WRITINGS OF LOUIS BERKHOF

by Louis Berkhof

A collection of theological writings, sermons, and essays by Louis Berkhof, compiled for study and devotional reading.

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Chapter 1

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01.00. Summary of Christian Doctrine

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01.01. Religion

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part 1: Introduction Chapter I: Religion

1. The Nature of Religion The Bible informs us that man was created in the image of God. When he fell in sin, he did not entirely cease to be the image-bearer of the Most High. The seed of religion is still present in all men, though their sinful nature constantly reacts against it. Missionaries testify to the presence of religion in some form or other among all the nations and tribes of the earth. It is one of the greatest blessings of mankind, though many denounce it as a curse. Not only does it touch the deepest springs of man's life, but it also controls his thoughts and feelings and desires. But just what is religion? It is only by the study of the Word of God that we can learn to know the nature of true religion. The word 'religion' is derived from the Latin and not from any word that is found in the original Hebrew or Greek of the Bible. It is found only four times in our translation of the Bible, Galatians 1:18, Galatians 1:14; James 1:26, James 1:27. The Old Testament defines religion as the fear of the Lord. This fear is not a feeling of dread, but of reverent regard for God akin to awe, but coupled with love and confidence. It is the response of the Old Testament believers to the revelation of the law. In the New Testament religion is a response to the gospel rather than to the law, and assumes the form of faith and godliness. In the light of Scripture we learn to understand that religion is a relation in which man stands to God, a relation in which man is conscious of the absolute majesty and infinite power of God and of his own utter insignificance and absolute helplessness. It may be defined as a conscious and voluntary relationship to God, which expresses itself in grateful worship and loving service. The manner of this religious worship and service is not left to the arbitrary will of man, but is determined by God.

2. The Seat of Religion. There are several wrong views respecting the seat of religion in man. Some think of religion primarily as a sort of knowledge, and locate it in the intellect. Others regard it as a kind of immediate feeling of God, and find its seat in the feelings. And still others hold that it consists most of all in moral activity, and refer it to the will. However, all these views are one-sided and contrary to Scripture, which teaches us that religion is a matter of the heart. In Scripture psychology the heart is the central organ of the soul. Out of it are all the issues of life, thoughts, feelings, and desires, Proverbs 4:28. Religion involves the whole man, his intellectual, his emotional, and his moral life. This is the only view that does justice to the nature of religion.

3. The Origin of Religion. Particular attention was devoted during the last fifty years to the problem of the origin of religion. Repeated attempts were made to give a natural explanation of it, but without success. Some spoke of it as an invention of cunning and deceptive priests, who regarded it as an easy source of revenue; but this explanation is entirely discredited now. Others held that it began with the worship of lifeless objects (fetishes), or with the worship of spirits, possibly the spirits of forefathers. But this is no explanation, since the question remains, How did people ever hit upon the idea of worshiping lifeless or living objects? Still others were of the opinion that religion originated in nature-worship, that is, the worship of the marvels and powers of nature, or in

the widespread practice of magic. But these theories do not explain any more than the others how non-religious man ever became religious. They all start out with a man who is already religious. The Bible gives the only reliable account of the origin of religion. It informs us of the existence of God, the only object worthy of religious worship. Moreover, it comes to us with the assurance that God, whom man could never discover with his natural powers, revealed Himself in nature and, more especially, in His divine Word, demands the worship and service of man, and also determines the worship and service that is well-pleasing to Him. And, finally, it teaches us that God created man in His own image, and thus endowed him with a capacity to understand, and to respond to, this revelation, and engendered in him a natural urge to seek communion with God and to glorify Him. To memorize. Scripture passages bearing on: a. The Nature of Religion:

Deuteronomy 10:12, Deuteronomy 10:18. "And now, Israel, what doth Jehovah thy God require of thee, but to fear Jehovah thy God, to walk in all His ways, and to love Him, and to serve Jehovah thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, to keep the commandments of Jehovah, and His statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good."

Psalms 111:10. "The fear of Jehovah is the beginning of wisdom; a good understanding have all they that do His commandments: His praise endureth for ever."

Ecclesiastes 12:13. "Fear God and keep His commandments; for this is the whole duty of man."

John 6:29. "This is the work of 'God, that ye believe on Him whom He hath sent."

Acts 16:31. "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house." b. The Seat of Religion.

Psalms 51:10. "Create in me a clean heart, 0 God; and renew a right spirit within me." Also Psalms 51:17. "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, 0 God, thou wilt not despise."

Proverbs 4:28. "Keep thy heart with all diligence; for out of it are the issues of life."

Matthew 6:8. "Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God." c. The Origin of Religion.

Genesis 1:27. "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him."

Deuteronomy 4:18. "And He declared unto you His covenant, which He commanded you to perform, even the ten commandments."

Ezekiel 37:26. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." For Further Study of Scripture: a. What elements of true religion are indicated in the following passages: Deuteronomy 10:12; Ecclesiastes 12:13; Hosea 6:6; Micah 6:8; Mark 12:33; John 3:36; John 6:29; Acts 6:31; Romans 12:1; Romans 13:10; James 1:27. b. What forms of false religion are indicated in the following passages: Psalms 78:35, Psalms 78:36; Isaiah 1:11-17; Isaiah 58:1-5; Ezekiel 33:31, Ezekiel 33:32; Matthew 6:2, Matthew 6:5; Matthew 7:21, Matthew 7:26, Matthew 7:27; Matthew 23:14; Luke 6:2; Luke 13:14; Galatians 4:10; Colossians 2:20; 2 Timothy 3:5; Titus 1:16; James 2:15, James 2:16; James 3:10. c. Name six instances of true religion. Genesis 4:4-8; Genesis 12:1-8; Genesis 15:17; Genesis 18:22-33; Exodus 3:2-22; Deuteronomy 32:33; 2 Kings 18:3-7; 2

Kings 19:14-19; Daniel 6:4-22; Luke 2:25-35; Luke 2:36, Luke 2:37; Luke 7:1-10; 2 Timothy 1:5.

Questions for Review

1. Is religion limited to certain tribes and nations?

2 .How can we learn to know the real nature of true religion?

3. What terms are used in the Old and New Testament to describe religion?

4. How would you define religion?

5. What mistaken notions are there as to the seat of religion in man?

6. What is the center of the religions life according to Scripture?

7. What different explanations have been given of the origin of religion?

8. What is the only satisfactory explanation?

01.02. Revelation

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part 1: Introduction Chapter II: Revelation

1. Revelation in General. The discussion of religion naturally leads on to that of revelation as its origin. If God had not revealed Himself, religion would have been impossible. Man could not possibly have had any knowledge of God, if God had not made Himself known. Left to himself, he would never have discovered God. We distinguish between God's revelation in nature and His revelation in Scripture.

Atheists and Agnostics, of course, do not believe in revelation. Pantheists sometimes speak of it, though there is really no place for it in their system of thought. And Deists admit the revelation of God in nature, but deny the necessity, the reality, and even the possibility of any special revelation such as we have in Scripture. We believe in both general and special revelation.

2. General Revelation. The general revelation of God is prior to His special revelation in point of time. It does not come to man in the form of verbal communications, but in the facts, the forces, and the laws of nature, in the constitution and operation of the human mind, and in the facts of experience and history. The Bible refers to it in such passages as Psalms 19:1, Psalms 19:2; Romans 1:19, Romans 1:20; Romans 2:14, Romans 2:15. a. Insufficiency of general revelation. While Pelagians, Rationalists, and Deists regard this revelation as adequate for our present needs, Roman Catholics and Protestants are agreed that it is not sufficient. It was obscured by the blight of sin resting on God's beautiful creation. The handwriting of the Creator was not entirely erased, but became hazy and indistinct. It does not now convey any fully reliable knowledge of God and spiritual things, and therefore does not furnish us a trustworthy foundation on which we can build for our eternal future. The present religious confusion of those who would base their religion on a purely natural basis clearly proves its insufficiency. It does not even afford an adequate basis for religion in general, much less for true religion. Even gentile nations appeal to some supposed special revelation. And, finally, it utterly fails to meet the spiritual needs of sinners. While it conveys some knowledge of the goodness, the wisdom, and the power of God, it conveys no knowledge whatever of Christ as the only way of salvation. b. Value of general revelation. This does not mean, however, that general revelation has no value at all. It accounts for the true elements that are still found in heathen religions. Due to this revelation gentiles feel themselves to be the offspring of God, Acts 17:28, seek after God if haply they might find Him, Acts 17:27, see in nature God's everlasting power and divinity, Romans 1:19, Romans 1:20, and do by nature the things of the law, Romans 2:14. Though they live in the darkness of sin and ignorance, and pervert the truth of God, they still share in the illumination of the Word, John 1:9, and in the general operations of the Holy Spirit, Genesis 6:3. Moreover, the general revelation of God also forms the background for His special revelation. The latter could not be fully understood without the former. Science and history do not fail to illumine the pages of the Bible.

3. Special Revelation. In addition to the revelation of God in nature we have His special revelation which is now embodied in Scripture. The Bible is preeminently the book of God's special

revelation, a revelation in which facts and words go hand in hand, the words interpreting the facts and the facts giving substance to the words. a. Necessity of special revelation. This special revelation became necessary through the entrance of sin into the world. God’s handwriting in nature was obscured and corrupted, and man was stricken with spiritual blindness, became subject to error and unbelief, and now in his blindness and perverseness fails to read aright even the remaining traces of the original revelation, and is unable to understand any further revelation of God. Therefore it became necessary that God should re-interpret the truths of nature, should provide a new revelation of redemption, and should illumine the mind of man and redeem it from the power of error. b. Means of special revelation. In giving His special or supernatural revelation God used different kinds of means, such as (1) Theophanies or visible manifestations of God. He revealed His presence in fire and clouds of smoke, Exodus 8:2; Exodus 33:9: Psalms 78:14; Psalms 99:7; in stormy winds, Job 38:1; Psalms 18:10-16, and in a "still small voice," 1 Kings 19:12. These were all tokens of His presence, revealing something of His glory. Among the Old Testament appearances those of the Angel of Jehovah, the second Person of the Trinity, occupied a prominent place, Genesis 16:13; Genesis 31:11; Exodus 23:20-23; Malachi 3:1. The highest point of the personal appearance of God among men was reached in the incarnation of Jesus Christ. In Him the Word became flesh and tabernacled among us, John 1:14. (2) Direct communications. Sometimes God spoke to men in an audible voice, as He did to Moses and the children of Israel, Deuteronomy 5:4, and sometimes He suggested His messages to the prophets by an internal operation of the Holy Spirit, 1 Peter 1:11. Moreover, He revealed Himself in dreams and visions, and by means of Urim and Thummim, Numbers 12:6; Numbers 27:21; Isaiah 6:1-13. And in the New Testament Christ appears as the great Teacher sent from God to reveal the Father’s will; and through His Spirit the apostles become the organs of further revelations, John 14:26; 1 Corinthians 2:12, 1 Corinthians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 2:13. (3) Miracles. The miracles of the Bible should never be regarded as mere marvels which fill men with amazement, but as essential parts of God’s special revelation. They are manifestations of the special power of God, tokens of His special presence, and often serve to symbolize spiritual truths. They are signs of the coming Kingdom of God and of the redemptive power of God. The greatest miracle of all is the coming of the Son of God in the flesh. In Him the whole creation of God is being restored and brought back to its original beauty, 1 Timothy 3:16; Revelation 21:5. c. The character of special revelation. This special revelation of God is a revelation of redemption. It reveals the plan of God for the redemption of sinners and of the world, and the way in which this plan is realized. It is instrumental in renewing man; it illumines his mind and inclines his will to that which is good; it fills him with holy affections, and prepares him for his heavenly home. Not only does it bring us a message of redemption; it also acquaints us with redemptive facts. It not only enriches us with knowledge, but also transforms lives by changing sinners into saints. This revelation is clearly progressive. The great truths of redemption appear but dimly at first, but gradually increase in clearness, and finally stand out in the New Testament in all their fullness and beauty. To memorize. Scripture passages bearing on: a. General Revelation:

Psalms 8:1. "0 Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth."

Psalms 19:1, Psalms 19:2. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth wisdom."

Romans 1:20. "For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity."

Romans 2:14-15. "For when Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these, not having the law, are a law unto themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts, their consciences bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them."

Numbers 12:6-8. "And He said, Hear now my words: if there be a prophet among you, I Jehovah will make myself known unto him in a vision, I will speak with him in a dream. My servant Moses is not so; he is faithful in all my house: with him will I speak mouth to mouth."

Hebrews 1:1. "God having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath in the end of these days spoken unto us in His Son."

2 Peter 1:21. "For no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spake from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit." For Further Study: a. Mention some of the appearances of the Angel of Jehovah. Can he have been a mere angel? Genesis 16:13; Genesis 31:11, Genesis 31:13; Genesis 32:28; Exodus 23:20-23. b. Name some examples of revelation by dreams. Genesis 28:10-17; Genesis 31:24; Genesis 41:2-7; Judges 7:13; 1 Kings 8:5-9; Daniel 2:1-3; Matthew 2:13, Matthew 2:19, Matthew 2:20. c. Mention some cases in which God revealed Himself in visions. Isaiah 6:1-13; Ezekiel 1:1-28; Ezekiel 2:1-10; Ezekiel 3:1-27; Daniel 2:19; Daniel 7:1-14; Zechariah 2:1-13; Zechariah 3:1-10; Zechariah 4:1-14; Zechariah 5:1-11; Zechariah 6:1-15. d. Can you infer from the following passages what the miracles recorded reveal? Exodus 10:1, Exodus 10:2; Deuteronomy 8:3; John 2:1-11; John 6:1-14, John 6:25-35; John 9:1-7; John 11:17-44.

Questions for Review

1. How do general and special revelation differ?

2. Where do we meet with the denial of all revelation of God?

3. What is the position of the Deists as to revelation?

4. What is the nature of general revelation?

5. Why is it insufficient for our special needs, and what value does if have?

6. Why was God’s special revelation necessary?

7. What means did God employ in His special revelations?

8. What are the characteristics of special revelation?

01.03. Scripture

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part 1: Introduction Chapter III: Scripture

1. Revelation and Scripture. The term ’special revelation’ may be used in more than one sense. It may denote the direct self-communications of God in verbal messages and in miraculous facts. The prophets and the apostles often received messages from God long before they committed them to writing. These are now contained in Scripture, but do not constitute the whole of the Bible. There is much in it that was not revealed in a supernatural way, but is the result of study and of previous reflection. However, the term may also be used to denote the Bible as a whole, that whole complex of redemptive truths and facts, with the proper historical setting, that is found in Scripture and has the divine guarantee of its truth in the fact that it is infallibly inspired by the Holy Spirit. In view of this fact it may be said that the whole Bible, and the Bible only, is for us God’s special revelation. It is in the Bible that God’s special revelation lives on and brings even now life, light, and holiness.

2. Scripture Proof for the Inspiration of Scripture. The whole Bible is given by inspiration of God, and is as such the infallible rule of faith and practice for all mankind. Since the doctrine of inspiration is often denied, it calls for special consideration. This doctrine, like every other, is based on Scripture, and is not an invention of man. While it is founded on a great number of passages, only a few of these can be indicated here. The Old Testament writers are repeatedly instructed to write what the Lord commands them, Exodus 17:14; Exodus 34:27; Numbers 33:2; Isaiah 8:1; Isaiah 30:8; Jeremiah 25:13; Jeremiah 30:2; Ezekiel 24:1; Daniel 12:4; Habakkuk 2:2. The prophets were conscious of bringing the word of the Lord, and therefore introduced their messages with some such formula as, "Thus saith the Lord," or, "The word of the Lord came unto me," Jeremiah 36:27, Jeremiah 36:32; Ezekiel 26:1-21; Ezekiel 27:1-36; Ezekiel 31:1-18; Ezekiel 32:1-32; Ezekiel 39:1-29. Paul speaks of his words as Spirit-taught words, 1 Corinthians 2:13, claims that Christ is speaking in him, 2 Corinthians 13:3, and describes his message to the Thessalonians as the word of God, 1 Thessalonians 2:13. The Epistle to the Hebrews often quotes passages of the Old Testament as words of God or of the Holy Spirit, Hebrews 1:6; Hebrews 3:7; Hebrews 4:3;" Hebrews 5:6; Hebrews 7:21. The most important passage to prove the inspiration of Scripture is 2 Timothy 3:16, which reads as follows in the Authorized Version: "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness."

3. The Nature of Inspiration. There are especially two wrong views of inspiration, representing extremes that should be avoided. a. Mechanical inspiration. It has sometimes been represented as if God literally dictated what the human authors of the Bible had to write, and as if they were purely passive like a pen in the hand of a writer. This means that their minds did not contribute in any way to the contents or form of their writings. But in view of what we find this can hardly be true. They were real authors, who in some cases gathered their materials from sources at their command, 1 Kings 11:41; 1 Kings 14:29; 1 Chronicles 29:29; Luke 1:1-4, in other instances recorded their own

experiences as, for instance, in many of the psalms, and impressed upon their writings their own particular style. The style of Isaiah differs from that of Jeremiah, and the style of John is not like that of Paul. b. Dynamic inspiration. Others thought of the process of inspiration as affecting only the writers, and having no direct bearing on their writings. Their mental and spiritual life was strengthened and raised to a higher pitch, so that they saw things more clearly and had a more profound sense of their real spiritual value. This inspiration was not limited to the time when they wrote the books of the Bible, but was a permanent characteristic of the writers and affected their writings only indirectly. It differed only in degree from the spiritual illumination of all believers. This theory certainly does not do justice to the biblical view of inspiration. c. Organic inspiration. The proper conception of inspiration holds that the Holy Spirit acted on the writers of the Bible in an organic way, in harmony with the laws of their own inner being, using them just as they were, with their character and temperament, their gifts and talents, their education and culture, their vocabulary and style. The Holy Spirit illumined their minds, aided their memory, prompted them to write, repressed the influence of sin on their writings, and guided them in the expression of their thoughts even to the choice of their words. In no small measure He left free scope to their own activity. They could give the results of their own investigations, write of their own experiences, and put the imprint of their own style and language on their books.

4. The Extent of Inspiration. There are differences of opinion also respecting the extent of the inspiration of Scripture. a. Partial inspiration. Under the influence of Rationalism it has become quite common to deny the inspiration of the Bible altogether, or to hold that only parts of it are inspired. Some deny the inspiration of the Old Testament, while admitting that of the New. Others affirm that the moral and religious teachings of Scripture are inspired, but that its historical parts contain several chronological, archaeological, and scientific mistakes. Still others limit the inspiration to the Sermon on the Mount. They who adopt such views have already lost their Bible, for the very differences of opinion are proof positive that no one can determine with any degree of certainty which parts of Scripture are, and which are not inspired. There is still another way in which the inspiration of Scripture is limited, namely, by assuming that the thoughts were inspired, while the choice of the words was left entirely to the wisdom of the human authors. But this proceeds on the very doubtful assumption that the thoughts can be separated from the words, while, as a matter of fact, accurate thought without words is impossible. b. Plenary inspiration. According to Scripture every part of the Bible is inspired. Jesus and the apostles frequently appeal to the Old Testament books as ’scripture’ or ’the Scriptures’ to settle a point in controversy. To their minds such an appeal was equivalent to an appeal to God. It should be noted that of the books to which they appeal in this fashion, some are historical. The Epistle to the Hebrews repeatedly cites passages from the Old Testament as words of God or of the Holy Spirit (cf. p. 18). Peter places the letters of Paul on a level with the writings of the Old Testament, 2 Peter 3:16, and Paul speaks of all Scripture as inspired, 2 Timothy 3:16.

We may safely go a step farther and say that the inspiration of the Bible extends to the very words employed. The Bible is verbally inspired, which is not equivalent to saying that it is mechanically inspired. The doctrine of verbal inspiration is fully warranted by Scripture. In many cases we are explicitly told that the Lord told Moses and Joshua exactly what to write, Leviticus 3:1-17; Leviticus 4:1-35; Leviticus 6:1; Leviticus 6:24; Leviticus 7:22; Leviticus 7:28; Joshua 1:1; Joshua 4:1; Joshua 6:2, and so on. The prophets speak of Jehovah as putting His words into their mouths,

Jeremiah 1:9, and as directing them to speak His words to the people, Ezekiel 3:4, Ezekiel 3:10, Ezekiel 3:11. Paul designates his words as Spirit taught words, 1 Corinthians 2:13, and both he and Jesus base an argument on a single word, Matthew 22:43-45; John 10:35; Galatians 3:16.

5. The Perfections of Scripture. The Reformers developed the doctrine of Scripture as over against the Roman Catholics and some of the Protestant sects. While Rome taught that the Bible owes its authority to the Church, they maintained that it has authority in itself as the inspired Word of God. They also upheld the necessity of Scripture as the divinely appointed means of grace over against the Roman Catholics, who asserted that the Church had no absolute need of it, and some of the Protestant sects, who exalted the "inner light," or the word of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of the people of God, at the expense of Scripture. In opposition to Rome they further defended the clearness of the Bible. They did not deny that it contains mysteries too deep for human understanding, but simply contended that the knowledge necessary unto salvation, though not equally clear on every page of the Bible, is yet conveyed in a manner so simple that anyone earnestly seeking salvation can easily gather this knowledge for himself, and need not depend on the interpretation of the Church or the priesthood. Finally, they also defended the sufficiency of Scripture, and thereby denied the need of the tradition of the Roman Catholics and of the inner light of the Anabaptists. To memorize. Passages bearing on: a. The inspiration of Scripture:

1 Corinthians 2:13. "Which things also we speak, not in words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Spirit teacheth; combining spiritual things with spiritual words."

1 Thessalonians 2:13. "And for this cause we also thank God without ceasing, that, when ye received from us the word of the message, even the word of God, ye accepted it not as the word of men, but, as it is in truth, the word of God."

2 Timothy 3:16. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." b. The authority of the Bible:

Isaiah 8:20. "To the lay and to the testimony! if they speak not according to this word, surely there is no morning for them." c. The necessity of the Bible:

2 Timothy 3:15. "And that from a babe thou has known the sacred writings, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus." d. The clearness of Scripture:

Psalms 19:7 b. "The testimony of Jehovah is sure, making wise the simple."

Psalms 119:105. "Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path." Also Psalms 119:130. "The opening of Thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding to the simple." e. The Sufficiency of Scripture:

Cf. the passages under c. above. For Further Study: a. Do the traditions of men have authority? Matthew 5:21-48; Matthew 15:3-6; Mark 7:7; Colossians 2:8; Titus 1:14; 2 Peter 1:18. b. Did the prophets themselves always fully understand what they wrote? Daniel 8:16; Daniel 12:8; Zech. 1:7 -- 6:11; 1 Peter 1:11. c. Does 2 Timothy 3:16 teach us anything respecting the practical value of the inspiration of Scripture? If so, what?

Questions for Review 1. What is the relation between special revelation and Scripture?

2. What different meanings has the term ’special revelation’?

3. Can we say that special revelation and Scripture are identical?

4. What Scripture proof can you give for the inspiration of the Bible.?

5. What are thee theories of mechanical and dynamical inspiration?

6. How would you describe the doctrine of organic inspiration?

7. What about the theory that the thoughts are inspired but not the words?

8. How would you prove that inspiration extends to every part of Scripture, and even to the very words?

9. How do Rome and the Reformers differ on the authority, the necessity, the clearness, and the sufficiency of Scripture?

Chapter 6

01.04. The Essential Nature of God

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part II: The Doctrine of God and Creation Chapter IV: The Essential Nature of God

1. The Knowledge of God. The possibility of knowing God has been denied on several grounds. But while it is true that man can never fully comprehend God, it does not follow that he can have no knowledge of Him at all. He can know Him only in part, but nevertheless with a knowledge which is real and true. This is possible because God has revealed Himself. Left to his own resources, man would never have been able to discover nor to know Him. Our knowledge of God is twofold. Man has an inborn knowledge of God. This does not merely mean that, in virtue of his creation in the image of God, he has a natural capacity to know God. Neither does it imply that man at birth brings a certain knowledge of God with him into the world. It simply means that under normal conditions a certain knowledge of God naturally develops in man. This knowledge is, of course, of a very general nature. But in addition to this inborn knowledge of God man also acquires knowledge of Him by learning from God’s general and special revelation. This is not obtained without efforts on man’s part, but is the result of his conscious and sustained pursuit of knowledge. While this knowledge is possible only because man is born with the capacity to know God, it carries him far beyond the limits of the inborn knowledge of God.

2. The Knowledge of God as Known from Special Revelation. While it is not possible to define God, it is possible to give a general description of His being. It is perhaps best to describe Him as a pure Spirit of infinite perfections. The description involves the following elements: a. God is a pure Spirit. The Bible contains no definition of God. The nearest approach to it is found in the words of Jesus to the Samaritan woman, "God is spirit." This means that He is essentially spirit, and that all the qualities which belong to the perfect idea of spirit are necessarily found in Him. The fact that He is pure spirit excludes the idea that He has a body of some kind and is in any way visible to the physical eye. b. God is personal. The fact that God is spirit also involves His personality. A spirit is an intelligent and moral being, and when we ascribe personality to God, we mean exactly that He is a reasonable Being, capable of determining the course of His life. At present many deny the personality of God and simply conceive of Him as an impersonal force or power. However, the God of the Bible is certainly a personal God, a God with whom men can converse, whom they can trust, who enters into their experiences, who helps them in their difficulties, and who fills their hearts with joy and gladness. Moreover, He revealed Himself in a personal form in Jesus Christ. c. God is infinitely perfect. God is distinguished from all His creatures by infinite perfection. His being and virtues are free from all limitations and imperfections. He is not only boundless and limitless, but also stands out above all His creatures in moral perfection and in glorious majesty. The children of Israel sang of the greatness of God after they passed through the Red Sea: "Who is like unto Thee, 0 Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" Exodus 15:11. Some philosophers of the present day speak of God as "finite, developing, struggling, suffering, sharing with man his defeats and victory." d. God and His perfections are one. Simplicity is one of the

fundamental characteristics of God. This means that He is not composed of different parts, and also that His being and attributes are one. It may be said that God's perfections are God Himself as He has revealed Himself to man. They are simply so many manifestations of the divine Being. Hence the Bible says that God is truth, life, light, love, righteousness, and so on. To memorize. Passages proving: a. That God can be known:

1 John 5:20. "And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ."

John 17:3. "And this is life eternal, that they should know thee, the only true God, and Him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ." b. That God is n Spirit:

John 4:24. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

1 Timothy 6:16. "Who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see." c. That God is personal:

Malachi 2:10. "Have we not all one father? Hath not one God created us?"

John 14:9 b. "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father; how sayest thou, Show us the Father?" d. That God is infinite in perfection:

Exodus 15:11. "Who is like unto Thee, 0 Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"

Psalms 147:5. "Great is our Lord, and mighty in power; His understanding is infinite." For Further Study: a. Do not the following passages teach that we cannot know God? Job 11:7; Job 26:14; Job 36:26. b. If God is a spirit and has no body, how do you explain the following passages? Psalms 4:6; Psalms 17:2; Psalms 18:6, Psalms 18:8, Psalms 18:9; Psalms 31:5; Psalms 44:3; Psalms 47:8; Psalms 48:10, and many others. c. How do the following passages testify to the personality of God? Genesis 1:1; Deuteronomy 1:34, Deuteronomy 1:35,; 1 Kings 8:23-26; Job 38:1; Psalms 21:7; Psalms 50:6; Psalms 103:3-5; Matthew 5:9; Romans 12:1.

Questions for Review

1. In what sense is God knowable and in what sense unknowable?

2. What is the difference between inborn and acquired knowledge of God?

3. Is it possible to define God? How would you describe Him?

4. What is involved in God's spirituality?

5. What do we mean when we speak of God as a personality?

6. What proof have WE for the personality of God?

7. What do we mean when we speak of the infinity of God?

8. How are the being of God and His perfections related?

01.05. The Names of God

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part II: The Doctrine of God and Creation Chapter V: The Names of God When God gives names to persons or things, they are names which have meaning and give an insight into the nature of the persons or things designated. This also applies to the names which God has given Himself. Sometimes the Bible speaks of the name of God in the singular, and in such cases the term is a designation of the manifestation of God in general, especially in relation to His people, Exodus 20:7; Psalms 113:3; or simply stands for God Himself, Proverbs 18:10; Isaiah 50:10. The one general name of God is split up into several special names, which are expressive of His many-sided being. These names are not of human invention, but are given by God Himself.

1. The Old Testament Names of God. Some of the Old Testament names denote that God is the High and Exalted One. ’El and ’Elohim indicate that He is strong and mighty and should therefore be feared, while ’Elyon points to His exalted nature as the Most High, the object of reverence and worship. Another name belonging to this class is ’Adonai, usually rendered "Lord," the Possessor and Ruler of all men. Other names express the fact that God enters into relations of friendship with His creatures. One of these, common among the patriarchs, was the name Shaddai or ’El-Shaddai, which indeed stresses the divine greatness, but as a source of comfort and blessing for His people. It indicates that God controls the powers of nature, and makes them serve His purposes. The greatest name of God, however, always held sacred by the Jews, is the name Jehovah (Yahweh). Its origin and meaning is indicated in Exodus 3:14, Exodus 3:15. It expresses the fact that God is always the same, and especially that He is unchangeable in His covenant relationship, and is always faithful in the fulfilment of His promises. It frequently assumes a fuller form in "Jehovah of Hosts." This calls up the picture of Jehovah as the King of Glory surrounded by angelic hosts.

2. The New Testament Names of God. The New Testament names are simply the Greek forms of those found in the Old Testament. The following deserve particular attention: a. The name Theos. This is simply the word for ’God,’ and is the most common name employed in the New Testament. It is frequently found with a possessive genitive as ’my God,’ ’thy God,’ ’our God,’ ’your God.’ In Christ God is the God of each one of His children. The individual form takes the place of the national form, ’the God of Israel,’ so common in the Old Testament. b. The name Kurios. This is the word for ’Lord,’ a name that is applied not only to God but also to Christ. It takes the place of both ’Adonai and Jehovah, though its meaning corresponds more particularly with that of ’Adonai. It designates God as the Possessor and Ruler of all things, and especially of His people. c. The name Pater. It is often said that the New Testament introduced this as a new name. But this is hardly correct, for the name ’Father’ is also found in the Old Testament to express the special relation in which God stands to Israel, Deuteronomy 32:6; Isaiah 63:16. In the New Testament it is more individual in that it points to God as the Father of all believers. Sometimes it designates God as the creator of all, 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 3:14; Hebrews 12:9; James 1:17, and sometimes the first Person of the Trinity as the Father of Christ, John 14:11; John 17:1. To

memorize. Passages bearing on: a. The name of God in general:

Exodus 20:7. "Thou shalt not take the name of Jehovah thy God in vain; for Jehovah will not hold him guiltless that taketh His name in vain."

Psalms 8:1. "0 Jehovah, our Lord, how excellent is Thy name in all the earth!" b. Particular names:

Genesis 1:1. "In the beginning God (’Elohim) created the heavens and the earth."

Exodus 6:3. "And I appeared unto Abraham, unto Isaac, and unto Jacob, as God Almighty (’El Shaddai); but by my name Jehovah I was not known unto them."

Psalms 86:8. "There is none like Thee among the gods, 0 Lord (’Adonai); neither are there any works like unto Thy works."

Malachi 3:6. "For I, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, 0 sons of Jacob, are not consumed."

Matthew 6:9. "Our Father who art in Heaven, Hallowed be Thy name."

Revelation 4:8. "Holy, holy, holy, is the Lord (Kurios) God, the Almighty, who was and who is and who is to come." For Further Study: a. What light does Exodus 8:13-16 shed on the meaning of the name Jehovah? b. What name of God was rather common in the times of the patriarchs? Genesis 17:1; Genesis 28:3; Genesis 35:11; Genesis 43:14; Genesis 48:38; Genesis 49:25; Exodus 6:3. c. Can you give some descriptive names of God? Isaiah 48:3, Isaiah 48:15; Isaiah 44:6; Amos 4:13; Luke 1:78; 2 Corinthians 1:3; 2 Corinthians 11:31; Joshua 1:17; Hebrews 12:9; Revelation 1:8, Revelation 1:17.

Questions for Review 1. What does Scripture mean when it speaks of the name of God in the singular?

2. Are the special names of God of human origin?

3. What two kinds of names do we distinguish in the Old Testament?

4. What is the meaning of the names ’Elohim, Jehovah, ’Adonai, ’El Shaddai, and Kurios?

5. Is the name Father ever applied to God in the Old Testament? 6. In what different senses is this name used in the New Testaments?

Chapter 8

01.06. The Attributes of God

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part II: The Doctrine of God and Creation Chapter VI: The Attributes of God

God reveals Himself not only in His names, but also in His attributes, that is, in the perfections of the divine Being. It is customary to distinguish between incommunicable and communicable attributes. Of the former there are no traces in the creature; of the latter there are.

1. The Incommunicable Attributes. These emphasize the absolute distinction between God and the creature, and include the following: a. The independence or self-existence of God. This means that God has the ground of His existence in Himself, and unlike man, does not depend on anything outside of Himself. He is independent in His Being, in His virtues and actions, and causes all His creatures to depend on Him. The idea is embodied in the name Jehovah and finds expression in the following passages, Psalms 33:11; Psalms 115:3; Isaiah 40:18 ff.; Daniel 4:35; John 5:26; Romans 11:33-36; Acts 17:25; Revelation 4:11. b. The immutability of God. Scripture teaches that God is unchangeable. He is forever the same in His divine Being and perfections, and also in His purposes and promises, Numbers 23:19; Psalms 33:11; Psalms 102:27; Malachi 3:6; Hebrews 6:17; James 1:17. This does not mean, however, that there is no movement in God. The Bible speaks of Him as coming and going, hiding and revealing Himself. He is also said to repent, but this is evidently only a human way of speaking of God, Exodus 32:14; Jonah 3:10, and really indicates a change in man's relation to God. c. The infinity of God. This means that God is not subject. to limitations. We can speak of His infinity in more than one sense. Viewed in relation to His being, it may be called His absolute perfection. He is unlimited in His knowledge and wisdom, in His goodness and love, in His righteousness and holiness, Job 11:7-10; Psalms 145:3. Seen in relation to time, it is called His eternity. While this is usually represented in Scripture as endless duration, Psalms 90:2; Psalms 102:12, it really means that He is above time and therefore not subject to its limitations. For Him there is only an eternal present, and no past or future. Viewed with reference to space, it is called His immensity. He is everywhere present, dwells in all His creatures, filling every point of space, but is in no way bounded by space, 1 Kings 8:27; Psalms 139:7-10; Isaiah 66:1-24; Isaiah 1:1-31; Jeremiah 23:23, Jeremiah 23:24; Acts 17:27, Acts 17:28. d. The simplicity of God. By ascribing simplicity to God we mean that He is not composed of various parts, such as the body and soul in man, and for that very reason is not subject to division. The three persons in the Godhead are not so many parts of which the divine essence is composed. The whole being of God belongs to each one of the Persons. Hence we can also say that God and His attributes are one, and that He is life, light, love, righteousness, truth, and so on.

2. The Communicable Attributes. These are the attributes of which we find some resemblance in man. It should be borne in mind, however, that what we see in man is only a finite (limited) and imperfect likeness of that which is infinite (unlimited) and perfect in God. Here we have: a. The knowledge of God. This is that perfection of God whereby He, in a manner all His own, knows Himself and all things possible and actual. God has this knowledge in Himself, and does not obtain

it from without. It is always complete and always present in His mind. And because it is all-comprehensive, it is called omniscience. He knows all things, past, present and future, and not only the things that have real existence, but also those which are merely possible. 1 Kings 8:29; Psalms 139:1-16; Isaiah 46:10; Ezekiel 11:5; Acts 15:18; John 21:17; Hebrews 4:13. b. The wisdom of God. God's wisdom is an aspect of His knowledge. It is the virtue of God which manifest itself in the selection of worthy ends and in the choice of the best means for the realization of those ends. The final end to which He makes all things subservient is His own glory. Romans 11:33; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:6, Ephesians 1:12, Ephesians 1:14; Colossians 1:16. c. The goodness of God. God is good, that is, perfectly holy. in Himself. But this is not the goodness we have in mind here. In this connection we refer to the divine goodness that reveals itself in doing well unto others. It is that perfection which prompts Him to deal kindly and bounteously with all His creatures The Bible refers to it repeatedly, Psalms 36:6; Psalms 104:21; Psalms 145:8, Psalms 145:9, Psalms 145:16; Matthew 5:45; Acts 14:17. d. The love of God. This is often called the most central attribute of God, but it is doubtful whether it should be regarded as more central than the other perfections of God. In virtue of it He delights in His own perfections and in man as the reflection of His image. It may be considered from various points of view. The unmerited love of God which reveals itself in pardoning sin is called His grace, Ephesians 1:6, Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 2:7-9; Titus 2:11. That love relieving the misery of those who are bearing the consequences of sin is known as His mercy or tender compassion, Luke 1:64, Luke 1:72, Luke 1:78; Romans 15:9; Romans 9:16, Romans 9:18; Ephesians 2:4. And when it bears with the sinner who does not heed the instructions and warnings of God it is named His longsuffering or forbearance, Romans 2:4; Romans 9:22; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:16. e. The holiness of God. God's holiness is first of all that divine perfection by which He is absolutely distinct from all His creatures, and exalted above them in infinite majesty. Exodus 15:11; Isaiah 57:15. But it denotes in the second place that He is free from all moral impurity or sin, and is therefore morally perfect. In the presence of the holy God man is deeply conscious of his sin, Job 34:10; Isaiah 6:5; Habakkuk 1:13. f. The righteousness of God. The righteousness of God is that perfection by which He maintains Himself as the Holy One over against every violation of His holiness. In virtue of it He maintains a moral government in the world and imposes a just law on man, rewarding obedience and punishing disobedience, Psalms 99:4; Isaiah 33:22; Romans 1:32. The justice of God which manifests itself in the giving of rewards is called His remunerative justice; and that which reveals itself in meting out punishment is known as His retributive justice. The former is really an expression of His love, and the latter of His wrath. g. The veracity of God. This is that perfection of God in virtue of which He is true in His inner being, in His revelation, and in His relation to His people. He is the true God over against the idols, knows things as they really are, and is faithful in the fulfillment of His promises. From the last point of view this attribute is also called God's faithfulness. Numbers 23:19; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:13; Hebrews 10:23. h. The sovereignty of God. This may be considered from two different points of view, namely, His sovereign will, and His sovereign power. The will of God is represented in Scripture as the final cause of all things, Ephesians 4:11; Revelation 4:11. On the basis of Deuteronomy 29:29 it is customary to distinguish between the secret and the revealed will of God. The former is the will of God's decree, which is hidden in God and can be known only from its effects, and the latter is the will of His precept, which is revealed in the law and in the gospel. God's will respecting His creatures is absolutely free, Job 11:10; Job 33:13; Psalms 115:3; Proverbs 21:1; Matthew 20:15;

Romans 9:15-18; Revelation 4:11. The sinful deeds of man are also under the control of His sovereign will, Genesis 50:20; Acts 2:23. The power to execute His will is called his omnipotence. That God is omnipotent does not mean that He can do everything. The Bible teaches us that there are some things which God cannot do. He cannot lie, sin, deny Himself, Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; 2 Timothy 2:13; Hebrews 6:18; James 1:13, James 1:17. It does mean that He can, by the mere exercise of Hie will, bring to pass whatsoever He has decided to accomplish, and that, if He so desired, He could do even more than that, Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32:27; Zechariah 8:6; Matthew 3:9; Matthew 26:53. To memorize. Passages to prove God's: a. Incommunicable attributes:

Independence. John 5:26. "For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so He gave to the Son also to have life in Himself.

Immutability. Malachi 3:6. "For I, Jehovah, change not; therefore ye, 0 sons of Jacob, are not consumed."

James 1:17. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, with whom can be no variation, neither shadow that is cast by turning."

Eternity. Psalms 90:2. "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever Thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting, Thou art God."

Psalms 102:27. "But Thou art the same, and Thy years have no end."

Omnipresence. Psalms 139:7-10. "Whither shall I go from Thy Spirit? Or whither shall I flee from Thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, Thou art there: if I make my bed in Sheol, behold Thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall Thy hand lead me, and Thy right hand shall hold me."

Jeremiah 23:23, Jeremiah 23:24. "Am I a God at hand, saith Jehovah, and not a God afar off? Can any hide himself in secret places so that I shall not see him' saith Jehovah. Do I not fill heaven and earth? saith Jehovah?" b. Communicable attributes:

Omniscience. John 21:17 b. "And he said unto Him, Yea, Lord, Thou knowest all things', Thou knowest that I love Thee."

Hebrews 4:13. "And there is no creature that is not manifest in His sight; but all things are naked and laid open before the eyes of Him with whom we have to do."

Wisdom. Psalms 104:24. "0 Jehovah, how manifold are Thy works! In wisdom hast Thou made them all."

Daniel 2:20, Daniel 2:21 b. "Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever; for wisdom and might are His.... He giveth wisdom unto the wise, and knowledge to them that have understanding."

Goodness. Psalms 86:5. "For Thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive, and abundant in lovingkindness unto all them that call upon Thee."

Psalms 118:29 "0 give thanks unto the Lord, for He is good; for His lovingkindness endureth forever."

Love. John 3:16. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

1 John 4:8. "He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."

Grace. Nehemiah 9:17 b. "But Thou art a God ready to pardon, gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness."

Romans 3:24. "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

Mercy. Romans 9:18. "So then He hath mercy on whom He will and whom He will He hardeneth."

Ephesians 2:4-5. "But God, being rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ."

Longsuffering or forbearance. Numbers 14:18. "Jehovah is slow to anger, and abundant in lovingkindness, forgiving iniquity and transgression."

Romans 2:4. "Or despisest thou the riches of His goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

Holiness. Exodus 15:11. "Who is like unto Thee, 0 Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like unto Thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"

Isaiah 6:3 b. "Holy, holy, holy, is Jehovah of hosts: the whole earth is full of His glory."

Righteousness or justice. Psalms 89:14. "Righteousness and justice are the foundation of Thy throne."

Psalms 145:17. "Jehovah is righteous in all His ways, and gracious in all His works."

1 Peter 1:17. "And if ye call on Him as Father, who without respect of persons judgeth according to each man’s work, pass the time of your sojourning in fear."

Veracity or faithfulness. Numbers 23:19. "God is not a man, that He should lie, neither the son of man, that He should repent. Hath He said, and will He not do it? Or hath He spoken, and will He not make it good?"

2 Timothy 2:13. "If we are faithless, he abideth faithful; for He cannot deny Himself."

Sovereignty. Ephesians 1:11. "In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the council of His will."

Revelation 4:11. "Worthy art Thou, our Lord and our God, to receive the glory and the honor and the power; for Thou didst create all things, and because of Thy will they were, and were created."

Secret and revealed will. Deuteronomy 29:29. "The secret things belong unto Jehovah our God; but the things that are revealed belong unto us and to our children for ever, that we may do all the words of this law."

Omnipotence. Job 42:2. "I know that Thou canst do everything." Matthew 19:26. "With God all things are possible." Luke 1:37. "For with God nothing shall be impossible." For Further Study: a. Give instances in which the Bible identifies God and His attributes, Jeremiah 28:6; Hebrews 12:29;

1 John 1:5; 1 John 4:16. b. How can God be just and gracious to the sinner at the same time, Zechariah 9:9; Romans 3:24-26? c. Prove from Scripture that God's foreknowledge includes conditional events. 1 Samuel 23:10-13; 2 Kings 13:19; Psalms 81:13-15; Psalms 48:18; Jeremiah 38:17-20; Ezekiel 3:6; Matthew 11:21.

Questions for Review 1. How do we divide the attributes of God?

2. Which belong to each one of these classes?

8. What is the independence of God?

4. What is His immutability?

5. How can we explain the fact that the Bible apparently ascribes change to God?

6. What is God's eternity and immensity or omnipresence?

7. What is the simplicity of God, and how can we prove it?

8. What is the nature and extent of God's knowledge?

9. How is His wisdom related to His knowledge?

10. What is the goodness of God? Are any other names used for it?

11. Should we speak of love as more central in God than His other attributes?

12. How do we distinguish God's grace, mercy, and longsuffering?

13. What is the holiness of God?

14. In what does God reveal His righteousness?

15. What is included in the veracity of God?

16. What distinction do we apply to the will of God?

17. Do the secret and the revealed will of God ever conflict?

18. Does God's omnipotence imply that He can do everything?

01.07. The Trinity

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part II: The Doctrine of God and Creation Chapter VII: The Trinity

1. Statement of the Doctrine. The Bible teaches that, while He exists in three Persons, called Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These are not three persons in the ordinary sense of the word; they are not three individuals, but rather three modes or forms in which the Divine Being exists. At the same time they are of such a nature that they can enter into personal relations. The Father can speak to the Son and vice versa, and both can send forth the Spirit. The real mystery of the Trinity consists in this that each one of the Persons possesses the whole of the divine essence, and that this has no existence outside of and apart from the Persons. The three are not subordinate in being the one to the other, though it may be said that in order of existence the Father is first, the Son second, and the Holy Spirit third, an order which is also reflected in their work.

2. Scripture Proof for the Trinity. The Old Testament contains some indications of more than one Person in God. God speaks of Himself in the plural, Genesis 1:26; Genesis 11:7; the Angel of Jehovah is represented as a divine Person, Genesis 16:7-13; Genesis 18:1-21; Genesis 19:1-22; and the Spirit is spoken of as a distinct Person, Isaiah 48:16; Isaiah 63:10. Moreover, there are some passages in which the Messiah is speaking and mentions two other Persons, Isaiah 48:16; Isaiah 61:6; Isaiah 63:9, Isaiah 63:10.

Due to the progress of revelation, the New Testament contains clearer proofs. The strongest proof is found in the facts of redemption. The Father sends the Son into the world, and the Son sends the Holy Spirit. Moreover, there are several passages in which the three Persons are expressly mentioned, such as the great commission, Matthew 28:19, and the apostolic blessing, 2 Corinthians 13:13. Cf. also Luke 3:21, Luke 3:22; Luke 1:35; 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 1 Peter 1:2. This doctrine was denied by the Socinians in the days of the Reformation, and is rejected also by the Unitarians and the Modernists of our own day. If they speak of the Trinity at all, they represent it as consisting of the Father, the man Jesus, and a divine influence which is called the Spirit of God.

3. The Father. The name ’Father’ is frequently applied in Scripture to the triune God, as the creator of all things, 1 Corinthians 8:6; Hebrews 12:9; James 1:17; as the Father of Israel, Deuteronomy 32:6; Isaiah 63:16; and as the Father of believers, Matthew 5:45; Matthew 6:6, Matthew 6:9, Matthew 6:14; Romans 8:15. In a deeper sense, however, it is applied to the First Person of the Trinity, to express His relation to the Second Person, John 1:14, John 1:18; John 8:54; John 14:12, John 14:13. This is the original Fatherhood, of which all earthly fatherhood is but a faint reflection. The distinctive characteristic of the Father is that He generates the Son from all eternity. The works particularly ascribed to Him are those of planning the work of redemption, creation and providence, and representing the Trinity in the Counsel of Redemption.

4. The Son. The second person in the Trinity is called ’Son’ or ’Son of God.’ He bears this name, however, not only as the only begotten of the Father, John 1:14, John 1:18; John 3:16, John 3:18;

Galatians 4:4, but also as the Messiah chosen of God, Matthew 8:29; Matthew 26:63; John 1:49; John 11:27, and in virtue of His special birth through the operation of the Holy Spirit, Luke 1:32, Luke 1:35. His special characteristic as the Second Person of the Trinity is that He is eternally begotten of the Father, Psalms 2:7; Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5. By means of eternal generation the Father is the cause of the personal existence of the Son within the Divine Being. The works more particularly ascribed to Him are works of mediation. He mediated the work of creation, John 1:3, John 1:10; Hebrews 1:2, Hebrews 1:3, and mediates the work of redemption, Ephesians 1:3-14.

5. The Holy Spirit. Though Socinians, Unitarians, and present day Modernists speak of the Holy Spirit merely as a power or an influence of God, He clearly stands out on the pages of the Bible as a Person, John 14:16, John 14:17, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:1-15; Romans 8:26. He has intelligence, John 14:26, feeling, Isaiah 68:10; Ephesians 4:30, and will, Acts 16:7; 1 Corinthians 12:11. Scripture represents Him as speaking, searching, testifying, commanding, revealing, striving, and making intercession. Moreover, He is clearly distinguished from His own power in Luke 1:35; Luke 4:14; Acts 10:38; 1 Corinthians 2:4. His special characteristic is that He proceeds from the Father and the Son by spiration, John 15:26; John 16:7; Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6. In general it may be said that it is His task to bring things to completion both in creation and redemption, Genesis 1:3; Job 26:13; Luke 1:35; John 3:34; 1 Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 2:22. To memorize. Passages to prove: a. The Trinity:

Isaiah 61:1. "The Spirit of the Lord Jehovah is upon Me" (the Messiah), cf. Luke 4:17, Luke 4:18.

Matthew 28:19. "Go ye therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit."

2 Corinthians 13:14. "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God; and the communion of the Holy Spirit, be with you all." b. Eternal generation:

Psalms 2:7. "I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee."

John 1:14, "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth." c. Procession of the Holy Spirit:

John 15:26. "But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth, which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of Me." For Further Study: a. In what sense can we speak of a general Fatherhood of God? 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 3:14, Ephesians 3:15; Hebrews 12:9; James 1:17. Cf. also Numbers 16:22. b. Can you prove the deity of the incarnate Son? John 1:1; John 20:28; Php 2:6; Titus 2:13; Jeremiah 28:5, Jeremiah 28:6; Isaiah 9:6; John 1:3; Revelation 1:8; Colossians 1:17; John 14:1; 2 Corinthians 13:14. c. How do the following passages prove the personality of the Holy Spirit? Genesis 1:2; Genesis 6:3; Luke 12:12; John 14:26; 15:26; 16:8; Acts 8:29; Acts 13:2; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 2:10, 1 Corinthians 2:11. d. What works are ascribed to the Spirit in Psalms 33:6; Psalms 104:30; Ex, 28:3; I1 Peter 1:21; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 12:4 ff.?

Questions for Review 1. Can we discover the doctrine of the Trinity from nature?

2. Are there three separate individuals in God?

3. Is one Person subordinate to another in God?

4. How can we prove the Trinity from the Old Testament?

5. What is the strongest proof for the Trinity?

6. What New Testament passages best prove it?

7. In what different senses is the name ’Father’ applied to God?

8. What works are more particularly ascribed to each one of the Persons?

9. In what different senses is the name ’Son’ applied to Christ?

10. What is the special characteristic of each Person?

11. How can you prove that the Holy Spirit is a Person?

01.08. The Divine Decrees

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part II: The Doctrine of God and Creation Chapter VIII: The Divine Decrees

1. The Divine Decrees in General. The decree of God is His eternal plan or purpose, in which He has foreordained all things that come to pass. Since it includes many particulars, we often speak of the divine decrees in the plural, though in reality there is but a single decree. It covers all the works of God in creation and redemption, and also embraces the actions of men, not excluding their sinful deeds. But while it rendered the entrance of sin into the world certain, it does not make God responsible for our sinful deeds. His decree with respect to sin is a permissive decree. a. Characteristics of the decree. The decree of God is founded in wisdom, Ephesians 3:9-11, though we do not always understand it. It was formed in the depths of eternity, and is therefore eternal in the strictest sense of the word, Ephesians 3:11. Moreover, it is effectual, so that everything that is included in it certainly comes to pass, Isaiah 46:10. The plan of God is also unchangeable, because He is faithful and true, Job 28:13, Job 28:14; Isaiah 46:10; Luke 22:22. It is unconditional, that is, its execution does not depend on any action of man but even renders such action certain, Acts 2:23; Ephesians 2:8. Moreover, it is all-inclusive, embracing the good and the wicked actions of men, Ephesians 2:10; Acts 2:28, contingent events, Genesis 50:20, the duration of man's life, Job 14:5; Psalms 39:4, and the place of his habitation, Acts 17:26. With respect to sin it is permissive. b. Objections to the doctrine of the decrees. Many do not believe in the doctrine of the decrees, and raise especially three objections. (1) It is inconsistent with, the moral freedom of man. But the Bible clearly teaches not only that God has decreed the free acts of man, but also that man is none to the less free and responsible for his acts, Genesis 50:19, Genesis 50:20; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-29. We may not be able to harmonize the two altogether, but it is evident from Scripture that the one does not cancel the other. (2) It makes people slothful in seeking salvation. They feel that, if God has determined whether they will be saved or not, it makes no difference what they may do. But this is hardly correct, because man does not know what God has decreed respecting him. Moreover, God has decreed not only the final destiny of man, but also the means by which it will be realized. And seeing that the end is decreed only as the result of the appointed means, it encourages rather than discourages their use. (3) It makes God the author of sin. It may be said, however, that the decree merely makes God the author of free moral beings, who are themselves the authors of sin. Sin is made certain by the decree, but God does not Himself produce it by His direct action. At the same time it must be admitted that the problem of God's relation to sin remains a mystery which we cannot fully solve.

2. Predestination. Predestination is the plan or purpose of God respecting His moral creatures. It pertains to men, both good and bad, to angels and devils, and to Christ as the Mediator. Predestination includes two parts, namely, election and reprobation. a. Election. The Bible speaks of election in more than one sense, as (1) the election of Israel as the Old Testament people of God, Deuteronomy 4:37; Deuteronomy 7:6-8; Deuteronomy 10:15; Hosea 13:5; (2) the election of persons to some special once or service, Deuteronomy 18:5; 1 Samuel 10:24; Psalms 78:70; and

(3) the election of individuals unto salvation, Matthew 22:14; Romans 11:6; Ephesians 1:4. The last is the election to which we refer in this connection. It may be defined as God's eternal purpose to save some of the human race in and by Jesus Christ. b. Reprobation. The doctrine of election naturally implies that God did not intend to save all. If He purposed to save some, He naturally also purposed not to save others. This is also in harmony with the teachings of Scripture, Matthew 11:25, Matthew 11:26; Romans 9:13, Romans 9:17, Romans 9:18, Romans 9:21, Romans 9:22; Romans 11:7, Romans 11:8; 2 Peter 2:9; Jude 1:4. Reprobation may be defined as God's eternal purpose to pass some men by with the operation of His special grace, and to punished them for their sin. It really embodies a twofold purpose therefore: (1) to pass some by in the bestowal of saving grace; and (2) to punish them for their sins.

It is sometimes said that the doctrine of predestination exposes God to the charge of injustice. But this is hardly correct. We could speak of injustice only if man had a claim on God, and God owed man eternal salvation. But the situation is entirely different if all men have forfeited the blessings of God, as they have. No one has the right to call God to account for electing some and rejecting others. He would have been perfectly just, if He had not saved any, Matthew 20:14, Matthew 20:15; Romans 9:14, Romans 9:15. To memorize. Passages pertaining to: a. God's decree in general:

Ephesians 1:11. "In whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of His will."

Psalms 33:11. "The counsel of Jehovah standeth fast forever, the thoughts of His heart to all generations."

Isaiah 46:10. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times things that are not yet done; saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." b. Predestination:

Ephesians 1:11, cf. above under a.

Psalms 2:7. "I will tell of the decree: Jehovah said unto me. Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten Thee."

Ephesians 1:4-5. "Even as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before Him in love, having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will."

Romans 11:5. "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace."

Romans 9:13. "Even as it is written, Jacob I loved, but Esau I hated."

Romans 9:18. "So then He hath mercy on whom He will, and whom He will He hardeneth." For Further Study: a. Is foreknowledge the same as foreordination or predestination? Acts 2:23; Romans 8:29; Romans 11:2; 1 Peter 1:2. b. How does the Bible indicate that Christ was also an object of predestination? Psalms 2:7; Isaiah 42:1; 1 Peter 1:20; 1 Peter 2:4. In what sense is this to be understood? c. What indications have we that the angels were also objects of predestination? 1 Timothy 5:21. How should we conceive of this?

Questions for Review l. What is the divine decree?

2. Why do we sometimes speak of ’decrees’ in the plural?

3. What are the characteristics of the decree?

4. What is the nature of God’s decree respecting sin?

5. What objections are raised against the doctrine of the Decrees?

6. What can be said in answer to these?

7. How is predestination related to the decree in general?

8. Who are the objects of predestination?

9. How must we conceive of the predestination of the angels and of Christ?

10. In what different senses does the Bible speak of election?

11. What does reprobation include, and what proof is there for it?

12. Does the doctrine of predestination involve injustice on the part of God? If not, why not?

01.09. Creation

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part II: The Doctrine of God and Creation Chapter IX: Creation The discussion of the decrees naturally leads on to the study of their execution, which begins with the work of creation. This is the beginning and basis of all revelation, and also the foundation of all religious life.

1. Creation in General. The word creation is not always used in the same sense in the Bible. In the strict sense of the word it denotes that work of God by which He producers the world and all that is in it, partly without the use of pre-existent materials, and partly out of material that is by its nature unfit, for the manifestation of His glory. It is represented as a work of the triune God, Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Job 38:4; Psalms 33:6; Isaiah 40:12, Isaiah 40:13; John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:15-17. Over against Pantheism we must maintain that it was a free act of God. He did not need the world. Ephesians 1:11; Revelation 4:11. And over against Deism, that He created the world so that it always remains dependent on Him. He must uphold it from day to day, Acts 17:28; Hebrews 1:3. a. The time of creation. The Bible teaches us that God created the world "in the beginning," that is, at the beginning of all temporal things. Back of this beginning lies a timeless eternity. The first part of the work of creation mentioned in Genesis 1:1 was strictly creation out of nothing or without the use of preexistent material. The expression "creation out of nothing" is not found in the Bible, but in one of the apocryphal books, 2Ma 7:28. However, the idea is clearly taught in such passages as Genesis 1:1; Psalms 33:9; Psalms 148:5; Romans 4:7; Hebrews 11:3. b. The final purpose of creation. Some find the final end or purpose of creation in the happiness of man. They say that God could not make Himself the final end, because He is sufficient unto Himself. But it would seem to be self-evident that God does not exist for man, but ma for God. The creature cannot be the final end of creation. The Bible teaches us clearly that God created the world for the manifestation of His glory. Naturally, the revelation of the glory of God is not intended as an empty show to be admired by the creature, but also aims at promoting their welfare and attuning their hearts to the praise of the Creator. Isaiah 43:7; Isaiah 60:21; Isaiah 61:3; Ezekiel 36:21, Ezekiel 36:22; Ezekiel 39:7; Luke 2:14; Romans 9:17; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 15:28; Ephesians 1:5, Ephesians 1:6, Ephesians 1:12, Ephesians 1:14; Ephesians 8:9, Ephesians 8:10; Colossians 1:16. c. Substitutes for the doctrine of creation. They who reject the doctrine of creation resort to one of three theories for the explanation of the world. (1) Some say that original matter is eternal, and out of it the world arose, either by mere chance, or by some higher directing force. But this is impossible, because you cannot have two eternals and therefore two infinites alongside of each other. (2) Others maintain that God and the world are essentially one, and that the world is a necessary issue (outflow) of the divine being. But this view robs God of His power of self-determination, and men of their freedom and of their moral and responsible character. It also makes God responsible for all the evil there is in the world. (3) Still others take refuge in the theory of evolution. But this is clearly a mistake, since evolution offers no explanation of the world. It already presupposes something that evolves.

2. The Spiritual World. God created not only a material but also a spiritual world, consisting of the angels. a. Proof for the existence of angels. Modern liberal theology has largely discarded the belief in such spiritual beings. The Bible, however, assumes their existence throughout and ascribes to them real personality, 2 Samuel 14:20; Matthew 24:36; Jude 1:6; Revelation 14:10. Some ascribe to them airy bodies, but this is contrary to Scripture. They are pure spiritual beings (though sometimes assuming bodily forms), Ephesians 6:12; Hebrews 1:14, without flesh and bone, Luke 24:39, and therefore invisible, Colossians 1:16. Some of them are good, holy and elect, Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; 2 Corinthians 11:14; 1 Timothy 5:21; Revelation 14:10, and others are fallen from their original state, and therefore evil, John 8:44; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6. b. Classes of angels. There are evidently different classes of angels. The Bible speaks of cherubim, who reveal the power, majesty, and glory of God, and guard His holiness in the garden of Eden, in tabernacle and temple, and at the descent of God to the earth. Genesis 3:24; Exodus 25:18; 2 Samuel 22:11; Psalms 18:10; Psalms 80:1; Psalms 99:1; Isaiah 37:16. Alongside of these are seraphim, mentioned only in Isaiah 6:2, Isaiah 6:3, Isaiah 6:6. They stand as servants round about the throne of the heavenly King, sing His praises, and are ever ready to do His bidding. They serve the purpose of reconciliation and prepare men for the proper approach to God.

Two angels are mentioned by name. The first of these is Gabriel, Daniel 8:16; Daniel 9:21; Luke 1:19, Luke 1:26. Evidently it was his special task to convey divine revelations to man and to interpret them. The second is Michael, Daniel 10:13, Daniel 10:21; Jude 1:9; Revelation 12:7. In the Epistle of Jude he is called the archangel. He is the valiant warrior fighting the battles of Jehovah against the enemies of the people of God and against the evil powers in the spirit world. Besides these the Bible mentions in general terms principalities, powers, thrones, dominions, Ephesians 1:21; Ephesians 3:10; Colossians 1:16; Colossians 2:10; 1 Peter 3:22. These names point to differences of rank and dignity among the angels. c. Work of the angels. The angels are represented as praising God continually, Psalms 103:20; Isaiah 6:1-13; Revelation 5:11. Since the entrance of sin into the world they serve those who inherit salvation, Hebrews 1:14, rejoice at the conversion of sinners, Luke 15:10, watch over believers, Psalms 3:7; Psalms 91:11, protect the little ones, Matthew 18:10, are present in the Church, 1 Corinthians 11:10; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Timothy 5:21, and convey believers to the bosom of Abraham, Luke 16:22. They also frequently bear special revelations of God, Daniel 9:21-23; Zechariah 1:12-14, communicate blessings to His people, Psalms 91:11, Psalms 91:12; Isaiah 63:9; Daniel 6:22; Acts 5:19, and execute judgments on His enemies, Genesis 19:1, Genesis 19:13; 2 Kings 19:85; Matthew 18:41. d. Evil angels. Besides the good there are also evil angels, who delight in opposing God and destroying His work. They were created good, but did not retain their original position, 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6. Their special sin is not revealed, but they probably revolted against God and aspired to divine authority, cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:4, 2 Thessalonians 2:9. Satan, who was evidently one of the princes among the angels, became the recognized head of those that fell away, Matthew 26:41; Matthew 9:34; Ephesians 2:2. With superhuman power he and his hosts seek to destroy the work of God. They seek to blind and mislead even the elect, and encourage the sinner in his evil way.

3. The Material World. In Genesis 1:1 we have the record of the original creation of heaven and earth. The rest of the chapter is devoted to what is often called secondary creation, the completion of the work in six days. a. The days of creation. The question is frequently debated, whether the days of creation were ordinary days or not. Geologists and evolutionists speak of them as long

periods of time. Now the word ’day’ does not always denote a period of twenty-four hours in the Scripture. Cf. Genesis 1:5; Genesis 2:4; Psalms 50:16; Ecclesiastes 7:14; Zechariah 4:10. Yet the literal interpretation of the word ’day’ in the narrative of creation is favored by the following considerations:

(a) The Hebrew word yom (day) primarily denotes an ordinary day, and should be so understood unless the context demands another interpretation. (b) The repeated mention of morning and evening favors this interpretation. (c) It was evidently an ordinary day which Jehovah set aside and hallowed as a day of rest. (d) In Exodus 20:9-11 Israel is commanded to labor six days and to rest on the seventh, because Jehovah made heaven and earth in six days and rested on the seventh day. (e) The last three days were evidently ordinary days, for they were determined by the earth’s relation to the sun. And if they were ordinary days, why not the others? b. Work of the six days. On the first day light was created, and by the separation of light and darkness day and night were constituted. This does not conflict with the idea that sun, moon, and stars were created on the fourth day, for these are not themselves light, but light-bearers. The work of the second day was also a work of separation, the separation of the waters above from the waters below by the establishment of the firmament. On the third day the work of separation is continued in the separation of the sea and the dry land. In addition to that the vegetable kingdom of plants and trees was established. By the word of His power God caused the earth to bring forth flowerless plants, vegetables, and fruit trees, each yielding seed after their kind. The fourth day brought the creation of sun, moon, and stars, to serve a variety of purposes: to divide day and night, to serve as signs of weather conditions, to determine the succession of the seasons and of days and years, and to function as lights for the earth. The work of the fifth day consisted in the creation of birds and fishes, the inhabitants of the air and of the water. Finally, the sixth day is marked by the climax of the work of creation. The higher classes of land animals were created, and the whole work was crowned by the creation of man in the image of God. His body was formed out of the dust of the earth, while his soul was an immediate creation of God. On the seventh day God rested from His creative labors and delighted in the contemplation of His work. c. The theory of evolution. Evolutionists want to substitute their view of the origin of things for the Scriptural doctrine. They believe that from the simplest forms of matter and life all existing species of plants and animals (including man), and also the various manifestations of life, such an intelligence, morality, and religion, developed by a perfectly natural process, purely as the result of natural forces. This is merely an assumption, however, and one that fails at several points. Moreover, it is in hopeless conflict with the narrative of creation as it is found in the Bible. To memorize. Passages bearing on: a. The fact of creation:

Gen: 1:1. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Psalms 33:6. "By the word of Jehovah were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of His mouth."

John 1:3. "All things were made through Him; and without Him was not anything made that hath been made."

Hebrews 11:3. "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." b. The final end of creation:

Isaiah 43:6, Isaiah 43:7. "Bring... every one that is called by my name, c. The theory of evolution. Evolutionists want to substitute their view of the origin of things for the Scriptural doctrine. They

believe that from the simplest forms of matter and life all existing species of plants and animals (including man), and also the various manifestations of life, such an intelligence, morality, and religion, developed by a perfectly natural process, purely as the result of natural forces. This is merely an assumption, however, and one that fails at several points. Moreover, it is in hopeless conflict with the narrative of creation as it is found in the Bible. To memorize. Passages bearing on:

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Isaiah 43:6, Isaiah 43:7. "Bring... every one that is called by my name, and whom I have created for my glory, whom I have formed; yea, whom I have made."

Psalms 19:1, Psalms 19:2. "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handiwork."

Psalms 148:13. "Let them praise the name of Jehovah; for His name alone is exalted: His glory is above the earth and the heavens." Cf. the connection. c. Angels:

Psalms 103:20. "Bless Jehovah, ye His angels, that are mighty in strength, that fulfil His word, hearkening unto the voice of His word."

Hebrews 1:14. "Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to do service for the sake of them that shall inherit salvation?"

Jude 1:6. "And the angels that kept not their principality, but left their proper habitation, He hath kept in everlasting bonds under darkness unto the judgment of the great day." d. Time of creation:

Genesis 1:1. "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth."

Exodus 20:11. "For in six days Jehovah made heaven and earth, the sea, and all that in them is, and rested the seventh day: wherefore Jehovah blessed the sabbath day and hallowed it." For Further Study:

a. In what sense is the word ’to create’ used in Psalms 51:10; Psalms 104:30; Isaiah 46:7? b. Do Genesis 1:1,Genesis 1:12, Genesis 1:20, Genesis 1:24 favor the idea of evolution? Cf. Genesis 1:21, Genesis 1:25; Genesis 2:9. c. Do the following passages tell us anything about the sin of the angels? if so, what? 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6; cf. also 2 Thessalonians 2:4-12.

Questions for Review 1. What is creation?

2. Was creation a free or a necessary act of God?

3. Is the word ’create’ always used in the same sense in Scripture?

4. Does the Bible prove creation out of nothing? Where?

5. What two views are there as to the final end of creation?

6. In what sense is the glory of God the final end?

7. What substitutes have been suggested for the doctrine of creation?

8. What is the nature of the angels?

9. What orders of angels are named in Scripture?

10. What is the function of Gabriel and Michael?

11. What is the work of the angels?

12. What proof have we for the existence of evil angels?

13. Were they created evil?

14. Were the days in Genesis ordinal days or long periods?

15. What did God create on each of the six days?

16. Is the theory of evolution consistent with the doctrine of creation?

17. Can you name some of the points on which they differ?

01.10. Providence

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part II: The Doctrine of God and Creation Chapter X: Providence

Since God not only created the world but also upholds it, we naturally pass from the doctrine of creation to that of divine providence. This may be defined as that work of God in which He preserves all His creatures, is active in all that happens in the world, and directs all things to their appointed end. It includes three elements, of which the first pertains primarily to the being, the second to the activity, and the third to the purpose of all things.

1. The Elements of Divine Providence. We distinguish three elements: a. Divine preservation. This is that continuous work of God by which He upholds all things. While the world has a distinct existence and is not a part of God, it nevertheless has the ground of its continued existence in God and not in itself. It endures through a continued exercise of divine power by which all things are maintained in being and action. This doctrine is taught in the following passages: Psalms 136:25; Psalms 145:15; Nehemiah 9:6; Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3. b. Divine concurrence. This may be defined as that work of God by which He co-operates with all His creatures and causes them to act precisely as they do. It implies that there are real secondary causes in the world, such as the powers of nature and the will of man, and asserts that these do not work independently of God. God works in every act of His creatures, not only in their good but also in their evil acts. He stimulates them to action, accompanies their action at every moment, and makes this action effective. However, we should never think of God and man as equal causes; the former is the primary, and the latter only a secondary cause. Neither should we conceive of them as each doing a part of the work like a team of horses. The same deed is in its entirety both a deed of God and a deed of man. Moreover, we should guard against the idea that this co-operation makes God responsible for man’s sinful deeds. This doctrine is based on Scripture, Deuteronomy 8:18; Psalms 104:20, Psalms 104:21, Psalms 104:30; Amos 3:6; Matthew 6:45; Matthew 10:29; Acts 14:17; Php 2:13. c. Divine government. This is the continued activity of God whereby He rules all things so that they answer to the purpose of their existence. God is represented as King of the universe both in the Old and in the New Testament. He adapts His rule to the nature of the creatures which He governs; His government of the physical world differs from that of the spiritual world. It is universal, Psalms 103:19; Daniel 4:34-35, includes the most insignificant things, Matthew 10:29-31, and that which is seemingly accidental, Proverbs 16:33, and bears on both the good and the evil deeds of man, Php 2:18; Genesis 50:20; Acts 14:16.

2. Misconceptions of Divine Providence. In the doctrine of providence we should guard against two misconceptions: a. The Deistic conception. This is to the effect that God’s concern with the world is of the most general nature. He created the world, established its laws, set it in motion, and then withdrew from it. He wound it up like a clock, and now lets it run off. It is only when something goes wrong that He interferes with its regular operation. God, is only a God afar off. b. The Pantheistic conception. Pantheism does not recognize the distinction between God and the world. It identifies the two, and therefore leaves no room for providence in the proper sense of the word. There are,

strictly speaking, no such things as secondary causes. God is the direct author of all that transpires in the world. Even the acts which we ascribe to man as really acts of God. God is only a God that is near, and not a God afar off.

3. Extraordinary Providences or Miracles. We distinguish between general and special providences, and among the latter the miracles occupy an important place. A miracle is a supernatural work of God, that is a work which is accomplished without the mediation of secondary causes. If God sometimes apparently uses secondary causes in the production of miracles, He employs them in an unusual way, so that the work Is after all supernatural. Some regard miracles as impossible, because they involve a violation of the laws of nature. But this is a mistake. The so-called laws of nature merely represent God’s usual method of working. And the fact that God generally works according to a definite order does not mean that He cannot depart from this order, and cannot without violating or disturbing it bring about unusual results. Even man can lift up his hand and throw a ball into the air in spite of the law of gravitation and without in any way disturbing its operation. Surely, this is not impossible for the omnipotent God. The miracles of the Bible are means of revelation. Numbers 16:28; Jeremiah 32:20; John 2:11; John 5:36. To memorize. Passages referring to: a. Preservation.

Psalms 36:6 b. "0 Jehovah, thou preservest man and beast."

Nehemiah 9:6. "Thou art Jehovah, even thou alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas all that is in them, and thou preservest them all."

Colossians 1:17. "And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist." b. Concurrence.

Deuteronomy 8:18 a. "But thou shalt remember Jehovah thy God, for it is He that giveth thee power to get wealth."

Amos 3:6. "Shall the trumpet be blown in a city, and the people be not afraid? shall evil befall a city, and Jehovah hath not done it?"

Php 2:13. "For it is God who worketh in you both to will and to work, for His good pleasure." c. Government.

Psalms 108:19. "Jehovah hath established His throne in the heavens; and His Kingdom ruleth over all."

Daniel 4:3 b. "His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and His dominion is from generation to generation."

1 Timothy 6:15. "Which in its own times He shall show, who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords." d. Miracles and their design:

Exodus 16:11. "Who is like unto Thee, 0 Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like Thee glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?"

Psalms 72:18. "Blessed be Jehovah God, the God of Israel, who alone doeth wondrous things."

Mark 2:10. "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, He saith to the sick of the palsy, I say unto thee, Arise, and take up thy bed, and go thy wan into thy house."

John 2:11. "This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested forth His glory; and His disciples believed on Him." For Further Study:

a. Name some examples of special providences. Cf. Deuteronomy 2:7; 1 Kings 17:6, 1 Kings 17:16; 2 Kings 4:6; Matthew 14:20. b. How should belief in divine providence affect our cares? Isaiah 41:10; Matthew 6:32; Luke 12:7; Php 4:6, Php 4:7; 1 Peter 5:7. c. Name some of the blessings of providence. Cf. Isaiah 25:4; Psalms 121:4; Luke 12:7; Deuteronomy 33:28; Psalms 37:28; 2 Timothy 4:18.

Questions for Review 1. How is the doctrine of providence related to that of creations?

2. What is divine providence?

3. What is the difference between general and special providence?

4. What are the objects of divine providence?

5. What are the three elements of providence, and how do they differ?

6. How must we conceive of the divine concurrence?

7. How far does the divine government extend?

8. What is a miracle, and what purpose do the scriptural miracles serve?

9. Why do some consider miracles impossible?

01.11. Man in His Original State

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part III: The Doctrine of Man in Relation to God Chapter XI: Man in His Original State From the discussion of the doctrine of God we pass on to that of man, the crown of God’s handiwork.

1. The Essential Elements of Human Nature. The usual view is that man consists of two parts, body and soul. This is in harmony with the self-consciousness of man, and is also borne out by a study of Scripture, which speaks of man as consisting of "body and soul," Matthew 6:25; Matthew 10:28, or of "body and spirit," Ecclesiastes 12:7; 1 Corinthians 5:3, 1 Corinthians 5:5. Some are of the opinion that the words ’soul’ and ’spirit’ denote different elements, and that therefore man consists of three parts, body, soul, and spirit, Cf. 1 Thessalonians 5:23. It is evident, however, that the two words ’soul’ and ’spirit’ are used interchangeably. Death is sometimes described as a giving up of the soul, Genesis 35:18; 1 Kings 17:21, and sometimes as the giving up of the spirit, Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59. The dead are in some cases named "souls," Revelation 9:6; Revelation 20:4, and in others ’spirits,’ 1 Peter 3:19; Hebrews 12:23. The two terms denote the spiritual element in man from different points of view. As spirit it is the principle of life and action, which controls the body, and as soul it is the personal subject, which thinks and feels and wills, and in some cases the seat of the affections.

2. The Origin of the Soul in Each Individual. There are three views respecting the origin of the individual souls. a. Pre-existentialism. Some advocated the idea that the souls of men existed in a previous state, and that something that happened then accounts for their present condition. A few found in this an explanation of the fact that man is born as a sinner. This view finds no favor now. b. Traducianism. According to this View men derive their souls as well as their bodies from their parents. This is the common view in the Lutheran Church. Support for it is found in the fact that nothing is said about the creation of Eve’s soul, and that descendants are said to be in the loins of their Fathers, Genesis 46:26; Hebrews 7:9, Hebrews 7:10. Furthermore, it seems to be favored by the fact that in the case of animals both body and soul are passed on from the old to the young, by the inheritance of family traits and peculiarities, and by the inheritance of sinful corruption, which is a matter of the soul more than of the body. However, it is burdened with serious difficulties. It either makes the parents creators, or assumes that the soul of man can be divided into various parts. Moreover, it endangers the sinlessness of Jesus. c. Creationism. This holds that each soul is a direct creation of God, of which the time cannot be precisely determined. The soul is supposed to be created pure, but to become sinful even before birth by entering into that complex of sin by which humanity as a whole is burdened. This view is common in Reformed circles. It is favored by the fact that Scripture represents the body and the soul of man as having different origins, Ecclesiastes 12:7; Isaiah 42:5; Zechariah 12:1; Hebrews 12:9. Moreover, it is more in harmony with the spiritual nature of the soul, and safeguards the sinlessness of Jesus. It is not free from difficulties, however. It does not explain the inheritance of family traits, and may seem to make God the Creator of sinful souls.

3. Man as the Image of God. The Bible teaches that man is created in the image of God. According to Genesis 1:26, God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." The two words 'image' and 'likeness' evidently denote the same thing. The following passages show that they are used interchangeably: Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 5:1; Genesis 9:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7; Colossians 3:10; James 3:9. The word 'likeness' probably stresses the fact that the image is most like or very similar. There are different views of the image of God in man: a. The Roman Catholic view:. Roman Catholics find the image of God in certain natural gifts with which man is endowed, such as the spirituality of the soul, the freedom of the will, and immortality. To these God added a supernatural gift, called original righteousness, to keep the lower nature in check. This is supposed to constitute man's likeness to God. b. The Lutheran view. The Lutherans are not all agreed on this point, but the prevailing opinion is that the image of God consists only in those spiritual qualities with which man was endowed at creation, namely, true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. These may be designated original righteousness. This view is too restricted. c. The Reformed view. The Reformed distinguish between the natural and the moral image of God. The former is the broader of the two, and is generally said to consist in man's spiritual, rational, moral, and immortal being. This was obscured but not lost by sin. The latter is the image of God in the more restricted sense, and consists in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. This was lost by sin and is restored in Christ, Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10. Since man retained the image in the broader sense, he can still be called the image or image-bearer of God, Genesis 9:6; 1 Corinthians 11:7; 1 Corinthians 15:49; James 3:9.

4. Man in the Covenant of Works. God at once entered into covenant relationship with man. This original covenant is called the covenant of works. a. Scripture proof for the covenant of works. (1) Paul draws a parallel between Adam and Christ in Romans 5:12-21. In Adam all men died, but in Christ all those who are His are made alive. This means that Adam was the representative head of all men, just as Christ is now the representative head of all those who are His. (2) In Hosea 6:7 we read: "But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant" (Am. Rev.). Adam's sin is called a transgression of the covenant. b. The elements of the covenant of works. (1) The parties. A covenant is always a compact between two parties. In this case they are the triune God, the sovereign Lord of the universe, and Adam as the representative of the human race. Since these parties are very unequal, the covenant naturally partakes of the nature of an arrangement imposed on man. (2) The promise. The promise of the covenant was the promise of life in the highest sense, life raised above the possibility of death. This is what believers now receive through Christ, the last Adam. (3) The condition. The condition was that of absolute obedience. The positive command not to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil was clearly a test of pure obedience. (4) The penalty. The penalty was death in the most inclusive sense of the word, physical, spiritual, and eternal. This consists not only in the separation of body and soul, but more fundamentally in the separation of the soul from God. (5) The sacrament(s). In all probability the tree of life was the only sacrament of this covenant,-- if it was indeed a sacrament. It seems to have been appointed as a symbol and seal of life. c. The present validity of the covenant of works. Arminians hold that this covenant was wholly set aside. But this is not correct. The demand of perfect obedience still stands for those who do not accept the righteousness of Christ. Leviticus 18:5; Galatians 3:12. Though they cannot meet the requirement, the condition stands. It holds no more, however, for those who are in Christ, since He met the demands of the law for them. It ceased to be a way of life, for as such it is powerless after the fall. To memorize. Passages

bearing on: a. The elements of human nature:

Matthew 10:28. "And be not afraid of them that kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him who is able to destroy both body and soul in hell."

Romans 8:10. "And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the spirit is life because of righteousness." b. The creation of the soul:

Ecclesiastes 12:7. "And the dust returneth to the earth as it was, and the spirit returneth unto God who gave it."

Hebrews 12:9. "Furthermore, we had the fathers of our flesh to chasten us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection to the Father of spirits, and live?" c. Man's creation in the image of God:

Genesis 1:27. "And God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them."

Genesis 9:6. "Whoso sheddeth man's blood, by man shall his blood be shed; for in the image of God made He man." d. Man in general even now tie image of God:

Genesis 9:6. Cf. above under c.

James 3:9. "Therewith bless we the Lord and Father; and therewith curse we men, who are made in the likeness of God." e. The restoration of the image of God in man:

Ephesians 4:24. "And put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth."

Colossians 3:10. "And have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him." f. The covenant of works:

Hosea 6:7. "But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant."

1 Corinthians 16:22. "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." For Further Study: a. How would you explain the passages which seem to imply that man consists of three elements, 1 Thessalonians 6:23; Hebrews 4:12; compare Matthew 22:37. b. Does man's dominion over the rest of creation also form part of the image of God? Genesis 1:26, Genesis 1:28; Psalms 8:6-8; Hebrews 2:5-9. c. What indications of a covenant can you find in Genesis 2:1-25; Genesis 3:1-24?

Questions for Review 1. What is the usual view of the elements of human nature, and how can this be proved?

2. What other view is there, and what passages seem to support it?

3. What different views are there as to the origin of the soul?

4. What are the arguments for, and the objections to each one of these?

5. Do the words 'image' and likeness denote different things?

6. What is the Roman Catholic, the Lutheran, and the Reformed view of the image of God in man?

7. What distinction do the Reformed make, and why is it, important?

8. What Bible proof have we for the covenant of works?

9. Who are the parties in the covenants?

10. What is the promise, the condition, the penalty, and the sacrament of the covenants?

11. In what sense does this covenant still hold?

12. In what sense is it abolished?

01.12. Man in the State of Sin

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part III: The Doctrine of Man in Relation to God Chapter XII: Man in the State of Sin

1. The Origin of Sin. The Bible teaches us that sin entered the world as the result of the transgression of Adam and Eve in paradise. The first sin was occasioned by the temptation of Satan in the form of a serpent, who sowed in man's heart the seeds of distrust and unbelief. Scripture clearly indicates that the serpent, who appears as the tempter in the story of the fall, was but an instrument of Satan, John 8:44; Romans 16:20; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 12:9. The first sin consisted in man's eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. This eating was sinful simply because God had forbidden it. It clearly showed that man was not willing to subject his will unconditionally to the will of God, and comprised several elements. In the intellect it revealed itself as unbelief and pride, in the will as the desire to be like God, and in the affections an unholy satisfaction in eating of the forbidden fruit. As a result of it man lost the image of God in the restricts sense, became guilty and utterly corrupt, and fell under the sway of death, Genesis 3:19; Romans 5:12; Romans 6:23.

2. The Essential Nature of Sin. At present many substitute the word 'evil' for 'sin,' but this is a poor substitute, for the word 'sin' is far more specific. It denotes a kind of evil, namely, a moral evil for which man is responsible and which brings him under a sentence of condemnation. The modern tendency is to regard it merely as a wrong done to one's fellow-beings misses the point entirely, for such a wrong can be called sin only in so far as it is contrary to the will of God. Sin is correctly defined by Scripture as "lawlessness," 1 John 3:4. It is lack of conformity to the law of God, and as such the opposite of that love which is required by the divine law. The Bible always contemplates it in relation to the law, Romans 1:32; Romans 2:12-14; Romans 4:15; Romans 5:13; James 2:9, James 2:10; 1 John 3:4. It is first of all guilt, making men liable to punishment, Romans 3:19; Romans 5:18; Ephesians 2:8, and then also inherent corruption or moral pollution. All men are guilty in Adam, and are therefore born with a corrupt nature. Job 14:4; Jeremiah 17:9; Isaiah 6:5; Romans 8:5-8; Ephesians 4:17-19. Sin has its seat in the heart of man, and from this center influences the intellect, the will, and the affections, in fact the whole man, and finds expression through the body. Proverbs 4:23; Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19, Matthew 15:20; Luke 6:45; Hebrews 3:12. In distinction from the Roman Catholics we maintain that it does not consist in outward acts only, but includes evil thoughts, affections, and intents of the heart. Matthew 5:22, Matthew 5:28; Romans 7:7; Galatians 5:17, Galatians 5:24.

3. Sin in the Life of the Human Race. Three points deserve consideration here: a. The connection between Adam's sin and that of his descendants. This has been explained in three different ways. (1) The earliest explanation is called the realistic theory, which is to the effect that God originally created one general human nature, which in course of time divided into as many parts as there are human individuals. Adam possessed the whole of this general human nature; and through his sin it became guilty and polluted. Naturally, every individual part of it shares this guilt and pollution. (2)

In the days of the Reformation the representative theory came to the foreground. According to this view Adam stood in a twofold relation to his descendants: he was their natural head, and he was their representative as the head of the covenant. When he sinned as their representative, this sin was also imputed to them, and as a result they are all born in a corrupt state. This is our Reformed view. (3) A third theory, not as well known, is that of mediate imputation. It holds that the guilt of Adam's sin is not directly placed to our account. His corruption is passed on to his descendants, and this makes them personally guilty. They are not corrupt because they are guilty in Adam, but guilty because they are corrupt. b. Original and Actual Sin. We distinguish between original and actual sin. All men are born in a sinful state and condition, which is called original sin, and is the root of all the actual sins that are committed. (1) Original sin. This includes both guilt and pollution. The guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to us. Because he sinned as our representative, we are guilty in him. Moreover, we also inherit his pollution, and now have a positive disposition toward sin. Man is by nature totally depraved. This does not mean that every man is as bad as he can be, but that sin has corrupted every part of his nature and rendered him unable to do any spiritual good. He may still do many praiseworthy things in relation to his fellow-beings, but even his best works are radically defective, because they are not prompted by love to God nor done in obedience to God. This total depravity and inability is denied by Pelagians, Arminians, and Modernists, but is clearly taught in Scripture, Jeremiah 17:9; John 5:42; John 6:44; John 15:4, John 15:5; Romans 7:18, Romans 7:23, Romans 7:24; Romans 8:7, Romans 8:8; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 2:1-3; Ephesians 4:18; 2 Timothy 3:2-4; Titus 1:16; Hebrews 11:6. (2) Actual sin. The term 'actual sin' denotes not only sins consisting in outward acts, but also those conscious thoughts, desires, and decisions that proceed from original sin. They are the sins which the individual performs in distinction from his inherited nature and inclination. While original sin is one, actual sins are manifold. They may be sins of the inner life, such as pride, envy, hatred, sensual lusts, and evil desires; or sins of the outer life, such as deceit, theft, murder, adultery, and so on. Among these there is one unpardonable sin, namely, the sin of blasphemy against the Holy Spirit, after which a change of heart is impossible, and for which it is not necessary to pray, Matt, 12:31, 32; Mark 3:28-30; Luke 12:10; Hebrews 6:4-6; Hebrews 10:26, Hebrews 10:27; 1 John 5:16. c. The Universality of Sin. Scripture and experience both teach us that sin is universal. Even the Pelagians do not deny this, though they ascribe it to external conditions, such as a bad environment, evil examples, and s wrong kind of education.

There are passages in which the Bible directly asserts the universality of sin, such as 1 Kings 8:46; Psalms 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:1-12, Romans 3:19, Romans 3:23; Galatians 3:22; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8, 1 John 1:10. Moreover, it teaches that man is sinful from birth, so that this cannot be considered as the result of imitation, Job 14:4; Psalms 51:5; John 3:6. Even infants are considered sinful, for they are subject to death, which is the penalty for sin, Romans 5:12-14. All men are by nature under condemnation, and therefore need the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Children are never made an exception to this rule. John 3:3, John 3:5; Ephesians 2:3; I John 5:12. To memorize. Passages to prove: a. That sin is guilt:

Romans 5:18. "So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life."

1 John 3:4. "Every one that doeth sin doeth also lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness."

Ephesians 2:3. "Among whom we also all once lived in the lusts of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." b. That sin is pollution:

Jeremiah 17:9. "The heart is deceitful above all things, and it is exceedingly corrupt: who can know it?"

Romans 7:18, "For I know that in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not."

Romans 8:6. "For they that are after the flesh mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit." c. That sin has its seat in the heart:

Jeremiah 17:9. Cf. above under b.

Matthew 16:19. "For out of the heart come forth evil thoughts murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witness, railings."

Hebrews 3:12. "Take heed, brethren, lest haply there shall be in any one of you an evil heart of unbelief, in falling away from the living God." d. That Adam's guilt is imputed to us:

Romans 5:12. "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned." Also verse 19. "For as through one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous."

1 Corinthians 15:21, 1 Corinthians 15:22. "For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive." e. That man is totally depraved:

Jeremiah 17:9; Romans 7:18; Romans 8:5. Cf. under b. above. g. That sin is universal:

1 Kings 8:46. "For there is no man that sinneth not."

Psalms 143:2. "And enter not into judgment with thy servant; for in thy sight no living man is righteous."

Romans 3:12. "They have all turned aside, they are become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not so much as one."

1 John 1:8. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." For Further Study: a. Can you give some other scriptural names for sin? Job 15:-5; Job 33:9; Psalms 32:1, Psalms 32:2; Psalms 55:15; Romans 1:18; Romans 5:15; 1 John 3:4. b. Does the word 'evil' ever mean anything else than sin in Scripture? If so, what? Cf. Exodus 5:19; 2 Kings 6:33; 2 Kings 22:16; Psalms 41:8; Psalms 91:10; Proverbs 16:4. c. Does the Bible explicitly teach that man is a sinner from birth? Psalms 51:5; Isaiah 48:8.

Questions for Review 1. What it the biblical view of the origin of sin?

2. What was the first sin, and what elements can be distinguished in it?

3. How would you prove that Satan was the real tempter?

4. What were the results of the first sin?

5. Do the words ’sin’ and ’evil’ mean the same Thing?

6. Where does sin have its seat in man?

7. Does sin consist only in outward acts?

8. What different views are there respecting the connection between Adam’s sin and that of his descendants?

9. What is original sin, and how does actual sin differ from it?

10. How do you conceive of total depravity?

11. What proof is there for the universality of sin?

Chapter 15

01.13. Man in the Covenant of Grace

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part III: The Doctrine of Man in Relation to God Chapter XIII: Man in the Covenant of Grace For the sake of clearness we distinguish between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace. The two are so closely related that they can be and sometimes are, considered as one. The former is the eternal foundation of the latter.

1. The Covenant of Redemption. This is also called "the counsel of peace," a name derived from Zechariah 6:13. It is a covenant between the Father, representing the Trinity, and the Son as the representative of the elect. a. The scriptural basis for it. It is clear that the plan of redemption was included in God's eternal decree, Ephesians 1:4 ff.; Ephesians 3:11; 2 Timothy 1:9. Christ speaks of promises made to Him before He came into the world, and repeatedly refers to a commission which He received from the Father, John 5:30, John 5:43; John 6:38-40; John 17:4-12. He is evidently a covenant head, Romans 5:12-21; 1 Corinthians 15:1-22. In Psalms 2:7-9 the parties of the covenant are mentioned and a promise is indicated, and in Psalms 40:7, Psalms 40:8 the Messiah expresses His readiness to do the Father's will in becoming a sacrifice for sin. b. The Son in the covenant of redemption. Christ is not only the Head but also the Surety of the covenant of redemption, Hebrews 7:22, A surety is one who takes upon himself the legal obligations of another. Christ took the place of the sinner, to bear the penalty of sin and to meet the demands of the law for His people. By so doing He became the last Adam, a life-giving spirit, 1 Corinthians 15:45. For Christ this covenant was a covenant of works, in which He met the requirements of the original covenant, but for us it is the eternal foundation of the covenant of grace. Its benefits are limited to the elect. They only obtain the redemption and inherit the glory which Christ merited for sinners. c. Requirements and promises in the covenant of redemption. (1) The Father required of the Son that He should assume human nature with its present infirmities, though without sin, Galatians 4:4, Galatians 4:5; Hebrews 2:10, Hebrews 2:11, Hebrews 2:14, Hebrews 2:15; Hebrews 4:15; that He should place Himself under the law to pay the penalty and to merit eternal life for the elect, Psalms 40:8; John 10:11; Galatians 1:4; Galatians 4:4, Galatians 4:5; and that He should apply His merits to His people by the renewing operation of the Holy Spirit, thus securing the consecration of their lives to God, John 10:28; John 17:19-22; Hebrews 5:7-9. (2) And the Father promised the Son that He would prepare for Him a body, Hebrews 10:5, would anoint Him with the Holy Spirit, Isaiah 42:1; Isaiah 61:1; John 3:34, would support Him in His work, Isaiah 42:6, Isaiah 42:7; Luke 22:43 would deliver Him from the power of death and place Him at His own right hand, Psalms 16:8-11; Php 2:9-11, would enable Him to [s]end the Spirit for the formation of the Church, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:13, John 16:14, would draw and preserve the elect, John 6:37, John 6:39, John 6:40, John 6:44, John 6:45, and would grant Him a numerous seed, Psalms 22:27; Psalms 72:17

2. The Covenant of Grace. On the basis of the covenant of redemption God established the covenant of grace. Several particulars call for consideration here. a. The contracting parties. God is the first party in the covenant. He establishes the covenant and determines the relation in which the second party will stand to Him. It is not so easy to determine who the second party is. The

prevailing opinion in Reformed circles is that it is the elect sinner in Christ. We should bear in mind, however, that the covenant may be viewed in two different ways: (1) As an end in itself, a covenant of mutual friendship or communion of life, which is realized in the course of history through the operation of the Holy Spirit. It represents a condition in which privileges are improved for spiritual ends, the promises of God are embraced by a living faith, and the promised blessings are fully realized. So conceived, it may be defined as that gracious agreement between God and the elect sinner in Christ, in which God gives Himself with all the blessings of salvation to the elect sinner, and the latter embraces God and all His gracious gifts by faith. Deuteronomy 7:9; 2 Chronicles 6:14; Psalms 25:10, Psalms 25:14; Psalms 103:17, Psalms 103:18. (2) As a means to an end, a purely legal arrangement for the realization of a spiritual end. It is evident that the Bible sometimes speaks of the covenant as including some in whom the promises are never realized, such as Ishmael, Esau, the wicked sons of Eli, and the rebellious Israelites who died in their sins. The covenant may be regarded as a purely legal agreement, in which God guarantees the blessings of salvation to all who believe. If we think of the covenant in this broader sense, we can say that God established it with believers and their children, Genesis 17:7; Acts 2:39; Romans 9:1-4. b. The promises and requirements of the covenant. Every covenant has two sides; it offers certain privileges and imposes certain obligations.

(1) The promises of the covenant. The main promise of the covenant, which includes all others, is contained in the oftrepeated words, "I will be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee," Jeremiah 31:33; Jeremiah 32:38-40; Ezekiel 34:23-25, Ezekiel 34:30, Ezekiel 34:31; Ezekiel 36:25-28; Hebrews 8:10; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18. This promise includes all others, such as the promise of temporal blessings, of justification, of the Spirit of God, and of final glorification in a life that never ends. Job 19:25-27; Psalms 16:11; Psalms 73:24-26; Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:33, Jeremiah 31:34; Ezekiel 36:27; Daniel 12:2, Daniel 12:3; Galatians 4:4, Galatians 4:5, 6; Tit, 3:7; Hebrews 11:7; James 2:5.

(2) The requirements of the covenant. The covenant of grace is not a covenant of works; it requires no work with a view to merit. However, it does contain requirements and imposes obligations on man. By meeting the demands of the covenant man earns nothing, but merely puts himself in the way in which God will communicate to him the promised blessings. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that even the requirements are covered by the promises: God gives man all that He requires of him. The two things which He demands of those who stand in covenant relationship to Him are (a) that they accept the covenant and the covenant promises by faith, and thus enter upon the life of the covenant; and (b) that from the principle of the new life born within them, they consecrate themselves to God in new obedience. c. The characteristics of the covenant. The covenant of grace is a gracious covenant, because it is a fruit and manifestation of the grace of God to sinners. It is grace from start to finish. It is also an eternal and inviolable covenant, to which God will always be true, though men may break it. Even in its widest extent it includes only a part of mankind, and is therefore particular. If its New Testament dispensation is called universal, this is done only in view of the fact that it is not limited to the Jews, as the Old Testament dispensation was. This covenant is also characterized by unity. It is essentially the same in all dispensations, though the form of its administration changes. The essential promise is the same, Genesis 17:7; Hebrews 8:10, the gospel is the same, Galatians 3:8, the requirement of faith is the same, Galatians 3:6, Galatians 3:7, and the Mediator is the same, Hebrews 13:8. The

covenant is both conditional and unconditional. It is conditional because it is dependent on the merits of Christ and because the enjoyment of the life it offers depends on the exercise of faith. But it is unconditional in the sense that it does not depend on any merits of man. And, finally, it is testamentary as a free and sovereign disposition on the part of God. It is called a 'testament' in Hebrews 9:16, Hebrews 9:17. This name stresses the facts, (1) that it is a free arrangement of God; (2) that its New Testament dispensation was ushered in by the death of Christ; and (3) that in it God gives what He demands. The covenant of grace differs from the covenant of works in that it has a mediator. Christ is represented as the Mediator of the new covenant, 1 Timothy 2:5; Hebrews 8:6; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24. He is Mediator, not only merely in the sense that He intervenes between God and man to sue for peace and to persuade to it, but in the sense that He is armed with full power to do all that is necessary for the actual establishment of peace. As our Surety, Hebrews 7:22, He assumes our guilt, pays the penalty of sin, fulfills the law, and thus restores peace. d. Membership in the covenant. Adults can enter the covenant as a purely legal arrangement only by faith. And when they so enter it, they at the same time gain entrance into the covenant as a communion of life. They therefore enter upon the full covenant life at once. Children of believers, however, enter the covenant as a legal arrangement by birth, but this does not necessarily mean that they also at once enter it as a communion of life, nor even that they will ever enter it in that sense. Yet the promise of God gives a reasonable assurance that the covenant life will be realized in them. As long as they do not manifest the contrary we may proceed on the assumption that they possess the new life. When they grow up, they must accept their covenant responsibilities voluntarily by a true confession of faith. Failure to do this makes them covenant breakers. From the preceding it follows that unregenerate persons may temporarily be in the covenant as a purely legal relationship, Romans 9:4. They are recognized as covenant children, are subject to its requirements and share its ministrations. They receive the seal of baptism, enjoy the common blessings of the covenant, and may even partake of some special operations of the Holy Spirit. If they do not accept the corresponding responsibilities, they will be judged as breakers of the covenant. The different dispensations of the covenant. (1) The first revelation of the covenant is found in Genesis 3:15, which is usually called the protevangel or the maternal promise. This does not yet refer to the formal establishment of the covenant. (2) The covenant with Noah is of a very general nature as a covenant with all flesh. It conveys only natural blessings, and is therefore often called the covenant of nature or of common grace. It is closeconnected, however, with the covenant of grace. It is also a fruit of the grace of God and guarantees those natural and temporal blessings which are absolutely necessary for the realization of the covenant of grace. (3) The covenant with Abraham marks its formal establishment. It is the beginning of the Old Testament particularistic administration of the covenant, which is now limited to Abraham and his descendants, Faith stands out prominently as its necessary requirement, and circumcision becomes its seal. (4) The covenant at Sinai is essentially the same as that established with Abraham, but now takes in the whole nation of Israel, and thus became a national covenant. Though it strongly stresses the keeping of the law, it should not be regarded as a renewed covenant of works. The law increased the consciousness of sin, Romans 3:20, and became a tutor unto Christ, Galatians 3:24. Passover was added as a second sacrament. (5) The new covenant, as revealed in the New Testament, Jeremiah 31:31; Hebrews 8:8, Hebrews 8:13, is essentially the same as that of the Old Testament, Romans 4:1-25; Galatians 3:1-29. It now breaks through the barriers of particularism and becomes universal in the sense that its blessings are extended to

people of all nations. Its blessings become fuller and more spiritual, and baptism and the Lord’s Supper are substituted for the Old Testament sacraments. To memorize. Passages bearing on: a. Thee parties of the covenant:

Genesis 3:15. "And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed: he shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel."

Genesis 3:15 : "And I will put enmity between thee and the and thee and thy seed after thee throughout their generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee and to thy seed after thee." Exodus 19:5, Exodus 19:6 a. "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then shall ye be mine own possession from among all peoples: for all the earth is mine: and ye shall be unto me a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation."

Jeremiah 31:31-33, "Behold, the days come, saith Jehovah, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah: not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt; which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith Jehovah. But this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith Jehovah: I will put my law in their inward parts, and in their heart will I write it; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

Acts 2:39. "For to you is the promise, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him." b. Its promises and requirements:

Cf. Genesis 17:7; Exodus 19:5; Exodus 19:6 a; Jeremiah 31:33 under a. above, for the essential promise.

Genesis 15:6. "And he (Abraham) believed in Jehovah, and He reckoned it to him for righteousness."

Exodus 19:5. "Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be mine own possession from among all peoples."

Psalms 25:14. "The friendship of Jehovah is with them that fear Him; and He will show them His covenant."

Psalms 103:17, Psalms 103:18. "But the lovingkindness of Jehovah is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children’s children; to such as keep His covenant, and to those that remember His precepts to do them."

Galatians 3:7, Galatians 3:9. "Know therefore that they that are of faith, the same are sons of Abraham.... So then they that are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham." c. Characteristics of the covenant:

Eternal. Genesis 17:19 b. "And I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant for his seed after him." Isaiah 54:10. "For the mountains may depart, and the hills be removed; but my lovingkindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall my covenant of peace be removed, saith Jehovah that hath mercy on thee." Isaiah 24:5. "The earth also is polluted under the inhabitants thereof; because they have transgressed the laws, violated the statutes, broken the

everlasting covenant."

Unity. Galatians 3:7, Galatians 3:9 under b. above. Romans 4:11. "And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be in uncircumcision, that righteousness might be reckoned unto them"

Testamentary. Hebrews 9:17, Hebrews 9:18. "For a testament is of force where there hath been death; for it doth never avail while he that made it liveth. Wherefore even the first covenant hath not been dedicated without blood." d. The Mediator of the covenant:

1 Timothy 2:5. "For there is one God, one Mediator also between God and men, Himself man, Christ Jesus." Hebrews 7:22. "By so much also hath Jesus become the Surety of a better covenant."

Hebrews 8:6. "But now He hath obtained a ministry the more excellent, by so much as He is also the Mediator of a better covenant, which hath been enacted upon better promises." For Further Study: a. Can you name some special covenants mentioned in the Bible? Genesis 31:44; Deuteronomy 29:1; 1 Samuel 18:3; 2 Samuel 28:5. b. Can you name instances of covenant breaking? Genesis 25:32-34, cf. Hebrews 12:16, Hebrews 12:17; Exodus 32:1-14; Numbers 14:1-45; Numbers 16:1-50; Judges 2:11 ff.; 1 Samuel 2:12 ff.; Isaiah 24:5; Ezekiel 16:59; Hosea 6:7; Hosea 8:1; Hosea 10:4. c. Did the giving of the law change the covenant essentially? Romans 4:13-17; Galatians 3:17-24.

Questions for Review 1. What is the covenant of redemption? By what other name is it known, and how is it related to the covenant of grace?

2. What scriptural evidence is there for it?

3. What is the official position of Christ in this covenants?

4. Was it for Christ a covenant of grace or a covenant of works.?

5. Whom does Christ represent in this covenant?

6. What did the Father require of Christ, and what did He promise Him?

7. What distinction do we apply to the covenant of grace?

8. How does this affect the question, who is the second party in the covenant?

9. What is the all-embracing promise of the covenant?

10. What does God require of those who are in the covenant?

11. What are the characteristics of the covenant?

12. In what sense is the covenant unbreakable, and in what sense breakable?

13. How can you prove the unity of the covenants?

14. In what sense is it conditional, and in what sense unconditional?

15. Why can it be called a testament?

16. Where do we find the first revelation of the covenant?

17. What was the nature of the covenant with Noah?

18. How did the covenant with, Abraham and the Sinaitic covenant differ?

19. What characterized the New Testament dispensation of the covenants?

20. What is the position of Christ in the covenant of grace?

21. How can adults become covenant members?

22. How do children of believers enter the covenant?

23. What is expected of them?

24. Can unregenerate persons be members of the covenants?

01.14. The Names and Nature of Christ

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part IV: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ Chapter XIV: The Names and Nature of Christ

1.The Names of Christ. The most important names of Christ are the following: a. Jesus. This is the Greek form of the Hebrew Joshua, Joshua 1:1; Zechariah 3:1, or Jeshua, Ezra 2:2. Derived from the Hebrew word 'to save,' it designates Christ as the Saviour, Matthew 1:21. Two types of Christ bore the same name in the Old Testament, namely, Joshua the son of Nun and Joshua the son of Jehozadak. b. Christ. This is the New Testament form for the Old Testament 'Messiah,' which means 'the anointed one.' According to the Old Testament, prophets, 1 Kings 19:16, priests, Exodus 29:7, and kings, 1 Samuel 10:1, were anointed with oil, which symbolized the Holy By this anointing they were set aside for their respective offices, and were qualified for them. Christ was anointed with the Holy Spirit for the threefold office of prophet, priest, and king. Historically, this anointing took place when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit and when He was baptized. c. Son of Man. This name, as applied to Christ, was derived from Daniel 7:13. It is the name which Jesus generally applies to Himself, while others seldom use it. While it does contain an indication of the humanity of Jesus, in the light of its historical origin in points far more to His superhuman character and to His future coming with the clouds of heaven in majesty and glory, Daniel 7:13; Matthew 16:27, Matthew 16:28; Matthew 26:64; Luke 21:27. d. Son of God. Christ is called 'the Son of God' in more than one sense. He is so called, because He is the second Person of the Trinity, and therefore Himself God, Matthew 11:27, but also because He is the appointed Messiah, Matthew 24:36, and because His birth to the supernatural activity of the Holy Spirit, Luke 1:3. e. Lord. Jesus' contemporaries sometimes applied this name to Jesus as a form of polite address, just as we use the word 'sir.' It is especially after the resurrection of Christ that the name acquires a deeper meaning. In some passages it designates Christ as the Owner and Ruler of the Church, Romans 1:7; Ephesians 1:17, and in others it really stands for the name of God, 1 Corinthians 7:34; Php 4:4, Php 4:5.

2. The Natures of Christ. The Bible represents Christ as a Person having two natures, the one divine and the other human. This is the great mystery of godliness, God manifested in the flesh, 1 Timothy 3:16. a. The two natures. Since many in our day deny the deity of Christ, it is necessary to stress the Scripture proof for it. Some old Testament passages clearly point to it, Such as Isaiah 9:6; Jeremiah 23:6; Micah 5:2; Malachi 3:1. The New Testament proofs are even more abundant, Matthew 11:27; Matthew 16:16; Matthew 26:63-64; John 1:1, John 1:18; Romans 9:5; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Php 2:6; Colossians 2:9; Hebrews 1:1-3; Revelation 19:16. The humanity of Jesus is not called in question. In fact, the only divinity many still ascribe to Him is that of His perfect humanity. There is abundant proof for the humanity of Jesus. He speaks of Himself as man, John 8:40, and is so called by others, Acts 2:22; Romans 5:15; 1 Corinthians 15:21. He had the essential elements of human nature, namely, a body and a soul, Matthew 26:26, Matthew 26:38; Luke 24:89; Hebrews 2:14. Moreover, He was subject to the ordinary laws of human development, Luke 2:40, Luke 2:52, and to human wants and sufferings, Matthew 4:2;

Matthew 8:24; Luke 22:44; John 4:6; John 11:35; John 12:27; Hebrews 2:10, Hebrews 2:18; Hebrews 5:7, Hebrews 5:8. Yet though He was a real man, He was without sin; He did no sin and could not sin, John 8:46; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5. It was necessary that Christ should be both God and man. It was only as man that He could be our substitute, and could suffer and die; and only as sinless man that He could atone for the sins of others. And it was only as God that He could give His sacrifice infinite value, and bear the wrath of God so as to deliver others from it, Psalms 40:7-10; Psalms 130:8. b. The two natures united in one Person. Christ has a human nature, but He is not a human person. The Person of the Mediator is the unchangeable Son of God. In the incarnation He did not change into a human person; neither did He adopt a human person. He simply assumed, in addition to His divine nature, a human nature, which did not develop into an independent personality, but became personal in the Person of the Son of God. After this assumption of human nature the Person of the Mediator is not only divine but divine-human; He is the God-man, possessing all the essential qualities of both the human and the divine nature. He has both a divine and a human consciousness, as well as a human and a divine will. This is a mystery which we cannot fathom. Scripture clearly points to the unity of the Person of Christ. It is always the same Person who speaks, whether the mind that finds utterance be human or divine, John 10:30; John 17:5 as compared with Matthew 27:46; John 19:28. Human attributes and actions are sometimes ascribed to the Person designated by a divine title, Acts 20:1-38; Acts 28:1-31; 1 Corinthians 2:8; Colossians 1:13, Colossians 1:14; and divine attributes and actions are sometimes ascribed to the Person designated by a human title, John 3:13; John 6:62; Romans 9:5. c. Some of the most important errors concerning this doctrine. The Alogi and the Ebionites denied the deity of Christ in the early Church. This denial was shared by the Socinians of the days of the Reformation, and by the Unitarians and Modernists of our day. In the early Church Arius failed to do justice to the full deity of Christ and regarded Him as a demi-God, while Apollinaris did not recognize His full humanity, but held that the divine Logos took the place of the human spirit in Christ. The Nestorians denied the unity of the two natures in one Person, and the Eutychians failed to distinguish properly between the two natures. To memorize. Passages to prove: a. The deity of Christ.

Isaiah 9:6. "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."

Jeremiah 23:6. "In His days shall Judah be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely; and this is His name whereby He shall be called: Jehovah our righteousness."

John 1:1. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."

Romans 9:5. "Whose are the fathers, and of whom is Christ as concerning the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever."

Colossians 2:9. "For in Him dwelleth all the fulness of the God" b. The humanity of Christ.

John 8:40. "But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I heard from God."

Matthew 26:28. "Then said He unto them, My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: abide here and watch with me."

Luke 24:39. "See my hands and my feet, that it is I myself'. handle me, and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye behold me having."

Hebrews 2:14. "Since then the children are sharers in flesh and blood, He also Himself in like manner partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." e. The unity of the Person.

John 17:5. "And now, Father, glorify Thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was."

John 3:13. "And no one hath ascended into heaven, but He that descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in heaven."

1 Corinthians 2:8. "Which none of the rulers of this world hath known: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory." For Further Study: a. In what respect was Joshua the son of Nun a type of Christ; and in what respect Joshua the son of Jehozadak? Zechariah 3:8, Zechariah 3:9; Hebrews 4:8. b. What do the following passages teach us respecting the anointing of Christ? Psalms 2:2; Psalms 45:7; Proverbs 8:23 (cf. Auth. Ver.), Isaiah 61:1. c. What divine attributes are ascribed to Christ? Isaiah 9:6; Proverbs 8:22-31; Micah 5:2; John 5:26; John 21:17. What divine works? Mark 2:5-7; John 1:1-3; Colossians 1:16, Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:1-3. What divine honor? Matthew 28:19; John 5:19-29; John 14:1; 2 Corinthians 13:14.

Questions for Review 1. Which are the most important names of Christ? What is the meaning of each?

2. What elements are included in Christ's anointing? When did it take place?

3. Whence is the name 'Son of Man' derived' What does the name express?

4. In what sense is the name 'Son of God' applied to Christ?

5. What different meanings has the name 'Lord' as applied to Christ?

6. What Bible proof is there for the deity and humanity of Christ?

7. What is the nature of the Person of Christ, divine, human, or divine-human?

8. How can the unity of the Person of Christ be proved from Scripture.?

9. What are the main errors respecting the Person of Christ?

01.15. The States of Christ

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part IV: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ Chapter XV: The States of Christ

We often use the words ’state’ and ’condition’ interchangeably. When we speak of the states of Christ, however, we use the word ’state’ in a more specific sense, to denote the relation in which He stood and stands to the law. In the days of His humiliation He was a servant under the law; in His exaltation He is Lord, and as such above the law. Naturally these two states carried with them corresponding conditions of life, and these are discussed as the various stages of these states.

1. The State of Humiliation. The state of humiliation consists in this that Christ laid aside the divine majesty which was His as the sovereign Ruler of the universe, and assumed human nature in the form of a servant; that He, the supreme Lawgiver, became subject to the demands and curse of the law. Matthew 3:15; Galatians 3:13; Galatians 4:4; Php 2:6-8. This state is reflected in the corresponding condition, in which we usually distinguish several stages. a. The incarnation and birth of Christ. In the incarnation the Son of God became flesh by assuming human nature, John 1:14; 1 John 4:2. He really became one of the human race by being born of Mary. This would not have been true, if He had brought His humanity from heaven, as the Anabaptists claim. The Bible teaches the virgin birth in Isa 7:14; Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:34, Luke 1:35. This wonderful birth was due to the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit, who also kept the human nature of Christ free from the pollution of sin from its very inception, Luke 1:35. b. The sufferings of Christ. We sometimes speak as if the sufferings of Christ were limited to His final agonies, but this is not correct. His whole life was a life of suffering. It was the servant life of the Lord of Hosts, the life of the sinless One in a sin-cursed world. Satan assaulted Him, His people rejected Him, and His enemies persecuted Him. The sufferings of the soul were even more intense than those of the body. He was tempted by the devil, was oppressed by the world of iniquity round about Him, and staggered by the burden of sin resting upon Him,-- "a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief." Isaiah 53:3. c. The death, of Christ. When we speak of the death of Christ, we naturally have in mind His physical death. He did not die as the result of an accident, nor by the hand of an assassin, but under a judicial sentence, and was thus counted with the transgressors, Isaiah 53:12. By suffering the Roman punishment of crucifixion He died an accursed death, bearing the curse for us, Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13. d. The burial of Christ. It might seem as if the death of Christ was the last stage of His sufferings. Did He not cry out on the cross, "It is finished"? But these words probably refer to His active suffering. His burial certainly was a part of His humiliation, of which He as Son of God was also conscious. Man’s returning to the dust is a punishment for sin, Genesis 3:19. That the Saviour’s abode in the grave was a humiliation, is evident from Psalms 16:10; Acts 2:27, Acts 2:31; Acts 13:34, Acts 13:35. It removed for us the terrors of the grave. e. The descent into hades. The words of the Apostolic Confession, "He descended into hades," are variously interpreted. Roman Catholics say that He went down into the Limbus Patrum, where the Old Testament saints were confined, to release them; and the Lutherans that, between His death and resurrection, He went down to hell to preach and to

celebrate his victory over the powers of darkness. In all probability it is a figurative expression to denote (1) that He suffered the pangs of hell in the garden and on the cross, and (2) that He entered the deepest humiliation of the state of death, Psalms 16:8-10; Ephesians 4:9.

2. The State of Exaltation. In the state of exaltation Christ passed from under the law as a covenant obligation, having paid the penalty of sin and merited righteousness and eternal life for the sinner. Moreover, He was crowned with a corresponding honor and glory. Four stages must be distinguished here. a. The resurrection. The resurrection of Christ did not consist in the mere re-union of body and soul, but especially in this that in Him human nature, both body and soul, was restored to its original beauty and strength, and even raised to a higher level. In distinction from all those who had been raised up before Him He arose with a spiritual body, 1 Corinthians 15:44, 1 Corinthians 15:45. For that reason He can be called "the first fruits of them that slept," 1 Corinthians 15:20, and "the firstborn of the dead," Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5. The resurrection of Christ has a threefold significance: (1) It was a declaration of the Father that Christ met all the requirements of the law, Php 2:9. (2) It symbolized the justification, regeneration, and final resurrection of believers, Romans 6:4, Romans 6:5, Romans 6:9; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22. (3) It was the cause of our justification, regeneration, and resurrection, Romans 4:25; Romans 5:10; Ephesians 1:20; Php 3:10; 1 Peter 1:3. b. The ascension. The ascension was in a sense the necessary completion of the resurrection, but it also had independent significance. We have a double account of it, namely, in Luke 24:50-53; Acts 1:6-11. Paul refers to it in Ephesians 1:20; Ephesians 4:8-10; 1 Timothy 3:16, and the Epistle to the Hebrews stresses its significance, Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 9:24. It was a visible ascent of the Mediator, according to His human nature, from earth to heaven, a going from one place to another. It included a further glorification of the human nature of Christ. The Lutherans have a different view of it. They conceive of it as a change of condition, whereby the human nature of Jesus passed into the full enjoyment of certain divine attributes, and became permanently omnipresent. In the ascension Christ as our great high priest enters the inner sanctuary to present His sacrifice to the Father and begin His work as intercessor at the throne, Romans 8:34; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 9:24. He ascended to prepare a place for us, John 14:1-3. With Him we are already set in heavenly places, and in His ascension we have the assurance of a place in heaven, Ephesians 2:6; John 17:24. c. The session at God’s right hand. After His ascension Christ is seated at the right hand of God, Ephesians 1:20; Hebrews 10:12; 1 Peter 3:22. Naturally, the expression ’right hand of God’ cannot be taken literally, but should be understood as a figurative indication of the place of power and glory. During His session at God’s right hand Christ rules and protects His Church, governs the universe in its behalf, and intercedes for His people on the basis of His completed sacrifice. d. The physical return. The exaltation of Christ reaches its climax, when He returns to judge the living and the dead. Evidently His return will be bodily and visible, Acts 1:11; Revelation 1:7. That He will come as Judge is evident from such passages as John 5:22, John 5:27; Acts 10:42; Romans 2:16; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1. The time of His second coming is not known to us. He will come for the purpose of judging the world and perfecting the salvation of His people. This will mark the complete victory of His redemptive work. 1 Corinthians 4:5; Php 3:20; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12; Titus 2:13; Revelation 1:7. To memorize. Passages bearing on: a. The state of humiliation:

Galatians 3:13. "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."

Galatians 4:4, Galatians 4:5. "But when the fulness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Php 2:6-8. "Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, He humbled Himself, becoming obedient even unto death, yea, the death of the cross." b. The incarnation:

John 1:14. "And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father), full of grace and truth."

Romans 8:3. "For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh." c. The virgin birth:

Isaiah 7:14. "Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call His name Immanuel."

Luke 2:86. "And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Most High shall overshadow thee: wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten shall be called the Son of God." d. The descent into hades:

Psalms 16:10. "For Thou wilt not leave my soul to Sheol (hades, Acts 2:27); neither wilt Thou suffer Thy holy one to see corruption."

Ephesians 4:9. "Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth?" e. The resurrection:

Romans 4:25. "Who was delivered up for our trespasses, and was raised for our justification."

1 Corinthians 15:20. "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep." f. The ascension:

Luke 24:51. "And it came to pass, while He blessed them, He was parted from them, and was carried up into heaven."

Acts 1:11. "Who also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye looking into heaven? This same Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have beheld Him going into heaven." g. The session:

Ephesians 1:20. "Which He wrought in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and made Him to sit at His right hand in the heavenly places."

Hebrews 10:12. "But He, when He had offered one sacrifice for sins for ever, sat down on the right hand of God." h. The return:

Acts 1:11. Cf. above under f.

Revelation 1:7. "Behold, He cometh with the clouds; and every eye shall see Him, and they that pierced Him; and all the tribes of the earth shall mourn over Him." For Further Study: a. What does the Old Testament tell us about the humiliation of Christ in the following passages: Psalms 22:6-20; Psalms 69:7-9; Psalms 20:21; Isaiah 52:14, Isaiah 52:15; Isaiah 53:1-10; Zechariah 11:12, Zechariah 11:13. b. What was the special value of Christ's temptations for us? Hebrews 2:18; Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 5:7-9. c. How do the following passages prove that heaven is a place rather than a condition? Deuteronomy 30:12; Joshua 2:11; Psalms 139:8; Ecclesiastes 5:2; Isaiah 66:1; Romans 10:6, Romans 10:7.

Questions for Review 1. What is meant by the states of the Mediator?

2. How would you define the states of humiliation and exaltation?

3. What took place at the incarnation?

4. How did Christ receive His human nature?

5. What proof have we for the virgin birth?

6. How was the Holy Spirit connected with the birth, of Christ?

7. Were the sufferings of Christ limited to the end of His life?

8. Did it make any difference how Christ died?

9. What different views are there respecting the descent into hades?

10. What was the nature of Christ's resurrection? What change did He undergo?

11. What was the significance of the resurrection?

12. How would you prove that the ascension was a going from place to place?

13. What is its significance, and how do Lutherans conceive of it?

14. What is meant by the session at God's right hand? What does Christ do there?

15. How will Christ return, and what is the purpose of His coming?

01.16. The Offices of Christ

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part IV: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ Chapter XVI: The Offices of Christ The Bible ascribes a threefold office to Christ, speaking of Him as Prophet, Priest, and King.

1. The Prophetic Office. The Old Testament predicted the coming of Christ as a prophet, Deuteronomy 18:15 (comp. Acts 3:23). He speaks of Himself as a prophet in Luke 13:33, claims to bring a message from the Father, John 8:26-28; John 12:49, John 12:50; John 14:10, John 14:24, foretells future things, Matthew 24:3-35; Luke 19:41-44, and speaks with singular authority, Matthew 7:29. It is no wonder, therefore, that the people recognized Him as a prophet, Matthew 21:11, Matthew 21:46; Luke 7:16; Luke 24:19; John 6:14; John 7:40; John 9:17. A prophet is one who receives divine revelations in dreams, visions, or verbal communications; and passes these on to the people either orally or visibly in prophetic actions. Exodus 7:1; Deuteronomy 18:18; Numbers 12:6-8; Isaiah 6:1-13; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Ezekiel 3:1-4, Ezekiel 3:17. His work may pertain to the past, the present, or the future. One of his important tasks was to interpret the moral and spiritual aspects of the law for the people. Christ functioned as prophet already in the Old Testament, 1 Peter 1:11; 1 Peter 3:18-20. He did it while He was on earth, and continued it by the operation of the Holy Spirit and through the apostles after the ascension, John 14:26; John 16:12-14; Acts 1:1. And even now his prophetic ministry continues through the ministry of the Word and the spiritual illumination of believers. This is the only function of Christ which is recognized in modern liberal theology.

2. The Priestly Office. The Old Testament also predicted and prefigured the priesthood of the coming Redeemer, Psalms 110:4; Zechariah 6:18; Isaiah 53:1-12. In the New Testament there is only a single book in which He is called priest, namely, Hebrews, but there the name is found repeatedly, Hebrews 3:1; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 5:5; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 7:26; Hebrews 8:1. However, other books refer to His priestly work, Mark 10:45; John 1:29; Romans 3:24, Romans 3:25; 1 Corinthians 5:7; I John 2:2; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18 While a prophet represented God among the people, a priest represented the people before God. Both were teachers, but while the former taught the moral, the latter taught the ceremonial law. Moreover, the priests had the special privilege of approach to God, and of speaking and acting in behalf of the people. Hebrews 5:1, Hebrews 5:3 teaches us that a priest is taken from among men to be their representative, is appointed by God, is active before God in the interests of men, and offers gifts and sacrifices for sins. He also makes intercession for the people. The priestly work of Christ was, first of all, to bring a sacrifice for sin. The Old Testament sacrifices were types pointing forward to the great sacrifice of Christ, Hebrews 9:23, Hebrews 9:24; Hebrews 10:1, Hebrews 13:11, Hebrews 13:12. Hence Christ is also called "the Lamb of God," John 1:1, and "our passover," 1 Corinthians 5:7. The New Testament speaks very clearly of the priestly work of Christ in numerous passages: Mark 10:45; John 1:29; Romans 3:24, Romans 3:25; 5:6-8; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 15:3; Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 5:2; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10; Revelation 1:1. The references are most frequent in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Hebrews 5:1-10; Hebrews 7:1-28;

Hebrews 9:11-15, Hebrews 9:24-28; Hebrews 10:11-14, Hebrews 10:19-22; Hebrews 12:24; Hebrews 13:12.

Besides bringing the great sacrifice for sins, Christ as priest also makes intercession for His people. He is called our parakletos by implication in John 14:16, and explicitly in 1 John 2:2. The term means 'one who is called in to help, an advocate, one who pleads the cause of another.' The New Testament refers to Christ as our intercessor in Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:24; 1 John 2:1. His intercessory work is based on His sacrifice, and is not limited, as is sometimes thought, to intercessory prayer. He presents His sacrifice to God, on the ground of it claims all spiritual blessings for His people, defends them against the charges of Satan, the law, and conscience, secures forgiveness for everything justly charged against them, and sanctifies their worship and service through the operation of the Holy Spirit. This intercessory work is limited in character; it has reference only to the elect, but includes all the elect, whether they are already believers or still live in unbelief, John 17:9, John 17:20.

3. The Kingly Office. As Son of God Christ naturally shares in the universal dominion of God. In distinction from this we speak of a kingship that was conferred on Him as Mediator This kingship is twofold, namely, His spiritual kingship over the Church, and His kingship over the universe. a. His spiritual kingship. The Bible speaks of this in many places, Psalms 2:6; Psalms 132:11; Isaiah 9:6, Isaiah 9:7; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 6:13; Luke 1:33; Luke 19:38; John 18:36, John 18:37; Acts 2:30-36. The kingship of Christ is His royal rule over His people. It is called spiritual, because it relates to a spiritual realm, is established in the hearts and lives of believers, has a spiritual end in view, the salvation of sinners, and is administered by spiritual means, the Word and the Spirit. It is exercised largely in the gathering, the government, the protection, and the perfection of the Church. This kingship as well as the realm over which it extends is called in the New Testament "the kingdom of God" or "the kingdom of heaven." In the strict sense of the word only believers, members of the invisible Church, are citizens of the kingdom. But the term 'kingdom of God' is sometimes used in a broader sense, as including all who live under the proclamation of the gospel, all who have a place in the visible Church, Matthew 13:24-30, Matthew 13:47-50. This kingdom of God is on the one hand a present, spiritual reality in the hearts and lives of men, Matthew 12:28; Luke 17:21; Colossians 1:13; but on the other hand a future hope, which will not be realized until the return of Jesus Christ, Matthew 7:21; Luke 22:29; 1 Corinthians 15:50; 2 Timothy 4:18; 2 Peter 1:11. The future kingdom will be essentially the same as the present, namely, the rule of God established and acknowledged in the hearts of men. It will differ, however, in that it will be visible and perfect. Some are of the opinion that this kingship of Christ will cease at His return, but the Bible would seem to teach explicitly that it will endure forever, Psalms 45:6; Psalms 72:17; Psalms 39:36; Psalms 39:37; Isaiah 9:6; Daniel 2:44; 2 Samuel 7:13, 2 Samuel 7:16; Luke 1:33; 2 Peter 1:11. b. His universal kingship, After the resurrection Christ said to His disciples: "All authority hath been given unto Me in heaven and on earth." Matthew 28:18. The same truth is taught in 1 Corinthians 15:27; Ephesians 1:20-22. This kingship should not be confused with the original kingship of Christ as the Son of God, though it pertains to the same realm. It is the kingship of the universe entrusted to Christ as Mediator in behalf of His Church. As Mediator He now guides the destiny of individuals and nations, controls the life of the world and makes it subservient to His redemptive purpose, and protects His Church against the dangers to which it is exposed in the world. This kingship will last until the victory over the enemies of the kingdom of God is complete.

When the end is accomplished, it will be returned to the Father. 1 Corinthians 15:24-28. To memorize. Passages pointing to: a. Christ as prophet:

Deuteronomy 18:18. "I will raise them up a prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee; and I will put my words in his mouth, and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

Luke 7:16. "And fear took hold on them all; and they glorified God, saying, A great prophet is arisen among us: and God hath visited His people." b. Christ as priest:

Psalms 110:4. "Jehovah hath sworn, and will not repent: Thou are a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek."

Hebrews 3:1. "Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of a heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, even Jesus."

Hebrews 4:14. "Having then a great high priest, who hath passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession." c. His characteristics as priest:

Hebrews 5:1, Hebrews 5:5. "For every high priest, being taken from among men, is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins... So Christ also glorified not Himself to be made a high priest, but He that spake unto Him, Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee." d. His sacrificial work:

Isaiah 53:5. "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with his stripes we are healed."

Mark 10:45. "For the Son of Man also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His soul a ransom for many."

John 1:29. "Behold, the Lamb of God, that taketh away the sin of the world."

1 Peter 2:24. "Who His own self bare sins in His body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness."

1 John 2:2. "And He is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but for the whole world." e. His intercessory work:

Romans 8:34. "It is Christ Jesus that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

Hebrews 7:25. "Wherefore also He is able to save to the uttermost them that draw near unto God through Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them."

1 John 2:1-29. "And if any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous." f. Christ as King of Zion:

Psalms 2:6. "Yet I have set my king upon my holy hill of Zion."

Isaiah 9:7. "Of the increase of His government and of peace there shall be no end upon the throne of David, and upon His kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from henceforth even for ever."

Luke 1:32, Luke 1:33. "He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Most High: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." g. Christ as king of the universe:

Matthew 28:18. "And Jesus came to them and spake to them, saying, All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth."

Ephesians 1:22. "And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the Church."

1 Corinthians 15:25. "For He must reign, till He hath put all His enemies under His feet." For Further Study:

a. What do the following passages tell us respecting the nature of the prophetic work? Exodus 7:1; Deuteronomy 18:18; Ezekiel 3:17. b. What Old Testament types of Christ are indicated in the following passages: John 1:29; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Hebrews 3:1; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 8:3-5; Hebrews 9:13-14; Hebrews 10:1-14; Hebrews 13:11-12? c. What do the following passages teach us respecting the kingdom of God? John 3:3, John 3:5; John 18:36, John 18:37; Romans 14:17; 1 Corinthians 4:20.

Questions for Review 1. What threefold office has Christ?

2. What is a prophet, and what proof is there that Christ is a prophet?

3. How did Christ function as prophet in various periods of history?

4. What is a priest in distinction from a prophet? How did their teaching differ?

5. What Scriptural proof is there for the priestly character of Christ?

6. What are the characteristics of a priest?

7. What was the nature of Christ's sacrificial work? How was it foreshadowed in the Old Testaments?

8. In what does the work of Christ as intercessor consist?

9. For whom does Christ intercede?

10. What is the spiritual kingship of Christ, and over what realm does it extend?

11. How is the present kingdom of Christ related to His future kingdom?

12. How long will His spiritual kingship lasts?

13. What is the nature and purpose of His universal kingdoms?

14. How long will this last?

01.17. The Atonement Through Christ

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part IV: The Doctrine of the Person and Work of Christ Chapter XVII: The Atonement Through Christ There is one part of Christ's priestly work that calls for further consideration, namely, the atonement.

1. The Moving Cause and Necessity of the Atonement. It is sometimes represented as if the moving cause of the atonement lay in Christ's sympathy for sinners. God in His anger, it is said, was bent on the sinner's destruction, but the loving Christ steps in between and saves the sinner. Christ receives all the glory, and the Father is robbed of His honour. The Bible teaches us that the atonement finds its moving cause in the good pleasure of God, Isaiah 53:10; Luke 2:14; Ephesians 1:6-9; Colossians 1:19, Colossians 1:20. It is best to say that the atonement is rooted in the love and justice of God: love offered sinners a way of escape, and justice demanded that the requirements of the law should be met, John 3:16; Romans 3:24-26. Some deny the necessity of the atonement, and hold that God could have pardoned the sinner without receiving any satisfaction. The Bible teaches however, that a righteous and holy God cannot simply overlook sin, but reacts against it, Exodus 20:5; Exodus 23:7; Psalms 5:5, Psalms 5:6; Nahum 1:2; Romans 1:18, Romans 1:32. Moreover, He had pronounced the sentence of death upon the sinner, Genesis 3:3; Romans 6:23.

2. The Nature of the Atonement. The following particulars should be noted here: a. It served to render satisfaction to God. It is often said that the atonement served primarily, if not exclusively, to influence the sinner, to awaken repentance in his heart, and thus to bring him back to God. But this is clearly wrong, for if a person offends another, amends should be made, not to the offender, but to the offended party. This means that the primary purpose of the atonement was to reconcile God to the sinner. The reconciliation of the sinner to God may be regarded as its secondary purpose. b. It was a vicarious atonement. God might have demanded a personal atonement of the sinner, but the latter would not have been able to render it. In view of this fact God graciously ordained that Christ should take the place of man as his vicar or substitute. Christ as our vicar atoned for the sin of mankind by bearing the penalty of sin and meeting the demands of the law, and thus wrought an eternal redemption for man. For that reason we speak of the atonement as a vicarious atonement. The offended party Himself made provision for the atonement in this case. The Old Testament sacrifices prefigured the atoning work of Christ, Leviticus 1:4; Leviticus 4:20, Leviticus 4:31, Leviticus 4:35; Leviticus 5:10, Leviticus 5:16; Leviticus 6:7; Leviticus 17:11. We are taught that our sins were laid upon Christ, Isaiah 53:6, He bore them, John 1:29, Hebrews 9:28, and gave His life for sinners, Mark 10:45; Galatians 1:4; 1 Peter 3:18. c. It included Christ's active and passive obedience. It is customary to distinguish a twofold obedience of Christ. His active obedience consists in all that He did to observe the law in behalf of sinners, as a condition for obtaining eternal life; and His passive obedience in all that He suffered in paying the penalty of sin and discharging the debt of His people. But while we distinguish these two, we should never separate them. Christ was active also in His suffering, and passive also in His submission to the law. Scripture teaches us that He paid the penalty of the law, Isaiah 53:8; Romans 4:25; Galatians

3:13; 1 Peter 2:24, and merited eternal life for the sinner, Romans 8:4; Romans 10:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 4:4-7.3. The Extent of the Atonement. Roman Catholics, Lutherans, and Arminians of every description regard the atonement of Christ as universal. This does not mean that in their estimation all men will be saved, but merely that Christ suffered and died for the purpose of saving all without any exception. They admit that the intended effect is not achieved. Christ did not actually save, but made salvation possible for all. Their actual redemption is dependent on their own choice. Reformed Churches on the other hand believe in a limited atonement. Christ suffered and died for the purpose of saving only the elect, and that purpose is actually accomplished. Christ not merely made salvation possible but really saves to the uttermost every one of those for whom he laid down His life, Luke 19:10; Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; Ephesians 1:7. The Bible indicates that Christ laid down His life for His people. Matthew 1:21, for His sheep, John 10:11, John 10:15, for the Church, Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25-27, or for the elect, Romans 8:32-35. If the Bible sometimes says that Christ died for the world, John 1:29; I John 2:2; John 4:14, or for all, 1 Timothy 2:6; Titus 2:11; Hebrews 2:9, this evidently means that He died for people of all nations of the world, or (in some instances) for all kinds or classes of people. To memorize. Passages bearing on: a. The cause of the atonement.

Isaiah 53:10. "Yet it pleased Jehovah to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief: when Thou shalt make His soul an offering for sin, He shall see His seed, He shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of Jehovah shall prosper in His hand."

Colossians 1:19, Colossians 1:20. "For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fullness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross." b. Vicarious atonement.

Isaiah 53:6. "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all."

Mark 10:45. "For the Son also came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many."

2 Corinthians 5:21. "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him."

1 Peter 2:24. "Who His own self bare our sins in His body upon the tree, that we, having died unto sins, might live unto righteousness." c. Active obedience and the gift of eternal life.

Matthew 3:15. "But Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness."

Matthew 5:17. "Think not that I came to destroy the law or the prophets: I came not to destroy, but to fulfil."

Galatians 4:4, Galatians 4:5. "But when the fullness of time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

John 10:28. "And I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand." Romans 6:23. "For the wages of sin is death; but the free gift of God is

eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." d. Limited atonement.

Matthew 1:21. "And she shall bring forth a son; and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for it is He that shall save His people from their sins."

John 10:26-28. "But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand."

Acts 20:28. "Take heed unto yourselves, and to all the flocks, in which the Holy Spirit hath made you bishops, to feed the Church of the Lord which He purchased with His own blood." For Further Study: a. What is the difference between atonement and reconciliation? b. How do the following passages prove the vicarious nature of Old Testament sacrifices? Leviticus 1:4; Leviticus 3:2; Leviticus 4:15; Leviticus 16:21, Leviticus 16:22. c. Does John 17:9 teach us anything respecting the extent of the atonement?

Questions for Review 1. What was the moving cause of the atonement?

2. Why was the atonement necessary?

3. What was the primary purpose of the atonement?

4. What is the difference between personal and vicarious atonement?

5. How was Christ’s vicarious atonement prefigured in the Old Testament?

6. What Scripture proof is there for it?

7. What is the difference between the active and passive obedience of Christ?

8. What did each one of these effect?

9. What difference of opinion is there respecting the extent of the atonement?

10. What is meant by universal atonement, and who teach it?

11. What is limited atonement, and what Scripture proof is there for it?

12. What objections are raised against this, and how can they be answered?

Chapter 20

01.18. The Common Operation of the Holy Spirit

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part V: The Doctrine of the Application of the Work of Redemption Chapter XVIII: The Common Operation of the Holy Spirit:

Common Grace The study of the work of redemption wrought by Christ is naturally followed by a discussion of the application of this redemption to the hearts and lives of sinners by the special operation of thy Holy Spirit. Before taking this up a brief chapter will be devoted to the general operations of the Holy Spirit, as these are seen in common grace.

1. Nature of Common Grace. When we speak of common grace, we have in mind either (a) those general operations of the Holy Spirit whereby He, without renewing the heart, exercises such a moral influence on man that sin is restrained, order is maintained in social life, and civil righteousness is promoted; or (b) those general blessings which God imparts to all men without any distinction as He sees fit. In distinction from the Arminians we maintain that common grace does not enable the sinner to perform any spiritual good, nor to turn to God in faith and repentance. It can be resisted by man, and is always more or less resisted, and at best affects only the externals of social, civil, moral, and religious life. While Christ died for the purpose of saving only the elect, nevertheless the whole human race, including the impenitent and the reprobate, derive great benefits from His death. The blessings of common grace may be regarded as indirect results of the atoning work of Christ.

2. Means of Common Grace. Several means may be distinguished: (a) The most important of these is the light of God’s general revelation. Without this all other means would be impossible and ineffective. It lightens every man, and serves to guide the conscience of the natural man. (b) Human governments also serve this purpose. According to our Confession they are instituted to curb evil tendencies, and to promote good order and decency. (c) Public opinion is another important means wherever it is in harmony with the law of God. It has a tremendous influence on the conduct of men who are very sensitive to the judgment of public opinion. (d) Finally, divine punishments and rewards also serve to encourage moral goodness in the world. The punishments often check the sinful deeds of men, and the rewards spur them on to do what is good and right.

3. The Effects of Common Grace. The following effects may be ascribed to the operation of common grace: (a) The execution of the sentence of death on man is deferred. God did not at once fully execute the sentence of death on the sinner, and does not do so now, but gives him time for repentance, Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 8:9. (b) Sin is restrained in the lives of individuals and nations The corruption that entered human life through sin is retarded and not yet permitted to complete its destructive work, Genesis 20:6; Genesis 31:7; Job 1:12; Job 2:6. (c) Man still has some sense of the true, the good, and the beautiful, appreciates this in a measure, and reveals a desire for truth, morality, and certain forms of religion, Romans 2:14, Romans 2:15; Acts 17:22. (d) The natural man is still able to perform natural good or civil righteousness, works that are outwardly in harmony with the law, though without spiritual value, 2 Kings 10:29, 2 Kings 10:30; 2 Kings 12:2; 2 Kings 12:14; 2 Kings 12:3; Luke 6:33. (e) All men receive numerous undeserved

blessings from God, Psalms 145:9, Psalms 145:15, Psalms 145:16; Matthew 5:44, Matthew 5:45; Luke 6:35, Luke 6:36; Acts 14:16, Acts 14:17; 1 Timothy 4:10. To memorize. Passages proving: a. A general striving of the Spirit with men:

Genesis 6:3. "And Jehovah said, My Spirit shall not strive with man for ever, for that he also is flesh."

Isaiah 68:10. "But they rebelled, and grieved His Holy Spirit: therefore He was turned to be their enemy, and Himself fought against them."

Romans 1:28, "And even as they refused to have God in their knowledge, God gave them up unto a reprobate mind, to do those things which are not fitting." b. Restraint of sin:

Genesis 20:6. "And God said unto him (Abimelech) in the dream, Yea, I know that in the integrity of thy heart thou hast done this, and I also withheld thee from sinning against me."

Genesis 31:7. "And your father hath deceived me, and changed my wages ten times; but God suffered him not to hurt me."

Psalms 105:14. "He suffered no man to do them wrong; yea, Ho reproved kings for their sakes." c. Good works on the part of unregenerate:

2 Kings 10:30. "And Jehovah said unto Jehu, because thou hast done well in executing that which is right in mine eyes, and hast done unto the house of Ahab according to all that was in my heart, thy sons of the fourth generation shall sit upon the throne of Israel." Cf. 2 Kings 10:31.

Luke 6:33. "And if ye do good to them that do good to you, what thank have ye? for even sinners do the same."

Romans 2:14, Romans 2:15. "For when Gentiles that have not the law do by nature the things of the law, these not having the law, are the law unto themselves; in that they show the work of the law written in their hearts." d. Unmerited blessings on all men:

Psalms 145:9. "Jehovah is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works."

Matthew 5:44, Matthew 5:45. "But I say unto you, Love your enemies, and pray for them that persecute you; that ye may be sons of your Father who is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sendeth rain on the just and the unjust."

1 Timothy 4:10. "For to this end we labor and strive, because we have our hope set on the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, especially of them that believe." For Further Study: a. Which are the three points emphasized by our Church as to common grace? b. How do Matthew 21:26, Matthew 21:46; Mark 14:2 show the restraining influence of public opinion? c. How do Romans 1:24, Romans 1:26, Romans 1:28, and Hebrews 6:4-6 prove common grace?

Questions for Review 1. What is common grace?

2. What is our view in distinction from the Arminian?

3. Does common grace have any spiritual and saving effect?

4. Is it in any way connected with the redemptive work of Christ?

5. By what means does common grace work?

6. What are the effects of common grace?

01.19. Calling and Regeneration

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part V: The Doctrine of the Application of the Work of Redemption Chapter XVIIII: Calling and Regeneration

1. Calling. Calling in general may be defined as that gracious act of God whereby He invites sinners to accept the salvation that is offered in Christ Jesus.

It may be either external or internal. a. External calling. The Bible speaks of this or refers to it in several passages, Matthew 28:19; Matthew 22:14; Luke 14:16-24; Acts 13:46; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; 1 John 5:10. It consists in the presentation and offering of salvation in Christ to sinners, together with an earnest exhortation to accept Christ by faith in order to obtain the forgiveness of sins and eternal life. From the definition it already appears that it contains three elements, namely, (1) A presentation of the gospel facts and ideas; (2) an invitation to repent and believe in Jesus Christ, and (3) a promise of forgiveness and salvation. The promise is always conditional; its fulfillment can be expected only in the way of true faith and repentance. The external call is universal in the sense that it comes to all men to whom the gospel is preached. It is not limited to any age or nation or class of men, and comes to the reprobate as well as to the elect, Isaiah 45:22; Isaiah 55:1; Ezekiel 3:19; Joel 2:32; Matthew 22:2-8, Matthew 22:14; Revelation 22:17. Naturally this call, as coming from God, is seriously meant. He calls sinners in good faith, earnestly desires that they accept the invitation, and in all sincerity promises eternal life to those who repent and believe. Numbers 23:19; Psalms 81:13-16; Proverbs 1:24; Isaiah 1:18-20; Ezekiel 18:23, Ezekiel 18:32; Ezekiel 33:11; Matthew 23:37; 2 Timothy 2:18. In the external call God maintains His claim on the sinner. If man does not accept the call, he slights the claim of God and thus increases his guilt. It is also the appointed means by which God gathers the elect out of all the nations of the world, Romans 10:14-17, and should be regarded as a blessing for sinners, though they may turn it into a curse, Isaiah 1:18-20; Ezekiel 3:18, Ezekiel 3:19; Amos 8:11; Matthew 11:20-24; Matthew 23:37. Finally, it also serves to justify God in the condemnation of sinners. If they despise the offer of salvation, their guilt stands out in the clearest light, John 5:39, John 5:40; Romans 3:5, Romans 3:6, Romans 3:19. b. Internal calling. While we distinguish two aspects of the calling of God, this calling is really one. The internal call is really the external call made effective by the operation of the Holy Spirit. It always comes to the sinner through the Word of God, savingly applied by the operation of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 1:23, 1 Corinthians 1:24. In distinction from the external call, it is a powerful calling that is effectual unto salvation, Acts 13:48; 1 Corinthians 1:23, 1 Corinthians 1:24. Moreover, it is a calling without repentance, one that is not subject to change, and is never withdrawn, Romans 11:29. The person called will surely be saved. The Spirit operates through the preaching of the Word by making its persuasions effective, so that man listens to the voice of His God. It addresses itself to the understanding enlightened by the Holy Spirit, so that man is conscious of it. And it is always directed to a certain end. It is a calling to the fellowship of Jesus Christ, 1 Corinthians 1:9, to inherit blessing, 1 Peter 8:9, to liberty, Galatians 6:18, to peace, 1 Corinthians 7:15; to holiness, 1 Thessalonians 4:7; to one hope, Ephesians 4:4, to eternal life, 1 Timothy 6:12, and to God’s kingdom and glory, 1 Thessalonians 2:12.2.

Regeneration. Divine calling and regeneration stand in the closest possible relation to each other. With respect to regeneration several points deserve consideration: a. Its nature. The word 'regeneration' is not always used in the same sense. Our Confession uses it in a broad sense, as including even conversion. At present it has a more restricted meaning. In the most restricted sense it denotes that act of God by which the principle of the new life is implanted in man, and the governing disposition of the soul is made holy. In a slightly more comprehensive sense it designates, in addition to the preceding, the new birth or the first manifestation of the new life. It is a fundamental change in the principle of life and the governing disposition of the soul, and therefore affects the whole man, 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Php 2:13; 1 Peter 1:8. It is completed in a moment of time, and is not a gradual process like sanctification. Through it we pass from death into life, 1 John 3:14. It is a secret and inscrutable work of God that is never directly perceived by man, but can be known only by its effects. b. Its author. God is the author of regeneration. Scripture represents it as the work of the Holy Spirit, John 1:13; Acts 16:14; John 3:5, John 3:8. Over against the Arminians we maintain that it is exclusively the work of the Spirit of God, and not in part the work of man. There is no co-operation of God and man in the work of regeneration, as there is in the work of conversion. Moreover, it should be said that regeneration in the most restricted sense of the word, that is, as the implanting of the new life, is a direct and immediate work of the Holy Spirit. It is a creative work in which for that very reason the word of the gospel cannot very well be used as an instrument. It may be said that James 1:18 and 1 Peter 1:23 prove that the word of preaching is used as an instrument in regeneration, but these passages refer to regeneration in a broader sense, as including the new birth. In that more inclusive sense regeneration is undoubtedly wrought through the instrumentality of the Word. c. Its necessity and place in the order of salvation. Scripture leaves no doubt as to the absolute necessity of regeneration, but asserts this in the clearest terms, John 3:3, John 3:5, John 3:7; 1 Corinthians 2:14; Galatians 6:15. This follows from the fact that we are by nature dead in trespasses and sin, and must be endowed with new spiritual 1ife, in order to enjoy the divine favor and communion with God. The question is often raised which of the two is first, calling or regeneration. In answer to this it may be said that in the case of adults external calling usually precedes or coincides with regeneration in the restricted sense. Regeneration, as the implanting of the new life, precedes internal calling, and internal calling precedes regeneration in the broader sense, or the new birth. We find the greater part of this order indicated in the record of the conversion of Lydia, Acts 16:14, "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one that worshipped God, heard us (external call): whose heart the Lord opened (regeneration in the restricted sense) to give heed to the things which were spoken by Paul (internal call)." To memorize. Passages proving: a External calling:

Mark 16:15, Mark 16:16. "And He said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation ("every creature," Auth. Ver.). He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned."

Matthew 22:14. "For many are called, but few are chosen."

Acts 13:46. "And Paul and Barnabas spake out boldly, and said, It was necessary that the word of God should first be spoken to you. Seeing ye thrust it from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." b. Calling of the reprobate:

Proverbs 1:24-26. "Because I have called, and ye have refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man hath regarded; but ye have set at nought all my counsel, and would none of my reproof: I also will laugh in the day of your calamity; I will mock when your fear cometh."

1 Peter 3:19, 1 Peter 3:20 a. "In which also He (Christ) went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah."

Confer also the parables in Matthew 22:1-8, Matthew 22:14; Luke 14:16-24. c. Seriousness of this calling:

Proverbs 1:24-26, cf. above under b.

Ezekiel 18:23, Ezekiel 18:32. "Have I any pleasure in the death of the wicked? said the Lord Jehovah; and not rather that he should return from his way and, live?... For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord Jehovah: wherefore turn yourselves, and live." Cf. also Ezekiel 33:11.

Matthew 23:37. "0 Jerusalem, Jerusalem, .that killeth the prophets, and stoneth them that are sent unto her! how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not." d. The necessity of regeneration:

Jeremiah 13:23, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil."

John 3:3, John 3:7. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except one be born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God.... Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again." e. Regeneration and the Word.

James 1:18. "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first fruits of His creatures."

1 Peter 1:23. "Having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth." For Further Study: a. Is calling a work of one Person of the Trinity or of all three? 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; Matthew 11:28; Luke 5:32; Matthew 10:20; Acts 5:31, Acts 5:32. b. Is the word ’regeneration’ used in the Bible? Titus 3:5. What other terms does it use to express this idea? John 3:3, John 3:5, John 3:7, 8; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 2:5; Colossians 2:13; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23. c. Does Titus 3:5 prove that we are regenerated by baptism? If not, how would you explain it?

Questions for Review 1. What do we mean by calling?

2. How do external and internal calling differ?

3. What elements are included in external calling?

4. In what sense is it universals?

5. What purpose does it serve?

6. How is the internal related to the external calling?

7. Are we conscious of it?

8. To what end is it directed?

9. What different meanings has the word ’regeneration’?

10. What is it in the most restricted sense?

11. What is the nature of the change wrought in regeneration?

12. Is regeneration a work of God alone or of God and man?

13. Is the Word used as an instrument in regeneration?

14. Is regeneration absolutely necessary? Proof.

15. What is the order of calling and regeneration?

01.20. Conversion: Repentance and Faith

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part V: The Doctrine of the Application of the Work of Redemption Chapter XX: Conversion: Repentance and Faith When the change wrought in regeneration begins to manifest itself in the conscious life, we speak of conversion.

1. Conversion in General. The Bible does not always speak of conversion in the same sense. The conversion we have in mind here may be defined as that act of God whereby He causes the regenerated, in their conscious life, to turn to Him in faith and repentance. From this definition it already appears that God is the author of conversion. This is clearly taught in Scripture, Acts 11:18; 2 Timothy 2:25. The new life of regeneration does not of itself issue in a conscious change of life, but only through a special operation of the Holy Spirit, John 6:44; Php 2:13. But while in regeneration God only works and man is passive, in conversion man is called upon to co-operate, Isaiah 55:7; Jeremiah 18:11; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30. But even so man can only work with the power which God imparts to him. Like regeneration conversion too consists in a momentary change, and is not a process like sanctification; but in distinction from regeneration it is a change in the conscious rather than in the unconscious life of man. While conversion is necessary in the case of all adults, Ezekiel 33:11; Matthew 18:3, it need not appear in the life of each one of them as a sharply marked crisis. The Bible mentions instances of conversion, such as Naaman, 2 Kings 5:15; Manasseh, 2 Chronicles 33:12, 2 Chronicles 33:13; Zacchmus, Luke 19:8, Luke 19:9; the eunuch, Acts 8:80 ff.; Cornelius, Acts 10:44 ff.; Paul, Acts 9:5 ff.; Lydia, Acts 16:14, and so on. Besides this it also speaks of a national conversion, as in Jonah 3:10, a temporary conversion, which includes no change of heart, Matthew 13:20, Matthew 13:21; 1 Timothy 1:19.20; 2 Timothy 4:10; Hebrews 6:4-6, and a repeated conversion, Luke 22:32; Revelation 2:5, Revelation 2:16, Revelation 2:21, Revelation 2:22; Revelation 3:8, Revelation 3:19. This is not a repetition of conversion in the strict sense of the word, which does not admit of repetition, but a revived activity of the new life after it has suffered eclipse. Conversion comprises two elements, the one negative and the other positive, namely repentance and faith, which call for separate discussion.

2. Repentance, the Negative Element of Conversion. Repentance looks to the past, and may be defined as that change wrought in the conscious life of the sinner by which he turns away from sin. It includes three elements, namely, (a) an intellectual element, in which the past life is viewed as a life of sin, involving personal guilt, defilement, and helplessness; (b) an emotional element, a sense of sorrow for sin as committed against a holy and just God; and (c) an element of the will, consisting in a change of purpose, an inward turning from sin and a disposition to seek pardon and cleansing. Romans 3:20; 2 Corinthians 7:9, 2 Corinthians 7:10; Romans 2:4. It is wrought in man primarily by the law of God. Roman Catholics have an external conception of repentance. According to them it comprises a sorrow, not for inborn sin, but for personal transgressions, which may merely result from the fear of eternal punishment; a confession made to the priest, who can forgive sin; and a measure of satisfaction by external deeds of penance, such as fastings, scourgings, pilgrimages, and so on. The Bible, on the other hand, views repentance wholly as an inward act, an act of real sorrow on account of sin, and does not confuse this with the change of

life in which it results.

3. Faith, the Positive Element of Conversion. In distinction from repentance, faith has a forward look. a. Different kinds of faith. The Bible does not always speak of faith in the same sense. It refers to a historical faith, consisting in an intellectual acceptance of the truth of Scripture without any real moral or spiritual response. Such a faith does not take the truth seriously and shows no real interest in it. Acts 26:27, Acts 26:28; James 2:19. It also speaks of a temporal faith, which embraces the truths of religion with some promptings of conscience and a stirring of the affections, but is not rooted in a regenerated heart. It is called temporal faith, Matthew 13:20, Matthew 13:21, because it has no abiding character and fails to maintain itself in days of trial and persecution. Cf. also Hebrews 6:4-6; 1 Timothy 1:19, 1 Timothy 1:20; 1 John 2:19. Moreover, it makes mention of a miraculous faith, that is a person's conviction that a miracle will be performed by him or in his behalf. Matthew 8:11-13; Matthew 17:20; Mark 16:17, Mark 16:18; John 11:22, John 11:40; Acts 14:9. This faith may or may not be accompanied with saving faith. Finally, it not only names, but stresses the necessity of, saving faith. This has its seat in the heart and is rooted in the regenerated life. Its seed is implanted in regeneration and gradually blossoms into an active faith. It may be defined as a positive conation, wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, as to the truth of the gospel, and a hearty reliance on the promises of God in Christ. b. The elements of faith. We distinguish three elements in true saving faith. (1) An intellectual element. There is a positive recognition of the truth revealed in the Word of God, a spiritual insight which finds response in the heart of the sinner. It is an absolutely certain knowledge, based on the promises of God. While it need not be comprehensive, it should be sufficient to give the believer some idea of the fundamental truths of the gospel. (2) An emotional element (assent). This is not mentioned separately by the Heidelberg Catechism, because it is virtually included in the knowledge of saving faith. It is characteristic of this knowledge that it carries with it a strong conviction of the importance of its object, and this is assent. The truth grips the soul. (3) An element of the will (trust). This is the crowning element of saving faith. It is a personal trust in Christ as Saviour and Lord, which includes a surrender of the soul as guilty and defiled to Christ, and a reliance on Him as the source of pardon and spiritual life. In the last analysis the object of saving faith is Jesus Christ and the promise of salvation in Him. John 3:16, John 3:18, John 3:36; John 6:40; Acts 10:43; Romans 3:22; Galatians 2:16. This faith is not of human origin, but is a gift of God, 1 Corinthians 12:8, 1 Corinthians 12:9; Galatians 5:22; Ephesians 2:8. But its exercise is a human activity, to which the children of God are repeatedly exhorted, Romans 10:9; 1 Corinthians 2:5; Colossians 1:23; 1 Timothy 1:5; 1 Timothy 6:11. c. The assurance of faith. Methodists maintain that he who believes is at once sure that he is a child of God, but that this does not mean that he is also certain of ultimate salvation, since he may fall from grace. The correct view is that true faith including, as it does, trust in God, naturally carries with it a sense of safety and security, though this may vary in degree. This assurance is not the permanent conscious possession of the believer, He does not ever live the full-orbed life of faith, and as a result is not always conscious of his spiritual riches. He may be swayed by doubts and uncertainties, and is therefore urged to cultivate assurance, 2 Corinthians 13:5; Hebrews 6:11; 2 Peter 1:10; 1 John 3:19. It can be cultivated by prayer, by meditating on the promises of God, and by the development of a truly Christian life. To memorize. Passages showing: a. That God is the author of conversion:

Acts 11:18. "And when they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also hath God granted repentance unto life."

2 Timothy 2:25. "In meekness correcting them that oppose themselves; if peradventure God may give them repentance unto the knowledge of the truth." b. That man co-operates in conversion:

Isaiah 55:7. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return unto Jehovah, and He will have mercy upon him; and to our God, and He will abundantly pardon."

Acts 17:30. "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent." c. The necessity of conversion:

Ezekiel 33:11. "Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord Jehovah, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked turn from his way and live: turn ye, turn ye from your evil ways; for why will ye die, 0 house of Israel?"

Matthew 18:3. "Verily I say unto you, Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." d. Historical faith:

Acts 26:27, Acts 26:28. "King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know that thou believest. And Agrippa said unto Paul, With but little persuasion thou wouldest fain make me a Christian."

James 2:19. "Thou believest that God is one; thou doest well; the demons also believe, and shudder." e. temporal faith:

Matthew 13:20, Matthew 13:21. "And he that was sown upon the rocky places, this is he that heareth the word, and straightway with joy receiveth it; yet hath he not root in himself, but endureth for a while; and when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, straightway he stumbleth."

1 John 2:19. "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us: but they went out, that they might be made manifest that they all are not of us." f. Miraculous faith:

Matthew 17:20 b. "If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove hence to yonder place: and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you."

Acts 14:9-10. "The same heard Paul speaking: who fastening his eyes upon him, and seeing that he had faith to be made whole, said with a loud voice, Stand upright on thy feet. And he leaped up and walked." g. Christ as the object of easing faith:

John 3:16. "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have eternal life." John 6:40. "For this is the will of my Father, that every one that beholdeth the Son, and believeth on Him, should have eternal life; and I will raise him up at the last day." h. The necessity of cultivating assurance:

Hebrews 6:11. "And we desire that each one of you may show the same diligence unto the fullness of hope even to the end."

2 Peter 1:10. "Wherefore, brethren, give the more diligence to make your calling and election sure." For Further Study: a. What kind of repentance is mentioned in Matthew 27:3; 2 Corinthians 7:10 b. b. Can you name biblical persons in whose lives conversion in the sense of an outstanding crisis could hardly be expected? Cf. Jeremiah 1:4; Luke 1:5; 2 Timothy 3:16. c. Can you name some of the great words of assurance found in the Bible? Cf. Hebrews 3:17, Hebrews 3:18; 2 Cor. 4:16 -- 5:1; 2 Timothy 1:12.

Questions for Review l. In how many different senses does the Bible speak of conversion?

2, How do temporary and repeated conversion differ?

8. What is true conversions? What elements does it include?

4. What elements are included in repentance?

5. How do the Roman Catholics conceive of repentance?

6. How does conversion differ from regeneration?

7. Who is the author of conversion? Does man co-operate in it?

8. Is conversion as a sharp crisis always necessary?

9. Of how many different kinds of faith does the Bible speak?

10. What is characteristic of historical, temporal, and miraculous faith?

11. How does temporal faith differ from saving faith?

12. What elements are included in faith? How much knowledge is needed?

13. What is the crowning element of saving faith?

14. Who is the object of saving faith?

15. Does the Christian always have the assurance of salvation?

16. How can he cultivate this assurance?

01.21. Justification

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part V: The Doctrine of the Application of the Work of Redemption Chapter XXI: Justification

1. The Nature and Elements of Justification, Justification may be defined as that legal act of God by which He declares the sinner righteous on the basis of the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. It is not an act or process of renewal, such as regeneration, conversion, or sanctification, and does not affect the condition but the-state of the sinner. It differs from sanctification in several particulars. Justification takes place outside of the sinner in the tribunal of God, removes the guilt of sin, and is an act which is complete at once and for all time; while sanctification takes place in man, removes the pollution of sin, and is a continuous and lifelong process. We distinguish two elements in justification, namely: (a) The forgiveness of sins on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The pardon granted applies to all sins, past, present, and future, and therefore does not admit of repetition, Psalms 103:12; Isaiah 44:22; Romans 5:21; Romans 8:1, Romans 8:32-34; Hebrews 10:14. This does not mean that we need no more pray for forgiveness, for the consciousness of guilt remains, creates a feeling of separation, and makes it necessary to seek repeatedly the comforting assurance of forgiveness, Psalms 25:7; Psalms 32:5; Psalms 51:1; Matthew 6:12; James 5:15; 1 John 1:9. (b) The adoption as children of God. In justification God adopts believers as His children, that is, places them in the position of children and gives them all the rights of children, including the right to an eternal inheritance, Romans 8:17; 1 Peter 1:4. This legal sonship of believers should be distinguished from their moral sonship through regeneration and sanctification. Both are indicated in the following passages: John 1:12, John 1:13; Romans 8:15, Romans 8:16; Galatians 4:5, Galatians 4:6.

2. The Time of Justification. The word 'justification' is not always used in the same sense. Some even speak of a fourfold justification: a justification from eternity, a justification in the resurrection of Christ, a justification by faith, and a public justification in the final judgment. In explanation of this it may be said that in an ideal sense the righteousness of Christ is already accounted to believers in the counsel of redemption, and therefore from eternity, but this is not what the Bible means when it speaks of the justification of the sinner. We must distinguish between what was decreed in the eternal counsel of God and what is realized in the course of history. Again, there is some reason for speaking of a justification in the resurrection of Christ. In a sense it may be said that the resurrection was the justification of Christ, and that in Him the whole body of believers was justified. But this was a general and purely objective transaction, which should not be confused with the personal justification of the sinner. When the Bible speaks of the justification of the sinner, it usually refers to the subjective and personal application and appropriation of the justifying grace of God. The usual representation is that we are justified by faith. This implies that it takes place at the time when we accept Christ by faith. Faith is called the instrument or the appropriating organ of justification. By faith man appropriates, that is, takes unto himself, the righteousness of Christ, on the basis of which he is justified before God. Faith justifies in so far as it takes possession of Christ. Romans 4:5; Galatians 2:16. We should guard against the error of the Roman Catholics

and the Arminians, that man is justified on the basis of his own inherent righteousness, or of his faith. Man's own righteousness or faith can never be the ground of his justification. This can be found only in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, Romans 3:24; Romans 10:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Php 3:9.

3. Objections to the Doctrine of Justification. Various objections are raised to this doctrine. It is said that, if man is justified on the basis of the merits of Christ, he is not saved by grace. But justification, with all that it includes, is a gracious work of God. The gift of Christ, God's reckoning of His righteousness to us, and His dealing with sinners as righteous,-- it is all grace from start to finish. Again, it is said to be unworthy of God to declare sinners righteous. But God does not declare that they are righteous in themselves, but that they are clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. And, finally, it is said that this doctrine is apt to make people indifferent as to their moral life. If they are justified apart from any consideration of works, why should they care for personal piety? But justification lays the foundation for a living relationship with Christ, and this is the surest guarantee for a truly godly life. The man who is really in living union with Christ cannot be morally indifferent. Romans 3:5-8. To memorize. Passages speaking of: a. Justification in general:

Romans 3:24. "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus."

2 Corinthians 5:21. "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf; that we might become the righteousness of God in Him." b. Justification by faith, not by works:

Romans 3:28. "We reckon therefore that a man is justified by faith apart from the works of the law."

Romans 4:5. "But to him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is reckoned for righteousness."

Galatians 2:16. "Yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law: because by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified." c. Justification and the forgiveness of sins:

Psalms 32:1, Psalms 32:2. "Blessed is the man whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered. Blessed is the man to whom Jehovah imputeth not iniquity, and in whose spirit there is no guile."

Acts 13:38, Acts 13:39. "Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this man is proclaimed unto you remission of sins; and by Him every one that believeth is justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." d. Adoption of children, heirs of eternal life:

John 1:12. "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that believe on His name."

Galatians 4:4, Galatians 4:5. "But when the fulness of the time came, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."

Romans 8:17. "And if children, their heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with Him, that we may be also glorified with Him." e. Justification based on the righteousness of Christ:

Romans 3:21, Romans 3:22. "But now apart from the law a righteousness of God hath been manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ unto all them that believe."

Romans 5:18. "So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so though one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life." For Further Study: a. What fruits of justification are mentioned in Romans 5:1-5?

b. Does not James teach that man is justified by works? James 2:21-25.

c. With what objection to the doctrine of justification does Paul deal in Romans 3:5-8?

Questions for Review 1. What is justification?

2. How does it differ from sanctification?

3. What elements does it comprise?

4. In how far are sins forgiven in justification?

5. Why must believers still pray for forgiveness?

6. What is included in the adoption of children?

7. Can we speak of justification from eternity and in the resurrection of Christ?

8. How is faith related to justification?

9. What is the ground of justification? What is the Arminian view?

10. What objections are raised to this doctrine? Can you answer them?

Chapter 24

01.22. Sanctification and Perseverance

Summary of Christian Doctrine Part V: The Doctrine of the Application of the Work of Redemption Chapter XXII: Sanctification and Perseverance The doctrine of justification naturally leads on to that of sanctification. The state of justification calls for a life of sanctification, consecrated to the service of God.

1. Nature and Characteristics of Sanctification. Sanctification may be defined as that gracious and continuous operation of the Holy Spirit by which, He purifies the sinner, renews his whole nature in the image of God, and enables him to perform good works. It differs from justification in that it takes place in the inner life of man, is not a legal but a recreative act, is usually a lengthy process, and never reaches perfection in this life. While it is very decidedly a supernatural work of God, the believer can and should co-operate in it by a diligent use of the means which God has placed at his disposal, 2 Corinthians 7:1; Colossians 3:5-14; 1 Peter 1:22. Sanctification does not consist in a mere drawing out of what is already given in regeneration, but serves to strengthen, to increase, and to fortify the new life. It consists of two parts: the gradual removal of the pollution and corruption of human nature, Romans 6:6; Galatians 5:24, and the gradual development of the new life in consecration to God, Romans 6:4, Romans 6:5; Colossians 2:12; Colossians 3:1, Colossians 3:2; Galatians 2:19. While it takes place in the heart of man, it naturally affects the whole life, Romans 6:12; 1 Corinthians 6:15-20; 1 Thessalonians 6:23. The change in the inner man is bound to carry with it a change in the outer life. That man must co-operate in the work of sanctification follows from the repeated warnings against evils and temptations, Romans 12:9, Romans 12:16, Romans 12:17; 1 Corinthians 6:9, 1 Corinthians 6:10; Galatians 5:16-23, and from the constant exhortations to holy living, Micah 6:8; John 15:4-7; Romans 8:12, Romans 8:13; Romans 12:1, Romans 12:2; Galatians 6:7, Galatians 6:8, Galatians 6:15.

2. The Imperfect Character of Sanctification in This Life. While sanctification affects every part of man, yet the spiritual development of believers remains imperfect in this life. They must contend with sin as long as they live, 1 Kings 8:46; Proverbs 20:9; James 3:2; I John 1:8. Their lives are characterized by a constant warfare between the flesh and the spirit, and even the best of them are still confessing sin, Job 9:3, Job 9:20; Psalms 32:5; Psalms 130:3; Proverbs 20:9; Isaiah 64:6; Daniel 9:7; Romans 7:14; 1 John 1:9, praying for forgiveness, Psalms 51:1, Psalms 51:2; Daniel 9:16; Matthew 6:12, Matthew 6:13; James 5:15, and striving for greater perfection, Romans 7:7-26; Galatians 5:17; Php 3:12-14. This truth is denied by the so-called Perfectionists, who maintain that man can reach perfection in this life. They appeal to the fact that the Bible commands believers to be perfect, Matthew 5:48; 1 Peter 1:16; James 1:4, speaks of some as perfect, Genesis 6:9; Job 1:8; 1 Kings 15:14; Php 3:15, and declares that they who are born of God sin not, 1 John 3:6, John 3:8, John 3:9; John 5:18. But the fact that we must strive for perfection does not prove that some are already perfect. Moreover, the word ’perfect’ does not always mean free from sin. Noah, Job, and Asa are called perfect, but history clearly proves that they were not without sin. And John evidently means either that the new man does not sin, or that believers do not live in sin. He himself says that, if we say that we have no sin, we deceive

ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 1 John 1:8.

3. Sanctification and Good Works. Sanctification naturally leads to a life of good works. These may be called the fruits of sanctification. Good works are not perfect works, but works that spring from the principle of love to God or faith in Him, Matthew 7:17, Matthew 7:18; Matthew 12:33, Matthew 12:35; Hebrews 11:6, that are done in conscious conformity to the revealed will of God, Deuteronomy 6:2; 1 Samuel 15:22; James 2:8, and have as their final aim the glory of God, 1 Corinthians 10:31; Colossians 3:17, Colossians 3:23. Only they who are regenerated by the Spirit of God can perform such good works. This does not mean, however, that the unregenerate cannot do good in any sense of the word. Cf. 2 Kings 10:29, 2 Kings 10:30; 2 Kings 12:2; 2 Kings 14:3; Luke 6:33; Romans 2:14. In virtue of the common grace of God they can perform works that are in external conformity to the law and serve a laudable purpose; but their works are always radically defective, because they are divorced from the spiritual root of love to God, represent no real inner obedience to the law of God, and do not aim at the glory of God. In opposition to the Roman Catholics it should be maintained that the good works of believers are not meritorious, Luke 17:9, Luke 17:10; Ephesians 2:8-10; Titus 3:5, though God promises to reward them with a reward of free grace, 1 Corinthians 3:14; Hebrews 11:26; and in opposition to the Antinomians the necessity of good works must be asserted, Colossians 1:10; 2 Timothy 2:21; Titus 2:14; Hebrews 10:24.

4. Perseverance of the Saints. The expression ’perseverance of the saints’ naturally suggests a continuous activity of believers whereby they persevere in the way of salvation. As a matter of fact, however, the perseverance referred to is less an activity of believers than a work of God, in which believers must participate. Strictly speaking, the assurance of man’s salvation lies in the fact that God perseveres. Perseverance may be defined as that continuous operation of the Holy Spirit in the believer, by which the work of divine grace that is begun in the heart, is continued and brought to completion. This doctrine is clearly taught in Scripture, John 10:28, John 10:29; Romans 11:29; Php 1:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:3; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2 Timothy 4:18. And it is only when we believe in this perseverance of God that we can in this life attain to the assurance of salvation, Hebrews 3:14; Hebrews 6:11; Hebrews 10:22; 2 Peter 1:10. Outside of Reformed circles this doctrine finds no favor. It is said to be contradicted by Scripture, which warns against apostasy, Hebrews 2:1; Hebrews 10:26, exhorts believers to continue in the way of salvation, Matthew 24:13; Colossians 1:23; Hebrews 3:14, and even records cases of apostasy, 1 Timothy 1:19, 1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Timothy 2:17, 2 Timothy 2:18; 2 Timothy 4:10. Such warnings and exhortations would seem to assume the possibility of falling away, and such cases would seem to prove it completely. But as a matter of fact the warnings and exhortations prove only that God works mediately and wants man to co-operate in the work of perseverance: and there is no proof that the apostates mentioned were real believers. Cf. Romans 9:6; 1 John 2:19; Revelation 3:1. To memorize: Passages to prove: a. Sanctification as a work of God:

1 Thessalonians 5:23. "And the God of peace himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame, at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Hebrews 2:11. "For both He that sanetifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause He is not ashamed to call them brethren." b. Man’s co-operation in sanctification:

2 Corinthians 7:1. "Having therefore these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God."

Hebrews 12:14. "Follow after peace with all men, and the sanctification without which no man shall see the Lord." c. The mortification of the old man:

Romans 6:6. "Knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away, so that we should no longer be in bondage to sin."

Galatians 6:24 : "And they that are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof." d. The quickening of the new man:

Ephesians 4:24. "And put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth."

Colossians 3:10. "And have put on the new man, that is being renewed unto knowledge after the image of Him that created him." e. Sanctification incomplete in this life:

Romans 7:18. "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me, but to do that which is good is not."

Php 3:12. "Not that I have already obtained, or am already made perfect: but I press on, if so be that I may lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus." f. The nature of good works:

1 Samuel 15:22. "And Samuel said, Hath Jehovah as great delight in burnt-offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of Jehovah? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."

1 Corinthians 10:31. "Whether therefore ye eat or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God."

Hebrews 11:6. "And without faith it is impossible to be well pleasing to Him; for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him." g. Perseverance of the saints:

John 10:28, John 10:29. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out of my hand. My Father, who hath given them unto me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of my Father’s hand."

2 Timothy 1:12. "For which cause I suffer also these things: yet am I not ashamed; for I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

2 Timothy 4:18. "The Lord will deliver me from every evil work, and will save me unto His heavenly kingdom: to whom be the glory for ever and ever." For Further Study: a. Can you infer anything from the following passages as to the time of complete sanctification? Php 3:21; Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 14:5; Revelation 21:27? b. What parts of man does sanctification affect according to Jeremiah 31:34; Php 2:13; Galatians 5:24; Hebrews 9:14? c. What does the word ’perfect’ (cf. Auth. Ver.) mean in the following passages: 1 Corinthians 2:6; 1 Corinthians 3:1, 1 Corinthians 3:2; Hebrews 5:14; 2 Timothy 3:16?

Questions for Review 1. What is sanctification, and how does it differ from justification?

2. Is it a work of God or of man?

3. Of what two parts does sanctification consists?

4. What proof is there that it is incomplete in this life?

5. Who deny this and on what ground? How can you answer them?

6. What are good works in the strict sense of the word?

7. In how far can the unregenerate perform good works?

8. Are good works meritorious or not? Are we not taught that they are rewarded?

9. 1n what sense are good works necessary?

10. What is meant by the perseverance of the saints?

11. How can this doctrine be proved?

Chapter 25

02.00.1. Introduction to the New Testament

Introduction to the New Testament By

Louis Berkof

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02.00.3. Preface

Preface This little work on New Testament Introduction is the result of labor done in and for the class-room, and is primarily intended for my own students. It is not and does not pretend to be a work of original research, but depends in a large measure on the labors of such men as Davidson, Reuss, Weiss, Westcott, Lightfoot, Godet, Holtzmann, Julicher, Zahn, e.a. The indebtedness to these will be evident from its pages. In method of treatment I have partly gone my own way, both in virtue of principles that are not generally recognized in works of Introduction and for practical considerations. As far as the limits of the work allowed, the directions given by Dr. Kuyper in his Encyclopaedia of Sacred Theology have been followed; not only the human but also the divine side of the Sacred Scriptures has been treated.

It has been my constant endeavor in writing this book, to make it a work that would introduce the students to the books of the New Testament, as they have in fact been transmitted to the Church, and not as some critic or other would have them be. Hence critical questions, though not disregarded, do not loom as large on its pages as they often do in works on Introduction; the positive constructive element has a decided precedence over the apologetic; and the human factor that operated in the origin and composition of the Scriptures, is not studied to the neglect of the divine. A limited number of copies was printed, partly in deference to the expressed wish of some of my present and past students, and partly because I desire to use it as a text-book in the future, there being none of the smaller works on Introduction, such as those of Dods, Pullan, Kerr, Barth, Peake e. a., however excellent some of them may be in their own way, that gave me what I desired. If the book may in some small measure be instrumental in leading others to a greater appreciation and an ever better understanding of the New Testament writings, I shall be very grateful indeed.

L. BERKHOF.

Grand Rapids, Mich., November 30, 1915.

02.00.4. Prolegomena

Prolegomena 1. NAME AND IDEA. The name Introduction or Isagogics (from the Greek ε■σαγωγ■) did not always denote what it does today. As it is used by the monk Adrianus (circa 440) and by Cassiodorus (circa 570), it designates a conglomeration of rhetorical archaeological, geographical and historical matter such as might be helpful in the interpretation of Scripture. In course of time the connotation of the word changed. Michaelis (1750) was the first one to employ it in something like its present sense, when he entitled his work, devoted to the literary historical questions of the New Testament, Einleitung in die gottlichen Schriften des neuen Bundes. The study of Introduction was gradually limited to an investigation of the origin, the composition, the history, and the significance of the Bible as a whole (General Introduction), or of its separate books (Special Introduction). But as a designation of this discipline the name Introduction did not meet with general approval. It was pointed out—and correctly so—that the name is too comprehensive, since there are other disciplines that introduce to the study of the Bible; and that it does not express the essential character of the discipline, but only one of its practical uses.

Several attempts have been made to supply a name that is more in harmony with the central contents and the unifying principle of this study. But opinions differed as to the essential character of the discipline. Some scholars, as Reuss, Credner and Hupfeld, emphasizing its historical nature, would designate it by a name something like that already employed by Richard Simon in 1678, when he styled his work, “Critical History of the Old Testament. Thus Hupfeld says: “Der eigentliche und allein richtige Name der Wissenschaft in ihrem heutigen Sinn ist demnach Geschichte der heiligen Schrif ten Alten und Neuen Testaments.” Begriff und Methode des sogenannten biblischen Finleitung p. 12. Reuss arranged his work entirely on this principle. It was objected however, by several scholars that a history of the Biblical literature is now, and perhaps for all time an impossibility and that such a treatment necessarily leads to a co-ordination of the canonical and the apocryphal books. And this is just what we find in the History of Reuss. Hence the great majority of New Testament scholars, as Bleek, Weiss, Davidson, Holtzmann, Julicher, Zahn e.a. prefer to retain the old name, either with or without the qualification, “historical-critical.”

Another and important stricture on the name suggested by Hupfeld, is that it loses sight of the theological character of this discipline. Holtzmann correctly says: “Als Glied des Organismus der theologischen Wissenschaften ist die biblische Einleitung allerdings nur vom Begriffe des Kanons aus zu begreif en, nur in ihm findet sie ihre innere Einheit, “Historisch-critische Finleitung in das Neue Testament p. 11. This special consideration also leads Kuyper to prefer the name Special Canonics. Encyclopaedie der Heilige Godgeleerdheid III p. 22 ff. Ideally this name is probably the best; it is certainly better than the others, but for practical reasons it seems preferable to abide by the generally recognized name Introduction. There is no serious objection to this, if we but remember its deficiency, and bear in mind that verba valent usu.

2. FUNCTION.

What is the proper function of this discipline? According to De Wette it must answer the questions: “Was ist die Bibel, und wie ist sie geworden was sie ist ?” Hupfeld objects to the first question that it has no place in a historical inquiry; hence he would change it a little and state the problem as follows: “Was waren die unter den Namen des Bibel vereinigten Schriften ursprunglich, und wie sind sie geworden was sie jetzt sind ?” Begriff u. Meth. p. 13. It is now generally understood and admitted that the study must investigate the questions of the authorship, the composition, the history, the purpose and the canonicity of the different books of the Bible. A difference of opinion becomes apparent, however, as soon as we ask, whether the investigation should be limited to the canonical books or should include the Apocrypha as well. The answer to that question will necessarily depend on ones standpoint. They who regard Introduction as a purely historical study of Hebrew and Old Christian literature, will hold with Raibiger and Reuss that the apocryphal books must also receive due consideration. On the other hand, they who desire to maintain the theological character of this discipline and believe that it finds its unity in the idea of the canon, will exclude the Apocrypha from the investigation. A similar difference obtains with reference to the question, whether it is only the human or also the divine side of the canonical books that should be the object of study. It is perfectly obvious that, if the discipline be regarded as a purely historical one, the divine factor that operated in the composition of the books of the Bible and that gives them their permanent canonical significance, cannot come in consideration. The Word of God must then be treated like all purely human compositions. This is the stand taken by nearly all writers on Introduction, and Hupfeld believes that even so it is possible to maintain the theological character of the discipline. Begriff u. Meth. p. 17. It appears to us, however, that this is impossible, and with Kuyper we hold that we should not only study the human, but should also have regard to the divine side of the Biblical books, notably to their inspiration and canonical significance.

Lastly the conception of the final aim of this study also varies. Many scholars are of the opinion that it is the final purpose of Introduction to determine in a historico-critical way what part of the Biblical writings are credible and therefore really constitute the Word of God. Human reason is placed as an arbiter over the divine Revelation. This, of course, cannot be the position of those who believe that the Bible is the Word of God. This belief is our starting point and not our goal in the study of Introduction. Thus we begin with a theological postulate, and our aim is to set forth the true character of Scripture, in order to explain, why the Church universal honors it as the Word of God; to strengthen the faith of believers; and to vindicate the claims of the canonical books over against the assaults of Rationalism. To define: Introduction is that Bibliological discipline that investigates the origin, composition, history and purpose of the Scriptural writings, on their human side; and their inspiration and canonical significance, on the divine side.

3. LEADING PRINCIPLES.

There are certain fundamental principles that guide us in our investigation, which it is desirable to state at the outset, in order that our position may be perfectly clear. For the sake of brevity we do not seek to establish them argumentatively.

1. For us the Bible as a whole and in all its parts is the very Word of God, written by men indeed, but organically inspired by the Holy Spirit; and not the natural product of the religious development of men, not merely the expression of the subjective religious consciousness of believers. Resting, as it ultimately does, on the testimony of the Holy Spirit, no amount of historical investigation can

shake this conviction.

2. This being our position, we unflinchingly accept all that the various books of the Bible tell us concerning their authorship, destination, composition, inspiration, etc. Only in cases where the text is evidently corrupt, will we hesitate to accept their dicta as final. This applies equally to all parts of the Word of God.

3. Since we do not believe that the Bible is the result of a purely natural development, but regard it as the product of supernatural revelation, a revelation that often looks beyond the immediate present, we cannot allow the so-called zeitgeschichtliche arguments the force which they are often supposed to have.

4. While it is the prevailing habit of many New Testament scholars to discredit what the early Church fathers say respecting the books of the Bible, because of the uncritical character of their work, we accept those early traditions as trustworthy until they are clearly proven unreliable. The character of those first witnesses warrants this position.

5. We regard the use of working-hypotheses as perfectly legitimate within certain limits. They may render good service, when historical evidence fails, but even then may not go contrary to the data at hand, and the problematic character of the results to which they lead must always be borne in mind.

6. It is not assumed that the problems of New Testament Introduction are insignificant, and that all the difficulties that present themselves can easily be cleared up. Whatever our standpoint, whatever our method of procedure in studying these problems, we shall sometimes have to admit our ignorance, and often find reason to confess that we know but in part.

4. ENCYCLOPAEDIC PLACE

There is little uniformity in Theological Encyclopaedias with respect to the proper place of this discipline. They all correctly place it among the Exegetical (Bibliological) group of Theological disciplinae, but its relation to the other studies of that group is a matter of dispute. The usual arrangement is that of Hagenbach, followed in our country by Schaff, Crooks and Hurst and Weidner, viz.: Biblical Philology, dealing with the words, and Biblical Archaeology, in its broadest sense, with the things of the Bible; Biblical Introduction, treating of the fortunes, and Biblical Criticism, supplying the test of Scripture; Biblical Hermeneutics, relating to the theory, and Biblical Exegesis, pertaining to the practice of interpretation. The order of Rabiger is unusual: Hermeneutics, Linguistics, Criticism, Antiquities, Biblical History, Isagogics, Exegesis, and Biblical theology. The disposition of Kuyper and Cave is preferable to either one of these. They place Introduction (Canonics) first, as pertaining to the formal side of Scripture as a book and then let the studies follow that have reference to the formal and material side of the contents of the Bible.

5. HISTORICAL REVIEW.

Although the beginnings of New Testament Isagogics are already found in Origen, Dionysus and Eusebius; and in the time of the Reformation some attention was devoted to it by Paginus, Sixtus of Siene and Serarius among the Roman Catholics; by Walther of the Lutherans; and by the Reformed scholars, Rivetus and Heidegger;—Richard Simon is generally regarded as the father of this study. His works were epoch-making in this respect, though they had reference primarily to the

language of the New Testament. He minimized the divine element in Scripture. Michaelis, who in his, Einleitung in die gottlichen Schriften des neuen Bundes, 1750, produced the first Introduction in the modern sense, though somewhat dependent on Simon, did not altogether share his rationalistic views. Yet in the succeeding editions of his work he gradually relaxed on the doctrine of inspiration, and attached no value to theTestimonium Spiritus Sancti. The next significant contribution to the science was made by Semler in his, Abhandlung von freier Untersuchung des Kanons, 1771-75. He broke with the doctrine of inspiration and held that the Bible was not, but contained the Word of God, which could be discovered only by the inner light. All questions of authenticity and credibility had to be investigated voraussetzungslos. Eichhorn also departed decidedly from traditional views and was the first to fix attention on the Synoptic problem, for which he sought the solution in his Urevangelium, 1804-27. At the same time the Johannine problem was placed in the foreground by several scholars, especially by Bretschneider, 1820. An acute defender of the traditional views arose in the Roman Catholic scholar Hug. who fought the rationalistic critics with their own weapons.

Meanwhile the Mediating school made its appearance under the leadership of Schleiermacher. The critics belonging to that school sought a mean between the positions of Rationalism and the traditional views. They were naturally divided into two sections, the naturalistic wing, inclining towards the position of Semler and Eichhorn; and the evangelical wing, leaning decidedly toward traditionalism. Of the first class De Wette was the ablest exponent, though his work was disappointing as to positive results; while Credner, following in general the same line, emphasized the historical idea in the study of Introduction. The other wing was represented by Guericke, Olshausen and Neander. The Tubingen school of New Testament criticism took its rise with F. C. Baur, 1792-1860 who applied the Hegelian principle of development to the literature of the New Testament. According to him the origin of the New Testament, too, finds its explanation in the three-fold process of thesis, antithesis and synthesIsa. There was action, reaction and compromise. Paul defended his position in the four great epistles (Romans, I and II Corinthians and Galatians), the only genuine productions of the apostle. This position is assailed by the Apocalypse, the sole work of John. And all the other writings of the New Testament were written by others than their reputed authors in the interest of reconciliation, the fourth Gospel and the first Epistle of John issuing in the blending of the different parties. Among the immediate followers of Baur we have especially Zeller, Schwegler and Kostlin. The further adherents of the school, such as Hilgenfeld, Hoisten and Davidson, modified the views of Baur considerably; while later German scholars, as Pfleiderer, Hausrath, Holtsmann, Weizsacker and Julicher, broke with the distinctive Tubingen theory and indulged independently in rationalistic criticism. The wildest offshoot of the Tubingen school was Bruno Bauer, who rejected even the four epistles regarded as genuine by F. C. Baur. He had no followers in Germany, but of late his views found support in the writings of the Dutch school of Pierson, Naber, Loman and Van Manen, and in the criticism of the Swiss scholar Steck.

Opposition to the radicalism of the Tubingen school became apparent in two directions. Some scholars, as Bleek, Ewald Reuss without intending a return to the traditional standpoint discarded the subjective element of the Tubingen theory, the Hegelian principle of thesis, antithesis and synthesis, in connection with the supposed second century struggle between Petrine and Pauline factions. Ritschl also broke away from the Tubingen tendency, but substituted an equally

subjective principle of criticism by applying his favorite Werthurtheile to the authentication of the books of the Bible. He had, as he claimed, no interest in saving mere objective statements. What had for him the value of a divine revelation was regarded as authentic. Some of his most prominent followers are Harnack, Schurer and Wendt. An evangelical reaction against the subjective Tubingen vagaries also made its appearance in Ebrard, Dietlein, Thiersch, Lechier and the school of Hofmann, who himself defended the genuineness of all the New Testament books. His disciples are Luthardt, Grau, Nosgen and Th. Zahn. The works of Beischlag and B. Weiss are also quite conservative. Moreover the writings of such men as Lightfoot, Westcott, Ellicott, Godet, Dods, Pullan e.a. maintain with great ability the traditional position respecting the books of the New Testament.

6. SELECT LITERATURE

Including the Works referred to in the Text. In order that the list may serve as a guide for students, both the edition and the value of the books are indicated. a.BOOKS ON INTRODUCTION, BIBLE DICTIONARIES AND RELATED WORKS.

ALEXANDER, The Canon of the Old and New Testaments, Philadelphia 1851. Conservative.

ANDREWS, The Life of our Lord upon the Earth, New York 1894. Excellent for chronological and historical discussions.

BAIJON, Geschiedenis van de Boeken des Nieuwen Verbonds, Groningen 1901. Scholarly with a liberal point of view.

BARTH, Finleitung in das Neue Testament, Gutersloh 1908; 2d edit. since published. Conservative and good.

BAUR, Church History of the first three Centuries, London 1878-79. Brilliant but written with a rationalistic tendency.

BERNARD, The Progress of Doctrine in the New Testament, New York 1864; 4th edit. 1878. A conservative and valuable work.

BLASS, Crammatik des neutestamentlichen Griechisch, Gottingen 1911. Supercedes Winer and Buttmann, but does not render them worthless. An excellent work.

BLEEK, Einleitung in das Neue Testament, 4th edit. by Mangold, Berlin 1886. Eng. transl. by W. Urwick, London 1870. One of the best works on N. T. Introd. Standpoint, moderately liberal.

BUCKLEY, Introduction to the Synoptic Problem, London 1912. Proceeds on the Combinations-hypothese.

CLARK, GEO. W., Harmony of the Acts of the Apostles, Philadelphia 1897. A very useful work.

DAVIDSON, S., Introduction to the Study of the New Testament, London 1894. Scholarly, but extremely rationalistic and verbose.

DAVIS, A Dictionary of the Bible, Philadelphia 1903. The best one volume Dictionary of the Bible.

DEISSMANN, Light from the Ancient East, London 1911. Very valuable for the new light it sheds on the language of the N. T.

DEISSMANN, St. Paul, a Study in Social and Religious History, London 1912. A vivid and delightful portrayal of Paul and his world.

DODS, An Introduction to the New Testament, London. A useful manual.

FARRAR, The Life and Work of St. Paul, London 1879. Instructive and written in a beautiful style, but not always characterized by sobriety.

GODET, Introduction to the New Testament, I Pauline Epistles, Edinburgh 1894; II The Collection of the Four Gospels and the Gospel of St. Matthew, Edinburgh 1899. Scholarly and conservative; devotes much space to the contents of the books.

GODET, Bijbelstudien over het Nieuwe Testament, Amsterdam. Contains introductions to the Gospels and the Apocalypse.

GREGORY, D. S., Why Four Gospels, New York 1907. The work of a conservative scholar, valuable in differentiating the Gospels.

GREGORY, C. R., Canon and Text of the New Testament, New York 1907. A scholarly and moderately conservative work.

HASTINGS, Dictionary of the Bible, dealing with its Language, Literature and Contents, New York 1900-04. Contains valuable introductions to the books of the Bible. Those pertaining to the New Testament are characterized by greater moderation than those relating to the Old; the latter are often extremely rationalistic, the former usually moderately conservative.

HAUSRATH, History of New Testament Times: The Life of Jesus 2 vols., Edinburgh 1878-80; The Life of the Apostles 4 vols., Edinburgh 1895. A learned work, full of information, but extremely rationalistic.

HILL, Introduction to the Life of Christ, New York 1911. A concise statement of the problems that enter into a study of the Life of Christ.

HOLDSWORTH, Gospel Origins. New York 1913. Though differing somewhat from the work of Buckley, it also advocates the Combinations-hypothese.

HOLTZMANN, Historisch-critische Finleitung in das Neue Testament, Freiburg 1892. Perhaps the most important representative of the rationalistic position in New Testament study. Very learned, and rich in historical matter.

JULICHER, Einleitung in des Neue Testament, Leipzig 1906. A scholarly work, written from the rationalistic point of view.

KING, The Theology of Christ’s Teaching, New York 1903. Conservative and very instructive; weak in genetic treatment.

KERR, Introduction to New Testament Study, New York 1892. A conservative manual.

KUYPER, Encyclopaedie der Heilige Godgeleerdheid, Amsterdam 1894.

LUTHARDT, St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel, Edinburgh 1875. An able conservative defense, containing a large Bibliography by C. R. Gregory.

MCGIFFERT, The Apostolic Age, New York 1910. A scholarly but rationalizing work.

MOFFAT, An Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament. New York 1911. Very able, but vitiated by rationalistic principles.

NORTON, Genuineness of the Gospels (abridged), Boston 1890. An able defense of the Gospels. The author adheres to the Traditions-hypothese.

PEAKE, A Critical Introduction to the New Testament, New York 1910. Well written, able, but following the line of negative criticism.

PULLAN, The Books of the New Testament, London 1901. A very useful manual; conservative.

PURVES, Christianity in the Apostolic Age, New York 1900. The work of a scholar. In point of view the antipode of McGiffert s book.

RAMSAY, Historical Commentary on the Galatians, London 1899.

RAMSAY, St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen, London 1903.

RAMSAY, The Church in the Roman Empire, London 1893.

RAMSAY, Luke the Physician (and other Studies), New York 1908. The works of Ramsay have a charm of their own: they are original and informing, based on large historical and arch~eological knowledge, and, on the whole, written in a conservative spirit.

REAL-ENCYOLOPAEDIE, Hauck, Leipzig 1896-1909. Contains very valuable material for New Testament study, but many of its articles are marred by their destructive tendency.

REUSS, History of the New Testament, Boston 1884. The work of a great scholar; its method is peculiar; its standpoint moderately rationalistic.

SALMON, Historical Introduction to the Books of the New Testament, New York 1889. The antipode of Davidson’s Introduction; very able, but suffering from want of method.

SCHURER, Geschichte des Jiidischen Volkes im Zeitalter Jesu Christi, Leipzig 1901-1911. The greatest work on the subject, but, on account of its liberal tendency, to be used with care.

SIMCOX, Writers of the New Testament, London 1890. Contains a lucid discussion of the style of the N. T. writers.

STEVENS, Johannine Theology, New York 1894.

STEVENS, Pauline Theology, New York 1903. Both works are stimulating and helpful, but must be used with discrimination.

URQUHART, The Bible, its Structure and Purpose, New York 1904.

URQUHART, The New Biblical Guide, London. Written by a staunch defender of the Bible, in popular style. Often helpful, especially the last work, in clearing up difficulties; but sometimes too

confident and fanciful.

VAN MELLE, Inleiding tot het Nieuwe Testament, Utrecht 1908. A very good manual; conservative in spirit.

VON SODEN, Urchristliche Literaturgeschichte, Berlin 1905. Rationalistic.

WEISS, Manual of Introduction to the New Testament, London 1888. One of the best Introductions to the New Testament. Moderately conservative.

WEISS, Theology of the New Testament, Edinburgh 1892-3. On the whole the best work on the subject.

WESTCOTT, Introduction to the Study of the Gospels, Boston 1902. Very helpful in differentiating the Gospels; defends the Traditions-hypothese.

WESTCOTT, The Canon of the New Testament, London 1881. One of the best works on the Canon of the N.T.

WESTCOTT and HORT, The New Testament in the original Greek; Introduction and Appendix, New York 1882. The indispensible companion to the Greek Testament, if one desires the reasons for the readings adopted.

WREDE, The Origin of the New Testament, London 1909. Very brief and radical.

WRIGHT, A Synopsis of the Gospels in Greek, London 1903. The most able presentation of the Traditions- hypothese.

ZAHN, Einleitung in das Neue Testament, Leipzig 1900; 3. Aufi. 1906; Eng. transl. Edinburgh 1909. A work of immense learning; the best on N. T. Introduction from the conservative side. b.COMMENTARIES.

ALEXANDER, Commentaries on Matthew, New York 1867; Mark, New York 1870; Acts 4 th edit. New York 1884. Valuable works, containing sound learning and thoroughly conservative.

ALFORD, The Greek Testament, Cambridge 1894; Vol I, 7th edit.; Vol. II, 7th edit.; Vol. III, 5th edit.; Vol. IV, 5th edit. A truly great work; brief, lucid, scholarly, conservative, embodying the results of German scholarship, yet with a measure of independence, though in some parts leaning rather much on Meyer. Still very useful, though not up to date. Contains valuable Prolegomena.

BARDE, Kommentaar op de Handelingen der Apostelen, Kampen 1910. A good commentary, written in a conservative spirit.

BEET, Commentaries on Romans , 10 th edit.;I and 2 Corinthians , 7 th edit.; Galatians , 6 th edit.; and Ephesians, Philip pians, Colossians , 3 d edit., all London 1891-1903. Good commentaries by a Methodist scholar; conservative, but must be used with care, especially in passages pertaining to election, the doctrine of the last things, e. a.

BIESTERVELD, De Brief van Paulus aan de Colossensen, Kampen 1908. An excellent work.

BROWN, J., Expositions of Galatians, Edinburgh 1853; Hebrews, Edinburgh 1862; and I Peter, Edinburgh 1866. Sound works of a Puritan divine, learned but somewhat diffuse.

CALVIN, Commentaries in Opera, Vols. 24-55. There is a fairly good English translation of the Calvin Translation Society. Calvin was undoubtedly the greatest exegete among the Reformers. The value of his exegetical work is generally recognized by present day scholars.

EADIE, Commentaries on Galatians, 1869; Ephesians, 1883; Colossians, 1884; Philippians, 1884; Thessalonians, 1877, all at Edinburgh. Able and reliable works of a Presbyterian scholar.

EDWARDS T. C., Commentary on 1 Corinthians , 3 d edit. London 1897. A good and learned commentary, though sometimes a little over-strained.

ELLICOTT, Commentaries on I Corinthians, Andover 1889; Galatians, 1867; Ephesians, 1884; Philippians and Colossians, 1861; Thessalonians, 1866; Pastoral Epistles, 1869, all at London. Very able grammatical commentaries; conservative.

Expositor s Greek Testament, London 1912. A very scholarly work on the order of Alford s Greek Testament; being more recent, it supersedes the latter. Standpoint is on the whole moderately conservative; it contains valuable introductions.

GODET, Commentaries on Luke, 1875; John, 1877; Romans, -1886; I Corinthians, 1886-7, all at Edinburgh. Very able and reliable.

GREYDANUS, De Openbaring des Heeren aan Johannes, Doesburg. A good popular commentary.

HODGE, Commentaries on Romans , 2 d edit. 1886; I Corinthians, 1860; II Corinthians, 1860; Ephesians, 1886. Admirable commentaries, especialy the one on Romans.

International Critical Commentary, New York, in course of publication. Some volumes of exceptional value; others of inferior merit. Characterized by a rationalistic tendency, especially the volumes on the 0. T.

LANGE, A Commentary on the Holy Scriptures, Critical, Doctrinal and Homiletical. On the whole a useful work; New Testament far better than the Old. Often suffers for want of clearness, and sometimes loses itself in mystical speculations. Its Homiletical material has little value.

LIGHTFOOT, Commentaries on Galatians, 1895; Philippians, 1895; Colossians and Philemon, 1895, all at London. Very able commentaries, containing valuable dissertations. Conservative.

MEYER (Lunemann, Huther and Dusterdieck), Commentary on the New Testament, New York 1890. Meyer is recognized as the prince of grammatical commentators. Parts of Vol. 8 and Vols. 9, 10, 11, contain the work of Lunemann, Huther and Dusterdieck, which though good, is not up to the standard of Meyer s work. Standpoint: moderately conservative. Last German edition by Weiss, Haupt e. a. is no more the work of Meyer.

OLSHAUSEN, Commentary on the New Testament, New York 1860-72. Quite good. Excells in organic interpretation of Scripture; but its mysticism often runs wild.

Pulpit Commentary, London 1880 sqq. This, as its name indicates, is far more homiletical than exegetical; yet it contains some real exposition.

STIER, The Words of the Lord Jesus, New York 1864. Very useful, but often fanciful and diffuse; devout, but frequently characterized by too great a desire to find a deeper meaning in Scripture.

STRACK UND ZOCKLER, Kurzgefasster Commentar zu den Schriften des Alten und Neuen Testaments, sowie zu den Apokryphen, Munchen 1886-93. One of the best recent German commentaries. Moderately conservative.

VINCENT, Word Studies in the New Testament, New York 1887-91. Contains some useful material.

WESTCOTT, Commentaries on the Gospel of John, 1890; the Epistle to the Hebrews, 1892; and the Epistles of John, 1905, all at London. All very scholarly and reliable.

ZAHN, Kommentar zum Neuen Testament (several co-laborators), Erlangen 1903 sqq., still in course of publication. Will constitute one of the best conservative commentaries of the New Testament.

02.01. The Gospels in General

The Gospels in General THE TITLE OF THE GOSPELS The shortest form of the title is κατ■ Ματθ■ιον, κατ■ M■ρχον, etc. The Textus Receptus and some of the Mnn. have τ■ κατ■ Ματθ■ιον ε■ανγγ■λιον; but the greater part of the Mjj. read ε■ανγγ■λιον κατ■ Ματθ■ιον, etc. The word ε■ανγγ■λιον passed through three stages in the history of its use. In the older Greek authors it signified a reward for bringing good tidings; also, a thank offering for good tidings brought. Next in later Greek it indicated the good news itself. And finally it was employed to denote the books in which the gospel of Jesus Christ is presented historic form. It is used very extensively in the New Testament, and always in the second sense, signifying the good news of God, the message of salvation. This meaning is also retained in the title of the gospels. The first trace of the word as indicating a written gospel is found in the didache, the Teaching of the Twelve Apostles, discovered in 1873 and in all probability composed between the years 90 and 100 A. D. This contains the following exhortation in 15:3: “And reprove one another not in wrath but in peace, as ye have it in the Gospel. Here the word ευανγγελιον evidently refers to a written record. It is very explicitly and repeatedly applied to a written account of the life of Christ about the middle of the second century. The plural euanggelia, signifying the four Gospels, is first found in Justin Martyr, about 152 A. D. The expression κατ■ Ματθ■ιον, κατ■ M■ρχον, etc., has often been misinterpreted. Some maintained that κατ■ simply indicated a genitive relation so that we should read: the Gospel of Matthew, the Gospel of Mark, etc. But if this is the idea intended, why was not the simple genitive used, just as it is employed by Paul, when he expresses a similar idea, τ■ ε■ανγγ■λι■ν μου, Romans 2:16; Romans 16:25? Moreover, it cannot be maintained that the preposition kata is equivalent to the Hebrew Lamed of possession, for the Septuagint never renders this by κατ■. Others inferred from the use of this expression that the Gospels were not written by the person named but were shaped after the Gospel as they preached it. But on this interpretation it seems very peculiar that the second and third Gospels were not called κατ■ Π■τρον and κατ■ Πα■λον, seeing that they were fashioned after their type of preaching. The expression must be explained from the Church’s consciousness that there is but one Gospel of Jesus Christ, and indicates that in these writings we have that Gospel, as ti was shaped (i. e. in writing) by the persons whose names they bear. That the early Church caught the idea of the unity of the Gospel is quite evident. It is true, the plural of ευανγγελιον is sometimes employed, but the singular prevails. Justin Martyr speaks of the Memoirs that are called Gospels, but he also expresses himself thus: “the precepts in what is called the Gospel,” “it is written in the Gospel.” Irenaeus in one of his writings states his theme as: “The Gospel is essentially fourfold.” Clement of Alexandria speaks of “the Law, the Prophets and the Gospel,” and Augustine, of “the four Gospels, or rather, the four books of the one Gospel.” The English word Gospel is derived from the Anglo Saxon godspell, composed of god=God and spel=story, thus indicating the story of the life of God in human flesh. It is not improbable, however, that the original form of the Anglo-Saxon word was godspell, from god=good and spel=story, this being a literal translation of the Greek ε■ανγγ■λιον. It denotes the good tidings of salvation in Christ for a perishing world. THE NUMBER OF THE GOSPELS RECOGNIZED BY THE EARLY CHURCH In view of the fact that the first Christian

century produced many Gospels besides those which are included in our canon, and that many at the present day deny the authority of some or all of our Gospels, it is important to know, how many the early Church received as canonic. The apostolic fathers, though often quoting the Gospels do not mention their authors, nor do they enumerate them. They testify to the substance and canonicity of the Gospels therefore, but not, except indirectly, to their authenticity and number. In all probability the earliest evidence that the Church of the first ages accepted the four Gospels that we now possess as canonic, is furnished by the Peshito, which most likely dates from the first half of the second century. And being a translation, it points to the fact that even before its origin our four Gospels were received into the canon, while all others were left out. Another early witness is found in the Muratorian Fragment, a mutilated work of which the real character cannot now be determined, and that was probably written about 170 A. D. It commences with the last words of a sentence that seemingly belongs to a description of Marks Gospel, and then tells us that “Luke’s Gospel stands third in order, having been written by Luke, the physician, the companion of Paul.” After making this statement it proceeds to assign the fourth place to “the Gospel of John, a disciple of the Lord.” The conclusion seems perfectly warranted that the first two Gospels, of which the description is lost, are those of Matthew and Mark. An important witness, really the first one to a fourfold Gospel, i. e. to a Gospel that is four and yet is one, is Tatian, the Assyrian. His Diatessaron was the first harmony of the Gospels. The exact date of its composition is not known; the meaning of its name is obviously [the Gospel]by the Four. This, no doubt, points to the fact that it was based on four Gospels, and also implies that these four were our canonical Gospels, since they constituted the only collection in existence that needed no other description than “the Four.” The testimony of Eusebius is in harmony with this when he says “Tatian, the former leader of the Encratites, having put together in some strange fashion a combination and collection of the Gospels, gave it the name of the Diatessaron, and the work is still partially current.” Church History, IV, 29. Very important testimony to our four Gospels is found in the writings of Irenaeus (c. 120-200) and of Tertullian (c. 150-130). The former was a disciple of Polycarp, who in turn had enjoyed the personal instruction of the apostle John. He preached the Gospel to the Gauls and in 178 succeeded Pothinus as bishop of Lyons. In one of his books he has a long chapter entitled: “Proofs that there can be neither more nor fewer than four Evangelists.” Looking at the Gospels as a unit, he called them “the Gospel with four Faces.” And he searched to find mystic reasons for this quadruple form, thus showing how strongly he and his age were persuaded that there were but four canonical Gospels. He compares the quadriform Gospel (τετρ■μορφον) to the four regions of the earth, to the four universal spirits, to the cherubim with four faces, etc. The testimony of Tertullian is equally explicit. This famous church father received a liberal education at Rome, lived on in heathen darkness until about his thirtieth or fortieth year, when he was converted and entered the ministry. Embittered by the treatment he received at the hands of the Church, he went into the fold of the Montanists about the beginning of the third century. He wrote numerous works in defense of the Christian religion. In his work against Marcion he says, after stating that the Gospel of Luke had been maintained from its first publication: “The same authority of the apostolic churches will uphold the other Gospels which we have in due succession through them and according to their usage, I mean those of [the apostles] Matthew and John; although that which was published by Mark may also be maintained to be Peters, whose interpreter Mark was: for the narrative of Luke also is generally ascribed to Paul: since it is allowable that that which scholars publish should be regarded as their masters work.” Just as those that went before him

Tertullian appealed to the testimony of antiquity as proving the canonicity of our four Gospels and the other Scriptural books; and his appeal was never gainsaid. Another significant testimony is that of Origin, the great teacher of Alexandria of whom Eusebius records that in the first book of his commentaries on the Gospel of Matthew he asserts that he knows of only four Gospels, as follows: “I have learnt by tradition concerning the four Gospels, which alone are uncontroverted in the Church of God spread under heaven, that according to Matthew, who was once a publican but afterwards an apostle of Jesus Christ, was written first; . . . that according to Mark second; . . . that according to Luke third; . . . that according to John last of all.” Church History VI, 25. Eusebius himself, who was the first historian of the Christian Church, in giving a catalogue of the New Testament writings, says: “First then we must place the holy quaternion of the Gospels.” From the testimony which we have now reviewed the conclusion seems perfectly warranted that the Church from the earliest times knew four and only four canonical Gospels; and that these four are the same that she has recognized ever since. It is true that the heretic Marcion acknowledged only the Gospel of Luke, and this in mutilated form, but his attitude toward the Gospels finds a ready explanation in his dogmatic bias. THE LITERARY CHARACTER OF THE GOSPELS. The Gospels have a literary character all their own; they are sui generIsa. There is not another book or group of books in the Bible to which they can be compared. They are four and yet one in a very essential sense; they express four sides of the one ε■αγγ■λιον of Jesus Christ. In studying them the question naturally arises, how we must conceive of them. Now we need not argue that they are not mere collections of myths and fables, with or without a historical basis, as many Rationalists would have us believe. Nor is it necessary to show at length that they are not four biographies of Jesus. If their authors intended them to be such, they would be very disappointing indeed. There is, however, another misconception against which we must warn, because it is quite prevalent in the circles of those who accept these writings unquestionably as a part of the Word of God, and since it is a positive hindrance to a true understanding of these priceless records. We refer to the conviction that the writers of the Gospels were minded to prepare for following generations more or less complete histories of the life of Christ. In reading these writings we soon find that, looked at as histories, they leave a great deal to be desired. In the first place they tell us comparatively little of that rich and varied life of Christ, of which they knew so much, Cf. John 20:30; John 21:25. The historical facts narrated by John only represent the work of a few days. His Gospel would thus be a life of Jesus with yawning gaps. The same is true of the other Gospels. In the second place the materials, except those at the beginning and at the end of Christ’s life are not arranged in chronological order. Any possible doubt that we may have on this point is soon dispelled, when we compare the Gospels. The same facts are often narrated in altogether different connections. Closely allied with this is a third feature that deserves attention. The casual relation of the important events that are narrated is not traced, except in a few instances, and yet this just what one expects in histories. And finally if they were really meant to be histories, why was it necessary that we should have four of them? The harmonists generally proceeded on the erroneous conception to which we refer. They were aware indeed that there were great lacunae in all the Gospels, but thought they might remedy matters by supplying from one Gospel what was wanting in the other. Thus the relation of the Gospels to one another was conceived of as supplemental. But their work was doomed to failure; it did violence to the exquisite compositions on which they operated, and marred the characteristic beauty of those literary productions. They were always uncertain as; to the true order of events, and did not know which one of the evangelists was the

best chronological guide. Some preferred Matthew, others chose Mark, and still others followed Luke. And after all their efforts to combine the four Gospels into one continuous narrative with the facts arranged in the exact order in which they occurred, their work must be pronounced a failure. The Gospels are not histories of the life of Christ, nor do they, taken together, form one history. But what are they, if they are neither biographies nor histories? They are four pen-pictures, or better, a four fold portraiture of the Saviour a fourfold representation of the apostolic κ■ρυγμα; fourfold witness regarding our Lord. It is said that the great artist Van Dyke prepared a threefold portrait of Charles I for the sculptor, that the latter might fashion an absolutely faithful likeness of the king. These three portraits were necessary; their differences and agreements were all required to give a true representation of the monarch. So it is in the case of the Gospels. Each one of them gives us a certain view of the Lord, and only the four taken together present to us his perfect likeness, revealing him as the Saviour of the world. The apostolic χ■ρυγμα had taken a wide flight. Its central content was the cross and the resurrection. But in connection with this the words and deeds of the Saviour and his history also formed the subject of the apostles preaching. And when this apostolic χηρυγμα was reduced to writing, it was found necessary to give it a fourfold form, that it might answer to the needs of four classes of people viz. to those of the Jews, to those of the Romans, to those of the Greeks and to those of the people who confessed Christ as Lord; needs that were typical of the spiritual requirements of all future ages. Matthew wrote for the Jews and characterized Christ as the great King of the house of David. Mark composed his Gospel for the Romans and pictured the Saviour as the mighty Worker, triumphing over sin and evil. Luke in writing his Gospel had in mind the needs of the Greeks and portrayed Christ as the perfect man, the universal Saviour. And John, composing his Gospel for those who already had a saving knowledge of the Lord and stood in need of a more profound understanding of the essential character of Jesus, emphasized the divinity of Christ, the glory that was manifested in his works. Each Gospel is complete in itself and acquaints us with a certain aspect of the Lords life. Yet it is only the fourfold Gospel that furnishes us with a complete, a perfect image of him whom to know is life eternal. And it is only, when we grasp the different features that are mirrored in the Gospels and see how they blend harmoniously in that noblest of all lives, the life of Christ, that we have found the true harmony of the Gospels. THE SYNOPTIC PROBLEM. The first three Gospels are known as the Synoptics, and their authors are called the Synoptists. The name is derived from the Greek σ■ν and ■ψις, and is applied to these Gospels, since they, as distinguished from the fourth, give us a common view of the life of our Lord. But notwithstanding the great similarity by which these Gospels are characterized, they also reveal very striking differences. This remarkable agreement on the one hand, and these manifest dissimilarities on the other, constitute one of the most difficult literary problems of the New Testament. The question is, whether we can account for the origin of these Gospels in such a manner that we can explain both the close resemblances and the often surprising differences. In the first place the general plan of these Gospels exhibits a remarkable agreement. Only Matthew and Luke contain a narrative of the infancy of our Lord and their accounts of it are quite distinct; but the history of Christ's public ministry follows very much the same order in all the Synoptics. They treat successively of the Lords preparation for the ministry, John the Baptist, the baptism, the temptation, the return to Galilee, the preaching in its villages and cities, the journey to Jerusalem, the entrance into the Holy City, the preaching there, the passion and the resurrection. The details that fit into this general plan are also arranged in quite a uniform manner, except in some places, especially of the first Gospel. The most striking

differences in the arrangement of the material results from the narrative of a long series of events connected with the Galilean ministry, which is peculiar to Matthew and Mark, Matthew 14:21-36, Matthew 15:1-39, Matthew 16:1-12; Mark 6:45-56, Mark 7:1-37, Mark 8:1-26; and from the history of another series of events related to the journey to Jerusalem that is found only in Luke 9:51-62, Luke 10:1-42, Luke 11:1-54, Luke 12:1-59, Luke 13:1-35, Luke 14:1-35, Luke 15:1-32, Luke 16:1-31, Luke 17:1-37, Luke 18:1-14. But there is not only similarity in the broad outlines of those Gospels; the particular incidents that are narrated are also in many cases the same in substance and similar if not identical in form. The amount of agreement that we find in this respect is represented by Norton, Genuineness of the Gospels p. 373, and by Westcott, Introduction to the Study of the Gospels p. 201, in the following manner: If the total contents of the Gospel is represented by 100, the following result is obtained: Mark has 7 peculiarities and—93 coincidences Matthew has 42 peculiarities and—58 coincidences Luke has 59 peculiarities and—41 coincidences If the extent of all the coincidences be represented by 100 their proportionate distribution will be:

Matthew, Mark and Luke 53 Matthew and Luke 21 Matthew and Mark 20 Mark and Luke 6 Still another estimate, viz, that by verses, is suggested by Reuss, History of the New Testament, I p. 177: Matthew out of a total of 971 verses has 330 peculiar to him. Mark out of a total of 478 verses has 68 peculiar to him. Luke out of a total of 1151 verses has 541 peculiar to him. The first two have 170 to 180 verses that are lacking in Luke; Matthew and Luke, 230 to 240 wanting in Mark; Mark and Luke about 50 wanting in Matthew. The number common to all three is 330 to 370. The preceding statements refer to the subject-matter of the Synoptics. Taken by itself this might give us an exaggerated idea of the similarity of these Gospels. As a corrective it is necessary to bear in mind that the verbal coincidences, though they are remarkable indeed, are nevertheless considerably less than one would expect. Dr. Schaff and his son, after some calculations based on Rushbrookes Synopticon, get the following results: “The proportion of words peculiar to the Synoptics is 28,000 out of 48,000, more than one-half. In Matthew 56 words out of every 100 are peculiar. In Mark 40 words out of every 100 are peculiar. In Luke 67 words out of every 100 are peculiar. The number of coincidences common to all three is less than the number of divergences. Matthew agrees with the other two gospels in 1 word out of 7. Mark agrees with the other two gospels in 1 word out of 4½. Luke agrees with the other two gospels in 1 word out of 8.But comparing the Gospels two by two, it is evident that Matthew and Mark have most in common, and Matthew and Luke are most divergent. One-half of Mark is found in Matthew. One-fourth of Luke is found in Matthew. One-third of Mark is found in Luke. The general conclusion from these figures is that all three Gospels widely diverge from the common matter, or triple tradition, Mark the least so and Luke the most (almost twice as much as Mark). On the other hand, both Matthew and Luke are nearer Mark than Luke and Matthew to each other.” Church History, I p. 597. In connection with the preceding we should bear in mind that these verbal agreements are greatest, not in the narrative, but in the recitative parts of the Gospels. About one fifth of them is found in the narrative portion of the Gospel, and four fifths in the recital of the words of our Lord and others. This statement will create a false impression, however, unless we bear in mind the proportion in which the narrative parts stand to the recitative element, which is as follows: Narrative Recitative Matthew 25 75 Mark 50 Luke 34 66. From what has now been said it is perfectly clear that the Synoptics present an intricate literary problem. Is it possible to explain the origin in such a manner that both the resemblances and differences are accounted for? During the last century many

scholars have applied themselves with painstaking diligence to the arduous task of solving this problem. The solution has been sought along different lines; several hypotheses have been broached, of which we shall name only the four most important ones. In the first place there is what has been called (though not altogether correctly) ~the mutual dependance theory (Benutzungshypothese, Augustine, Bengel, Bleek, Storr). According to this theory the one Gospel is dependent on the other, so that the second borrowed from the first and the third from both the first and the second. On this theory, of course, six permutations are possible viz.: Matthew, Mark, Luke. Matthew, Luke, Mark. Mark, Matthew, Luke. Mark, Luke, Matthew. Luke, Matthew, Mark. Luke, Mark, Matthew. In every possible form this theory has found defenders, but it does not meet with great favor at present. True, it seems to account for the general agreement in a very simple manner but serious difficulties arise when one seeks to determine which one of the Gospels was first, which second and which third. This is perfectly evident from the difference of opinion among the adherents of this hypothesIsa. Again it fails to account for the divergencies; it does not explain why one writer adopts the language of his predecessor(s) up to a certain point, and then suddenly abandons it. Of late it is tacitly admitted, however, that it does contain an element of truth. In the second place the hypothesis of oral tradition (Traditions-hypothese, Gieseler, Westcott, Wright), should be mentioned. This theory starts from the supposition that the Gospel existed first of all in an unwritten form. It is assumed that the apostles repeatedly told the story of Christ's life, dwelling especially on the most important incidents of his career, and often reiterating the very words of their blessed Lord. These narratives and words were eagerly caught up by willing ears and treasured in faithful and retentive memories, the Jews making it a practice to retain whatever they learnt in the exact form in which they received it. Thus a stereotyped tradition arose which served as the basis for our present Gospels. Several objections have been urged against this theory. It is said that, as a result of the apostles preaching in the vernacular, the oral tradition was embodied in the Aramaic language, and hence cannot account for the verbal coincidences in the Greek Gospels. Again it is urged that the more stereotyped the tradition was, the harder it becomes to account for the differences between the Synoptics. Would anyone be apt to alter such a tradition on his own authority? Moreover this hypothesis offers no explanation of the existence of the two-fold, the triple and the double tradition, i. e. the tradition that is embodied in all three of the Gospels and that which is found only in two of them. The majority of scholars have now abandoned this theory, although it has ardent defenders even at present. And no doubt, it must be taken into account in the solution of this problem. In the third place we have the hypothesis of one primitive Gospel (Urevangeliums-Hypothese) from which all three of the Synoptists drew their material. According to G. E. Lessing this Gospel, containing a short account of the life of Jesus for the use of traveling missionaries, was written in the popular language of Palestine. Eichhorn, however, following him, held that it was translated into Greek, worked over and enriched in various ways, and soon took shape in several redactions, which became the source of our present Gospels. There is very little agreement among, the defenders of this theory regarding the exact character of this original source. At present it finds little favor in scientific circles, but has been discarded for various reasons. There is absolutely no trace of such an original Gospel, nor any historical reference to it, which seems peculiar in view of its unique significance. And if the existence of such a source be postulated, how must the arbitrary alteration of it be explained, how did these different recensions come into existence. It is evident that by this theory the problem is not solved, but simply shifted to another place. Moreover while in its original form this hypothesis

accounted very well for the agreement, but not for the differences found in the Synoptics, in its final form it was too artificial and too complicated to inspire confidence and to seem anything like a natural solution of the Synoptic problem. In the fourth place the so-called double source, or two document theory (Combinations-hypothese, Weisse, Wilke, Holtzmann, Wendt) deserves mention since it is the favorite theory of New Testament scholars today. This hypothesis holds that, in order to explain the phenomena of the Gospels, it is necessary to postulate the existence of at least two primitive documents, and recognizes the use of one Gospel in the composition of the others. The form in which this theory is most widely accepted at present is the following: The Gospel of Mark was the first one to be written and, either in the form in which we now have it, or in a slightly different form was the source of the triple tradition. For the double tradition, which is common to Matthew and Luke, these writers used a second source that, for want of definite knowledge regarding it, is simply called Q (from the German Quelle). This Q may have been the λ■για of Matthew mentioned by Papias, and was probably a collection of the sayings of our Lord. The differences between Matthew and Luke in the matter of the double tradition finds its explanation in the assumption that, while Matthew drew directly from Q, Luke derived the corresponding matter from Q and other sources, or from a primitive Gospel based on Q. On the last supposition the relation of Matthew and Luke to Q would be as follows: But even so the use of some inferior sources by both Matthew and Luke must be assumed. The double source theory presupposes the existence of a rather large precanonical literature.

There are some evident objections to this theory also. The assumption that the λ■για of Matthew was anything else than the Hebrew or Aramaic original of our Greek Matthew is a baseless supposition; it has no historical foundation whatever. Furthermore the theory offers no explanation of the fact that the writers in some cases faithfully copied their original and in others altered the text rather freely or even departed from it entirely. And by postulating the development of a somewhat extensive Gospel literature previous to the composition of Matthew and Luke, it has naturally led to the position that our Gospels were written late, and therefore in all probability not by their reputed authors. Moreover it also requires us to believe that Luke included the Gospel of Mark in the number of the attempted Gospel stories which his Gospel was meant to supersede.

None of the theories broached up to the present time has proved satisfactory. There is still a great deal of uncertainty and confusion in the study of the Synoptic problem; we do not seem to be nearer to its solution now than we were fifty years ago. The great aim has always been to explain the origin of the Synoptics without taking into account the supernatural factor that entered into their composition. Now we do not doubt the value of these studies; they have already taught us a good many things regarding the origin of these Gospels; but they have proven themselves insufficient to lead to a final solution of the problem. It is, of course, folly to rule this problem out of existence by simply appealing to the supernatural agency of the Holy Spirit. It is true, if one believes in the mechanical inspiration of the Bible, there is no Synoptic problem. This is quite different, however, for those who believe that the Scriptures have been inspired in an organic way. The more naturally we conceive of the origin of these writings, the better it is, if we only do not lose sight of the operation of the divine factor, of the directing, the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit. Cf. Kuyper, Encyclopedie III p. 51 f. It is hardly sufficient to say with Urquhart, New Biblical Guide VII p. 357, that the key to the problem is found in the fact that the Synoptic Gospels are all the work of one author, and that each book is serving a distinct purpose. Yet this statement contains two important

truths that we should continually bear in mind. In any attempt to account for the similarities of the synoptics great allowance should be made for the influence of oral tradition It is very natural to suppose that, since the apostles for some time labored together at Jerusalem with Peter at the head, a particular, perhaps Petrine type of tradition became the common property of these early preachers and of their first hearers. And because the life of Christ entered as a very important element into the life of his apostles, and they felt the supreme significance of his words, it is also reasonable to assume that they aimed at inculcating the teachings of our Lord on their hearers in the exact form in which He gave it. It is equally rational to suppose that, at a comparatively early time, the desire to escape the uncertainty that always attends oral transmission, led to the composition of brief gospel narratives, containing especially the sayings and discourses of our Lord. These suppositions are entirely in harmony too with the opening verses of the Gospel of Luke: “Forasmuch as many have taken in hand to draw up a narrative concerning those matters which have been fulfilled among us, even as they delivered them unto us, who from the beginning were eyewitnesses and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, etc.” Some of these early documents may have been written in Aramaic and others in Greek. The groundwork thus furnished and drawn upon by the writers of our Gospels, explains in a very natural way most of the agreements that are found in the Synoptics. And those that cannot be accounted for in that manner may have resulted directly from the guiding influence of the Holy Spirit, who led the writers also in the choice of their words. These three Gospels are in a very real sense the work of one Author. In seeking to explain the differences that are found in the Synoptic Gospels, we should bear in mind first of all that they are no histories, but memoirs, historical arguments. In composing them each one of the writers had his own purpose. Matthew, writing for the Jews, made it his aim to present Christ as the King, the great Son of David; Mark, intending his Gospel for the Romans, endeavored to draw a vivid picture of the powerful Worker, conquering the forces of evil; and Luke, addressing the Greeks and adjusting his Gospel to their needs, sought to describe Christ as the universal Saviour, as a person with wide sympathies. This diversity of aim accounts to a great extent for the variations exhibited in the Gospels, i. e. for omissions on the one hand and additions on the other, for differences in the distribution and arrangement of the material, etc. The writers of the Gospels selected from the great mass of early traditions the material that was suited to their purpose and used it to advantage. The difference between the Synoptics is not accidental, is not the result of the chance use of certain sources. And where the identical teachings of Christ are sometimes found in different forms, we should remember, first, that the Lord may have uttered the same truth at different times in varying forms; and secondly, that the Synoptists do not always give the identical words of the Saviour, but were so guided by the Holy Spirit that they do give an exact representation of the Lords teachings, perhaps in a form better adapted to their purpose than the original would have been. Cf. Kuyper, Diet. Dogm., Locus de Sacra Scriptura II p. 131 f.; Gregory, Why Four Gospels; Van Leeuwen, Literatuur en Schriftuur p. 14 ff.; Urquhart, New Biblical Guide VII p. 328-428. For further study of the Synoptic Problem we refer to; Norton, Genuineness of the Gospels; Westcott, Introduction to the Study of the Gospels; Arthur Wright, A Synopsis of the Gospels in Greek; Holdsworth, Gospel Origins; Buckley, Introduction to the Synoptic Problem; Hill, Introduction to the Life of Christ; Reuss, History of the New Testament I p. 163-218 (where the most important German literature is referred to); and the various Introductions of Davidson, Weiss, Zahn, Julicher, Salmon, e.a. THE RELATION OF THE GOSPEL OF JOHN TO THE SYNOPTICS.

After pointing out the remarkable agreement between the synoptic Gospels and referring to some of the attempted explanations of this feature, we must consider the equally striking difference that exists between the Synoptics on the one hand and the Gospel of John on the other. This difference is so great that even untrained minds immediately feel it. Hence the question naturally arises: How can we account for it? This is in substance the Johannine problem. The differences that are found may conveniently be arranged under two heads:1. Differences touching the external course of events in the Lords ministry; and 2. Differences in regard to the form and contents of Christ's teaching.

I. Differences touching the external course of events in the Lord's ministry

.a. According to the Synoptics the principal scene of the Lords activity is Galilee. He repairs to this Northern province soon after the imprisonment of John the Baptist, and apparently does not return to Judea until the last Passover. The representation that is found in the Gospel of John is quite different. Very little is said about the Galilean ministry, while the activity of Christ in Judea looms large on his pages. Most of the work of which John speaks was done at Jerusalem. b. The first three Gospels mention but one Passover in their narrative of Christ's public ministry, viz. that at the end of his life. This led many to the conviction that the Lord's public ministry was limited to a period of one year. In the Gospel of John, on the other hand, we find three Passovers definitely mentioned, while a fourth is probably referred to in John 5:1. Judging by this the length of the Lords ministry was at least two and possibly three years. c. The people with whom Jesus deals primarily are not the same in the Synoptics and in the Gospel of John. In the first three Gospels we see Jesus moving along the Galilean peasantry and preaching to them the gospel of the Kingdom, while in the fourth the Jews (by which John means the leaders of the people, i. e. Chief Priests, Scribes and Pharisees) are generally in the foreground, and certain individuals, that are not named, or are merely names, in the Synoptics, are very prominent, such as Philip, Nathanael, the Samaritan woman, Mary Magdalena and Thomas. d. The attitude of the Jews towards Jesus appears to be quite different in the synoptic Gospels and in the Gospel of John. According to the Synoptics Jesus meets with great success at first. The multitudes flock unto him, are delighted to hear him and marvel at his teachings and work. And it is only after He has clearly shown that He had not come to establish an earthly kingdom that their enthusiasm dies away, and that He begins to prepare his disciples for his coming suffering and death. The Gospel of John makes it appear that from the beginning of Christ's ministry at Jerusalem the hearts of the Jews were filled with a hatred that gradually grew, reaching its highest pitch after the raising of Lazarus, and that finally issued in the crucifixion of the Lord of glory. e. There are also several details in which the Gospel of John does not agree with the Synoptics. We shall only mention a couple of the most important examples. In the synoptic Gospels we find the cleansing of the temple at the end of Christ's public ministry, while John places this at the very beginning. Then there is also a the representation of the of the Lord's death. The Synoptics convey the impression that Christ ate the Passover in the evening of the 14th of Nisan, and was therefore crucified on the 15th; while the Gospel of John seems to say with equal explicitness that He ate it a day in advance of the regular time and died at the very hour, when the symbolic Paschal lamb was slain.

II. Differences in respect to the form and contents of our Lord's teaching. a. There is a striking diversity in the form in which the teaching of Jesus is cast. In the Synoptics we have short incisive sayings of the Lord, which in some cases are and in others are not connected with what

immediately precedes or follows. In the Gospel of John, on the other hand, we find long and labored discourses, closely connected with the signs, the miracles of our Lord. The first three Gospels contain a goodly number of parables, which are strangely absent from the fourth Gospel, where we have instead a few allegories, such as the Door of the Sheepfold, the good Shepherd, and the true Vine. The style of the Gospel of John too is quite different from that of the Synoptics. It is a more Hebraic style, in which the statements are brief, the construction is simple and the sentences are usually connected with the conjunction and. This style is carried through also in the discourses of Christ, so that in some cases it is very hard, if not impossible, to tell just where the words of the Lord come to an end and those of the evangelist begin, or vice versa. Notice this especially in the third chapter. b. There is an equally great difference in the contents of the Lords teaching. In the Synoptics the central theme on which Christ dwells is the Kingdom of God. He speaks of its origin, its nature, its subjects, its King, its requirements, its righteousness, its enemies and its future glory. In vain do we turn to the fourth Gospel for a corresponding line of thought. The Kingdom of God is mentioned but once there, viz, in the conversation of our Lord with Nicodemus. Christ himself is the main theme of the discourses found in the Gospel of John. The Lord speaks of his heavenly origin, of his essential character and of his return to glory. He presents himself to the Jews as the Messiah, the Son of God, the heavenly manna, the water of life, the true liberator, the light of the world, the good Shepherd, the resurrection and the life, etc. In the Synoptics we find that Jesus only occasionally, and then towards the end of his ministry, speaks of himself. In connection with this we may remark that the self-revelation of Christ both by his words and works differs greatly in the Synoptics and in the fourth Gospel. In the former Jesus begins by speaking of the Kingdom and makes little mention of the King. Only gradually does He reveal his true character and it is not until He is well along in the course of his public ministry that Peter is led up to the confession: “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” Only in the last week of his life does Jesus throw off all reserve and speaks clearly of himself as the Messiah sent from God. In the Gospel of John however, everything is quite clear from the beginning. John the Baptist points to Christ as “the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world ;” to the Samaritan woman Jesus says: “I am He ;” and to the Jews attending the unnamed feast he speaks clearly of the unique relation in which He stands to the Father. This is closely connected with another fact. In the synoptic Gospels the humanity of Christ is made very prominent. We behold him there primarily as the Saviour who is taken on our nature, shares in our infirmities, and is tempted even as we are, though without sin. The fourth Gospel, on the other hand, brings the divinity of Christ into strong Revelation. We notice this at the very beginning of the Gospel: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” It strikes us in the signs which Christ gave to reveal his glory, and in the discourses that speak at length of his essential nature, of his descending out of glory, his being in glory, and his returning to the glory that He possessed from the foundation of the world; and it rings in our ears as we listen to the confession of Thomas: “My Lord and my God.”

There are many critics at the present time who magnify these differences into discrepancies, and find in them a ground on which to reject the authorship of John. They maintain that the fourth Gospel is a treatise written with marked theological bias, inspired by the controversy about the person of Christ in the second century. The great stumbling block for them is the very clear teaching contained in this Gospel respecting the divinity of Christ. This, they hold, could only be the fruit of theological preconceptions. And the great desire on the part of the author to establish

this beyond the shadow of a doubt is said to explain a good many of the other special features that characterize this gospel. This explanation contains both a falsehood and a truth. A careful study of the Gospel of John, a study that takes its true character in consideration, does not bear out the contention that several of the differences between the Gospel of John and the Synoptics amount to discrepancies. Neither does it reveal differences that cannot be accounted for in a perfectly natural way. We desire to point out first of all that there are not only dissimilarities but also correspondences between these Gospels. The incidents that we find mentioned in all the Gospels are the following: The baptism of John , the feeding of the five thousand, the walking on the sea, the anointing at Bethany, the triumphal entry, the last supper, the betrayal, the trial, the crucifixion, the burial and the resurrection. Of course in some cases the details of the narrative vary. Besides these parallel narratives there are many passages in which we find imagery, sayings or words that find their counterpart in the synoptic Gospels. Davidson says that about one-third of the matter in John agrees with that in the Synoptics.

It is evident from the foregoing that the diversity is greater than the similarity, and the great question is: How must we account for the differences? In pointing out the way in which we must look for a solution of this problem we call attention to several particulars.

1. We should not lose sight of the true character of John's writing. Neither it nor the other Gospels are meant to be complete histories of what the Lord did and said during his life in the flesh. If this were its claim, it would be disappoint in the extreme, since all that John narrates happened in a few days. Like the Synoptics the Gospel of John is a pen-picture of the Lord, is a witness to him from a particular point of view, and represents a phase of the apostolic χ■ρυγμαι. We must allow for the principle of selection and of selective arrangement in the composition of this work. It was John's aim to describe the Lord from a particular point of view. Hence he chose from the great mass of apostolic tradition, whether oral or written, the materials that suited his purpose best, and arranged them in the most effective way, taking in consideration as much as possible the chronological order in which the events occurred. This general truth must be borne in mind continually, if we would understand the differences between the Gospel of John and the Synoptics.

2. The great controlling factor, however, in the construction of this Gospel, was the aim of the writer. Therefore it is necessary that we have some understanding of thIsa. Happily we need not guess at it, because John himself tells us what purpose he had in writing his Gospel. He says in John 20:31 : "But these things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might have life through His name." According to this statement the apostle had a twofold aim, the one theoretical and the other practical, the one his proximate, the other his ulterior aim. The theoretical aim of the evangelist was twofold: he wanted to show in a convincing manner that the historical Jesus was the Christ sent from God for the salvation of the world; and that this Christ was not a mere man, but the very Son of God, who in his pre-existent state shared in the divine glory, a glory which He radiated even while He dwelt among men in the form of a servant, and that would again shine forth in heavenly splendor after He had finished his task. It was the desire of the writer further, to present this Christ, this Son of God, to his readers in such a manner that they might be led to believe in him, and that they, being united to him the fountain of life by faith, might have life everlasting. With this end in view John, of course, selected those signs and discourses of the Lord that were best adapted to bring out his glory and to lead others to faith in him. He almost seems to tell us this himself, when he concludes his narrative of

the first miracle performed by our Lord at Cana with the words: “This beginning of miracles did Jesus in Cana of Galilee, and manifested his glory; and his disciples believed on Him.” John views the miracles of which he speaks as shmeiathat exhibit the divine greatness of Christ. And he limits himself almost exclusively to those of which he can say definitely that they led men to believe on Christ, or of which Christ himself points out the symbolic significance in His discourses, as: The changing of water into wine at Cana (“and his disciples believed on Him.”) The healing of the rulers son at Cana (Capernaum) (“and himself believed and his whole house.”) The healing of the impotent man at the pool Bethesda (Christ the restorer of life). The feeding of the five thousand near Bethsaida (Christ the spiritual food, the heavenly manna). The restoring of the blind mans sight at Jerusalem (Christ the light of the world). The raising of Lazarus at Bethany (Christ the resurrection and the life). In harmony with his aim too the evangelist records such discourses of the Lord as serve to explain the shmeia to bring. out the unique relation in which Christ stands to the Father, to accentuate Christ’s authority, to emphasize the divine character of his mission. etc. Moreover he introduces several individuals to show us how Jesus labored to bring them to the conviction that He was the Christ, the Son of God, as Nathanael, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman and Thomas.

Now if we bear these things in mind, many of the differences between this Gospel and the Synoptics are immediately explained. The aim of John being what it is, he naturally speaks of Christ rather than of the Kingdom of God, introduces whatever accentuates the divinity of our Lord, and brings out as much as possible that Christ revealed himself as the Messiah from the very beginning of his public career. But doing this in a historical way, he cannot represent the Galilean peasants but only the leaders of the Jews at Jerusalem as the recipients of this revelation, for it was only to them, who were versed in the Scriptures, that Christ spoke so explicitly from the outset, and it was primarily for them that He expressed his thought in profound discourses rather than in parables. This in turn determines the time of which John speaks in his gospel and also explains how it is that he mentions so many feasts, because it was almost exclusively on these occasions that Jesus visited Jerusalem and came in contact with the Scribes and the Chief Priests. It also sheds light on the difference in the attitude of the Jews toward Jesus. For a long time the Galileans were attached to Christ and marveled at his words and works; the spirit of opposition was aroused in them especially towards the end of Christ’s labors among them and mostly by the machinations of the Pharisees that came from Jerusalem. The leaders of the Jews in Judea, on the other hand, hated Jesus almost from the beginning of his public ministry. Their hatred kept pace with the knowledge they received of Christ.

3. Every attempt at solving the Johannine problem must also make allowance for the fact that John was acquainted with the other Gospels and avoided as much as was consistent with his aim the repetition of facts that were already generally known. We have no doubt that John had read the other Gospels before he wrote his own. There are certain features in his Gospel that we can understand only on that supposition. According to John 21:19 John wrote his Gospel after the death of Peter and therefore comparatively late. Now he certainly would not be such a stranger in his own world of thought as not to know the Gospels that had already been composed. Then we find that in several places the evangelist trusts to the previous knowledge of his readers. He does not describe the institution of the Lords supper in his Gospel; yet he clearly assumes in John 6:5 that his readers were acquainted with it. Though he does not give a description of the ascension,

he proceeds on the assumption that this fact is well known, John 6:62; John 20:17. Cf. further John 1:40; John 3:24; John 6:70, etc. In several cases in which the persons introduced in the Gospel misunderstand the Lord, the writer does not deem it necessary to explain for his readers what Jesus really meant, because he knew that they themselves were able to correct the mistake, Cf. John 7:35-36; John 3:4; John 4:15; John 6:52. It is a very weighty consideration in this connection too that John does not deign to answer objections that are brought against the Messiahship of Christ. Notice John 1:45-46; John 7:41-42; John 7:52. The evangelist does not give a single hint of the solution of the difficulty thus raised repeatedly. We can understand this only on the supposition that he was aware of the fact that his readers knew from the other Gospels how to solve the problem. John evidently read the other Gospels and this explains how he could avoid to such a great extent what they had already brought to the knowledge of the people.

4. Finally we must also bear in mind that the individuality of the author is stamped his literary production. John was a profound meditative spirit, who drank deeply at the fountain of life. He searched for the mainspring of action in the career of our Saviour; he pondered on the hidden background of the mysterious, the wonderful life of his Master. He was the best qualified of all the apostles to describe the divine greatness of the Lord. And it was no small achievement of his, that he presented the profoundest truths in the most simple manner. The simplicity of its language is a very striking feature of the fourth Gospel. It is due in part, no doubt, to Johns idiosyncrasy, and in part to his habit of contemplating Christianity in its most fundamental relations. It need not surprise us that we find the same style in the discourses of Christ, for in these also the style is to a great extent Johns. Neither John nor the other evangelists always give us the exact words of Jesus. It is true that he generally employs direct discourse in introducing the words of the Saviour, but this is merely an oriental custom and does not imply that the words were used exactly in that way. But the Spirit of God so guided the writer that he reproduces, though possibly in a slightly different form, the exact truths which Jesus sought to inculcate on his hearers. And this Spirit, which is also the Spirit of Christ, vouching for these words, makes them just as really the words of Christ, as if they had been an exact reproduction of the words Jesus had used in addressing the Jews. THE INSPIRATION OF THE GOSPELS.

During the past century the human origin of the Gospels has been carefully investigated. With a great deal of patience and ingenuity every chapter and verse of these writings has been scrutinized and referred to its supposed ultimate source. The discussion of the divine factor that operated in the composition of these books, however, has been conspicuously absent from these studies. And this neglect is not the result of chance, but of a very deliberate plan. A large number of scholars today do not believe in any special inspiration of these writings; others, who do not wish to deny their divine inspiration, nevertheless maintain that their claim to this prerogative should be waived in the historical investigation of their origin. In the preceding century many were wont to label the Gospels sneeringly as fictitious narratives, written by a few religious fanatics, who deliberately lied about Jesus. This crude and baseless opinion does not meet with great favor today. People intuitively recoil from that position and feel that they must take a more respectful attitude towards the Gospels. They now regard these as the product of the reverent and in part unconscious invention of the Church; or as the expression of the corporate consciousness and the corporate mood of the first Christian community. Even so, of course, they are simply human productions that contain besides a large quota of truth a great deal of mythical and legendary

matter.

Over against this position we hold that the Gospels were written by men who were inspired by the Holy Spirit, and that they are therefore absolutely trustworthy and authoritative accounts of the life of our Lord. They are inspired records. They constitute one of the most precious fruits of the apostolic inspiration, since they are one and all the literary embodiment of the apostolic chrugma. The substance of what the apostles preached is contained in these writings. Now as well as the prophets in the old dispensation, the apostles in the new were inspired by the Holy Spirit. This is quite evident from the New Testament. Consider the promises which our Lord gave to His disciples: Matthew 10:19-20 ".... for it shall be given you in that same hour what ye shall speak; for it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father that speaketh in you." John 14:26, "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you." John 16:13-14, "Howbeit when the Spirit of truth is come, He will guide you into all truth; for He shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak; and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify me; for He shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you." Notice too that these promises found their initial fulfilment on the day of Pentecost. We read in Acts 2:4 : "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and 'began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance." And after this day the apostles were conscious of being guided by the Spirit of God. Paul says in 1 Corinthians 2:11-13, "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things which are freely given us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which mans wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual." And in 2 Corinthians 13:2-3, "—and being absent now I write to them which heretofore have sinned, and to all other, that, if I come again, I will not spare; since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you." These few passages, which might easily be multiplied, must suffice for the present.

Some who admit the inspiration of the prophets, do not believe the apostles were also inspired, because in their case they do not hear the familiar formula "thus saith the Lord," nor behold the characteristic phenomena that accompanied the inspiration of the prophets. They do not distinguish between different kinds of inspiration. There are especially three points of interest between the inspiration of the prophets and that of the apostles.

1. Under the Old Covenant the Holy Spirit did not yet dwell in the Church, but operated on believers from without. So it was also in the case of the prophets. The Holy Spirit took possession of them, sometimes suppressed their personality to a. certain degree, and then employed their consciousness for his purpose. In the new dispensation, however, He took up his abode in The Church, and first of all in the apostles, who were to be the Church's foundation; and then, identifying himself to a great extent with their conscious life, used them as instruments to produce his revelation.

2. In the case of the prophets it was the entrance of a foreign element, a foreign power into their lives, and something extraordinary in their career that impelled them to prophesy. It was a power that they could not resist, because it became as a fire burning within them. With the apostles, on

the other hand, it was the indwelling Spirit in connection with their official task that led them to speak the Word of God. The inspiration of the prophets was intermittent; that of the apostles, continuous in the performance of their regular apostolic duties.

3. The prophets often spoke of unknown and unseen things, while the apostles discoursed on things which they knew and saw. In connection with this the Holy Spirit did not operate through the same faculty in both the prophets and the apostles. In the former it was the imagination, in the latter the understanding, especially memory and reflection, that constituted the medium of divine revelation. Hence the prophets generally spoke in poetic and in symbolic language, while the apostles as a rule clothed their thought in ordinary prose. In the case of the Gospels the inspiration of the apostles has above all the character of a ■π■μνησις. Cf. John 14:26. This apostolic inspiration gave birth to the χ■ρυγμα of the apostles, but does not yet account for the infallible records we have of this in the Gospels. Besides the apostolic we must take into consideration a separate graphical or transcriptive inspiration, if we would fully understand the divine origin of the Gospels. The authors were led by the spirit of God in composing these writings, in giving to the preaching of the apostles a definite written form. They were guided in the selection of their material and its proper arrangement, and in the choice of their words and expressions, so that their records are truly a part of the Word of God for the Church of all ages. The question naturally arises, whether we have any reasons to think that the Gospels were so inspired. In answer would say that we have, though we do not flatter ourself with the idea that these reasons would convince anyone who is disinclined to accept the Scriptures as the very Word of God.

1. The contents of the Gospels testify to their divine origin. We find in them a fourfold portraiture of the Saviour. There are many differences in the individual pictures, yet together they form a grand unity. Four writers, each one portraying the life of Christ in his own way, to a great extent without knowing each others writings or drawing on them, so that their individual portraits blend perfectly into a harmonious whole,—it is marvelous, it can only be understood, if we assume that these four writers were all guided unerringly by the same superintending Spirit. The Gospels are really the work of one author. And the life that is pictured in them is a divine life, unfathomable, mysterious, far surpassing human understanding. And yet that incomparable, that divine life has been so faithfully portrayed, with such a profound insight into its real character and hidden depths, in such a simple, natural, artless manner, that it has been the marvel of ages. Could man, unaided by higher power, describe such a life? No, only they who were inspired by the Holy Spirit, were equal to the task.

2. Taking for granted the inspiration of the Old Testament, which is conclusively proved by the words of Jesus and the apostles we feel that it calls for an inspired complement. It covers the period of preparation that is prophetic of a future completion, the time in which the Church was in its infancy, that points forward to the maturity of a coming age. It is filled with prophecies that await fulfilment; it contains the shadow that is cast before the coming body, growing more distinct as the ages roll on, until at last it seems as if the body will presently appear, yet it does not—the Old Testament requires a compliment. And in harmony with it this too must be inspired. Of what avail would the inspiration of the Old Testament be, if that in which it culminates is not inspired. The divine surety would be wanting.

3. At least two of our Gospels were written by apostles who in speaking to their contemporaries, were inspired by the Spirit of God. Now it would be an anomaly that they should be guided by the Holy Spirit in their oral witnessing to Christ, and be without that divine guidance in perpetuating their testimony for all future ages. It was the will of God that people until the end of the world should believe on him through the word of the apostles, John 17:20; 1 John 1:3. Hence it was of the greatest importance that there should be an infallible record of their testimony.

4. There are some Scripture passages that point to the inspiration of the gospel records. The older Lightfoot, (Works IV p. 1193, 114; XII p. 7, and following him Urquhart, The Bible its Structure and Purpose 1 Chronicles 5), find a proof for the inspiration of Luke's Gospel in Luke 1:3, where they would translate the words παρηχολουθηχ■τι ■νωθεν by "having had perfect understanding of all things from above." This interpretation is favored by the fact that ■νωθεν has this meaning in eight of the thirteen times that it occurs in the New Testament, and in three of the remaining instances means again, while it is translated "from the beginning" only here and in Acts 26:4. The expressed purpose of Luke in writing his Gospel also falls in exceedingly well with the rendering from above. It is, he writes to Theophilus, that you may have the certainty of those things in which you have been instructed." Yet the verb παραχολουθ■ω, meaning, to follow up carefully, and thus, to obtain knowledge, argues decisively against it. What is of greater significance for us, is the fact that the Gospel of Luke is quoted as ■ γραφ■ in 1 Timothy 5:18, where we read: "For the Scripture saith, Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn, and, The laborer is worthy of his hire." The only place in the entire Bible where the last words are found, is Luke 10:7. Finally we call attention to 2 Peter 3:15-16, where the apostle says: ". . . even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, unto their own destruction." Here we find that the writings of Paul are placed on a level with other inspired writings, which Peter calls, "the other Scriptures." There is good reason to believe that this expression refers to the books of the Old Testament, and to those of the New Testament that were already composed, when Peter wrote his second epistle, among which we may also reckon the Gospels of Matthew and Luke.

5. The fact that the early Church from the very beginning accepted these Gospels as canonical, is also a proof of their inspired character, for in it the communal consciousness of the Church expressed itself in regard to these writings; and it is said of believers in their corporate existence that they, taught by the Holy Ghost, know all things. Dean Alford says: "The apostles being raised up for the special purpose of witnessing to the gospel history,—and these memoirs having been universally received in the early Church as embodying that their testimony, I see no escape left from the inference that they come to us with inspired authority. The Greek Testament, Vol. I, Prolegomena Section VI.

6. Finally the Holy Spirit testifies in the heart of every believer to the divine character of the Gospels, so that they feel assured that these writings contain the very Word of God. Under the influence of the Holy Spirit they realize that these Gospels too minister to the deepest needs of their spiritual life, they realize their infinite value, marvel at their exquisite beauty and find in them ever increasingly the words of everlasting life. Thus they cannot but speak their "Amen" to the contents of these books. THE CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE GOSPELS AS A WHOLE. The Gospels are of course, closely related to the Old Testament Scriptures. They describe in a

vivid manner the initial stage of the fulness of time, showing how all the prophecies that pointed to Christ and to a new and more spiritual dispensation began to be fulfilled. Rather than enlarge on this relation, however, we shall here briefly describe the peculiar function of the Gospels in the New Testament revelation. These writings are related to the rest of the New Testament, as the Pentateuch is to the following books of the Old Testament. Both are of a fundamental character, laying foundations on which an imposing superstructure is raised. In the case of the Gospels this is clearly indicated by the opening words of Luke in the Acts of the Apostles: “The former treatise have I written, Theophilus, of all that Jesus began both to do and to teach.” In this passage the word ■ρξατο is not pleonastic, as was held by some, but emphatic. According to this word the Gospel contained the narrative only of what Jesus began to do and to teach, which would prove to be the solid foundation and the germinating principle of all that He would continue to do on earth (through His apostles) and in heaven. The Gospels mark but an initial stage in New Testament revelation; they lack finality. The form, the method and the substance of Christ’s teaching in the Gospels,—it all bears the stamp of an incipient stage. Everyone that reads the Gospels and compares them with the epistles is struck by the simple manner in which Christ presents his teachings to the multitude. He gave his instruction primarily in the form of parables and proverbial sayings. Now it is the essence of proverbial speech that it detaches itself from particular occasions, and is therefore best adapted to the expression of general fundamental truths. Because parables and proverbs set forth the truth in a lively and concrete way, they were very appropriate in teaching those that were just initiated in the spiritual truths of the new dispensation. Since they generally disclose the truth but partially, they stimulate the spirit of inquiry. A very suitable way of instructing beginners indeed! We notice that the disciples gradually longed for a different form of instruction, and towards the end of his life Christ says to them: “These things have I spoken unto you in proverbs, but the time cometh, when I shall no more speak unto you in proverbs, but I shall show you plainly of the Father.” John 16:25.—The method of Jesus’ work points to the same general conclusion. His teaching has a fragmentary character. He speaks a word here and a word there, discourses now with this person and then with that one, just as a missionary among the gentiles is apt to do, expressing the deepest truths in a sporadic way. Important doctrines were thus uttered without any attempt to relate them to other truths. All this is in perfect harmony with the initial character of Christ’s work.—The contents of Christ’s teaching also are primitive and fundamental. Many of the most important truths are indeed taught in the Gospels, but they are not elaborated, nor set forth in all their significance, as the doctrine of the atonement, of justification by faith, of the forgiveness of sins, of the Kingship of Christ, etc. Other truths were suppressed, because, as the Lord himself says, even the best of his hearers were not yet able to bear them, John 16:12. The works of Christ were also initiatory. His miracles contained within them. the promise of still greater works in the future. He says to his disciples: “He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also, and greater works than these shall he-do, because I go unto my Father,” John 14:12.

Now the writers of the Gospels simply narrated this initial work of Christ, as they remembered it. They do not make mention of the greater works that followed after Christ had gone to heaven, nor do they (except in very rare instances) reflect on or seek to interpret the life and teachings of the Saviour. This remains to be done in later writings.

02.02. The Gospel of Matthew

The Gospel of Matthew

CONTENTS1 The Gospel of Matthew may be divided into five parts:

I. The Advent of the Messiah, Matthew 1:1-25, Matthew 2:1-23, Matthew 3:1-17, Matthew 4:1-11. Matthew proves by the legal genealogy that Christ was the Son of David, the child of the promise; that, in harmony with the prophecies, He was born of a virgin at Bethlehem and his way was prepared by John the Baptist; and records his baptism and temptation.

II. The Public proclamation of Messiah's Kingdom, Matthew 4:12; Matthew 16:12. Here we find Jesus, after John is taken captive, choosing his first disciples and beginning his work in Galilee, Matthew 4:12-25. Then follows a splendid example of Christ's teaching in the Sermon on the Mount, in which the law of the New Kingdom is promulgated, and its righteousness and life are contrasted with those of Pharisees and Scribes, Matthew 5:1-48, Matthew 6:1-34, Matthew 7:1-29. This is followed by the description of a series of miracles, interspersed with brief teachings of the Lord and the calling of Matthew, giving clear evidence of the power and mercy of Jesus and establishing his authority to set up the New Kingdom and to proclaim its laws, Matthew 8:1-34, Matthew 9:1-38. Next we have a catalogue of the twelve apostles and their commission to announce the coming Kingdom to the house of Israel, Matthew 10:1-42. It is brought out that the teachings and miracles of Jesus lead to serious questionings on the part of John the Baptist, to open opposition from the side of Pharisees and Scribes, and to the interference of his relatives, Matthew 11:1-12; that as a result Christ substitutes parabolic for plain teaching, Matthew 13:1-53; and that the opposition finally culminates in his rejection by the synagogue of Nazareth, by Herod and by the spiritual leaders of the people, both of Jerusalem and of Galilee, leading in every instance to the withdrawal of his gracious works and also to an exposition and condemnation of the hypocrisy and wickedness of the leaders of the nation. Matthew 13:54-58, Matthew 14:1-36, Matthew 15:1-39, Matthew 16:1-12.

III. The Distinct and Public Claim of Messiahship, Matthew 16:13-28, Matthew 17:1-27, Matthew 18:1-35, Matthew 19:1-30, Matthew 20:1-34, Matthew 21:1-46, Matthew 22:1-46, Matthew 23:1-39. In this section the evangelist shows, how Christ instructs his disciples regarding the Messiahship. The Lord calls forth their explicit confession of him as Messiah, Matthew 16:13-20; and teaches them in a threefold form that He must suffer and die, but will rise again. In connection with these announcements we have the narrative of the transfiguration and the healing of the epileptic demoniac, and instruction regarding the civil and religious relations and duties of the disciples, such as the payment of the temple tribute, the self-denying, humble, loving and forgiving spirit of true discipleship, divorce, the proper attitude toward children, the danger of earthly possessions, the gracious character of the reward in God's Kingdom, and the ministering spirit demanded in his followers, Matthew 16:21-28, Matthew 17:1-27, Matthew 18:1-35, Matthew 19:1-30, Matthew 20:1-28. At Jerusalem also He now makes his claim, entering the city as the Son of David and assuming Messianic authority in the temple. He brings out clearly the future rejection

of Israel, answers the test questions of his enemies and pronounces a sevenfold woe on Pharisees and Scribes, Matthew 20:29-34, Matthew 21:1-46, Matthew 22:1-46, Matthew 23:1-39.

IV. The Sacrifice of Messiah the Priest, Matthew 24:1-51, Matthew 25:1-46, Matthew 26:1-75, Matthew 27:1-66. Matthew demonstrates that Christ, now that He is rejected by the Jews, prepares his disciples for his sacrificial death by unfolding the doctrine of his future coming in glory and by teaching them the true posture of his followers in waiting for the day of his coming, Matthew 24:1-51, Matthew 25:1-46. He then describes how Christ brought his sacrifice, after eating the Paschal lamb, being betrayed by Judas, condemned by the Sanhedrin and Pilate, and dying on the cross, Matthew 26:1-75, Matthew 27:1-66.

V. The Truimph of Messiah the Saviour and King. The author brings out that Jesus by rising again from the dead fully established his claim to the Messiahship. Abundant evidence of the resurrection is furnished and it is clearly shown that in the end Christ is clothed with Messianic authority.

CHARACTERISTICS

1 As to form we find, in the first place, a characteristically Jewish numerical arrangement of things in this Gospel. The genealogy in Matthew 1:1-25 consists of three groups of generations of fourteen each. There are seven beatitudes Matthew 5:1-48; seven petitions in the Lord's prayer Matthew 6:1-34; a group of seven parables Matthew 13:1-58; and seven woes on Pharisees and Scribes Matthew 23:1-39. As to the style of Matthew, in the second place, may be said that it is smoother than that of Mark, though not so vivid. But it is tinged with Hebraisms, less indeed than the language of Luke, but more than that of Mark. It is rather impersonal, lacking in individuality. Its individualism of language consists mostly in the frequent use of certain words and phrases. The Hebraistic formulae of transition χα■ ■γ■νετο and χα■ ιδ■υ occur repeatedly, and the simple τ■τε is constantly used, especially with a historical tense. Further the following characteristic expressions are found: ■ βασιλε■α τ■ν ο■ραν■ν instead of the more common ■ β. το■ θεο■; ■να πληρωθ■ τ■ ρηθ■ν ■π■ χυρ■ου δι■ το■ προφητο■, or an abbreviated form of this expression; and ■πως instead of ■να.

2. The arrangement of the material in this Gospel also differs considerably from that in the other Synoptics. The narrative is not continuous, but is interrupted by five great discourses, such as are not found in the Gospels of Mark and Luke, viz, the Sermon on the Mount, Matthew 5:1-48; Matthew 6:1-34; Matthew 7:1-29; the charge to the apostles, Matthew 10:1-42; the parables of the Kingdom, Matthew 13:1-58; the discourse on the church, Matthew 18:1-35; and the final eschatological discourses of Christ on the last judgment, Matthew 23:1-39; Matthew 24:1-51; Matthew 25:1-46. After every one of these discourses we find the words: "And it came to pass, when Jesus had ended (made an end of, finished) these sayings, etc.

3. As to contents the following peculiarities deserve our attention: In the first place the Gospel of Matthew has a more Jewish aspect, than the other Synoptics. Its predominant subject is, the Messiah and his Kingdom. The discourses of which we spoke all have reference to this Kingdom, and it is clearly brought out that the mission of Christ is to the Jews only and that the establishment of His rule will be a restoration of the fallen throne of David. Cf. the genealogy Matthew 1:1-25 and also Matthew 2:2; Matthew 10:5-6; Matthew 15:24; Matthew 19:28, etc. Yet we must not think that

it positively excludes the idea of salvation for the gentiles; it clearly holds out a hope to them and even announces that the Kingdom will be taken from Israel on account of its unfaithfulness. Cf. Matthew 2:1-13; Matthew 8:10-12; Matthew 15:28; Matthew 21:43; Matthew 22:1-14. In the second place the first Gospel alludes to the Old Testament more frequently than any other: It emphasizes the fact that the New Testament reveals the fulfilment of Old Testament promises; that Christ was born, revealed himself and labored as the prophets of old had foretold. Matthew contains more than 40 quotations, while Mark has 21 and Luke , 22. The characteristic use of ■να (■πως) πληρωθ■ in quotations proves that Matthew had an eye for the divine teleology in history. And in the third place Matthew looks at things in their grand general aspect and pays less attention to the minor details on which Mark so much loves to dwell.

AUTHORSHIP The superscription ascribes the first Gospel to Matthew. That this embodies the opinion of the early Church is evident from the testimony of Irenaeus, Tertullian, Origen, Eusebius and several others, who all point to Matthew as the author. The Gospel itself shows unmistakably, by its Jewish physiognomy, that its author was a Jew, yea even that he was a Palestinian Jew, for he quotes from the Hebrew and not from the Septuagint. It contains no direct evidence, however to the authorship of Matthew, though there are a couple points of difference between it and the other Synoptics that are best explained on the assumption that Matthew wrote it. When we compare the lists of the twelve apostles in Matthew 10:2-4; Mark 3:16-19; and Luke 6:14-16, we notice that only in the first Gospel the name Matthew is followed by the less honorable qualification “the publican ;” and that it has the order, “Thomas and Matthew” instead of, “Matthew and Thomas.’ The apostolic authorship of this gospel is denied by several rationalistic critics, such as Davidson; Julicher and Baljon. Their reasons for rejecting it are the following:

(1). Legend, misunderstanding and irrelevancy are very prominent in this Gospel, which would not be the case if the writer had been an eye and ear witness of Jesus. The reference is to such narratives as the story of the wise men, the flight into Egypt, and the slaughter of the innocents, Matthew 2:1-23; the doublet of the miraculous feeding, Matthew 14:16-21; Matthew 15:32-38; the story of Jesus riding into Jerusalem on two animals, Matthew 21:2; Matthew 21:7; the opening of the graves at the resurrection of Christ, Matthew 27:52; the setting of a watch at the sepulchre and the bribing of them, etc. (2). The Gospel of Matthew is too closely dependent on Mark, not merely in choice of matter and arrangement but in verbal detail, to be the work of an apostle. (3). The author never indicates by the use of the pronouns I or we that he was an eye witness of the things which he narrates. In answer to these objections it may be said that one’s disbelief in miracles does not prove them false, and that the seeming difficulties to which reference is made easily yield to good exegesIsa. The dependence of Matthew on Mark (instead of the reverse as the Tubingen school believed) is indeed accepted by a great number of scholars today, but is not absolutely proven. And even if it were, it would be no disparagement for Matthew. The impersonal objective style is the prevailing one in the historical books of the Bible and is irrelevant as an objection to the authorship of the apostle. Our information regarding Matthew is very scanty. We read of him first in connection with the call to follow Jesus, Matthew 9:9-10; Mark 2:14-15; Luke 5:27-29. There is no reason to doubt that the Matthew of the first Gospel is the Levi of the second and third. Possibly his name was changed by the Lord after his call to the discipleship, just as those of Peter and Paul. In Mark he is said to be the son of Alphaeus, whom some identify with Alphaeus the father of the apostle James. But this identification does not commend itself to us, since we may assume

that, if James and Matthew had indeed been brothers, this would have been stated in their case as well as it is in those of Andrew and Peter and John and James. He belonged to the despised class of publicans and hence cannot have been a very strict Jew. When Jesus called him, he made a great feast for the Lord, to which he also invited many publicans and sinners. Clement of Alexandria describes him as a rigorous ascetic, living “on seeds and herbs and without flesh.” It is not impossible that by a very natural reaction his sinful life changed into one of great austerity. A veil of obscurity is cast over the apostolic career of Matthew. Tradition has it that he remained at Jerusalem with the other apostles for about twelve years after the death of the Lord, laboring among his fellow-countrymen. When the work was done, it is said, he preached the Gospel to others, according to the popular opinion in Ethiopia. He probably died a natural death.

COMPOSITION

I. Original Language. A hotly debated question is that regarding the language in which Matthew originally wrote his Gospel. The difficulty of the problem arises from the fact that external testimony and internal evidence seem to disagree. As a result the camp is very much divided, some scholars ardently defending a Hebrew, others with equal zeal a Greek original. The earliest testimony in regard to this matter is that of Papias and runs as follows: “Matthew composed the oracles (λ■για) in the Hebrew dialect, and everyone interpreted them as he was able.” It is clear from the original that in these words the emphasis falls on the phrase “in the Hebrew language.” But Papias does not stand alone in this assertion; a similar statement is found in Irenaeus: “Matthew among the Hebrews did also publish a Gospel in writing in their own language.” Pantaenus is said to have gone to India, where he found “the writing of Matthew in Hebrew letters.” Origen quoted by Eusebius also says that “the first Gospel was written by Matthew . . . who delivered it to the Jewish believers, composed in the Hebrew language.” Eusebius himself makes the following statement: “For Matthew, having first preached to the Hebrews, when he was about to go to other people, delivered to them in their own language the Gospel written by himself.” Jerome also states that “Matthew wrote a Gospel of Jesus Christ in Judea in the Hebrew language and letters for the benefit of those of the circumcision who believed. Who afterwards translated it into Greek, is uncertain.” To these testimonies might be added those of Athanasius, Cyril of Jerusalem, Epiphanius, Ebedjesu and Chrysostom. On the other hand it is pointed out that the present Greek Gospel does not impress one as a translation, but has all the appearance of an original work, since: (1.) The hypothesis of a translation fails to account for the identity seen in certain parts of the Synoptic Gospels. (2.) While the author himself indeed quotes from the Hebrew text of the Old Testament, the quotations of our Lord are almost uniformly taken from the Septuagint. Is it conceivable that this would be the case in a Hebrew Gospel? (3.) The Gospel contains translations of Hebrew words, as: “They shall call His name Emmanuel, which being interpreted is, God with us,” Matthew 1:23; “A place called Golgotha, that is to say, a place of a skull,” Matthew 27:33. (4.) There are certain explanations of Palestinian customs and habitual occurrences that would have been altogether superfluous in a Hebrew Gospel, naturally intended only for the natives of Palestine, in Matthew 22:23; Matthew 27:8; Matthew 27:15; Matthew 28:15. The conclusion to which this evidence leads is corroborated by the following facts: (1.) In all probability no one has ever seen the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, and no trace of it can now be found. (2.) All the quotations from Matthew in the early Church fathers are taken from the present Greek Gospel. (3.) The Gospel of Matthew always stood on an equal footing with the other Gospels and is cited just

as much as they are. This evidence both external and internal has given rise to several theories, which we can briefly state in the following manner: (1.) Matthew wrote his Gospel in Hebrew and someone else translated it into Greek. This position was held by the Church in general until the time of the Reformation. Since then several Protestant scholars took another view, because Rome defended the ultimate authority of the Vulgate by pointing out that the Greek Matthew was also merely a translation. The attacks of Rationalism on the so-called second-hand Matthew, and the dubious character of a part of the ancient testimony, also served to bring this theory into discredit. Notwithstanding this, however, some of the ablest scholars have defended it up to the present. The prevailing idea among them is that the Greek Matthew is not so much in all parts a literal translation as a new redaction. According to Westcott it gives in writing the Greek counterpart of the Hebrew Gospel, that had taken shape in oral tradition from the beginning. Zahn regards it as the ripe fruit of the interpretation of the Hebrew original in the congregations to which Papias refers.

(2.) There never was a Hebrew original, but Matthew wrote his Gospel in the Greek language. The present gospel is not a translation, but an original work. They who hold this view are of the opinion that the testimony of Papias and of those following him was a sheer mistake, due partly to ignorance and partly to a confounding of the Gospel of Matthew with the Ebionite Gospel according to the Hebrews.

(3.) Matthew wrote neither a Hebrew nor a Greek Gospel, but, if anything, a work called the λ■για by Papias, which must have been a collection of the sayings or discourses of the Lord. According to some these λ■για are lost, but must probably be identified with one of the supposed sources (Q) of our present Gospels. Others as Godet and Holdsworth believe that the work contained the discourses that we find in the Gospel of Matthew and was therefore incorporated bodily in our present Gospel.

(4.) The evangelist after writing his Gospel in Hebrew with a view to his countrymen, possibly when he had left Palestine to labor elsewhere, translated or rather furnished a new recension of his Gospel in the Greek language with a view to the Jews of the Diaspora. The former was soon lost and altogether replaced by the latter. In formulating our opinion in regard to this question. we desire to state first of all that we have no sufficient reason to discredit the testimony of the early Church. It is true that Eusebius says of Papias that he was “a credulous, weak minded, though pious man,” but in connection with this we must bear in mind: (1) that Eusebius says this in connection with the chiliastic opinions of Papias that were odious to the historian; (2) that he himself elsewhere testifies that Papias was a man “in the highest degree eloquent and learned and above all skilled in the Scriptures,” and (3) that the peculiar views of Papias did not necessarily impair his veracity, nor invalidate his testimony to a historical fact. Let us remember also that it is inconsistent to believe Papias, when he says that Matthew wrote the Gospel, and to discredit his further testimony that the apostle wrote in Hebrew, as some scholars do. It is indeed almost certain that Pantaenus was mistaken, when he thought that he had found the Hebrew Gospel in India; and that Jerome labored under a delusion, when he imagined that he had translated it at Caesarea. What they saw was probably a corruption of the Hebrew original, known as, “the Gospel according to the Hebrews.” But this possible mistake does not invalidate the other independent testimony of Jerome and that of all the early fathers to the effect that Matthew wrote the Gospel in Hebrew. In the second place we desire to point out that Papias in speaking of the

λ■για of Matthew undoubtedly referred to his Gospel. The word λ■για does not mean speeches or sayings, as is now often asserted. It is found four times in the New Testament, viz, in Acts 7:38; Romans 3:2; Hebrews 5:12; 1 Peter 4:11, and in every one of these places it has its classical meaning of oracles. It is applied to the divine utterances of God in his Word. In later writers the word is generally employed to indicate inspired writings. There is no reason to think that Papias used the word in the sense of λ■γοι. If in addition to this we take in consideration that in all probability the testimony of Irenaeus is based on, that of Papias and that he takes the word as referring to the Gospel of Matthew, the presumption is that Papias had the Gospel in mind. The meaning of his testimony is therefore, that the first Gospel was written in Hebrew. The so-called Logia-source is a creature of the imagination. In the third place the internal evidence of our present Gospel proves conclusively that this is not a mere translation of a Hebrew original. The evidence adduced seems quite sufficient. The Greek Matthew may be and most likely is in substance a translation of the original Hebrew; yet it must be regarded as in many respects a new recension of the Gospel. The loss of the Hebrew original and the general substitution for it of the Greek version is readily explained by the scattering of the Jews after the destruction of Jerusalem, and by the early corruption of the Hebrew Gospel in the circles of the Ebionites and the Nazarenes. In the fourth place it seems most plausible that Matthew himself, shortly after he had written the Hebrew Gospel, translated it, adjusting it in several respects to the needs of the Jews that were dispersed in different lands. True, early tradition does not speak of this, and Jerome even says that it was not known in his time who translated it into Greek. This favors the idea that it was done very early. Moreover our Greek Gospel was known from the beginning as the Gospel κατ■ Ματθ■ιον, just as the second and third as the Gospel κατ■ M■ρκον and κατ■ Λουκ■ν. As such it is also universally quoted by those fathers that are accustomed to mention their authors. The case of Matthew would thus be analogous to that of Josephus.

II. Readers and Purpose. The Gospel of Matthew was undoubtedly destined for the Jews. This is expressly stated by Irenaeus, Origen, Eusebius, Gregory Nazianzen, e. a. This testimony is corroborated by internal evidence. The genealogy of Jesus goes back only to Abraham, the father of the Hebrew race; and in harmony with the tenets of the Jews the Messiahship of Christ is proved from the prophets. The whole Gospel impresses one as being occasioned by the exigencies of the Jews both in Palestine and without. In none of the other Gospels is the false position of Pharisees and Scribes so clearly exposed.

It was Matthew's purpose to convince the Jews that Jesus was the Christ, the great Davidic King promised by the prophets. He knew that, if this could be shown clearly, they would be won for the Saviour. This purpose is very evident from the Gospel. The legal genealogy of Christ is traced back to Abraham; and it is clearly brought out that prophecy was fulfilled in the manner of Christ's birth Matthew 1:23; the place of his nativity Matthew 2:6; his flight into Egypt Matthew 2:15; the murder of the innocents Matthew 2:18; his residence at Nazareth Matthew 2:23; the ministry of his forerunner Matthew 3:3; Matthew 11:10, his removal to Capernaum Matthew 4:15-16; his healing the sick Matthew 8:17; his meek and retiring disposition Matthew 12:18-21; his teaching by parables Matthew 13:34-35; his entry into Jerusalem Matthew 21:4-5; his rejection by the builders Matthew 21:42; his being David's Son and Lord Matthew 22:44; his desertion by his disciples Matthew 26:31; the price of his betrayal Matthew 27:9; the division of his raiment Matthew 27:35; and his cry of agony Matthew 27:46. It is Matthew only that records the sayings of the Lord: "I am

not come to destroy, but to fulfill," Matthew 5:17; and: "I was not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel," Matthew 15:24. To him Jerusalem is "the Holy City," "the Holy Place," and "the City of the great King." On seven different occasions he calls the Lord "the Son of David." In harmony with the prophets Christ the King is most prominent in his Gospel, though of course the prophetic and priestly character of the Lord are also clearly revealed.

III. Time and Place. Little can be said as to the time, when Matthew wrote his Gospel; and what few indications we have of the time are rather uncertain, because we do not know, whether they bear on the origin of the Hebrew original or of the present Greek Gospel. Tradition generally points to Matthew's Gospel as being the first. Irenaeus makes a very definite statement, viz.: "Matthew among the Hebrews published a Gospel in their own language, while Peter and Paul were preaching the Gospel at Rome and founding a church there." This must have been somewhere between 63-67 A. D.

Something may be gathered in this respect from the contents of the Gospel. We cannot, as some do, infer from Matthew 22:7 that it was composed after the destruction of Jerusalem, for then we would have to assume that our Lord could not have predicted this event. Moreover this argument impugns the veracity of the evangelist. A proof for the contrary, viz, that this Gospel was written before the destruction of Jerusalem, is found in Matthew 24:15, where we find in a discourse of the Saviour this parenthetic clause of the writer: "let him that readeth understand," in connection with the Lord's admonition to the inhabitants of Judea to flee to the mountains, when they shall see the abomination of desolation standing in the Holy Place. The same inference is drawn by some from the eschatological discourse of Christ in Matthew 24:1-51; Matthew 25:1-46, where the beginning of sorrows, the destruction of Jerusalem, and the Lord's return in glory are placed alongside of each other, without any distinction of time; and the writer does not by a single word betray any knowledge of the fact that the destruction of Jerusalem would be separated in time from the Lord's return. But this, being an argument from silence, is rather precarious. The dates assigned to this Gospel by rationalistic critics range from about 70 to 125 A. D. As to the place, where the Gospel was written, Athanasius says that it was published at Jerusalem; Ebedjesu, in Palestine; and Jerome, in Judea for the sake of those in Judea who believed. There is nothing in the Gospel itself that contradicts thIsa. It is very likely, however, that the Greek Gospel was written elsewhere.

IV. Method. The question arises, whether Matthew used sources in the composition of his Gospel. The prevalent opinion at present is that the writer of this Gospel, whoever he may have been, drew in the main on two sources, viz, on the λ■για of Matthew for the discourses of the Lord, and on the Gospel of Mark for the narrative portion of his work. It is found necessary, however, to assume several other minor sources. Thus Weiss, Julicher, Baljon, Peake, Buckley, Bartlet (in Hastings D. B.) e. a. Against these see Davidson and Salmon. Zahn's opinion is that Mark employed the Hebrew Matthew in the composition of his Gospel, and that the writer of our Greek Matthew in turn used the Gospel of Mark. The great diversity of opinion among New Testament scholars in this respect shows clearly that it is quite impossible to determine with any degree of certainty what sources Matthew employed. All we can say is (1) that in all probability the Hebrew Matthew depended on oral tradition only; (2) that our Greek Matthew is based on the Hebrew; and (3) that it is not impossible that Matthew had read the Gospel of Mark before he composed the present Greek Gospel.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The Gospel of Matthew has been accepted as canonical from the earliest times. There are many traces of its use, especially of the Sermon on the Mount in the Didache. Next we find it clearly quoted in the Epistle of Barnabas, who cites ten passages with the significant formula “it is written.” This proves that the Gospel was used and recognized as canonical in the early part of the second century. Further it is abundantly testified to until the beginning of the third century, when all controversy ceases, there being up to that time altogether 21 witnesses, so that this Gospel is one of the best attested books in the New Testament. Among these witnesses are the old Latin and Syriac Versions that contain this Gospel; early church fathers that refer to it as authoritative or quote it; and heretics who, even while attacking the truth, tacitly admit the canonical character of the Gospel. This book is properly placed at the very beginning of the New Testament. It forms part of the foundation on which the New Testament structure was to be reared. And among the Gospels, which together constitute this foundation, it is rightly put in the first place. It is, as it were, a connecting link between the Old Testament and the New. As the Old Testament had reference to the Jews only, so the Gospel of Matthew is written for the old covenant people. And it is clearly linked to the Old Testament by its continual reference to the prophets. The permanent spiritual value of this Gospel is that it sets forth in clear outline Christ as the One promised of old; and, in harmony with the prophetic literature, especially as the great divine King, before whom the Church of all ages must bow down in adoration.

02.03 The Gospel of Mark

The Gospel of Mark

CONTENTS We may divide the contents of Mark's Gospel, that treats of Christ as the mighty Worker, into five parts:

I. The Advent of the mighty Worker, Mark 1:1-45, Mark 2:1-12. Jesus is heralded as the mighty One by John the Baptist, and proclaimed as the Son of God by the Father, Mark 1:1-13. After calling some of his disciples, He taught the Galilean multitudes as one having authority, worked mighty miracles among them, as the casting out of demons, the healing of Peters mother-in-law, the cleansing of a leper, etc., and showed His authority to forgive sins, Mark 1:14-45, Mark 2:1-12.

II. The Conflict of the mighty Worker, Mark 2:12-28, Mark 3:1-35, Mark 4:1-41, Mark 5:1-43, Mark 6:1-56, Mark 7:1-37, Mark 8:1-26. In connection with the feast of Levi, the fact that the apostles did not fast, and that they plucked ears of corn on the sabbath, Jesus gives the Pharisees instruction regarding the purpose of his coming, and the moral character of the requirements of his Kingdom, Mark 2:13-29, Mark 3:1-8. The healing of the man with the withered hand leads to the enmity of Pharisees and Herodians, which caused the withdrawal of Jesus. The Lord now chose twelve apostles and continued his mighty works, so that even his friends and relatives sought to restrain him, and his enemies claimed that He did them through the power of the devil, Mark 3:9-35. Next we find him teaching the people regarding the origin, the quiet growth, independent of mans efforts, and the future strength of the Kingdom of God, Mark 4:1-34. His divine power shines forth in his calming the sea, his curing the demoniacs in the land of the Gadarenes and the woman that had the issue of blood, and his raising the daughter of Jairus, Mark 4:36-41, Mark 5:1-43. He finds no faith at Nazareth, and now sends out the twelve into the cities of Galilee, Mark 6:1-13. Herod, hearing of Christ, stands in awe of him, believing him to be John the Baptist, whom he beheaded, Mark 6:14-29. Withdrawing with the twelve to a desert place, He feeds the five thousand, and after that shows his power over nature by walking on the sea, Mark 6:30-56. The Pharisees accost him, because his disciples eat bread with unclean hands, Mark 7:1-23. He now cures the daughter of the Syro-Phoenician woman and the deaf and dumb man at Decapolis, where He also feeds the four thousand, Mark 7:24-37, Mark 8:1-9. Once more the Pharisees ask him for a sign. Leaving them, He restores the sight of the blind man at Bethsaida, Mark 8:10-26.

III. The Claim of the mighty Worker, Mark 8:27-38, Mark 9:1-50, Mark 10:1-52, Mark 11:1-33, Mark 12:1-44, Mark 13:1-37. The Lord shows the necessity of his suffering, leads his disciples to confess him as Messiah, and points out what is required of them, Mark 8:27-38. His power and glory are seen in the transfiguration and in the miracle following this, Mark 9:1-29. Then follows a second revelation of his future suffering, followed by teachings regarding humility and offenses, Mark 9:30-50. In Perea Christ, tempted by the Pharisees, gives his opinion on the question of divorce; then He blesses little children and points out the way of life to the young ruler, Mark 10:1-31. For the third time He reveals his future suffering, and prepares his disciples for a life of service, Mark 10:32-45. At Jericho He restores the sight of Bartemaeus. Next he enters Jerusalem

amid loud hosannas, curses the fig-tree and cleanses the temple, Mark 10:46-52, Mark 11:1-26. In the temple He reveals his superiority by answering the questions of Pharisees, Sadducees and Herodians, and points to himself as David's Lord, Mark 11:27-33, Mark 12:1-44. Then he speaks of his coming in glory, Mark 13:1-37.

IV. The Sacrifice of the mighty Worker, Mark 14:1-72, Mark 15:1-47. Preparation is made for Jesus death by the Sanhedrin and Judas on the one hand, and by Mary of Bethany on the other, Mark 14:1-11. The Passover is eaten and the Lords supper instituted, Mark 14:12-25 : In Gethsemane follows bitter agony and captivity, Mark 14:26-52. Then the Lord is tried and condemned by the Sanhedrin and by Pilate, and finally He is crucified, Mark 14:53-72, Mark 15:1-47.

V. The mighty Worker as Conqueror of Death, Mark 16:1-20. Women go to the grave on the first day of the week and are directed by the angels to go to Galilee, Mark 16:1-8. The Lord appears several times, gives blessed promises, and at last ascends to heaven, Mark 14:9-20.

CHARACTERISTICS There are certain characteristics by which the Gospel of Mark is distinguished from the other Gospels:

1. The most striking peculiarity of the second Gospel is its descriptive character. It is Marks constant aim to picture the scenes of which he speaks in lively colours. There are many minute observations in his work that are not found in the other Synoptics, some of which point to its autoptic character. He mentions the look of anger that Christ cast on the hypocrites about him, Mark 3:5; relates the miracles, performed immediately after the transfiguration, with greater circumstantiality than the other Gospels, Mark 9:9-29; tells of Jesus taking little children in his arms and blessing them, Mark 9:36; Mark 10:16; remarks that Jesus, looking at the young ruler, loved him, Mark 10:21, etc.

2. This Gospel contains comparatively little of the teaching of Jesus; it rather brings out the greatness of our Lord by pointing to his mighty works, and in doing this does not follow the exact chronological order. Teaching is subordinate to action, though we cannot maintain that it is ignored altogether. Mark, though considerably smaller than Matthew, contains all the miracles narrated by the latter except five, and besides has three that are not found in Matthew. Of the eighteen miracles in Luke, Mark has twelve and four others above this number.

3. In the Gospel of Mark several words of Christ that were directed against the Jews are left out, such as we find in Matthew 3:7-10; Matthew 8:5-13; Matthew 15:24, etc. On the other hand more Jewish customs and Aramaic words are explained than in the first Gospel, Mark 2:18; Mark 7:3; Mark 14:12; Mark 15:6; Mark 15:42; Mark 3:17; Mark 5:41; Mark 7:11; Mark 7:34; Mark 14:36. The argument from prophecy has not the large place here that it has in Matthew.

4. The style of Mark is more lively than that of Matthew, though not as smooth. He delights in using words like ε■θ■ς or ε■θ■ως and πολ■ς prefers the use of the present and the imperfect to that of the aorist, and often uses the periphrastic ε■ναι with a participle instead of the finite verb. There are several Latinisms found in his Gospel, as κεντυρ■ων,κορδ■ντης, κρ■ββατος,πραιτ■ριον, σπεκουλ■τωρ and φραγελλο■ν.

AUTHORSHIP

Just as in the case of Matthew we are entirely dependent on external testimony for the name of the author of the second Gospel. And the voice of antiquity is unanimous in ascribing it to Mark. The most ancient testimony to this effect is that of Papias, who says: “Mark, the interpreter of Peter, wrote down carefully all that he recollected, though he did not [record] in order that which was either said or done by Christ. For he neither heard the Lord nor followed him; but subsequently, as I have said, [attached himself to] Peter, who used to frame his teaching to meet the [immediate] wants [of his hearers]; and not as making a connected narrative of the Lords discourses. So Mark committed no error, as he wrote down some particulars just as he called them to mind. For he took heed to one thing—to omit none of the facts that he heard, and to state nothing falsely in [his narrative] of them.” Several other church fathers, such as Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Jerome, Eusebius, e. a., follow in his wake; there is not a dissentient voice.

We cannot glean a single hint from the Gospel itself as to the identity of the author. It may be that the obscure young man who followed Jesus in the night of his betrayal. Mark 14:51-52, and who, stripped of his garment fled naked in the darkness of night, was the author himself. The house of Marks mother was at least in later time a rendezvous for the disciples of the Lord, Acts 12:12; so that it is not improbable that Jesus and his disciples ate the Paschal supper there, and that Mark, hearing them depart, left his bed and stole after them. This would immediately explain the acquaintance of the author with this interesting fact.

Some scholars have expressed doubt as to the identity of Mark, the evangelist, and John Mark, the companion of Barnabas and Paul. The general consensus of opinion, however, favors thIsa. Proceeding on the assumption that this view is correct, we find Mark mentioned first in connection with Peter’s deliverance from prison in 44 A. D. After leaving the prison walls the apostle went to “the house of Mary, the mother of John, whose surname was Mark,” Acts 12:12. From the way in which Luke introduces his mother we gather that Mark was a well known person, when the Acts were written. The fact that Peter calls him his son, 1 Peter 5:13 naturally leads to the supposition that in his early years he had frequent intercourse with the apostle and was through the instrumentality of Peter led to a saving knowledge of the truth. He was a cousin of Barnabas and hence a Jew, probably even of a priestly family, Acts 4:36. When Barnabas and Paul set out on their first missionary journey, Mark accompanied them until they came to Pamphylia, when for some unknown, but as it seems reprehensible reason, he turned back. At the beginning of the second missionary journey he was minded to accompany the apostles again, but Paul positively refused to accept his services. He now accompanied his uncle to Cyprus. When we next hear of Mark, about ten years later, he is spoken of by Paul as one of those few “fellow-laborers that have been a consolation to him,” Colossians 4:10; Philemon 1:24. In his last letter the apostle speaks of Mark once more, and in such a laudatory manner as to prove that Mark has fully regained his confidence, 2 Timothy 4:11. The last we hear of Mark in Scripture is, when Peter sends the greetings of Mark, his son, to the Christians in Asia Minor, 1 Peter 5:13. These four passages lead us to the following construction of his later history: He was with Paul during the apostles first imprisonment at Rome and then intended to visit the congregation of Colossae. We have no reason to doubt that he carried out this purpose. After Pauls release Mark was at Rome with Peter, who in writing to the Christians of Asia Minor assumes that they know Mark. Apparently he made another visit to Asia Minor, since Paul requests Timothy, 2 Timothy 4:11 to take Mark with him,

when he comes to Rome. After the death of Peter he is said to have visited Alexandria, where he was the first to found Christian churches, and finally died a martyr's death. This tradition, though old, is not without suspicion.

It seems that Mark was "like Peter more a man of action than of deep and abiding principle, a man of fervor and enthusiasm rather than of persevering effort; but he was transfused by the power of the same Christ who transfused Peter into the man of rapid, continued and effective effort in the missionary work of the Church." Gregory, Why Four Gospels, p. 163. The relation of Mark to Peter deserves special attention. Scripture speaks of this in the two places already mentioned, and tradition abundantly testifies to it. Papias says that "Mark was Peters interpreter and wrote down carefully all that he recollected." Clement of Alexandria also says that he wrote down the discourses of Peter, as he remembered them. Irenaeus, Tertullian and Jerome all style Mark "the interpreter of Peter." Tertullian even says that "the Gospel published by Mark may be reckoned Peter's, whose interpreter he was." And Origen still stronger: "Mark wrote his Gospel according to the dictates of Peter." Similarly Athanasius. All these testimonies agree in asserting that Mark was dependent on Peter in writing his Gospel; they disagree, however, as to the degree of dependence, some claiming merely that Mark recorded what he remembered of Peters preaching, and others, that he wrote what Peter dictated. Which representation is the true one? The title of the Gospel is against the dictation theory, for if Peter had dictated the Gospel, it would in all probability have been called by his name, just as the Epistles dictated by Paul are universally ascribed to him. On the other hand the autoptic touches in the Gospel make it probable that in some parts of his work Mark employed the very words of Peter; they also suggest a possible basis for the later tradition that Peter dictated to Mark. However, it is not impossible that some of the Church fathers accentuated the dependence of Mark on Peter unduly, merely to enhance the authority of his work. The true relation of the evangelist to the apostle is expressed in the words: "Mark was the interpreter (■ρμηνευτης) of Peter." This does not mean that he accompanied Peter on his missionary journeys as dragoman, translating Aramaic discourses into Greek (Davidson), or Greek into Latin (Bleek); but that he was Peters scholar and in his Gospel interprets i. e. sets forth the doctrine of Peter for those who have not heard the apostle. The Gospel itself incidentally testifies to the relation in which it stands to Peter. There are many touches that indicate first-hand knowledge, as in Mark 1:16-20; Mark 1:29; Mark 9:5; 15:54, 72; Mark 16:7. Some things found in the other Synoptics are unexpectedly omitted by Mark, as Peters walking on the water, Matthew 14:29; his appearance in the incident of the tribute money, Matthew 17:24-27; the statement of Christ that He prayed for Peter individually, Luke 22:32; the significant word spoken to him as the Rock, Matthew 16:18. In other cases his name is suppressed, where it is used by Matthew or Luke, as Matthew 7:17 cf. Matthew 15:15; Matthew 14:13 cf. Luke 22:8. The authorship of Mark is quite generally admitted; yet there are some, such as Beischlag and Davidson e.a. who deny it. They maintain that our present Gospel does not tally with the description of Papias, where he says that Mark wrote down the things he heard of Peter "not in order." Wendt supposes that Papias had in mind a series of narratives that are embodied in our present Gospel, a sort of Urmarkus. But when Papias said that the evangelist wrote "not in order," he did not say anything that is not true of our Mark, for in it we do not find things in the order of their occurrence. And in ancient literature there is not a single trace of an Urmarkus.

COMPOSITION

1. Readers and Purpose. External testimony enlightens us respecting the circle for which the Gospel of Mark was intended; it points to Rome and the Romans. Clement of Alexandria says that many of the converts of Rome desired of Mark that he should write down the discourses of Peter. Jerome also speaks of this “request of the brethren at Rome”; and Gregory Nazianzen says: “Mark wrote his Gospel for the Italians.” If we now turn to the Gospel itself, we find that it was peculiarly adapted to the Romans. They were a strenuous, a very active people; Marks Gospel is pre-eminently the Gospel of action, and is written in a brisk lively style. The fact that the argument from prophecy holds an inferior place in it, and that so many Jewish customs and Aramaic words are explained, points away from the Jews; while the Latin words contained in the gospel, the reference to the Roman manner of divorce, Mark 10:12, the reduction of a coin to the Roman quadrans, Mark 12:42, the knowledge of Pilate presupposed in Mark 15:1 (cf. Matthew 27:1 and Luke 3:1), and the introduction of Simon of Cyrene as the father of Alexander and Rufus, Mark 15:21 (cf. Romans 16:13),—all point to Rome.

It stands to reason that the purpose of Mark in writing stood in the closest relation to the circle of readers for whom he intended his Gospel. It is certainly true, as Zahn asserts, that his intention was to record the beginning (■ρχ■) of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, i. e. the beginning of its preaching and of its course; but he has this in common with the other Synoptics; it is nothing distinctive (cf. p. 58 above). The theory of Hilgenfeld and Davidson, following Baur, that the Gospel of Mark was written to conciliate the two opposing parties of the apostolic age, the Petrine and the Pauline, and therefore carefully avoids the exclusivism of Matthew as well as the universalism of Luke can only be sustained by the most forced and artificial interpretations. Neither does the gospel support the view of Weiss, that it was written at a time, when the hope of Christ’s second coming was on the decline, and intended to show that the Messianic character of Jesus mission was sufficiently attested by His earthly life. Mark’s aim was simply to record the gospel narrative without any special dogmatic aim, but to do this in such a manner as would be most suitable for the Romans, the busy Romans, the people of action. Hence he places special emphasis on the acts of Christ. For those who loved conquest and admired heroism he desired to picture Christ as the mighty Conqueror that overcame sin and all its consequences, yea even death itself.

2. Time and Place. As to the time when Mark wrote his Gospel the witness of the early Church is not unanimous. Irenaeus says that after the death of Peter and Paul Mark wrote down what he had heard Peter preach. Clement of Alexandria places the composition of the Gospel before the death of Peter, stating that, when Peter heard of it, “he neither obstructed nor encouraged the work.” Jerome informs us that Peter “approved and published it in our churches, commanding the reading of it by his own authority~” Others say that Peter dictated to Mark. The question to be decided is therefore, whether Mark wrote before or after the death of Peter. It is generally assumed that the testimony of Irenaeus is the most trustworthy. It is possible that some of the later Church fathers insisted on Marks having written the Gospel during the life of Peter, in order to clothe it with apostolic authority. Zahn would harmonize the testimony of the fathers by assuming that Mark began his work before and finished it after the death of the apostle; and that Peter on hearing of Mark’s venture at first said nothing regarding it; then, seeing a part of the work, rejoiced in it; and still later, when it had almost reached its perfect form, sanctioned it, Einl. II p. 203.

Turning to the Gospel itself, we find that it contains no positive evidence as to the time of its composition. Some inferred from Mark 13:24 as compared with Matthew 24:29 that it was written

after the destruction of Jerusalem, the evangelist being conscious of the lapse of a certain period between that catastrophe and the day of Christ's return. But the foundation is too slender for the conclusion. With greater probability others infer from Mark 13:14, "let him that readeth understand," that the destruction of the city was still a matter of expectation. This seems to follow also from Marks utter silence regarding that calamity. The probable conclusion is therefore that the year 70 A. D. is the terminus ad quem for the composition of this Gospel. From Colossians 4:10 we may infer that it was written after 62 A. D., for if Paul had known Mark as an evangelist, he would most likely have introduced him as such. A place of still greater importance is 2 Peter 1:15. "Yea I will give diligence that at every time ye may be able after my decease to call these things to remembrance." Here Peter seems to promise that there will be a record of his preaching after his demise. We would therefore date the Gospel between 67 and 70 A. D. Davidson without good reasons places it in the beginning of the second century, about 125 A. D. Regarding the grounds for his position, (1) that in this Gospel belief in the divinity of Christ is more pronounced than in the first century; and (2) that the word ε■αγγ■λιον is used in a sense foreign to the apostolic age, we merely remark that they are both unproved assumptions. The testimony of the fathers points, almost without a dissenting voice, to Rome as the place, where Mark composed his gospel. Chrysostom, however, testifies that "Mark wrote in Egypt at the request of the believers there. But in another statement he admits that he really knows nothing about it.

3. Method. Augustine called Mark "the abridger of Matthew," assuming that the second Gospel was an abbreviated compilation from the first. This theory has since been defended by several scholars of the Tubingen school, but is now abandoned. The general features of the Gospel do not bear out that view. Zahn finds that Mark based his Gospel both on the oral communications of Peter and on the Hebrew Matthew, Einl. II p. 322. Davidson denies the originality and priority of the Gospel by making it depend to a great extent on Matthew and Luke, Introd. I p. 478. Salmon finds throughout the Gospel many evidences of the priority and independence of Mark, but believes that in other places he is, with Matthew and Luke, dependent on a common source, Introd. p. 155. The prevalent opinion at present is that Marks Gospel was prior to the other two, though, at least according to some, he may have employed the ε■αγγ■λιον of Matthew. But in order to maintain this priority its defenders have resorted to such artificial and unlikely theories that they in part defeated their own purpose. The theory of an Urmarkus has been broached, but found little acceptance. The opinion of Dr. Arthur Wright that we must distinguish between a proto-, a deutero- and a trito Mark, a distinction applied to oral tradition by him, is now by others applied to written documents. Cf. Holdsworth, Gospel Origins p. 108.

Here again the great difference of opinion proves that it is quite impossible to trace in all details the origin of the material found in this Gospel. The great objection to several of the theories propounded is that they seek to account for the origin of Mark in a too mechanical way. We may be certain of two things: (1) that Mark derived the greatest part of his material from the preaching of Peter that had gradually assumed a definite shape in his mind; and (2) that he has recorded partly the ipsissima verba of Peter (except for the occasional change of we into they), and partly merely the substance of the apostles κ■ρυγμα in a form and with interpretations of his own. For the rest of his material he probably depended on the Hebrew original of Matthew.

INTEGRITY The integrity of the Gospel of Mark is generally maintained, with the exception, however, of the last twelve verses, regarding which there is a great difference of opinion. The

critical camp of the past century is just about equally divided, although at present the tide is somewhat against these verses. The reasons for rejecting them are both external and internal. These verses are wanting in the two oldest and most valuable manuscripts, viz, the Sinaitic and the Vatican. Eusebius and Jerome and a few others state that they were wanting in almost all the Greek copies of the gospels of their time. It is possible, however, that the testimony of Jerome and the rest resolves itself into that of Eusebius. This is all but certain with respect to that of Jerome, as even Davidson admits. They are wanting also in the important MS. k, representing the African text of the old Latin Version, which has another and shorter conclusion, like that in MS. L. They are also absent from some of the best MSS. of the Armenian Version. Then the style of this section is abrupt and sententious, not graphic like that of the rest of the Gospel. It makes the impression of a collection of brief notices, extracted from larger accounts and loosely combined. Its phraseology is also peculiar. Thus πρ■τ■ σαββ■του, verse 9 is used instead of ■ μ■α τ■ν σαββ■του as in Mark 16:2. The verb πορε■εσθαι, which occurs three times in this section, is not found in the body of the Gospel. Neither is the word θε■σθαι, Mark 16:11; Mark 16:14. Another unique feature is the use of ■ κ■ριος as a designation of Christ, Mark 6:19-20.

These verses have also found ardent defenders, however, among whom especially Dean Burgon must be named, though he is perhaps a little too positive. In his work on, “The last Twelve Verses of the Gospel according to Mark,” he put up an able defense. The authenticity of this section is favored by the following considerations: It is found in most of the uncial MSS. and in all the cursives, though some of these mark it with an asterisk, or indicate that it was absent in older copies. Moreover its absence from Aleph and B looks somewhat suspicious. It is also incorporated in most of the ancient Versions, of which the Itala, the Curatorian and Peshito Syriac, and the Coptic are older than any of our Greek codices. All the existing Greek and Syriac lectionaries, as far as they have now been examined, contain these verses. Irenaeus quotes the 19th verse as a part of the Gospel of Mark. Justin Martyr too in all probability testifies to the authenticity of these verses. And several of the later fathers, such as Epiphanius, Ambrose and Augustine certainly quote from them. And as far as internal evidence is concerned, it seems very unlikely that Mark would end his Gospel with the words ■φοβο■ντο γ■ρ without recording a single appearance of the Lord. Moreover these verses contain too many peculiarities to be a forgery.

We cannot delay to discuss the causes for the variation of the MSS, nor to review the different conclusions to which scholars have come as to the extent of Marks Gospel. They who wish to study the subject can do so in the work of Burgon, in the Introductions of Guericke and Salmon and in Urquharts New Biblical Guide VII, where this section is defended; and in the work of Westcott and Hort, “The New Testament in Greek,” and in the Introductions of Reuss, Weiss, Davidson and Zahn, who reject it.

It seems to us that the ground offered for the rejection of these verses by external testimony is rather slender and uncertain, while the internal evidence is weighty indeed. In view of it we are inclined to accept one of two possible conclusions: either that Mark himself added these verses some time after he had written his Gospel, possibly culling his material from Matthew and Luke; or that someone else wrote them to complete the work. The latter is favored by the Armenian Gospel that was written in 986 and was discovered by F. C. Conybeare in 1891, and which has the superscription above this section: “Of the Presbyter Ariston.” In either case we see no reason, however, to doubt the canonicity of this part of Marks Gospel, though some have attempted to

make this suspicious especially by pointing to the unlikely (?) miracles of Mark 16:17-18. Cf. Luke 10:19.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Though the external testimony to the canonicity of Mark's Gospel is not so abundant as that for the Gospel of Matthew, yet it is sufficient to establish this beyond a shadow of doubt. It is quoted by at least two of the apostolic fathers, by Justin Martyr and by the three great witnesses of the end of the second century, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, and is referred to as a part of the Word of God by several others. We find no expressions of doubt in the early Church. The special purpose of this Gospel in the canon is to show us Christ in his divine power, destroying the works of Satan, and conquering sin and death. More than other Gospels it places prominently before us the work of Christ in behalf of those that are bound by the shackles of Satan and are suffering the consequences of sin. We here see the Lion out of the tribe of Judah, conquering and ever to conquer. Mark is the only one of the evangelists that speaks of the future Kingdom of God as coming with power, 9:1. In that way this Gospel has special significance for the Church of all ages. It gives her the blessed assurance that her future is entrusted to One who has shown himself a mighty Conqueror, and who is abundantly able to save to the uttermost all who believe in Him.

02.04. The Gospel of Luke

The Gospel of Luke

CONTENTS Like the contents of the previous Gospels we may also divide those of Luke's into five parts:

I. The Advent of the Divine Man, Luke 1:1-80, Luke 2:1-52, Luke 3:1-38, Luke 4:1-13. After stating his aim the evangelist describes the announcement from heaven of the forerunner, John the Baptist, and of Christ himself, and their birth with the attendant circumstances, Luke 1:1-80, Luke 2:1-20. Then he shows that Christ was made subject to the law in circumcision, in the presentation in the temple, and in his journey to Jerusalem, Luke 2:21-52. He traces the descent of the Son of Man to Adam, and points out that He was prepared for his work by baptism and temptation, Luke 3:1-38, Luke 4:1-13.

II. The Work of the Divine Man for the Jewish World, Luke 4:14-44, Luke 5:1-39, Luke 6:1-49, Luke 7:1-50, Luke 8:1-56, Luke 9:1-50. In this part we first see Christ preaching in the synagogues of Nazareth, Capernaum and all Galilee; performing many miracles in Capernaum and by the sea of Galilee, such as the curing of Peter's mother-in-law, the wonderful draught of fishes, the cleansing of the leper, and the healing of the palsied man; calling Levi to follow him; and instructing his enemies regarding his authority, his purpose, and the moral character of his demands, as a result of which many were amazed and Pharisees and Scribes were filled with hatred, Luke 4:14-44, Luke 5:1-39, Luke 6:1-11. After a night of prayer the Lord now chooses his twelve disciples and proclaims the constitution of his Kingdom, Luke 6:12-49. He cures the centurion s servant, raises the widow's son, and gives instruction by word and example regarding the nature of his work and the character of the subjects of his Kingdom, Luke 7:1-49. The origin of the Kingdom is now illustrated in the parable of the sower, and the divine power of Christ over both the natural and the spiritual world is shown in the stilling of the storm, in the deliverance of the Gadarene demoniac, in his curing the woman with the issue of blood and raising the daughter of Jairus, Luke 8:1-56. The twelve are sent out and on their return Christ retires with them to a desert place, where He miraculously feeds the five thousand, after which He once and again announced his future suffering and was transfigured on the Mount, Luke 9:1-50.

III. The Work of the Divine Man for the Gentiles, Luke 9:51-62, Luke 10:1-42, Luke 11:1-54, Luke 12:1-59, Luke 13:1-35, Luke 14:1-35, Luke 15:1-32, Luke 16:1-31, Luke 17:1-37, Luke 18:1-30. Jesus in traveling towards Jerusalem sends messengers before him, but these are rejected by the Samaritans; then He sends out the seventy, who return with a good report, teaches that neighborly love is not to be restricted to the Jews (good Samaritan), and gives his disciples instruction regarding prayer, Luke 9:51-62, Luke 10:1-42, Luke 11:1-13. The Pharisees now claim that Christ casts out the devils through Beelzebub, in answer to which He pictures their condition, and when they tempt him in various ways, pronounces his woe upon them and warns his disciples against them, Luke 11:14-54, Luke 12:1-12. In connection with the parable of the rich fool the Lord warns against covetousness and anxious care, and bids his disciples to be prepared for the day of his

coming, Luke 12:13-53. Sitting at meat in the house of a Pharisee, He teaches those present true mercy, true humility, true hospitality, and the fact that they, having refused the supper of the Lord, will be rejected, Luke 14:1-24. Next the necessity of self-denial is impressed on those that would follow Jesus, and in three parables the Pharisees are made acquainted with the real purpose of his coming, Luke 14:25-35, Luke 15:1-32. The disciples are instructed in the careful use of their earthly possessions, and to the Pharisees the law of retribution is explained, Luke 16:1-31. In various ways the Lord impresses on his followers the necessity of a forgiving spirit, of humility, of faith and gratitude, of constant prayer with a view to the unexpected character of his coming, of trusting in God and of self denial, all ending in everlasting salvation, Luke 17:1-37, Luke 18:1-30.

IV. The Sacrifice of the Divine Man for all Mankind, Luke 18:31-43, Luke 19:1-48, Luke 20:1-47, Luke 21:1-38, Luke 22:1-71, Luke 23:1-49. Jesus announces once more his future suffering and death, at Jericho restores the sight of a blind man and calls Zaccheus, and points out to his followers that his Kingdom would not immediately come, Luke 18:32-43, Luke 19:1-27. Triumphantly He enters Jerusalem, where He cleanses the temple, answers the questions of the Chief Priests, the Scribes, the Pharisees and the Sadducees, and instructs his followers regarding his future coming, Luke 19:28-48, Luke 20:1-47, Luke 21:1-38. After eating the Passover with his disciples He was betrayed, condemned and crucified, Luke 22:1 Luke 23:56.

V. The Divine Man Saviour of all Nations, Luke 24:1-53. On the morning of the first day Christ arose; women seek him in the grave; He appears to two of his disciples on the way to Emmaus, to the eleven, and finally departs from them with the promise of the Spirit.

CHARACTERISTICS The following are the most important characteristics of the third Gospel:

1. In point of completeness it surpasses the other Synoptics, beginning, as it does, with a detailed narrative of the birth of John the Baptist and of Christ himself, and ending with a record of the ascension from the Mount of Olives. In distinction from Matthew and Mark this Gospel even contains an allusion to the promise of the Father, Luke 24:29, and thus points beyond the old dispensation to the new that would be ushered in by the coming of the Holy Spirit. The detailed narrative of Christ’s going to Jerusalem in Luke 9:51-62, Luke 10:1-42, Luke 11:1-54, Luke 12:1-59, Luke 13:1-35, Luke 14:1-35, Luke 15:1-32, Luke 16:1-31, Luke 17:1-37, Luke 18:1-14 is also peculiar to this gospel.

2. Christ is set before us in this Gospel as the perfect Man with wide sympathies. The genealogy of Jesus is trace back through David and Abraham to Adam, our common progenitor, thus presenting him as one of our race. We are told of the truly human development both in body and spirit of Jesus in Luke 2:40-52, and of his dependence on prayer in the most important crises of His life, Luke 3:21; Luke 9:29. Those features of the Lord’s miracles of healing are clearly brought out that show his great sympathy. “Peter’s mother-in-law suffers from a great fever; and the leper is full of leprosy. The hand restored on the sabbath is the right hand, the centurion s servant is one dear to him, the son of the widow of Nain, is an only son, the daughter of Jairus an only daughter, the epileptic boy at the hill of transfiguration is an only child.” Bruce, The Expositor’s Greek Testament I p. 47.

3. Another feature of this gospel is its universality. It comes nearer than other Gospels to the Pauline doctrine of salvation for all the world, and of salvation by faith, without the works of the

law. In the synagogue at Nazareth Christ points out that God might again deal with the Jews as He had done in the days of Elijah and Elisha, Luke 4:25-27; He declares that the faith of the centurion was greater than any He had found in Israel, Luke 7:2-10; sends messengers before his face into Samaria, Luke 9:52-56; demands love of Israel even for the Samaritans, Luke 10:30-37; heals the Samaritan leper as well as the others, Luke 17:11-19; and speaks the significant word: “Blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it, Luke 11:28.

4. More than the other evangelists Luke relates his narrative to contemporaneous history and indicates the time of the occurrences. It was in the days of king Herod that the birth of John the Baptist and Christ was announced, Luke 1:1; Luke 1:26; during the reign of Caesar Augustus, that Christ was born, Luke 2:1; while Cyrenius was governor of Syria, that the taxation took place, Luke 2:2; in the fifteenth year of Tiberias, etc., that Christ was baptized and began his public ministry, Luke 3:1-2. Notice also the following chronological indications: Luke 1:36; Luke 1:56; Luke 1:59; Luke 2:42; Luke 3:23; Luke 9:28; Luke 9:37; Luke 9:51; Luke 22:1; Luke 22:7. We should not infer from the foregoing, however, that Luke furnishes us with a chronological record of the Lord’s public ministry. Very indefinite expressions of time are found throughout the Gospel, as: “and it came to pass, when he was in a certain city,” Luke 5:12; “and it came to pass on a certain day,” Luke 5:17; “and it came to pass also on another sabbath,” Luke 6:6, etc.

5. Luke writes a purer Greek than any of the other evangelists, but this is evident only, where he does not closely follow his sources. The Greek of the preface is of remarkable purity, but aside from this the first and second chapters are full of Hebraisms. Of the rest of the Gospel some parts approach very closely to classical Greek, while others are tinged with Hebrew expressions. Plummer says: “The author of the Third Gospel and of the Acts is the most versatile of all the New Testament writers. He can be as Hebraistic as the LXX, and as free from Hebraisms as Plutarch.” Comm. on Luke in International Crit. Comm. p. XLIX. His style is also very picturesque; he tries to make us see things, just as the eyewitnesses saw them. Moreover his Gospel contains 312 words that are peculiar to him. Several of these are ■παξ λεγ■μενα. There are also five Latin words, viz. δην■ριον,λεγε■ν, σουδ■ριον,■σσ■ριον and μ■διος. Cf. lists in Plummer’s Comm. and Davidson’s Introd.

AUTHORSHIP

Though the author speaks of himself explicitly in the preface of his Gospel, we are dependent on tradition for his name. And here again the testimony of the fathers is unanimous. Irenaeus asserts that “Luke, the companion of Paul, put down in a book the Gospel preached by him.” With this agrees the testimony of Origen; Eusebius, Athanasius, Gregory, Nazianze, Jerome, e.a. The Gospel itself offers us no direct collateral testimony. Yet there are certain features that strengthen our belief in the authorship of Luke. In the first place the writer evidently looks at things with the eye of a physician. In 1882 Dr. Hobart published a work on, The Medical Language of St. Luke, showing that in many instances the evangelist uses the technical language that was also used by Greek medical writers, as παραλελυμ■νος, Luke 5:18; Luke 5:24 (the other Gospels have παραλ■τικος);συνεχομ■νη πυρετ■ μεγαλλ■ Luke 4:38; ■στη ■ ■υ■σις το■ ■ιματος Luke 8:44 (cf. Matthew 5:29); ■νεκ■θισεν, Luke 7:14, Luke carefully distinguishes demoniacal possession from disease, Luke 4:18; Luke 13:32; states exactly the age of the dying person, Luke 8:42; and the duration of the affliction in Luke 13:11. He only relates the miracle of the healing of Malchus

ear. All these things point to Luke, “the beloved physician. In the second place there is what has been called the Paulinism of Luke. This has sometimes been emphasized unduly, no doubt, but it certainly is a characteristic feature of the third Gospel, and is just what we would expect in a writing of Paul’s companion. In the third place we find great similarity between this Gospel and the Acts of the Apostles. If Luke wrote the latter, he also composed the former. The general opinion is expressed by Knowling in his introduction to the book of Acts, in the Expositor’s Greek TestamentII p. 3: “Whoever wrote the Acts wrote also the Gospel which bears the name of Luke.” It is true that there are more Hebraisms in the Gospel than in Acts, but this is due to the fact that the writer in composing the former was more dependent on written sources than he was in writing the latter. The only certain knowledge we have of Luke is derived from the Acts of the Apostles and from a few passages in the Epistles of Paul. From Colossians 4:11; Colossians 4:14 it appears that he was not a Jew and that his worldly calling was that of a physician. Eusebius and Jerome state that he was originally from Antioch in Syria, which may be true; but it is also possible that their statement is due to a mistaken derivation of the name Luke from Lucius (cf. Acts 13:1) instead of from Lucanus. The testimony of Origen makes us suspect thIsa. Theophylact and Euthymius had the mistaken opinion that he was one of the Seventy sent out by our Lord. This is refuted by the preface of the Gospel, where Luke clearly distinguishes himself from those that saw and heard the Lord. Apparently the evangelist joined the company of Paul and his co-laborers on the second missionary journey at Troas. This may be inferred from the beginning of the we-sections in Acts 16:10. The first one of these sections ends at Acts 16:17, so that Luke probably remained at Philippi. He stayed there, so it seems, until Paul returned from Greece on his third missionary journey, for in Acts 20:5 we suddenly come upon the plural pronoun of the first person again. Then he evidently accompanied the apostle to Jerusalem, Acts 20:6; Acts 20:13-15; Acts 21:1-17. In all probability he was with Paul at Ceasarea, Acts 27:1, from where he accompanied the apostle to Rome, Acts 27:1 Acts 28:16. He remained at Rome during the first imprisonment, Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24, and was according to these passages a beloved friend and fellow-laborer of the apostle. And when the great missionary of the gentiles was imprisoned for the second time, Luke was the only one with him, 2 Timothy 4:11, and thus gave evidence of his great attachment to Paul. The last part of Luke’s life is involved in obscurity. Nothing certain can be gathered from the conflicting testimony of the fathers. Some claim that he gained a martyr’s crown; others, that he died a natural death. The question must be asked, whether Paul was in any way connected with the composition of the third Gospel. The testimony of the early Church is very uncertain on this point. Tertullian says: “Luke’s digest is often ascribed to Paul. And indeed it is easy to take that for the master’s which is published by the disciples.” According to Eusebius, “Luke hath delivered in his Gospel a certain amount of such things as he had been assured of by his intimate acquaintance and familiarity with Paul, and his connection with the other apostles.” With this the testimony of Jerome agrees. Athanasius states that the Gospel of Luke was dictated by the apostle Paul. In view of the preface of the gospel we may be sure that the Church fathers exaggerate the influence of Paul in the composition of this Gospel, possibly to give it apostolic authority. Paul’s relation to the third Gospel differs from that of Peter to the second; it is not so close. Luke did not simply write what he remembered of the preaching of Paul, much less did he write according to the dictation of the apostle, for he himself says that he traced everything from the beginning and speaks of both oral and written sources that were at his command. Among these oral sources we must, of course, also reckon the preaching of Paul. That the great apostle

did influence Luke's representation of "the beginning of the Gospel," is very evident. There are 175 words and expressions in the gospel that are peculiar to Luke and Paul. Cf. Plummer p. LIV. Besides, as we have already seen, some of the leading ideas of Paul are found in the third gospel, such as the universality of the Gospel, the necessity of faith, and the use of the word δικαι■ω in a forensic sense, Luke 7:29; Luke 10:29; Luke 16:15; Luke 18:14. A striking resemblance exists also between Luke's account of the institution of the Lord's supper, Luke 22:19-20. and Paul's memoir of this in 1 Corinthians 11:23-25, but this may be due to the use of a common source. The Lukan authorship of the Gospel was generally accepted up to the time, when Rationalism began its attacks on the books of the Bible. The Tubingen school, notably F. C. Baur, maintained that the Gospel of Marcion, who began to teach at Rome in 140 A. D., was the original of our Gospel. Others followed where Baur led. In later years, however, critical opinion wheeled about completely and the opinion is generally held that Marcion's Gospel is a mutilation of Luke's, though in some parts it may represent another and even an older text. This, of course, made it possible again to maintain the authorship of Luke. But even now there are several German scholars who doubt that Luke wrote the Gospel, and Harnack's protest against their contention seems ineffective. Their objections to the Lukan authorship are based on the Acts of the Apostles rather than on the Gospel, but, as has been intimated, the two stand or fall together. We shall consider these objections, when we treat of Acts.

COMPOSITION

1. Readers and Purpose. The Gospel of Luke was first of all intended for Theophilus, who is addressed as "most excellent Theophilus" in Luke 1:3, and is also mentioned in Acts 1:1. We have no means of determining who this Theophilus was. It has been supposed by some that the name was a general one, applied to every Christian, as a beloved one or a friend of God. But the general opinion now is, and rightly so, that it is the name of an individual, probably a Greek. The fact that he is addressed by Luke in the same manner as Felix, Acts 23:26; Acts 24:3, and Festus, Acts 26:25 are addressed, led to the conclusion that he was a person of high station. Baljon thinks he was undoubtedly a Gentile Christian, while Zahn regards him as a Gentile who had not yet accepted Christ, since Luke would have addressed a brother differently. It is generally agreed, however, that the Gospel was not intended for Theophilus only, but was simply addressed to him as the representative of a large circle of readers. Who were these first readers of the gospel? Origen says that the third gospel was composed "for the sake of the Gentile converts ;" Gregory Nazianze, more definitely: "Luke wrote for the Greeks." Now it is quite evident from the gospel itself that the evangelist is not writing for the Jews. He never gives the words of Jesus in the Aramaic language; instead of ■μ■ν λ■γω he has ■ληθ■ς λ■γω, Luke 9:27; Luke 12:44; Luke 21:3; for γραμματε■ς he uses νομικ■ι, διδ■σκαλος, Luke 2:46; Luke 7:30; Luke 10:25; Luke 11:45; and of many places in Palestine he gives a nearer definition. It is very probable that that Gospel of Luke was intended for the Greeks, because Paul labored primarily among them, Theophilus was in all probability a Greek, the preface of the gospel is in many respects like those found in Greek historians, and the whole Gospel is remarkably adjusted to the needs of the Greeks. Cf. for this last point especially Gregory, Why Four Gospels p. 207 if. The purpose of Luke is clearly stated in the preface, viz. 98 that Theophilus and the Gentile readers in general might know the certainty of those things, wherein they had been instructed, Luke 1:4. It is his desire to present clearly the truth of all Gospel facts. In order to do this, he aims at fulness of treatment;

traces all things from the beginning; writes an orderly account of all that has happened, recording the sayings of the Lord in their original setting more than the other evangelists do, thus promoting definiteness and strengthening his representation of the reality of things; mentions the names not only of the principal actors in the Gospel history, but also those of others that were in any way connected with it, Luke 2:1-2; Luke 3:1-2; Luke 7:40; Luke 8:3; brings the Gospel facts in relation with secular history, Luke 2:1-2; Luke 3:1-2; and describes carefully the impression which the teachings of Christ made, Luke 4:15; Luke 4:22; Luke 4:36; Luke 5:8; Luke 5:25; Luke 6:11; Luke 7:29; Luke 8:37; Luke 18:43; Luke 19:37. From the contents of the Gospel we may further gather that it was the author s nearer purpose to present Christ in a very acceptable way to the Greeks, viz, as the perfect man (cf. p. 91 above), as the sympathetic friend of the afflicted and the poor, Luke 1:52; Luke 2:7; Luke 4:18; Luke 6:20; Luke 12:15 ff. Luke 16:19, etc., and as the Saviour of the world, seeking those that are lost, Luke 7:36-50; Luke 15:1-32; Luke 18:9-14; Luke 19:1-10; Luke 23:43.

2. Time and Place. Tradition tells us very little regarding the time, when Luke wrote his Gospel. According to Eusebius Clement of Alexandria received a tradition from presbyters of more ancient times “that the Gospels containing the genealogies were written first.” Theophylact says: “Luke wrote fifteen years after Christ’s ascension. The testimony of Euthymius is to the same effect, while Eutichius states that Luke wrote his Gospel in the time of Nero. According to these testimonies the evangelist composed his Gospel possibly as early as 54, and certainly not later than 68 A. D.

Internal evidence is even more uncertain. Some infer from Luke 21:24 that Luke realized that a certain time was to elapse between the destruction of Jerusalem and the final judgment, and therefore wrote after the destruction of the Holy City, a very inconclusive argument indeed, since this is a prophetic word of Christ. We might argue in favor of a date after the destruction of Jerusalem from the absence of the warning note that is found in both Matthew and Mark, but being an argument from silence even that does not prove the point. Several scholars, especially of the Tubingen school, date the Gospel near the end of the first or in the beginning of the second century. The main argument for this date is the supposed fact that Luke is in some parts of his Gospel dependent on the Antiquities of Josephus, a rather chimerical idea. Both Zahn and Weiss are of the opinion that Luke wrote after the destruction of Jerusalem, but not later than the year 80 A. D. Zahn settled on this terminus ad quem, because he considers it likely that Luke was a member of the Antiochian congregation as early as the year 40 A. D., and would therefore be very old in the year 80 A. D.; Weiss, since the evangelist evidently expected the second coming of Christ in his time, which was characteristic of the first generation after Christ. The great majority of conservative scholars place the composition of this Gospel somewhere between 58 and 63 A. D. The main arguments for this date are: (1) it is in harmony with ancient tradition; (2) it best explains the total silence of Luke regarding the destruction of Jerusalem; and (3) it is most in harmony with the dating of Acts in 63 A. D., which offers a good explanation of Luke’s silence with respect to the death of Paul. As to the place, where the Gospel of Luke was written tradition points to Achaia and Boeotia. We have no means of controlling this testimony, however, so that it really leaves us in ignorance. Some of the modern guesses are, Rome, Caesarea, Asia Minor, Ephesus, and Corinth.

3. Method. In view of the preface of Luke’s Gospel we have reason to believe that in the composition of it the evangelist depended on both oral tradition and written sources. In present day

theories the emphasis is mainly placed on written sources, and the most prevalent hypothesis is that he employed the Gospel of Mark, either in the present form or in an earlier recension; the apostolic source Q or some δι■γησις containing this (from which two sources he derived mainly the matter that he has in common with Matthew and Mark); and a third main source of unknown character and authorship, from which he drew the narrative of the nativity, Luke 1:1-80, Luke 2:1-52, and the account of the last journey to Jerusalem, contained in Luke 9:51 Luke 18:14. Zahn also believes that Luke employed Mark as one of his sources, but does not attempt to give a nearer definition of the other sources used. The opinion that he drew part of his material from Josephus deserves but a passing notice. It seems to us that it is impossible to determine exactly what sources Luke used; all we can say is: (1) Having been an associate of Paul for several years, part of which he spent in Palestine, where he had abundant opportunity to meet other apostles and eyewitnesses of the Lord's works, he must have gathered a large store of knowledge from oral tradition, which he utilized in the composition of his gospel. This accounts for a great deal of the matter which he has in common with Matthew and Mark. (2) During the time of his research in Palestine he also became acquainted with a goodly number of διηγ■σεις narratives of the Gospel facts, of which we can no more determine the exact nature, and drew on them for a part of his material. One of these probably contained the matter found in Luke 1:1-80 and Luke 2:1-52, and in Luke 9:51 Luke 18:14. (3) It does not seem likely that Luke read either the Gospel of Matthew or that of Mark, and classed them or either one of them with the previous attempts, on which he desired to improve. Oral tradition in connection with the guidance of the Holy Spirit is quite sufficient to explain the resemblance between these Gospels and that of Luke.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The canonicity of this Gospel is well attested. Says Alexander in his work on the Canon p. 177: "The same arguments by which the canonical authority of the Gospels of Matthew and Mark was established, apply with their full force to the Gospel of Luke. It was universally received as canonical by the whole primitive Church has a place in every catalogue of the books of the New Testament, which was ever published is constantly referred to and cited by the Fathers as a part of sacred Scripture and was one of the books constantly read in the churches, as a part of the rule of faith and practice for all believers." There are in all 16 witnesses before the end of the second century that testify to its use and general acceptance in the Church. The gospel of Luke presents to us Christ especially as one of the human race, the Seed of the woman, in his saving work not only for Israel, but also for the Gentiles. Hence it pictures him as the friend of the poor and as seeking sinners, emphasizes the universality of the Gospel blessings, and distinctly bespeaks a friendly relation to the Samaritans. Its permanent spiritual value is that it reminds the Church of all ages that in every nation he that feareth God, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him; and that we have a great High Priest that was touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was in all parts tempted like as we are, yet without sin.

02.05. The Gospel of John

The Gospel of John

CONTENTS The contents of the Gospel of John is also divided into five parts:

I. The Advent and Incarnation of the Word, John 1:1-13. John takes his point of departure in the pre-existence and divine origin of Christ, and points out that He was heralded by John the Baptist, was the light of the world and gave believers the power to become the children of God.

II. The Incarnate Word the only Life of the World, John 1:14-51, John 2:1-25, John 3:1-36, John 4:1-54, John 5:1-47, John 6:1-71. The evangelist records the testimony to the grace and truth of the incarnate Word given by John the Baptist and by Christ himself in word and deed, John 1:14-51, John 2:1-11; and the self-revelation of Christ in the cleansing of the temple, John 2:12-25; in the conversation with Nicodemus, John 3:1-21; followed by the public testimony of John 3:22-36; in the conversation with the Samaritan woman, John 4:1-42; and in the healing of the nobleman's son, John 4:43-54. More particularly he shows, how Christ reveals himself as the author and sustainer of life in the healing of the impotent man and its vindication, John 5:1-47; and in the miracle of the loaves with the following discourse, leading to desertion on the one and to confession on the other hand, John 6:1-71.

III. The Incarnate Word, the Life and Light, in Conflict with Spiritual Darkness, John 7:1-53, John 8:1-59, John 9:1-41, John 10:1-42, John 11:1-54. On the feast of tabernacles Christ reminds the Jews of the fact that He is the life of the world, and presents himself to them as the water of life, wherefore officers were sent to take him, John 7:1-52. The following day He brings out the spiritual darkness of the Jews in connection with the adulterous woman, and declares that He is the light of the world, the only light that can truly enlighten them; and that He only could liberate them from their spiritual bondage; which leads to an attempt to stone him, John 8:1-59. On a subsequent occasion He proves himself to be the light of the world by healing the blind man and speaks of himself as the good Shepherd that lays down his life for his sheep; thereby provoking unbelief and rage, John 9:1-41, John 10:1-21. At the feast of the dedication He declares that He and the Father are one, which again leads to an attempt to stone him, John 10:22-42. In raising Lazarus Jesus presents himself as the resurrection and the life, thus leading some of the people to believe in him, but his enemies to the settled purpose to kill him, John 11:1-54.

IV. The Incarnate Word saving the Life of the World through his Sacrificial Death, John 11:55-57, John 12:1-50, John 13:1-38, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33, John 17:1-26, John 18:1-40, John 19:1-42. The enemies plan to kill Jesus, but Mary of Bethany anoints him and the people meet him with glad hosannas; the Greeks seek him at Jerusalem, but the multitude turns from him in unbelief, John 11:55-57, John 12:1-50. He sits at the Paschal supper with his disciples, gives them a lesson in humble service, exposes the traitor and announces that the time has now come to leave his disciples, John 13:1-38. He discourses on the significance of his departure and on the new life in communion with the Father, John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27, John 16:1-33; and

offers the intercessory prayer committing his followers to the Father, John 17:1-26. In Gethsemane He is taken captive, and after a preliminary hearing before the high priest is brought before Pilate who, though finding no guilt in Jesus, yet delivers him into the hands of the Jews to be crucified, John 18:1-16. After his crucifixion He is buried by Joseph and Nicodemus, John 19:17-42.

V. The Incarnate Word, risen from the Dead, the Saviour and Lord of all Believers, John 20:1-31, John 21:1-25. Having risen from the dead, Jesus appears to Mary Magdalena and on two successive Lords days to his disciples, John 20:1-31. Later He is seen by some of his disciples at the sea of Tiberias, where He restores Peter and points significantly to the career of John, the writer of the Gospel, John 21:1-25.

CHARACTERISTICS Of the characteristics that mark the fourth Gospel the following especially are to be noted:

1. The gospel of John emphasizes more than any of the others the Divinity of Christ. It has no historical starting-point, like the Synoptics, but recedes back into the depths of eternity, and starts out with the statement sublime in its simplicity: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.” Positively, the Logos-doctrine is peculiar to this Gospel; negatively, every indication of Christ’s human development and of his gradually awakening self-consciousness is strikingly absent from it. We find no genealogy here, no description of Christ’s birth with it’s attendant circumstances, and no narrative of his baptism and temptation. John the Baptist testifies to his Divinity, as soon as He enters on the scene, and He himself publicly claims this prerogative almost from the beginning of his public ministry, cf. John 3:13; John 5:17 ff; John 6:32; John 6:40 ff., etc. The miracles of the Lord, narrated in this Gospel, are of such a character that they give great prominence to his divine power. The nobleman’s son was cured from a distance, John 4:46 ff.; the man at Bethesda had been infirm thirty-eight years, John 5:5; the blind man at Jerusalem had been born blind, John 9:1; and Lazarus had already lain in the grave four days, John 11:17.

2. The teaching of Christ greatly predominates in Johns Gospel, but this is quite different from that contained in the Synoptics. We find no parables here but elaborate discourses, which also contain a couple of allegories. The all absorbing topic is not the Kingdom of God but the Person of the Messiah. The simple rudimentary teaching regarding the Kingdom is here replaced by a more penetrating (though not developed) instruction in the deeper realities of faith. In connection with his miracles or other historical facts Christ presents himself as the source of life, 4:46—5:47; the spiritual nourishment of the soul, John 6:22-65; the water of life, John 4:7-16; John 7:37-38; the true liberator, John 8:31-58; the light of the world, John 9:5; John 9:35-41; and the living principle of the resurrection, John 11:25-26. The farewell discourses of the Saviour, besides containing many profound truths respecting his personal relation to believers, are also significant on account of their clear references to the coming Paraclete.

3. The scene of action in this Gospel is quite different from that in the Synoptics. In the latter the work of Christ in Galilee is narrated at length, while He is seen at Jerusalem only during the last week of His life. In the Gospel of John, on the other hand, the long ministry of Christ in Galilee is presupposed rather than narrated, while his work and teaching in Judea and particularly at Jerusalem is made very prominent. The great feasts afforded the occasion for this work and are therefore distinctly mentioned. John speaks of three, possibly four, Passovers, John 2:13; John

5:1; John 6:4; John 13:1; of the feast of Tabernacles, John 7:2; and of the feast of the Dedication, John 10:22.

4. The Gospel of John is far more definite than the Synoptics in pointing out the time and place of the occurrences that are narrated; it is in a certain sense more chronological than the other Gospels. We are generally informed as to the place of Christ's operation. Definite mention is made of Bethany, John 1:28; Cana, John 2:1; Capernaum, John 2:12; Jerusalem, John 2:13; Sychar, John 4:5; Bethesda, John 5:2, etc. The designations of time are equally distinct, sometimes the hour of the day being given. The chronological framework of the gospel is found in its reference to the great feasts. John the Baptist sees Christ coming to him the day after he had met the delegation from Jerusalem, John 1:29; and again on the following day, John 1:35. A day later Christ called Philip and Nathanael, John 1:43-51; on the third day there was a marriage in Cana, John 2:1; it was at the sixth hour that Christ sat down at the well, 4:6; at the seventh, that the nobleman's son was cured, John 4:52; in the midst of the feast that Jesus went into the temple, John 7:14; and again on the last great day, John 7:37; and about the sixth hour that Christ was delivered unto the Jews by Pilate, John 19:14.

5. The style of the fourth Gospel is not like that of the other three. It is peculiar in that "it contains, on the one hand, except in the prologue and χαρ■ χα■ρειin John 3:29, hardly any downright Hebraisms," Simcox, The Writers of the New Testament p. 73, while, on the other hand, it approaches the style of Old Testament writers more than the style of any other New Testament writing does. John evidently commanded a fairly good Greek vocabulary, but does not attempt any elaborate sentences. Rather than do this, he will repeat part of a previous statement and then add a new element to it. His sentences are generally connected in the most simple way by κα■, δε or ο■ν, and his descriptions are often elaborate and repetitious. He exhibits a special fondness for contrasts and for the use of the parallelismus membrorum. A very characteristic expression of his is ζω■ α■ω■νος, which occurs 17 times in the Gospel. For other phrases and expressions see Simcox. He also employs several Aramaean words, as ■αββ■, κηφ■ς, μεσσ■ας, Γαββαθ■, Γολγοθ■, ■μ■ν ■ν■ν.

AUTHORSHIP The voice of antiquity is all but unanimous in ascribing the fourth Gospel to John. The Monarchian sect, called by Epiphanius, "the Alogi," forms the only exception. Little is known of this sect, except that it rejected the doctrine of the Logos. Salmon says: "In fact I now believe that "the Alogi" consisted of Caius and, as far as I can learn, of nobody else." Introd. p. 229. The internal evidence for the authorship of the Gospel is now generally arranged under the following heads:

1. The author was a Jew. He evidently had an intimate acquaintance with the Old Testament, had, as it were, imbibed the spirit of the prophetical writings. He knew them not only in the translation of the LXX, but in their original language, as is evident from several Old Testament quotations. Moreover the style of the author clearly reveals his Jewish nationality. He wrote Greeks it is true, but his construction, his circumstantiality and his use of parallelism, are all Hebraic. "There is a Hebrew soul living in the language of the evangelist." Luthardt, St. John the Author of the Fourth Gospel, p. 166. Ewald comes to the conclusion, "that the Greek language of the author bears in itself still the clearest and strongest mark of a genuine Hebrew, who born among the Jews in the Holy Land, and grown up in this society without speaking Greek, carries in himself the whole spirit

and breath of his mother-tongue even in the midst of the Greek raiment that he afterwards learnt to cast about him, and has no hesitation to let himself be led by that spirit." Quoted by Luthardt, p. 167.

2. The author was a Palestinian Jew. He clearly shows that he is well at home in the Jewish world. He is intimately acquainted with Jewish customs and religious observances and with the requirements of the law, and moves about with ease in the Jewish world of thought. He knows that, according to the strict Jewish conception, it was unlawful to heal on the sabbath, John 5:1 ff; John 9:14 ff.; and also that circumcision was allowed, John 7:22 ff. He is aware of the Jewish expectation of Elijah, John 1:21; and of the ill-feeling between the Jews and the Samaritans, John 4:9. He understood that the Jews regarded a misfortune as the result of some particular sin, John 9:2; and that they considered one unclean who had entered the house of a Gentile, John 18:28. He is thoroughly acquainted with Jerusalem, John 5:2; with the valley of Sichem and mount Gerezim, John 4:5 ff.; with the temple, John 8:20; and with Capernaum and other places around the sea of Galilee, 7.

3. The writer was an eyewitness of the events he relates. He claims this explicitly, if not already in John 1:14, "we beheld his glory" (Cf. 1 John 1:1-3), certainly in John 19:35. "And he that saw it bare record, and his record is true; and he knoweth that he saith true that ye might believe." This claim is corroborated by the lively and yet simple manner in which he pictures the events; by the many definite chronological data and naming of localities, to which we have already referred; and by the great prominence given to certain individuals with whom Jesus came in contact.

4. The author was the apostle John. He often makes mention in his Gospel of a disciple whom he never names, but to whom he constantly refers as "the (an) other disciple," or as "the disciple whom Jesus loved." Cf. John 13:23; John 18:15; John 19:26; John 20:2-4; John 20:8; John 21:7. At the close of his Gospel he says of him: "This is the disciple which testifieth these things; and we know that his testimony is true," John 21:24. Who was this disciple? The evangelist names only seven of the disciples of the Lord, the five that are not named being John and his brother James, Matthew, Simon the Canaanite and James the son of Alpheus. Now it is evident from John 1:35-41 that said disciple was one of the first ones called by the Lord, and these according to Mark 1:16-19 were Peter, Andrew, John and James. The first two are explicitly named in John 1:41-43, so that the one whose name is suppressed must have been either John or James. But we cannot think of James as the author of this Gospel, since he died a martyr's death as early as A. D. 44. Therefore John must have been the writer.

According to Matthew 27:56 and Mark 1:20; Mark 15:40, John was the son of Zebedee and Salome who probably belonged to the middle class of society. His mother was among the faithful followers of the Saviour, Matthew 27:56; Mark 16:1. He was one of the very first followers of Jesus and soon appears as one of the innermost circle of the disciples, one of the three that always accompany the Saviour. With the Lord he enters the dwelling of Jairus, ascends the mount of transfiguration and penetrates into the dark recesses of Gethsemane. As he stands by the cross, the mother of Jesus is entrusted to his care. On the morning of the resurrection he is one of the first to visit the grave of the Saviour. In the first part of the Acts of the Apostles he appears as one of the faithful witnesses of the resurrection of the Lord. After that we lose sight of John in Scripture, but tradition tells us that he spent the last part of his life in Asia Minor, especially at Ephesus,

where he died in venerable age.

There is an apparent contradiction between the synoptical data regarding the character of John and the conception of it derived from his own writings, but this is easily explained. The very first indication of his character we glean from the statement in Mark 3:17, that the Lord named him and his brother James “Boanerges, which is, the sons of thunder.” This conveys the idea of an ardent temper, of great strength and vehemence of character. And on two occasions we find that they reveal just such traits, viz. when they peremptorily forbade one who was casting out devils in the name of Jesus to continue this, Mark 9:38; Luke 9:49; and when they desired permission to command fire to come down from heaven to devour the Samaritans, Luke 9:54. In both cases the Lord reproves their show of temper. Another trait of their character is revealed in their request to sit in the places of honor in the future Kingdom of Jesus, Matthew 20:20-24; Mark 10:35-41. Their ambition was such as to offend the other disciples and to call forth a severe rebuke from the Lord. John was, no doubt, zealous for the Lord, but his zeal was mistaken; he had a passionate desire to be near his Master, but he showed this in a manner that was not free from selfishness and pride. The Lord directed his zeal and ambition into other channels by pointing out their unspiritual character and by teaching him that one can be great in the Kingdom of God only by being the servant of ones brethren. This undoubtedly made a profound impression on the sensitive John and begot within him the habit of introspection, of self-examination. He became more quiet, more reserved with an inclination to ponder on the mysteries that he encountered in his daily association with the Lord, and penetrated farther than the other disciples into the hidden depths of the mysterious life of Christ. As a result John, as he reveals himself in his writings, is quite different from the John of the Synoptics. From his Gospel and Epistles we learn to know him as a man of deep religious feeling, beloved of Christ; a man that lived in close communion with his Lord, a communion more spiritual, however, than he desired in his youthful years. His exclusivism has made place for a love that would embrace all; his zeal is still operative, but it has been sanctified and led into proper channels; his strength has become a tower of defense for spiritual truth. Not until the last part of the eighteenth century was the authorship of John attacked on critical grounds, and even then the attacks were of small significance. Bretschneider in 1820 was the first to assail it in a systematic way. But he was soon followed by others, such as Baur, Strauss, Schwegler, Zeller, Scholten, Davidson, Wrede e.a. It has been their persistent endeavor to show that the Gospel of John is a product of the second century. Some would ascribe it to that shadowy person, the presbyter John, whose existence Eusebius infers from a rather ambiguous passage of Papias, but who, in all probability, is to be identified with John the apostle. Others positively reject this theory. Wrede, after arguing that the authorship of John cannot be established, says: “Far less can the recent hypothesis be regarded as proven which purports to find the author of the Gospel in John the presbyter.” The Origin of the New Testament p. 89. The most important considerations that led many rationalistic critics to the conclusion that the fourth Gospel was written in the second century, are the following: (1) The theology of the Gospel, especially its representation of Christ, is developed to such a degree that it points beyond the first and reflects the consciousness of the Church of the second century. (2) The Gospel was evidently written under the influence of the philosophic and religious tendencies that were prevalent in the second century, such as Montanism, Docetism and Gnosticism. (3) The great difference between the fourth Gospel and the Synoptics appears to be the result of second century cavilling respecting the nature of Christ, and of the Paschal controversy. But the idea that the Gospel of John is a second century product goes

counter to both the internal evidence to which we already referred, and to the external testimony, which is exceptionally strong and which can be traced back to the very beginning of the second century. Some of the Epistles of Ignatius show the influence of John's Christology, and the writings of both Papias and Polycarp contain allusions to the first Epistle of John, which was evidently written at the same time as the Gospel. The latter was in existence, therefore, in the beginning of the second century. The theology of the Gospel of John is no more developed than that of Paul's Epistles to the Ephesians and the Colossians, that were written between A. D. 61 and 63. Critics generally ceased to place any reliance on the so-called Montanistic features of the Gospel, and although they still maintain that some passages contain traces of a Docetic Gnosticism, these are purely imaginary and readily vanish, when the light of exegesis is turned on. The connection of the Gospel with the Paschal controversy is now admitted to be very dubious. And the difference between it and the Synoptics can be satisfactorily explained without regarding it as a work of the second century. Cf. above p. 19 ff.

Critics of the Tubingen school, who accepted the Johannine authorship of the Apocalypse, were wont to deny that John had written the Gospel, because it differed in so many respects from the former work. At present this argument is not insisted on, because scholars are not so sure as they once were, that John wrote the book of Revelation. Reuss, who still argues in that fashion, says: "It must be admitted that even in the most recent times the decision of the question as to the apostolic genuineness of the Apocalypse has by both sides been made to depend upon a previously formed judgment as to the fourth Gospel." History of the N. T., I p. 161.

COMPOSITION

1. Readers and Purpose. The Gospel of John was in all probability written primarily for the Christians of Asia Minor, among whom especially the heresy of Cerinthus had arisen. Early tradition has it that John wrote it at the request of the bishops of Asia to combat that heresy. Internal evidence certainly favors the hypothesis that it was composed for Greek readers. The author carefully interprets Hebrew and Aramaic words, as in John 1:38; John 1:41-42; John 9:7; John 11:16; John 19:13; John 19:17; John 20:16. He makes it a point to explain Jewish customs and geographical designations, John 1:28; John 2:1; John 4:4-5; John 11:54, . . . John 7:37; John 19:31; John 19:40; John 19:42. Moreover, notwithstanding his characteristically Hebrew style, he usually quotes from the Septuagint.

It was not John's purpose to furnish a supplement to the Synoptics, though his Gospel certainly contains a good deal of supplemental matter; neither did he mean to produce a direct polemic against the Cerinthian heresy, even if this did to a certain degree determine his special way of stating the truth. He did not aim at conciliating the discordant parties of the second century by leading them up to a higher unity, as the Tubingen school asserted; nor at refuting "Jewish objections and invectives," and at providing "his fellow-Christians with weapons ready to hand ;" a hypothesis of which Wrede asserts: "This view is on the whole a recent one, but it is making victorious progress among scholars." The Origin of the New Testament, p. 84. The apostle himself gives expression to his purpose, when he says: "These things are written that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing, ye might have life in his name," John 20:31. His aim is twofold, therefore, theoretical and practical. He desires to prove that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and to lead believers to a life of blessed communion with him. The means he

employs to that end are: (1) The miracles of the Lord, on which special emphasis is placed, cf. John 20:30; John 21:25; and which are contemplated as σημε■α, as signs of the divine glory of Christ. (2) The long discourses of the Saviour, which serve to interpret his signs and to describe the unique relation in which He stands to the Father. And (3) the narratives touching Jesus dealing with individuals, such as Nathaniel, Nicodemus, the Samaritan woman, Philip, Mary Magdalena and Thomas, showing, how He led them to faith, a faith culminating in the confession of Thomas: “My Lord and my God.”

2. Time and Place. Since John was undoubtedly the writer of the fourth Gospel, we have a terminus ad quem in A. D. 98, for Irenaeus says that John lived to the time of Trajan, who began his reign in that year. The testimony of Jerome is to the same effect: “The apostle John lived in Asia to the time of Trajan, and dying at a great age in the sixty-eighth year of our Lords passion, was buried near the city of Ephesus.” The same writer places the death of John in A. D. 100. In all probability, however, John wrote his Gospel several years before his death, since its style is, as Alford remarks, “that of a matured, but not of an aged writer.” Prolegomena to the Gospels Ch. V., Sec. VI, 10. It is not an easy matter to find a terminus a quo. We may be sure that the apostle did not compose the Gospel until after the death of Paul in A. D. 68. The congregations of Asia Minor were the special charge of the great apostle of the Gentiles, and he never makes any mention in his Epistles of Johns being in their midst, nor does he send him a single salutation; and when he parted from the Ephesian elders, he evidently did not anticipate the coming of an apostle among them. Moreover we infer from John 21:19 that John knew of the manner in which Peter died, and presupposes this knowledge in his readers. Therefore it is unlikely that the Gospel was written before A. D. 70. Bengel in his Gnomon infers from the use of the present tense in John 5:2 that Jerusalem was still intact. But this argument is not conclusive, since the city was not completely demolished by the Romans, and because we can with equal propriety conclude from John 11:18 that both Jerusalem and Bethany had been swept off the face of the earth. John’s utter silence regarding the destruction of the city favors the idea that he wrote the Gospel several years after that calamity. Zahn would date the Gospel after A. D. 80, his terminus ad quem for the composition of Luke’s Gospel, since tradition teaches that John wrote later than the Synoptics. Among rationalistic critics the most divergent dates are suggested. Baur held that the Gospel was composed between A. D. 160 and 170. At present the tendency is to revert to some date nearer the limits indicated above. Thus Pfleiderer dates it A. D. 140; Hilgenfeld believes that it originated between A. D. 130 and 140. Harnack and Julicher are not inclined to place it later than A. D. 110, and the former even admits that it may have been written as early as A. D. 80.

Tradition points to Ephesus as the place of composition. Origen testifies “that John, having lived long in Asia, was buried at Ephesus.” This is confirmed by Polycrates, a bishop of Ephesus. Jerome says: “John wrote a Gospel at the desire of the bishops of Asia.” And Cosmas of Alexandria informs us definitely that John composed his Gospel, while dwelling at Ephesus. There is no reason to doubt this testimony.

3. Method. John’s Gospel is evidently of an autoptic character. He may have read the Synoptics before he composed his work, but he did not use them as sources from which he drew a part of his material. In several places the author indicates that he related what he had seen and heard, cf. John 1:14; John 13:23; John 18:15; John 19:26; John 19:35; John 20:2. Compare what he says in his first Epistle 1:1-3. While the Synoptic Gospels were in all probability based to a great extent on

oral tradition and written sources, neither of these played an appreciable part in the composition of the fourth Gospel. John, who had carefully stored in memory the profound discourses of the Lord regarding his own Person, discourses that made a deep and lasting impression on the beloved disciple, drew on that fountain of knowledge and, guided by the Holy Spirit in all the truth, supplied us with an exact record of the signs and words of the Saviour.

It has often been remarked that there is a great difference between the style of Christ's discourses in the Synoptics and that of those contained in the fourth Gospel; and that in this gospel there is so much similarity between the narrative of the evangelist and the discourses of the Saviour that it seems as if John clothed these in his own language. But the Synoptics and John have so little such matter in common that we cannot safely build a conclusion on it, and in the discourses of Christ which they do have in common no great difference of style in observable. And as far as the second point is concerned, it may be, as Alford thinks probable, that the Lord influenced John so profoundly that the latter's style became very similar to that of the Master. But even if John did reproduce the discourses of the Saviour in his own style and language, we may rest assured that he gives us the exact teaching of the Lord.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The Gospel of John was accepted as canonical in all parts of the Church from the earliest time, the only exceptions being the Alogi and Marcion. It is true, the apostolic fathers do not quote it, but the writings of three of them show traces either of it or of the first Epistle. Among the Church fathers Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen, Justin Martyr, Jerome e.a. either freely quote it, or refer to it as an integral part of the Word of God. Moreover it is included in Tatian's Diatessaron, the Muratori canon, and the Syriac and old Latin Versions. In all at least nineteen witnesses testify to the use and recognition of the Gospel before the end of the second century. The great significance of this Gospel in Holy Writ is that it places prominently before us the Son of Man as the Son of God, as the eternal Word that became flesh. According to this Gospel Christ is the Son of God, who descended from the Father, stood in a unique relation to the Father, had come to do the Father's will on earth, and would return to the glory that He had eternally possessed with the Father, that He might send the Holy Spirit from the Father to abide with his Church throughout all ages. In that Spirit He himself returns to his followers to dwell in them forever. He is the highest revelation of God, and our relation to him, either of faith or of unbelief, determines our eternal destiny. Before this Christ the Church bows down in adoration with Thomas and calls out: "My Lord and my God."

02.06. The Acts of the Apostles

The Acts of the Apostles The contents of this book is naturally divided into two parts; in each of which the main topic is the establishment of the Church from a certain center:

I. The establishment of the Church from Jerusalem, Acts 1:1-26, Acts 2:1-47, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-37, Acts 5:1-42, Acts 6:1-15, Acts 7:1-60, Acts 8:1-40, Acts 9:1-43, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 11:1-30, Acts 12:1-25. In this part we first have the last discourse of Christ to his disciples, the ascension, the choice of an apostle in the place of Judas, the fulfilment of the promise in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit and the conversion of three thousand, Acts 1:1-26, Acts 2:1-47. Then follows the healing of the lame man by Peter and John; their faithful witnessing for Christ in the temple, for which they were taken captive by the priests, the captain of the temple and the Sadducees; their release, since the enemies feared the people; and their thanksgiving for deliverance, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-31. Next the condition of the Church is described: they had all things in common, and severe punishment was meted out to Ananias and Sapphira for their deception, Acts 4:32-37, Acts 5:1-11. On account of their words and works the apostles were again imprisoned, but delivered by the angel of the Lord; they were brought before the council of the Jews and dismissed after a warning, Acts 5:12-42. The murmuring of the Grecians leads to the appointment of seven deacons, one of which, viz. Stephen, wrought miracles among the people, and after witnessing for Christ before the council, became the first Christian martyr, Acts 6:1-15, Acts 7:1-60. This is followed by a description of the persecution of the Church and the resulting scattering of believers, of the work of Philip in Samaria, of Saul's conversion, and of Peters healing of Eneas and raising of Tabitha, Acts 8:1-40, Acts 9:1-43. Then we have Peters vision of the descending vessel, his consequent preaching to the household of Cornelius, and the defense of his course before the brethren in Judea, Acts 10:1-48, Acts 11:1-18. The narrative of the establishment of the Church at Antioch, of James martyrdom, and of the imprisonment and miraculous deliverance of Peter concludes this section, Acts 11:19-30, Acts 12:1-25.

II. The Establishment of the Church from Antioch. Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28, Acts 15:1-41, Acts 16:1-40, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-28, Acts 19:1-41, Acts 20:1-38, Acts 21:1-40, Acts 22:1-30, Acts 23:1-35, Acts 24:1-27, Acts 25:1-27, Acts 26:1-32, Acts 27:1-44, Acts 28:1-31. From Antioch Barnabas and Saul set out on the first missionary journey, including visits to Cyprus, Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, from where they returned to Antioch, Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28. Then an account is given of the council of Jerusalem and its decisions affecting the Gentiles, Acts 15:1-34. After his contention with Barnabas, Paul starts out on the second missionary journey with Silas, passing through the Cilician gates to Derbe, Lystra, Iconium and Troas, whence he was directed by a vision to pass into Europe, where he visited Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth, preaching the gospel and establishing churches. From Corinth he again returned to Jerusalem and Antioch, Acts 15:35-41, Acts 16:1-40, Acts 17:1-34, Acts 18:1-22. Shortly after Paul began his third missionary journey, going through Asia Minor, staying at Ephesus for over two years, and passing into Corinth, from where he again returned to Jerusalem by way of Troas, Ephesus and Cesarea, Acts 18:23-28, Acts 19:1-41, Acts 20:1-38,

Acts 21:1-16. At Jerusalem the Jews sought to kill him, his defense both on the steps of the castle and before the Sanhedrin merely inciting greater rage and leading to a positive determination to kill him, Acts 21:17-40, Acts 22:1-30, Acts 23:1-14. A conspiracy leads to Paul's deportation to Cesarea, where he defends his course before Felix, Festus and Agrippa, and on account of the unfair treatment received at the hands of these governors, appeals to Caesar, Acts 23:15-35, Acts 24:1-27, Acts 25:1-27, Acts 26:1-32. From Cesarea he is sent to Rome, suffers shipwreck on the way, performs miracles of healing on the island Melita, and on reaching his destination preaches the gospel to the Jews and remains a prisoner at Rome for two years, Acts 27:1-44, Acts 28:1-31.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. The great outstanding feature of this book is that it acquaints us with the establishment of Christian churches, and indicates their primary organization. According to it churches are founded at Jerusalem, Acts 2:41-47; Judea, Galilee and Samaria, Acts 9:31; Antioch, Acts 11:26; Asia Minor, Acts 14:23; Acts 16:5; Philippi, Acts 16:40; Thessalonica, Acts 17:10; Berea, Acts 17:14; Corinth, Acts 18:18, and Ephesus, Acts 20:17-38. From the sixth chapter we learn of the institution of the deacons office, and from Acts 14:23 and Acts 20:17-38 it is clear that elders, also called bishops, were already appointed.

2. The narrative which it contains centers about two persons, viz. Peter and Paul, the first establishing the Jewish, the second the Gentile churches. Consequently it contains several discourses of these apostles, as Peters sermon on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2:14-36; and in the temple, John 3:12-26; his defenses before the Jewish council, Acts 4:8-12; Acts 5:29-32; his sermon in the house of Cornelius, Acts 10:34-43; and his defense before the brethren in Judea, Acts 11:4-18. And of Paul the book contains the sermons preached at Antioch, Acts 13:16-41; at Lystra, Acts 14:15-18; and at Athens, Acts 17:22-31; his address to the Ephesian elders, John 20:18-31; and his defenses before the Jews on the stairs of the castle, Acts 22:1-21; before the Sanhedrin Acts 23:1-6; and before Felix and Agrippa, Acts 24:10-21; Acts 26:2-29.

3. The many miracles recorded in this writing constitute one of its characteristic features. Besides the miracles that are not described and of which there were many "signs and wonders" by the apostles, Acts 2:43; Acts 5:12; Acts 5:15-16; by Stephen, Acts 6:8; by Philip, Acts 8:7; by Paul and Barnabas, Acts 14:3; and also by Paul alone, Acts 19:11-12; Acts 28:1-9 ;—the following miracles are specifically described: the gift of tongues, Acts 2:1-11; the lame man cured, Acts 3:1-11; the shaking of the prayer hall, Acts 4:31; the death of Ananias and Sapphira, Acts 5:1-11; the apostles delivered from prison, Acts 5:19; the translation of Philip, Acts 8:39-40; Eneas made whole, Acts 9:34; Dorcas restored to life, Acts 9:36-42; Pauls sight restored, Acts 9:17; the deliverance of Peter from prison, Acts 12:6-10; the death of Herod, Acts 12:20-23; Elymas, the sorcerer, struck blind, Acts 13:6-11; the lame man at Lystra cured, Acts 14:8-11; the damsel at Philippi delivered , Acts 16:16-18; the jail at Philippi shaken, Acts 16:25-26; Eutychus restored to life, Acts 20:9-12; Paul unhurt by the bite of a poisonous viper, Acts 28:1-6; the father of Publius and many others healed, Acts 28:8-9.

4. The style of this book is very similar to that of the third Gospel, though it contains less Hebraisms. Simcox says that "the Acts is of all the books included in the New Testament the nearest to contemporary, if not to classical literary usage,—the only one, except perhaps the Epistle to the Hebrews, where conformity to a standard of classical correctness is consciously

aimed at." The Writers of the New Testament, p. 16. The tone is most Hebraic in the first part of the book, especially in the sermons in chs. 2 and 13 and in the defense of Stephen ch. 7, in all of which the Old Testament element is very large ;—and it is most Hellenic in the last part of the book, as in the epistle of the church at Jerusalem, the letter of Lysias, the speech of Tertullus, and the defense of Paul before Agrippa. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that the first part of the book deals primarily with Jewish, and last part especially with Gentile Christianity.

TITLE The Greek title of the book is πρ■ξεις ■ποστ■λων, Acts of Apostles. There is no entire uniformity in the MSS. in this respect. The Sinaiticus has simply πρ■ξειςalthough it has the regular title at the close of the book. Codex D is peculiar in having πρ■ξις ■ποστ■λων, Way of acting of the Apostles. We do not regard the title as proceeding from the author, but from one of the transcribers; nor do we consider it a very happy choice. On the one hand the title, if translated, as is done in both the Authorized and the Revised Version, by "The Acts of the Apostles," is too comprehensive, since there are but two apostles whose acts are recorded in this book, viz. Peter and Paul. On the other hand it is too restricted, because the book contains not only several acts, but also many words of these apostles; and also, since it records besides these acts and words of other persons, such as Stephen, Philip and Barnabas.

AUTHORSHIP The voice of the ancient Church is unanimous in ascribing this book to Luke, the author of the third Gospel. Irenaeus in quoting passages from it repeatedly uses the following formula: "Luke the disciple and follower of Paul says thus." Clement of Alexandria, quoting Paul's speech at Athens, introduces it by, "So Luke in the Acts of the Apostles relates." Eusebius says: "Luke has left us two inspired volumes, the Gospel and the Acts." The external testimony for the Lukan authorship is as strong as we could wish for.

Now the question arises, whether the internal evidence agrees with thIsa. The book does not directly claim to have been written by Luke. Our Scriptural evidence for the authorship is of an inferential character. It seems to us that the Lukan authorship is supported by the following considerations:

1. The we-sections. These are the following sections, Acts 16:10-17; Acts 20:5-15; and Acts 27:1 to Acts 28:16, in which the pronoun of the first person plural is found, implying that the author was a companion of Paul in part of the apostles travels. Since Paul had several associates, different names have been suggested for the author of this book, as Timothy, Silas, Titus and Luke, who according to Colossians 4:14; Philemon 1:24; and 2 Timothy 4:11, was also one of the apostles companions and best friends. The first two persons named are excluded, however, by the way in which they are spoken of in Acts 16:19 and Acts 20:4-5. And so little can be said in favor of Titus that it is now quite generally agreed that Luke was the author of the we-sections. But if this is true, he is also the author of the book, for the style of the book is similar throughout; there are cross-references from the we-sections to the other parts of the book, as in Acts 21:8, where Philip is introduced as one of the seven, while we know only from ch. 6 who the seven were, and from Acts 8:40, how Philip came to be in Caesarea; and it is inconceivable that a later writer should have incorporated the we-sections in his work in such a skillful manner that the lines of demarcation cannot be discovered, and should at the same time leave the tell-tale pronoun of the first person undisturbed.

2. The medical language. Dr. Hobart has clearly pointed out this feature in both the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles. Some make light of this argument, but Zahn says: “W. K. Hobart hat fur Jeden, dem flberhaupt etwas zu beweisen ist, bewiesen, dass der Verfasser des lucanischen Werks em mit der Kunstsprache der griechischen Medicin vertrauter Mann, em griechischer Arzt gewesen ist.” Einl. II p. 429. We find instances of this medical language in ■cl■v Acts 13:11;paralelum■nov;, Acts 8:7; Acts 9:33;pureto■v ka■ dusenter■a sunerx■menon, Acts 25:8.

3. Assuming that Luke wrote the third Gospel, a comparison of Acts with that work also decidedly favors the Lukan authorship, for: (1) The style of these two books is similar, the only difference being that the second book is less Hebraistic than the first,—a difference that finds a ready explanation in the sources used and in the authors method of composition. (2) Both books are addressed to the same person, viz. Theophilus, who was, so it seems, a special friend of the author. (3) In the opening verse of Acts the author refers to a first book that he had written. Taking the points just mentioned in consideration, this can be no other than our third Gospel, though Baljon, following Scholten, denies thIsa. Geschiedenis v/d Boeken des N. V. p. 421.

4. The book contains clear evidence of having been written by a companion of Paul. This follows not only from the we-sections, but also from the fact that, as even unfriendly critics admit, the author shows himself well acquainted with the Pauline diction. We have reasons to think that he did not derive this acquaintance from a study of Pauls Epistles; and if this is true, the most rational explanation is that he was an associate of Paul and heard the great apostle speak on several occasions. Moreover the authors characterization of Paul is so detailed and individualized as to vouch for personal acquaintance. The authorship of Luke has not found general acceptance among New Testament scholars. The main objections to it appear to be the following: (1) The book is said to show traces of dependence on the Antiquities of Josephus, a work that was written about A. D. 93 or 94. The reference to Theudas and Judas in Acts 5:36-37 is supposed to rest on a mistaken reading of Josephus, Ant. XX, V, 1, 2. (2) The standpoint of the author is claimed to be that of a second century writer, whose Christianity is marked by universality, and who aims at reconciling the opposing tendencies of his time. (3) The work is held by some to be historically so inaccurate, and to reveal such a wholesale acceptance of the miraculous, that it cannot have been written by a contemporary. There is supposedly a great conflict especially between Acts 15 and Galatians 2.

We cannot enter on a detailed examination of these objections; a few remarks anent them must suffice. It is by no means proven that the author read Josephus, nor that he wrote his work after the Jewish historian composed his Antiquities. Gamaliel, who makes ‘the statement regarding Theudas and Judas, may very well have derived his knowledge from a different source; and his supposed mistake (which may not be a mistake after all) does not affect the authorship, nor the trustworthiness of the book. That the standpoint of the author is more advanced than that of the Pauline Epistles (Baljon) is purely imaginary; it is in perfect harmony with the other New Testament writings. And the idea of a struggle between the Petrine and Pauline factions is now generally discarded. Historical inaccuracy does not necessarily imply that a book was written a considerable time after the events. Moreover in the book of Acts there is no such inaccuracy. On the contrary, Ramsay in his, St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen has conclusively proved that this book is absolutely reliable and is a historical work of the highest order. It may be that some difficulties have not yet found an altogether satisfactory solution, but this does not militate against the

authorship of Luke.

COMPOSITION

1. Readers and Purpose. It is not necessary to speak at length about the readers for whom this book was first of all intended, because like the Gospel of Luke it is addressed to Theophilus, and like it too it was undoubtedly destined for the same wider circle of readers, i. e. the Greeks. But what was the purpose of the author in writing this book? This is a very much debated question. The book of Acts is really a continuation of the third gospel and was therefore, in all probability, also written to give Theophilus the certainty of the things narrated. We notice that in this second book, just as in the first, the author names many even of the less important actors in the events, and brings out on several occasions the relation of these events to secular history. Cf. Acts 12:1; Acts 18:2; Acts 23:26; Acts 25:1. Of what did Luke want to give Theophilus certainty? From the fact that he himself says that he wrote the first book to give his friend the certainty of the things that Jesus began to do and to teach, we infer that in the second book he intended to give him positive instruction regarding the things that Jesus continued to do and to teach through his apostles. It seems that he found his program in the words of the Saviour, Acts 1:8 : “But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you, and ye shall be my witnesses both in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth.” In harmony with this program he describes the march of Christianity from Jerusalem, the center of the Jewish Theocracy, to Rome, the center of the world. With Paul in Rome, therefore, the authors task is finished.

Opposed to this view are those that regard the book as a tendency writing, in which history has been falsified with a definite purpose. As such we have:

(1) The theory of the Tubingen school, that the book was written to conciliate the Petrine and Pauline factions in the early Church, and therefore represents Peter as more liberal, and Paul as more Judaistic than is in harmony with their own writings. The supposed parallelism between Peter and Paul, according to some, ministers to the same purpose. This theory in the bald form in which it was broached by Baur, is now generally abandoned, and has been modified in various ways.

(2) The view defended by some later scholars, such as Overbeck and Straatman, that the book of Acts is really an apology for Christianity over against the Gentiles, especially the Romans. Hence the author gives the Romans due honor, and clearly brings out the advantages which Paul derived from his Roman citizenship. He desires to convey the impression that the doctrine taught by Paul, who was protected by the mighty arm of Rome, who was acquitted of false charges by Roman governors, and who with a good conscience appealed to Caesar himself, could not be regarded as dangerous to the state. Wrede considers this a subordinate purpose of the author. The abiding merit of these theories is that they contemplate the book of Acts as an artistic whole. For the rest, however, they do not commend themselves to our serious consideration. The basis on which they rest is too uncertain; they are not borne out by the facts; they are inimical to the well established historicity of the book; and they come to us with the unreasonable demand, born of unbelief and aversion to the miraculous, to consider the author as a falsifier of history.

2. Time and Place. As to the time, when the book was composed little can be said with certainty. It must have been written after A. D. 63, since the author knows that Paul staid in Rome two years. But how long after that date was it written? Among conservative scholars, such as Alford, Salmon, Barde e.a. the opinion is generally held that Luke wrote his second book before the death of Paul and the destruction of Jerusalem, because no mention whatever is made of either one of these important facts. Zahn and Weiss naturally date it about A. D. 80, since they regard this date as the terminus ad quem for the composition of the third gospel. Many of the later rationalistic critics too are of the opinion that the book was written after the destruction of Jerusalem, some even placing it as late as A. D. 110 (Baljon) and 120 (Davidson). Their reasons for doing this are: (1) the supposed dependence of Luke on Josephus; (2) the assumption, based on Luke 21:20; Acts 8:26 ff. that Jerusalem was already destroyed; and (3) the supposed fact that the state of affairs in the book points to a time, when the state had begun to persecute Christians on political grounds. None of these reasons are conclusive, and we see no reasons to place the book later than A. D. 63. The place of composition was in all probability Rome.

3. Method. The problem of the sources used by Luke in the composition of this book has given rise to several theories, that we cannot discuss here. And it is not necessary that we should do this, because, as Zahn maintains, none of these repeated attempts has attained any measure of probability; and Headlam says: “The statement of them is really a sufficient condemnation.” Hastings D. B. Art. Acts of the Apostles. For a good discussion of the various theories of Van Manen, Sorof, Spitta and Clemen cf. Knowlings Introduction to Acts in the Expositors Greek Testament. With Blass we believe that, if Luke is the author, the question of sources for the greater part of the book need not be raised. The writer may have learnt the early history of the Jerusalem church from Barnabas at Antioch and from several others who found refuge in that city after the persecution; from Philip, whose guest he was for several days, Acts 21:8-15, and with whom he must have had frequent intercourse during Pauls later stay at Caesarea; and from Mnason, an old disciple, Acts 21:16. And regarding the missionary journeys of Paul he, in all probability, received full information from the apostle himself, and could partly draw on his own memory or memorandum. It is quite possible that the author had written records of the speeches of Peter and Paul, but he certainly did not reproduce them literally but colored them in part with his own style.

INSPIRATION The book of Acts is a part of the inspired Word of God. We have in it the fruit of apostolic inspiration, in so far as we find here speeches of some of the apostles and of Stephen, who was filled with the Holy Ghost, when he defended his course before the Jewish council, Acts 6:5; Acts 6:10. And in the composition of his book Luke was guided by the Holy Spirit, so that the whole work must be regarded as a product of graphical inspiration. This follows from the fact that this book is a necessary complement of the Gospels, which are, as we have seen, inspired records. It is a continuation of the Gospel of Luke, that is quoted as Scripture in 1 Timothy 5:18 (cf. Luke 10:7). If the Gospel is inspired, then,. assuredly, the work that continues its narrative is also written by inspiration. Moreover we find that the Church fathers from the earliest time appeal to this book as of divine authority,—as an inspired work.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The place of Acts in the canon of Holy Scripture has never been disputed by the early Church, except by such heretical sects as the Marcionites, the Ebionites and the Manichaeans, and then only on dogmatical grounds. Traces of acquaintance with it are found

in the apostolic fathers, as also in Justin and Tatian. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian frequently quote from this book. It is named in the Muratorian canon, and is also contained in the Syriac and old Latin Versions. These testimonies are quite sufficient to show that it was generally accepted. As an integral part of Scripture it is inseparably connected with the Gospels, and reveals to us, how the Gospel was embodied in the life and institution of the Church. We here see that the sowing of the precious seed that was entrusted to the apostles resulted in the planting and extension of the Church from three great racial centers of the world, from Jerusalem, the center of the Jewish Theocracy, from Antioch, the center of Greek culture, and from Rome, the capital of the world. The Gospels contain a revelation of what Jesus began to do and to teach; the book of Acts shows us what he continued to do and to teach through the ministry of men. There is an evident advance in the teaching of the apostles; they have learnt to understand much that was once a mystery to them. In the Gospels we find that they are forbidden to tell anyone that Jesus is the Messiah; here we read repeatedly that they preach Christ and the resurrection. They now exhibit Christ in his true character as the Prince of Life and as the King of Glory. And the effect of their teaching was such as to bear striking evidence to the regenerating power of Him, who by the resurrection from the dead was powerfully declared to be the Son of God.

02.07. The Epistles in General

The Epistles in General THE EPISTOLARY FORM IN BIBLICAL LITERATURE. The revelation of God comes to us in many forms, in diverse manners. It is not only embodied in facts, but also in words; it is borne not only by the prophets, but also by the sweet singers and by the wise men of Israel; it finds expression not only in the Gospels, but also in the Epistles. About one-third of the New Testament is cast in the epistolary form. This form of teaching was not something absolutely new in the time of the apostles, although we find but few traces of it in the Old Testament. Mention is made there of some letters written by kings and prophets, in 1 Kings 21:8-9; 2 Kings 5:5-7; 2 Kings 19:14; 2 Kings 20:12; Jeremiah 29:1; but these are quite different from our New Testament Epistles. The letter as a particular type of self-expression took its rise, so it seems, among the Greeks and the Egyptians. In later time it was also found among the Romans and in Hellenistic Judaism, as we notice from the epistle of Aristion, that treats of the origin of the Septuagint. According to Deissmann the Egyptian papyri especially offer a great amount of material for comparison. In all probability, however, it was Paul who first introduced the epistle as a distinct type of literary form for the conveyance of divine truth. Aside from the Gospels his Epistles form the most prominent part of the New Testament. In this connection it is well to bear in mind the important distinction made by Deissmann between a letter and an epistle, of which the former is non-literary, or, as J. V. Bartlet says, “pre-literary,” and the latter is a literary artistic form of communication. It is Deissmann’s conviction that the writings of Paul have been very much misunderstood. “They have been regarded as treatises, as pamphlets in letter form, or at any rate as literary productions, as the theological works of the primitive Christian dogmatist.” He insists that they are letters, serving the purpose of communication between Paul and the congregations, letters that were not intended by Paul for publication, but only for the private use of the addressees, arising from some historical exigency, unsystematic and pulsating with the life of the writer. Deissmann, St. Paul p. 7 ff. This writer certainly rendered us good service by calling attention to the fact, often lost sight of, that the Epistles of Paul are the living spontaneous expression of a great mind, continually meditating and reflecting on the truth of God; that they are letters, often clearly revealing the changing moods of the apostle. They are marked as letters by their occasional character, by their being calculated for a single community and situation, and by their addresses, prescripts and salutations. With respect to the fitness of this form for the communication of the divine thoughts the remarks of Bernard are very valuable. He finds that it is in perfect harmony “with that open and equal participation of revealed truth, which is the prerogative of the later above the former dispensation; indicating too that the teacher and the taught are placed on one common level in the fellowship of the truth. The prophets delivered oracles to the People, but the apostles wrote letters to the brethren, letters characterized by all that fulness of unreserved explanation, and that play of various feeling, which are proper to that form of intercourse. It is in its nature a more familiar communication, as between those who are or should be equals.” “The form adopted in the New Testament combines the advantages of the treatise and the conversation. The letter may treat important subjects with accuracy and fulness, but it will do so in immediate connection with actual life. It is written to meet any occasion. It is addressed to

peculiar states of mind. It breathes of the heart of the writer. It takes its aim from the exigencies, and its tone from the feelings of the moment." Bernard, The Progress of Doctrine in the N. T. pp. 156, 157. THE INSPIRATION OF THE EPISTLES The Scriptural Epistles are as well as the Gospels and Acts divinely inspired. Even as in their preaching, so also in writing their letters the apostles were guided by the Holy Spirit. Here again we must distinguish between the apostolic and the graphical inspiration, although in this case the two are very closely connected. For a general description of the apostolic inspiration we refer to p. 30 if. above. It is necessary to remark, however, that in the case of the Epistles, as distinguished from that of the Gospels, it did not almost exclusively assume the character of a ■πομν■σις, but was also to a great extent a διδασκαλ■α. Both of those elements are indicated in the promise of the Holy Spirit given by Christ before his departure: "But the Comforter, even the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, He shall teach you all things, and bring to your remembrance all that I said unto you." John 14:26. Cf. also John 16:12-13. In the Gospels we have the totality of the apostolic κ■ρυγμα hence their production naturally depended in great measure on a faithful memory. The Epistles, on the other hand, contain the fruit of the apostles reflection on this κ■ρυγμα, their interpretation of it. Therefore it was not sufficient that the writers in composing them should faithfully remember former things; they needed more light on them, a better understanding of their real meaning and profound significance. For that reason the Holy Spirit became their διδασκαλος. The apostles were evidently conscious of being inspired by the Holy Ghost in the composition of their Epistles. This follows from the authority with which they address the congregations. They feel sure that their word is binding on the conscience; they condemn in unqualified terms those who teach any other doctrine as coming from God; they commend and praise all that diligently follow their directions; but they also reprimand and censure those that dare to follow another course. If this is not due to the fact that they were conscious of divine inspiration, it bespeaks an overweening arrogance; which, however cannot be harmonized with their life of service and their many expressions of deep humility.

Moreover there are several explicit statements in the Epistles testifying to the fact that the apostles were aware of being the instruments of Gods Spirit. Thus Paul claims that the Spirit revealed to him the hidden things of God, which he also spoke, not in words which man's wisdom taught, but in words which the Spirit taught, 1 Corinthians 2:10; 1 Corinthians 2:13. He is willing to subject his words to the judgment of the prophets, 1 Corinthians 14:37; and to give a proof of Christ speaking in him, 2 Corinthians 13:3. He thanks God that the Thessalonians received the word of his message, not as the word of man, "but as it is in truth, the word of God," 1 Thessalonians 2:13; and admonishes them to hold the traditions which they were taught by his word or by his Epistle. Peter places the word of the prophets and that of the apostles on a level as the Word of God, in 1 Peter 1:10-12; and elsewhere he arranges his Epistle alongside of those of Paul, which he calls Scripture by implication, and thus clearly shows that he also regards his own writing as a product of the Spirit of God, 2 Peter 3:15-16. John writes: "We are of God; he that knoweth God knoweth us; he that is not of God knoweth us not. By this we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." 1 John 4:6. This language is intelligible only on the supposition that John spoke the words of God.

Now we must bear in mind that the apostles speak thus regarding their written words, so that they were evidently conscious of the guidance of the Holy Spirit in writing their Epistles. To that extent they too shared in a separate transcriptive inspiration. Their Epistles are a part of the Word of God,

and have been accepted as such by the Church. It is true that for a time five of them, viz., the Epistles of James and Jude, II Peter and II and III John, were classed as antilegomena, but this only means that their canonicity was subject to doubt and dispute for a while, not that they were ever numbered among the spurious books. They have been recognized by the majority of ecclesiastical writers from the very beginning, and were generally accepted by the Church after the council of Laodicea in A. D. 363. THE CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE EPISTLES IN GENERAL The Old and the New Testament revelations run on parallel lines. In the Old Testament we have the fundamental revelation of the Law in the Pentateuch; in the New Testament, the fundamental revelation of the Gospel in the fourfold witness of the evangelists. This is followed in the Old Testament by the historical books, revealing the institutions to which the Law gave rise; and in the New Testament, by a historical book, showing how the Gospel of Jesus Christ found embodiment in the Church. After this we find in the New Testament the Epistles that reveal the operation of the truth in the churches, and contain, in connection with the life of the churches, the interpretation of the Gospel; thus corresponding in part to the Old Testament books of experience, such as Job, Psalms, Proverbs, etc., and in part to the prophets as interpreters of the Law. The Gospels show us, how Christ was preached to the world; the Epistles, how he was taught to the Church. The former contain the facts of the manifestation of Christ; the latter the effects of it in the spiritual experience of the churches. In the Epistles we get a glimpse of the inner life of the congregations; we see, how they receive the truth and to what degree they are guided by it in their actions. We behold Christian life in operation, working on the great principles that have been received. We find that some heartily embrace the truth and endeavor to apply it consistently to life in its manifold forms; that others grasp it but imperfectly and, as a result, misapply it in practical life; and that still others resist the truth and pervert it to their own condemnation. And in connection with these conditions the truth is now set forth and interpreted and applied to the multifarious relations of life. This teaching is given in the epistolary form, of which we have already spoken. Cf. p.129 above. And the method employed by the writers in presenting the truth is, as Bernard says, “one of companionship rather than of dictation.” They do not announce a series of revelations that come to them from without, but they speak out of the fulness of their own Christian knowledge and experience. Neither do they approach their readers with the authoritative prophetic formula, “Thus saith the Lord,” which in the Old Testament was the end of all contradiction; but they appeal to the judgment and conscience of those whom they address. They state their propositions and then substantiate them by giving the grounds on which they rest. They argue with their readers from the Old Testament, from generally admitted truths and from experience, often employing the argumentum ad hominem to give point to their teachings; and they intercept the objections of their readers and refute them. This method of teaching, as compared with that of the prophets, is more truly human, the divine factor being less prominent; and as compared with that of Christ in the Gospels, is far more argumentative, calculated to train the minds of men to that thoughtfulness that leads to a thorough assimilation of the truth. In their contents as well as in their form the Epistles are a distinct advance on the Gospels. After the latter have presented to us the manifestation of Christ in the world, the former treat of the life in Christ, in which the acceptance of his manifestation issues. After the Spirit of God has been poured out, Christ, who had formerly dwelt among men, makes his abode in the very hearts of believers. Hence it is especially of that new life of believers in union with Christ, that the Epistles speak. They constantly emphasize the fact that the individual believers and that the churches are “in Christ,” and that therefore their

conversation too must be “in Christ.” They clearly interpret the significance of Christ’s work for believers out of every nation and tribe. and point out that his experiences are paralleled in the life of every believer. All those that are united with Christ by faith suffer with Christ, are crucified with Christ, die with Christ, and live with Christ in newness of life. And their future life is hid with Christ in God. The origin of that new life, its conditions, its nature, its progressive and communal character, and its final perfection and glory,—are all clearly described in the Epistles. As the foundation on which all these blessings rest we are pointed to the redemptive, the justifying, the sanctifying, and the intercessory work of Jesus Christ. He is the beginning and the end. The Epistles contain clear evidence that believers are gathered from every nation and tribe to Christ who is the Head of the Church, and in whom they are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit, that God may be all in all.

CLASSIFICATION The New Testament contains in all twenty-one Epistles, which may be divided into two classes, viz., 1. The Pauline Epistles; and, 2. The General Epistles.

1. The Pauline Epistles. Thirteen of the New Testament Epistles bear the name of the great apostle to the gentiles. Hence they are generally known as the Pauline Epistles. By some the Epistle to the Hebrews is added to this number, though it nowhere claims to have been written by Paul. The Church has always been divided on the question of it’s authorship, the Eastern church affirming and the Western denying that Paul wrote it. Clement of Alexandria states that the apostle composed it in the Hebrew language, and that Luke translated it into Greek. From a statement of his we may probably infer that his teacher, Pantaenus, also affirmed the Pauline authorship of this Epistle, which would carry the testimony back another generation. Origen admits that a very old tradition points to Paul as the author, but he comes to the conclusion that only God knows who wrote the book. Irenaeus does not attribute the Epistle to Paul; nor does Tertullian, who regards Barnabas as the author. Eusebius says: “Of Paul the fourteen Epistles commonly received are at once manifest and clear. It is not, however, right to ignore the fact that some have rejected the Epistle to the Hebrews, asserting that it is gainsaid by the church of Rome as not being Paul’s.” He was inclined to believe that the apostle wrote it in Hebrew and that Luke, or more likely, Clement of Rome translated it. The catalogue of the council of Laodicea also speaks of fourteen Epistles of Paul. We shall leave the question of the authorship of this Epistle in suspense for the present, and classify the fourteen Epistles of which we have now spoken, as follows:

I. Pauline Epistles:

1. Those written during the period of Pauls missionary activity: a. The two Epistles to the Thessalonians; b. The Epistle to the Galatians; c. The two Epistles to the Corinthians; d. The Epistle to the Romans.

2. Those written during Pauls imprisonment: a. The Epistle to the Ephesians; b. The Epistle to the Colossians; c. The Epistle to Philemon; d. The Epistle to the Philippians.

3. Those written after Pauls release from the Roman prison: a. The two Epistles to Timothy; b. The Epistle to Titus.

II. Of uncertain Authorship: The Epistle to the Hebrews.

It may well be supposed that Paul who always remained in touch with the churches he founded wrote many more letters than we now possess of him. This is evident also from the Epistles themselves. 1 Corinthians 5:9 refers to a letter now lost, and it is possible that 2 Corinthians 7:8 does also, although this may refer to first Corinthians. Colossians 4:16 speaks of a letter out of (ix) Laodicea, of which we have no further knowledge. Although these letters were undoubtedly inspired as well as the ones we still possess, we may rest assured that no Epistle intended by God for the canon of Holy Scriptures was ever lost.

We may further remark that Paul evidently wrote very little with his own hand; he generally employed an amanuensis in the composition of his Epistles and merely added with his own hand the salutation to his friends and the authenticating signature, cf. 2 Thessalonians 3:17; Philemon 1:19; and Galatians 6:11, which is, however, of uncertain interpretation. Only in one letter do we find a definite designation of the amanuensis, viz., in Romans 16:22.

2. The General Epistles. This is a group of seven Epistles which in the old manuscripts usually follows immediately after the Acts of the Apostles and therefore precedes the Pauline Epistles, perhaps because they are the works of the older apostles and in general represent the Jewish type of Christianity. Their representation of the truth naturally differs from that of the Pauline Epistles, but is in perfect harmony with it. Among these general Epistles there are:

1. Those written to a community of Christians: a. The Epistle of James; b. The two Epistles of Peter; c. The first Epistle of John; d. The Epistle of Jude.

2. Those written to a certain individual: a. The second Epistle of John; (?) b. The third Epistle of John. Of these seven Epistles the first one of Peter and the first one of John were generally accepted as canonical from the beginning, while the other five were at first subject to doubt and only gradually found acceptance throughout the Church. Yet they were never regarded as spurious.

Why these Epistles should be called general or catholic, is more or less of an enigma. Various interpretations of the name have been given, but none of them is entirely satisfactory. Some hold that they were so called, because they contain the one catholic doctrine which was delivered to the churches by the apostles; but this is not a characteristic mark of these Epistles, since those of Paul contain the same doctrine. Others maintain that the adjective catholic was used by some of the church fathers in the sense of canonical, and was by them applied first to the first Epistle of Peter and the first of John to indicate their general acceptance, and afterwards to the entire group. But this explanation is unlikely, because (1) there is scant proof that the term catholic was ever equivalent to canonical; and (2) it is hard to see, if this really was the case, why the term should not have been applied to the Pauline Epistles as well, that were all accepted from the beginning. Still others think that they received this appellation, because they were not addressed to one person or church like the Epistles of Paul, but to large sections of the Church. We consider this to be the best explanation of the name, since it is most in harmony with the usual meaning of the term, and accounts best for the way in which it is used in patristic literature. Even so, however the name cannot be regarded as entirely correct, because on the one hand the second (?) and third Epistles of John are written to individuals, and on the other, the Epistle to the Ephesians is also an encyclical letter. These two Epistles of John were probably included in this group, because of their smallness and close relation to the first Epistle of John.

02.08. The Epistles of Paul

The Epistles of Paul

PAUL

There is no apostle of whose life we have such full information as we have regarding that of Paul. He was born of Hebrew parents in the intellectual atmosphere of Tarsus in Cilicia, where besides receiving the regular Jewish education, he may have visited one of the many Greek schools found there. Being exceptionally bright, he was sent to Jerusalem to complete the study of the law and to be introduced into rabbinic lore. In that center of Jewish learning he received instruction at the feet of the greatest Jewish teacher of his age, Gamaliel I, and a bright future was opening up before him, since he was zealous for the law.

We first meet him in Scripture as a youth in connection with the violent death of Stephen, and soon find in him the most active persecutor of the Church of Christ. After he has finished his destructive work at Jerusalem, he repairs to Damascus with authority from the high priest to persecute the Church in that city. On the way thither his course is checked by the Lord of the Church, he becomes a penitent, and turns into a zealous advocate of the principles that were formerly obnoxious to him. Leaving Damascus, he spent three years in Arabia, where he received further instruction from God himself, and he learnt to adjust himself to the new conditions of life; after which he again returned to Damascus. Being threatened with death at the hands of the Jews, he fled from Damascus to Jerusalem, and from Jerusalem to his native city in Cilicia. After laboring there for some years, he accompanied Barnabas to Antioch in Syria, where he aided in establishing the youthful church in that city. He ministered to the needs of that congregation for a whole year, during which time he and Barnabas also went to Jerusalem to bring the contributions for the poor. Soon after they were directed by the Holy Spirit to preach the Gospel among the Gentiles. On this first journey they labored on the island of Cyprus and in Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, preaching the Gospel and working miracles. Notwithstanding fierce opposition from the Jews, they succeeded in founding several churches. Having finished their work, they returned to Antioch in Syria, and during their stay there were delegated to the council of Jerusalem to consult the mother church regarding the debated question, whether circumcision was binding on the Gentiles. Next Paul sets out on his second missionary journey with Silas, revisiting the churches founded on the first tour and by the direction of the Holy Spirit crossing over to Europe, where he labored with varying success at Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth, founding churches in most of these places. From Corinth he returned to Antioch, after first visiting Jerusalem. His third missionary journey followed shortly. Passing through Asia Minor, he finds a fruitful field of labor in Ephesus, where he remains three years, bringing all Asia to the knowledge of the truth and contending with idolatry and superstition. From there he again passes through Macedonia to Corinth, spending the winter in that city, and then returning by way of Troas, Ephesus and Caesarea to Jerusalem. Here he takes the necessary precautions to avoid all possible provocation of the Jews, but notwithstanding this they seek to kill him. Having been

rescued by the chief captain, he defends his course before the Jews. This only increases their rage, however; wherefore he is taken into the castle and is brought before the Sanhedrin on the following day, where his defense leads to dissension between the Pharisees and the Sadducees. In the following night he receives encouragement from the Lord and is told that he must also bear witness in Rome. On account of a plot laid by the Jews he is transferred to Caesarea, where he again defends his course before Felix, Festus and Agrippa. The wavering attitude of the governors, who are convinced of his innocence and yet desire to favor the Jews, induces him to appeal to Caesar. As a result he is taken to Rome, arriving there after suffering shipwreck, and remaining a prisoner in his own dwelling for two years. From the pastoral epistles and tradition we may infer that his first trial ended in acquittal. His movements after this are uncertain, though there are hints of visits to Philippi, Colossae, Ephesus, Crete, Nicopolis and even Spain. After being imprisoned again he was condemned and died as a martyr in A.D.68.

Little can be said regarding the personal appearance of the great apostle. In the Acts of Paul and Thecla he is represented as “short, bald, bow-legged, with meeting eyebrows, hooked nose, full of grace.” John of Antioch preserves a similar tradition, which adds, however, that he was “round-shouldered and had a mixture of pale and red in his complexion and an ample beard.” His opponents at Corinth said of him: “His letters are weighty and powerful, but his bodily presence is weak and his speech contemptible,” 2 Corinthians 10:10 ff. He himself refers once and again to his physical weaknesses. In all probability he was not a man of magnificent physique. His personal life was full of contrasts, as Deissmann correctly observes. He was encumbered with an ailing body, and yet was a man of great endurance and of almost unlimited capacity for work in the Kingdom of God. The secret of his strength lay in his God, who spoke to him: “My grace is sufficient for thee, and my strength is made perfect in weakness.” He was a man of great humility, but was at the same time capable of uttering words of the greatest self-confidence, “before God a worm, before men an eagle” (Deissmann). It is Paul that says: “I am the least of the apostles,” 1 Corinthians 15:9; “I am less than the least of all the saints,” Ephesians 3:8; and: “of whom (sinners) I am chief,” 1 Timothy 1:16. But it is the same Paul that speaks: “I labored more abundantly than they all,” 1 Corinthians 15:10; and: “For I suppose I was not a whit behind the very chiefest apostles,” 2 Corinthians 11:5. But he realizes that all that is commendable in him and that is praiseworthy in his work, is fruit of the grace of God. Hence he follows up the statement in 1 Corinthians 15:10 by saying: “yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.” Paul was a tenderhearted man, and was yet on certain occasions very severe. He was capable of the most affectionate feeling, always solicitous for the welfare of the churches; but just on that account inexorable over against all those that were enemies to the truth. Compare in this respect the epistle to the Philippians with that to the Galatians. He placed himself entirely at God’s disposal, following where He led, and was willing to be the unworthy instrument in the hand of his Lord in spreading the glad tidings of salvation. Hence he was great in the Kingdom of God. The chronology of the life of Paul is a subject of great difficulty. Aside from the date of the first Pentecost there is but a single date in the Acts of the Apostles of which we are sure, viz., that of the death of Herod in A. D. 44, and this has little value in determining the chronological order of the events in Paul’s life. A question of great importance is, in what year Felix was succeeded by Festus. We cannot enter into the dispute about this date, but assume that Schurer is correct, when he fixes it at A. D. 60. Geschichte des fiidischen Volkes I p. 577. In the same year Paul was sent to Rome, arriving there in the spring of the following year, A. D. 61. He remained a prisoner at Rome for two years, i. e., until A. D. 63,

when he was probably released; and lived until the fall of A. D. 67 (Eusebius), or until the spring of A. D. 68 (Jerome), when he was martyred at Rome.

Figuring back from the same date, we find that Paul was imprisoned at Caesarea in A. D. 58, Acts 24:27. Since he had spent the previous winter in Corinth and the fall in Macedonia, Acts 20:2-3, and had labored in Ephesus for a period of three years, Acts 20:31, he must have begun his third missionary journey in the spring of A. D. 54. His second missionary tour was concluded shortly before, probably in the fall of A. D. 53, Acts 16:23. This journey undoubtedly lasted about two years and a half, since the apostle would naturally set out in the spring of the year and his stay of a year and a half at Corinth together with all the work done in other places makes it impossible that he started on his journey in A. D. 52, cf. Acts 15:36-41, Acts 16:1-40, Acts 17:1-34. Hence the second journey began in A. D. 51. This second journey was preceded by the council of Jerusalem that most likely convened in A. D. 50, Acts 15:1-41. The first missionary journey must be placed somewhere between the date just named and the year of Herod's death, A. D. 44.

Now it is probable that we must identify the visit of Paul to Jerusalem mentioned in Galatians 2:1 with that of Acts 15:1-41. What is the apostles point of departure there, when he says: "Then fourteen years after, etc."? Exegetically it may be the visit spoken of in Galatians 1:18; more likely, however, it is the time of his conversion, cf. Ellicott on Gal., so that the year 37 was probably the year in which that momentous change was wrought in his life. Then he spent the years 37-40 in Arabia, at the end of which period he again visited Jerusalem, Acts 9:26; Galatians 1:18. In the same year he went to Tarsus, where he labored until about the year of Herod's death, Acts 11:25 to Acts 12:1.

Thus we obtain the following result:

Pauls Conversion A. D. 37 First Visit to Jerusalem A. D. 40 Beginning of his Work at Antioch A. D. 44 First Missionary Journey A. D. 45—48 Delegated to the Council of Jerusalem A. D. 50 Second Missionary Journey A. D. 5 1—53 Third Missionary Journey A. D. 54—58 Captivity at Jerusalem and Caesarea A. D. 58—60 Arrives at Rome A. D. 61 First Captivity at Rome A. D. 61—63 Period between first and second Captivity A. D. 63—67 Second Captivity and Death A. D. 67 or 68

02.09. The Epistle to the Romans

The Epistle to the Romans

CONTENTS This Epistle consists of two clearly marked but very unequal parts, viz, the doctrinal (Romans 1:1-32, Romans 2:1-29, Romans 3:1-31, Romans 4:1-25, Romans 5:1-21, Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25, Romans 8:1-39, Romans 9:1-33, Romans 10:1-21, Romans 11:1-36) and the practical part (Romans 12:1-21, Romans 13:1-14, Romans 14:1-23, Romans 15:1-33, Romans 16:1-27).

I. The Doctrinal Part, Romans 1:1-32, Romans 2:1-29, Romans 3:1-31, Romans 4:1-25, Romans 5:1-21, Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25, Romans 8:1-39, Romans 9:1-33, Romans 10:1-21, Romans 11:1-36. In this part we have first the introduction, containing the address, the customary thanksgiving and prayer, and an expression of the apostles desire to preach the gospel also at Rome, Romans 1:1-15. In the following two verses the apostle states his theme: “The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith,” Romans 1:16-17. After announcing this he describes the sinful state of the Gentiles, points out that the Jews are likewise guilty, and declares that their prerogatives do not exempt them from punishment but rather increase their guilt, Romans 1:18-32, Romans 2:1-29, Romans 3:1-20. He then defines the righteousness which God has provided without the works of the law, and proves that this is revealed in the Old Testament, is the basis of a Christian experience that is rich in spiritual fruits, and proceeds on the same principle of moral government on which God dealt with Adam, Romans 3:21-31, Romans 4:1-25, Romans 5:1-21. Next he replies to the objections that on his doctrine men may continue in sin and yet be saved; that his teaching releases men from moral obligation; and that it makes the law of God an evil thing, Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25. In the following chapter he shows that on the basis of man’s justification by faith his complete sanctification and final glorification is assured, Romans 8:1-39. Having stated the way of salvation through faith, he now points out that this does not conflict with the promises given to Israel by showing that these pertained only to the elect among them; that the rejection of Israel is due to their refusal of the way of salvation; that it is not a complete rejection; and that in the end the Jews will be converted and will turn to God, Romans 9:1-33, Romans 10:1-21, Romans 11:1-36.

II. The Practical Part, Romans 12:1-21, Romans 13:1-14, Romans 14:1-23, Romans 15:1-33, Romans 16:1-27. The apostle admonishes the Christians at Rome that they be devoted to God and love one another, Romans 12:1-21. He desires that they willingly subject themselves to the civil authorities and meet all their obligations, Romans 13:1-14. He enjoins upon them due regard for the weakness of others in matters of indifference, and the proper use of their Christian liberty, Romans 14:1-23. Then he holds up to them Christ as their great example, and speaks of his purpose to visit Rome, Romans 15:1-33. Finally he sends a long list of greetings to Rome and closes his epistle with a doxology, Romans 16:1-27.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. The characteristic feature of this Epistle is found in the fact that it is the most systematic writing of the apostle, an elaborate treatment of a single theme with appropriate practical exhortations. It contains a careful and rather full statement of what Paul himself calls, “my Gospel,” Romans 2:16; Romans 16:25. His Gospel is that man is justified by faith and not by the works of the law. In harmony with this theme the contents of the Epistle are Soteriological rather than Christological. The apostle points out that both Gentiles and Jews need this justification; that it is the way of salvation provided by God himself; that it yields the most blessed spiritual fruits; that it does not issue in the moral degradation of man, but in a life sanctified by the Spirit and culminating in everlasting glory; and that, though the Gentiles will have precedence over the Jews, who rejected the Gospel, these too will at last accept it and be saved. Godet calls this Epistle, “The Cathedral of Christian Faith.” Because of its methodical character some have mistakenly regarded it as a treatise rather than as a letter. If it were a treatise, it might have been sent to one church as well as another, and it may be regarded as accidental that it was sent to Rome. But this is not the case. We cannot understand this, the greatest of Paul’s literary productions, unless we study it historically in its relation to the church of Rome.

2. The style of the Epistle is described by Sanday and Headlam in the following words: “This Epistle, like all the others of the group (I and II Cor. and Gal.), is characterized by a remarkable energy and vivacity. It is calm in the sense that it is not aggressive and that the rush of words is always well under control. Still there is a rush of words rising repeatedly to passages of splendid eloquence; but the eloquence is spontaneous, the outcome of strongly moved feeling; there is nothing about it of labored oratory. The language is rapid, terse, incisive; the argument is conducted by a quick cut and thrust of dialectic; it reminds us of a fencer with his eye always on his antagonist.” Intern. Grit. Comm., Romans p. LV.

AUTHORSHIP

Both external and internal evidence clearly point to Paul as the author. We find the first direct evidence for his authorship in the Apostolicon of Marcion. The letter is further ascribed to Paul by the Muratori canon, and is quoted as his by Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and a host of others. The Epistle itself claims to have been written by Paul, and this claim is borne out by the contents, so that even Davidson says: “The internal character of the epistle and its historical allusions coincide with the external evidence in proving it an authentic production of the apostle.” Introd. I p. 119. The authenticity of this great letter, along with that of the Epistles to the Corinthians and to the Galatians has been well-nigh universally admitted. The first one to attack it was Evanson in 1792, followed by Bruno Bauer in 1852. Their rather reckless criticism has made little impression on German critical opinion. In more recent times the Pauline authorship has been denied by the Dutch scholars Loman (1882), Pierson and Naber (1886) and Van Manen (1892), and by the Swiss scholar Steck (1888); but their arguments, of which an epitomy may be found in Sanday-Headlam, Romans p. LXXXVI; Baljon, Gesch. v/d Boeken des N. V. p. 97 ff.; and Godet, Introd. to the N. T. I St. Paul’s Epistles p. 393,—failed to carry conviction among New Testament critics. THE CHURCH AT ROME

Regarding the church to which this letter is addressed there are especially two questions that call for discussion, viz. 1. It’s Origin; and 2. It’s Composition.

1. Its Origin. There are three theories respecting the origin of the church at Rome. a. According to a tradition dating from the fourth, and probably from the third century, that found general acceptance in the Roman Catholic church, the congregation at Rome was founded by Peter in A. D. 42 (Jerome and Eusebius) or in A. D. 44 (Acts 12:17). This view is now generally given up and is even rejected by some Catholic scholars. It finds no support in Scripture, but is rather contradicted by its plain statements. From Acts 16:9-10 we get the impression that Paul was the first missionary to pass into Europe (A. D. 52), and this is just what we would expect, since he, in distinction from the other apostles, was sent to the Gentiles. Moreover we still find Peter in the East, when in A. D. 50 the council of Jerusalem is held, which does not agree with the tradition that he was at Rome 25 years. And neither in this Epistle, nor in those written from Rome do we find the slightest trace of Peter's presence there; yet Paul would certainly have mentioned him, had he been the bishop of the Roman church. It is also impossible to reconcile Paul's plan to visit Rome with the principle he himself lays down in Romans 15:20, if the local church had been founded by Peter. And finally tradition tells us that Linus was the first bishop of Rome, and Clement, the second. b. Protestants often ascribed the origin of this church to the Roman Jews that were in Jerusalem at the feast of Pentecost, Acts 2:10, and witnessed the extraordinary phenomena that accompanied the descent of the Holy Spirit. On that theory the church really originated among the Jews. In proof of this the report which Suetonius gives of the decree of expulsion issued by the emperor Claudius against the Jews of Rome, is adduced: "Judaeos impulsore Chresto assidue tumultuantes Roma expulit." It is said that this Chresto must be Christ, whose religion spread in the Jewish synagogue and caused violent dissensions that were dangerous to the public peace; but this may well be, and indeed is, questioned by many scholars. Moreover it is rather doubtful, whether the Jews converted at the time of Pentecost were in a position to evangelize others and to establish a Christian church. And finally this explanation does not square with the fact that the church at Rome, as we know it from the Epistle, does not bear a Judaeo- but a Gentile-Christian complexion. c. It seems more likely, therefore, that the church at Rome originated somewhat later, and in a different fashion. We know that before A. D. 44 the gospel had been brought to Antioch in Syria and spread rapidly among the Gentiles of that region, Acts 11:20. Soon a flourishing church was established in that beautiful city on the Orontes, a church endowed with great spiritual gifts, having in its midst an abundance of men that were well qualified for the work of evangelization, Acts 13:1. Now there was at that time a lively intercommunication between Syria and Rome, and it is certainly not improbable that some Gentile Christians, filled with the spirit of evangelization, set out from here for the capital of the world. Or if not from here, some such persons may have gone forth from the other centers of Christianity, established, by Paul on his missionary journeys. This would explain, how the great apostle acquired so many acquaintances at Rome as he names in Romans 16:1-27, mostly Gentiles, some of whom he calls his fellow-laborers (cf. Romans 3:1-31, Romans 9:1-33, Romans 12:1-21), while he characterizes others with some word of endearment (cf. Romans 5:1-21, Romans 6:1-23, Romans 7:1-25, Romans 8:1-39, Romans 10:1-21, Romans 11:1-36, Romans 13:1-14). Some such friends they must have been who went out to meet Paul on the Appian way, Acts 28:25, while the Jews at Rome were evidently quite ignorant as to the teachings of Christianity, Acts 28:17-29. On this theory the Gentile character of the church at Rome causes no surprise.

2. Its Composition. Quite a controversy has been waged about the question, whether the church at Rome was predominantly Jewish- or Gentile-Christian. The traditional idea was that it consisted

primarily of Christians from the Gentiles; but the view that it was composed mainly of Jewish Christians gained currency through Baur and was widely accepted for some time. In support of this theory scholars appealed: (1) To the passages in the epistle, in which Paul seems to include himself and his readers in the first person plural, as Romans 3:9 and Romans 5:1. But notice the same feature in 1 Corinthians 10:1, though the Corinthians were certainly Gentiles. (2) To those passages that speak of the relation of the readers, or of Paul and his readers alike to the law, as Romans 7:1-6. This argument is stronger than the preceding one; yet we find that the apostle employs similar language with reference to the Galatians, Galatians 3:13 to Galatians 4:9, while most of these were certainly outside the pale of Jewry. (3) To the character of Pauls argumentation and the dialectical form in which he presents his Gospel to the Romans. But even this does not necessarily imply that he was writing primarily to Jewish Christians, since he argues in similar fashion in the Epistle to the Galatians, and because this finds a ready explanation partly in the Jewish training of the apostle and partly in the fact that Paul was fully conscious of the objections which legalistic adversaries were wont to bring against his doctrine. Besides, he knew that there were Jewish converts in the church at Rome too, who might make similar strictures. (4) To Romans 9:3; Romans 9:24; Romans 10:1-3; Romans 11:13, regarded by Baur as the kernel of the epistle, which relate particularly to the Jews. Yet in these very chapters Paul addresses, in the most unambiguous manner, the Gentiles, and refers to Israel as distinct from his readers, cf. Romans 9:3; Romans 9:24; Romans 10:1-3; Romans 11:13; Romans 11:17-20; Romans 11:24-25; Romans 11:30-31. When in 1876 Weizsacker again took up the defense of the older view, he produced a decisive reaction in its favor. And, no doubt, it deserves the preference, for: (1) In Romans 1:5-6 Paul writes: “By whom we have received grace and apostleship, for obedience to the faith among the Gentiles (το■ς ■θνεσιν) for his Name; among whom ye are also the called of Jesus Christ.” (2) In Romans 1:13 he says that he had often purposed to come to Rome “that I might have some fruit among you also, even as among other Gentiles.” (3) When the apostle says in Romans 11:13 : “For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office,” it is best to assume with Meyer and Godet that he is addressing the whole congregation in its chief constituent element. (4) According to 15:15 ff. the writer has spoken the more boldly to the Romans, because of the grace that was given him “that he should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.” On the strength of these passages we conclude that, though there was a Jewish constituency in the church at Rome, it consisted primarily of Gentile Christians, so that in ministering to it also Paul was the apostle of the Gentiles. It seems almost certain, however, that a legalistic tendency had sprung up in the congregation, but this tendency may have been characteristically Roman rather than specifically Judaistic. For further details of this controversy cf. Holtzmann, Einleitung p. 232 ff.; Sanday-Headlam, Comm. p. XXXI ff.; The Expositors Greek Test. II p. 561 ff.; and Zahn, Einleitung I p. 299 ff. etc.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. It is impossible to speak with absolute certainly respecting the occasion of Paul’s writing this Epistle, although scholars are quite well agreed that the apostle found it in the fact that he had finished his work in the East and now intended to visit the imperial city, on which he had long since cast his eye. Probably an imminent journey of Phebe to the capital offered him,

on the eve of his departure for Jerusalem, the desired opportunity to send his communication to Rome. But if the question is asked, why the apostle wrote this letter to the Romans, why he gave it the particular character that it has, we find that there is a great variety of opinions. Some regard the Epistle as historical and occasional; others, as dogmatic and absolute. There are those who hold that the particular form of the letter was determined by the condition of the readers; and those that would make it dependent on the state of Paul's mind. Some believe that the apostle in writing it had in mind his Gentile readers, while others hold that he had special reference to the Jewish constituents of the church at Rome. The different theories respecting the purpose of the letter may be reduced to three. a. According to some the purpose of the letter is dogmatic, the Epistle containing a systematic exposition of the doctrine of salvation. But if Paul meant to give in it nothing but an objective statement of the truth, the question may be asked, why he should send it to Rome, and not to some other church. b. Others affirm that the aim of the Epistle is controversial, Paul giving an exposition of the truth with special reference to the opposition of Judaism to his gospel. Now we need not doubt that there is a polemic element in this Epistle, but the question may well be raised, whether the apostle did not combat legalism in general rather than Judaism. c. Still others believe that the purpose of the letter is conciliatory, aiming at the unity of Jew and Gentile in the church at Rome. This theory also contains an element of truth, for Paul certainly was very solicitous about that unity, when he wrote this Epistle; but it is a mistake to regard the promotion of it as his sole purpose in writing.

It seems to us that, with Holtzmann, Sanday-Headlam and Denney (in Exp. Gk. Test.), we should combine these various elements in stating the purpose of the Epistle. Paul had long cherished a desire to visit the city on the Tiber. Through his friends and associates he had received some intelligence regarding the church that had been founded there. And now that he is about to depart for Jerusalem, he has evil forebodings; he may never see Rome; and yet he deems it desirable that the Roman church, which had not been founded by an apostle, should not only be notified of his intended visit, but receive a full and clear statement of his Gospel. Hence he prepares for the Romans a careful exposition of the Gospel truth. And knowing, as he did, the legalistic tendency of the human heart, accented, as it often was in his time, by Judaism,—a tendency that probably found a fruitful soil among the moralistic Romans, he clearly exhibits its antagonism to the doctrine of salvation, at the same time carefully guarding and assiduously cultivating the unity of the believers at Rome, of the weak and the strong, of Jews and Gentiles.

2. Time and Place. As to the time, when Paul wrote this Epistle, we can infer from Romans 1:13 that he had not yet been in Rome, and from Romans 15:25 that he was still a free man. Therefore he must have written it before Pentecost of A. D. 58, for then he was taken captive at Jerusalem. On the other hand it is clear from Romans 15:19-21 that the apostle has finished his task in the East and is now about to transfer his ministry to the West. Hence it follows that he composed this letter at the end of his third missionary journey, i. e. in the fall of A. D. 57, or in the spring of A. D. 58. This also agrees with the fact that the apostle in the Epistles to the Corinthians (1 Corinthians 6:1-4; 2 Corinthians 8:1-24, 2 Corinthians 9:1-15) is still occupied with the collection for the saints at Jerusalem, while this work is finished, when he writes to the Romans 15:25.

If this date is correct, then the Epistle must have been written at Corinth. And there are some data that corroborate this conclusion. The bearer of the letter is a member of the church at Cenchrea, one of the ports of Corinth, Romans 16:1; and Gaius, the host of Paul, is most likely the person

mentioned in 1 Corinthians 1:14. Moreover the salutations of Timothy and Sopater or Sosipater in Romans 16:21 is in perfect agreement with what is said in Acts 20:4 regarding the presence of these men at Corinth, when Paul started for Jerusalem.

INTEGRITY

Touching the integrity of the Epistle to the Romans two questions have arisen:1. Is the doxology, Romans 16:25-27, in the right place, or does it belong between Romans 14:23 to Romans 15:1, or is it spurious? And 2. Are Romans 15:1-33 and Romans 16:1-27 genuine or spurious?

1. The place of the doxology at the end of Romans 16:1-27 was doubted as early as the days of Origen. External testimony favors it, since it is found there in most of the MSS, while some have it at the end of Romans 14:1-23, and a few, in both places. Zahn is of the opinion, however, that internal evidence decidedly favors placing it at the end of Romans 14:1-23, because: (1) Paul's letters are often interspersed with doxologies, but never end with them. (2) It seems unlikely that Paul should add a doxology, closely connected with the body of the letter, after a list of personal greetings not so connected with it. (3) The doxology is closely related to the subject-matter of Romans 14:23 and Romans 15:1. (4) It is far harder to explain its transfer from Romans 16:1-27 chapter to Romans 14:1-23 than the reverse. Einl. I p. 268 ff.

Some, as Davidson and Baljon, doubt the genuineness of the doxology, but: (1) It is found in all the MSS. (2) The thought expressed in it is too rich and varied to be an interpolation. (3) No possible motive can be found for forging such a doxology.

2. Romans 15:1-33 is regarded by some as spurious, (1) because it is not found in the canon of Marcion; and (2) since the appellative applied to Christ in Romans 15:8 is considered very strange as coming from Paul; the expression in Romans 15:19 is not characterized by the usual Pauline modesty; and the Romans 15:24, Romans 15:28-29 are held to be in conflict with Romans 1:10-15, because they imply that Paul merely desired to pay a short visit to Rome, when he was on his way to Spain. But the first argument has little weight, since Marcion omits many other parts of the New Testament, and several that are generally admitted to be genuine; and the difficulties mentioned under (2) easily yield to exegesis. A far greater number of scholars reject Romans 16:1-27, (1) because Marcions canon does not contain it; (2) since it is contrary to the apostles custom to end his letters with so many greetings; and (3) because Paul was not in a position to know so many persons at Rome. To the first argument we need not reply again (cf. above); and as far as the greetings are concerned, it may be that Paul intentionally greeted so many persons at Rome to bring out clearly that, though he had not founded the church there, he was not a stranger to it, and to cultivate a certain familiarity. It deserves our attention that the only other Epistle in which we find a list of greetings is that to the Colossian church, which was like the church of Rome, in that it was not founded by the apostle. And taking in consideration the extensive travels of Paul in the East, and the constant movement of people in all parts of the empire to and from Rome, it causes no surprise that so many of the apostles acquaintances were in the capital.

Some who doubt the destination rather than the genuineness of this chapter surmise that it or a part of it originally constituted an epistle, or a fragment of one, that was addressed to the Ephesians. They point out that Phebe would be more likely to journey to Ephesus than to Rome; that, in view of what is said in Acts 18:19; 1 Corinthians 16:19; 2 Timothy 4:19, there is a greater

probability that Aquila and Priscilla were at Ephesus than in the imperial city; and that Epenetus is called “the first-fruits of Achaia unto Christ, Romans 16:5. But none of these proofs are conclusive. Moreover Dr. Gifford points out in the Speakers Commentary that of the twenty-two persons named in Romans 16:6-15, not one can be shown to have been at Ephesus; while (1) Urbanus, Rufus, Ampliatus, Julia and Junia are specifically Roman names; and (2) besides the first four of these names, “ten others, Stachys, Apelles, Tryphaena, Tryphosa, Hermes, Hernias, Patrobas (or (Patrobius), Philologus, Julia, Nereus are found in the sepulchral inscriptions on the Appian way as the names of persons connected with ‘Ceasars household (Php 4:22), and contemporary with St. Paul.”

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The Epistle to the Romans is one of the best attested writings of the New Testament. Its canonicity was never doubted by the Church, and it has been remarkably free from the attacks of Rationalism up to the present time. Before the beginning of the third century there are nineteen witnesses to the canonicity of the letter, including some of the apostolic fathers, the Testament of the Twelve Patriarchs, Justin Martyr, the Muratori Canon, Marcion, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian. Both friends and foes of Christianity accepted it as authoritative.

It is the most systematic of all the writings of Paul, containing a profound and comprehensive statement of the way of salvation, a statement made with special reference to the legalistically inclined Romans. That salvation can be had through faith only, and not by the works of the law, not by one’s works of morality, on which the man of the Roman type was inclined to place his reliance, is at once the great central doctrine of this epistle and its permanent lesson for all ages.

02.10. The First Epistle to the Corinthians

The First Epistle to the Corinthians

CONTENTS The contents of this Epistle may be divided into five parts:

I. Condemnation of the Factions in the Church, 1 Corinthians 1:1-31, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16, 1 Corinthians 3:1-23, 1 Corinthians 4:1-21. After a brief introduction in 1 Corinthians 1:1-9 Paul states that he had heard of the divisions among the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 1:11-12. In arguing against these he points out that his conduct was free from party spirit, since this is opposed by the gospel and forbidden by the character of Christ, 1 Corinthians 1:13-31. Moreover he reminds the Corinthians that his preaching had been free from all partisanship which glories in the wisdom of man, because the gospel is the message of divine wisdom, is revealed by the Spirit and is understood only through the Spirit; white party spirit misapprehends the nature of the ministry, 1 Corinthians 2:1-16, 1 Corinthians 3:1-23. He concludes this argument by pointing to his own example, 1 Corinthians 4:1-21.

II. The Necessity of Church Discipline urged, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13, 1 Corinthians 6:1-20. The Corinthians are exhorted to cast out the incestuous person, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; to desist from lawsuits before the unrighteous, 1 Corinthians 6:1-11; and to flee from fornication, Romans 6:12-20.

III. Answer to Inquiries sent from the Church, 1 Corinthians 7:1-40, 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 1 Corinthians 9:1-27, 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, 1 Corinthians 11:1-34, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, 1 Corinthians 14:1-39. Here we find a discussion of the lawfulness of marriage and its duties; directions about mixed marriages and an apostolic advice to the unmarried, 1 Corinthians 7:1-40. Then follows a discussion of Christian liberty in the participation of food offered to the idols, in which love must rule, and one must beware of any participation in idolatrous practices. The apostle illustrates this principle at length by pointing to his own example, 1 Corinthians 8:1-13, 1 Corinthians 9:1-27, 1 Corinthians 10:1-33, 1 Corinthians 11:1. Next the place of woman in the assemblies of the church, and the proper observance of the Lord’s supper is considered, 1 Corinthians 11:2-34. And finally the spiritual gifts manifest in the congregation come in for consideration. Their source and diversity, their functions, the superiority of love over the extraordinary gifts, and of prophecy over the speaking of tongues, and the right service of God,—all receive due treatment, 1 Corinthians 12:1-31, 1 Corinthians 13:1-13, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40.

IV. A Discussion of the Resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:1-58. The apostle shows that the resurrection of Christ is an essential article of the apostolic testimony, and is the pledge of our resurrection; and answers various objections, describing the nature of the resurrection body and the final victory over death.

V. Conclusion, 1 Corinthians 16:1-24. In this chapter the apostle commends to the Corinthians the collection for the saints at Jerusalem, bespeaks a good reception for Timothy, and ends his epistle

with friendly admonitions and salutations.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. This Epistle is the most comprehensive of all the writings of Paul. It is just about as long as the letter to the Romans, and contains the same number of chapters; but, while the Epistle to the Romans systematically treats a single theme, this letter discusses a great variety of subjects, such as party spirit, church discipline, marriage and celibacy, Christian liberty, the place of woman in the church, the significance and use of the charismata, and the resurrection of the dead. And the apostle treats of these matters in a very orderly way, first taking up the accusations contained in the report of those from the household of Chloe, and then answering the questions that were put to him in the letter sent by the Corinthians.

2. Closely connected with the first is a second characteristic, viz, that this Epistle is the most practical of all the Pauline letters. It reveals to us, as no other New Testament writing does, the snares and pitfalls, the difficulties and temptations to which a church just emerging from heathendom and situated in a wicked city, is exposed. Many of the problems that arose in the Corinthian church constantly recur in city congregations. As important as the Epistle to the Romans is for instruction in Christian doctrine, the first Epistle to the Corinthians is for the study of social relations.

3. Little need be said regarding the language of Paul in this Epistle; it is the Greek of a Hellenistic Jew. We cannot call it Hebraistic; neither is it literary Greek. It is rather the Greek of Paul's own period, containing, aside from a few Hebrew loanwords, such as π■σχα, very few words that are found exclusively in the Septuagint. Findlay says: "Paul has become in this epistle more than elsewhere το■ς ■■Ελλησιν ■ς ■■Ελλην." Exp. Gk. Test. II p. 748. The argumentative form too in which the apostles thought is cast here, as elsewhere, is far more Greek than Hebrew, more Western than Oriental.

AUTHORSHIP This epistle also claims to have been written by Paul, 1 Corinthians 1:1-2, and bears upon the face of it the earmarks of the great apostle. The language, the style, the doctrine, and the spirit which it breathes,—are all his; and the historical allusions in 1 Corinthians 9:1-27 and 1 Corinthians 16:1-24 fit in exactly with what we know of his life and acquaintances from other sources. Besides this there is an imposing body of external evidence from Clement of Rome down to the authenticity of the letter. Hence it, like that written to the Romans, has been remarkably free from hostile attacks. Robertson and Plummer truly say in the Introduction to their Commentary on this Epistle p. XVI: "Both the external and the internal evidence for the Pauline authorship are so strong that those who attempt to show that the apostle was not the writer succeed chiefly in proving their own incompetence as critics." The free-lance Bruno Bauer was the first, and for a long time the only one, to attack the genuineness of I Corinthians. But in the last two decennia of the preceding century the Dutch critics Loman, Pierson, Naber and Van Manen, and the Swiss professor Steck chimed in with a most irresponsible kind of criticism, founded on supposed inconsistencies and evidences of composite authorship found in the Epistle, and on imaginary conflicts between it and the Acts of the Apostles. No critic of name takes their argument serious; according to the general estimate they are scarcely worth the paper on which they are written. THE CHURCH AT CORINTH

1. Its Origin. After Paul left Athens on his second missionary journey, he came to the capital of Achaia,—to Corinth, a city situated on the isthmus of the Peloponnese between the Ionian and the Aegean sea. It was not the old Corinth, since this had been destroyed by Mummius in 146 B. C., but Corinth redivivus, Corinth rebuilt by Ceasar just a hundred years later, that had rapidly risen in fame, and now had a population of between six and seven hundred thousand, consisting of Romans, Greeks, Jews and people of such other nationalities as were attracted by the commercial advantages of Corinth. The East and the West met there, and it soon became the mart of the world, where unparalleled riches were found alongside of the deepest poverty. And with the increase of riches and luxury came a life of ease and licentiousness. Worldly wisdom and great moral degradation went hand in hand. On the Acropolis shotie the temple of Venus, where a thousand maidens devoted themselves to the sensual service of the goddess. Corinthian immorality became a byword; and the expression to live like a Corinthian (κορινθι■ζειν) was indicative of the greatest licentiousness. Farrar says: “Corinth was the Vanity Fair of the Roman Empire, at once the London and the Paris of the first century after Christ.” St. Paul I p. 556. To that worldly-wise profligate Corinth Paul wended his way with a sad heart in A. D. 52. Depressed in spirit because of past experiences, he began his labors in the synagogue, preaching to the Jews; but when they opposed him, he turned to the Gentiles and taught them in the house of a certain Justus. Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, became one of his first converts, and many others believed and were baptized, Acts 18:1-8. Encouraged by a vision, he now began a ministry of a year and a half in that city. The Jews, filled with hatred, brought him before Gallio, the proconsul of Achaia, but did not succeed in making out a case against him. Even after this incident he labored a long time in Corinth and the adjacent country and undoubtedly established the Corinthian church on this occasion, Acts 18:18; 1 Corinthians 1:1.

2. Its Composition and Character. We may be sure that the church consisted primarily of Christians from the Gentiles. This impression is conveyed by the account of Pauls work in Corinth, preserved for us in Acts 18:1-28, and is strengthened by a careful study of the epistle. The apostle says of the congregation, describing it according to its main constituent element: “Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led,” 1 Corinthians 12:1. Yet the church also comprised many Jews, as we may infer from Acts 18:8; 1 Corinthians 1:12; 1 Corinthians 7:18; 1 Corinthians 12:13. The majority of the converts were of the poorer classes, 1 Corinthians 1:26; but there were also Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, Acts 18:8; 1 Corinthians 1:14, Erastus, the chamberlain of the city and Gaius, Paul’s host, Romans 16:23, and several others that were in more favorable circumstances, as we may infer from 1 Corinthians 11:21-22. As far as the complexion of the church is concerned we find that it bore the impress of its surroundings. There was a shallow intellectualism, coupled with a factiousness that was “the inveterate curse of Greece.” Lax morals and unseemly conduct disgraced its life. Christian liberty was abused and idolatrous practices were tolerated. Even the gifts of the Holy Spirit gave rise to vainglory; and a false spiritualism led, on the one hand, to a disregard of bodily sin, and, on the other, to a denial of the bodily resurrection. But these faults should not blind us to the fact that there was a great deal in the church of Corinth that was praiseworthy. The social relations among the Corinthians had already undergone to a certain degree the elevating and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit; the church was rich in spiritual gifts, and was willing to impart of its substance to the poor saints at Jerusalem. The divisions at Corinth deserve more than a passing notice, since they are made so prominent in the Epistle. The question is, whether we can determine the

character of the existing parties. In attempting this we desire to point out first of all that they were no parties in the strict sense of the word, each with an organization of its own, but merely dissensions in the church, representing a difference of opinion. They had not led to an absolute split in the ranks of believers, for Paul distinctly recognizes a certain feeling of unity in the church of Corinth, since he mentions meetings of the whole church repeatedly, 1 Corinthians 11:18; 1 Corinthians 14:23. Yet there were four divisions of which each one had his own slogan. a. Some said: “I am of Paul!” This party is mentioned first, not necessarily because it comes first in chronological order. Since the church had been founded by Paul, it would seem that a separate party, using the apostles name as their shibboleth, could only arise in opposition to another. It consisted most likely of those serious-minded believers who had regard to the contents of the gospel preaching rather than to its form; and who heartily accepted the simple doctrine of the cross, as Paul preached it, who had come to them without wisdom of words that the cross of Christ might not be made of non-effect. b. Others said: “I am of Apollos!” We do not believe that the preaching of Apollos differed essentially from that of Paul, nor that he was to blame for the dissension that arose as a result of his work. Paul himself bears witness to his perfect unity of spirit with Apollos, where he says that Apollos watered what he had planted, and that he that planteth and he that watereth are one, 1 Corinthians 3:6-8; and that he had greatly desired to send Apollos with Timothy and the other brethren to Corinth, 1 Corinthians 15:12. And is it not likely that Apollos refused to go, just because he feared that it might foster the party spirit? The Apollos Christians were in all probability those cultured Greeks who, while they were in accord with the doctrine of free grace, greatly preferred a speculative and oratorical presentation of it to the simple preaching of Paul. c. Still others said: “I am of Cephas!” While the two former parties undoubtedly constituted the bulk of the congregation, there were also some who had scruples regarding the doctrine of free grace. They were conservative Jewish believers that adhered to the decisions of the council of Jerusalem and persisted in certain legal observances. Naturally they in spirit rallied around Peter, the apostle of circumcision. It may be that the tradition preserved by Dionysius of Corinth is true that Peter has at one time visited Corinth. If it is, this helps to explain their watchword. d. Finally there were also those who said: “I am of Christ!” This party has always been the most difficult to characterize, and, as a result, a great number of theories have been broached. After F. C. Baur many interpreted this “of Christ” in the light of 2 Corinthians 10:7, where the opponents of whom Paul speaks are ultra-Judaists. On that theory the Christ-party would be even more strictly Jewish than the party of Peter. Others, such as Hilgenfeld and Hausrath maintain that it consisted of those that had been in personal relation with the Lord, and probably belonged to the five hundred of 1 Corinthians 15:5. Godet suggests that they were such as were embued with the spirit of Cerinthus, and believed in Christ in distinction from the human Jesus. He identifies them with those who would call Jesus accursed, 1 Corinthians 12:3. We prefer to think with Meyer, Ellicott, Alford, Findley (Exp. Gk. Test.) and Biesterveld that it consisted of the ultra-pious ones who, despising all human leadership, arrogated the common watchword as their own private property, and by so doing made it a party slogan. They regarded themselves as the ideal party, were filled with spiritual pride, and thus became a great stumbling block for the apostle. The key to this interpretation is found in 1 Corinthians 3:22-23, where the apostle offers a corrective for the party spirit, when he says: “Whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours; and ye are Christ’s and Christ is God’s.” Findlay correctly remarks that “the catholic ■με■ς Χριστο■ swallows up the self-assertive and sectarian

Εγ■ δ■ Χριστο■.

3. Pauls Communications with it. There are two questions that call for consideration under this heading: a. How often did Paul visit Corinth? and b. Did he write more letters to the Corinthian church than we now possess? a. We know that Paul visited Corinth in A. D. 52, Acts 18:1, and again in 57, Acts 20:2. Are there traces of any other visits? The allusions in 2 Corinthians 2:1; 2 Corinthians 12:14; 2 Corinthians 13:1 seem to imply that he had been in Corinth twice before he wrote II Corinthians, and hence prior to the visit of A. D. 57. In all probability we must assume a visit not recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. The question is, however, whether we must place it before the writing of I Corinthians, or between this and the composition of II Corinthians. This cannot be decided absolutely with the data at hand, but we consider it preferable to place it before the first Epistle: (1) because the time intervening between the two letters is so short that a trip to Corinth in that time is exceedingly improbable; (2) Since, Timothy and Titus having been in Corinth a part of that time, we cannot understand, what could make it imperative for Paul to make such a hasty visit; and (3) II Corinthians constantly refers to things written in the first Epistle in a way that would not have been necessary if Paul had already been in Corinth himself. In favor of placing it after the writing of the first Epistle, it is urged that I Corinthians does not refer to a visit that shortly preceded it. b. It seems to us that Paul unquestionably wrote more epistles to the Corinthians than those which we now possess. In 1 Corinthians 5:9 the author clearly refers to an earlier letter, forbidding intercourse with immoral persons. That letter had been misunderstood, and therefore the impression it made is now corrected by the apostle. Very likely it also spoke of the collection for the saints at Jerusalem, 1 Corinthians 16:1, and conveyed the apostles intention to visit Corinth both before and after his visit to Macedonia, to which 2 Corinthians 1:15-16 refers, and which he changed before writing I Corinthians (cf. 1 Corinthians 16:5), thereby unwittingly exposing himself to the calumny of his enemies, 2 Corinthians 1:15-18. From 2 Corinthians 7:6-8 some infer that another letter, far more censorious than I Corinthians intervened between the two canonical letters, and caused the apostles uneasiness; but the evidence is not strong enough to warrant the conclusion.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. This letter was occasioned by reports which Paul received from Corinth and by a series of questions that were put to him by the Corinthians. Those who were of the house of Chloe told him of the divisions in their home church, 1 Corinthians 1:11, and common report had it that fornication and even incest was permitted in the congregation, 1 Corinthians 5:1. Moreover the church sent a letter, probably by the hand of Stephanas, Fortunatus and Achaicus, 1 Corinthians 16:17, asking the apostles opinion in several matters, as marriage, 1 Corinthians 7:1; the eating of meat offered to the idols, 1 Corinthians 8:1; the proper conduct in the church, 1 Corinthians 11:2; the right use of the spiritual gifts, 1 Corinthians 12:1; and in all probability also respecting the doctrine of the resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:1-58. In harmony with this occasion the purpose of the Epistle is especially twofold: In the first place the apostle desires to quench the party spirit that was rife among the Corinthians that he might lead them all to the unity of faith that is in Jesus Christ; and to correct the other evils that were found in the church, such as the case of incest and the irregularities that disgraced their Agapae, which culminated in the Lords Supper. And in the second place it was his aim to give the young church, struggling with temptations and baffled by many difficult questions, further instruction along the lines indicated by them in their

letter. With great diligence and care and solicitude for the welfare of the congregation the apostle applies himself to this task. In answer to the question, whether he also intended to defend his apostleship over against his enemies we would say that, though this was not altogether absent from his mind (cf. 1 Corinthians 4:1-21 and 1 Corinthians 9:1-27), he does not aim at this directly like he does in writing II Corinthians, when the hostility of the false teachers has become far more pronounced.

2. Time and Place. The place, where this Epistle was written, is clearly indicated in 1 Corinthians 16:8, and therefore does not call for further discussion. This also aids us in determining the time of writing. The only stay of Paul at Ephesus of any duration is described in Acts 19:1-41. If our chronological calculations are correct, he came there in A. D. 54 and, after a stay of three years, left there again in 57. According to 1 Corinthians 16:8 he wrote the epistle toward the end of his Ephesian ministry, before Pentecost of A. D. 57, and therefore probably in the early part of that year. We cannot conclude from 1 Corinthians 5:7 that it was when the feast of unleavened bread was celebrated, although it is very well possible that the nearness of that feast gave rise to the line of thought developed in that chapter.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The canonicity of the Epistle is abundantly attested by early Christian literature. It is the first one of the New Testament writings that is cited by name by one of the apostolic fathers. Clement of Rome says in his first Epistle to the Corinthians: “Take the Epistle of the blessed Paul the apostle into your hands etc.” The writings of the other apostolic fathers, viz. Barnabas, Hermas, Ignatius and Polycarp show clear traces of the use of this Epistle. From Irenaeus on it is quoted as Holy Scripture. The Gnostics regarded it with special favor. It was found in Marcion’s canon, in the Muratorian Fragment etc. The testimony to it is very full and clear. In the Epistle to the Romans we have a statement of the way of salvation with special reference to the legalistic Romans; in this Epistle we find an exposition of it particularly with a view to the philosophically inclined Greeks. It clearly reveals that the way of worldly wisdom is not the way of life, a valuable lesson for the Church of all ages. But there is still another phase that gives the Epistle permanent value; it contains the doctrine of the cross in its social application. In it we see the church of God in the world with all its glitter and show, its temptations and dangers, its errors and crimes, and are taught to apply the principles of the Christian religion to the diversified relations of life, as we meet them in the bustle of a great and wicked city.

02.11. The Second Epistle to the Corinthians

The Second Epistle to the Corinthians

CONTENTS The contents of this Epistle are naturally divided into three parts:

I. Review of Pauls Relation's with the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 1:1-24, 2 Corinthians 2:1-17, 2 Corinthians 3:1-18, 2 Corinthians 4:1-18, 2 Corinthians 5:1-21, 2 Corinthians 6:1-18, 2 Corinthians 7:1-16. After the usual epistolary introduction, 2 Corinthians 1:1-11, the apostle vindicates himself with respect to the change in his intended visit, and with reference to what he had written respecting the offender, 2 Corinthians 1:12-24, 2 Corinthians 2:1-13. Having done this, he takes up the discussion of the apostleship. In the first place he considers the office of an apostle, comparing the ministry of the Law with that of the Gospel, 2 Corinthians 3:6-18, and vindicating his own position as an apostle of the New Covenant, 2 Corinthians 2:14-17, 2 Corinthians 3:5; 2 Corinthians 4:1-6. Then he treats of the sufferings of an apostle which are inseparably connected with his work, but are alleviated by the hope of future glory, 2 Corinthians 4:7-18, 2 Corinthians 5:1-10. Next the life of an apostle passes the review, which finds its constraining motive in the love of Christ, has its spiritual basis in the life of the Redeemer, and is marked by sufferings, dishonor and poverty, on the one hand; but also by longsuffering and kindness, by knowledge and righteousness, on the other, 2 Corinthians 5:11-21, 2 Corinthians 6:10. This is followed up by an appeal of the apostle to the Corinthians that they should give him place in their hearts, and should not be unequally yoked together with unbelievers, 2 Corinthians 6:11-18, 2 Corinthians 7:1-4. Finally the apostle tells the Corinthians that he had been comforted greatly by the coming of Titus, by whom his fears that the former letter might have estranged them, were allayed and made place for rejoicing, 2 Corinthians 7:5-16.

II. The Collection for the Judean Christians, 2 Corinthians 8:1-24, 2 Corinthians 9:1-15. The apostle points the Corinthians to the example of the Macedonians who gave abundantly for the poor at Jerusalem, 2 Corinthians 8:1-7; and to the example of Christ who became poor that the Corinthians might be enriched, 2 Corinthians 8:8-15. He commends to them Titus and the two brethren that are sent with him to gather the collection, 2 Corinthians 8:16-24; and exhorts them to give abundantly for this worthy cause, 2 Corinthians 9:1-15.

III. Pauls Vindication of his Apostleship, 2 Corinthians 10:1-18, 2 Corinthians 11:1-33, 2 Corinthians 12:1-21, 2 Corinthians 13:1-14. In this part Paul deals directly with his opponents. First of all he points out that the ministry entrusted to him also extended to the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 9:1-15. Then he replies to his opponents that he had been perfectly loyal to the cause of Christ, 2 Corinthians 11:1-6; that he had not dealt deceitfully with the Corinthians, when he refused support from them, 2 Corinthians 11:7-15; that he had far greater things in which to glory than they could boast of, 2 Corinthians 11:16-33, 2 Corinthians 12:1-10; and that it had never been and was not now his aim to make a gain of the Corinthians, 2 Corinthians 12:11-18. Finally he gives them warnings in view of his coming visit, and closes his epistle with final salutations and benediction, 2 Corinthians 12:19-21, 2 Corinthians 13:1-13.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. II Corinthians is one of the most personal and the least doctrinal of all the letters of Paul, except the one written to Philemon. The doctrinal element is not altogether wanting; the great truths of salvation find expression in it, as well as in the other letters of the apostle; but, though they enter into its composition, they have a subordinate place and are, as it were, eclipsed by its large personal element, in which we see the very heart of the apostle, with all its varying moods of courage and anxiety, of love and aversion, of hope and disappointment. Alford says: “Consolation and rebuke, gentleness and severity, earnestness and irony succeed one another at very short intervals and without notice.”

2. The second characteristic of this Epistle is closely connected with the preceding one; it is the most unsystematic of all the letters of Paul. How greatly it differs in this respect from the Epistle to the Romans and from First Corinthians, becomes perfectly evident, when one attempts to give an outline of the contents. This irregularity is due to the fact that in this letter we do not find a calm discussion of doctrinal subjects or of certain phases of Christian life, but above all an impassioned self-defense against unjust charges and calumnies and insinuations. However humble the apostle may be, and though he may regard himself as the least of all the saints, yet in this letter he finds himself constrained to boast of his sufferings and of his work.

3. The language of this Epistle has been judged variously, some criticizing it severely and others praising its excellencies. We cannot deny that it is more rugged and harsh, more obscure and difficult of interpretation than we are accustomed to in Paul’s other writings. “Parentheses and digressions often intersect the narrative and disturb its sequence.” (Davidson) Meyer says beautifully: “The excitement and varied play of emotion with which Paul wrote this letter, probably also in haste, certainly make the expression not seldom obscure and the sentences less flexible, but only heighten our admiration of the great delicacy, skill and power with which this outpouring of Paul’s spirit and heart, possessing as a defense of himself a high and peculiar interest, flows and gushes on, till finally, in the last part, wave on wave overwhelms the hostile resistance.” Comm. p. 412.

AUTHORSHIP The external testimony to the authorship of Paul is inferior to that of I Corinthians; yet it is so strong that it leaves no room for honest doubt. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and many others, from all parts of the early Church, quote it by name. But even if this were not so strong, internal evidence would be quite sufficient to settle the question of authenticity. In the first place the Epistle claims to be a product of the great apostle. In the second place it is written in a style that is in many respects characteristically Pauline, notwithstanding its unique features; it contains the doctrine of salvation, as we are wont to hear it proclaimed by the apostle of the Gentiles; and it reveals his character, as no other Epistle does. And in the third place the thought of this Epistle is closely interwoven with that of I Corinthians. In 1 Corinthians 16:5 Paul speaks of his plan of travel, and in 2 Corinthians 1:15-24 he comments on it; in 1 Corinthians 5 he urges that discipline be applied to the incestuous person, and in 2 Corinthians 2:5-11 he says, with reference to this case, that they have inflicted sufficient punishment, and restrains their evident severity; respecting the collection for the Judean Christians which he enjoins on the Corinthians in 1 Corinthians 16:14, he gives further directions in 2 Corinthians 8:1-24, 2 Corinthians 9:1-15; to the Judaizers who cast doubt on his apostleship he refers in 1 Corinthians 4:1-21, 1 Corinthians

9:1-27, and speaks of them more at length in 2 Corinthians 10:1-18, 2 Corinthians 11:1-33, 2 Corinthians 12:1-21, 1 Corinthians 13:1-14. The authenticity of the Epistle too was attacked by Bruno Bauer and by the Dutch critics that we mentioned in connection with the first Epistle. But their work failed to convince anyone but themselves. Godet truly says: "—the scholars who cannot discern, across these pages, the living personality of St. Paul, must have lost in the work of the study, the sense for realities." Introd. to the N. T. I p. 337.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. In order to understand the occasion that induced Paul to write this Epistle to the Corinthians, we must bring it in connection with the first letter, which was in all probability borne to Corinth by Titus, Paul's spiritual son. After it had gone forth, the apostle pondered on what he had written in that letter, and it caused him some uneasiness of mind, 2 Corinthians 7:8. He reflected that he had written in a rather severe strain regarding the divisions at Corinth and the incestuous person, and feared for a time that his words might be misconstrued, that his letter might create a false impression, and that his severity might provoke resentment and thus injure the cause of the gospel that lay so near to his heart.

We are aware that some scholars, as Hausrath, Schmiedel, Kennedy, Baljon, Findlay, Robertson (in Hastings D. B.) and Davidson hold that 2 Corinthians 2:4; 2 Corinthians 2:9; 2 Corinthians 7:8 refer to a second lost epistle of Paul, the so-called Painful Letter; but with Zahn, Holtzmann and Bernard (in Expositors Gk. Test.) we believe it to be a rather gratuitous assumption that such an epistle ever existed.

Shortly after Paul had sent I Corinthians, he left Ephesus for Troas, where a splendid opportunity for work offered. Yet he was keenly disappointed, for he had expected to find Titus there with tidings from Corinth; and when he did not find him, his very anxiety caused him to sail for Macedonia that he might meet his beloved brother and co-laborer the sooner and be reassured by him, 2 Corinthians 2:12-13. The mere change of the field of labor brought him no relief, for he says: "When we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings, within were fears." 7:5. Soon, however, he was comforted by the coming of Titus, 2 Corinthians 7:6; the painful uncertainty now made place for calm assurance, yea even for joy and thanksgiving. But his happiness was not unalloyed, since the report of Titus was not altogether favorable. The Corinthian congregation as a whole had taken kindly to the warnings and directions of the previous letter. The words of reproof had made a deep impression on them, had saddened their hearts, had filled them with sorrow,—but it was a godly sorrow that worked repentance. Hence the apostle had occasion to rejoice and did rejoice, 2 Corinthians 7:7-16. The enemies of Paul, however, had been embittered by the former Epistle and had increased their sinister work, attempting to undermine the apostolic authority of Paul by charging that he was fickle and vacillating, 2 Corinthians 1:15-24; that he was controlled by fleshly motives, 2 Corinthians 10:2; that he was bold at a distance, but cowardly, when present, 2 Corinthians 10:10; that he was dealing deceitfully with the Corinthians even in taking no support from them, 2 Corinthians 11:7-12; and that he had not shown himself an apostle by his works, 2 Corinthians 12:11-13. The question may be asked to which one of the four parties mentioned in I Corinthians the enemies belong with which the apostle deals in 2 Corinthians 10:1-18, 2 Corinthians 11:1-33, 2 Corinthians 12:1-21, 1 Corinthians 13:1-14. It is quite clear, and scholars are generally agreed,

that they were in the main, if not exclusively, ultra-Judaists. But there is no such unanimity in classifying them with one of the divisions of which the first Epistle speaks. Following F. C. Baur many, such as Baljon, Davidson, Weiss, identify them with those whose watchword was: “I am of Christ!” Others, however, as Meyer and Zahn regard them as belonging to the party that professed special allegiance to Peter. To this view we give preference; however, with the provisos that in this letter Paul does not deal with the whole party, but rather with its leaders, who had probably come from Judaea with letters of commendation, 2 Corinthians 3:1, and whom Paul qualifies as “false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves in apostles of Christ,” 2 Corinthians 11:13 ;—and that it is quite possible that some of his words refer to those who, ignoring and despising all human authority, claimed to be of Christ, and did not uphold the honor and faithfulness of the apostle against the false teachers. Cf. 2 Corinthians 10:7. This being the situation at Corinth, when the apostle wrote his second letter, he was naturally led to write with a twofold purpose. In the first place it was his desire to express his gratitude for the way in which the Corinthians had received his former letter, and to inform them of the joy he experienced, when they had manifested their willingness to mend their ways and had been filled with godly sorrow. And in the second place he considered it incumbent on him to defend his apostleship against the calumnies and the malignant attacks of the Judaeistic adversaries.

2. Time and Place. In view of the account we have given of the course of events that followed the writing of 1 Corinthians, it is not very difficult to establish approximately both the time and the place of writing. We may assume that, in accordance with the plan expressed in 1 Corinthians 15:8, the apostle remained at Ephesus until Pentecost of A. D. 57. On leaving Ephesus he went to Troas, from where he crossed over to Macedonia. There he soon met Titus, presumably in the summer of that same year, and therefore some time before he was ready to visit Corinth, and received information from him regarding the condition of the Corinthian church. Overjoyed by what he heard, but at the same time apprehending the danger that lurked in the agitation of the Judaizers, he immediately wrote II Corinthians, and sent it to Corinth by the hand of Titus, who was accompanied on his journey by two of the brethren, whose names are not recorded, 2 Corinthians 8:18; 2 Corinthians 8:22. The letter was written, therefore, in the summer of A. D. 57, somewhere in Macedonia.

INTEGRITY The integrity of the letter has been attacked especially on two points. It is claimed by some that the verses 6:14—7:1 do not belong, where they stand, but form an awkward interruption in the course of thought. A few scholars regard them as a part of the lost letter to which 1 Corinthians 5:9 refers. Now it is true that at first sight these verses seem out of place, where they stand, but at the same time it is very well possible to give a plausible explanation for their insertion at this point. Cf. Meyer, Alford, Expositors Greek Testament.

Several critics opine that 2 Corinthians 10:1-18, 2 Corinthians 11:1-33, 2 Corinthians 12:1-21, 1 Corinthians 13:1-14 did not originally form a part of this letter. Hausrath and Schmiedel advocated the theory that they constituted a part of the so-called Painful letter that intervened between I and II Corinthians. The reasons why they would separate this section from the other nine chapters, are the following: (1) 2 Corinthians 10:1-18 begins with the words Α■τ■ς δ■ ■γ■ Παυ■λος, which δ■ marks these words as an antithesis to something that is not found in the preceding. (2) The tone of the apostle in these last chapters is strikingly different from that in the other nine; from a calm and joyful tone it has changed to one of stern rebuke and of sharp invective. (3) Certain passages

found in the first part point back to statements that are found in the last chapters, and thus prove that these are part of a previous letter. Thus 2 Corinthians 2:3 refers to 2 Corinthians 13:10; 2 Corinthians 1:23 to 2 Corinthians 13:2; and 2 Corinthians 2:9 to 2 Corinthians 10:6. But to these arguments we may reply, in the first place, that δ■ often does no more than mark the transition to a new subject (cf. 1 Corinthians 15:1; 2 Corinthians 8:1); in the second place, that the change of tone need not surprise us, if we take in consideration the possibility that Paul did not write the whole Epistle at a single sitting and therefore in the same mood; and the fact that in the last chapters he deals more particularly with the false teachers among the Corinthians; and in the third place, that the passages referred to do not necessitate the construction put on them by the above named critics. Moreover, if we adopt the theory that another letter intervened between our two canonical Epistles. we are led to a very complicated scheme of Pauls transactions with Corinth, a scheme so complicated that it is its own condemnation.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The ancient Church was unanimous in accepting the Epistle as a part of the Word of God. Of the apostolic fathers Polycarp plainly quotes it. Marcion included it in his canon, and it is also named in the Muratorian Fragment. The Syriac and old Latin Versions contain it, and the three great witnesses of the end of the second century quote it by name. This Epistle too has permanent value for the Church of God. It is inseparably connected with I Corinthians, and as such also brings out that it is not the wisdom of the world but the foolishness of the cross that saves; and sheds further light on the application of Christian principles to social relations. More than any other Epistle it reveals to us the apostles personality, and is therefore a great psychological aid in the interpretation of his writings. It also has considerable doctrinal interest in that it exhibits a part of the apostles eschatology, 4:16—5:8; brings out the contrast between the letter and the spirit, 3:6-18; describes the beneficent influence of the glory of Christ, 3:18—A:6; and contains an explicit statement of the reconciliation and renovation wrought by Christ, 5:17-21.

02.12. The Epistle to the Galatians

The Epistle to the Galatians

CONTENTS The Epistle to the Galatians may be divided into three parts:

I. Pauls Defense of his Apostleship, Galatians 1:1-24, Galatians 2:1-21. After the usual introduction the apostle states the occasion of his writing, Galatians 1:1-10. In defense of his apostleship he points out that he has been called by God himself and received his Gospel by direct revelation, and had no occasion to learn it from the other apostles, Galatians 1:11-24; that the apostles showed their agreement with him by not demanding the circumcision of Titus and by admitting his mission to the gentiles. Galatians 2:1-10; and that he had even rebuked Peter, when this “pillar of the church” was not true to the doctrine of free grace, Galatians 2:11-21.

II. His Defense of the Doctrine of Justification, Galatians 3:1-29, Galatians 4:1-31. Here the apostle clearly brings out that the Galatians received the gift of the Spirit by faith, Galatians 3:1-5; that Abraham was justified by faith, Galatians 3:6-9; that delivery from the curse of the law is possible only through faith, Galatians 3:10-14; and that the law has merely a parenthetic character, coming, as it does, between the promise and its fulfillment, Galatians 3:15-29. He compares Judaism to a son who is minor, and Christianity to a son that has attained his majority, Galatians 4:1-7; admonishes the Galatians that, realizing their privilege, they should not return to the beggarly elements of knowledge, Galatians 4:8-20; and says that the Jew is like the child of Hagar, while the Christian resembles the child of Sara, Galatians 4:21-31.

III. Practical Exhortations, Galatians 5:1-26, Galatians 6:1-18. The Galatians are exhorted to stand in their Christian liberty, Galatians 5:1-12, a liberty that is not license but obedience, Galatians 5:13-18. The works of the flesh and the fruits of the Spirit are described that the Galatians may avoid the former and yield the latter, Galatians 5:19-26. The right way of treating the erring and weak is pointed out, and also the relation of what one sows to what one reaps, Galatians 5:1-10. With a brief summary and benediction Paul ends his letter, Galatians 6:11-18.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. The Epistle to the Galatians has a great deal in common with that written to the Romans. They both treat the same general theme, viz, that by the works of the law no man will be justified before God. The same Old Testament passage is quoted in Romans 4:3 and Galatians 3:6; and the same general argument is built on it, that the promise belongs to those who have faith like that which Abraham had even before he was circumcised. In both Epistles Paul aims at reconciling his admission that the Mosaic law came from God with his contention that it was not binding on Christians. Besides these similarities there are also several verbal agreements and parallel passages in these letters. Of the latter we may mention Romans 8:14-17 and Galatians 4:5-7; Romans 6:6-8 and Galatians 2:20; Romans 13:13-14 and Galatians 5:16-17.

2. But however similar these Epistles may be, there are also striking differences. In the Epistle to the Romans Paul does not directly encounter such as are hostile to the truth or personal adversaries; hence it is written in a calm spirit and is at most indirectly polemical. This is quite different in the Epistle to the Galatians. There were those in the churches of Galatia who perverted the doctrine of the cross and called the apostolic authority of Paul in question. As a result this is one of the most controversial writings of the apostle; it is an outburst of indignant feeling, written in a fiery tone.

3. This Epistle abounds in striking contrasts. Grace is contrasted with the Law in its Jewish application, and especially on its ritual side; faith is placed in antithetic relation to the works of man; the fruits of the Spirit are set over against the works of the flesh; circumcision is opposed to the new creation; and the enmity of the world to the cross of Christ is brought out in strong relief.

4. The style of this letter is rather unique in that it unites the two extreme affections of Paul's admirable character: severity and tenderness. At times he speaks in a cold severe tone, as if he would scarcely recognize the Galatians as brethren; then again his whole heart seems to yearn for them. It is hard to imagine anything more solemnly severe than the opening verses of the epistle and Galatians 3:1-5; but it is equally difficult to conceive of something more tenderly affectionate than appeals such as we find in Galatians 4:12-16, Galatians 4:18-20. We find in this letter a beautiful blending of sharp invective and tender pleading.

AUTHORSHIP The authorship of the Epistle need not be subject to doubt, since both the external and the internal evidence are very strong. The letter is found in Marcions canon, is named in the Muratorian Fragment, and from the time of Irenaeus is regularly quoted by name. But even if the external testimony were not so strong, internal evidence would be quite sufficient to establish the Pauline authorship. The letter is self-attested, Galatians 1:1, and clearly reveals the character of the great apostle; it does this all the better, since it is so intensely personal. And though there are some harmonistic difficulties, when we compare Galatians 1:18 and Acts 9:23 ;— Galatians 1:18-19 and Acts 9:26; Galatians 1:18; Galatians 2:1 and Acts 9:26; Acts 11:30; Acts 12:25; Acts 15:2,—yet these are not insuperable, and, on the whole, the historical allusions found in the epistle fit in well with the narrative in Acts. For a long time Bruno Bauer was the only one to question the authenticity of this letter, but since 1882 the Dutch school of Loman and Van Manen joined him, followed by Friedrich in Germany. The principal reason for doubting it is the supposed impossibility of so rapid a development of the contrast between Jewish and Pauline Christianity as this letter presupposes. But the facts do not permit us to doubt that the conflict did occur then, while in the second century it had died out. THE CHURCHES OF GALATIA

Among the Epistles of Paul this is the only one that is expressly addressed, not to an individual nor to a single church, but a group of churches, τα■ς ■κκλησ■αις τ■ς Γαλατ■ας, Galatians 1:2. When did the apostle found these Galatian churches? The answer to that question will necessarily depend on our interpretation of the term Galatia, as it is used by the apostle. There is a twofold use of this appellative, viz, the geographical and the political. Geographically the term Galatia denotes one of the Northern districts of Asia Minor, a district that was bounded on the North by Bithynia and Paplagonia, on the East by the last named province and Pontus, on the West by Phrygia, and on the South by Lycaonia and Cappadocia. The same name is employed in an official, political sense, however, to designate the Roman province which included Galatia proper,

a part of Phrygia, Pisidia and Lycaonia. This twofold significance of the name Galatia has led to two theories respecting the location of the Galatian churches, viz, the North and the South Galatian theory. The former still represents the prevailing view; but the latter is accepted by an ever increasing number of scholars.

According to the North Galatian theory the churches of Galatia were situated in the geographical district indicated by that name. Since about 280 B. C. this territory was inhabited by a Celtic people, consisting of three separate tribes, that had migrated thither from Western Europe, and who constituted shortly before Christ the kingdom of Galatia. They were given to the worship of Cybele "with its wild ceremonial and hideous mutilations;" and were characterized by fickleness and great instability of character. "Inconstant and quarrelsome," says Lightfoot, Corn. p. 14, "treacherous in their dealings, incapable of sustained effort, easily disheartened by failures, such they appear, when viewed on their darker side." The adherents of this theory are generally agreed that Paul, in all probability, founded the Galatian churches in the most important cities of this district, i. e. in the capital Ancyra, in Pessinus, the principal seat of the hideous service of Cybele, and at Tavium. at once a strong fortress and a great commercial center. The South Galatian theory, on the other hand, identifies the Galatian churches with those founded by Paul on his first missionary journey at Pisidian Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, not excluding any other churches that may have been founded in the province. The North Galatian theory is supported by the following considerations: (1) It is unlikely that Paul would address the inhabitants of Phrygia, Pisidia and Lycaonia as Galatians. That name could properly be given only to the Celts, the Gauls that lived in Galatia proper. (2) It is improbable that Paul would have referred to the churches founded by him and Barnabas jointly, as if they had been established by him alone. (3) The character of the Galatians, as it is reflected in this letter, is in remarkable agreement with that of the Celts whose changeableness was a subject of common comment. (4) Since in the Acts of the Apostles Mysia, Phrygia and Pisidia are all geographical terms, without any political significance, the inference seems perfectly warranted that the name Galatia, when it is found alongside of these, is employed in a similar sense. (5) "The expression used in the Acts of Pauls visit to these parts, 'the Phrygian and Galatian country, shows that the district intended was not Lycaonia and Pisidia, but some region which might be said to belong either to Phrygia or Galatia, or the parts of each contiguous to the other." (Lightfoot).

Now we are not inclined to underrate the value of these arguments, but yet it seems to us that they are not altogether conclusive. The first one impresses us as a rather gratuitous assumption. Taking in consideration that the Roman province of Galatia was organized as early as 25 B. C. (Cf. Ramsay, Historical Comm. on the Galatians, p. 103 ff. and J. Weiss, Real-Enc. Art. Kleinasien), and had therefore existed at least 75 years, when Paul wrote this letter, it is hard to see, why he could not address its inhabitants as Galatians. This is true especially in view of the fact that the apostle shows a decided preference for the imperial nomenclature, probably since it was the most honorable. Moreover in writing to the congregations in South Galatia he could not very well use any other name, if he did not wish to address them in a very cumbrous way.—In connection with the second argument we must bear in mind that this Epistle was written after the rupture between Barnabas and Paul, when, so it seems; the labor was divided so that Paul received charge of the South Galatian churches. It was but natural therefore that he should feel the sole responsibility for them.—On the third argument Salmon, who also advocates the North Galatian theory, would

wisely place little reliance, because “it may be doubted whether Celts formed the predominating element in the churches of Galatia,” and since “men of different nationalities show a common nature.” Introd. p. 412.—We do not feel the cogency of the fourth argument for, granted that Luke does use the term Galatia in its geographical sense, this does not prove anything as to Paul’s usage. In fact the presumption is that the apostle did not so use it.—And the last argument is of rather dubious value, since it rests on an uncertain interpretation of the expressions τ■ν Φρυγ■αν κα■ Γαλατικ■ν, Acts 16:1-40 :, and τ■ν Γαλατικ■ν Χ■ραν κα■ Φρυγ■αν, Acts 18:23. The expression in Acts 16:6 can probably also be translated “the Phrygo-Galatic region,” referring to that part of the province Galatia that included Antioch and Iconium, and that originally belonged to Phrygia. In Acts 18:23, however, where the names are reversed, we must translate, “the Galatic territory and Phrygia,” the last name then, according to Ramsay, referring to either Phrygia Galatica or Phrygia Magna. In any event it seems peculiar that Paul, if in these places he has reference to Galatia proper, should speak of the Galatian territory rather than of Galatia. The North Galatian theory is defended by Weiss, Davidson, Julicher, Godet and especially by Lightfoot. But the South Galatian theory also has able defenders, such as Renan, Hausrath, Zahn, Baljon and above all Ramsay, whose extended travels and research in Asia Minor, combined with great learning, enable him to speak with authority on questions pertaining to that district. This theory assumes that Paul used the name Galatia in its official political sense, and that the Galatian churches were those of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe, e.a. Although we do not feel inclined to speak dogmatically on the subject, it seems to us that this theory deserves preference for the following reasons: (1) It was evidently Paul’s uniform custom to denote the location of the churches which he founded, not by the popular but by the official nomenclature. Thus he speaks of the churches of Asia, 1 Corinthians 16:19; the churches of Macedonia, 2 Corinthians 8:1; and the churches of Achaia, 2 Corinthians 1:1. And that this was not something peculiar to Paul, is proved by the fact that Peter does the same in 1 Peter 1:1, where the term Galatia is obviously used in its political sense, since all the other names refer to Roman provinces. Even Light-foot admits that this is probably the case. (2) That Paul founded churches in the Roman province of Galatia is a well attested fact, of which we have a detailed narrative in Acts 13:1-52, Acts 14:1-28; on the other hand, we have no record whatever of his establishing churches in the district of that name. It is certainly not very obvious that Luke in Acts 16:6 wants to convey the idea that the apostle established churches in North Galatia. The most that can be said, is that Acts 18:23 implies such previous activity on the part of Paul; but even this depends on the correct interpretation of the phrase, “the country of Galatia and Phrygia.” Lightfoot himself regards it as “strange that, while we have more or less acquaintance with all the other important churches of St. Paul’s founding, not a single name of a person or place, scarcely a single incident of any kind, connected with the apostles preaching in Galatia, should be preserved either in the history or in the epistle.” Comm. p. 20. (3) The Epistle refers to the collection for the Judean saints, 2 Corinthians 2:10 and in 1 Corinthians 16:1 Paul says that he commanded the churches in Galatia to take part in thIsa. What is the meaning of the term Galatia here? From the Epistles of Paul we gather that the churches of Galatia, 1 Corinthians 16:1, Macedonia, 2 Corinthians 8:1; 2 Corinthians 9:2; and Achaia, Romans 15:26, contributed for this cause; while from Acts 20:4 we learn that representatives from Asia also accompanied Paul to Jerusalem, according to the principle laid down in 1 Corinthians 16:3-4. Now if we take the name Galatia in its official sense here, then all the churches founded by Paul are seen to participate in this work of charity; while if we interpret it as referring to North Galatia, the

churches of Antioch, Iconium, Lystra and Derbe are not mentioned, and the impression is created that they did not take part. But this is exceedingly improbable, and the improbability is heightened by the fact that among the representatives accompanying Paul we also find Secundus and Gaius of Derbe and Timotheus of Lystra, while there are none to represent North Galatia. (4) From Galatians 4:13 we learn that Paul first preached the gospel to the Galatians through infirmity of the flesh. This may mean that Paul, traveling through Galatia, was detained there by sickness, or that he repaired to this district, in order to recuperate from some disease. But the road through North Galatia did not lead to any place, where Paul was likely to go, and its climate was very undesirable for an invalid. On the other hand the supposition is altogether natural that the apostle contracted some disease in the marshy lowlands of Pamphylia, and therefore sought restoration in the bracing atmosphere of Pisidian Antioch. (5) In this Epistle Paul repeatedly mentions Barnabas as a person well known to the Galatians 2:1; Galatians 2:9; Galatians 2:13. Now he was Pauls co-laborer in establishing the South Galatian churches, but did not accompany the apostle on his second missionary journey, when the churches of North Galatia are supposed to have been founded. It is true that this argument is somewhat neutralized by the fact that Barnabas is mentioned also in 1 Corinthians 9:6; yet this is not altogether the case, since the references in Galatians are more specific. In Galatians 2:9, where Paul seeks to establish his apostleship, he also seems to consider it desirable to vindicate the legitimacy of Barnabas mission; while in Galatians 2:13 he presupposes that his readers have knowledge of the stand taken by Barnabas with reference to the doctrine of free grace. We conclude, therefore, that the Galatian churches were in all probability those founded by Paul on his first missionary journey in South Galatia. Cf. especially Ramsay, The Church in the Roman Empire pp. 3-112; St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen pp. 89-151; and Zahns Einleitung II pp. 124-139. The Galatian churches were mainly composed of Gentile-Christians, but also contained an important Jewish element. This can be inferred from the narrative in Acts 13:52, Acts 14:1-28. The Gentiles were eager to receive the truth, Acts 13:42, Acts 13:46-48; Acts 14:1, while the Jews were very much divided, some believingly accepting the word of the apostles, Acts 13:43; Acts 14:1, and others rejecting it with scorn and maltreating the messengers of the cross, Acts 13:45, Acts 13:50; Acts 14:2, Acts 14:5, Acts 14:19. The impression received from the narrative is corroborated by the Epistle, which in the main addresses itself to the Greeks who had not yet accepted circumcision, but had of late been urged to submit to this rite, if not to all the Jewish ceremonies, that they might share in the covenant blessings of Abraham. The apostle describes the whole congregation according to the majority of its members, when he says in Galatians 4:8, “Howbeit then, when ye knew not God, ye did service unto them which by nature are no gods.” Yet it is evident from Galatians 3:23-25, Galatians 3:28 that he also bears the Jewish element in mind. We need not doubt, however, that the majority of the Greeks that constituted the Galatian churches had already for some time attended the synagogue of the Jews before they were converted to Christianity, and therefore belonged to the proselytes, the so-called devout persons of whom Acts repeatedly speaks. This may be inferred from Acts 13:43; Acts 14:1, and from the fact that the apostle presupposes a certain familiarity in his readers with the patriarchal history, the Law, the Psalms and the Prophets.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. After Paul had preached the gospel to the Galatians and had seen them well started on the royal road to salvation, Judaizing teachers entered the field, jealous of their

Jewish prerogatives. Probably they were emissaries from Jerusalem that abused a commission entrusted to them, or assumed an authority which they in no way possessed. They did not combat Christianity as such, but desired that it should be led in Judaeistic channels. Every convert to Christianity should submit to circumcision, if not to the whole ceremonial law. Their teaching was quite the opposite of Pauls doctrine, and could only be maintained by discrediting the apostle. Hence they sought to undermine his personal influence and to depreciate his apostolic authority by claiming that he had not been called of God and had received the truth at second-hand from the Twelve. It seems that Paul, when he last visited the Galatian churches, had already encountered some such enemies, Galatians 1:9, but he now heard that their influence was increasing, and that they were successful in persuading the Galatians to forsake their Christian privileges, and thus virtually though perhaps unwittingly, to deny Christ who had bought them, Galatians 3:1; Galatians 4:9-11; Galatians 4:17; Galatians 5:7-8; Galatians 5:10. Hence he deems it imperative to write them a letter. The purpose of the author in writing this Epistle was, of course, twofold. In order that his words might be effective, it was necessary, first of all, that he should defend his apostolic authority by proving that God had called him and had imparted the truth of the gospel to him by means of a direct revelation. And in the second place it was incumbent on him that he should expose the Judaeistic error by which they were led astray, and should defend the doctrine of justification by faith.

2. Time and Place. There is great diversity of opinion as to the time, when the Epistle was written. Zahn, Hausrath, Baljon and Rendall (in The Exp. Gk. Test.) regard it as the earliest of Paul's Epistles, and assume that it was written during the early part of his stay in Corinth in the year 53. Ramsay thinks it was written from Antioch at the end of the second missionary journey, i. e. according to his dating, also in A. D. 53. Weiss, Holtzmann and Godet refer it to the early part of Paul's Ephesian residence, about the year 54 or 55, while Warfield prefers to place it towards the end of this period in A. D. 57. And finally Lightfoot and Salmon agree in dating it after Paul's departure from Ephesus. This great variety of opinion proves that the data for determining the time are few and uncertain. Those accepting the North Galatian theory are virtually confined to a date after the beginning of Paul's Ephesian residence in the year 54, because the πρ■τερρον of Galatians 4:13 seems to imply that the apostle had visited the churches of Galatia twice before he wrote his letter; while it is for the same reason most natural that they who advocate the South Galatiari theory, find their terminus a quo in A. D. 52 (McGiffert notwithstanding), when Paul had paid a second visit to the South Galatian churches. Assuming, as we do, that this letter was addressed to the churches of South Galatia, we may dismiss the idea that the apostle wrote it during the third missionary journey, because this would imply that he had already visited them three times, in which case he would have used πρ■τον instead of πρ■τερον in Galatians 4:13. Moreover if Paul wrote it from Ephesus, the question is naturally raised, why he did not visit the Galatians rather than write to them, seeing that he had a great desire to be with them, Galatians 4:20. We are inclined to think that Paul wrote this letter on his second missionary journey, after he had passed into Europe, and probably during the first part of his residence at Corinth, for: (1) Galatians 4:20 implies that Paul was at some distance from the Galatian churches; (2) The letter presupposes that some time had elapsed between its composition and the second visit of the apostle; and (3) The letter contains no greetings from Silas and Timotheus, who were both well known to the Galatians. Evidently they had not yet reached Corinth.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE

There has never been any serious doubt respecting the canonicity of this Epistle. It was received as authoritative in all sections of the Church from the very earliest times. There are allusions to its language in the apostolic fathers, Clement of Rome, Polycarp and Ignatius. Justin Martyr, Melito and Athanagoras seem to have known it; and some of the heretics, especially the Ophites, used it extensively. It is found in Marcions canon, is named in the Muratorian Fragment, and the Syriac and old Latin versions contain it. From the end of the second century the quotations multiply and increase in directness and definiteness. This Epistle too has abiding significance for the Church of God. It is essentially a defense of the doctrine of free grace, of the Christian liberty of New Testament believers over against those that would bring them under the law in its Old Testament application, and would place them under the obligation to submit to circumcision and to participate in the shadowy ceremonies of a by-gone day. The great central exhortation of this letter is: “Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and be not tangled again with the yoke of bondage.” The way of the ritualist is not the way of life, is the lesson that should be remembered by all those who are inclined to over-emphasize the outward form of religion to the neglect of its spirit and essence.

02.13. The Epistle to the Ephesians

The Epistle to the Ephesians

CONTENTS The Epistle to the Ephesians is naturally divided into two parts:

I. The Doctrinal Part, treating of the Unity of the Church, Ephesians 1:1-23, Ephesians 2:1-22, Ephesians 3:1-21. After the address and salutation, Ephesians 1:1-2, the apostle praises God for the great spiritual blessings received in Christ, in whom the Ephesians have been chosen, adopted and sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, Ephesians 1:3-14. He renders thanks for these blessings and prays that God may make known to the Church, the glorious body of Christ, who filleth all in all, the glory of its heavenly calling, Ephesians 1:15-23. Then he compares the past and present condition of the readers, Ephesians 2:1-13, and describes Christ's work of reconciliation, resulting in the unity and glory of the Church, Ephesians 2:14-22. Next he enlarges on the mystery of the Gospel and reminds his readers that he has been commissioned by God to make it known to mankind, Ephesians 3:1-13. He prays that they may be strengthened and enabled to comprehend the greatness of the love of Christ to the glory of God, Ephesians 3:14-21.

II. The Practical Part, containing Exhortations to a Conversation worthy of the Calling and Unity of the Readers, Ephesians 4:1-32, Ephesians 5:1-33, Ephesians 6:1-20. The readers are exhorted to maintain the unity which God seeks to establish among them by distributing spiritual gifts and instituting different offices, Ephesians 4:1-16. They should not walk as the Gentiles do, but according to the principle of their new life, shunning the vices of the old man and practicing the virtues of the new, Ephesians 4:17-32. In society if must be their constant endeavor to be separate from the evils of the world and to walk circumspectly; husbands and wives should conform in their mutual relation to the image of Christ and the Church; children should obey their parents and servants their masters, Ephesians 5:1-33, Ephesians 6:1-9. Finally Paul exhorts the readers to be strong in the Lord, having put on the whole armour of God and seeking strength in prayer and supplication; and he closes his Epistle with some personal intelligence and a twofold salutation, Ephesians 6:10-24.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. This letter is marked first of all by its general character. It has this in common with the Epistle to the Romans, that it partakes somewhat of the nature of a treatise; yet it is as truly a letter, as any one of the other writings of Paul. Deissmann correctly remarks, however, that "the personal element is less prominent in it than the impersonal." St. Paul, p. 23. The letter does not presuppose, like those to the Corinthians and to the Galatians, some special clearly marked historical situation, does not refer to any historical incidents known to us from other sources, except the imprisonment of Paul, and contains no personal greetings. The only person mentioned is Tychicus, the bearer of the letter. It treats in a profound and sublime manner of the unity of all believers in Jesus Christ, and of the holy conversation in Christ that must issue from it.

2. It is also characterized by its great similarity to the letter sent to the Colossians. This is so great that some critics have regarded it as merely a revised and enlarged edition of the latter; but this idea must be dismissed altogether, because the difference between them is too great and fundamental. The Epistle to the Colossians is more personal and controversial than that to the Ephesians; the former treats of Christ, the Head of the Church, while the latter is mainly concerned with the Church, the body of Christ. Notwithstanding this, however, the resemblance of the two is readily observed. There is good reason for calling them twin letters. In many cases the same words and forms of expression are found in both; the thought is often identical, while the language differs; and the general structure of the Epistles is very similar.

3. The style of the letter is in general very exalted, and forms a great contrast with that of the epistle to the Galatians. Dr. Sanday says: “With few exceptions scholars of all different schools who have studied and interpreted this epistle have been at one in regarding it as one of the sublimest and most profound of all the New Testament writings. In the judgment of many who are well entitled to deliver an opinion, it is the grandest of all the Pauline letters.” The Exp. Gk. Test. III p. 208. The style is characterized by a succession of participial clauses and dependent sentences that flow on like a torrent, and by lengthy-digressions. One is impressed by its grandeur, but often finds it difficult to follow the apostle as he soars to giddy heights. The language is further remarkable in that it contains a series of terms with far-reaching significance, such as the council (βουλ■), of God, His will (θελ■μα), His purpose (πρ■θεσις), His good pleasure (■υδοκ■α), etc., and also a great number of ■παξ λεγ■μενα. According to Holtzmann there are 76 words that are peculiar to this epistle, of which 18 are found nowhere else in the Bible, 17 do not occur in the rest of the New Testament, and 51 are absent from all the other Pauline letters (the Pastoral epistles being excepted). Einleitung p. 259.

AUTHORSHIP The historical evidence for the Pauline authorship of the Epistle is exceptionally strong. Some scholars claim that Ignatius even speaks of Paul as the author, when he says in his Epistle to the Ephesians: ”—who (referring back to Paul) throughout all his Epistle (■ν π■σ■ ■πιστολ■) makes mention of you in Christ Jesus.” But it is very doubtful, whether the rendering, “in all the Epistle,” should not rather be, “in every Epistle.” Marcion ascribed the letter to Paul, and in the Muratorian Fragment the church of Ephesus is mentioned as one of the churches to which Paul wrote Epistles. Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria refer to Paul by name as the author of this letter and quote it as his, while Tertullian mentions Ephesus among the churches that had apostolic Epistles.

Internal evidence also points to Paul as the author. In the opening verse of the Epistle the writer is named, and the structure of the letter is characteristically Pauline. In the first place it contains the usual blessing and thanksgiving; this is followed in the regular way by the body of the epistle, consisting of a doctrinal and a practical part; and finally it ends with the customary salutations. The ideas developed are in perfect agreement with those found in the letters which we already discussed, although in certain particulars they advance beyond them, as in the theological conception of the doctrine of redemption; and in the doctrine of the Church as the body of Christ with its various organs. The style of the Epistle too is Pauline. It is true that it differs considerably from that of Romans, Corinthians and Galatians, but it shows great affinity with the style of Colossians and of the Pastorals.

Notwithstanding all the evidence in favor of the Pauline authorship of this Epistle, its authenticity has been questioned by several New Testament scholars. De Wette, Baur and his school, Davidson, Holtzmann and Weizsacker are among the most prominent. The idea is that some later, probably a second century writer impersonated the great apostle. The principal grounds on which the Epistle was attacked, are the following: (1) It is so like the Epistle to the Colossians that it cannot be an original document. De Wette came to the conclusion that it was a “verbose amplification” of the Epistle to the Colossians. Holtzmann, finding that in some parts the priority must be ascribed to Ephesians rather than to Colossians, advocated the theory that Paul wrote an Epistle to the Colossians shorter than our canonical letter; that a forger, guided by this, fabricated the Epistle to the Ephesians; and that this plagiarist was so enamoured with his work that he, in turn, revised the Colossian Epistle in accordance with it. (2) The vocabulary and in general the style of the Epistle is so different from that of the other letters of Paul as to give it an un-Pauline stamp. This objection is based partly, though not primarily, on the numerous ■παξ λεχ■μενα; but especially on the use of Pauline words in a new souse, such as μυστ■ριον, ο■κονομ■α and περιπο■ησις; on the expression of certain ideas by terms that differ from those employed elsewhere by the apostle for the same purpose, as ■ θε■ς το■ κυρ■ου ■μ■ν ■Ιησο■, Ephesians 1:17, and above all το■ς ■γ■οις ■ποστ■λοις κ■ι προφ■ταις, Ephesians 3:5, which, it is said, smacks of a later time, when the apostles were held in great veneration, and does not agree with the apostles estimate of himself in Ephesians 3:8; and on the fact that, as Davidson puts it, “there is a fulness of expression which approaches the verbose.” (3) The line of thought in this letter is very different from that of the recognized Pauline Epistles. The law is contemplated, not in its moral and religious value, but only as the cause of enmity and separation between Jew and Gentile; the death of Christ is not dwelt on as much as in the other Epistles, while his exaltation is made far more prominent; the parousia is placed in the distant future; and instead of the diversity the unity of the Church in Jesus Christ if emphasized: (4) The Epistle contains traces of Gnostic and even of Montanist influences in such words as ■ι■νες, πληρ■μαand γενε■ι (5) The letter, along with the writings of John, evidently aims at reconciling the Petrine and Pauline factions, and therefore emphasizes the unity of the Church. This unmistakably points to the second century as the time of its composition. But these objections are not sufficient to discredit the Pauline authorship. Such men as Lightfoot, Ellicott, Eadie, Meyer, Hodge, Reuss, Godet, Weiss, Baljon, Zahn, Sanday and Abbot defend it. The similarity of the Epistle and that to the Colossians is most naturally explained by the fact that the two were written by the same author, at about the same time, under similar circumstances, and to neighboring congregations. The idea that it is but a copy of the Epistle to the Colossians is now generally given up, since it appears that many passages favor the priority of Ephesians. The theory of Holtzmann is too complicated to command serious consideration. This whole argument is very peculiar in view of the following ones. While it derives its point from the Epistles similarity to Colossians, their cogency depends on the unlikeness of this letter to the other Epistles of Paul. The linguistic features to which the critics call attention are not such as to disprove the Pauline authorship. If the ■παξ λεγομ■να found in this letter prove that it is unPauline, we must come to a similar conclusion with respect to the Epistle to the Romans, for this contains a hundred words that are peculiar. The terms that are said to be used in a new sense dwindle into insignificance on closer inspection. And of the expressions that are held to be unusual only the one in Ephesians 3:5 has any argumentative force. And even this need not cause surprise, especially not, if we take in consideration that Paul designates

believers in general as ■γιοι, and that in this place he applies this epithet at once to the apostles and to the prophets. And further we may ask, whether it is reasonable to demand that such a fertile mind as that of Paul should always express itself in the same way. The argument derived from the line of thought in this Epistle simply succeeds in proving, what is perfectly obvious, that the apostle looks at the work of redemption from a point of view different from that of the other letters, that he views it sub specie aeternitatIsa. It is now generally admitted that the supposed traces of Gnosticism and Montanism have no argumentative value, since the terms referred to do not have the second century connotation in this Epistle. Similarly that other argument of the Tubingen school, that the letter was evidently written to heal the breach between the Judaeistic and the liberal factions of the Church, is now discarded, because it was found to rest on an unhistorical basis.

DESTINATION

There is considerable uncertainty respecting the destination of this Epistle. The question is whether the words ■ν ■Εφ■σ■ in Ephesians 1:1 are genuine. They are indeed found in all the extant MSS. with the exception of three, viz, the important MSS. Aleph and B and codex 67. The testimony of Basil is that the most ancient MSS. in his day did not contain these words. Tertullian informs us that Marcion gave the Epistle the title ad Laodicenos; and Origen apparently did not regard the words as genuine. All the old Versions contain them; but, on the other hand, Westcott and Hort say: “Transcriptional evidence strongly supports the testimony of documents against ■ν ■Εφ■σ■.” New Testament in Greek, Appendix p. 123. Yet there was in the Church an early and, except as regards Marcion, universal tradition that the Epistle was addressed to the Ephesians. Present day scholars quite generally reject the words, although they are still defended by Meyer, Davidson, Eadie and Hodge. The conclusion to which the majority of scholars come is, either that the Epistle was not written to the Ephesians at all, or that it was not meant for them only, but also for the other churches in Asia.

Now if we examine the internal evidence, we find that it certainly favors the idea that this Epistle was not intended for the Ephesian church exclusively, for (1) It contains no references to the peculiar circumstances of the Ephesian church, but might be addressed to any of the churches founded by Paul. (2) There are no salutations in it from Paul or his companions to any one in the Ephesian church. (3) The Epistle contemplates only heathen Christians. while the church at Ephesus was composed of both Jews and Gentiles, Ephesians 2:11-12; Ephesians 4:17; Ephesians 5:8. (4) To these proofs is sometimes added that Ephesians 1:15 and Ephesians 3:2 make it appear as if Paul and his readers were not acquainted with each other; but this is not necessarily implied in these passages. In all probability the words ■ν ■Εφ■σ■ were not originally in the text. But now the question naturally arises, how we must interpret the following words το■ς ■γ■οις το■ς ο■σιν και πιστο■ς; etc. Several suggestions have been made. Some would read: “The saints who are really such ;” others: “the saints existing and faithful in Jesus Christ ;” still others: “the saints who are also faithful.” But none of these interpretations is satisfactory: the first two are hardly grammatical; and the last one implies that there are also saints who are not faithful, and that the Epistle was written for a certain select view. Probably the hypothesis first suggested by Ussher is correct, that a blank was originally left after το■ς ο■σιν, and that Tychicus or someone else was to make several copies of this Epistle and to fill in the blank with the name of the church to which each copy was to be sent. The fact that the church of Ephesus was the most

prominent of the churches for which it was intended, will account for the insertion of the words ■ν ■Εφ■σ■ in transcribing the letter, and for the universal tradition regarding its destination. Most likely, therefore, this was a circular letter, sent to several churches in Asia, such as those of Ephesus, Laodicea, Hierapolis, e.a. Probably it is identical with the Epistle ■κ Λαοδικ■ας, Colossians 4:16.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. There is nothing in the Epistle to indicate that it was called forth by any special circumstances in the churches of Asia. To all appearances it was merely the prospective departure of Tychicus and Onesimus for Colossae, Ephesians 6:21-22; Colossians 4:7-9, combined with the intelligence that Paul received as to the faith of the readers in the Lord Jesus, and regarding their love to all the saints, Ephesians 1:15, that led to its composition.

Since the Epistle was not called forth by any special historical situation, the purpose of Paul in writing it was naturally of a general character. It seems as if what he had heard of “the faith of the readers in the Lord Jesus, and of their love to all the saints,” involuntarily fixed his thought on the unity of believers in Christ, and therefore on that grand edifice,—the Church of God. He sets forth the origin, the development, the unity and holiness, and the glorious end of that mystical body of Christ. He pictures the transcendent beauty of that spiritual temple, of which Christ is the chief cornerstone and the saints form the superstructure.

2. Time and Place. From Ephesians 3:1 to Ephesians 4:1 we notice that Paul was a prisoner, when he wrote this Epistle. From the mention of Tychicus as the bearer of it in Ephesians 6:21, compared with Colossians 4:7 and Philemon 1:13, we may infer that these three letters were written at the same time. And it has generally been thought that they were composed during the Roman imprisonment of Paul. There are a few scholars, however, such as Reuss and Meyer, who believe that they date from the imprisonment at Caesarea, A. D. 58-60. Meyer urges this view on the following grounds: (1) It is more natural and probable that the slave Onesimus had run away as far as Caesarea than that he had made the long journey to Rome. (2) If these Epistles had been sent from Rome, Tychicus and Onesimus would have arrived at Ephesus first and then at Colossae. But in that case the apostle would most likely have mentioned Onesimus along with Tychicus in Ephesians, like he does in Colossians 4:9, to insure the runaway slave a good reception; which was not necessary however, if they reached Colossae first, as they would in coming from Caesarea, since Onesimus would remain there.

(3) In Ephesians 6:21 the expression, “But that ye also may know my affairs,” implies that there were others who had already been informed of them, viz, the Colossians, Colossians 4:8-9. (4) Pauls request to Philemon in Philemon 1:22, to prepare a lodging for him, and that too, for speedy use, favors the idea that the apostle was much nearer Colossae than the far distant Rome. Moreover Paul says in Php 2:24 that he expected to proceed to Macedonia after his release from the Roman imprisonment. But these arguments are not conclusive. To the first one we may reply that Onesimus would be far safer from the pursuit of the fugitivarii in a large city like Rome than in a smaller one such as Caesarea. The second argument loses its force, if this Epistle was a circular letter, written to the Christians of Asia in general. The κ■ι in Ephesians 6:21 is liable to different interpretations, but finds a sufficient explanation in the fact that the Epistle to the Colossians was written first. And in reply to the last argument we would say that Philemon 1:22 does not speak of a

speedy coming, and that the apostle may have intended to pass through Macedonia to Colossae.

It seems to us that the following considerations favor the idea that the three Epistles under consideration were written from Rome: (1) From Ephesians 6:19-20 we infer that Paul had sufficient liberty during his imprisonment to preach the gospel. Now this ill accords with what we learn of the imprisonment at Cesarea from Acts 24:23, while it perfectly agrees with the situation in which Paul found himself at Rome according to Acts 28:16. (2) The many companions of Paul, viz. Tychicus, Aristarchus, Marcus, Justus, Epaphras, Luke and Demas, quite different from those that accompanied him on his last journey to Jerusalem (cf. Acts 20:4), also point to Rome, where the apostle might utilize them for evangelistic work. Cf. Php 1:14. (3) In all probability Philippians belongs to the same period as the other Epistles of the imprisonment; and if this is the case, the mention of Caesars household in Php 4:22 also points to Rome. (4) Tradition also names Rome as the place of composition. Ephesians must probably be dated about A.D. 62.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The early Church leaves no doubt as to the canonicity of this Epistle. It is possible that we have the first mention of it in the New Testament itself, Colossians 4:16. The writings of Ignatius, Polycarp, Herman and Hippolytus contain passages that seem to be derived from our Epistle. Marcion, the Muratorian Canon, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian clearly testify to its early recognition and use. There is not a dissentient voice in all antiquity. The particular significance of the Epistle lies in its teaching regarding the unity of the Church: Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ. It constantly emphasizes the fact that believers have their unity in the Lord and therefore contains the expression “in Christ” about twenty times. The unity of the faithful originates in their election, since God the Father chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, 1:4; it finds expression in a holy conversation, sanctified by true love, that naturally results from their living relation with Christ, in whom they are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit; and it issues in their coming in the “unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.” The great practical exhortation of the Epistle is that believers live worthily of their union with Christ, since they were sometime darkness, but are now light in the Lord, and should therefore walk as children of light, Ephesians 5:8.

02.14. The Epistle to the Philippians

The Epistle to the Philippians

CONTENTS In the Epistle to the Philippians we may distinguish five parts:

I. Pauls Account of his Condition, Php 1:1-26. The apostle addresses the Philippians in the usual way, Php 1:1-2; and then informs them of his gratitude for their participation in the work of the Gospel, of his prayer for their increase in spiritual strength and labor, of the fact that even his imprisonment was instrumental in spreading the Gospel, and of his personal feelings and desires, Php 1:3-26.

II. His Exhortation to Imitate Christ, Php 1:27-30, Php 2:1-18. He exhorts the Philippians to strive after unity by exercising the necessary self-denial, Php 1:27-30, Php 2:1-4; points them to the pattern of Christ, who humiliated himself and was glorified by God, Php 2:5-11; and expresses his desire that they follow the example of their Lord, Php 2:12-18.

III. In formation respecting Paul's Efforts in behalf of the Philippians, Php 2:19-30. He intends to send Timotheus to them that he may know of their condition, and therefore commends this worthy servant of Christ to them, Php 2:19-23; and though he trusted that he himself would come shortly he now sends Epaphroditus back to them, and bespeaks a good reception for him, Php 2:24-30.

IV. Warnings against Judaism and Antinomian Error, Php 3:1-21. The apostle warns his readers against Judaeistic zealots that boasted in the flesh, pointed to his own example in renouncing his fleshly prerogatives that he might gain Christ and experience the power of His resurrection, and in striving after perfection, Php 3:1-15. By way of contrast this induces him to warn them also for the example of those whose lives are worldly and licentious, Php 3:16-21.

V. Final Exhortations and Acknowledgment, Ephesians 4:1-23. He urges the Philippians to avoid all dissension, Php 4:1-3; exhorts them to joyfulness, freedom from care, and the pursuit of all good things, Php 4:4-9; gratefully acknowledges their gifts, invoking a blessing on their love, Php 4:10-20; and closes his Epistle with salutation and benediction, Php 4:21-23.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. The Epistle to the Philippians is one of the most personal of Paul's letters, resembling in that respect II Corinthians. It has been called the most letter-like of all the writings of Paul, and may be compared in this respect with I Thessalonians and Philemon. The personal note is very marked throughout the Epistle. There is not much dogma, and what little is found is introduced for practical purposes. This holds true even with reference to the classical passage in Php 2:6-11. The apostle, with the prospect of an early martyrdom before him, yet not without hope of a speedy release, opens his heart to his most beloved congregation. He speaks of the blessings that attend his labors at Rome, of the strait in which he finds himself, and expresses his desire to remain with them. He manifests his love for the Philippians, shows himself concerned for their spiritual welfare, and expresses his profound gratitude for their support. Though in bonds, he rejoices, and bids the

readers be joyful. The tone of joyous gratitude rings through the entire Epistle.

2. The letter is in no sense a controversial one. There are in it no direct polemics; there is very little that has to any degree a polemical character. The apostle warns against errorists that are without the church, but might disturb its peace, and forestalls their attacks; he hints at dissensions, most likely of a practical nature, in the congregation, and admonishes the readers to be peaceful and self-denying; but he never once assumes a polemical attitude, like he does in Corinthians or Galatians. Stronger still, the Epistle is singularly free from all denunciation and reproof; it is written throughout in a laudatory spirit. The apostle finds little to chide and much to praise in the Philippian church.

3. The address of the Epistle is peculiar in that it names not only, “the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi,” but adds, “with the bishops and deacons.” In that respect it stands in a class by itself. The greetings at the end of the Epistle are also unique. On the one hand they are very general, while, on the other, “the household of Caesar” is singled out for special mention.

4. As to style, Alford reminds us, that this letter, like all those in which Paul writes with fervor, “is discontinuous and abrupt, passing rapidly from one theme to another; full of earnest exhortation, affectionate warnings, deep and wonderful settings-forth of his individual spiritual condition and feelings, of the state of the Christian and of the sinful world, of the loving councils of our Father respecting us, and the self-sacrifice and triumph of our Redeemer.” Prolegomena Sec. IV. There are constant expressions of affection, such as ■γαπητο■ and■δελφο■. Notice especially Php 4:1, “Therefore my brethren, my dearly beloved and longed for, my joy and crown, so stand fast in the Lord, my dearly beloved.”

AUTHORSHIP The Pauline authorship of this Epistle is established as well as anything can be. We probably find the first reference to it in the epistle of Polycarp to the Philippians, where we read: “The glorious Paul who, being personally among you, taught you exactly and surely the word of truth; who also, being absent, wrote you letters (or, a letter) which you have only to study to be edified in the faith that has been given you.” The passage does not necessarily refer to more than one letter. Our Epistle formed a part of Marcions collection, is mentioned in the Muratorian canon, is found in the Syriac and old Latin Versions, and is quoted by Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and many others. And this testimony of antiquity is clearly borne out by the evidence furnished by the Epistle itself. It is self-attested and has, at the beginning, the usual Pauline blessing and thanksgiving. Above all, however, it is like II Corinthians in that the personality of the apostle is so strongly stamped on it as to leave little room for doubt. The historical circumstances which the Epistle presupposes, the type of thought which it contains, the language in which it is couched, and the character which it reveals,—it is all Pauline. The evidence in its favor is so strong that its authenticity has been generally admitted, even by radical critics. Of course, Baur and the majority of his school rejected it, but even Hilgenfeld, Julicher and Pfleiderer accept it as Pauline. The great majority of New Testament scholars regard the objections of Baur as frivolous, as that the mention of bishops and deacons points to a post-Pauline stage of ecclesiastical organization; that there is no originality in the Epistle; that it contains evident traces of Gnosticism; that the doctrine of justification which it sets forth is not that of Paul; and that the Epistle aims at reconciling the opposing parties of the second century, typified by Euodia and Syntyche. Of late Holsten has taken up the cudgels against the genuineness of this letter. Dismissing several of the

arguments of Baur as irrelevant, he bases his attack especially on the Christological and Soteriological differences that he discerns between this Epistle and the other writings of Paul. The most important points to which he refers are these: (1) The idea of the pre-existent Christ in Php 2:6-11 does not agree with that found in 1 Corinthians 15:45-49. According to the first passage the manhood of Christ begins with his incarnation; according to the second, He was even in his pre-existence “a heavenly man.” (2) There is a glaring contradiction between Php 3:6, where the writer says that he was blameless as touching the righteousness which is in the law, and Romans 7:21, where the apostle declares:—when I would do good, evil is present.” (3) The doctrine of forensic, imputed righteousness is replaced by that of an infused righteousness in Php 3:9-11. (4) The writer shows a singular indifference to the objective truth of his Gospel in Php 1:15-18, an attitude which compares strangely with that of Paul in 2 Corinthians 11:1-4, and especially in Galatians 1:8-9. But these objections are not of sufficient weight to disprove the Pauline authorship. In 1 Corinthians 15:1-58 the apostle does not speak of the pre-existent Christ, but of Christ as he will appear at the parousia in a glorified body. With what Paul says in Php 3:6 we may compare Galatians 1:14. In both places he speaks of himself from the standpoint of the Jew who regards the law merely as an external carnal commandment. From that point of view he might consider himself blameless, but it was quite different, if he contemplated the law in its deep spiritual sense. It is not true that Paul substitutes an infused for an imputed righteousness in this Epistle. He clearly speaks of the latter in Php 2:9, and then by means of an infinitive of purpose passes on to speak of the subjective righteousness of life. The persons spoken of in Php 1:15-18 are not said to preach a Gospel different from that of the apostle; they preached Christ, but from impure motives. Hence they can not be compared with the adversaries of whom Paul speaks in Corinthians and Galatians. To these he probably refers in Php 3:2. Schurer says: “The arguments of Holsten are such that one might sometimes believe them due to a slip of the pen.” THE CHURCH AT PHILIPPI The city of Philippi was formerly called Crenides, and derived its later name from Philip, the king of Macedonia, who rebuilt it and made it a frontier city between his kingdom and Thrace. It was situated on the river Gangites and on the important Egnatian highway that connected the Adriatic with the Hellespont. After the defeat of his enemies Octavius about 42 B. C. determined on Philippi as one of the places, where Roman soldiers who had served their time were to dwell. He constituted it a Roman colony, with the special privilege of the jus Italicum, which included ”(1) exemption from the oversight of the provincial governors; (2) immunity from the poll and property taxes; and (3) right to property in the soil regulated by Roman law.” These privileges, no doubt, attracted many colonists, so that Philippi soon became a city of considerable size. It is described in Acts 16:12 as, “the chief city of that part of Macedonia and a colony.” To that city Paul first came, when about the year 52, in obedience to the vision of the Macedonian man, he passed from Asia into Europe. This was in harmony with his general policy of preaching in the main centers of the Roman empire. Apparently the Jews were not numerous in Philippi: there was no synagogue, so that the small band of Jews and proselytes simply repaired to the river side for prayer; and one of the charges brought against Paul and Silas was that they were Jews. At the place of prayer the missionaries addressed the assembled women, and were instrumental in converting Lydia who, with characteristic generosity, immediately received them in her house. We read no more of the blessings that crowned their labors there, but find that on their departure there was a company of brethren to whom they spoke words of comfort.

Little can be said regarding the composition of the Philippian church. In the narrative of its founding we find no specific mention of Jews, although the assembly by the river points to their presence. However the fact that there was no synagogue, and that the enemies contemptuously emphasized the Jewish nationality of the missionaries leads us to think that they were few and greatly despised. It may be that those who did live there had, under the pressure of their environment, already lost many of their distinctive features. The presumption is that some of them accepted the teaching of Paul and Silas, but we cannot tell how large a proportion of the church they formed. In all probability they were a small minority and caused no friction in the congregation. Paul does not even refer to them in his letter, much less condemn their Jewish tenets, like he does the errors of the false brethren at Corinth and in the Galatian churches. The adversaries of whom he speaks in Php 3:2 were evidently outside of the church. On the whole the Philippian church was an ideal one, consisting of warmhearted people, diligent in the work of the Lord, and faithfully devoted to their apostle.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. The immediate occasion of this Epistle was a contribution brought by Epaphroditus from the Philippian church. They had often sent the apostle similar tokens of their love (cf. Php 4:15-16; 2 Corinthians 11:9), and now, after they had for some time lacked the opportunity to communicate with him, Php 4:10, they again ministered to his wants. From over-exertion in the work of Gods Kingdom their messenger was taken sick at Rome. On his recovery Paul immediately sends him back to Philippi, in order to allay all possible fears as to his condition; and utilizes this opportunity to send the Philippians a letter. His purpose in writing this Epistle was evidently fourfold. In the first place he desired to express his gratitude for the munificence of the Philippians, especially because it testified to the abundance of their faith. In the second place he wished to give utterance to his sincere love for the Philippian church that constituted his crown in the Lord. In the third place he felt it incumbent on him to warn them against the dangers that were present within the fold, and the enemies that were threatening them from without. Apparently there was some dissension in the church, 1:27—2:17; Php 4:2-3, but, in all probability this was not of a doctrinal character, but rather consisted of personal rivalries and divisions among some of the church members. In Php 3:2 the apostle most likely referred to the Judaeizing Christians that traveled about to make proselytes, and also threatened the church of Philippi. Finally he desires to exhort his most beloved church to be joyful, notwithstanding his imprisonment, and to lead a truly Christian life.

2. Time and Place. Like the Epistle to the Ephesians that to the Philippians was written at Rome. While several scholars assign the former to the Caesarean captivity, very few refer the latter to that period. The apostles evident residing in some great center of activity, the many friends that surrounded him, his joyful expectation of being set free soon, his mention of the praetorian, Php 1:13, which may be the praetorian guard (so most commentators), or the supreme imperial court (so Mommsen and Ramsay), and the greetings of Caesars household,—all point to Rome. The Epistle was written, therefore, between the years 61-63. The only remaining question is, whether it was composed before or after the other three Epistles of the captivity. The prevailing view is that Philippians is the last of the group. This view is supported by the following arguments: (1) The apostles words in Php 1:12 seem to imply that a long period of imprisonment has already elapsed. (2) A rather long time was required in the communications between Rome and Philippi indicated in

the letter. The Philippians had heard of Pauls imprisonment, had sent Epaphroditus to Rome, had heard of the latter's illness there, and of this their messenger, in turn, had received intelligence. Four journeys are, therefore, implied. (3) Paul anticipates that his case will soon come up for decision, and although uncertain as to the outcome, he somewhat expects a speedy release. These arguments are not absolutely conclusive, but certainly create a strong presumption in favor of dating the Epistle after the other three.

Bleek was inclined to regard Philippians as the earliest of the Epistles of the captivity. This view found a strong defender in Lightfoot, who is followed by Farrar in his St. Paul. Lightfoot defends his position by pointing to the similarity of this Epistle to Romans, which implies, according to him, that it immediately follows this in order of time; and to the fact that in this Epistle we have the last trace of Paul's Judaeistic controversy, while in Ephesians and Colossians he begins to deal with an incipient Gnosticism, and his teachings respecting the Church bear a close resemblance and are intimately related to the views presented in the pastorals. These Epistles, therefore, represent a further development in the doctrine of the Church. But these proofs do not carry conviction, since the character of Paul's Epistles was not necessarily determined by the order in which they were written, and the apostle did not write as one who is presenting his system of thought to the world in successive letters. His Epistles were called forth and determined by special situations. And the question may be asked, whether it seems plausible that any considerable development of doctrine should take place within the course of at most a year and a half.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The Epistle to the Philippians is not quoted as much as some of the preceding ones, which is probably due to the fact that it contains little doctrinal matter. Notwithstanding this its canonicity is well established. There are traces of its language in Clement of Rome and Ignatius. Polycarp, addressing the Philippians, speaks more than once of Pauls writing to them. The Epistle to Diognetus, Justin Martyr and Theophilus contain references to our letter. In the Epistle of the churches of Vienne and Lyons Php 2:6 is quoted. Marcion has it and the Muratorian canon speaks of it. And it is often directly quoted and ascribed to Paul by Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian.

Though the Epistle is primarily of a practical nature, it has also great and abiding dogmatic significance. It contains the classical passage on the important doctrine of the kenosis of Christ, Php 2:6-11. Aside from this, however, its great permanent value is of a practical character. It reveals to us the ideal relation between Paul and his Philippian church, a relation such as the church of God should constantly seek to realize: he, sedulously seeking to promote the spiritual welfare of those entrusted to his care, even in a time of dire distress; and they, though possessing no great wealth, willingly and lovingly ministering to the natural wants of their beloved apostle. It points us to Christ as the pattern of that self-denial and humiliation that should always characterize his followers. It comes to us with the grand exhortation, enforced by the example of the great apostle, to press forward for "the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus." And finally it pictures us the Christian satisfied and joyful, even when the shades of night are falling.

02.15. The Epistle to the Colossians

The Epistle to the Colossians

CONTENTS The Epistle to the Colossians may best be divided into two parts:

I. The Doctrinal Part, emphasizing the unique Significance of Christ, Colossians 1:1-29, Colossians 1:1-23. Paul begins the letter with the apostolic blessing, the usual thanksgiving and a prayer for his readers, Colossians 1:1-13. Then he describes the pre-eminence of Christ as the Head of both the natural and the spiritual creation, who has reconciled all things to God, Colossians 1:14-23, of which mystery the apostle himself was made a minister, Colossians 1:24-29. He warns his readers against the inroads of a false philosophy that dishonored Christ. Since the Colossians have all the fulness of the Godhead in their Lord and Saviour, are rooted in him, and have arisen with him to a new life, they should walk in him and avoid semi-Jewish practices and the worship of angels, Colossians 2:1-19. This was all the more necessary, because they had died with Christ to their old life and to the beggarly elements of the world, Colossians 2:20-23.

II. The Practical Part, containing divers Directions and Exhortations, Colossians 3:1-25, Colossians 4:1-18. Where believers have risen with Christ to newness of life, they must part with the vices of the old man and clothe themselves with Christian virtues, Colossians 3:1-17. Wives should submit themselves to their husbands and husbands should love their wives; children must obey their parents and parents must beware of discouraging their children; servants should obey their masters and these should give the servants their due, Colossians 3:18-25, Colossians 4:1. The duty of prayer and thanksgiving is urged, and directions are given for the right behavior of believers toward the unconverted, Colossians 4:2-6. With a few personal notices, several greetings and a salutation the apostle closes his Epistle, Colossians 4:7-18.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. On its formal side this Epistle differs from that to the Ephesians in its polemical character. It is not a general exposition of the truth that is in Christ Jesus, without reference to antagonistic principles, but a statement of it with a special view to the errors that were gradually creeping into the Colossian church, insidious errors of which the Colossians, so it seems, little realized the danger. It is true that we find none of the fiery polemics of the Epistle to the Galatians here, nor any of the sharp invective of II Corinthians;—yet the controversial character of this letter is very evident.

2. On its material side it exhibits great affinity with the Epistle to the Ephesians. Hence the contention of the critics that the one is but a copy of the other. We should not infer from this, however, that the teaching of these Epistles is identical. While that contained in Ephesians is in the main Theological, that found in Colossians is primarily Christological, the summing up of all things in Christ, the Head. Essentially the Christology of this letter is in perfect harmony with that of previous Epistles, but there is a difference of emphasIsa. The writer here places prominently

before his readers, not only the Soteriological, but also the Cosmical significance of Christ. He is the Head both of the Church and of the new creation. All things were created by him, and find the purpose of their existence in him.

3. In point of style and language too this Epistle shows great similarity to its twin-letter. Of the 155 verses in Ephesians 78 contain expressions that find parallels in Colossians. There are the same involved sentences of difficult interpretation, and also a great number of ■παξ λεγ■μενα. The letter contains 34 words that are absent from all the other writings of Paul, 12 of which are found in other New Testament books, however, (cf. lists of these words in Alford and in Abbotts Comm.) Of these 34 words at least 18, and therefore more than half, are found in the second chapter. Owing to the polemical character of this letter the author is generally speaking in a more matter-of-fact manner than he is in Ephesians, and it is only, when he sets forth the majesty of Christ, that he soars to sublime heights. Comparing this Epistle with those to the Corinthians and the Philippians, Lightfoot says: “It is distinguished from them by a certain ruggedness of expression, a want of finish often bordering on obscurity.” Comm. p.123.

AUTHORSHIP

There are no good reasons to doubt the Pauline authorship of this Epistle. Marcion and the school of Valentinus recognized it as genuine. And the great witnesses of the end of the second century, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian repeatedly quote it by name.

Moreover the internal evidence decidedly favors the authenticity of the letter. It claims to be written by the apostle in Colossians 1:1; the line of thought developed in it is distinctly Pauline and is in striking harmony with that of the Epistle to the Ephesians; and if we do not first rule out several of the Pauline Epistles and then compare the style of this letter with those that remain, we may confidently assert that the style is Pauline. Moreover the persons named in Colossians 4:7-17 are all, with but a couple exceptions (viz. Jesus called Justus and Nymphas) known to have been companions or fellow-laborers of Paul.

Yet the Epistle did not go unchallenged. Mayerhoff began the attack on it is 1838, rejecting it, because its vocabulary, style and thought were not Pauline; it was so similar to Ephesians; and it contained references to the heresy of Cerinthus. The school of Baur and many other critics, such as Hoekstra, Straatman, Hausrath, Davidson, Schmiedel e. a., followed his lead and considered this Epistle as a second century production. Holtzmann, as we have already seen, found a genuine nucleus in it.

There are especially three objections that are urged against the Pauline authorship of this letter. (1) The style is not that of the apostle. The fact that the letter contains 34 ■παξ λεγ■μενα that characteristically Pauline terms, such as δικαιοσ■νη, σωτερ■α, αποκ■λυψις and καταργε■ν are absent, while some of the particles often employed by the apostle, as γ■ρ, ο■ν, δι■τι and ■ρα are rarely found; and that the construction is often very involved and characterized by a certain heaviness, is urged against its genuineness. (2) The error combated in this Epistle, it is said, shows clear traces of second century Gnosticism. These are found in the use of the terms σοφ■α, γν■σις, Colossians 2:3, μυστ■ριον, Colossians 1:26-27; Colossians 2:2, πλ■ρωμα, Colossians 1:19, ■ι■νες, Colossians 1:26, etc.; in the series of angels named in Colossians 1:16; and in the conception of Christ in Colossians 1:15. It is held that they point to the Valentinian system. (3)

Closely related to the preceding is the objection that the Christology of this Epistle is un-Pauline. Davidson regards this as the chief feature that points to the Gnostics, Introd. I p. 246, but it is also thought to conflict with the representation of Paul in his other writings, and to approach very closely the Johannine doctrine of the Logos. Christ is represented as the image of the invisible God, Colossians 1:15, the central Being of the universe, absolutely pre-eminent above all visible and invisible beings, Colossians 1:16-18, the originator and the goal of creation, and the perfect Mediator, who reconciles not only sinners but all things in heaven and on earth to God, Colossians 1:16-20. In answer to the first objection we may say that the argument derived from the ■παξ λεγ■μενα is irrelevant and would apply with equal force in the case of the Epistle to the Romans. From the fact that more than half of them are found in the second chapter it is quite evident that they are due to the special subject-matter of this letter. The difference between Colossians and some of the other Pauline writings also explains why the characteristically Pauline terms referred to above are absent from our Epistle. Had Paul used exactly the same words that he employs elsewhere, that would also, in all probability, have been proof positive for many critics that the letter was a forgery. Moreover it should not be regarded as very strange that a persons vocabulary changes somewhat in the course of time, especially not, when he is placed in an altogether different environment, as was the case with Paul. We fully agree with Dr. Salmon, when he says: “I cannot subscribe to the doctrine that a man, writing a new composition, must not, on pain of losing his identity, employ any word that he has not used in a former one.” Introd. p. 148. As to the second objection we would reply that there is absolutely no proof that the Epistle presupposes second century Gnosticism. The Gnostics evidently did not regard it as a polemic directed against their tenets, for Marcion and the Valentinians made extensive use of it. Moreover some of the most important elements of Gnosticism, such as the creation of the world by a demiurge, ignorant of the supreme God or opposed to Him, are not referred to in the Epistle. An incipient Gnosticism there may have been in Paul’s time; but it is also possible that the error of the Colossian church is in no way to be identified with the Gnostic heresy. Present day scholarship strongly inclines to the view that it is not Gnosticism at all to which Paul refers in this letter. And with respect to the third argument, we do not see why the further development of the Pauline Christology cannot have been the work of Paul himself. There is nothing in the Christology of this Epistle that conflicts with the recognized representation of Paul. We clearly find the essence of it in Romans 8:19-22; 1 Corinthians 8:6; 2 Corinthians 4:4; Php 2:5-11. These passages prepare us for the statement of Paul regarding the Cosmical significance of Christ,. Colossians 1:16-17. And the representation that all the forces of creation culminate in the glory of Christ does not necessarily run counter to Romans 11:36 and 1 Corinthians 15:28, according to which all things exist to the praise of God, their Creator. THE CHURCH AT COLOSSAE

Colossae was one of the cities of the beautiful Lycus Valley in Phrygia, situated but a short distance from Laodicea and HierapolIsa. Herodotus speaks of it as a great city, but it did not retain its magnitude until New Testament times, for Strabo only reckons it as a π■λισμα. We have no information respecting the founding of the Colossian church. From the Acts of the Apostles we learn that Paul passed through Phrygia twice, once at the start of his second, and again at the beginning of his third missionary journey, Acts 16:6; Acts 18:23. But on the first of these journeys he remained well to the East of Western Phrygia, where Colossae was situated; and though on the second he may have gone into the Lycus Valley, he certainly did not find nor found the Colossian church there, since he himself says in Colossians 2:1 that the Colossians had not seen his face in

the flesh. In all probability Paul's prolonged residence at Ephesus and his preaching there for three years, so that "all those in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus," Acts 19:10, was indirectly responsible for the founding of the churches in the Lycus Valley. The most plausible theory is that Epaphras was one of Paul's Ephesian converts and became the founder of the Colossian church. This is favored by Colossians 1:7, where the correct reading is καθ■ς ■μ■θατε, and not καθ■ς κ■ι εμ■θετε. The church consisted, so it seems, of Gentile Christians, Colossians 1:21; Colossians 1:27; Colossians 2:11-13; the Epistle certainly does not contain a single hint that there were Jews among them. Yet they were clearly exposed to Jewish influences, and this need not cause surprise in view of the fact that Antiochus the Great transplanted two thousand families of Jews from Babylonia into Lydia and Phrygia, Jos. Ant. XII 6. 4. This number had, of course, greatly increased by the time the Epistle was written. Lightfoot estimates that the number of Jewish freemen was more than eleven thousand in the single district of which Laodicea was the capital. Cf. his essay on The Churches of the Lycus Valley in his Comm. p. 20.

According to the Epistle the Colossians were in danger of being misled by certain false teachings. As to the exact nature of the Colossian heresy there is a great variety of opinion. Some regard it as a mixture of Judaeistic and theosophic elements; others dub it Gnosticism or Gnostic Ebionism; and still others consider it to be a form of Essenism. We can infer from the Epistle that the errorists were members of the congregation, for they are described as those "not holding the head," Colossians 2:19, an expression that is applicable only to those that had accepted Christ. And it seems perfectly clear that their error was primarily of a Jewish character, since they urged circumcision, not, indeed, as an absolute necessity, but as a means to perfection, Colossians 2:10-13; they appealed to the law and emphasized its ceremonial requirements and probably also the ordinances of the rabbis, Colossians 2:14-17; Colossians 2:20-23. Yet they clearly went beyond the Judaism that Paul encountered in his earlier Epistles, falsely emphasizing certain requirements of the law and adjusting their views to those of their Gentile neighbors. Their dualistic conception of the world led them, on the one hand, to an asceticism that was not demanded by the law. They regarded it as essential to abstain from the use of meat and wine, not because these were Levitically unclean, but since this abstinence was necessary for the mortification of the body, which they regarded as the seat of sin. They neglected the body and apparently aspired after a pure spiritual existence; to be like the angels was their ideal. On the other hand the consciousness of their great sinfulness as material beings made them hesitate to approach God directly. And the Jewish doctrine that the law was mediated by the angels, in connection with the influence that was ascribed to the spirits in their heathen environment, naturally led them to a worship of the angels as intermediaries between God and man. Among the higher spirits they also ranked Christ and thus failed to recognize his unique significance. The Colossian error was, therefore, a strange mixture of Jewish doctrines, Christian ideas and heathen speculation; and this composite character makes it impossible to identify it with any one heretical system of the apostolic time. Cf. especially Zahn, Einl. I p. 329 if.; Holtzmann, Einl. p. 248 ff.; Lightfoot, Comm. pp. 71-111; Biesterveld, Comm. pp. 18-28.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. From the Epistle itself we can readily infer what gave Paul occasion to write it. Epaphras, the founder and probably also the minister of the congregation, had evidently seen the danger, gradually increasing, that was threatening the spiritual welfare of the church. The

errorists did not directly antagonize him or Paul; yet their teaching was a subversion of the Pauline gospel. Hence he informed the apostle of the state of affairs, and this information led to the composition of the Epistle. The object Paul has in view is the correction of the Colossian heresy. Hence he clearly sets forth the unique significance of Christ, and the all-sufficient character of his redemption. Christ is the image of the invisible God, the Creator of the world, and also of the angels, and the only Mediator between God and man. He in whom all the fulness of the Godhead dwells, has reconciled all things to God and has delivered men from the power of sin and death. In his death He abrogated the shadows of the Old Testament and terminated the special ministry of the angels that was connected with the law, so that even this vestige of a supposed Biblical foundation for the worship of angels has been removed. In him believers are perfect and in him only. Hence the Colossians should not fall back on the beggarly elements of the world, nor in sham humility worship the angels. Having their life in Christ, they should conform to his image in all their domestic and social relations.

2. Time and Place. For the discussion of these we refer to what we have said in connection with the Epistle to the Ephesians. The letter was written at Rome about A. D. 61 or 62. Of course the majority of those who reject this Epistle date it somewhere in the second century.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The canonical character of this Epistle has never been doubted by the Church. There are slight but uncertain indications of its use in Clement of Rome, Barnabas and Ignatius. More important references to it are found in Justin Martyr and Theophilus. Marcion gave it a place in his canon, and in the Muratorian Fragment it is named as one of the Pauline Epistles. With Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian the quotations increase both in number and definiteness. That the Epistle is not quoted as often as Ephesians is probably due to its polemical character. The permanent value of this letter is found primarily in its central teaching, that the Church of God is made perfect in Christ, its glorious Head. Since He is a perfect Mediator and the complete redemption of his people, they grow into him, as the Head of the body, they find the fulfillment of all their desires in him, as their Saviour, and they reach their perfection in him, as the Goal of the new creation. His perfect life is the life of the entire Church. Hence believers should seek to realize ever more in every atom of their existence the complete union with their divine Head. They should avoid all arbitrary practices, all human inventions and all will-worship that is derogatory to the only Mediator and Head of the Church, Jesus Christ.

02.16. The First Epistle to the Thessalonians

The First Epistle to the Thessalonians

CONTENTS In the first Epistle to the Thessalonians we distinguish two parts:

I. Pauls Apologia, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10, 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20, 1 Thessalonians 3:1-13. The letter opens with the usual apostolic blessing and thanksgiving, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-4. This thanksgiving was called forth by the fact that the apostles work in Thessalonica had not been in vain, but had resulted in a faith that was spoken of throughout Macedonia and Achaia, 1 Thessalonians 1:5-10. The writer reminds the readers of his labors among them, emphasizing his suffering, good moral behavior, honesty, faithfulness, diligence and love, 1 Thessalonians 2:1-12. He thanks God that they had received him and his message and had suffered willingly for the cause of Christ at the hands of the Jews, and informs them that he had often intended to visit them, 1 Thessalonians 2:13-20. His great love to them had induced him to send Timothy to establish them and to strengthen them in their affliction, 1 Thessalonians 3:1-5; who had now returned and gladdened his heart by a report of their steadfastness, 1 Thessalonians 3:6-10. He prays that the Lord may strengthen them, 1 Thessalonians 3:11-13.

II. Practical Exhortations and Instruction regarding the Parousia, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-18, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-28. The apostle exhorts the Thessalonians that they follow after sanctification, abstaining from fornication and fraud, and exercising love, diligence and honesty, 1 Thessalonians 4:1-12. He allays their fears respecting the future of those that have died in Christ, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, and admonishes the Thessalonians in view of the sudden coming of Christ to walk as children of the light that they may be prepared for the day of Christ’s return, 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. After exhorting the brethren to honor their spiritual leaders, and urging them to warn the unruly, to comfort the feeble-minded, to support the weak, and to practice all Christian virtues, the apostle closes his Epistle by invoking on the Thessalonians the blessing of God, by expressing his desire that the Epistle be read to all the brethren, and with the usual salutations, 1 Thessalonians 5:12-28.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. This Epistle is like that to the Philippians one of the most letter like of all the writings of Paul. It is, as Deissmann says, “full of moving personal reminiscences.” The practical interest greatly predominates over the doctrinal; and though the polemical element is not altogether absent, it is not at all prominent. The letter is primarily one of practical guidance, instruction and encouragement, for a faithful, persecuted church, whose knowledge is still deficient, and whose weak and faint-hearted and idlers greatly need the counsel of the apostle.

2. Doctrinally I Thessalonians is one of the eschatological Epistles of Paul. It refers very little to Christ’s coming in the flesh to give himself a ransom for sin, but discusses all the more his future coming as the Lord of Glory. There are at least six references to the parousia in this short letter, two of which are rather extensive passages, 1 Thessalonians 1:10; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 1

Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11; 1 Thessalonians 5:23. This doctrine is at once the impelling motive for the exhortations of the apostle, and the sufficient ground for the encouragement of his readers, who expected the return of Christ in the near future.

3. The Epistle never appeals to the Old Testament as an authority, and contains no quotations from it. We find a reference to its history, however, in 1 Thessalonians 2:15, and probable reminiscences of its language in 1 Thessalonians 2:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:5-6; 1 Thessalonians 4:8-9; 1 Thessalonians 5:8. The language of 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 shows some similarity to 2Es 5:42, but the thought is quite different.

4. The style of this letter is thoroughly Pauline, containing an abundance of phrases and expressions that have parallels in the other Epistles of Paul, especially in those to the Corinthians. Comparing it with the other polemical writings of the apostle, we find that it is written in a quiet unimpassioned style, a style, too, far more simple and direct than that of Ephesians and Colossians. There are 42 words peculiar to it, of which 22 are not found elsewhere in the New Testament, and 20 are, but not in the writings of Paul.

AUTHORSHIP The external testimony in favor of the Pauline authorship is in no way deficient. Marcion included the letter in his canon, and the Muratorian Fragment mentions it as one of the Pauline writings. It is contained in the old Latin and Syriac Versions; and from the time of Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian it is regularly quoted by name. The internal evidence also clearly points to Paul as the writer. The Epistle comes to us under the name of Paul; and those that were associated with him in writing it, viz. Silvanus (Silas) and Timotheus, are known to have been Pauls companions on the second missionary journey. It is marked by the usual Pauline blessing, thanksgiving and salutation, and clearly reflects the character of the great apostle to the Gentiles. Although it has been subject to attack, it is now defended by critics of nearly every school as an authentic production of Paul.

Schrader and Baur were the first ones to attack it in 1835. The great majority of critics, even those of Baur’s own school, turned against them; such men as Hilgenfeld, Pfleiderer, Holtzmann, Davidson, Von Soden and Julicher defending the genuineness of the letter. They found followers, however, especially in Holsten and Van der Vies. Of the objections brought against the Epistle the following deserve consideration: (1) As compared with the other writings of Paul, the contents of this Epistle are very insignificant, not a single doctrine, except that in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18, being made prominent. In the main it is but a reiteration of Pauls work among the Thessalonians, and of the circumstances attending their conversion, all of which they knew very well. (2) The letter reveals a progress in the Christian life that is altogether improbable, if a period of only a few months had elapsed between its composition and the founding of the church, cf. 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8; 1 Thessalonians 4:10. (3) The passage 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16 does not fit in the mouth of him who wrote Romans 9—11 and who was himself at one time a fierce persecutor of the Church. Moreover it implies that the destruction of Jerusalem was already a thing of the past. (4) The Epistle is clearly dependent on some of the other Pauline writings, especially I and II Corinthians. Compare 1 Thessalonians 1:5 with 1 Corinthians 2:4 ;— 1 Thessalonians 1:6 with 1 Corinthians 11:1;— 1 Thessalonians 2:4 ff. with 1 Corinthians 2:4; 1 Corinthians 4:3 ff; 1 Corinthians 9:15 ff.; 2 Corinthians 2:17; 2 Corinthians 5:11. The cogency of these arguments is not apparent. Paul’s letters have an occasional character, and the situation at Thessalonica did not call for an

exposition of Christian doctrine, save a deliverance on the parousia; but did require words of encouragement, guidance and exhortation, and also, in view of the insinuations against the apostle, a careful review of all that he had done among them. Looked at from that point of view the Epistle is in no sense insignificant. The words of 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8 and 1 Thessalonians 4:10 do not imply a long existence of the Thessalonian church, but simply prove the intensity of its faith and love. Three or four months were quite sufficient for the report of their great faith to spread in Macedonia and Achaia. Moreover the very shortcomings of the Thessalonians imply that their religious experience was as yet of but short duration. In view of what Paul writes in II Corinthians and Galatians respecting the Judaeizers, we certainly need not be surprised at what he says in 1 Thessalonians 2:14-16. If the words are severe, let us remember that they were called forth by a bitter and dogged opposition that followed the apostle from place to place, and on which he had brooded for some time. The last words of this passage do not necessarily imply that Jerusalem had already been destroyed. They are perfectly intelligible on the supposition that Paul, in view of the wickedness of the Jews and of the calamities that were already overtaking them, Jos. Ant. XX 2, 5, 6, had a lively presentiment of their impending doom. The last argument is a very peculiar one. It is tantamount to saying that the Epistle cannot be Pauline, because there are so many Pauline phrases and expressions in it. Such an argument is its own refutation, and is neutralized by the fact that in the case of other letters dissimilarity leads the critics to the same conclusion.
THE CHURCH AT THESSALONICA

Thessalonica, originally called Thermae (Herodotus), and now bearing the slightly altered name Saloniki, a city of Macedonia, has always been very prominent in history and still ranks, after Constantinople, as the second town in European Turkey. It is situated on what was formerly known as the Thermaic gulf, and is built “in the form of an amphitheater on the slopes at the head of the bay.” The great Egnatian highway passed through it from East to West. Hence it was of old an important trade center and as such had special attraction for the Jews, who were found there in great numbers. Cassander, who rebuilt the city in 315 B. C. in all probability gave it the name Thessalonica in honor of his wife. In the time of the Romans it was the capital of the second part of Macedonia and the seat of the Roman governor of the entire province.

Paul, accompanied by Silas and Timothy, came to that city, after they had left Philippi about the year 52. As was his custom, he repaired to the synagogue to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ. The result of this work was a spiritual harvest consisting of some Jews, a great number of proselytes (taking the word in its widest significance) and several of the city’s chief women. From the Acts of the Apostles we get the impression (though it is not definitely stated) that Pauls labors at Thessalonica terminated at the end of three weeks; but the Epistles rather favor the idea that his stay there was of longer duration. They pre-suppose a flourishing, well organized congregation, 1 Thessalonians 5:12, whose faith had become a matter of common comment, 1 Thessalonians 1:7-9; and show us that Paul, while he was in Thessalonica, worked for his daily bread, 1 Thessalonians 2:9; 2 Thessalonians 3:8, and received aid at least twice from the Philippians, Php 4:16. His fruitful labor was cut short, however, by the malign influence of envious Jews, who attacked the house of Jason, where they expected to find the missionaries, and failing in this, they drew Jason and some of the brethren before the rulers, πολιτ■χας (a name found only in Acts 17:6; Acts 17:8, but proved absolutely correct by inscriptions, cf. Ramsey, St. Paul the Traveler and the Roman Citizen p. 227) and charged them with treason. “The step taken by the politarchs

was the mildest that was prudent in the circumstances; they bound the accused over in security that peace should be kept." (Ramsay) As a result the brethren deemed it advisable to send Paul and his companions to Berea, where many accepted the truth, but their labors were again interrupted by the Jews from Thessalonica. Leaving Silas and Timothy here, the apostle went to Athens, where he expected them to join him shortly. From the narrative in the Acts it seems that they did not come to the apostle until after his arrival at Corinth, but 1 Thessalonians 3:1 implies that Timothy was with him at Athens. The most natural theory is that both soon followed the apostle to Athens, and that he sent Timothy from there to Thessalonica to establish and comfort the church, and Silas on some other mission, possibly to Philippi, both returning to him at Corinth. From the data in Acts 17:4 and 1 Thessalonians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:14 we may infer that the church of Thessalonica was of a mixed character, consisting of Jewish and Gentile Christians. Since no reference is made in the Epistles to the tenets of the Jews and not a single Old Testament passage is quoted, it is all but certain that its members were mostly Christians of the Gentiles. Only three of them are known to us from Scripture, viz. Jason, Acts 17:5-9, and Aristarchus and Secundus, Acts 20:4. The congregation was not wealthy, 2 Corinthians 8:2-3; with the exception of a few women of the better class, it seems to have consisted chiefly of laboring people that had to work for their daily bread, 1 Thessalonians 4:11; 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12. They had not yet parted company with all their old vices, for there was still found among them fornication 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5, fraud 1 Thessalonians 4:6 and idleness 1 Thessalonians 4:11. Yet they were zealous in the work of the Lord and formed one of the most beloved churches of the apostle.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. What led Paul to write this letter, was undoubtedly the report Timothy brought him respecting the condition of the Thessalonian church. The apostle felt that he had been torn away from them all too soon and had not had sufficient time to establish them in the truth. Hence he was greatly concerned about their spiritual welfare after his forced departure. The coming of Timothy brought him some relief, for he learnt from that fellow-laborer that the church, though persecuted, did not waver, and that their faith had become an example to many. Yet he was not entirely at ease, since he also heard that the Jews were insinuating that his moral conduct left a great deal to be desired, while he had misled the Thessalonians for temporal gain and vainglory, 1 Thessalonians 2:3-10; that some heathen vices were still prevalent in the church; and that the doctrine of the parousia had been misconstrued, giving some occasion to cease their daily labors, and others, to feel concerned about the future condition of those who had recently died in their midst. That information led to the composition of our Epistle. In view of all these things it was but natural that the apostle should have a threefold purpose in writing this letter. In the first place he desired to express his gratitude for the faithful perseverance of the Thessalonians. In the second place he sought to establish them in faith, which was all the more necessary, since the enemy had sown tares among the wheat. Hence he reminds them of his work among them, pointing out that his conversation among them was above reproach, and that as a true apostle he had labored among them without covetousness and vainglory. And in the third place he aimed at correcting their conception of the Lords return, emphasizing its importance as a motive for sanctification,

2. Time and Place. There is little uncertainty as to the time and place of composition, except in the ranks of those who regard the Epistle as a forgery. When Paul wrote this letter, the memory of his visit to Thessalonica was still vivid, 1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 and 1 Thessalonians 2:1-20; and he was evidently in some central place, where he could keep posted on the state of affairs in Macedonia and Achaia, 1 Thessalonians 1:7-8, and from where he could easily communicate with the Thessalonian church. Moreover Silas and Timothy were with him, of which the former attended the apostle only on his second missionary journey. and the latter could not bring him a report of conditions at Thessalonica, until he returned to the apostle at Corinth, Acts 18:5. Therefore the Epistle was written during Paul's stay in that city. However it should not be dated at the beginning of Paul's Corinthian residence, since the faith of the Thessalonians had already become manifest throughout Macedonia and Achaia, and some deaths had occurred in the church of Thessalonica. Neither can we place it toward the end of that period, for II Thessalonians was also written before the apostle left Corinth. Most likely it was composed towards the end of A. D. 52.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The canonicity of this Epistle was never questioned in ancient times. There are some supposed references to it in the apostolic fathers, Clement of Rome, Barnabas, Ignatius and Polycarp, but they are very uncertain. Marcion and the Muratorian Fragment and the old Latin and Syriac Versions testify to its canonicity, however, and from the end of the second century its canonical use is a well established fact. In this letter we behold Paul, the missionary, in the absence of any direct controversy, carefully guarding the interest of one of his most beloved churches, comforting and encouraging her like a father. He strengthens the heart of his persecuted spiritual children with the hope of Christ's return, when the persecutors shall be punished for their evil work, and the persecuted saints, both the dead and the living, shall receive their eternal reward in the Kingdom of their heavenly Lord. And thus the apostle is an example worthy of imitation; his lesson is a lesson of permanent value. The glorious parousia of Christ is the cheering hope of the militant church in all her struggles to the end of time.

02.17. The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians

The Second Epistle to the Thessalonians

CONTENTS The contents of the letter naturally falls into three parts:

I. Introduction, 2 Thessalonians 1:1-12. The apostle begins his letter with the regular blessing, 2 Thessalonians 1:1-2. He thanks God for the increasing faith and patience of the Thessalonians, reminding them of the fact that in the day of Christ's coming God will provide rest for his persecuted church and will punish her persecutors; and prays that God may fulfill his good pleasure in them to the glory of his Name, 2 Thessalonians 1:3-12.

II. Instruction respecting the Parousia, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17. The church is warned against deception regarding the imminence of the great day of Christ and is informed that it will not come until the mystery of iniquity has resulted in the great apostasy, and the man of sin has been revealed whose coming is after the work of Satan, and who will utterly deceive men to their own destruction, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12. The Thessalonians need not fear the manifestation of Christ, since they were chosen and called to everlasting glory; and it is the apostles wish that the Lord may comfort their hearts and establish them in all good work, 2 Thessalonians 2:13-17.

III. Practical Exhortations, 2 Thessalonians 3:1-18. The writer requests the prayer of the church for himself that he may be delivered from unreasonable and wicked men, and exhorts her to do what he commanded, 2 Thessalonians 3:1-5. They should withdraw from those who are disorderly and do not work, because each one should labor for his daily bread and thus follow the example of the apostle, 2 Thessalonians 3:6-12. Those who do not heed the apostolic word should be censured, 2 Thessalonians 3:13-15. With a blessing and a salutation the apostle closes his letter, 2 Thessalonians 3:16-18.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. The main characteristic of this letter is found in the apocalyptic passage, 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12. In these verses, that contain the most essential part of the Epistle, Paul speaks as a prophet, revealing to his beloved church that the return of Christ will be preceded by a great final apostasy and by the revelation of the man of sin, the son of perdition who, as the instrument of Satan, will deceive men, so that they accept the lie and are condemned in the great day of Christ. II Thessalonians, no doubt, was written primarily for the sake of this instruction.

2. Aside from this important doctrinal passage the Epistle has a personal and practical character. It contains expressions of gratitude for the faith and endurance of the persecuted church, words of encouragement for the afflicted, fatherly advice for the spiritual children of the apostle, and directions as to their proper behavior.

3. The style of this letter, like that of I Thessalonians, is simple and direct, except in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12, where the tone is more elevated. This change is accounted for by the prophetic contents of that passage. The language clearly reveals the working of the vigorous mind

of Paul, who in the expression of his thoughts was not limited to a few stock phrases. Besides the many expressions that are characteristically Pauline the Epistle contains several that are peculiar to it, and also a goodly number which it has in common only with I Thessalonians. Of the 26 ■παξ λεγ■μενα in the letter 10 are not found in the rest of the New Testament, and 16 are used elsewhere in the New Testament but not in the writings of Paul.

AUTHORSHIP The external testimony for the authenticity of this Epistle is just as strong as that for the genuineness of the first letter. Marcion has it in his canon, the Muratorian Fragment names it, and it is also found in the old Latin and Syriac Versions. From the time of Irenaeus it is regularly quoted as a letter of Paul, and Origen and Eusebius claim that it was universally received in their time. The Epistle itself claims to be the work of Paul, 2 Thessalonians 1:1; and again in 2 Thessalonians 3:17, where the apostle calls attention to the salutation as a mark of genuineness. The persons associated with the writer in the composition of this letter are the same as those mentioned in I Thessalonians. As in the majority of Paul's letters the apostolic blessing is followed by a thanksgiving. The Epistle is very similar to I Thessalonians and contains some cross-references to it, as in the case of the parousia and of the idlers. It clearly reveals the character of the great apostle, and its style may confidently be termed Pauline.

Nevertheless the genuineness of the Epistle has been doubted far more than that of I Thessalonians. Schmidt was the first one to assail it in 1804; in this he was followed by Schrader, Mayerhof and De Wette, who afterwards changed his mind, however. The attack was renewed by Kern and Baur in whose school the rejection of the Epistle became general. Its authenticity is defended by Reuss, Sabatier, Hofmann, Weiss, Zahn, Julicher, Farrar, Godet, Baljon, Moffat e.a. The principal objections urged against the genuineness of this letter are the following: (1) The teaching of Paul regarding the parousia in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 is not consistent with what he wrote in 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18; 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11. According to the first letter the day of Christ is imminent and will come suddenly and unexpectedly; the second emphasizes the fact that it is not close at hand and that several signs will precede it. (2) The eschatology of this passage 2 Thessalonians 2:1-12 is not Paul's but clearly dates from a later time and was probably borrowed from the Revelation of John. Some identify the man of sin with Nero who, though reported dead, was supposed to be hiding in the East and was expected to return; and find the one still restraining the evil in Vespasian. Others hold that this passage clearly refers to the time of Trajan, when the mystery of iniquity was seen in the advancing tide of Gnosticism. (3) This letter is to a great extent but a repetition of I Thessalonians, and therefore looks more like the work of a forger than like a genuine production of Paul. Holtzmann says that, with the exception of 2 Thessalonians 1:5-6; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; 2 Thessalonians 1:12; 2 Thessalonians 2:2-9; 2 Thessalonians 2:11-12; 2 Thessalonians 2:15; 2 Thessalonians 3:2; 2 Thessalonians 3:13-14; 2 Thessalonians 3:17, the entire Epistle consists of a reproduction of parallel passages from the first letter. Einl. p. 214. (4) The Epistle contains a conspicuously large number of peculiar expressions that are not found in the rest of Paul's writings, nor in the entire New Testament. Cf. lists in Frames Comm. pp. 28-34, in the Intern. Crit. Comm. (5) The salutation in 2 Thessalonians 3:17 has a suspicious look. It seems like the attempt of a later writer to ward off objections and to attest the Pauline authorship. But the objections raised are not sufficient to discredit the authenticity of our Epistle. The contradictions in Paul's teaching regarding the parousia of Christ, are more apparent than real. The signs that precede the great day will not detract from its suddenness any more than the signs

of Noah's time prevented the flood from taking his contemporaries by surprise. Moreover these two features, the suddenness of Christ's appearance and the portentous facts that are the harbingers of his coming, always go hand in hand in the eschatological teachings of Scripture. Daniel 11:1 to Daniel 12:3; Matthew 24:1-44; Luke 17:20-37. As to the immediacy of Christ's coming we can at most say that the first Epistle intimates that the Lord might appear during that generation (though possibly it does not even imply that), but it certainly does not teach that Christ will presently come. The eschatology of 2 Thessalonians 2:1-17 has given rise to much discussion and speculation regarding the date and authorship of the Epistle, but recent investigations into the conditions of the early church have clearly brought out that the contents of this chapter in no way militate against the genuineness of the letter. Hence they who deny the Pauline authorship have ceased to place great reliance on it. There is nothing improbable in the supposition that Paul wrote the passage regarding the man of sin. We find similar representations as early as the time of Daniel (cf. Daniel 11:1-45), in the pseudepigraphic literature of the Jews (cf. Schfirer, Geschichte des fiidischen Volkes II p. 621 f.), and in the eschatological discourses of the Lord. The words and expressions found in this chapter are very well susceptible of an interpretation that does not necessitate our dating the Epistle after the time of Paul. We cannot delay to review all the preterist and futurist expositions that have been given (for which cf. Alford, Prolegomena Section V), but can only indicate in a general way in what direction we must look for the interpretation of this difficult passage. In interpreting it we should continually bear in mind its prophetic import and its reference to something that is still future. No doubt, there were in history prefigurations of the great day of Christ in which this prophecy found a partial fulfilment, but the parousia of which Paul speaks in these verses is even now only a matter of faithful expectation. The history of the world is gradually leading up to it. Paul was witnessing some apostasy in his day, the μυστ■ριον της ■νομ■ας was already working, but the great apostasy (■ ■ποστασ■α) could not come in his day, because there had been as yet but a very partial dissemination of the truth; and will not come until the days immediately preceding the second coming of Christ, when the mystery of godlessness will complete itself, and will finally be embodied in a single person, in the man of sin, the son of perdition, who will then develop into a power antagonistic to Christ (anti-christ, ■ ■ντικε■μενος), yea to every form of religion, the very incarnation of Satan. Cf. 2 Thessalonians 2:9. This can only come to pass, however, after the restraining power is taken out of the way, a power that is at once impersonal (κατ■χον) and personal (κατ■χων), and which may refer first of all to the strict administration of justice in the Roman empire and to the emperor as the chief executive, but certainly has a wider signification and probably refers in general to "the fabric of human polity and those who rule that polity." (Alford). For a more detailed exposition cf. especially, Alford, Prolegomena Section V; Zahn, Einleitung I p. 162 if.; Godet, Introduction p .171 if.; and Eadie, Essay on the Man of Sin in Comm. p. 329 if.

We fail to see the force of the third argument, unless it is an established fact that Paul could not repeat himself to a certain degree, even in two Epistles written within the space of a few months, on a subject that engaged the mind of the apostle for some time, to the same church and therefore with a view to almost identical conditions. This argument looks strange especially in view of the following one, which urges the rejection of this letter, because it is so unlike the other Pauline writings. The points of difference between our letter and I Thessalonians are generally exaggerated, and the examples cited by Davidson to prove the dissimilarity are justly ridiculed by Salmon, who styles such criticism "childish criticism, that is to say, criticism such as might proceed

from a child who insists that a story shall always be told to him in precisely the same way." Introd. p. 398. The salutation in 2 Thessalonians 3:17 does not point to a time later than that of Paul, since he too had reason to fear the evil influence of forged Epistles, 2 Thessalonians 2:2. He merely states that, with a view to such deception, he would in the future authenticate all his letters by attaching an autographic salutation.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. Evidently some additional information regarding the state of affairs at Thessalonica had reached Paul, it may be through the bearers of the first Epistle, or by means of a communication from the elders of the church. It seems that some letter had been circulated among them, purporting to come from Paul, and that some false spirit was at work in the congregation. The persecution of the Thessalonians still continued and had probably increased in force, and in some way the impression had been created that the day of the Lord was at hand. This led on the one hand to feverish anxiety, and on the other, to idleness. Hence the apostle deemed it necessary to write a second letter to the Thessalonians. The purpose of the writer was to encourage the sorely pressed church; to calm the excitement by pointing out that the second advent of the Lord could not be expected immediately, since the mystery of lawlessness had to develop first and to issue in the man of sin; and to exhort the irregular ones to a quiet, industrious and orderly conduct.

2. Time and Place. Some writers, such as Grotius, Ewald, Vander Vies and Laurent advocated the theory that II Thessalonians was written before I Thessalonians, but the arguments adduced to support that position cannot bear the burden. Moreover 2 Thessalonians 2:15 clearly refers to a former letter of the apostle. In all probability our Epistle was composed a few months after the first one, for on the one hand Silas and Timothy were still with the apostle, 2 Thessalonians 1:1, which was not the case after he left Corinth, and they were still antagonized by the Jews so that most likely their case had not yet been brought before Gallio, Acts 18:12-17; and on the other hand a change had come about both in the sentiment of the apostle, who speaks no more of his desire to visit the Thessalonians, and in the condition of the church to which he was writing, a change that would necessarily require some time. We should most likely date the letter about the middle of A. D. 53.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The early Church found no reason to doubt the canonicity of this letter. Little stress can be laid, it is true, on the supposed reference to its language in Ignatius, Barnabas, the Didache and Justin Martyr. It is quite evident, however, that Polycarp used the Epistle. Moreover it has a place in the canon of Marcion, is mentioned among the Pauline letters in the Muratorian Fragment, and is contained in the old Latin and Syriac Versions. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and others since their time, quote it by name. The great permanent value of this Epistle lies in the fact that it corrects false notions regarding the second advent of Christ, notions that led to indolence and disorderliness. We are taught in this Epistle that the great day of Christ will not come until the mystery of iniquity that is working in the world receives its full development, and brings forth the son of perdition who as the very incarnation of Satan will set himself against Christ and his Church. If the Church of God had always remembered this lesson, she would have been spared many an irregularity and disappointment. The letter also reminds us once more of the fact that the day of the Lord will be a day of terror to the wicked, but a day of

deliverance and glory for the Church of Christ.

02.18. The Pastoral Epistles

The Pastoral Epistles

AUTHORSHIP In the case of these Epistles it seems best to consider the question of authorship first, and to treat them as a unity in the discussion of their authenticity. When we examine the external testimony to these letters we find that this is in no way deficient. If many have doubted their genuineness, it was not because they discovered that the early Church did not recognize them. It is true that some early heretics, who acknowledged the genuineness of the other letters attributed to Paul, rejected these, such as Basilides and Marcion, but Jerome says that their adverse judgment was purely arbitrary. From the time of Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, who were the first to quote the New Testament books by name, until the beginning of the nineteenth century, no one doubted the Pauline authorship of these letters. The Muratorian Fragment ascribes them to Paul, and they are included in all MSS., Versions and Lists of the Pauline letters, in all of which (with the single exception of the Muratorian Fragment) they are arranged in the same order, viz. I Timothy, II Timothy, Titus. As far as the internal evidence is concerned we may call attention in a preliminary way to a few facts that favor the authenticity of these letters and take up the consideration of other features in connection with the objections that are urged against them. They are all self-attested; they contain the characteristic Pauline blessing at the beginning, end with the customary salutation, and reveal the usual solicitude of Paul for his churches and for those associated with him in the work; they point to the same relation between Paul and his spiritual sons Timothy and Titus that we know from other sources; and they refer to persons (cf. 2 Timothy 4:1-22. Titus 3:1-15) that are also mentioned elsewhere as companions and co-laborers of Paul.

Yet it is especially on the strength of internal evidence that these Epistles have been attacked. J. E. C. Schmidt in 1804, soon followed by Schleiermacher, was the first one to cast doubt on their genuineness. Since that time they have been rejected, not only by the Tubingen school and by practically all negative critics, but also by some scholars that usually incline to the conservative side, such as Neander (rejecting only I Timothy), Meyer; (Introd. to Romans) and Sabatier. While the majority of radical critics reject these letters unconditionally, Credner, Harnack, Hausrath and McGiffert believe that they contain some genuine Pauline sections; the last named scholar regarding especially the passages that contain personal references, such as 2 Timothy 1:15-18; 2 Timothy 4:9-21; Titus 3:12-13, as authentic, and surmising that some others may be saved from the ruins, The Apostolic Age p. 405 if. The genuineness of the Pastorals is defended by Weiss, Zahn, Salmon, Godet, Barth, and nearly all the Commentators, such as Huther, Van Oosterzee, Ellicott, Alford, White (in The Exp. Gk. Test.) e. a.

Several arguments are employed to discredit the authenticity of these letters. We shall briefly consider the most important ones. (1) It is impossible to find a place for their composition and the historical situation which they reflect in the life of Paul, as we know it from the Acts of the Apostles. Reuss, who provisionally accepted their Pauline authorship in his, History of the New Testament I

pp. 80-85; 121-129, did so with the distinct proviso that they had to fit into the narrative of Acts somewhere. Finding that his scheme did not work out well, he afterwards rejected I Timothy and Titus. Cf. his Commentary on the Pastorals. (2) The conception of Christianity found in these letters is un-Pauline and clearly represents a later development. They contain indeed some Pauline ideas, but these are exceptional. “There is no trace whatever,” says McGiifert, “of the great fundamental truth of Paul’s gospel,—death unto the flesh and life in the Spirit.” Instead of the faith by which we are justified and united to Christ, we find piety and good works prominently in the foreground. Cf. 1 Timothy 1:5; 1 Timothy 2:2; 1 Timothy 2:15; 1 Timothy 4:7 f.; 1 Timothy 5:4; 1 Timothy 6:6;—2 Timothy 1:3; 2 Timothy 3:5; 2 Timothy 3:12;—Titus 1:1; Titus 2:12. Moreover the word faith does not, as in the letters of Paul, denote the faith that believes, but rather the sum and substance of that which is believed, 1 Timothy 1:19; 1 Timothy 3:9; 1 Timothy 4:1; 1 Timothy 4:6; 1 Timothy 5:8. And sound doctrine is spoken of in a way that reminds one of the characteristic esteem in which orthodoxy was later held, cf. 1 Timothy 1:10; 1 Timothy 4:6; 1 Timothy 6:3 ;— 2 Timothy 4:3 ;—Titus 1:9; Titus 2:1; Titus 2:7. (3) The church organization that is reflected in these letters points to a later age. It is unlikely that Paul, believing as he did in the speedy second coming of Christ, would pay so much attention to details of organization; nor does it seem probable that he would lay such stress on the offices received by ecclesiastical appointment, and have so little regard to the spiritual gifts that are independent of official position and that occupy a very prominent place in the undoubted writings of the apostle. Moreover the organization assumed in these letters reveals second century conditions. Alongside of the πρεσβ■τεροιthe ■π■σκοποςis named as a primus inter pares (notice the singular in 1 Timothy 3:1; Titus 1:7); and the office-bearers in general are given undue prominence. There is a separate class of widows, of which some held an official position in the Church, just as there was in the second century, 1 Timothy 5. Ecclesiastical office is conferred by the laying on of hands, 1 Timothy 5:22; and the second marriage of bishops, deacons, and ministering widows was not to be tolerated, 1 Timothy 3:2; 1 Timothy 3:12; 1 Timothy 5:9-11; Titus 1:6. (4) The false teachers and teachings to which the Epistles refer are evidently second century Gnostics and Gnosticism. The term ■ντιθ■σεις, 1 Timothy 6:20, according to Baur, contains a reference to the work of Marcion which bore that title. And the endless genealogies of 1 Timothy 1:4 are supposed to refer to the Aeons of Valentinus. (5) The most weighty objection is, however, that the style of these letters differs from that of the Pauline Epistles to such a degree as to imply diversity of authorship. Says Davidson: “The change of style is too great to comport with identity of authorship. Imitations of phrases and terms occurring in Pauls authentic Epistles are obvious; inferiority and feebleness show dependence; while the new constructions and words betray a writer treating of new circumstances and giving expression to new ideas, yet personating the apostle all the while. The change is palpable; though the author throws himself back into the situation of Paul the prisoner.” Introd. II p. 66. Holtzmann claims that of the 897 words that constitute these letters (proper names excepted) 171 (read 148) are ■παξ λεγ■μενα of which 74 are found in I Timothy, 46 in II Timothy, and 28 in Titus. Besides these there is a great number of phrases and expressions that are peculiar and point away from Paul, such as δ■κειν δικαιοσ■νην, 1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 2:22; φυλ■σσειν τ■ν παραθ■κην, 1 Timothy 6:20; 2 Timothy 1:12; 2 Timothy 1:14; παρακολουθε■ν τ■ διδασκαλ■α■, 1 Timothy 4:6; 2 Timothy 3:10; β■βηλοι κενοφων■αι, 1 Timothy 6:20; 2 Timothy 2:16; ■■νθρωπος θεο■ 1 Timothy 6:11; 2 Timothy 3:17; etc. On the other hand many expressions that play a prominent part in Pauline literature are absent from these letters, as ■δικος, ■κροβυστ■α, γνωπ■ζειν,

δικαιοσ■νη θεο■, δικα■ωμα, ■■■ργα ν■μου, ■μο■ωμα, παρ■δοσις, etc. As far as the first argument is concerned, it must be admitted that these Epistles do not fit in the life of Paul, as we know it from the Acts of the Apostles. Their genuineness depends on the question, whether or not Paul was set free again after the imprisonment described in Acts 28:1-31. Now we have reasons, aside from the contents of these Epistles, to believe that he was liberated and resumed his missionary labors. In view of the fact that Felix, Festus and Agrippa found no guilt in Paul, and that the apostle was sent to Rome, only because he appealed to Caesar, the presumption is that he was not condemned at Rome. This presumption is greatly strengthened by the fact that, when the apostle wrote his letters to the Philippians and to Philemon, the prospect of his release seemed favorable, Php 1:25; Php 2:24; Philemon 1:22; compare 2 Timothy 4:6-8. It is objected to this that Paul, in taking his farewell of the Ephesian elders, says to them: "I know (ο■δα) that ye all—shall see my face no more," Acts 20:25. But it may be doubted, whether we have the right to press this ο■δα so that it becomes prophetic; if we have, it is counterbalanced by the ο■δα in Php 1:25. The most natural inference from the data of Scripture (outside of these Epistles) is that Paul was set free; and this is confirmed by the tradition of the early Church, as it is expressed by Eusebius, Church Hist. II 22: Paul is said (λ■γος ■χει)after having defended himself to have set forth again upon the ministry of preaching, and to have entered the same city a second time, and to have ended his life by martyrdom. Whilst then a prisoner, he wrote the second Epistle to Timothy, in which he both mentions his first defense, and his impending death." Moreover the Muratorian Fragment speaks of a visit that Paul paid to Spain, which cannot be placed before the first Roman imprisonment. And Clement of Rome states in his letter to the Corinthians, after relating that the apostle labored in the East and in the West, that he came to "the boundaries of the West." Now it does not seem likely that he, who himself lived in Rome, would refer to the city on the Tiber in those terms. And if this is not the import of those words, the presumption is that he too has reference to Spain.

Paul's movements after his release are uncertain, and all that can be said regarding, them is conjectural. Leaving Rome he probably first repaired to Macedonia and Asia Minor for the intended visits, Php 1:23-26; Philemon 1:22, and then undertook his long looked for journey to Spain, Romans 15:24. Returning from there, he possibly went to Ephesus, where he had a dispute with Hymenaeus and Alexander, 1 Timothy 1:20, and engaged the services of Onesiphorus, 2 Timothy 1:16-18. Leaving Timothy in charge of the Ephesian church, he departed for Macedonia, 1 Timothy 1:3, from where he most likely wrote I Timothy. After this he may have visited Crete with Titus, leaving the latter there to organize the churches, Titus 1:5, and returning to Ephesus according to his wishes, 1 Timothy 3:14; 1 Timothy 4:13, where Alexander the coppersmith did him great evil, 2 Timothy 4:14. From here he probably wrote the Epistle to Titus, for he was evidently in some center of missionary enterprise, when he composed it, Titus 3:12-15. Departing from Ephesus, he went through Miletus, 2 Timothy 4:20 to Troas, 2 Timothy 4:13, where he was probably re-arrested, and whence he was taken to Rome by way of Corinth, the abode of Erastus, 2 Timothy 4:20; Romans 16:23. In that case he did not reach Nicopolis, where he intended to spend the winter. In this statement we proceed on the assumption that the winter mentioned in 2 Timothy 4:21 is the same as that of Titus 3:12. The second imprisonment of Paul was more severe than the first, 2 Timothy 1:16-17; 2 Timothy 2:9. His first defense appears to have been successful, 2 Timothy 4:16-17, but as his final hearing drew nigh, he had a presentiment of approaching martyrdom. According to the Chronicles of Eusebius Paul died as a martyr in the thirteenth year of

Nero, or A. D. 67. The objection that the theological teaching of these Epistles is different from that of Paul, must be taken cum grano salis, because this teaching merely complements and in no way contradicts the representation of the undoubted Epistles. We find no further objective development of the truth here, but only a practical application of the doctrines already unfolded in previous letters. And it was entirely fitting that, as every individual letter, so too the entire cycle of Pauline Epistles should end with practical admonitions. Historically this is easily explained, on the one hand, by the fact that the productive period of the apostles life had come to an end, and it is now Paul the aged—for all the vicissitudes of a busy and stormy life must greatly have sapped his strength—that speaks to us, cf. Philemon 1:9; and, on the other hand, by the fact that the heresy which the apostle here encounters had developed into ethical corruption. If it is said that the writer of these Epistles ascribes a meritorious character to good works, we take exception and qualify that as a false statement. The passages referred to, such as 1 Timothy 1:15; 1 Timothy 3:13; 1 Timothy 4:8; 1 Timothy 6:18 if.; 2 Timothy 4:8, do not prove the assertion. Since a rather full statement of the Christian truth had preceded these letters, it need not cause surprise that Paul should refer to it as “the sound doctrine,” Cf. Romans 6:17. Nor does it seem strange, in view of this, that alongside of the subjective the objective sense of the word faith should begin to assert itself. We find an approach to this already in Romans 12:6; Galatians 1:23; Php 1:27.

It is a mistake to think that the emphasis which these letters place on the external organization of the churches, and the particular type of ecclesiastical polity which they reflect, precludes their Pauline authorship. There is nothing strange in the fact that Paul, knowing that the day of Christ was not at hand (2 Thessalonians 2:1-12), should lay special stress on church government now that his ministry was drawing to a close. It might rather have caused surprise, if he had not thus made provision for the future of his churches. And it is perfectly natural also that he should emphasize the offices in the church rather than the extraordinary spiritual gifts, since these gradually vanished and made place for the ordinary ministry of the Word. The position that the office-bearers mentioned in these letters prove a development beyond that of the apostolic age. is not substantiated by the facts. Deacons were appointed shortly after the establishment of the Church, Acts 6; elders were chosen from place to place, as the apostle founded churches among the Gentiles, Acts 14:23; and in Php 1:1 Paul addresses not only the Philippians in general, but also “the bishops and deacons.” Moreover in Ephesians 4:11 the apostle says: “And He gave you some apostles; and some prophets; and some evangelists; and some pastors and teachers.” Surely it does not seem that the Pastoral Epistles are strikingly different in this respect from the others. If it be said that the bishop becomes so prominent here as to indicate that the leaven of hierarchy was already working, we answer that in the New Testament the terms ■π■σκοπος and πρεσβ■τερος; are clearly synonymous. The fact that the bishop is spoken of in the singular proves nothing to the contrary. Not once are bishops and presbyters arranged alongside of each other as denoting two separate classes, and in Titus 1:5-7 the terms are clearly interchangeable. The case of Phebe, Romans 16:1 certainly does not countenance the theory that the office of deaconess was not called into existence until the second century. And the passages that are supposed to prohibit the second marriage of office-bearers are of too uncertain interpretation to justify the conclusions drawn from them.

Granted that the errors to which these letters refer were of a Gnostic character—as Alford is willing to grant—, it by no means follows that the Epistles are second century productions, since the first

signs of the Gnostic heresy are known to have made their appearance in the apostolic age. But it is an unproved assumption that the writer refers to Gnosticism of any kind. It is perfectly evident from the letters that the heresy was of a Judaeistic, though not of a Pharisaic type, resembling very much the error that threatened the Colossian church. Hort, after examining it carefully comes to the conclusion that “there is a total want of evidence for anything pointing to even rudimentary Gnosticism or Essenism.” In view of the fact that the errorists prided themselves as being teachers of the law, 1 Timothy 1:7, and that the term γενεαλογ■α is brought in close connection with “strivings about the law” in Titus 3:9, the presumption is that it contains no reference whatever to the emanations of Gnostic aeons, but rather, as Zahn surmises, to rabbinic disputations regarding Jewish genealogies. And the word “antitheses,” of which Hort says that it cannot refer to Marcions work, is simply descriptive of the opposition in which the heretics that boasted of a higher knowledge placed themselves to the Gospel. The argument from style has often proved to be a very precarious one. If a persons vocabulary were a fixed quantity, he were limited to the use of certain set phrases and expressions, and his style, once acquired, were unchangeable and necessarily wanting in flexibility, a plausible case might be made out. But as a matter of fact such is not the usual condition of things, and certainly was not the case with Paul, who to a great extent moulded the language of the New Testament. We need not and cannot deny that the language of the Pastorals has many peculiarities, but in seeking to explain these we should not immediately take refuge in a supposed difference of authorship, but rather make allowance for the influence of Paul’s advancing years, of the altered conditions of his life, of the situation in which his readers were placed. And of the subjects with which he was obliged to deal in these Epistles. And let us not forget what N. J. D. White says, Exp. Gk. Test. IV p. 63, that “the acknowledged peculiarities must not be allowed to obscure the equally undoubted fact that the Epistles present not only as many characteristic Pauline words as the writer had use for, but that, in the more significant matter of turns of expression, the style of the letters is fundamentally Pauline. Cf. also the judicious remarks of Reuss on the style of these letters. History of the New Testament, I p. 123. In concluding our discussion of the authenticity of the Pastoral Epistles we desire to remark: (1) The critics admit that the objections urged by them against the genuineness of these letters do not apply to all three of them in the same degree. According to Baur II Timothy and Titus are the least suspicious. He maintains, however, that I Timothy will always be “the betrayer of its spurious brothers.” But it would be reasonable to turn the statement about with Reuss, and to say that “so long as no decisive and palpable proofs of the contrary are presented the two which are in and of themselves less suspicious ought always to afford protection to the third which is more so.” Ibid. p. 84. (2) Baur and his followers rightly held that, in order to prove the spuriousness of these letters, they had to point out the positive purpose of the forgery; in which, according to Reuss, they utterly failed, when they said that it was to combat the Gnostic heresies that were prevalent after A. D. 150, Ibid. p. 124 f. (3) It looks a great deal like a confession of defeat, when several of the negative critics admit that the passages in which personal reminiscences are found, must be regarded as genuine, for it means that they yield their case wherever they can be controlled. For a broader discussion of the authenticity of these letters, cf. Alford, Prolegomena Section I; Holtzmann, Einl. pp. 274-292; Zahn, Einl. I pp. 459-491; Godet, Introd. pp. 567-611; Farrar, St. Paul, II pp. 607-622; Salmon, Introd. pp. 433-452; McGiffert, Apostolic Age pp. 399-423; Davidson, Introd. II pp. 21-76. Lock (in Hastings D. B. Artt. I Timothy, II Timothy and Titus.)

02.19. The First Epistle to Timothy

The First Epistle to Timothy

CONTENTS The first Epistle to Timothy may be divided into four parts:

I. Introduction, 1 Timothy 1:1-20. The apostle begins by reminding Timothy that he had been left at Ephesus to counteract prevalent heresies, 1 Timothy 1:1-10. He directs the attention of his spiritual son to the Gospel contradicted by these errors, thanks the Lord that he was made a minister of it, and charges Timothy to act in accordance with that Gospel, 1 Timothy 1:11-20.

II. General Regulations for Church Life, 1 Timothy 2:1-15, 2 Timothy 3:1-16, 1 Timothy 4:5. Here we find first of all directions for public intercession and for the behavior of men and women in the meetings of the church, 1 Timothy 2:1-15. These are followed by an explicit statement of the qualities that are necessary in bishops and deacons, 1 Timothy 3:1-13. The expressed purpose of these directions is, to promote the good order of the church, the pillar and ground of the truth, essentially revealed in Christ, from which the false brethren were departing, 1 Timothy 3:14-16, 1 Timothy 4:1-5.

III. Personal Advice to Timothy, 1 Timothy 4:6-16, 1 Timothy 5:1-25, 1 Timothy 6:1-2. Here the apostle speaks of Timothy's behavior towards the false teachers, 1 Timothy 4:6-11; of the way in which he should regard and discharge his ministerial duties, 1 Timothy 4:12-16; and of the attitude he ought to assume towards the individual members of the church, especially towards the widows, the elders and the slaves, 1 Timothy 5:1-25, 1 Timothy 6:1-2.

IV. Conclusion, 1 Timothy 6:3-21. The apostle now makes another attack on the heretical teachers, 1 Timothy 6:3-10; and exhorts Timothy to be true to his calling and to avoid all erroneous teachings, giving him special directions with respect to the rich, 1 Timothy 6:11-21.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. This letter is one of the Pastoral Epistles of Paul, which are so called, because they were written to persons engaged in pastoral work and contain many directions for pastoral duties. They were sent, not to churches, but to office-bearers, instructing them how to behave in the house of God. It is evident, however, that, with the possible exception of II Timothy, they were not intended exclusively for the persons to whom they were addressed, but also for the churches in which these labored. Cf. as far as this Epistle is concerned, 1 Timothy 4:6; 1 Timothy 4:11; 1 Timothy 5:7; 1 Timothy 6:17.

2. From the preceding it follows that this letter is not doctrinal but practical. We find no further objective development of the truth here, but clear directions as to its practical application, especially in view of divergent tendencies. The truth developed in previous Epistles is here represented as the "sound doctrine" that must be the standard of life and action, as "the faith" that should be kept, and as "a faithful word worthy of all acceptation." 'the emphasis clearly falls on the ethical requirements of the truth.

3. The letter emphasizes, as no other Epistle does, the external organization of the church. The apostle feels that the end of his life is fast approaching, and therefore deems it necessary to give more detailed instruction regarding the office-bearers in the church, in order that, when he is gone, his youthful co-laborers and the church itself may know how its affairs should be regulated. Of the office-bearers the apostle mentions the ■π■σκος and the πρεσβ■τεροι, which are evidently identical, the first name indicating their work, and the second emphasizing their age; the δι■κονοι, the γυν■ικες, if 1 Timothy 3:11 refers to deaconesses, which is very probable (so Ellicott, Alford, White in Exp. Gk. Test.) and the χ■ραι, 1 Timothy 5:1-25, though it is doubtful, whether these were indeed office-bearers.

4. Regarding the style of the Pastoral Epistles in general Huther remarks: “In the other Pauline Epistles the fulness of the apostles thoughts struggle with the expression, and cause peculiar difficulties in exposition. The thoughts slide into one another, and are so intertwined in many forms that not seldom the new thought begins before a correct expression has been given of the thought that preceded. Of this confusion there is no example in the Pastoral Epistles. Even in such passages as come nearest to this confused style, such as the beginning of the first and second Epistles of Timothy (Titus 2:11 if.; 1 Timothy 3:4 if.) the connection of ideas is still on the whole simple.” Comm. p. 9. This estimate is in general correct, though we would hardly speak of Pauls style in his other letters as “a confused style.” THE PERSON TO WHOM THE EPISTLE WAS WRITTEN

Paul addresses this letter to “Timothy my own son in the faith,” 1 Timothy 1:2. We find the first mention of Timothy in Acts 16:1, where he is introduced as an inhabitant of Lystra. He was the son of a Jewish mother and a Greek father, of whom we have no further knowledge. Both his mother Eunice and his grandmother Lois are spoken of as Christians in 2 Timothy 1:5. In all probability he was converted by Paul on his first missionary journey, since he was already a disciple, when the apostle entered Lystra on his second tour. He had a good report in his home town, Acts 16:2, and, being circumcised for the sake of the Jews, he joined Paul and Silas in their missionary labors. Passing with the missionaries into Europe and helping them at Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea, he remained with Silas in the last named place, while Paul pressed on to Athens and Corinth, where they finally joined the apostle again, Acts 17:14; Acts 18:5. Cf. however also 1 Thessalonians 3:1 and p. 222 above. He abode there with the missionaries and his name appears with those of Paul and Silvanus in the addresses of the two Epistles to the Thessalonians. We next find him ministering to the apostle during his long stay at Ephesus, Acts 19:22, from where he was sent to Macedonia and Corinth, Acts 19:21-22; 1 Corinthians 4:17; 1 Corinthians 16:10, though it is doubtful, whether he reached that city. He was again in Paul’s company, when II Corinthians was written, 2 Corinthians 1:1, and accompanied the apostle to Corinth, Romans 16:21, and again on his return through Macedonia to Asia, Acts 20:3-4, probably also to Jerusalem, 1 Corinthians 16:3. He is then mentioned in the Epistles of the imprisonment, which show that he was with the apostle at Rome, Php 1:1; Colossians 1:1; Philemon 1:1. From this time on we hear no more of him until the Pastoral Epistles show him to be in charge of the Ephesian church, 1 Timothy 1:3. From 1 Timothy 4:14, and 2 Timothy 1:6 we learn that he was set apart for the ministry by Paul with the laying on of hands, in accordance with prophetic utterances of the Spirit, 1 Timothy 1:18, when he probably received the title of evangelist, 2 Timothy 4:5, though in 1 Thessalonians 2:6 he is loosely classed with Paul and Silas as an apostle. We do not know when this formal ordination took place,

whether at the very beginning of his work, or when he was placed in charge of the church at Ephesus. The character of Timothy is clearly marked in Scripture. His readiness to leave his home and to submit to the rite of circumcision reveal his self-denial and earnestness of purpose. This is all the more striking, since he was very affectionate, 2 Timothy 1:4, delicate and often ill, 1 Timothy 5:23. At the same time he was timid, 1 Corinthians 16:10, hesitating to assert his authority, 1 Timothy 4:12, and needed to be warned against youthful lusts, 2 Timothy 2:22, and to be encouraged in the work of Christ, 2 Timothy 1:8. Yet withal he was a worthy servant of Jesus Christ, Romans 16:21, 1 Thessalonians 3:2; Php 1:1; Php 2:19-21; and the beloved spiritual son of the apostle, 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:2; 1 Corinthians 4:17.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. This letter was occasioned by Paul's necessary departure from Ephesus for Macedonia, 1 Timothy 1:3, the apprehension that he might be absent longer than he at first expected, 1 Timothy 3:14-15, and the painful consciousness that insidious errors were threatening the Ephesian church. Since Timothy was acquainted with these heresies, the apostle refers to them only in general terms which convey no very definite idea as to their real character. The persons who propagated them were prominent members of the church, possibly even office-bearers, 1 Timothy 1:6-7; 1 Timothy 1:20; 1 Timothy 3:1-12; 1 Timothy 5:19-25. Their heresy was primarily of a Jewish character, 1 Timothy 1:7, and probably resulted from an exaggeration of the demands of the law, a mistaken application of Christian ideas and a smattering of Oriental speculation. They claimed to be teachers of the law, 1 Timothy 1:7, laid great stress on myths and genealogies, 1 Timothy 1:4; 1 Timothy 4:7, prided themselves like the rabbis on the possession of special knowledge, 1 Timothy 6:20, and, perhaps assuming that matter was evil or at least the seat of evil, they propagated a false asceticism, prohibiting marriage and requiring abstinence from certain foods, 1 Timothy 4:3, and taught that the resurrection was already past, most likely recognizing only a spiritual resurrection, 2 Timothy 2:18. The charge entrusted to Timothy was therefore a difficult one, hence the apostle deemed it necessary to write this Epistle. In connection with the situation described the purpose of Paul was twofold. In the first place he desired to encourage Timothy. This brother, being young and of a timid disposition, needed very much the cheering word of the apostle. And in the second place it was his aim to direct Timothy's warfare against the false doctrines that were disseminated in the church. Possibly it was also to prevent the havoc which these might work, if they who taught them were allowed in office, that he places such emphasis on the careful choice of office-bearers, and on the necessity of censuring them, should they go wrong.

2. Time and Place. The Epistle shows that Paul had left Ephesus for Macedonia with the intention of returning soon. And it was because he anticipated some delay that he wrote this letter to Timothy. Hence we may be sure that it was written from some place in Macedonia. But the time when the apostle wrote this letter is not so easily determined. On what occasion did Paul quit Ephesus for Macedonia, leaving Timothy behind? Not after his first visit to Ephesus, Acts 18:20-21, for on that occasion the apostle did not depart for Macedonia but for Jerusalem. Neither was it when he left Ephesus on his third missionary journey after a three years residence, since Timothy was not left behind then, but had been sent before him to Corinth, Acts 19:22; 1 Corinthians 4:17. Some are inclined to think that we must assume a visit of Paul to Macedonia during his Ephesian residence, a visit not recorded in the Acts of the Apostles. But then we must

also find room there for the apostles journey to Crete, since it is improbable that the Epistle of Paul to Titus was separated by any great interval of time from I Timothy. And to this must be added a trip to Corinth, cf. above p. 168. This theory is very unlikely in view of the time Paul spent at Ephesus, as compared with the work he did there, and of the utter silence of Luke regarding these visits. We must date the letter somewhere between the first and the second imprisonment of Paul. It was most likely after the apostles journey to Spain, since on the only previous occasion that he visited Ephesus after his release he came to that city by way of Macedonia, and therefore would not be likely to return thither immediately. Probably the letter should be dated about A. D. 65 or 66.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE

There was not the slightest doubt in the ancient church as to the canonicity of this Epistle. We find allusions more or less clear to its language in Clement of Rome, Polycarp, Ilegesippus, Athenagoras and Theophilus. It was contained in the old Latin and Syriac Versions and referred to Paul by the Muratorian Fragment. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian quote it by name, and Eusebius reckons it among the generally accepted canonical writings. The great abiding value of the Epistle is found in the fact that it teaches the Church of all generations, how one, especially an office-bearer, should behave in the house of God, holding the faith, guarding his precious trust against the inroads of false doctrines, combating the evil that is found in the Lords heritage, and maintaining good order in church life. “It witnesses,” says Lock (Hastings D. B. Art. I Timothy) “that a highly ethical and spiritual conception of religion is consistent with and is safeguarded by careful regulations about worship, ritual and organized ministry. There is no opposition between the outward and the inward, between the spirit and the organized body.”

02.20. The Second Epistle to Timothy

The Second Epistle to Timothy

CONTENTS The contents of this Epistle falls into three parts:

I. Considerations to strengthen Timothy's Courage, 2 Timothy 1:1-18, 2 Timothy 2:1-13. After the greeting, 2 Timothy 1:1-2, the apostle urges Timothy to stir up his ministerial gift, to be bold in suffering, and to hold fast the truth entrusted to him, 2 Timothy 1:3-14, enforcing these appeals by pointing to the deterrent example of the unfaithful and the stimulating example of Onesiphorus, 2 Timothy 1:15-18. Further he exhorts him to be strong in the power of grace, to commit the true teaching to others, and to be ready to face suffering, 2 Timothy 2:1-13.

II. Exhortations primarily dealing with Timothy's Teaching, 2 Timothy 2:14-26, 2 Timothy 3:1-17, 2 Timothy 4:1-18. Timothy should urge Christians to avoid idle and useless discussions, and should rightly teach the truth, shunning vain babblings, 2 Timothy 2:14-21. He must also avoid youthful passions, foolish investigations, and false teachers who, for selfish purposes, turn the truth of God into unrighteousness, 2 Timothy 2:22-26, 2 Timothy 3:1-9. He is further exhorted to abide loyally by his past teaching, knowing that sufferings will come to every true soldier and that deceivers will grow worse, 2 Timothy 3:10-17; and to fulfill his whole duty as an evangelist with sobriety and courage, especially since Paul is now ready to be offered up, 2 Timothy 4:1-8.

III. Personal Reminiscences, 2 Timothy 4:9-22. Paul appeals to Timothy to come to Rome quickly, bringing Mark and also taking his cloak and books, and to avoid Alexander, 2 Timothy 4:9-15. He speaks of his desertion by men, the protection afforded him by the Lord, and his trust for the future, 2 Timothy 4:16-18. With special greetings, a further account of his fellow-laborers, and a final salutation the apostle ends his letter, 2 Timothy 4:19-22.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. II Timothy is the most personal of the Pastoral Epistles. Doctrinally it has no great importance, though it does contain the strongest proof-passage for the inspiration of Scripture. In the main the thought centers about Timothy, the faithful co-laborer of Paul, whom the apostle gives encouragement in the presence of great difficulties, whom he inspires to noble, self-denying efforts in the Kingdom of God, and whom he exhorts to fight worthily in the spiritual warfare against the powers of darkness, that he may once receive an eternal reward.

2. It is the last Epistle of Paul, the swan-song of the great apostle, after a life of devotion to a noble cause, a life of Christian service. We see him here with work done, facing a martyr's death. Looking back his heart is filled with gratitude for the grace of God that saved him from the abyss that yawned at his feet, that called and qualified him to be a messenger of the cross, that protected him when dangers were threatening, and that crowned his work with rich spiritual fruits. And as he turns his eyes to the future, calm assurance and joyous hope are the strength of his soul, for he knows that the firm foundation of God will stand, since the Lord will punish the evil-doers and be

the eternal reward of his children. He already has visions of the heavenly Kingdom, of eternal glory, of the coming righteous Judge, and of the crown of righteousness, the blessed inheritance of all those that love Christ's appearance.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. The immediate occasion for writing this Epistle was the apostles presentiment of his fast approaching end. He was anxious that Timothy should come to him soon, bringing Mark with him. In all probability he desired to give his spiritual son some fatherly advice and some practical instruction before his departure. But we feel that this alone did not call for a letter such as II Timothy really Isa. Another factor must be taken in consideration. Paul was not sure that Timothy would succeed in reaching Rome before his death, and yet realized that the condition of the Ephesian church, the danger to which Timothy was there exposed, and the importance of the work entrusted to this youthful minister, called for a word of apostolic advice, encouragement and exhortation. It seems that the Ephesian church was threatened by persecution, 2 Timothy 1:8; 2 Timothy 2:3; 2 Timothy 2:12; 2 Timothy 3:12; 2 Timothy 4:5; and the heresy to which the apostle referred in his first epistle was evidently still rife in the circle of believers. There were those who strove about words, 2 Timothy 2:14, were unspiritual, 2 Timothy 2:16, corrupted in mind, 2 Timothy 3:8, indulging in foolish and ignorant questionings, 2 Timothy 2:23, and fables, 2 Timothy 4:4, tending to a low standard of morality, 2 Timothy 2:19, and teaching that the resurrection was already past, 2 Timothy 2:18.

Hence the object of the Epistle is twofold. The writer wants to warn Timothy of his impending departure, to inform him of his past experiences at Rome and of his present loneliness, and to exhort him to come speedily. Besides this, however, he desired to strengthen his spiritual son in view of the deepening gloom of trials and persecution that were threatening the church from without; and to fore-arm him against the still sadder danger of heresy and apostasy that were lurking within the fold. Timothy is exhorted to hold fast the faith, 2 Timothy 1:5; 2 Timothy 1:13; to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ, 2 Timothy 2:3-10; to shun every form of heresy, 2 Timothy 2:16-18; to instruct in meekness those that withstand the Gospel, 2 Timothy 2:24-26; and to continue in the things he had learnt, 2 Timothy 3:14-17.

2. Time and Place. From 2 Timothy 1:17 it is perfectly evident that this letter was written at Rome. The apostle was again a prisoner in the imperial city. Though we have no absolute certainty, we deem it probable that he was re-arrested at Troas in the year 67. The situation in which he finds himself at Rome is quite different from that reflected in the other epistles of the captivity. He is now treated like a common criminal, 2 Timothy 2:9; his Asiatic friends with the exception of Onesiphorus turned from him, 2 Timothy 1:15; the friends who were with him during his first imprisonment are absent now, Colossians 4:10-14; 2 Timothy 4:10-12; and the outlook of the apostle is quite different from that found in Philippians and Philemon. It is impossible to tell just how long the apostle had already been in prison, when he wrote the Epistle, but from the fact that he had had one hearing, 2 Timothy 4:16 (which cannot refer to that of the first imprisonment, cf. Php 1:7; Php 1:12-14), and expected to be offered up soon, we infer that he composed the letter towards the end of his imprisonment, i. e. in the fall of A. D. 67.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The canonicity of this Epistle has never been questioned by the Church; and the testimony to its early and general use is in no way deficient. There are quite clear

traces of its language in Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Polycarp, Justin Martyr, The Acts of Paul and Thecla, and Theophilus of Antioch. The letter is included in all the MSS., the old Versions and the Lists of the Pauline Epistles. The Muratorian Fragment names it as a production of Paul, and from the end of the second century it is quoted by name. The Epistle has some permanent doctrinal value as containing the most important proof-passage for the inspiration of Scripture, 3:16, and also abiding historical significance in that it contains the clearest Scriptural testimony to the life of Paul after his first Roman imprisonment. But Lock truly says that “its main interest is one of character, and two portraits emerge from it.” We have here (1) the portrait of the ideal Christian minister, busily engaged in the work of his Master, confessing His Name, proclaiming His truth, shepherding His fold, defending his heritage, and battling with the powers of evil; and (2) the “portrait of the Christian minister, with his work done, facing death. He acquiesces gladly in the present, but his eyes are turned mainly to the past or to the future.” (Lock in Hastings D. B. Art. II Timothy) He is thankful for the work he was permitted to do, and serenely awaits the day of his crowning.

02.21. The Epistle to Titus

The Epistle to Titus

CONTENTS The contents of this Epistle may be divided into three parts:

I. Instruction regarding the Appointment of Ministers, Titus 1:1-16. After the opening salutation, Titus 1:1-4, the apostle reminds Titus of his past instruction to appoint presbyters, Titus 1:5. He emphasizes the importance of high moral character in an overseer, in order that such an office-bearer may maintain the sound doctrine and may refute the opponents that mislead others and, claiming to know God, deny Him with their words, Titus 1:6-16.

II. Directions as to the Teaching of Titus, Titus 2:1-15, Titus 3:1-11. Paul would have Titus urge all the different classes that were found in the Cretan church, viz, the elder men and women, the younger women and men, and the slaves, to regulate their life in harmony with the teachings of the Gospel, since they were all trained by the saving grace of God to rise above sin and to lead godly lives, Titus 2:1-14. As regards their relation to the outer world, Titus should teach believers to subject themselves to the authorities, and to be gentle towards all men, remembering that God had delivered them from the old heathen vices, in order that they should set others an example of noble and useful lives, Titus 3:1-8. He himself must avoid foolish questionings and reject the heretics, who refused to listen to his admonition, Titus 3:9-11.

III. Personal Details, Titus 3:12-15. Instructing Titus to join him at Nicopolis after Artemus or Tychicus has come to Crete, bringing with him Zenos and Apollos, the writer ends his letter with a final salutation.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. Like the other Pastoral Epistles this letter is also of a personal nature. It was not directed to any individual church or to a group of churches, but to a single person, one of Pauls spiritual sons and co-laborers in the work of the Lord. At the same time it is not as personal as II Timothy, but has distinctly a semi-private character. It is perfectly evident from the Epistle itself (cf. Titus 2:15) that its teaching was also intended for the church in Crete to which Titus was ministering.

2. This letter is in every way very much like I Timothy, which is due to the fact that the two were written about the same time and were called forth by very similar situations. It is shorter than the earlier Epistle, but covers almost the same ground. We do not find in it any advance on the doctrinal teachings of the other letters of Paul; in fact it contains very little doctrinal teaching, aside from the comprehensive statements of the doctrine of grace in Titus 2:11-14 and Titus 3:4-8. The former of these passages is a locus classicus. The main interest of the Epistle is ecclesiastical and ethical, the government of the church and the moral life of its members receiving due consideration. THE PERSON TO WHOM THE EPISTLE WAS WRITTEN

Paul addressed the letter to “Titus mine own son after the common faith,” Titus 1:4. We do not meet with Titus in the Acts of the Apostles, which is all the more remarkable, since he was one of

the most trusted companions of Paul. For this reason some surmised that he is to be identified with some one of the other co-laborers of Paul, as in Timothy, Silas or Justus, Acts 18:7. But neither of these satisfy the conditions.

He is first mentioned in Galatians 2:1; Galatians 2:3, where we learn that he was a Greek, who was not compelled to submit to circumcision, lest Paul should give his enemies a handle against himself. From Titus 1:4 we infer that he was one of the apostles' converts, and Galatians 2:3 informs us that he accompanied Paul to the council of Jerusalem. According to some the phrase ■συν ■μ■ι in this passage implies that he was also with Paul, when he wrote the Epistle to the Galatians, but the inference is rather unwarranted. He probably bore I Corinthians to its destination, 2 Corinthians 2:13, and after his return to Paul, was sent to Corinth again to complete the collection for the saints in Judaea, 2 Corinthians 8:16 if. Most likely he was also the bearer of II Corinthians. When next we hear of him, he is on the island of Crete in charge of the church(es) that had been founded there. Titus 1:4-5. and is requested to join Paul at Nicopolis, Titus 3:12. Evidently he was with the apostle in the early part of his second imprisonment, but soon left him for Dalmatia, either at the behest, or against the desire of Paul. The traditions regarding his later life are of doubtful value.

If we compare 1 Timothy 4:12 with Titus 2:15, we get the impression that Titus was older than his co-laborer at Ephesus. The timidity of the latter did not characterize the former. While Timothy went to Corinth, so it seems, with some hesitation, 1 Corinthians 16:10, Titus did not flinch from the delicate task of completing the collection for the saints in Judaea, but undertook it of his own accord, 2 Corinthians 8:16-17. He was full of enthusiasm for the Corinthians, was free from wrong motives in his work among them, and followed in the footsteps of the apostle, 2 Corinthians 12:18.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. The occasion for writing this Epistle is found in the desire of Paul that Titus should come to him in the near future, and in the condition of the Cretan church(es), whose origin is lost in obscurity. Probably the island was evangelized soon after the first Pentecost by those Cretans that were converted at Jerusalem, Acts 2:11. During the last part of his life Paul visited the island and made provision for the external organization of the church(es) there. When he left, he entrusted this important task to his spiritual son, Titus, Titus 1:5. The church(es) consisted of both Jews and Gentiles, Titus 1:10, of different ages and of various classes, Titus 2:1-10. The Cretans did not have a very good reputation, Titus 1:12, and some of them did not believe their reputed character, even after they had turned to Christ. Apparently the errors that had crept into the church(es) there were very similar to those with which Timothy had to contend at Ephesus, though probably the Judaeistic element was still more prominent in them, Titus 1:10-11; Titus 1:14; Titus 3:9. The object of Paul in writing this letter is to summon Titus to come to him, as soon as another has taken his place; to give him directions regarding the ordination of presbyters in the different cities; to warn him against the heretics on the island; and guide him in his teaching and in his dealing with those that would not accept his word.

2. Time and Place. Respecting the time when this Epistle was written there is no unanimity. Those who believe in the genuineness of the letter, and at the same time postulate but one Roman imprisonment, seek a place for it in the life of Paul, as we know it from the Acts. According to some it was written during the apostles first stay at Corinth, from where, in that case, he must have

made a trip to Crete; others think it was composed at Ephesus, after Paul left Corinth and had on the way visited Crete. But the word “continued” in Acts 18:11 seems to preclude a trip from Corinth to Crete. Moreover both of these theories leave Pauls acquaintance with Apollos, presupposed in this letter, unexplained, Titus 3:13. Still others would date the visit to Crete and the composition of this letter somewhere between the years 54-57, when the apostle resided at Ephesus, but this hypothesis is also burdened with insuperable objections. Cf. above p. 249. The Epistle must have been composed in the interval between the first and the second imprisonment of the apostle, and supposing the winter of Titus 3:13 to be the same as that of 2 Timothy 4:21, probably in the early part of the year 67. We have no means to determine, where the letter was written, though something can be said in favor of Ephesus, cf. p. 639 above.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The Church from the beginning accepted this Epistle as canonical. There are passages in Clement of Rome, Ignatius, Barnabas, Justin Martyr and Theophilus that suggest literary dependence. Moreover the letter is found in all the MSS. and in the old Latin and Syriac Versions; and is referred to in the Muratorian Fragment. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian quote it by name. The permanent value of the letter is in some respects quite similar to that of I Timothy. It has historical significance in that it informs us of the spread of Christianity on the island of Crete, a piece of information that we could not gather from any other Biblical source. Like I Timothy it emphasizes for all ages to come the necessity of church organization and the special qualifications of the office bearers. It is unique in placing prominently before us the educative value of the grace of God for the life of every man, of male and female, young and old, bond and free.

02.22. The Epistle to Philemon

The Epistle to Philemon

CONTENTS We can distinguish three parts in this brief letter:

I. The Introduction, Philemon 1:1-7. This contains the address, the customary blessing, and a thanksgiving of the apostle for the charity of Philemon, for the increase of which Paul hopes, because it greatly refreshes the saints.

II. The Request, Philemon 1:8-21. Rather than command Philemon the apostle comes to him with a request, viz, that he receive back the converted slave Onesimus and forgive him his wrong-doing. Paul enforces his request by pointing to the conversion of Onesimus, and to his own willingness to repay Philemon what he lost, though he might ask retribution of him; and trusts that Philemon will do more than he asks.

III. Conclusion, Philemon 1:22-25. Trusting that he will be set free, the apostle requests Philemon to prepare for him lodging. With greetings of his fellow-laborers and a final salutation he ends his letter.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. This letter is closely related to the Epistle that was sent to the Colossian church. They were composed at the same time, were sent to the same city and, with a single exception (that of Justus), contain identical greetings. At the same time it is distinguished from Colossians in that it is a private letter. Yet it is not addressed to a single individual, but to a family and to the believers at their house.

2. The letter is further characterized by its great delicacy and tactfulness. It bears strong evidence to Christian courtesy, and has therefore been called “the polite epistle.” In it we see Paul, the gentleman, handling a delicate question with consummate skill. Though he might command, he prefers to request that Philemon forgive and receive again his former slave. Tactfully he refers to the spiritual benefit that accrued from what might be called material loss. In a delicate manner he reminds Philemon of the debt the latter owed him, and expresses his confidence that this brother in Christ would even do more than he requested.

AUTHORSHIP

Marcion included this letter in his Pauline collection, and the Muratorian Fragment also ascribes it to Paul. Tertullian and Origen quote it by name, and Eusebius reckons it among the Pauline letters.

Moreover the Epistle has all the marks of a genuine Pauline production. It is self-attested, contains the usual Pauline blessing, thanksgiving and salutation, reveals the character of the great apostle and clearly exhibits his style.

Yet even this short and admirable Epistle has not enjoyed universal recognition. Baur rejected it because of its close relation to Colossians and Ephesians, which he regarded as spurious. He called it “the embryo of a Christian romance,” like that of the Clementine Recognitions, its tendency being to show that what is lost on earth is gained in heaven. He also objects to it that it contains seven words which Paul uses nowhere else. Weizsacker and Pfleiderer are somewhat inclined to follow Baur. They find proof for the allegorical character of the letter in the name Onesimus =profitable, helpful. The latter thinks that this note may have accompanied the Epistle to the Colossians, to illustrate by a fictitious example the social precepts contained in that letter. Such criticism need not be taken seriously. Hilgenfelds dictum is that Baur has not succeeded in raising his explanation to the level of probability. And Renan says: “Paul alone can have written this little masterpiece.” THE PERSON TO WHOM THE LETTER IS WRITTEN The letter is addressed to “Philemon our dearly beloved and fellow-laborer, and to our beloved Apphia, and Archippus, our fellow-soldier, and to the church in thy house,” Philemon 1:1-2. Little is known of this Philemon. He was evidently an inhabitant of Colossae, Colossians 4:9, and apparently belonged to the wealthy class. He had slaves, received a circle of friends in his house, and was able to prepare a lodging for Paul, Philemon 1:22. His munificence was generally known, Philemon 1:5-7, and he made himself useful in Christian service. He was converted by Paul, Philemon 1:19, most likely during the apostles three years residence at Ephesus. Apphia is generally regarded as the wife of Philemon, while many consider Archippus as their son. We notice from Colossians 4:17 that the latter had an office in the church. Probably he was temporarily taking the place of Epaphras. The expression “the church in thy house” undoubtedly refers to the Christians of Colossae that gathered in the dwelling of Philemon for worship.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. The occasion for writing this Epistle is clearly indicated in the letter itself. Onesimus, the slave of Philemon absconded and, so it seems, defrauded his master, Philemon 1:18-19. He fled to Rome, where in some way—it is useless to guess just how—he fell in with Paul, whom he may have known from the time of his Ephesian residence. The apostle was instrumental in converting him and in showing him the evil of his way, 10, and although he would gladly have retained him for the work, sent him back to Colossae in deference to the claims of Philemon. He did not send him empty-handed, however, but gave him a letter of recommendation, in which he informs Philemon of the change wrought in Onesimus by which the former slave became a brother, bespeaks for him a favorable reception in the family of his master and in the circle that gathered at their house for worship, and even hints at the desirability of emancipating him.

2. Time and place. For the discussion of the time and place of composition cf. what was said respecting the Epistle to the Ephesians.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE This Epistle is rarely quoted by the early church fathers, which is undoubtedly due to its brevity and to its lack of doctrinal contents. The letter is recognized by Marcion and the Muratorian Fragment, and is contained in the old Latin and Syriac Versions. Tertullian quotes it more than once, but no trace of it is found in Irenaeus and Clement of Alexandria. Eusebius classes it with the Homologoumena and Jerome argues at length against those who refused to accept it as Pauline. The Church never doubted its canonicity. The

permanent value of this little letter is both psychological and ethical. It shows us Paul as he corresponds in a friendly way with a brother in Christ, and thus gives us a new glimpse of his character, the character of a perfect gentleman, unobtrusive, refined, skillful and withal firm,—a character worthy of imitation. Moreover it reveals to us how Paul, in view of the unity of bond and free in Jesus Christ, deals with the perplexing question of slavery. He does not demand the abolishment of the institution, since the time for such a drastic measure had not yet come; but he does clearly hint at emancipation as the natural result of the redemptive work of Christ.

02.23. The Epistle to the Hebrews

The Epistle to the Hebrews

CONTENTS In this Epistle we may distinguish five parts.

I. The Superiority of Christ as Mediator, Hebrews 1:1-14, Hebrews 2:1-18, Hebrews 3:1-19, Hebrews 4:1-16. The writer begins by saying that the New Testament revelation was mediated by the very Son of God, who is far superior to the angels, Hebrews 1:1-14; whose revelation one can only neglect to the peril of one's soul, Hebrews 2:1-4, and in whom and through whom the ideal of man is realized through suffering, Hebrews 2:5-18. Then he points out that Christ is greater than Moses, as the builder is greater than the house and the son is superior to the servant, Hebrews 3:1-6, wherefore it is necessary that we should listen to his voice, since unbelief deprives us of the blessings of salvation, as is clearly seen in the history of Israel, Hebrews 3:7-19. They were not brought into the rest by Joshua, so that the promise remains to be fulfilled, and we should labor to enter into that rest, seeking strength in our great High Priest, Hebrews 4:1-16.

II. Christ the true High Priest, Hebrews 5:1-14, Hebrews 6:1-20, Hebrews 7:1-28. Like every high priest Christ was taken from among men to represent them in worship, and was called by God, Hebrews 5:1-5; but in distinction from these He was made a Priest after the order of Melchizedek, and thus became the author of eternal salvation for those that obey him, Hebrews 5:6-10. Since the readers were not yet able to understand all that might be said regarding the Priesthood of Christ after the order of Melchizedek, the author exhorts them to press on to more perfect knowledge, to beware of apostasy, and to be diligent to inherit, through faith and patience, the promises of the ever faithful God, Hebrews 5:11-14, Hebrews 6:1-20. Returning now to the subject in hand, the writer describes the unique character of Melchizedek, Hebrews 7:1-10, and contrasts the priesthood of Christ with that of the order of Aaron with respect to fleshly descent (Levi—Judah), Hebrews 7:11-14; endurance (temporal—eternal) Hebrews 7:15-19; solemnity and weight (without oath—with oath) Hebrews 7:20-22; number (many—one) Hebrews 7:23-24; and then argues the necessity of such a High Priest for us, Hebrews 7:25-28.

III. Pre-eminence of the New Covenant mediated by Jesus Christ, Hebrews 8:1-13, Hebrews 9:1-28, Hebrews 10:1-18. As High Priest Christ is now ministering in heaven, of which the tabernacle on earth was but a shadow, since He is the Mediator, not of the Old, but of the New Covenant, Hebrews 8:1-13. The ordained services and the sanctuary of the old dispensation were merely figures for the time then present, and pointed to the better services which Christ, the Mediator of the New Covenant would render at the heavenly sanctuary, since He would not enter with the blood of bulls and goats, but with his own blood, thus bringing eternal redemption, Hebrews 9:1-28. The sacrifices of the old dispensation could not take away sin, and therefore Christ offered himself for our purification and to give us access to the throne of God, Hebrews 10:1-18.

IV. Application of the Truths presented and Personal Epilogue, Hebrews 10:19-39, Hebrews 11:1-40, Hebrews 12:1-29, Hebrews 13:1-25. The writer exhorts the readers to draw near to God with confidence, and warns them against apostasy, reminding them of its dire consequences and of their former endurance, and assuring them that the just shall live by faith, Hebrews 10:19-39. He illustrates this point by presenting to their view a long line of heroes that triumphed in faith, Hebrews 11:1-40. In view of these examples he urges them to endure chastening which is a sign of their sonship and ministers to their sanctification, and warns them against despising the grace of God, Hebrews 12:1-17. Since they have received far greater privileges than Old Testament saints, they should strive to serve God acceptably with reverence and godly feat, Hebrews 12:18-29. Then follow some general exhortations respecting hospitality, marriage, contentment, the following in the footsteps of their teachers, and the necessity of guarding against strange doctrines, Hebrews 13:1-17; after which the writer closes the letter with a few personal notices and salutations, Hebrews 13:18-25.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. The Epistle to the Hebrews has not the letter-like appearance of the confessedly Pauline writings. It does not contain the name of the author, nor that of the addressees. And if it were not for a few stray personal notes, Hebrews 10:34; Hebrews 13:18; Hebrews 13:25, and for the greetings and salutations found at the end, we might regard this writing as a treatise rather than an Epistle. Deissmann, who emphasizes the nonliterary character of the admittedly Pauline compositions, and insists that they be looked upon as real letters, considers this writing to be an Epistle as distinguished from a letter, and thinks it is very important to recognize its literary character. According to him “it is historically the earliest example of Christian artistic literature.” Light from the Ancient East p.64 f.;236 f.; 243.

2. The relation in which the teaching of this book stands to that of the Old Testament is unique. It does not view the Law as a body of commandments imposed on the obedience of man, but as a system of ritual provided by the mercy of God; and clearly reveals its insufficiency as an institution for the removal of sin, since it could only remove ceremonial defilement and could not purify the heart. In harmony with this divergence from the prevailing Pauline conception of the Law, it does not, like the undoubted letters of Paul, regard the Law as an episode temporarily intervening, on account of sin, between the promise and its fulfilment; but as a typical representation, as a primitive revelation of the blessings to which the promise pointed. In it the image of the New Testament realities is dimly seen; it is the bud that gradually develops into a beautiful flower. The realities that answer to the shadows of the Old Testament are pointed out in detail, and thereby this Epistle is for all ages the inspired commentary on the ritual of the Old Covenant, making the pages of Leviticus luminous with heavenly light. We should bear in mind that the terms type and antitype are employed in a rather unusual sense in this letter; their meaning is in a way reversed. The holy places of the earthly tabernacle are called the ■ντ■τυπαof the true and heavenly, Hebrews 9:24, according to which usage the latter are, of course, the types of the former, cf. Hebrews 8:5.

3. This letter is peculiar also in the way in which it quotes the Old Testament. While in the writings that bear Paul’s name the quotations are partly from the Hebrew and partly from the Septuagint, in this Epistle they are uniformly derived from the Greek. Moreover the formulae of quotation are

different from those in the other letters. While these generally refer the passages quoted to their human authors, except in cases where God speaks in the first person in the Old Testament, our Epistle with but few exceptions refers them to the primary author, i. e. to God or to the Holy Spirit, thus offering indubitable proof of the authors belief in the inspiration of the Scriptures.

4. The language of this Epistle is the best literary Greek of the New Testament. We do not find the author struggling, as it were, with a scanty language to express the abundance of the thoughts that are crowding in upon him. There are no broken constructions, no halting sentences, and, although a few parentheses are introduced, they do not disturb the thought, cf. Hebrews 11:38; Hebrews 12:20-21. The sentences are all evenly balanced and the style flows on with great regularity. The writer seems to have given special attention to the rhetorical rhythm and equilibrium of words and sentences. Westcott says: “The style of the book is characteristically Hellenistic, perhaps we may say, as far as our scanty knowledge goes, Alexandrian.” Comm. p. LXI.

AUTHORSHIP The authorship of the Epistle to the Hebrews constitutes a very difficult question. The external testimony is of a conflicting character. The oldest and most explicit tradition is that of Alexandria, where Clement testified that the Epistle was written by Paul in the Hebrew language and was translated by Luke into Greek. Origen regards the thoughts of the Epistle as Paul’s, but the language as that of a disciple of the great apostle, and finally comes to the conclusion that God only knows who wrote this letter. He does not make mention of a Hebrew original. Both Clement and Origen agree, however, in regarding the Greek Epistle as Pauline only in a secondary sense. In Italy and Western Europe generally the letter was not held to be Paul’s. This is the more remarkable, since we find the first trace of its existence in the West, in the writings of Clement of Rome. Hippolytus and Irenaeus were acquainted with it, but did not accept it as Paul’s; Cajus reckoned only thirteen Pauline Epistles and Eusebius says that even in his time the negative opinion was still held by some Romans. In North Africa, where the Roman tradition is usually followed, the letter was not regarded as the work of Paul. Tertullian ascribes it to Barnabas. In the fourth century the Eastern tradition gradually prevailed over the Western, especially through the influence of Augustine and Jerome, though they felt by no means certain that Paul was the author. During the Middle Ages this mooted question hardly ever came up for discussion, but when the light of the Reformation dawned, doubts were again expressed as to the authorship of Paul. Erasmus questioned whether Paul had written the letter; Luther conjectured that Apollos was the writer; Calvin thought that it might be the work of Luke or of Clement; and Beza held that it was written by a disciple of Paul. At present there are comparatively few that maintain the authorship of Paul. And if we examine the internal evidence of the Epistle, we find that it points away from Paul. It must be admitted that its teaching is in a general sense Pauline, but this does not prove that Paul was the author. There are also some expressions in the letter to which parallels are found in the Epistles of Paul. Compare Hebrews 2:14 with 2 Timothy 1:10; 1 Corinthians 15:26 ;— Hebrews 2:8 with 1 Corinthians 15:27. But this similarity may find its explanation in the authors acquaintance with the Pauline writings. The statement in Hebrews 10:34 cannot be urged in favor of Paul, especially not, if we adopt the reading το■ς δεσμ■οισ συνεπατ■σατε, in which almost all the critical editors concur, and which is certainly favored by the context. The expression in Hebrews 13:19 does not prove that the writer was a prisoner, when he wrote these words, much less that he was Paul. Neither does the notice respecting Timothy in Hebrews 13:23 necessarily point to the apostle, for some of the older companions of Paul might have made that same

statement. Moreover we know of no time in the life of Paul when Timothy was a prisoner. If there were other positive evidence for the Pauline authorship, some of these supposed criteria might serve as corroborative proofs, but such evidence is not forthcoming. The main features of the Epistle are such as to discredit the authorship of Paul: (1) The letter, in distinction from the Pauline Epistles, is entirely anonymous. It contains neither the name of the author nor that of the addressees. Moreover the customary blessing and thanksgiving are altogether wanting. (2) In Hebrews 2:3 the writer clearly distinguishes himself and his hearers from those who heard the Lord, i. e. from his immediate disciples and apostles. Would Paul say that he had heard the word of the Gospel only from the immediate followers of the Lord, and not of the Lord himself? The assumption does not seem reasonable in view of Galatians 1:12. (3) Though the teaching of the Epistle is in full harmony with that of Paul, yet it does not reveal the usual trend of Paul's reasoning. As Bruce points out (Hastings D. B. Art. Hebrews, Epistle to), there is an entire absence of the Pauline antitheses law and grace, faith and works, flesh and spirit; while there are found instead the antitheses of shadow and reality, type and antitype. (4) While Paul is wont to take some of his quotations from the Hebrew and often quotes from memory, the writer of this Epistle always derives his quotations from the Septuagint, and with such exactness that he seems to have had the manuscript before him. He does not like Paul refer his quotations to the human author, but to the auctor primarius. And instead of the Pauline formula of quotation, γ■γραπται or ■ γραφ■ λ■γει he often employs μαρτυρε■or φησ■ (5) There is also a great difference in the names ascribed to the Mediator. In the writings of Paul we find the names, Christ, the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ our Lord, our Lord Jesus Christ, and very seldom the simple Jesus. In our Epistle, on the other hand, Jesus is the regular name for the Saviour; Jesus Christ is used three times, the Lord, twice, but the full Pauline name, our Lord Jesus Christ is wanting altogether. (6) The strongest proof against the Pauline authorship is generally considered to be the argument from style. Says Dr. Salmon: "There is here none of the ruggedness of St. Paul, who never seems to be solicitous about forms of expression, and whose thoughts come pouring out so fast as to jostle one another in the struggle for utterance. This is a calm composition, exhibiting sonorous words and well balanced sentences. I have already shown that I do not ascribe to Paul any rigid uniformity of utterance, and that I am not tempted to deny a letter to be his merely because it contains a number of words and phrases which are not found in his other compositions; but in this case I find myself unable to assert the Pauline authorship in the face of so much unlikeness, in the structure of sentences, in the general tone of the Epistle, in the general way of presenting doctrines, and in other points that I will not delay to enumerate." Introd. p. 464 f. In view of all the foregoing it is all but certain that Paul did not write the Epistle to the Hebrews. But now the question naturally arises: Who did? Several answers have given, as Barnabas (Tertullian), Luke or Clement (Calvin), Apollos (Luther), Silas (Bohme, Godet), (Aquila and) Priscilla (Harnack), of which only two are at present seriously considered, viz. Barnabas and Apollos, though the suggestion of Harnack has found favor with some. Renan, Hausrath, Weiss, Salmon and Barth accept the authorship of Barnabas, relying especially on the facts: (1) that Tertullian points to him as the author, thereby transmitting not only his own private opinion, but the North African tradition; (2) that Barnabas was an apostolic man and as a Levite would be well acquainted with the Jewish ritual; and (3) that, as an inhabitant of the island Cyprus, he would in all probability have been subject to the influence of Alexandrian culture. On the other hand, Lunemann, Farrar, Alford and Zahn hold that Apollos best answers the requirements, since (1) he was a man of fine Greek

culture; (2) was well acquainted with the writings of Paul; and (3) as a native of Alexandria was deeply embued with the thoughts of the Alexandrian school. But it has been objected to Barnabas that he could not reckon himself to the second generation of Christians, Hebrews 2:3; and that he certainly knew Hebrew, with which, so it seems, the author of this Epistle was not acquainted ;—and to Apollos, that there is no tradition whatever connecting his name with the Epistle; and that the historical allusions in Hebrews 13:18-24 have no point of contact in the life of Apollos as we know it from the Acts of the Apostles. If we had to choose between the two, Barnabas would be our choice, but we prefer with Moll, Westcott, Dods, Baljon and Bruce (Hastings D. B.) to confess our ignorance on this point and to abide by the dictum of Origen. The general thought of the Epistle is Pauline, but God only knows who wrote it.

DESTINATION

Under this head we must consider two questions:1. Was the letter written for Jewish or for Gentile Christians? 2. Where were the first readers located?

1. Until a comparatively recent date the general opinion was that this Epistle was composed for Jewish Christians. Of late, however, some scholars, as Schuirer, Weizsacker, Von Soden, Julicher and McGiffert reached the opposite conclusion. They argue that the fundamentals enumerated in Hebrews 6:1-2 are such as were suitable only to Gentile catechumens; that the expression “the living God” in Hebrews 9:14 implies a contrast between the true God and pagan idols; and that the exhortations at the end of the Epistle were more appropriate to Gentile than to Jewish Christians. From these passages it has been argued with great ingenuity that the original readers were Christians of the Gentiles; but they are also susceptible of a plausible interpretation on the opposite view. Cf. the Commentaries and also Dods, Exp. Gk. Test. IV p. 231. It seems preferable to hold that the first readers were of Jewish extraction. In support of this theory we cannot rely on the title πρ■ς ■Εβρα■ος, because the presumption is that this, though it can be traced to the second century, is not original. Yet it does express the early conviction of the Church that the letter was destined first of all for Jewish Christians. The general features of the letter point in the same direction. The Epistle presupposes that its readers are in danger of a relapse into Judaism; and its symbolism, based entirely on the tabernacle and its services, is peculiarly adapted to converted Jews. The whole Epistle has a Jewish physiognomy. With Bruce we say: “If the readers were indeed Gentiles, they were Gentiles so completely disguised in Jewish dress and wearing a mask with so pronounced Jewish features, that the true nationality has been hidden for nineteen centuries. Hastings D. B.

2. But where must we look for the first readers? Some scholars, regarding this writing as a treatise, are of the opinion that it was not intended for any definite locality, but for Christians in general, (Lipsius, Reuss); this opinion cannot pass muster, however, in view of the many passages that have no meaning unless they are addressed to a definite circle of Christians, Hebrews 5:11-12; Hebrews 6:9-10; Hebrews 10:32; Hebrews 12:4. At the same time it is impossible to determine with certainty the exact locality in which the readers were found. The four places that received the most prominent consideration in this connection are Alexandria, Antioch (in Syria), Rome and Jerusalem, of which, it would appear, the choice really lies between the last two. The position that the letter was sent to the Jewish Christians of Jerusalem or of entire Judaea, is defended by Moll, Lunemann, Salmon, Weiss and Westcott, and is supported by the following considerations: (1)

The name ■Εβρα■ος, embodying an early tradition, certainly fits them better than it does Christians of any other community. (2) They were the most likely to develop great love for the Jewish ritual and to be exposed to danger from these quarters. (3) Their church (es) was (were) well nigh purely Jewish, which best accords with the total absence of any reference to Gentile Christians in the Epistle. (4) They would certainly understand the symbolism of the letter far better than the Christians of the Diaspora. (5) A passage like Hebrews 13:12-13 has a peculiar appropriateness, if it was written to them. The objections are urged against this hypothesis, however, that the passages Hebrews 3:2 and Hebrews 5:12 are hardly applicable to the Christians of Jerusalem or Judaea; that these, rather than exercise liberality, Hebrews 6:10, were continually the objects of charity; that the letter was written in Greek and not in Hebrew; and that, as far as we know, Timothy stood in no particular relation to the Jerusalem church. Many present day scholars, such as Alford, Zahn, Baljon, Dods, Holtzmann, Julicher and Von Soden fixed on Rome as the destination of this letter. In favor of this they urge: (1) The greeting of Hebrews 13:24 is evidently one of such as had gone forth from Italy, to their old friends at home. (2) The first traces of the use of this Epistle are found in the writings of Clement and in the Shepherd of Hermas, both issuing from Rome. (3) The term ■ρομενοι, Hebrews 13:7; Hebrews 13:17; Hebrews 13:24 was not in vogue in the Pauline churches, but was used at Rome, since Clement speaks of προηγο■μενοι. (4) The persecutions mentioned in Hebrews 10:32-34 probably refer to those of Nero and his predecessors. But this theory is burdened with the objections; that it was exactly at Rome that the canonicity of the letter was questioned for centuries; that the congregation at Rome was primarily Gentile-Christian (which Zahn denies, however); and that the words of Hebrews 12:4 were hardly applicable to the Christians at Rome after the Neronian persecution. To our mind the first theory deserves the preference, unless we are prepared to admit that the Epistle was written to Gentile Christians.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. This letter was occasioned by the danger of apostasy that threatened the readers. For a time they had professed Christianity, Hebrews 5:12, and for the sake of it had endured persecution, and had even joyfully borne the spoiling of their goods, Hebrews 10:32-34. But they were disappointed, so it seems, in two respects. In the first place in their expectation of the speedy return of Christ to triumph over his enemies and to transform the affliction of his followers into everlasting bliss. Christ remained hidden from their view and their sufferings continued, yea even increased in severity. In the encircling gloom they had no visible support for their faith. And in the second place they were disappointed in the attitude their own people took to the new religion. For a time they had combined their Christian services with the worship of their fathers, but it became ever increasingly evident that the Jews as a people would not accept Christ. Their brethren according to the flesh persisted in their opposition and waxed ever more intolerant of the followers of Jesus. The time was fast approaching, when these would have to break with the ministrations of the temple and look elsewhere for the support of their faith. Hence they had become feeble, Hebrews 12:12, had ceased to make progress, Hebrews 5:12, were inclined to unbelief, Hebrews 3:12, and in danger of falling away, Hebrews 6:4-6. Returning to Jewry, they might escape the persecution to which they were subjected, and enjoy their former privileges. The writer desires to warn them against the danger to which they were exposed, and to exhort them to remain loyal to their Christian standard. In order to do this he points out by way of contrast the true

nature and intrinsic worth of the Christian religion. The Old Testament service of God contained but the shadows of the New Testament realities. Christ is higher than the angels, Hebrews 1:1-14, is greater than Moses, Hebrews 3:1-19, is our only true High Priest, who through suffering opened up the way to heaven and gives us free unrestricted access to God, Hebrews 5:1-14, Hebrews 6:1-20, Hebrews 7:1-28, Hebrews 8:1-13, Hebrews 9:1-28, Hebrews 10:1-39. He was perfected through sufferings, that He might sympathize with his followers in their trials and afflictions, Hebrews 2:10; Hebrews 2:17-18; Hebrews 4:15, and might lead them through suffering to glory. If He is now invisible to the eye, it is only because He has entered the sanctuary, where He continually ministers to the spiritual needs of his followers, and insures them free access to the throne of God, Hebrews 4:16; Hebrews 6:18-20; Hebrews 9:24; Hebrews 10:18-22. He may seem distant, yet He is near, and they who believe can enjoy his presence and strength through faith. That is their true support in time of need, Hebrews 11:1-40, Hebrews 12:1-2. And though He tarry for a while, He will surely come in due time to lead his children to glory. They should willingly go forth without the camp, bearing his reproach, since they enjoy far greater privileges than the Old Testament saints and will at last enter their eternal inheritance.

2. Time and Place. It is not easy to determine the date of this letter, since it contains no definite notes of time. The majority of scholars agree in placing it before the destruction of Jerusalem. Thus Moll, Kurtz, Hilgenfeld, Reuss, Davidson, Weiss, Godet, Westcott, Salmon, Bruce, Barth, Dods. Others, however, as Baur, Kluge, Zahn, Meijboom, Volkmar and Hausrath bring it down to a later date. To our mind the evidence favors a date before the destruction of the temple, for (1) Though it is true that the author does not speak of the temple but of the tabernacle, the danger to which the Hebrew Christians were exposed seems to imply that the temple services were still carried on. (2) If the Jewish ritual had already ceased, it is strange that the writer does not refer to this, when he describes the transitory character of the old dispensation. And (3) the present tense used by the writer in the description of the Jewish services, Hebrews 8:4 f.; Hebrews 9:6; Hebrews 9:9 (cf. Gk.); Hebrews 10:1 ff.; Hebrews 13:10 creates the presumption that the ministry of the temple was still continued. It is true that parallels to such presents use of past events can be pointed out in Clement of Rome. But as a rule the use of the present implies the existence of the subject spoken of, at the time of the speaker; and the question of Hebrews 10:2, “Else would they not have ceased to be offered ?” is certainly difficult to interpret on any other view. It is not possible to say, how long before the destruction of Jerusalem the Epistle was written, but from the solemn tone of the writer, and from the fact that, according to him, the readers saw the day of the Lord approaching, Hebrews 10:25, we infer that it was but shortly before that great catastrophe. Cf. also Hebrews 12:26-27. We shall not go far wrong, if we date the Epistle about the year 69.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The letter was not regarded as canonical in the Western church until the fourth century; in the Eastern church, however, the recognition of its apostolicity and canonicity went hand in hand. Clement of Alexandria often quotes the letter as canonical, and Origen does sometimes, though he felt uncertain as to its Pauline authorship. The Epistle is found in the Peshito, but it is uncertain, whether it also had a place in the earliest Syriac translation. From the fourth century the Western church also admitted its canonical authority. The intrinsic value of the letter naturally commended it as authoritative and as a part of the Word of God. Augustine and Jerome regarded it as canonical, though they still had scruples about the authorship of Paul; and it was. included in the Lists authorized by the Councils of Hippo in 393 and

of Carthage in 397 and 419. From that time the Church did not again question the canonical authority of the Epistle until the time of the Reformation, when some Lutheran theologians had serious doubts. The permanent value of this Epistle lies especially in two facts, which may be said to imply a third. In the first place it brings out, as no other New Testament book does, the essential unity of both the Old and the New Testament religions. They are both from God; they both center in Christ; they both pertain to the same spiritual verities; and they both aim at bringing man to God. In the second place the Epistle emphasizes the difference between the two dispensations, the one containing the shadows, the other the corresponding realities; the services of the one being earthly and therefore carnal and temporal, those of the other being heavenly and therefore spiritual and abiding; the ministry of the one effecting only ceremonial purity and union with God, that of the other issuing in the purification of the soul and in spiritual communion with God in heaven. And because the letter so presents the relation of the Old Covenant to the New, it is an inspired commentary on the entire Mosaic ritual.

02.24. The General Epistle of James

The General Epistle of James

CONTENTS

There are no clearly defined parts in this Epistle; hence no classification of its contents is attempted. After the opening salutation the writer points out the significance of temptation in the life of his readers, exhorts them to ask in faith for the wisdom needed in bearing them and warns them not to refer their inward temptations to God, James 1:1-18. Then he admonishes them to receive the Word in all humility and to carry it out in action, James 1:19-27. He warns them against that respect of persons that reveals itself in favoring the rich at the expense of the poor, reminding them of the fact that he who violates the law in one point breaks the whole law; James 2:1-13; and asserts that it is foolish to trust to a faith without works, since this is dead, James 2:14-26. A warning against rash teaching and reproving follows, based on the difficulty of controlling the tongue, which is yet of the very greatest importance, James 3:1-12. Wisdom from above is commended to the readers, since the wisdom of this world is full of bitter envy and works confusion and evil, while heavenly wisdom is plenteous in mercy and yields good fruits, James 3:13-18. The author then reprimands the readers for their quarrelsomeness, which results from a selfishness and lust that infects even one's prayers and renders them futile; and exhorts them to humble themselves before God, James 4:1-12. He condemns those who, in the pride of possession, forget their dependence on God, and denounces the rich that oppress and rob the poor, James 4:13-17, James 5:1-6; after which he urges the brethren to be patient, knowing the Lord is at hand, James 5:7-11. Finally he warns his readers against false swearing, gives special advice to the sick, exhorts them all to pray for one another, reminding them of the efficacy of prayer, and of the blessedness of turning a sinner from his sinful way, James 5:12-20.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. From a literary point of view the Epistle of James is quite different from those of Paul. The latter are real letters, which cannot be said of this Epistle. There is no benediction at the beginning, nor any salutation or greeting at the end. Moreover it contains very little that points to definite historical circumstances such as are known to us from other sources. Zahn calls this Epistle, "eine . . . in schriftliche Form gefasste Ansprache." Einl. I p. 73. Barth speaks of it as, "eine Sammlung von Ansprachen des Jakobus an die Gemeinde zu Jerusalem," which, he thinks were taken down by a hearer and sent to the Jewish Christians of the Diaspora. Einl. p. 140. And Deissmann says: "The Epistle of James is from the beginning a little work of literature, a pamphlet addressed to the whole of Christendom, a veritable Epistle (as distinguished from a letter). The whole of the contents agrees therewith. There is none of the unique detail peculiar to the situation, such as we have in the letters of Paul, but simply general questions, most of them still conceivable under the present conditions of church life." Light from the Ancient East p. 235.

2. The contents of the Epistle are not doctrinal but ethical. The writer does not discuss any of the great truths of redemption, but gives moral precepts for the life of his readers. There is no Christological teaching whatever, the name of Christ being mentioned but twice, viz. James 1:1; James 2:1. Beischlag correctly remarks that it is “so wesentlich noch Lehre Christi und so wenig noch Lehre von Christo.” The letter may be called, the Epistle of the Royal Law, James 2:8. The emphasis does not rest on faith, but on the works of the law, which the writer views, not in its ceremonial aspect, but in its deep moral significance and as an organic whole, so that transgressing a single precept is equivalent to a violation of the whole law. The essential element of life according to the law is a love that reveals itself in grateful obedience to God and in self-denying devotion to one’s neighbor.

3. Some scholars, as Spitta, claim that this Epistle is really not a Christian but a Jewish writing; but the contents clearly prove the contrary. Yet it must be admitted that the Epistle has a somewhat Jewish complexion. While the writer never once points to the exemplary life of Christ, he does refer to the examples of Abraham, Rahab, Job and Elijah. In several passages he reveals his dependence on the Jewish Chokmah literature, on the Sermon on the Mount, and on the words of Jesus generally; compare James 1:2 with Matthew 5:12 ;— James 1:4 with Matthew 5:48 ;— James 1:5 with Matthew 7:7;— James 1:6 with Mark 11:23;—James 1:22 with Matthew 7:24;—2:8 with Mark 12:31;—2:13 with Matthew 5:7; Matthew 18:33;— James 4:10 with Matthew 23:12; etc. Moreover the author does not borrow his figurative language from the social and civil institutions of the Greek and Roman world, as Paul often does, but derives it, like the Lord himself had done, from the native soil of Palestine, when he speaks of the sea, James 1:6; James 3:4; of the former and the latter rain, James 5:7; of the vine and the fig-tree, James 3:12; of the scorching wind, James 1:11; and of salt and bitter springs, James 3:11-12.

4. The Epistle is written in exceptionally good, though Hellenistic Greek. The vocabulary of the author is rich and varied, and perfectly adequate to the expression of his lofty sentiments. His sentences are not characterized by great variation; yet they have none of the utter simplicity, bordering on monotony, that marks the writings of John. The separate thoughts are very clearly expressed, but in certain instances there is some difficulty in tracing their logical sequence. We find some examples of Hebrew parallelism especially in the fourth chapter; downright Hebraisms, however are very few, cf. the adjectival genitive in James 1:25, and the instrumental εν in James 3:9.

AUTHORSHIP

According to external testimony James, the brother of the Lord, is the author of this Epistle. Origen is the first one to quote it by name, and it is only in Rufinus Latin translation of his works that the author is described as, “James, the brother of the Lord.” Eusebius mentions James, the brother of Christ, as the reputed author, remarking, however, that the letter was considered spurious. Jerome, acknowledging its authenticity, says: “James, called the Lord’s brother, surnamed the Just, wrote but one Epistle, which is among the seven catholic ones. The author simply names himself, “James a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ,” James 1:1, thus leaving the question of his identity still a matter of conjecture, since there were other persons of that name in the apostolic Church. It is generally admitted, however, that there is but one James that meets the requirements, viz, the brother of the Lord, for: (1) The writer was evidently a man of great authority

and recognized as such not only by the Jews in Palestine but also by those of the diaspora. There is only one James of whom this can be said. While James, the brother of John, and James the son of Alphaeus soon disappear from view in the Acts of the Apostles, this James stands out prominently as the head of the Jerusalem church. During the Lords public ministry he did not yet believe in Christ, John 7:5. Probably his conversion was connected with the special appearance of the Lord to him after the resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:7. In the Acts we soon meet him as a man of authority. When Peter had escaped out of prison, after James the brother of John had been killed, he says to the brethren: “Go, show these things to James,” Acts 12:17. Paul says that he, on his return from Arabia, went to Jerusalem and saw only Peter and James, the Lords brother, Galatians 1:18-19. On the following visit James, Cephas and John, who seemed to be pillars, gave Paul and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, Galatians 2:9. Still later certain emissaries came from James to Antioch and apparently had considerable influence, Galatians 2:12. The leading part in the council of Jerusalem is taken by this James, Acts 15:13 if. And when, at the end of his third missionary journey, Paul comes to Jerusalem, he first greeted the brethren informally, and on the following day “went unto James, and all the elders were present,” Acts 21:18. (2) The authorship of this James is also favored by a comparison of the letter, Acts 15:23-29, very likely written under the inspiring influence of James, together with his speech at the council of Jerusalem, and certain parts of our Epistle, which reveals striking similarities. The salutation χα■ρειν Acts 15:23, James 1:1 occurs elsewhere in the New Testament only in Acts 23:26. The words τ■ καλ■ν ■νομα τ■ ■πικληθ■ν ■φ ■ ■μ■ς, 2:7, can only be paralleled in the New Testament in Acts 15:17. Both the speech of James and the Epistle are characterized by pointed allusions to the Old Testament. The affectionate term ■δελφ■ς, of frequent occurrence in the Epistle (cf. James 1:2; James 1:9; James 1:16; James 1:19; James 2:5; James 2:15; James 3:1; James 4:11; James 5:7; James 5:9-10; James 5:12; James 5:19), is also found in Acts 15:13; Acts 15:23; compare especially James 2:5 and Acts 15:13. Besides these there are other verbal coincidences, as ■πισκ■πτεσθαι, James 1:27; Acts 15:14; τηρε■ν and διατηρε■ν, James 1:27, Acts 15:29; ■πισκ■πτεσθαι, James 5:19-20; Acts 15:19; ■γαπητ■ς, James 1:16; James 1:19; James 2:5; Acts 15:25. (3) The words of the address are perfectly applicable to this particular James. He does not claim that he is an apostle, as do Paul and Peter in their Epistles. It might be objected, however, that if he was the brother of the Lord, he would have laid stress on that relation to enhance his authority. But does it not seem far more likely, in view of the fact that Christ definitely pointed out the comparative insignificance of this earthly relationship, Matthew 12:46-50, that James would be careful not to make it the basis of any special claim, and therefore simply speaks of himself as a servant of God and of the Lord Jesus Christ?

Now the question comes up, whether this James cannot be identified with James, the son of Alphaeus, one of the Lord’s apostles, Matthew 10:3; Mark 3:18; Luke 6:15; Acts 1:13. This identification would imply that the so-called brethren of the Lord were in reality his cousin’s, a theory that was broached by Jerome about A. D. 383, and which, together with the view of Epiphanius (that these brethren were sons of Joseph by a former marriage) was urged especially in the interest of the perpetual virginity. But this theory is not borne out by the data of Scripture, for: (1) The brethren of the Lord are distinguished from his disciples in John 2:12, and from the twelve after their calling in Matthew 12:46 ff. ;Mark 3:31 ff.; Luke 8:19 ff.; and John 7:3. It is stated that they did not belong to the circle of his disciples, indirectly in Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3, and directly in John 7:5. (2) Although it is true that cousins are sometimes called brethren in Scripture, cf.

Genesis 14:16; Genesis 29:12; Genesis 29:15, we need not assume that this is the case also in the instance before us. Moreover it is doubtful whether James the son of Alphaeus was a cousin of Jesus. According to some this relationship is clearly implied in John 19:25; but it is by no means certain that in that passage, “Mary the wife of Clopas” stands in apposition with, “his mother’s sister.” If we do accept that interpretation, we must be ready to believe that there were two sisters bearing the same name. It is more plausible to think that John speaks of four rather than of three women, especially in view of the fact that the gospels speak of at least five in connection with Jesus death and resurrection, cf. Matthew 27:56; Mark 16:1; Luke 24:10. But even if we suppose that he speaks of but three, how are we going to prove the identity of Alphaeus and Clopas? And in case we could demonstrate this, how must we account for the fact that only two sons are named of Mary, the wife of Clopas, viz. James and Joses, Matthew 27:56; Mark 15:40; Luke 24:10, comp. John 19:25, while there are four brethren of the Lord, Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3, viz. James, Joses, Judas and Simon? It has been argued that Judas is indicated as a brother of James the less in Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13, where we read of a ■Ιο■δας ■Ιακ■βου. But it is contrary to analogy to supply the word brother in such cases. (3) We repeatedly find the brethren of the Lord in the company of Mary, the mother of Jesus, just as we would expect to find children with their mother. Moreover in passages like Matthew 12:46; Mark 3:31-32; and Luke 8:19 it is an exegetical mistake to take the word mother in its literal sense, and then to put a different interpretation on the word brother. We conclude, therefore, that James, the brother of the Lord and the author of this Epistle, was not an apostle. There are two passages that seem to point in a different direction, viz. Galatians 1:19 and 1 Corinthians 15:7; but in the former passage ■ι μ■ may be adversative rather than exceptive, as in Luke 4:26-27, cf. Thayer in loco; and the name apostle was not limited to the twelve. The considerations of Lange in favor of identifying the author with James, the son of Alphaeus, are rather subjective.

James seems to have been a man of good common sense, with a well balanced judgment, who piloted the little vessel of the Jerusalem church through the Judaeistic breakers with a skillful hand, gradually weaning her from ceremonial observances without giving offense and recognizing the greater freedom of the Gentile churches. He was highly respected by the whole Church for his great piety and whole-hearted devotion to the saints. The account of Hegesippus with respect to his paramount holiness and ascetic habits is in all probability greatly overdrawn. Cf. Eusebius II 23. The authorship of James has been called in question by many scholars during the last century, such as DeWette, Schleiermacher, Baur, Hilgenfeld, Holtzmann, Harnack, Spitta, Baljon e.a. The main reasons for regarding the Epistle as spurious, are the following: (1) The condition of the church reflected in it reminds one of the church at Rome in the time of Hermas, when the glowing love of the first time had lost its fervency. (2) The Greek in which the Epistle is written is far better than one could reasonably expect of James, who always resided in Palestine.

(3) The writer does not mention the law of Moses, nor refer to any of its precepts, but simply urges the readers to keep the perfect law that requires love, charity, peacefulness, etc., just as a second century writer would do; while James believed in the permanent validity of the Mosaic law, at least for the Jews.

(4) The Epistle bears traces of dependence on some of the Epistles of Paul, especially Romans and Galatians, on the Epistle to the Hebrews and on I Peter; and clearly contradicts the Pauline doctrine of justification by faith. But these arguments need not shake our conviction as to the

authorship of James. The condition implied in this letter may very well and, at least in part, is known to have existed about the middle of the first century. Jos. Ant. XX 8.8; 9.2 Cf. especially Salmon, Introd, p. 501 f. With respect to the second argument Mayor remarks that, accepting the view that Jesus and his brethren usually spoke Aramaic, “we are not bound to suppose that, with towns like Sepphoris and Tiberius in their immediate vicinity, with Ptolomais, Scythopolis and Gadara at no great distance, they remained ignorant of Greek.” Hastings D. B. Art. James, the General Epistle of. The idea that James was a fanatic Judaeist and therefore could not but insist on keeping the Mosaic law, is not borne out by Scripture. He was a Jewish Christian and reveals himself as such in Acts 15:14-29; Acts 21:20-25 and in his Epistle, cf. James 2:5 if.; James 3:2; James 4:7; James 4:14. His insistence on the spirit of the law, not at all Judaeistic, is in perfect harmony with the teaching of the Lord. The literary dependence to which reference has been made may, in so far as any really exists, just as well be reversed, and the contradiction between James and Paul is only apparent. Cf. the larger Introductions and the Commentaries.

DESTINATION The Epistle is addressed to “the twelve tribes which are in the dispersion,” James 1:1. Who are indicated by these words? The adverbial phrase, “in the dispersion” excludes the idea that the writer refers to all the Jewish Christians, including even those in Palestine (Hofmann, Thiersch); and the contents of the letter forbid us to think that he addresses Jews and Jewish Christians jointly (Thiele, Guericke, Weiss). There are, however, two interpretations that are admissible. The expression may designate the Jewish Christians that lived outside of Palestine (the great majority of scholars); but it may also be a description of all the believers in Jesus Christ that were scattered among the Gentiles, after the analogy of 1 Peter 1:1 and Galatians 6:16 (Koster, Hilgenfeld, Hengstenberg, Von Soden). Zahn is rather uncertain in his interpretation. He finds that the twelve tribes mentioned here form an antithesis to the twelve tribes that were in Palestine, and refer either to Christianity as a whole, or to the totality of Jewish Christians; and reminds us of the fact that there was a time, when the two were identical. Einl. I p. 55. We prefer to think of the Jewish Christians of the Diaspora in Syria and neighboring lands, which were probably called “the twelve tribes” as representing the true Israel, because (1) the Epistle does not contain a single reference to Gentile Christians; (2) James was pre-eminently the leader of the Jewish Church; (3) the entire complexion of the Epistle points to Jewish readers. The Epistle being of an encyclical character, naturally does not have reference to the situation of any particular local church, but to generally prevailing conditions at that time. The Jewish Christians to whom the Epistle is addressed were subject to persecutions and temptations, and the poor were oppressed by the rich that, possibly, did not belong to their circle. They did not bear these temptations with the necessary patience, but were swayed by doubt. They even looked with envy at the glitter of the world and favored the rich at the expense of the poor. In daily life they did not follow the guidance of their Christian principles, so that their faith was barren. There may have been dead works, but the fruits of righteousness were not apparent.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. The occasion for writing this Epistle is found in the condition of the readers which we just described. James, the head of the Jerusalem church, would naturally be informed of this, probably in part by his own emissaries to the various churches of the Diaspora, Acts 15:22; 2 Corinthians 3:1; Galatians 2:12, and in part by those Jewish Christians that came from different lands to join in the great festivals at Jerusalem. The object of the Epistle was ethical

rather than didactic; it was to comfort, to reprove and to exhort. Since the readers were persecuted to the trial of their faith, and were tempted in various ways, the writer comes to them with words of consolation. Feeling that they did not bear their trials with patience, but were inclined to ascribe to God the temptations that endangered them as a result of their own lust and worldliness, he reproves them for the error of their way. And with a view to the blots on their Christian life, to their worldliness, their respect of persons, their vainglory and their envy and strife, he exhorts them to obey the royal law, that they may be perfect men.

2. Time and Place. The place of composition was undoubtedly Jerusalem, where James evidently had his continual abode. It is not so easy to determine when the letter was written. We have a terminus ad quem in the death of James about the year 62, and a terminus a quo in the persecution that followed the death of Stephen about A. D. 35, and that was instrumental in scattering the Jewish church. Internal evidence favors the idea that it was written during this period, for (1) There is no reference in the Epistle to the destruction of Jerusalem either as past or imminent; but the expectation of the speedy second coming of Christ, that was characteristic of the first generation of Christians, was still prevalent, James 5:7-9. (2) The picture of the unbelieving rich oppressing the poor Christians and drawing them before tribunals, is in perfect harmony with the description Josephus gives of the time immediately after Christ, when the rich Sadducees tyrannized over the poor to such a degree that some starved. Ant. XX 8.8; 9.2. This condition terminated with the destruction of Jerusalem. (3) The indistinctness of the line of separation between the converted and the unconverted Jews also favors the supposition that the letter was composed during this period, for until nearly the end of that time these two classes freely intermingled both at the temple worship and in the synagogues. In course of time, however, and even before the destruction of Jerusalem, this condition was gradually changed. But the question remains, whether we can give a nearer definition of the time of composition. In view of the fact that the Christian Jews addressed in this letter must have had time to spread and to settle in the dispersion so that they already had their own places of worship, we cannot date the Epistle in the very beginning of the period named. Neither does it seem likely that it was written after the year 50, when the council of Jerusalem was held, for (1) the Epistle does not contain a single allusion to the existence in the church of Gentile Christians; and (2) it makes no reference whatever to the great controversy respecting the observance of the Mosaic law, on which the council passed a decision. Hence we are inclined to date the Epistle between A. D. 45 and 50.

Some have objected to this early date that the Epistle is evidently dependent on Romans, Galatians, Hebrews and I Peter; but this objection is an unproved assumption. It is also said that the πρεσβ■τεροι mentioned in James 5:14 imply a later date. We should remember, however, that the Church, especially among the Jews, first developed out of the synagogue, in which presbyters were a matter of course. Moreover some urge that the Christian knowledge assumed in the readers, as in James 1:3; James 3:1, does not comport with such an early date. It appears to us that this objection is puerile. Of those who deny the authorship of James some would date the Epistle after the destruction of Jerusalem, Reuss, Von Soden, and Hilgenfeld in the time of Domitian (81-96); Blom in A. D. 80; Bruckner and Baljon in the time of Hadrian (117-138).

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE

There was considerable doubt as to the canonicity of this Epistle in the early church. Some allusions to it have been pointed out in Clement of Rome, Hermas and Irenaeus, but they are very uncertain indeed. We cannot point to a single quotation in Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian, though some are inclined to believe on the strength of a statement made by Eusebius, Ch. Hist. VI 14 that Clement commented on this Epistle, just as he did on the other general Epistles. There are reasons, however, to doubt the correctness of this statement, cf. Westcott, on the Canon p. 357. The letter is omitted from the Muratorian Fragment, but is contained in the Peshito. Eusebius classes it with the Antilegomena, though he seems uncertain as to its canonicity. Origen was apparently the first to quote it as Scripture. Cyril of Jerusalem, Athanasius and Gregory of Nazianze recognized it, and it was finally ratified by the third council of Carthage in A. D. 397. During the Middle Ages the canonicity of the Epistle was not doubted, but Luther for dogmatical reasons called it “a right strawy Epistle.” Notwithstanding the doubts expressed in the course of time, the Church continued to honor it as a canonical writing ever since the end of the fourth century. The great permanent value of this Epistle is found in the stress it lays on the necessity of having a vital faith, that issues in fruits of righteousness. The profession of Christ without a corresponding Christian life is worthless and does not save man. Christians should look into the perfect law, and should regulate their lives in harmony with its deep spiritual meaning. They should withstand temptations, be patient under trials, dwell together in peace without envying or strife, do justice, exercise charity, remember each other in prayer, and in all their difficulties be mindful of the fact that the coming of the Lord is at hand.

02.25. The First General Epistle of Peter

The First General Epistle of Peter

CONTENTS The contents of the Epistle can be divided into four parts:

I. Introduction, 1 Peter 1:1-12. After the greeting, 1 Peter 1:1-2, the apostle praises God for the blessings of salvation, which should raise the readers above all temporal sufferings, since they are so great that the prophets searched them, and the angels were desirous to understand their mystery, 1 Peter 1:3-12.

II. General Exhortations to a worthy Christian Conversation, 1 Peter 1:13-25, 1 Peter 2:1-10. The writer exhorts the readers to become ever more firmly grounded in their Christian hope. To that end the holiness of God should be the standard of their life, 1 Peter 1:13-16; they must fear God, and as regenerated persons, love the brethren and seek to increase in spiritual life, 1 Peter 1:17-25, 1 Peter 2:1-3. This growth should not only be individual, however, but also communal, a developing into a spiritual unity, 1 Peter 2:4-10.

III. Particular Directions for the special Relations of Life, 1 Peter 2:11-25, 1 Peter 3:1-22, 1 Peter 4:1-6. The author urges the readers to be dutiful to the authorities, 1 Peter 2:11-17; more particularly he exhorts the servants among them to follow the example of Christ in self-denying service, 1 Peter 2:18-25; the wives to submit themselves to their husbands, and the husbands to love their wives and to treat then with consideration, 1 Peter 3:1-7. Then he admonishes them all to do good and to refrain from evil, that in their sufferings they may be like their Master, whom they should also follow in their Christian conversation, 1 Peter 3:18-22, 1 Peter 4:1-6.

IV. Closing Instructions for the present Needs of the Readers, 1 Peter 4:7-19, 1 Peter 5:1-14. The apostle exhorts the readers to prayer, brotherly love, hospitality, and conscientiousness in the exercise of their official duties, 1 Peter 4:7-11. He warns them not to be discouraged by persecutions, but to regard these as necessary to the imitation of Christ, 1 Peter 4:12-19. Further he exhorts the elders to rule the flock of Christ wisely, the younger ones to submit to the elder; and all to humble themselves and to place their trust in God, 1 Peter 5:1-9; and ends the letter with good wishes and a salutation, 1 Peter 5:10-14.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. Though there are some doctrinal statements in the Epistle, its chief interest is not theoretical but practical, not doctrinal but ethical. It has been said that, while Paul represents faith and John love, Peter is the apostle of hope. This distinction, which may easily be misconstrued, nevertheless contains an element of truth. The basic idea of the Epistle is that the readers are begotten again unto a lively hope, the hope of an incorruptible, undefiled and unfading inheritance. This glorious expectation must be an incentive for them to strive after holiness in all the relations of life, and to bear patiently the reproach of Christ, mindful of the fact that He is their great prototype, and that suffering is the pre-requisite of everlasting glory.

2. The Epistle has a characteristic impress of Old Testament modes of thought and expression. Not only does it, comparatively speaking, contain more quotations from and references to the Old Testament than any other New Testament writing, cf. 1 Peter 1:16; 1 Peter 1:24-25; 1 Peter 2:3-4; 1 Peter 2:6-7; 1 Peter 2:9-10; 1 Peter 2:22-24; 1 Peter 3:10-14; 1 Peter 4:8; 1 Peter 4:17-18; 1 Peter 5:5; 1 Peter 5:7; but the entire complexion of the letter shows that the author lived and moved in Old Testament conceptions to such an extent, that he preferably expresses his thoughts in Old Testament language.

3. On the other hand, there is great similarity between this Epistle and some of the New Testament writings, notably the Epistles of Paul to the Romans and to the Ephesians, and the Epistle of James. And this likeness is of such a character as to suggest dependence of the one on the other. Nearly all the thoughts of Romans 12:1-21, Romans 13:1-14 are also found in this letter; compare 1 Peter 2:5 with Romans 12:1 ;—1 Peter 1:14 with Romans 12:2 ;—1 Peter 4:10 with Romans 12:3-8 ;—1 Peter 1:22 with Romans 12:9 ;—1 Peter 2:17 with Romans 12:10, etc. The relationship between it and the Epistle to the Ephesians is evident not only from single passages, but also from the structure of the letter. There is a certain similarity in the general and special exhortations, which is probably due to the fact that both Epistles are of a general character. Compare also the passages 1 Peter 1:3 and Ephesians 1:3;—1 Peter 1:5 and Ephesians 1:19;—1 Peter 1:14 and Ephesians 2:3;—1 Peter 1:18 and Ephesians 4:17;—1 Peter 2:4-5 and Ephesians 2:20-22. There are also points of resemblance between this Epistle and that of James, and though not so numerous, yet they indicate a relation of dependence; compare 1 Peter 1:6-7 with James 1:2-3;—1 Peter 2:1 with James 1:21;—1 Peter 5:5-9 with James 4:6-7; James 4:10.

4. The Greek in which this letter is written is some of the best that is found in the New Testament. Though the language is simple and direct, it is not devoid of artistic quality. Simcox, comparing it with the language of James, says: “St. Peters language is stronger where St. James is weak, and weaker where he is strong—it is more varied, more classical, but less eloquent and of less literary power.” The Writers of the New Testament p. 66. The authors vocabulary is very full and rich, and his sentences flow on with great regularity, sometimes rising to grandeur. It is noticeable, however, that the writer, though having a good knowledge of Greek in general, was particularly saturated with the language of the Septuagint.

AUTHORSHIP The external authentication of this Epistle is very strong. Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Origen and Cyprian all quote it by name and without expressing the slightest doubt as to its canonicity. And Eusebius says: “One Epistle of Peter called his first is universally received.” Salmon suggests that, in view of what Westcott says, its omission from the Muratorian Canon may be due to the error of a scribe, who left out a sentence. Cf. Westcott, The canon of the N. T., Appendix C.

Aside from the fact that the letter is self-attested there is very little internal evidence that can help us to determine who the author was. There is nothing that points definitely to Peter, which is in part due to the fact that we have no generally recognized standard of comparison. The speeches in Acts may not have been recorded literally by Luke; and II Peter is one of the most doubted Epistles of the New Testament, partly because it is so dissimilar to our letter. If we leave the first verse out of consideration, we can only say on the strength of internal evidence that the writer was evidently an eyewitness of the sufferings of Christ, 1 Peter 3:1; that the central contents of his

teaching is, like that of Peter in the Acts of the Apostles, the death and the resurrection of Christ; and that his attitude toward the Christians of the Gentiles is in perfect harmony with that of the apostle of the circumcision. Moreover the persons mentioned in 1 Peter 5:12-13 are known to have been acquaintances of Peter, cf. Acts 12:12; Acts 15:22. The apostle Peter, originally called Simon, was a native of Bethsaida, John 1:42; John 1:44. When the Lord entered on his public ministry, Peter was married and dwelt at Capernaum, Luke 4:31; Luke 4:38. He was the son of Jonas, Matthew 16:17 and was, with his father and his brother, by occupation a fisherman, Mark 1:16. We find him among the first that were called to follow the Lord, Matthew 4:18-19, and he soon received a certain prominence among the disciples of Jesus. This was in harmony with the new name, Petros, which the Lord gave him, John 1:42. With John and James he formed the inner circle of the disciples; together they were the most intimate followers of the Saviour and as such enjoyed special privileges. They only entered with the Lord into the house of Jairus, Luke 8:51; none but they witnessed his glory on the Mount of Transfiguration, Matthew 17:1; and they alone beheld him in his hour of great grief in the garden of Gethsemane, Matthew 26:37. The trial of Jesus was also the hour of Peters deepest fall, for on that occasion he thrice denied his Master, Matthew 26:69-75. He truly repented of his deed, however, and was restored to his former position by the Lord, John 21:15-17. After the ascension he is found at the head of the disciples at Jerusalem, guiding them in the choice of an apostle in the place of Judas, Acts 1:15-26, and preaching the Pentecostal sermon, Acts 2:14-36. Laboring at first in connection with John, he healed the lame man, repeatedly addressed the people in the temple, executed judgment on Ananias and Sapphira, and once and again defended the cause of Christ before the Sanhedrin, Acts 3:1-26, Acts 4:1-37, Acts 5:1-42. During the time of persecution that followed the death of Stephen, they together went to Samaria to establish the work of Philip, Acts 8:14 ff. In Lydda he healed Aeneas, Acts 9:22 f. and raised up Tabitha in Joppa, Acts 9:36 f. By means of a vision he was taught that the Gentiles too were to be admitted to the Church, and was prepared to go and preach Christ to the household of Cornelius, Acts 10:1-48. After James, the brother of John was killed, Peter was cast in prison, but, being delivered by an angel, he left Jerusalem, Acts 12:1-17. Later he returned thither and was present at the council of Jerusalem, Acts 15. Nothing certain is known of his movements after this time. From 1 Corinthians 9:5 we infer that he labored at various places. On one occasion Paul rebuked him for his dissimulation, Galatians 2:11 ff. From all the traditions regarding his later life we can gather only one piece of reliable information, to the effect that towards the end of his life he came to Rome, where he labored for the propagation of the Gospel and suffered martyrdom under Nero.

Peter was a man of action rather than of deep thought. He was always eager and impulsive, but, as is often the case with such persons, was wanting in the necessary stability of character. Burning with love towards the Saviour, he was always ready to defend his cause, Matthew 17:24-25; Matthew 16:22; Luke 22:33; John 18:10, and to confess his name, John 6:68 f.; Matthew 16:16. But his action was often characterized by undue haste, as when he rebuked Christ, Matthew 16:22, smote the servant of the high priest, John 18:10, and refused to let the Saviour wash his feet, John 13:6; and by too much reliance on his own strength, as when he went out upon the sea, Matthew 14:28-31, and declared himself ready to die with the Lord, Matthew 26:35. It was this rashness and great self-confidence that led to his fall. By that painful experience Peter had to be taught his own weakness before he could really develop into the Rock among the apostles. After his restoration we see him as a firm confessor, ready, if need be, to lay down his life for the

Saviour.

Until the previous century the Epistle was generally regarded as the work of Peter, and even now the great majority of New Testament scholars have reached no other conclusion. Still there are several, especially since the time of Baur, that deny its authenticity, as Hilgenfeld, Pfleiderer, Weizsacker, Hausrath, Keim, Schurer, Von Soden e.a. The most important objections urged against the traditional view, are the following: (1) The Epistle is clearly dependent on Pauline letters, while it contains very few traces of the Lords teaching. This is not what one would expect of Peter, who had been so intimate with the Lord and had taken a different stand than Paul, Galatians 2:11 ff. Harnack regards this argument as decisive, for he says: “Were it not for the dependence (of I Peter) on the Pauline Epistles, I might perhaps allow myself to maintain its genuineness; that dependence, however, is not accidental, but is of the essence of the Epistle.” Quoted by Chase, Hastings D. B. Art. I Peter. (2) It is written in far better Greek than one can reasonably expect of a Galilean fisherman like Peter, of whom we know that on his missionary journeys he needed Mark as an interpreter. Davidson regards it as probable that he never was able to write Greek. (3) The Epistle reflects conditions that did not exist in the lifetime of Peter. The Christians of Asia Minor were evidently persecuted, simply because they were Christians, persecuted for the Name, and this, it is said, did not take place until the time of Trajan, A. D. 98-117. (4) It is very unlikely that Peter would write a letter to churches founded by Paul, while the latter was still living. As to the first argument, we need not deny with Weiss and his pupil Kuhl that Peter is dependent on some of the writings of Paul, especially on Romans and Ephesians. In all probability he read both of these Epistles, or if he did not see Ephesians, Paul may have spoken to him a good deal about its contents. And being the receptive character that he was, it was but natural that he should incorporate some of Paul’s thoughts in his Epistle. There was no such antagonism between him and Paul as to make him averse to the teachings of his fellow-apostle. The idea of an evident hostility between the two is exploded, and the theory of Baur that this letter is a Unionsschrift, is destitute of all historical basis and is burdened with a great many, improbabilities. Moreover it need not cause surprise that the teaching of this Epistle resembles the teaching of Paul more than it does that of Christ, because the emphasis had shifted with the resurrection of the Lord, which now, in connection with his death, became the central element in the teaching of the apostles. Compare the sermons of Peter in the Acts of the Apostles. With respect to the objection that Peter could not write. such Greek as we find in this Epistle, we refer to what Mayor says regarding James, cf. p. 286 above. The fact that Mark is said to have been the interpreter of Peter does not imply that the latter did not know Greek, cf. p. 80 above. It is also possible, however, that the Greek of this Epistle is not that of the apostle. Zahn argues with great plausibility from 1 Peter 5:12, Dia. Silouanou/, that Silvanus took an active part in the composition of the letter, and in all probability wrote it under the immediate direction rather than at the verbal dictation of Peter, Einl. II p. 10 f. Cf. also Brown on I Peter in loco,, and J. H. A. Hart, Exp. Gk. Test. IV p. 13 f. Against this, however, cf. Chase, Hastings D. B. Art. I Peter. It is possible that Silvanus was both the amanuensis of Peter and the bearer of the Epistle. The third argument is open to two objections. On the one hand it rests on a faulty interpretation of the passages that speak of the sufferings endured by the Christians of Asia Minor, as 1 Peter 1:6; 1 Peter 3:9-17; 1 Peter 4:4 f., and especially 1 Peter 4:12-19; 1 Peter 5:8-12. And on the other hand it is based on a misunderstanding of the correspondence between Pliny and Trajan A. D. 112. The passages referred to do not imply and do not even favor the idea that the Christians were persecuted by the

state, though they do point to an ever increasing severity of their sufferings. There is no hint of judicial trials, of the confiscation of property, of imprisonments or of bloody deaths. The import of the Epistle is that the readers were placed under the necessity of bearing the reproach of Christ in a different form. As Christians they were subject to ridicule, to slander, to ill treatment, and to social ostracism; they were the outcasts of the world, 1 Peter 4:14. And this, of course, brought with it manifold temptations, 1 Peter 1:6. At the same time the correspondence of Pliny and Trajan does not imply that Rome did not persecute Christians as such until about A. D. 112. Ramsay says that this state of affairs may have arisen as early as the year 80; and Mommsen, the greatest authority on Roman history, is of the opinion that it may have existed as early as the time of Nero. The last objection is of a rather subjective character. Peter was undoubtedly greatly interested in the work among the Christians of Asia Minor; and it is possible that he himself had labored there for some time among the Jews and thus became acquainted with the churches of that region. And does it not seem likely that he, being informed of their present sufferings, and knowing of the antagonism of the Jews, who had occasionally used his name to undermine the authority and to subvert the doctrine of Paul, would consider it expedient to send them a letter of exhortation, urging them to abide in the truth in which they stood, and thus indirectly strengthening their confidence in his fellow-apostle?

DESTINATION The letter is addressed to “the elect who are sojourners of the dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia and Bithynia,” 1 Peter 1:1. The use of the strictly Jewish term Diaspora, is apt to create the impression that the letter was sent to Jewish Christians. Origen said, presumably on the strength of this superscription, that Peter seems to have preached to the Jews in the dispersion. And Eusebius felt sure that this letter was sent to Hebrews or to Jewish Christians. The great majority of the church fathers agreed with them. Among recent scholars Weiss and Kuhl defend the position that the letter was addressed to Jewish congregations founded in Asia Minor by Peter. But the idea that the original readers of this Epistle were Christians of Jewish extraction is not favored by internal evidence. Notice especially (1) the passages that point to the past moral condition of the readers, as 1 Peter 1:14 (comp. Galatians 4:8; Ephesians 4:18); 1 Peter 1:18 (comp. Ephesians 1:17); 1 Peter 4:2-4 (comp. 1 Thessalonians 4:5; Ephesians 2:11); and (2) the emphatic use of “you” as distinguished from the “us” found in the context, to mark the readers as persons that were destined to receive the blessings of the gospel and to whom these at last came. Moreover this is in perfect agreement with what we know of the churches of Asia Minor; they certainly consisted primarily of Gentile Christians. But the question is naturally asked, whether this view is not contradicted by the address. And to that question we answer that it certainly is, if the word διασπορ■ς must be taken literally; but this will also bear, and, in harmony with the contents of the Epistle, is now generally given a figurative interpretation. The word διασπορ■ς is a Genitivus appostitivus (for which cf. Blass, Grammatik p. 101) with παρεπιδ■μοις) Taken by itself the address is a figurative description of all believers, whether they be Jewish or Gentile Christians, as sojourners on earth, who have here no abiding dwelling place, but look for a heavenly city; and who constitute a dispersion, because they are separated from that eternal home of which the earthly Jerusalem was but a symbol. In agreement with this the apostle elsewhere addresses the readers as “pilgrims and strangers,” 1 Peter 2:11, and exhorts them “to pass the time of their sojourning here in fear,” 1 Peter 1:17. Cf. the Comm. of Huther, Brown, and Hart (Exp. Gk. Test.), and the Introductions of Zahn, Holtzmann, Davidson and Barth. Salmon admits the possibility of this interpretation, but is yet inclined to take the word Diaspora literally,

and to believe that Peter wrote his letter to members of the Roman church that were scattered through Asia Minor as a result of Nero's persecution. Introd. p. 485. As to the condition of the readers, the one outstanding fact is that they were subject to hardships and persecutions because of their allegiance to Christ, 1 Peter 1:17; 1 Peter 2:12-19. There is no sufficient evidence that they were persecuted by the state; they suffered at the hands of their associates in daily life. The Gentiles round about them spoke evil of them, because they did not take part in their revelry and idolatry, 1 Peter 4:2-4. This constituted the trial of their faith, and it seems that some were in danger of becoming identified with the heathen way of living, 1 Peter 2:11-12, 1 Peter 2:16. They were in need of encouragement and of a firm hand to guide their feeble steps.

COMPOSITION

1.Occasion and Purpose. In a general way we can say that the condition just described led Peter to write this Epistle. He may have received information regarding the state of affairs from Mark or Silvanus, who is undoubtedly to be identified with Paul's companion of that name, and was therefore well acquainted with the churches of Asia Minor. Probably the direct occasion for Peter's writing must be found in a prospective journey of Silvanus to those churches. The writers purpose was not doctrinal but practical. He did not intend to give an exposition of the truth, but to emphasize its bearings on life, especially in the condition in which the Christians of Asia Minor were placed. The Tubingen critics are mistaken, however, when they hold that the unknown writer, impersonating Peter, desired to make it appear as if there was really no conflict between the apostle of the circumcision and the apostle of the Gentiles, and to unite the discordant factions in the Church; for (1) such antagonistic parties did not exist in the second century, and (2) the Epistle does not reveal a single trace of such a tendency. The writer incidentally and in a general way states his aim, when he says in 1 Peter 5:12, "By Silvanus I have written briefly, exhorting and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand." The main purpose of the author was evidently to exhort the readers to suffer, not as evil-doers, but as well-doers, to see to it that they should suffer for the sake of Christ only; to suffer patiently, remaining steadfast in spite of all temptations; and to bear their sufferings with a joyful hope, since they would issue in a glory that never fades away. And because these sufferings might lead them to doubt and discouragement, the writer makes it a point to testify that the grace in which they stand, and with which the sufferings of this present time are inseparably connected, is yet the true grace of God, thus confirming the work of Paul.

2.Time and Place. There are especially three theories regarding the place of composition, viz. (1) that the Epistle was sent from Babylon on the Euphrates; (2) that it was composed at Rome; and (3) that it was written from Babylon near Cairo in Egypt. The last hypothesis found no support and need not be considered. The answer to the question respecting the place of composition depends on the interpretation of 1 Peter 5:13, where we read: "She (the church) that is in Babylon, elect together with you, saluteth you." The prima facie impression made by these words is that the writer was at ancient Babylon, the well known city on the Euphrates. Many of the early church fathers, however, (Papias, Clement of Alexandria, Hippolytus, Eusebius, Jerome) and several later commentators and writers on Introduction (Bigg, Hart, Salmon, Holtzmann, Zahn, Chase) regard the name Babylon as a figurative designation of Rome, just as it is in the Apocalypse, Revelation 17:5; Revelation 18:2, Revelation 18:10. In favor of the literal interpretation it is argued, (1) that it's figurative use is very unlikely in a matter-of-fact statement; and (2) that in 1 Peter 1:1 the order in

which the provinces of Asia Minor are named is from the East to the West, thus indicating the location of the writer. Aside from the fact, however, that the last argument needs some qualification, these considerations seem to be more than off-set by the following facts: (1) An old and reliable tradition, that can be traced to the second century, informs us that Peter was at Rome towards the end of his life, and finally died there as a martyr. This must be distinguished from that fourth century tradition to the effect that he resided at Rome for a period of twenty-five years as its first bishop. On the other hand there is not the slightest record of his having been at Babylon. Not until the Middle Ages was it inferred from 1 Peter 5:13 that he had visited the city on the Euphrates. (2) In the Revelation of John Rome is called Babylon, a terminology that was likely to come into general use, as soon as Rome showed herself the true counterpart of ancient Babylon, the representative of the world as over against the Church of God. The Neronian persecution certainly began to reveal her character as such. (3) The symbolical sense is in perfect harmony with the figurative interpretation of the address, and with the designation of the readers as “pilgrims and strangers in the earth.” (4) In view of what Josephus says in Ant. XVIII 9. it is doubtful, whether Babylon would offer the apostle a field for missionary labors at the time, when this Epistle was composed. We regard it as very likely that the writer refers to Rome in 1 Peter 5:13. With respect to the time when this Epistle was written, the greatest uncertainty prevails. Dates have been suggested all the way from 54 to 147 A. D. Of those who deny the authorship of Peter the great majority refer the letter to the time of Trajan after A. D. 112, the date of Trajan’s rescript, for reasons which we already discussed. Thus Baur, Keim, Lipsius, Pfleiderer, Hausrath, Weizsacker, Hilgenfeld, Davidson e.a. In determining the time of writing we must be guided by the following data: (1) The Epistle cannot have been written later than A. D. 67 or 68, the traditional date of Peter’s death, which some, however place in the year 64. Cf. Zahn Einl. II p. 19. (2) Peter had evidently read the Epistles of Paul to the Romans (58) and that to the Ephesians (62), and therefore cannot have written his letter before A. D. 62. (3) The letter makes no mention whatever of Paul, so that presumably it was written at a time when this apostle was not at Rome. (4) The fact that Peter writes to Pauline churches favors the idea that Paul had temporarily withdrawn from his field of labor. We are inclined to think that he composed the Epistle, when Paul was on his journey to Spain, about A. D. 64 or 65.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The canonicity of the letter has never been subject to doubt in the opening centuries of our era. It is referred to in 2 Peter 3:1. Papias evidently used it and there are clear traces of its language in Clement of Rome, Hermas and Polycarp. The old Latin and Syriac Versions contain it, while it is quoted in the Epistle of the churches of Vienne and Lyons, Irenaeus, Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian all quote it by name, and Eusebius classes it with the Homologoumena.

Some scholars objected to this Epistle that it was characterized by a want of distinctive character. But the objection is not well founded, since the letter certainly has a unique significance among the writings of the New Testament. It emphasizes the great importance which the hope of a blessed and eternal inheritance has in the life of God’s children. Viewed in the light of their future glory, the present life of believers, with all its trials and sufferings, recedes into the background, and they realize that they are strangers and pilgrims in the earth. From that point of view they understand the significance of the sufferings of Christ as opening up the way to God, and they also learn to value their own hardships as these minister to the development of faith and to their everlasting

glory. And then, living in expectation of the speedy return of their Lord, they realize that their sufferings are of short duration, and therefore bear them joyfully. In the midst of all her struggles the Church of God should never forget to look forward to her future glory,—the object of her living hope.

02.26. The Second General Epistle of Peter

The Second General Epistle of Peter

CONTENTS The contents of the Epistle can be divided into two parts:

I. The Importance of Christian Knowledge, 2 Peter 1:1-21. After the greeting, 2 Peter 1:1-2, the author reminds the readers of the great blessings they received through the knowledge of Jesus Christ, and urges them to live worthy of that knowledge and thus to make sure their calling and election, 2 Peter 1:3-11. He says that he deemed it expedient to put them in mind of what they knew, and that he would see to it that they had a remembrance of these things after his decease, 2 Peter 1:12-15. This knowledge is of the greatest value, because it rests on a sure foundation, 2 Peter 1:16-21.

II. Warning against False Teachers, 2 Peter 2:1-22, 2 Peter 3:1-18. The apostle announces the coming of false prophets, who shall deny the truth and mislead many, 2 Peter 2:1-3. Then he proves the certainty of their punishment by means of historical examples, 2 Pet. 4-9, and gives a minute description of their sensual character, 2 Peter 2:10-22. Stating that he wrote the letter to remind them of the knowledge they had received, he informs them that the scoffers that will come in the last days, will deny the advent of Christ, 2 Peter 3:1-4. He refutes their arguments, assuring the readers that the Lord will come, and exhorting them to a holy conversation, 2 Peter 3:5-13. Referring to his agreement with Paul in this teaching, he ends his letter with an exhortation to grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ, 2 Peter 3:14-18.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. Like the first Epistle this second one is also a letter of practical warning, exhortation and encouragement. But while in the former the dominant note is that of Christian hope, the controlling idea in the latter is that of Christian knowledge. It is the ■π■γνωσις χπιστο■■ which consists essentially in the acknowledgment of the δ■ναμις κ■ι παρουσ■α of Christ. Advancement in this ■π■γνωσις■ as the ground and aim of the exercise of all Christian virtues, is the prominent feature of every exhortation." Huther, Comm. p. 344. This knowledge, resting on a sure foundation, must be the mainstay of the readers, when false doctrines are propagated in their midst, and must be their incentive to holiness in spite of the seducing influences round about them.

2. This Epistle has great affinity with that of Jude, cf. 2 Peter 2:1-18; 2 Peter 3:1-3. The similarity is of such a character that it cannot be regarded as accidental, but clearly points to dependence of the one on the other. Though it cannot be said that the question is absolutely settled, the great majority of scholars, among whom there are some who deny the authorship of Peter (Holtzmann, Julicher, Chase, Strachan, Barth e. a.), and others who defend the authenticity of the Epistle (Wiesinger, Bruckner, Weiss, Alford, Salmon), maintain the priority of Jude. The main reasons that lead them to this conclusion, are the following: (1) The phraseology of Jude is simpler than that of Peter in the related passages. The language of the latter is more laborious and looks like an elaboration of what the former wrote. (2) Several passages in Peter can be fully understood on1y

in the light of what Jude says, compare 2 Peter 2:4 with Jude 1:6; 2 Peter 2:11 with Jude 1:9; 2 Peter 3:2 with fade Jude 1:17. (3) Though the similar passages are adapted to the subject-matter of both Epistles, they seem more natural in the context of Jude than in Peter; The course of thought is more regular in the Epistle of Jude.—The priority of Jude is quite well established, though especially Zahn, Spitta (who defends the second Epistle of Peter at the cost of the first) and Bigg put up an able defense for the priority of Peter.

3. The language of II Peter has some resemblance to that of the first Epistle cf Weiss, Introd.~~p. 166, but the difference between the two is greater than the similarity. We need not call special attention to the a[pax lego,mena found in this letter, since it contains but 48, while 1 Peter has 58. But there are other points that deserve our attention. Bigg says: “The vocabulary of I Peter is dignified; that of II Peter inclines to the grandiose.” Comm. p. 225. And according to Simcox, “we see in this Epistle, as compared with the first, at once less instinctive familiarity with Greek idiom and more conscious effort at elegant Greek composition.” Writers of the N. T. p. 69.

There are 361 words in I Peter that are not found in this Epistle, and 231 in II Peter that are absent from the first letter. There is a certain fondness for the repetition of words, cf. Holtzmann, Einl. p. 322, which Bigg, however, finds equally noticeable in I Peter. The connecting particles, ■να, ■τι, ο■ν, μ■ν, found frequently in I Peter, are rare in this Epistle, where instead we find sentences introduced with το■το or τα■ταχφ■ 2 Peter 1:8, 2 Peter 1:10; 2 Peter 3:11, 2 Peter 3:14. And while in the first Epistle there is a free interchange of prepositions, we often find a repetition of the same preposition in the second, φ■ ■ δια, is found three times in 2 Peter 1:3-5 and ■ν seven times in 2 Peter 1:5-7. Different words are often used to express the same ideas; compare ■ποκαλυψις, 1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 4:13 with παρουσ■α, 2 Peter 1:16; 2 Peter 3:4;—■αντισμ■ς, 1 Peter 1:2 with καθαρισμ■ς, 2 Peter 1:9 ;—κληρονομ■α, 1 Peter 1:4 with a■ι■νοκ βασιλεια, 2 Peter 1:11.

AUTHORSHIP This Epistle is the most weakly attested of all the New Testament writings. Besides that of Jerome we do not find a single statement in the fathers of the first four centuries explicitly and positively ascribing this work to Peter. Yet there are some evidences of its canonical use, which indirectly testify to a belief in its genuineness. There are some phrases in Clement of Rome, Hermas, the Clementine Recognitions and Theophilus that recall II Peter, but the coincidences may be accidental. Supposed traces of this Epistle are found in Irenaeus, though they may all be accounted for in another way, cf. Salmon, Introd. p. 324 f. Eusebius and Photius say that Clement of Alexandria commented on our Epistle, and their contention may be correct, notwithstanding the doubt cast on it by Cassiodorus, cf. Davidson, Introd. II p. 533 f. Origen attests that the book was known in his time, but that its genuineness was disputed. He himself quotes it several times without any expression of doubt. It is pointed out, however, that these quotations are found in those parts of his work that we know only in the Latin translation of Rufinus, which is not always reliable; though, according to Salmon, the presumption is that Rufifius did not invent them, Introd. p. 533 f. Eusebius classes this letter with the Antilegomena and Jerome says: “Simon Peter wrote two Epistles, which are called catholic; the second of which most persons deny to be his, on account of its disagreement in style with the first.” This difference he elsewhere explains by assuming that Peter employed a different interpreter. From that time the Epistle was received by Rufinus, Augustine, Basil, Gregory, Palladius, Hilary, Ambrose e.a. During the Middle Ages it was generally accepted, but at the time of the Reformation Erasmus and Calvin, though accepting the

letter as canonical doubted the direct authorship of Peter. Yet Calvin believed that in some sense the Petrine authorship had to be maintained, and surmised that a disciple wrote it at the command of Peter. The Epistle itself definitely points to Peter as its author. In the opening verse the writer calls himself, “Simon Peter, a servant and an apostle of Jesus Christ,” which clearly excludes the idea of Grotius, that Symeon, the successor of James at Jerusalem, wrote the letter. From 2 Peter 1:16-18 we learn that the author was a witness of the transfiguration of Christ; and in 2 Peter 3:1 we find a reference to his first Epistle. As far as style and expression are concerned there is even greater similarity between this letter and the speeches of Peter in the Acts of the Apostles than between the first Epistle and those addresses. Moreover Weiss concludes that from a biblical and theological point of view, no New Testament writing is more like I Peter than this Epistle, Introd. II p. 165. Besides the whole spirit of the Epistle is against the idea that it is a forgery. Calvin maintained its canonicity, “because the majesty of the Spirit of Christ exhibited itself in every part of the Epistle.”

Notwithstanding this, however, the authenticity of the letter is subject to serious doubt in modern times, such scholars as Mayerhoff, Credner, Hilgenfeld, Von Soden, Hausrath, Mangold, Davidson, Volkmar, Holtzmann, Julicher, Harnack, Chase, Strachan e.a. denying that Peter wrote it. But the Epistle is not without defenders; its authenticity is maintained among others by Luthardt, Wiesinger, Guericke, Windischmann, Bruckner, Hofmann, Salmon, Alford, Zahn, Spitta, and Warfield, while Huther, Weiss, and Kuhl conclude their investigations with a non liquet. The principle objections to the genuineness of II Peter are the following: (1)The Language of the Epistle is so different from that of I Peter as to preclude the possibility of their proceeding from the same author. (2) The dependence of the writer on Jude is inconsistent with the idea that he was Peter, not only because Jude was written long after the lifetime of Peter, but also since it is unworthy of an apostle to rely to such a degree on one who did not have that distinction. (3) It appears that the author is over-anxious to identify himself with the appost1e Peter: there is a threefold allusion to his death, 2 Peter 1:13-15; he wants the readers to understand that he was present at the transfiguration, 2 Peter 1:16-18; and he identifies himself with the author of the first Epistle, 2 Peter 3:1. (4) In 2 Peter 3:2 where the reading ■μ■ν is better attested than ■μ■ν, the writer by using the expression, τ■ς τ■ν ■ποστ■λων ■μ■ν ■ντολ■ς, seems to place himself outside of the apostolic circle. Deriving the expression from Jude, the writer forgot that he wanted to pass for an apostle and therefore could not use it with equal propriety. Cf. Holtzmann, Einl. p. 321. (5) The writer speaks of some of Paul’s Epistles as Scripture in 2 Peter 3:16, implying the existence of a New Testament canon, and thus betrays his second point. (6) The Epistle also refers to doubts regarding the second coming of Christ, 2 Peter 3:4 ff., which points beyond the lifetime of Peter, because such doubts could not be entertained before the destruction of Jerusalem. (7) According to Dr. Abbott (in the Expositor) the author of II Peter is greatly indebted to the Antiquities of Josephus, a work that was published about A. D. 93.

We cannot deny that there is force in some of these arguments, but do not believe that they compel us to give up the authorship of Peter. The argument from style is undoubtedly the most important one; but if we accept the theory that Silvanus wrote the first Epistle under the direction of Peter, while the apostle composed the second, either with his own hand or by means of another amanuensis, the difficulty vanishes.—As far as the literary dependence of Peter on Jude is concerned, it is well to bear in mind that this is not absolutely proved. However, assuming it to be

established, there is nothing derogatory in it for Peter, since Jude was also an inspired man, and because in those early days unacknowledged borrowing was looked at in a far different light than it is today.—That the author is extremely solicitous to show that he is the apostle Peter is, even if it can be proved, no argument against the genuineness of this letter. In view of the errorists against which he warns the readers, it was certainly important that they should bear in mind his official position. But it cannot be maintained that he insists on this over-much. The references to his death, his experience on the Mount of Transfiguration, and his first Epistle are introduced in a perfectly natural way. Moreover this argument is neutralized by some of the others brought forward by the negative critics. If the writer really was so over-anxious, why does he speak of himself as Simon Peter, cf. 1 Peter 1:1; why does he seemingly exclude himself from the apostolic circle, 2 Peter 3:2; and why did he not more closely imitate the language of I Peter ?—The difficulty created by 3:2 is not as great as it seems to some. If that passage really disproves the authorship of Peter, it certainly was a clumsy piece of work of a very clever forger, to let it stand. But the writer, speaking of the prophets as a class, places alongside of them another class, viz, that of the apostles, who had more especially ministered to the New Testament churches, and could therefore as a class be called, “your apostles,” i. e. the apostles who preached to you. The writer evidently did not desire to single himself out, probably, if for no other reasons, because other apostles had labored more among the readers than he had.—The reference to the Epistles of Paul does not necessarily imply the existence of a New Testament canon and it is a gratuitous assumption that they were not regarded as Scripture in the first century, so that the burden of proof rests on those who make it.—The same may be said of the assertion that no doubt could be entertain as the second coming of Christ before the destruction of Jerusalem. Moreover the author does not say that these were already expressed, but that they would be uttered by scoffers that would come in the last days.—The attempt to prove the dependence of II Peter on Josephus, has been proved fallacious, especially by Salmon and by Dr. Warfield. The former says in conclusion: “Dr. Abbot has completely failed to establish his theory; but I must add that it was a theory never rational to try to establish.” Introd. p. 536.

DESTINATION The readers are simply addressed as those “that have obtained like precious faith with us through the righteousness of God and our Saviour Jesus Christ,” 2 Peter 1:1. From 2 Peter 3:1 we gather, however, that they are identical with the readers of the first Epistle and from 2 Peter 3:15, that they were also the recipients of some Pauline Epistle(s). It is vain to guess what Epistle(s) the writer may have had in view here. Zahn argues at length that our Epistle was written to Jewish Christians in and round about Palestine, who had been led to Christ by Peter and by others of the twelve apostles. He bases his conclusion on the general difference of circumstances presupposed in the two letters of Peter, and on such passages as 2 Peter 1:1-4, 2 Peter 1:16-18; 2 Peter 3:2. But it seems to us that the Epistle does not contain a single hint regarding the Jewish character of its readers, while passages like 2 Peter 1:4 and 2 Peter 3:15 rather imply their Gentile origin. Moreover, in order to maintain his theory, Zahn must assume that both 2 Peter 3:1 and 2 Peter 3:15 refer to lost letters, cf. Einl. II p. 43 ff. The condition of the readers presupposed in this letter is indeed different from that reflected in the first Epistle. No mention is made of persecution; instead of the affliction from without, internal dangers are now coming in view. The readers were in need of being firmly grounded in the truth, since they would soon have to contend with heretical teachers, who theoretically would deny the Lordship of Jesus Christ, 2 Peter 2:1, and his second coming, 2 Peter 3:4; and practically would disgrace their lives by licentiousness, 2 Peter 2:1-22.

These heretics have been described as Sadducees, as Gnostics, and as Nicolaitans, but it is rather doubtful, whether we can identify them with any particular sect. They certainly were practical Antinomians, leading careless, wanton and sinful lives, just because they did not believe in the resurrection and in a future judgment. Their doctrine was, in all probability, an incipient Gnosticism.

Since the author employs both the future and the present tense in describing them, the question arises, whether they were already present or were yet to come. The most natural explanation is that the author already knew such false teachers to be at work in some places (cf. especially I Corinthians and the Epistles to the Thessalonians), so that he could consequently give a vivid description of them; and that he expected them to extend their pernicious influence also to the churches of Asia Minor.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. The occasion that led to the composition of this Epistle must be found in the dangerous heresies that were at work in some of the churches, and that also threatened the readers. In determining the object of the writer the Tubingen school emphasized 2 Peter 3:15, and found it in the promotion of harmony and peace between the Petrine and Pauline parties (Baur, Schwegler, Hausrath). With this end in view, they say, the writer personating Peter, the representative of Jewish Christendom, acknowledges Paul, who represents the more liberal tendency of the Church. But it is unwarranted to lay such stress on that particular passage. Others regarded the Epistle as primarily a polemic against Gnosticism, against the false teachers depicted in the letter. Now it cannot be denied that the Epistle is in part controversial, but it is only its secondary character. The main object of the letter, as indicated in 2 Peter 1:16 and 2 Peter 3:1-2 was to put the readers in mind of the truth which they had learned in order that they might not be led astray by the theoretical and practical libertines that would soon make their influence felt, and especially to strengthen their faith in the promised parousia of Jesus Christ.

2. Time and Place. The Epistle contains no certain data as to the time of its composition. We can only infer from 2 Peter 3:1 that it was written after I Peter, though Zahn, who is not bound by that passage, places it before the first Epistle, about A. D. 60-63. The fact that the condition of the churches, which is indicated in this letter, is quite different from that reflected in the earlier writing, presupposes the lapse of some time, though it does not require many years to account for the change. A short time would suffice for the springing up of the enemies to which the Epistle refers. Can we not say, in view of the tendencies apparent at Corinth that their doctrines had already been germinating for some time? Moreover, according to 2 Peter 1:14 the writer felt that his end was near. Hence we prefer to date the letter about the year 66 or 67.

They who deny the authenticity of the Epistle generally place it somewhere between the years 90 and 175, for such reasons as its dependence on Jude and on the Apocalypse of Peter, its reference to Gnosticism, and its implication respecting the existence of a New Testament canon.

Since a trustworthy tradition informs us that Peter spent the last part of his life at Rome, the Epistle was in all probability composed in the imperial city. Zahn points to Antioch, and Julicher suggests Egypt as the place of composition.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE For the reception of this Epistle in the early church, we refer to what has been said above.

Like all the canonical writings this one too has abiding significance. Its importance is found in the fact that it emp1i~sizes the great value of true Christian knowledge, especially in view of the dangers that arise for believers from all kinds of false teachings, and from the resultant example of a loose, a licentious, an immoral life. It teaches us that a Christianity that is not well founded in the truth as it is in Christ, is like a ship without a rudder on the turbulent sea of life. A Christianity without dogma cannot maintain itself against the errors of the day, but will go down before the triumphant forces of darkness; it will not succeed in cultivating a pure, noble spiritual life, but will be conformed to the life of the world. In particular does the Epistle remind us of the fact that faith in the return of Christ should inspire us to a holy conversation.

02.27. The First General Epistle of John

The First General Epistle of John

CONTENTS

It is impossible to give a satisfactory schematic representation of the contents of this letter. After the introduction, 1 John 1:1-4, in which the apostle declares that the purpose of his ministry is to manifest the life-giving divine Word, in order that the readers may have fellowship with him and the other apostles, and through them with God and Christ, he defines the character of this fellowship and points out that, since God is light, believers also should be and walk in the light, 1 John 1:5-10, i. e. they should guard against sin and keep Gods commandments, 1 John 2:1-6. He reminds the readers of the great commandment, which is at once old and new, that they should love the brethren, 1 John 2:7-14; and in connection with this warns them not to love the world, and to beware of the false teachers that deny the truth, 1 John 2:15-27. The representation of God as light now passes over into that of God as righteous, and the writer insists that only he that is righteous can be a child of God, 1 John 2:28-29, 1 John 3:1-6. He reminds the readers of the fact that to be righteous is to do righteousness, which in turn is identical with love to the brethren, 1 John 3:7-17. Once more he warns the readers against the love of the world, and points out that the commandment of God includes two things, viz, belief in Christ and love to the brethren, 1 John 3:18-24. In view of the false teachers he next reminds the readers that the test of having the Spirit of God, is to be found in the true confession of Christ, in adherence to the teaching of the apostles, and in that faith in Jesus that is the condition of love and of true spiritual life, 1 John 4:1-21, 1 John 5:1-12. Finally he states the object of the Epistle once more, and gives a brief summary of what he has written, 1 John 5:13-21.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. The literary form of this Epistle is different from that of all the other New Testament letters, the Epistle to the Hebrews and that of James resembling it most in this respect. Like the Epistle to the Hebrews it does not name its author nor its original readers, and contains no apostolic blessing at the beginning; and in agreement with that of James it has no formal conclusion, no greetings and salutations at the end. This feature led some to deny its epistolary character; yet, taking everything into consideration, the conclusion is inevitable that it is an Epistle in the proper sense of the word, and not a didactic treatise. “The freedom of the style, the use of such direct terms as, ‘I write unto you, ‘I wrote unto you, and the footing on which writer and readers stand to each other all through its contents, show it to be no formal composition.” (Salmond) Moreover it reveals no such plan as would be expected in a treatise. The order found in it is determined by association rather than by logic, the thoughts being grouped about certain clearly related, ruling ideas.

2. The great affinity of this Epistle with the Gospel of John naturally attracts attention. The two are very similar in the general conception of the truth, in the specific way of representing things, and in style and expression. Besides there are several passages in both that are mutually explanatory,

as:

John 1:1-2 John 1:1-2, John 1:4, John 1:14 John 3:11, John 3:16 John 15:12-13 1 John 2:1 John 14:16 1 John 4:6 John 8:47 1 John 2:2 John 11:51-52 1 John 5:6 John 19:34-35 1 John 2:8 John 13:34; John 15:10, John 15:12 1 John 5:9 John 5:32, John 5:34, John 5:36, John 8:17-18 1 John 2:10 John 11:9-10; John 12:35 1 John 5:12 John 3:36 1 John 2:23 John 15:23-24 1 John 5:13 John 20:31 1 John 2:27 John 14:26; John 16:13 1 John 5:14 John 14:13-14; John 16:23 1 John 3:8, 1 John 3:15 John 8:44; 1 John 5:20

John 17:3

Hence many scholars assume a very intimate connection of the Epistle with the Gospel, regarding it as a kind of introduction (Lightfoot), a sort of dedicatory writing (Hausrath, Hofmann), or a practical companion (Michaelis, Storr, Eichhorn), destined to accompany the Gospel. At the same time there are differences of such a kind between the two writings, as make it seem more likely that the Epistle is an independent composition. Cf. Holtzmann, Einl. p. 478; Salmond, Hastings D. B. Art. 1 John 5:1-21.

3. The truth is represented in this Epistle ideally rather than historically. This important fact is stated by Salmond concisely as follows: “The characteristic ideas of the Epistle are few and simple, they are of large significance, and they are presented in new aspects and relations as often as they occur. They belong to the region of primary principles, realities of the intuition, certainties of the experience, absolute truths. And they are given in their absoluteness. (Italics are ours). The regenerate man is one who cannot sin; Christian faith is presented in its ideal character and completeness; the revelation of life is exhibited in its finality, not in the stages of its historical realization.” Cf. especially Weiss, Biblical Theology of the N. T. .11 p. 311 if. Stevens, Johannine Theology, p. 1 if.

4. The style of the Epistle is very similar to that of the Gospel. Fundamental words and phrases are often repeated such as “truth,” “love,” “light,” “In the light,” “being born of God,” “abiding in God,” etc.; and the construction is characterized by utter simplicity, the sentences being coordinated rather than subordinated, and involved sentences being avoided by the repetition of part of a previous sentence. There is a remarkable paucity pf connecting particles, γ■ρ occurs only three times; δ■ but nine times; μ■ν τε and ο■ν are not found at all (while the last is of frequent occurrence in the Gospel). On the other hand ■τι is often used, and κ■ι is the regular connective. In many cases sentences and clauses follow one another without connecting particles, e. g.1 John 2:22-24; 1 John 4:4-13.

AUTHORSHIP The authorship of John is clearly attested by external testimony Eusebius says that Papias employed this Epistle, and also that Irenaeus often quoted from it. The last assertion is borne out by the work against heresies, in which Irenaeus repeatedly quotes the letter and ascribes it to John. Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian and Origen all quote it by name; it is contained in the Muratorian Fragment and in the old Latin and Syriac Versions; and Eusebius classes it with the writings universally received by the churches. This testimony may be regarded as very strong, especially in view of the fact that the author is not named in the Epistle. That conviction of the early church is corroborated by what internal evidence we have. All the proofs adduced for the Johannine authorship of the fourth Gospel also apply in the case of this Epistle, cf.

LINK TO JOHN AUTHORSHIP above. The two writings are so similar that they evidently were composed by the same hand. It is true, there are some points of difference, but these divergencies are of such a kind that they altogether preclude the idea that the Epistle is the product of a forger trying to imitate John. The almost general verdict is that he who wrote the one, also wrote the other. From 1 John 1:1-3 it is evident that the author has known Christ in the flesh; and the whole Epistle reveals the character of John as we know it from the Gospel and from tradition. But the authenticity of the letter did not go unchallenged. In the second century the Alogi and Marcion rejected it but only for dogmatical reasons. The truth presented in it did not fit their circle of ideas. The next attack on it followed in the sixteenth century, when Joseph Scaliger declared that none of the three Epistles that bear the name of John, were written by him; and S. G. Lange pronounced our letter unworthy of an apostle. It was not until 1820, however, that an important critical assault was made on the Epistle by Bretschneider. He was followed by the critics of the Tubingen school who, however they may differ in the details of their arguments, concur in denying the Johannine authorship and in regarding the Epistle as a second century production. Some of them, such as Kostlin, Georgii, and Hilgenfeld maintain that this Epistle and the fourth Gospel were composed by the same hand, while others, as Volkmar, Zeller, Davidson, Scholten e.a. regard them as the fruit of two congenial spirits. The main arguments against the Johannine authorship are the following: (1) The Epistle is evidently directed against second century Gnosticism, which separated in a dualistic manner knowledge and conduct, the divine Christ and the human Jesus, cf. 1 John 2:4; 1 John 2:9; 1 John 2:11; 1 John 5:6, etc. (2) The letter also seems to be a polemic against Docetism another second century heresy, cf. 1 John 4:2-3. (3) There are references to Montanism in the Epistle, as where the writer speaks of the moral perfection of believers, 1 John 3:6; 1 John 3:9, and distinguishes between sins unto death and sins not unto death, 1 John 3:16-17, a distinction which, Tertullian says, was made by the Montanists. (4) The difference between this Epistle and the Apocalypse is so great that it is impossible that one man should have written both.

We need not deny that the Epistle is partly an indirect polemic against Gnosticism, but we maintain that this was an incipient Gnosticism that made it’s appearance before the end of the first century in the heresy of Cerinthus, so that this does not argue against the authorship of John.—The supposed references to Docetism are very uncertain indeed; but even if they could be proved they would not point beyond the first century, for most of the Gnostics were also Docetae, and the Cerinthian heresy may be called a species of Docetism.—The representations of John have nothing in common with those of the Montanists. When he speaks of the perfection of believers, he speaks ideally and not of a perfection actually realized in this life. Moreover the “sin unto death” to which he refers, is evidently a complete falling away from Christ, and is not to be identified with the sins to which Tertullian refers, viz. “murder, idolatry, fraud, denial of Christ, blasphemy, and assuredly also adultery and fornication.”—With reference to the last argument we refer to what we have said above p. 111, and to the explanation given of the difference between the Apocalypse and the other Johannine writings below p. 321.

DESTINATION

There is very little in the letter that can help us to determine the location of the original readers. Because there is no local coloring whatever, it is not likely that the Epistle was sent to some individual church, as Ephesus (Hug) or Corinth (Lightfoot); and since the letter favors the idea that it was written to Gentile, rather than to Jewish Christians, it is very improbable that it was destined

for the Christians of Palestine (Benson). There is not a single Old Testament quotation in the Epistle, nor any reference to the Jewish nationality or the Jewish tenets of the readers. The statement of Augustine that this is John's letter "ad Parthos" is very obscure. Some, as Grotius, inferred from it that the Epistle was written for Christians beyond the Euphrates; but most generally it is regarded as a mistaken reading for some other expression, the reading πρ■ς παρθ■νους, finding most favor, which, Gieseler suggests, may in turn be a corruption of the title τ■υ παρθ■νου, which was commonly given to John in early times. In all probability the correct opinion respecting the destination of this Epistle is that held by the majority of scholars, as Bleek, Huther, Davidson, Plummer, Westcott, Weiss, Zahn, Alford e.a., that it was sent to the Christians of Asia Minor generally, for (1) that was John's special field of labor during the latter part of his life; (2) the heresies referred to and combated were rife in that country; and (3) the Gospel was evidently written for the Christians of that region, and the Epistle presupposes similar circumstances.

We have no definite information retarding the condition of the original readers. They had evidently left behind the Church's early struggles for existence and now constituted a recognized κοινων■α of believers, a community that placed its light over against the darkness of the world, and that distinguished itself from the unrighteous by keeping the commandments of God. They only needed to be reminded of their true character, which would naturally induce them to a life worthy of their fellowship with Christ. There are dangerous heresies abroad, however, against which they must be warned. The pernicious doctrine of Cerinthus, that Jesus was not the Christ, the Son of God, threatened the peace of their souls; and the subtle error, that one could be righteous without doing righteousness, endangered the fruitfulness of their Christian life.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. Although the Epistle is not primarily and directly polemical, yet it was most likely occasioned by the dangers to which we already referred. As to the object of the letter the author himself says: "that which we have seen and heard declare we unto you also, that ye also may have fellowship with us; yea, and our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ," 1 John 1:3; and again in 1 John 5:13 : "These things have I written unto you, that ye may know that ye have eternal life, even unto you that believe in the Name of the Son of God." The direct purpose of the author is to give his readers authentic instruction regarding the truth and reality of the things which they, especially as believers in Jesus Christ, accepted by faith; and to help them to see the natural issues of the fellowship to which they had been introduced, in order that they might have a full measure of peace and joy and life. The purpose of the writer is therefore at once theoretical and practical.

2. Time and Place. What we said above, pp. 113, 114, respecting the date of the fourth Gospel and the place of its composition, also favors the idea that this Epistle was written between the years 80-98, and at Ephesus. It is impossible to narrow down these time-limits any more. The only remaining question is, whether the Epistle was written prior to the Gospel, (Bleek, Huther, Reuss, Weiss), or the Gospel prior to the Epistle (DeWette, Ewald, Guericke, Alford, Plummer). It appears to us that the grounds adduced for the priority of the Epistle, as that a writing of momentary design naturally precedes one of permanent design; a letter of warning to particular churches, a writing like the Gospel addressed to all Christendom,—are very weak. And the arguments for the other side are almost equally inconclusive, although there is some force in the reasoning that the Epistle

in several places presupposes a knowledge of the Gospel, cf. the points of resemblance referred to on p. 311 above. But even this does not carry conviction, for Reuss correctly says: “For us, the Epistle needs the Gospel as a commentary; but inasmuch as at the first it had one in the oral instruction of the author, it is not thereby proved that it is the later.” History of the N. T. I p. 237. Salmond and Zahn wisely conclude their discussion of this point with a non liquet.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The canonicity of this letter was never doubted by the Church. Polycarp and Papias, both disciples of John, used it, and Irenaeus, a disciple of Polycarp, directly ascribes it to John. Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Cyprian, Origen and Dionysius of Alexandria all quote it by name, as a writing of the apostle John. It is referred to as John’s in the Muratorian Fragment, and is contained in the old Latin and Syriac Versions. The abiding significance of this important Epistle is, that it pictures us ideally the community of believers, as a community of life in fellowship with Christ, mediated by the word of the apostles, which is the Word of life. It describes that community as the sphere of life and light, of holiness and righteousness, of love to God and to the brethren; and as the absolute antithesis to the world with its darkness and death, its pollution and unrighteousness, its hatred and deception. All those who are introduced into that sphere should of necessity be holy and righteous and filled with love, and should avoid the world and its lusts. They should test the spirits, whether they be of God, and shun all anti-Christian error. Thus the Epistle describes for the Church of all ages the nature and criteria of heavenly fellowship, and warns believers to keep themselves unspotted from the world.

02.28. The Second and Third General Epistles of John

The Second and Third General Epistles of John

CONTENTS The Second Epistle. After the address and the apostolic blessing, 2 John 1:1-3, the writer expresses his joy at finding that some of the children of the addressee walk in the truth, and reiterates the great commandment of brotherly love, 2 John 1:4-6. He urges the readers to exercise this love and informs them that there are many errorists, who deny that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh, admonishing them not to receive these, lest they should become partakers of their evil deeds, 2 John 1:7-11. Expressing his intention to come to them, he ends his Epistle with a greeting, 2 John 1:12-13. The Third Epistle. The writer, addressing Gaius, sincerely wishes that he may prosper, as his soul prospereth, 3 John 1:1-3. He commends him for receiving the itinerant preachers, though they were strangers to him, 3 John 1:5-8. He also informs the brother that he has written to 3 John the church, but that Diotrephes resists his authority, not receiving the brethren himself and seeking to prevent others from doing it, 3 John 1:9-10. Warning Gaius against that evil example, he commends Demetrius, mentions an intended visit, and closes the Epistle with greetings, 3 John 1:11-14.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. These two Epistles have rightly been called twin epistles, since they reveal several points of similarity. The author in both styles himself the elder; they are of about equal length; each one of them, as distinguished from the first Epistle, begins with an address and ends with greetings; both contain an expression of joy; and both refer to itinerant preachers and to an intended visit of the writer.

2. The letters show close affinity to I John. What little they contain of doctrinal matter is closely related to the contents of the first Epistle, where we can easily find statements corresponding to those in 2 John 1:4-9 and 3 John 1:11. Several concepts and expressions clearly remind us of I John, as “love,” “truth,” “commandments,” “a new commandment,” one “which you had from the beginning,” “loving truth,” “walking in the truth,” “abiding in” one, “a joy that may be fulfilled,” etc. Moreover the aim of these letters is in general the same as that of the first Epistle, viz. to strengthen the readers in the truth and in love; and to warn them against an incipient Gnosticism.

AUTHORSHIP

Considering the brevity of these Epistles, their authorship is very well attested. Clement of Alexandria speaks of the second Epistle and, according to Eusebius, also commented on the third. Irenaeus quotes the second Epistle by name, ascribing it to “John the Lord’s disciple.” Tertullian and Cyprian contain no quotations from them, but Dionysius of Alexandria, Athanasius and Didymus received them as the work of the apostle. The Muratorian Canon in a rather obscure passage mentions two Epistles of John besides the first one. The Peshito does not contain them; and Eusebius, without clearly giving his own opinion, reckons them with the Antilegomena. After his time they were generally received and as such recognized by the, councils of Laodicea (363),

Hippo (393) and Carthage (397).

Internal evidence may be said to favor the authorship of John. One can scarcely read these letters without feeling that they proceeded from the same hand that composed I John. The second Epistle especially is very similar to the first, a similarity that can hardly be explained, as Baljon suggests, from an acquaintance of the author with I John, ml. p. 237, 239. And the third Epistle is inseparably linked to the second. The use of a few Pauline terms, προπ■μτειν, ε■δο■σθαι and ■για■νειν, and of a few peculiar words, as φλυαρε■ν, φιλοπρωτε■ειν ■πολαμβ■νειν, prove nothing to the contrary. The great stumbling block, that prevents several scholars from accepting the apostolic authorship of these Epistles, is found in the fact that the author simply styles himself ■ πρεσβ■τερος. This appellation led some, as Erasmus, Grotius, Beck, Bretschneider, Hase, Renan, Reuss, Wieseler e.a., to ascribe them to a certain well-known presbyter John, distinct from the apostle. This opinion is based on a passage of Papias, as it is interpreted by Eusebius, The passage runs thus: “If I met anywhere with anyone who had been a follower of the elders, I used to inquire what were the declarations of the elders; what was said by Andrew, by Peter, by Philip, what by Thomas or James, what by John or Matthew, or any other of the disciples of our Lord; and the things which Aristion and the presbyter John, the disciples of the Lord say; for I did not expect to derive so much benefit from the contents of books as from the utterances of a living and abiding voice.” From this statement Eusebius infers that among the informants of Papias there was besides the apostle John also a John the presbyter, Church Hist. III 39. But the correctness of this inference is subject to doubt. Notice (1) that Papias first names those whose words he received through others and then mentions two of whom he had also received personal instruction, cf. the difference in tense, ε■πεν and λ■γουσιν; (2) that it seems very strange that for Papias, who was himself a disciple of the apostle John, anyone but the apostle would be ■ πρεσβ■τερος; (3) that Eusebius was the first to discover this second John in the passage of Papias: (4) that history knows nothing of such a John the presbyter; he is a shadowy person indeed; and (5) that the Church historian was not unbiased in his opinion; being averse to the supposed Chiliasm of the Apocalypse, he was only too glad to find another John to whom he could ascribe it. But even if the inference of Eusebius were correct, it would not prove that this presbyter was the author of our Epistles. The same passage of Papias clearly establishes the fact that the apostles were also called elders in the early Church. And does not the appellation, ■ πρεσβ■τερος, admirably fit the last of the apostles, who for many years was the overseer of the churches in Asia Minor? He stood preeminent above all others; and by using this name designated at once his official position and his venerable age.

DESTINATION The second Epistle is addressed to ■κλεκτ■ κυρ■α■ and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but all those that know the truth,” 2 John 1:1. There is a great deal of uncertain{y about the interpretation of this address. On the assumption that the letter was addressed to an individual, the following renderings have been proposed: (2 John 1:1) to an elect lady; (2 John 1:2) to the elect lady; (2 John 1:3) to the elect Kuria; (2 John 1:4) to the Lady Electa; (2 John 1:5) to Electa Kuria. The first of these is certainly the simplest and the most natural one, but considered as the address of an Epistle, it is too indefinite. To our mind the second, which seems to be grammatically permissible, is the best of all the suggested interpretations. As to the third, it is true that the word κυρ■α does occur as a proper name, cf. Zahn, Einl. II p. 584; but on the supposition that this is the case here also, it would be predicated of a single individual, which

in Scripture is elsewhere done only in Romans 16:13, a case that is not altogether parallel; and the more natural construction would be κυρ■α■ τ■ ■κλεκτ■. Cf. 3 John 1:1; the case in 1 Peter 1:1 does not offer a parallel, because παρεπιδ■μοις is not a proper noun. The fourth must be ruled out, since ■κλεκτ■ is not known to occur as a nomen proprium; and if this were the name of the addressee, her sister, 2>Jn 1:13, would strangely bear the same name. The last rendering is the least likely, burdening the lady, as it does, with two strange names. If the letter was addressed to an individual, which is favored by the analogy of the third Epistle, and also by the fact that the sisters children are spoken of in 2 John 1:13, while she herself is not mentioned, then in all probability the addressee was a lady well known and highly esteemed in the early church, but not named in the letter. Thus Salmond (Hastings D. B.), while Alford and D. Smith regard Kuria as the name of the lady. In view of the contents of the Epistle, however, many from the time of Jerome on have regarded the title as a designation of the Church in general (Jerome, Hilgenfeld, Lunemann, Schmiedel), or of some particular church (Huther, Holtzmann, Weiss, Westcott, Salmon, Zahn, Baljon). The former of these two seems to be excluded by 2 John 1:13, since the Church in general can hardly be represented as having a sister. But as over against the view that the Epistle was addressed to an individual, the latter is favored by (1) the fact that everything of a personal nature is absent from the Epistle; (2) the plurals which the apostle constantly uses, cf. 2 John 1:6, 2 John 1:8, 2 John 1:10, 2 John 1:12; (3) the way in which he speaks to the addressee in 2 John 1:5, 2 John 1:8; (4) the expression, “and not I only, but also all they that have known the truth,” 1, which is more applicable to a church than to a single individual; and (5) the greeting, 2 John 1:13, which is most naturally understood as the greeting of one church to another. If this view of the Epistle is correct, and we are inclined to think it is, κυρ■α is probably used as the feminine of κ■ριος, in harmony with the Biblical representation that the Church is the bride of the Lamb. It is useless to guess, however, what particular church is meant. Since the church of Ephesus is in all probability the sister, it is likely that one of the other churches of Asia Minor is addressed. The third Epistle is addressed to a certain Gaius, of whom we have no knowledge beyond that gained from the Epistle, where he is spoken of as a beloved friend of the apostle, and as a large-hearted hospitable man, who with a willing heart served the cause of Christ. There have been some attempts to identify him with a Gaius who is mentioned in the Apostolic Constitutions as having been appointed bishop of Pergamum by John, or with some of the other persons of the same name in Scripture, Acts 19:29; Acts 20:4, especially with Pauls host at Corinth, Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 1:14; but these efforts have not been crowned with success.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose: In all probability the false agitators to whom the apostle refers in the Second Epistle, 2 John 1:7-12, gave him occasion to write this letter. His aim is to express his joy on account of the obedience of some of the members of the church, to exhort all that they love one another, to warn them against deceivers who would pervert the truth, and to announce his coming. The third Epistle seems to have been occasioned by the reports of certain brethren who traveled about from place to place and were probably engaged in preaching the Gospel. They reported to the apostle that they had enjoyed the hospitality of Gaius, but had met with a rebuff at the hands of Diotrephes, an ambitious fellow (probably, as some have thought, an elder or a deacon in the church), who resisted the authority of the apostle and refused to receive the brethren. The authors purpose is to express his satisfaction with the course pursued by Gaius, to condemn the attitude of

Diotrephes, to command Demetrius as a worthy brother, and to announce an intended visit.

2. Time and Place. The assumption seems perfectly warranted that John wrote these Epistles from Ephesus, where he spent perhaps the last twenty-five years of his life. We have no means for determining the time when they were composed. It may safely be said, however, that it was after the composition of I John. And if the surmise of Zahn and Salmon is correct, that the letter referred to in 3 John 1:9 is our second Epistle, they were probably written at the same time. This idea is favored somewhat by the fact that the expression, "I wrote somewhat (■ψραψ■ τι) to the church," seems to refer to a short letter; and by the mention of an intended visit at the end of each letter. But from the context it would appear that this letter must have treated of the reception or the support of the missionary brethren, which is not the case with our second Epistle.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE

There was some doubt at first as to the canonicity of these Epistles. The Alexandrian church generally accepted them, Clement, Dionysius and Alexander of Alexandria all recognizing them as canonical, though Origen had doubts. Irenaeus cites a passage from the second Epistle as John's. Since neither Tertullian nor Cyprian quote them, it is uncertain, whether they were accepted by the North African church. The Muratorian Fragment mentions two letters of John in a rather obscure way. In the Syrian church they were not received, since they were not in the Peshito, but in the fourth century Ephrem quotes both by name. Eusebius classed them with the Antilegomena, but soon after his time they were universally accepted as canonical. The eminent significance of the second Epistle is that it emphasizes the necessity of abiding in the truth and thus exhibiting one's love to Christ. To abide in the doctrine of Christ and to obey his commandments, is the test of sonship. Hence believers should not receive those who deny the true doctrine, and especially the incarnation of Christ, lest they become partakers of their evil deeds. The third Epistle also has it's permanent lesson in that it commends the generous love that reveals itself in the hospitality of Gaius, shown to those who labor in the cause of Christ, and denounce the self-centered activity of Diotrephes; for these two classes of men are always found in the Church.

02.29. The General Epistle of Jude

The General Epistle of Jude

CONTENTS The writer begins his Epistle with the regular address and apostolic blessing, Jude 1:1-2. He informs his readers that he felt it incumbent on him to warn them against certain intruders, who deny Christ, lead lascivious lives and will certainly be punished like the people delivered from Egypt, the fallen angels and the cities of the plain, Jude 1:3-7. These intruders are further described as defilers of the flesh and as despisers and blasphemers of heavenly dignities, and the woe is pronounced on them, Jude 1:8-11. After giving a further description of their debauchery, the author exhorts the readers to be mindful of the words of the apostles, who had spoken of the appearance of such mockers, Jude 1:12-19. Admonishing them to increase in faith and to keep themselves in the love of God, and giving them directions as to the correct behaviour towards others, he concludes his Epistle with a doxology, Jude 1:20-25.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. This Epistle is characterized by its very close resemblance to parts of II Peter. Since we have already discussed the relation in which the two stand to each other (II Peter), we now simply refer to that discussion.

2. The letter is peculiar also in that it contains quotations from the apocryphal books. The story in Jude 1:9 is taken from the Assumption of Moses, according to which Michael was commissioned to bury Moses, but Satan claimed the body, in the first place because he was the lord of matter, and in the second place since Moses had committed murder in Egypt. The falsity of the first ground is brought out by Michael, when he says: “The Lord rebuke thee, for it was God’s Spirit which created the word and all mankind.” He does not reflect on the second. The prophecy in Jude 1:14-15 is taken from the Book of Enoch a book that was highly esteemed by the early church. According to some the statement regarding the fallen angels, Jude 1:6, is also derived from it. The latest editor of these writings, R. H. Charles, regards the first as a composite work, made up of two distinct books, viz, the Testament and the Assumption of Moses, of which the former, and possibly also the latter was written in Hebrew between 7 and 29 A. D. With respect to the Book of Enoch he holds, “that the larger part of the book was written not later than 160 B. C., and that no part of it is more recent than the Christian era.” Quoted by Mayor, Exp. Gk. Test. V p. 234.

3. The language of Jude may best be likened to that of his brother James. He speaks in a tone of unquestioned authority and writes a vigorous style. His Greek, though it has a Jewish complexion, is fairly correct; and his descriptions are often just as picturesque as those of James, when he compares the intruders to “spots (R. V. ‘hidden rocks) in the feasts of charity;” “clouds without water, carried along by winds,” “autumn trees without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots,” “wild waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame ;” etc., Jude 1:12-13. Like James also he employs some words that are otherwise exclusively Pauline, as ■ι■■διος, χυριτης, ο■χητ■ρι■, προγρ■φειν. Moreover the letter contains a few ■παξ λεγ■μενα.

AUTHORSHIP The Muratorian Canon accepts Jude, but indicates that it was doubted by some. Clement of Alexandria commented on it, and Tertullian quotes it by name. Origen acknowledges that there were doubts as to the canonicity of Jude, but does not seem to have shared them. Didymus of Alexandria defends the Epistle against those who questioned its authority on account of the use made in it of apocryphal books. Eusebius reckoned it with the Antilegomena; but it was accepted as canonical by the third council of Carthage in 397 A. D. The author designates himself as “Jude the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James.” There are several persons of that name mentioned in the New Testament, of which only two can come in consideration here, however, viz. Jude, the brother of the Lord, Matthew 13:55; Mark 6:3, and Jude the apostle, Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13, also called Lebbeus, Matthew 10:3, and Thaddeus, Mark 3:18. It appears to us that the author was Jude, the brother of the Lord, because: (1) He seeks to give a clear indication of his identity by calling himself, “the brother of James.” This James must have been so well known, therefore, as to need no further description; and there was but one James at that time of whom this could be said, viz. James the brother of the Lord. (2) It is inconceivable that an apostle, rather than name his official position, should make himself known by indicating his relationship to another person, whoever that person might be. (3) Though it is possible that the writer, even if he were an apostle, should speak as he does in Jude 1:17, that passage seems to imply that he stood outside of the apostolic circle. - In favor of the view that the author was the apostle Jude, some have appealed to Luke 6:16; Acts 1:13, where the apostle is called ■Ιο■δας ■Ιαχ■βου but it is contrary to established usage to supply the word brother in such a case.

Very little is known of this Jude. If the order in which the brethren of the Lord are named in Scripture is any indication of their age, he was the youngest or the youngest but one of the group; compare Matthew 13:55 with Mark 6:3. With his brothers he was not a believer in Jesus during the Lord’s public ministry, John 7:5, but evidently embraced him by faith after the resurrection, Acts 1:14. For the rest we can only gather from 1 Corinthians 9:5 respecting the brethren of the Lord in general, undoubtedly with the exception of James, who resided at Jerusalem, that they traveled about with their wives, willing workers for the Kingdom of God, and were even known at Corinth. The authenticity of the Epistle has been doubted, because: (1)The author speaks of faith in the objective sense, Ths a fides quae creditur, Jude 1:3, Jude 1:20, a usage that points to the post-apostolic period; (2) He mentions the apostles as persons who lived in the distant past, Jude 1:17; and (3) he evidently combats the second century heresy of the Carpocratians. But these grounds are very questionable indeed. The word faith is employed in the objective sense elsewhere in the New Testament, most certainly in the Pastorals, and probably also in Romans 10:8; Galatians 1:23; Php 1:27. And there is nothing impossible in the assumption that that meaning should have become current in the time of the apostles. The manner in which Jude mentions the apostles does not necessarily imply that they had all passed away before this letter was composed. At most the death of a few is implied. But we agree with Dr. Chase, when he judges that the supposition that the apostles were dispersed in such a way that their voice could not at the time reach the persons to whom this letter is addressed, meets all the requirements of the case. Hastings D. B. Art. Jude. The assumption that the heretics referred to were second century Carpocratians, is entirely gratuitous; it rests on a mistaken interpretation of three passages, viz, the Jude 1:4 b, Jude 1:8, Jude 1:19.

DESTINATION

Jude addresses his Epistle to “those that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ, and called.” On account of the very general character of this designation some, as Ewald, regard the Epistle as a circular letter; but the contents of the Epistle are against this assumption. Yet we are left entirely to conjecture as to the particular locality in which the readers dwelt. Some scholars, e. g. Alford and Zahn, believe that the Epistle was written to Jewish readers, but we are inclined to think with Weiss, Chase, Bigg, Baljon e. a. that the recipients of the letter were Gentile Christians, (1) because the letter is so closely related to II Peter, which was sent to the Christians of Asia Minor; and (2) since the heresies to which it refers are known to have arisen in Gentile churches. Cf. especially I Corinthians and the letters to the seven churches in the Apocalypse.

Many expositors are inclined to look for the first readers in Asia Minor on account of the resemblance of the heresies mentioned in the Epistle to those referred to in II Peter. But possibly it is better to hold with Chase that the letter was sent to Syrian Antioch and the surrounding district, since they had evidently received oral instruction from the apostles generally, and were therefore most likely in the vicinity of Palestine. Moreover Jude may have felt some special responsibility for the church in that vicinity since the death of his brother James. In the condition of the readers there was cause for alarm. The danger that Peter saw as a cloud on the distant horizon, Jude espied as a leaven that was already working in the ranks of his readers. False brethren had crept into the church who were, it would seem, practical libertines, enemies of the cross of Christ, who abused their Christian liberty (Alford, Salmon, Weiss, Chase), and not at the same time heretical teachers (Zahn, Baljon). Perhaps they were no teachers at all. Their life was characterized by lasciviousness, Jude 1:4, especially fornication, Jude 1:7-8; Jude 1:11, mockery, Jude 1:10, ungodliness, Jude 1:15, murmuring, complaining, pride and greed, Jude 1:16. Their fundamental error seems to have been that they despised and spoke evil of the authorities that were placed over them. They were Antinomians and certainly had a great deal in common with the Nicolaitans of the Apocalypse.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. The danger to which these Christians were thus exposed, led to the composition of this Epistle. Apparently Jude intended to write to them of the common salvation, when he suddenly heard of the grave situation and found it necessary to pen a word of warning, 3. In the verse from which we draw this conclusion, the author also clearly states his aim, when he says that he deemed it imperative to write to them that they should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints. In order to do this, he pictures to them the disobedient and immoral character of the ungodly persons that had unawares crept into the fold and endangered their Christian faith and life; reminds them of the fact that God would certainly punish those wanton libertines, just as He had punished sinners in the past; and exhorts them to stand in faith and to strive after holiness.

2. Time and Place. We have absolutely no indication of the place where this Epistle was written; it is not unlikely, however, that it was at Jerusalem. With respect to the time of its composition we have a terminus ad quem in the date of II Peter, about A. D. 67, since that Epistle is evidently dependent on Jude. On the other hand it does not seem likely that Jude would write such a letter, while his brother James was still living, so that we have a terminus a quo in A. D. 62. A date later than 62 is also favored by the Pauline words employed in this letter, in some of which we seem to

have an echo of Ephesians and Colossians. Moreover the great similarity between the conditions pictured in this letter and those described in II Peter is best explained, if we date them in close proximity to each other. We shall not go far wrong in dating the Epistle about the year 65. The older critics of the Tubingen school dated the Epistle late in the second century, while more recent critics, as Pfleiderer, Holtzmann, Julicher, Harnack, Baljon, think it originated about the middle or in the first half of the second century. They draw this conclusion from, (1) the way in which the writer speaks of faith, Jude 1:3; Jude 1:20; (2) the manner in which he refers to the apostles, Jude 1:17; (3) the use of the apocryphal books; and (4) the supposed references to the doctrines of the Carpocratians. But these arguments can all be met by counter-arguments, cf. above.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE In the early Church there was considerable doubt as to the canonicity of this epistle especially because it was not written by an apostle and contained passage from apocryphal books. There are allusions more or less clear to the Epistle in II Peter, Polycarp, Athenagoras and Theophilus of Antioch. The Muratorian Canon mentions it, but in a manner which implies that it was doubted by some. It is found in the old Latin Version, but not in the Peshito. Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian and Origen recognized it, though Origen intimates that there were doubts regarding its canonicity. Eusebius doubted its canonical authority, but the council of Carthage (397) accepted it. In the Epistle of Jude we have the Christian war-cry, resounding through the ages: Contend earnestly for the faith that was once delivered unto the saints! This letter, the last of the New Testament, teaches with great emphasis that apostasy from the true creed with its central truths of the atonement of Christ and the permanent validity of the law as the rule of life, is assured perdition; and clearly reveals for all generations the inseparable connection between a correct belief and a right mode of living.

Chapter 58

03.00. Sanctification

Sanctification by Louis Berkhof

Part I: The Scriptural Terms for Sanctification and Holiness

Part II: The Doctrine of Sanctification in History

Part III: The Biblical Idea of Holiness and Sanctification

Part IV: The Nature of Sanctification

Part V: The Characteristics of Sanctification

Part VI: The Author and Means of Sanctification

Part VII: Relation of Sanctification to Other Stages in the Ordo Salutis

Part VIII: The Imperfect Character of Sanctification in This Life

Part IX: Sanctification and Good Works

From Berkhof's Systematic Theology,

03.01. Part 1 - The Scriptural Terms for Sanctification

Sanctification

L. Berkhof Scriptural Terms for Sanctification and Holiness 1. THE OLD TESTAMENT TERMS. The Old Testament word for ‘to sanctify’ is qadash, a verb that is used in the niphal, piet, hiphil, and hithpa’el species. The corresponding noun is qodesh, while the adjective is qadosh. The verbal forms are derived from the nominal and adjectival forms. The original meaning of these words is uncertain. Some are of the opinion that the word qadash is related to chadash, meaning ‘to shine.’ This would be in harmony with the qualitative aspect of the Biblical idea of holiness, namely, that of purity. Others, with a greater degree of probability, derive the word from the root qad, meaning ‘to cut.’ This would make the idea of separation the original idea. The word would then point to aloofness, separateness, or majesty. Though this meaning of the words ‘sanctification’ and ‘holiness’ may seem unusual to us, it is in all probability the fundamental idea expressed by them. Says Girdlestone: “The terms ‘sanctification’ and ‘holiness’ are now used so frequently to represent moral and spiritual qualities, that they hardly convey to the reader the idea of position or relationship as existing between God and some person or thing consecrated to Him; yet this appears to be the real meaning of the word.” [1] Similarly, Cremer-Koegel calls attention to the fact that the idea of separation is fundamental to that of holiness. “Heiligkeit ist ein verhaeltnisbegriff.” At the same time it is admitted that the two ideas of holiness and separation do not merge, are not absorbed in each other, but that the former in a measure serves to qualify the latter. [2] 2. THE NEW TESTAMENT TERMS. a. The verb hagiazo and its various meanings. The verb hagiazo is a derivative of hagios, which like the Hebrew qadosh expresses primarily the idea of separation. It is used in several different senses, however, in the New Testament. We may distinguish the following: (1) It is used in a mental sense of persons or things, Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2; 1 Peter 3:15. In such cases it means “to regard an object as holy,” “to ascribe holiness to it,” or “to acknowledge its holiness by word or deed.” (2) It is also employed occasionally in a ritual sense, that is, in the sense of “separating from ordinary for sacred purposes,” or of “setting aside for a certain office,” Matthew 23:17; Matthew 23:19; John 10:36; 2 Timothy 2:21. (3) Again it is used to denote that operation of God by which He, especially through His Spirit, works in man the subjective quality of holiness, John 17:17; Acts 20:32; Acts 26:18; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23. (4) Finally, in the Epistle to the Hebrews it seems to be used in an expiatory sense, and also in the related sense of the Pauline dikaio-o, Hebrews 9:13; Hebrews 10:10; Hebrews 10:29; Hebrews 13:12. [3] b. The adjectives expressive of the idea of holiness. (1) Hieros. The word that is used least and that is also the least expressive, is the word hieros. It is found only in 1 Corinthians 9:13; 2 Timothy 3:15, and then not of persons but of things. It does not express moral excellence, but is expressive of the inviolable character of the thing referred to, which springs from the relation in which it stands to God. It is best translated by the English word "sacred." (2) Hosios. The word hosios is of more frequent occurrence. It is found in Acts 2:27; Acts 13:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:8; Titus 1:8; Hebrews 7:26; Revelation 15:4; Revelation 16:5, and is applied not only to things, but also to God and to Christ. It describes a person or thing as free from

defilement or wickedness, or more actively (of persons) as religiously fulfilling every moral obligation. (3) Hagnos. The word hagnos occurs in 2 Corinthians 7:11; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Php 4:8; 1 Timothy 5:22; James 3:17; 1 Peter 3:2; 1 John 3:3. The fundamental idea of the word seems to be that of freedom from impurity and defilement in an ethical sense. (4) Hagios. The really characteristic word of the New Testament, however, is hagios. Its primary meaning is that of separation in consecration and devotion to the service of God. With this is connected the idea that what is set aside from the world for God, should also separate itself from the world's defilement and share in God's purity. This explains the fact that hagios speedily acquired an ethical signification. The word does not always have the same meaning in the New Testament. (a) It is used to designate an external official relation, a being set aside from ordinary purposes for the service of God, as for instance, when we read of "holy prophets," Luke 1:70, "holy apostles," Ephesians 3:5, and "holy men of God" 2 Peter 1:21. (b) More often, however, it is employed in an ethical sense to describe the quality that is necessary to stand in close relation to God and to serve Him acceptably, Ephesians 1:4; Ephesians 5:27; Colossians 1:22: 1 Peter 1:15-16. It should be borne in mind that in treating of sanctification we use the word primarily in the latter sense. When we speak of holiness in connection with sanctification, we have in mind both an external relation and an inner subjective quality. c. The nouns denoting sanctification and holiness. The New Testament word for sanctification is hagiasmos. It occurs ten times, namely, in Romans 6:19; Romans 6:22; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:2. While it denotes ethical purification, it includes the idea of separation, namely, "the separation of the spirit from all that is impure and polluting, and a renunciation of the sins towards which the desires of the flesh and of the mind lead us." While hagiasmos denotes the work of sanctification, there are two other words that describe the result of the process, namely, hagiotes and hagiosune. The former is found in 1 Corinthians 1:30 and Hebrews 12:10; and the latter in Romans 1:4; 2 Corinthians 7:1, and 1 Thessalonians 3:13. These passages show that the quality of holiness or freedom from pollution and impurity is essential to God, was exhibited by Jesus Christ, and is imparted to the Christian.

1. Old Testament Synonyms, p. 283.

2. Biblisch-Theologisches Woerterbuch (10th ed.) p. 41.

3. Cf. Denney, The Death of Christ, p. 220; Kennedy, The Theology of the Epistles, p. 214.

03.02. Part 2: The Doctrine of Sanctification in History

The Doctrine of Sanctification in History.

1. BEFORE THE REFORMATION. In the historical unfolding of the doctrine of sanctification, the Church concerned itself primarily with three problems: (a) the relation of the grace of God in sanctification to faith; (b) the relation of sanctification to justification; and (c) the degree of sanctification in this present life. The writings of the early Church Fathers contain very little respecting the doctrine of sanctification. A strain of moralism is quite apparent in that man was taught to depend for salvation on faith and good works. Sins committed before baptism were washed away in baptism, but for those after baptism man must provide by penance and good works. He must lead a life of virtue and thus merit the approval of the Lord. "Such dualism," says Scott in his The Nicene Theology,[1] "left the domain of sanctification only indirectly related to the redemption of Christ; and this was the field in which grew up, naturally, defective conceptions of sin, legalism, Sacramentarianism, priestcraft, and all the excesses of monkish devotion." Asceticism came to be regarded as of the greatest importance. There was also a tendency to confound justification and sanctification. Augustine was the first one to develop rather definite ideas of sanctification, and his views had a determining influence on the Church of the Middle Ages. He did not clearly distinguish between justification and sanctification, but conceived of the latter as included in the former. Since he believed in the total corruption of human nature by the fall, he thought of sanctification as a new supernatural impartation of divine life, a new infused energy, operating exclusively within the confines of the Church and through the sacraments. While he did not lose sight of the importance of personal love to Christ as a constituent element in sanctification, he manifested a tendency to take a metaphysical view of the grace of God in sanctification, -- to regard it as a deposit of God in man. He did not sufficiently stress the necessity of a constant preoccupation of faith with the redeeming Christ, as the most important factor in the transformation of the Christian’s life. The tendencies apparent in the teachings of Augustine came to fruitage in the theology of the Middle Ages, which is found in its most developed form in the writings of Thomas Aquinas. Justification and sanctification are not clearly distinguished, but the former is made to include the infusion of divine grace, as something substantial, into the human soul. This grace is a sort of donum superadditum, by which the soul is lifted to a new level or a higher order of being, and is enabled to achieve its heavenly destiny of knowing, possessing, and enjoying God. The grace is derived from the inexhaustible treasury of the merits of Christ and is imparted to believers by the sacraments. Looked at from the divine point of view, this sanctifying grace within the soul secures the remission of original sin, imparts a permanent habit of inherent righteousness, and carries within itself the potency of further development, and even of perfection. Out of it the new life develops with all its virtues. Its good, work can be neutralized or destroyed by mortal sins; but the guilt contracted after baptism can be removed by the eucharist in the case of venial sins, and by the sacrament of penance in the case of mortal sins. Considered from the human point of view, the supernatural works of faith working through love have merit before God, and secure an increase of grace. Such works are impossible, however, without the continuous

operation of the grace of God. The result of the whole process was known as justification rather than as sanctification; it consisted in making man just before God. These ideas are embodied in the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent.

2. AFTER THE REFORMATION The Reformers in speaking of sanctification emphasized the antithesis of sin and redemption rather than that of nature and supernature. They made a clear distinction between justification and sanctification, regarding the former as a legal act of divine grace, affecting the judicial status of man, and the latter, as a moral or re-creative work, changing the inner nature of man. But while they made a careful distinction between the two, they also stressed their inseparable connection. While deeply convinced that man is justified by faith alone, they also understood that the faith which justifies is not alone. Justification is at once followed by sanctification, since God sends out the Spirit of His Son into the hearts of His own as soon as they are justified, and that Spirit is the Spirit of sanctification. They did not regard the grace of sanctification as a supernatural essence infused in man through the sacraments, but as a supernatural and gracious work of the Holy Spirit, primarily through the Word and secondarily through the sacraments, by which He delivers us more and more from the power of sin and enables us to do good works. Though in no way confounding justification and sanctification, they felt the necessity of preserving the closest possible connection between the former, in which the free and forgiving grace of God is strongly emphasized, and the latter, which calls for the co-operation of man, in order to avoid the danger of work-righteousness. In Pietism and Methodism great emphasis was placed on constant fellowship with Christ as the great means of sanctification. By exalting sanctification at the expense of justification, they did not always avoid the danger of self-righteousness. Wesley did not merely distinguish justification and sanctification, but virtually separated them, and spoke of entire sanctification as a second gift of grace, following the first, of justification by faith, after a shorter or longer period. While he also spoke of sanctification as a process, he yet held that the believer should pray and look for full sanctification at once by a separate act of God. Under the influence of Rationalism and of the moralism of Kant sanctification ceased to be regarded as a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in the renewal of sinners, and was brought down to the level of a mere moral improvement by the natural powers of man. For Schleiermacher it was merely the progressive domination of the God consciousness within us over the merely sentient and ever morally defective world consciousness. And for Ritschl it was the moral perfection of the Christian life to which we attain by fulfilling our vocation as members of the Kingdom of God. In a great deal of modern liberal theology sanctification consists only in the ever-increasing redemption of man’s lower self by the domination of his higher self. Redemption by character is one of the slogans of the present day, and the term "sanctification" has come to stand for mere moral improvement.

1. p. 200

03.03. Part 3: The Biblical Idea of Holiness and

The Biblical Idea of Holiness and Sanctification. l. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. In Scripture the quality of holiness applies first of all to God, and as applied to Him its fundamental idea is that of unapproachableness. And this unapproachableness is based on the fact that God is divine and therefore absolutely distinct from the creature. Holiness in this sense is not merely an attribute to be co-ordinated with others in God. It is rather something that is predicable of everything that is found in God. He is holy in His grace as well as in His righteousness, in His love as well as in His wrath. Strictly speaking, holiness becomes an attribute only in the later ethical sense of the word. The ethical meaning of the term developed out of the majesty meaning. This development starts with the idea that a sinful being is more keenly conscious of the majesty of God than a sinless being. The sinner becomes aware of his impurity as over against the majestic purity of God, cf. Isaiah 6:1-13. Otto speaks of holiness in the original sense as the numenous, and proposes to call the characteristic reaction to it "creature-feeling, or creature-consciousness," a disvaluation of self into nothingness, while he speaks of the reaction to holiness in the derived ethical sense as a "feeling of absolute profaneness." Thus the idea of holiness as majestic purity or ethical sublimity was developed. This purity is an active principle in God, that must vindicate itself and uphold its honor. This accounts for the fact that holiness is represented in Scripture also as the light of the divine glory turned into a devouring fire. Isaiah 5:24; Isaiah 10:17; Isaiah 33:14-15. Over against the holiness of God man feels himself to be, not merely insignificant, but positively impure and sinful, and as such an object of God’s wrath. God revealed His holiness in the Old Testament in various ways. He did it in terrible judgments upon the enemies of Israel, Exodus 15:11-12. He did it also by separating unto Himself a people, which He took out of the world, Exodus 19:4-6; Ezekiel 20:39-44. By taking this people out of the impure and ungodly world, He protested against that world and its sin. Moreover, He did it repeatedly in sparing His unfaithful people, because He did not want the unholy world to rejoice at what it might consider the failure of His work, Hosea 11:9. In a derivative sense the idea of holiness is also applied to things and persons that are placed in a special relation to God. The land of Canaan, the city of Jerusalem, the temple-mount, the tabernacle and temple, the Sabbaths and the solemn feasts of Israel, -- they are all called holy, since they are consecrated to God and are placed within the radiance of His majestic holiness. Similarly, the prophets, the Levites, and the priests are called holy as persons that were set aside for the special service of the Lord. Israel had its sacred places, its sacred seasons, its sacred rites, and its sacred persons. This is not yet the ethical idea of holiness, however. One might be a sacred person, and yet be entirely devoid of the grace of God in his heart. In the old dispensation, as well as in the new, ethical holiness results from the renewing and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. It should be remembered, however, that even where the conception of holiness is thoroughly spiritualized, it is always expressive of a relation. The idea of holiness is never that of moral goodness, considered in itself, but always that of ethical goodness seen in relation to God.

2. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. In passing from the Old Testament to the New we become aware of a striking difference. While in the Old Testament there is not a single attribute of God that

stands out with anything like the same prominence as His holiness, in the New Testament holiness is seldom ascribed to God. Except in a few Old Testament quotations, it is done only in the writings of John, John 17:11; 1 John 2:20; Revelation 6:10. In all probability the explanation for this lies in the fact that in the New Testament holiness stands forth as the special characteristic of the Spirit of God, by whom believers are sanctified, are qualified for service, and are led to their eternal destiny, 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 3:5. The word hagios is used in connection with the Spirit of God well nigh a hundred times. The conception of holiness and sanctification, however, is no other in the New Testament than it is in the Old. In the former as well as in the latter holiness is ascribed in a derived sense to man. In the one as well as in the other ethical holiness is not mere moral rectitude, and sanctification is never mere moral improvement. These two are often confused in the present day, when people speak of salvation by character. A man may boast of great moral improvement, and yet be an utter stranger to sanctification. The Bible does not urge moral improvement pure and simple, but moral improvement in relation to God, for God's sake, and with a view to the service of God. It insists on sanctification. At this very point much ethical preaching of the present day is utterly misleading; and the corrective for it lies in the presentation of the true doctrine of sanctification. Sanctification may be defined as that gracious and continuous operation of the Holy Spirit, by which He delivers the justified sinner from the pollution of sin, renews his whole nature in the image of God, and enables him to perform good works.

03.04. Part 4: The Nature of Sanctification

The Nature of Sanctification. l. IT IS A SUPERNATURAL WORK OF GOD.

Some have the mistaken notion that sanctification consists merely in the drawing out of the new life, implanted in the soul by regeneration, in a persuasive way by presenting motives to the will. But this is not true. It consists fundamentally and primarily in a divine operation in the soul, whereby the holy disposition born in regeneration is strengthened and its holy exercises are increased. It is essentially a work of God, though in so far as He employs means, man can and is expected to co-operate by the proper use of these means. Scripture clearly exhibits the supernatural character of sanctification in several ways. It describes it as a work of God, 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:20-21, as a fruit of the union of life with Jesus Christ, John 15:4; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 4:19, as a work that is wrought in man from within and which for that very reason cannot be a work of man, Ephesians 3:16; Colossians 1:11, and speaks of its manifestation in Christian virtues as the work of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22. It should never be represented as a merely natural process in the spiritual development of man, nor brought down to the level of a mere human achievement, as is done in a great deal of modern liberal theology.

2. IT CONSISTS OF TWO PARTS. The two parts of sanctification are represented in Scripture as: a. The mortification of the old man, the body of sin. This Scriptural term denotes that act of God whereby the pollution and corruption of human nature that results from sin is gradually removed. It is often represented in the Bible as the crucifying of the old man, and is thus connected with the death of Christ on the cross. The old man is human nature in so far as it is controlled by sin, Romans 6:6; Galatians 5:24. In the context of the passage of Galatians Paul contrasts the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit, and then says: "And they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof." This means that in their case the Spirit has gained predominance. b. The quickening of the new man, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. While the former part of sanctification is negative in character, this is positive. It is that act of God whereby the holy disposition of the soul is strengthened, holy exercises are increased, and thus a new course of life engendered and promoted. The old structure of sin is gradually torn down, and a new structure of God is reared in its stead. These two parts of sanctification are not successive but contemporaneous. Thank God, the gradual erection of the new building need not wait until the old one is completely demolished. If it had to wait for that, it could never begin in this life. With the gradual dissolution of the old the new makes its appearance. It is like the airing of a house filled with pestiferous odors. As the old air is drawn out, the new rushes in. This positive side of sanctification is often called "a being raised together with Christ," Romans 6:4-5; Colossians 2:12; Colossians 3:1-2. The new life to which it leads is called "a life unto God," Romans 6:11; Galatians 2:19.

3. IT AFFECTS THE WHOLE MAN: BODY AND SOUL; INTELLECT, AFFECTIONS AND WILL. This follows from the nature of the case, because sanctification takes place in the inner life of man, in the heart, and this cannot be changed without changing the whole organism of man. If the inner

man is changed, there is bound to be change also in the periphery of life. Moreover, Scripture clearly and explicitly teaches that it affects both body and soul, 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:12; 1 Corinthians 6:15; 1 Corinthians 6:20. The body comes into consideration here as the organ or instrument of the sinful soul, through which the sinful inclinations and habits and passions express themselves. The sanctification of the body takes place especially in the crisis of death and in the resurrection of the dead. Finally, it also appears from Scripture that sanctification affects all the powers or faculties of the soul, the understanding, Jeremiah 31:34; John 6:45; -- the will, Ezekiel 36:25-27; Php 2:13; -- the passions, Galatians 5:24; -- and the conscience, Titus 1:15; Hebrews 9:14.

4. IT IS A WORK OF GOD IN WHICH BELIEVERS CO-OPERATE. When it is said that man takes part in the work of sanctification, this does not mean that man is an independent agent in the work, so as to make it partly the work of God and partly the work of man; but merely, that God effects the work in part through the instrumentality of man as a rational being, by requiring of him prayerful and intelligent co-operation with the Spirit. That man must co-operate with the Spirit of God follows: (a) from the repeated warnings against evils and temptations, which clearly imply that man must be active in avoiding the pitfalls of life, Romans 12:9; Romans 12:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:16-23; and (b) from the constant exhortations to holy living. These imply that the believer must be diligent in the employment of the means at his command for the moral and spiritual improvement of his life, Micah 6:8; John 15:2; John 15:8; John 15:16; Romans 8:12-13; Romans 12:1-2; Romans 12:17; Galatians 6:7-8; Galatians 6:15.

03.05. Part 5: The Characteristics of Sanctification

The Characteristics of Sanctification. l. As appears from the immediately preceding, sanctification is a work of which God and not man is the author. Only the advocates of the so-called free will can claim that it is a work of man Nevertheless, it divers from regeneration in that man can, and is in duty bound to, strive for ever-increasing sanctification by using the means which God has placed at his disposal. This is clearly taught in Scripture, 2 Corinthians 7:1; Colossians 3:5-14; 1 Peter 1:22. Consistent Antinomians lose sight of this important truth, and feel no need of carefully avoiding sin, since this affects only the old man which is condemned to death, and not the new man which is holy with the holiness of Christ.

2. Sanctification takes place partly in the subconscious life, and as such is an immediate operation of the Holy Spirit; but also partly in the conscious life, and then depends on the use of certain means, such as the constant exercise of faith, the study of God’s Word, prayer, and association with other believers.

3. Sanctification is usually a lengthy process and never reaches perfection in this life. At the same time there may be cases in which it is completed in a very short time or even in a moment, as, for instance, in cases in which regeneration and conversion are immediately followed by temporal death. If we may proceed on the assumption that the believer’s sanctification is perfect immediately after death -- and Scripture seems to teach this as far as the soul is concerned --, then in such cases the sanctification of the soul must be completed almost at once.

4. The sanctification of the believer must, it would seem, be completed either at the very moment of death, or immediately after death, as far as the soul is concerned, and at the resurrection in so far as it pertains to the body. This would seem to follow from that fact that, on the one hand, the Bible teaches that in the present life no one can claim freedom from sin, 1 Kings 8:46; Proverbs 20:9; Romans 3:10; Romans 3:12; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8; and that, on the other hand, those who have gone before are entirely sanctified. It speaks of them as "the spirits of just men made perfect," Hebrews 12:23, and as "without blemish," Revelation 14:5.

Moreover, we are told that in the heavenly city of God there shall in no wise enter "anything unclean or he that maketh an abomination and a lie," Revelation 21:27; and that Christ at His coming will "fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory," Php 3:21.

03.06. Part 6: The Author and Means of Sanctification

The Author and Means of Sanctification

Sanctification is a work of the triune God, but is ascribed more particularly to the Holy Spirit in Scripture, Romans 8:11; Romans 15:16; 1 Peter 1:2. It is particularly important in our day, with its emphasis on the necessity of approaching the study of theology anthropologically and its one-sided call to service in the kingdom of God, to stress the fact that God, and not man, is the author of sanctification. Especially in view of the Activism that is such a characteristic feature of American religious life, and which glorifies the work of man rather than the grace of God, it is necessary to stress the fact over and over again that sanctification is the fruit of justification, that the former is simply impossible without the latter, and that both are the fruits of the grace of God in the redemption of sinners. Though man is privileged to cooperate with the Spirit of God, he can do this only in virtue of the strength which the Spirit imparts to him from day to day. The spiritual development of man is not a human achievement, but a work of divine grace. Man deserves no credit whatsoever for that which he contributes to it instrumentally. In so far as sanctification takes place in the subconscious life, it is effected by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit. But as a work in the conscious life of believers it is wrought by several means, which the Holy Spirit employs.

1. THE WORD OF GOD. In opposition to the Church of Rome it should be maintained that the principal means used by the Holy Spirit is the Word of God. The truth in itself certainly has no adequate efficiency to sanctify the believer, yet it is naturally adapted to be the means of sanctification as employed by the Holy Spirit. Scripture presents all the objective conditions for holy exercises and acts. It serves to excite spiritual activity by presenting motives and inducements, and gives direction to it by prohibitions, exhortations, and examples, 1 Peter 1:22; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 1:4.

2. THE SACRAMENTS.

These are the means par excellence according to the Church of Rome. Protestants' regard them as subordinate to the Word of God, and sometimes even speak of them as the "visible Word." They symbolize and seal to us the same truths that are verbally expressed in the Word of God, and may be regarded as an acted word, containing a lively representation of the truth, which the Holy Spirit makes the occasion for holy exercise They are not only subordinate to the Word of God, but cannot exist without it, and are therefore always accompanied by it, Romans 6:3; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:21.

3. PROVIDENTIAL GUIDANCE.

God's providences, both favorable and adverse, are often powerful means of sanctification. In connection with the operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word, they work on our natural affections and thus frequently deepen the impression of religious truth and force it home. It should be borne in mind that the light of God's revelation is necessary for the interpretation of His

providential guidance’s, Psalms 119:71; Romans 2:4; Hebrews 12:10.

Chapter 65

03.07. Part 7: Relation of Sanctification to Other

Relation of Sanctification to Other Stages in the Ordo Salutis

It is of considerable importance to have a correct conception of the relation between sanctification and some of the other stages in the work of redemption.

1. To REGENERATION.

There is both difference and similarity here. Regeneration is completed at once, for a man cannot be more or less regenerated; he is either dead or alive spiritually. Sanctification is a process, bringing about gradual changes, so that different grades may be distinguished in the resulting holiness. Hence we are admonished to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, 2 Corinthians 7:1. The Heidelberg Catechism also presupposes that there are degrees of holiness, when it says that even “the holiest men, when in this life, have only a small beginning of this obedience.” [1] At the same time regeneration is the beginning of sanctification. The work of renewal, begun in the former, is continued in the latter, Php 1:6. Strong says: “It (sanctification) is distinguished from regeneration as growth from birth, or as the strengthening of a holy disposition from the original impartation of it.” [2] 2. TO JUSTIFICATION.

Justification precedes and is basic to sanctification in the covenant of grace. In the covenant of works the order of righteousness and holiness was just the reverse. Adam was created with a holy disposition and inclination to serve God, but on the basis of this holiness he had to work out the righteousness that would entitle him to eternal life. Justification is the judicial basis for sanctification. God has the right to demand of us holiness of life, but because we cannot work out this holiness for ourselves, He freely works it within us through the Holy Spirit on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to us in justification. The very fact that it is based on justification, in which the free grace of God stands out with the greatest prominence, excludes the idea that we can ever merit anything in sanctification. The Roman Catholic idea that justification enables man to perform meritorious works is contrary to Scripture. Justification as such does not effect a change in our inner being and therefore needs sanctification as its complement. It is not sufficient that the sinner stands righteous before God; he must also be holy in his inmost life. Barth has a rather unusual representation of the relation between justification and sanctification. In order to ward off all self-righteousness, he insists on it that the two always be considered jointly. They go together and should not be considered quantitatively, as if the one followed the other. Justification is not a station which one passes, an accomplished fact on the basis of which one next proceeds to the highway of sanctification. It is not a completed fact to which one can look back with definite assurance, but occurs ever anew whenever man has reached the point of complete despair, and then goes hand in hand with sanctification. And just as man remains a sinner even after justification, so he also remains a sinner in sanctification, even his best deeds continue to be sins. Sanctification does not engender a holy disposition, and does not gradually purify man. It does not put him in possession of any personal holiness, does not make him a saint, but leaves him a sinner. It really becomes a declarative act like justification.

McConnachie, who is a very sympathetic interpreter of Barth, says: “Justification and sanctification are, therefore, to Barth, two sides of one act of God upon men. Justification is the pardon of the sinner (justificatio impii), by which God declares the sinner righteous. Sanctification is the sanctification of the sinner (sanctificatio impii), by which God declares the sinner ‘holy’.” However laudable the desire of Barth to destroy every vestige of work-righteousness, he certainly goes to an unwarranted extreme, in which he virtually confuses justification and sanctification, negatives the Christian life, and rules out the possibility of confident assurance.

3. To FAITH.

Faith is the mediate or instrumental cause of sanctification as well as of justification. It does not merit sanctification any more than it does justification, but it unites’ us to Christ and keeps us in touch with Him as the Head of the new humanity, who is the source of the new life within us, and also of our progressive sanctification, through the operation of the Holy Spirit. The consciousness of the fact that sanctification is based on justification, and is impossible on any other basis, and that the constant exercise of faith is necessary, in order to advance in the way of holiness, will guard us against all self-righteousness in our striving to advance in godliness and holiness of life. It deserves particular attention that, while even the weakest faith mediates a prefect justification, the degree of sanctification is commensurate with the strength of the Christian’s faith and the persistence with which he apprehends Christ.

1. Q. 114.

2. Syst. Theol., p. 871.

03.08. Part 8: The Imperfect Character of Sanctific

The Imperfect Character of Sanctification in This Life.

1. SANCTIFICATION IMPERFECT IN DEGREE. When we speak of sanctification as being imperfect in this life, we do not mean to say that it is imperfect in parts, as if only a part of the holy man that originates in regeneration were affected. It is the whole, but yet undeveloped new man, that must grow into full stature. A new-born child is, barring exceptions, perfect in parts, but not yet in the degree of development for which it is intended. Just so the new man is perfect in parts, but remains in the present life imperfect in the degree of spiritual development. Believers must contend with sin as long as they live, 1 Kings 8:46; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8.

2. DENIAL OF THIS IMPERFECTION BY THE PERFECTIONIST. a. The doctrine of perfectionism. Speaking generally, this doctrine is to the effect that religious perfection is attainable in the present life. It is taught in various forms by Pelagians, Roman Catholics or Semi-Pelagians, Arminians, Wesleyans, such mystical sects as the Labadists, the Quietists, the Quakers, and others, some of the Oberlin theologians, such as Mahan and Finney, and Ritschl. These all agree in maintaining that it is possible for believers in this life to attain to a state in which they comply with the requirements of the law under which they now live, or under that law as it was adjusted to their present ability and needs, and, consequently, to be free from sin. They differ, however:

(1) In their view of sin, the Pelagians, in distinction from all the rest, denying the inherent corruption of man. They all agree, however, in externalizing sin.

(2) In their conception of the law which believers are now obliged to fulfill, the Arminians, including the Wesleyans, differing from all the rest in holding that this is not the original moral law, but the gospel requirements or the new law of faith and evangelical obedience. The Roman Catholics and the Oberlin theologians maintain that it is the original law, but admit that the demands of this law are adjusted to man’s deteriorated powers and to his present ability. And Ritschl discards the whole idea that man is subject to an externally imposed law. He defends the autonomy of moral conduct, and holds that we are under no law but such as is evolved out of our own moral disposition in the course of activities for the fulfillment of our vocation.

(3) In their idea of the sinner’s dependence on the renewing grace of God for the ability to fulfill the law. All, except the Pelagians, admit that he is in some sense dependent on divine grace, in order to the attainment of perfection.

It is very significant that all the leading perfectionist theories (with the sole exception of the Pelagian, which denies the inherent corruption of man) deem it necessary to lower the standard of perfection and do not hold man responsible for a great deal that is undoubtedly demanded by the original moral law. And it is equally significant that they feel the necessity of externalizing the idea of sin, when they claim that only conscious wrong-doing can be so considered, and refuse to

recognize as sin a great deal that is represented as such in Scripture. b. Scriptural proofs adduced for the doctrine of perfectionism.

(1) The Bible commands believers to be holy and even to be perfect, 1 Peter 1:16; Matthew 5:48; James 1:4, and urges them to follow the example of Christ who did no sin, 1 Peter 2:21 f. Such commands would be unreasonable, if it were not possible to reach sinless perfection. But the Scriptural demand to be holy and perfect holds for the unregenerate as well as for the regenerate, since the law of God demands holiness from the start and has never been revoked. If the command implies that they to whom it comes can live up to the requirement, this must be true of every man. However, only those who teach perfectionism in the Pelagian sense can hold that view. The measure of our ability cannot be inferred from the Scriptural commandments.

(2) Holiness and perfection are often ascribed to believers in Scripture, Song of Solomon 4:7; 1 Corinthians 2:6; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 5:27; Hebrews 5:14; Php 4:13; Colossians 2:10. When the Bible speaks of believers as holy and perfect, however, this does not necessarily mean that they are without sin, since both words are often used in a different sense, not only in common parlance, but also in the Bible. Persons set aside for the special service of God are called holy in the Bible, irrespective of their moral condition and life. Believers can be and are called holy, because they are objectively holy in Christ, or because they are in principle subjectively sanctified by the Spirit of God. Paul in his Epistles invariably addresses his readers as saints, that is “holy ones,” and then proceeds in several cases to take them to task for their sins. And when believers are described as perfect, this means in some cases merely that they are full grown, 1 Corinthians 2:6; Hebrews 5:14, and in others that they are fully equipped for their task, 2 Timothy 3:17. All this certainly does not give countenance to the theory of sin less perfection.

(3) There are, it is said, Biblical examples of saints who led perfect lives, such as Noah, Job, and Asa, Genesis 6:9; Job 1:1; 1 Kings 15:14. But, surely, such examples as these do not prove the point for the simple reason that they are no examples of sinless perfection. Even the most notable saints of the Bible are pictured as men who had their failings and who sinned, in some cases very grievously. This is true of Noah, Moses, Job, Abraham, and all the others. It is true that this does not necessarily prove that their lives remained sinful as long as they lived on earth, but it is a striking fact that we are not introduced to a single one who was without sin. The question of Solomon is still pertinent: “Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?” Proverbs 20:9. Moreover, John says: “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us,” 1 John 1:8.

(4) The apostle John declares explicitly that they who are born of God do not sin, 1 John 3:6; 1 John 3:8-9; 1 John 5:18. But when John says that they who are born of God do not sin, he is contrasting the two states, represented by the old and the new man, as to their essential nature and principle. One of the essential characteristics of the new man is that he does not sin. In view of the fact that John invariably uses’ the present to express the idea that the one born of God does not sin, it is possible that he desires to express the idea that the child of God does not go on sinning habitually, as the devil does, 1 John 3:8. [1] He certainly does not mean to assert that the believer never commits an act of sin, cf. 1 John 1:8-10. Moreover, the Perfectionist cannot very well use these passages to prove his point, since they would prove too much for his purpose. He does not make bold to say that all believers are actually sinless, but only that they can reach a

state of sinless perfection. The Johannine passages, however, would prove, on his interpretation, that all believers are without sin. And more than that, they would also prove that believers never fall from the state of grace (for this is sinning); and yet the Perfectionists are the very people who believe that even perfect Christians may fall away. c. Objections to the theory of Perfectionism.

(1) In the light of Scripture the doctrine of Perfectionism is absolutely untenable. The Bible gives us the explicit and very definite assurance that there is no one on earth who does not sin, 1 Kings 8:46; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8. In view of these clear statements of Scripture it is hard to see how any who claim to believe the Bible as the infallible Word of God can hold that it is possible for believers to lead sinless lives, and that some actually succeed in avoiding all sin.

(2) According to Scripture there is a constant warfare between the flesh and the Spirit in the lives of God's children, and even the best of them are still striving for perfection. Paul gives a very striking description of this struggle in Romans 7:7-25, a passage which certainly refers to him in his regenerate state. In Galatians 5:16-24 he speaks of that very same struggle as a struggle that characterizes all the children of God. And in Php 3:10-14 he speaks of himself, practically at the end of his career, as one who has not yet reached perfection but is pressing on toward the goal.

(3) Confession of sin and prayer for forgiveness are continually required. Jesus taught all His disciples without any exception to pray for the forgiveness of sins and for deliverance from temptation and from the evil one, Matthew 6:12-13. And John says: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John 1:9. Moreover, Bible saints are constantly represented as confessing their sins, Job 9:3; Job 9:20; Psalms 32:5; Psalms 130:3; Psalms 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Isaiah 64:6; Daniel 9:16; Romans 7:14.

(4) The Perfectionists themselves deem it necessary to lower the standard of the law and to externalize the idea of sin, in order to maintain their theory. Moreover, some of them have repeatedly modified the ideal to which, in their estimation, believers can attain. At first the ideal was "freedom from all sin"; then, "freedom from all conscious sin," next, "entire consecration to God," and, finally, "Christian assurance." This is in itself a sufficient condemnation of their theory. We naturally do not deny that the Christian can attain to the assurance of faith.

1. Cf. Robertson, The Minister and His Greek Testament, p. 100.

03.09. Part 9: Sanctification and Good Works

Sanctification and Good Works.

Sanctification and good works are most intimately related. Just as the old life expresses itself in works of evil, so the new life, that originates in regeneration and is promoted and strengthened in sanctification, naturally manifests itself in good works, and as such come into consideration here. These may be called the fruits of sanctification, and as such come into consideration here.

1. THE NATURE OF GOOD WORKS. a. Good works in the specifically theological sense. When we speak of good works in connection with sanctification, we do not refer to works that are perfect, that answer perfectly to the requirements of the divine moral law, and that are of such inherent worth as to entitle one to the reward of eternal life under the conditions of the covenant of works. We do mean, however, works that are essentially different in moral quality from the actions of the unregenerate, and that are the expressions of a new and holy nature as the principle from which they spring. These are works which God not only approves, but in a certain sense also rewards. The following are the characteristics of works that are spiritually good: (1) They are the fruits of a regenerate heart, since without this no one can have the disposition (to obey God) and the motive (to glorify God) that is required, Matthew 12:33; Matthew 7:17-18. (2) They are not only in external conformity with the law of God, but are also done in conscious obedience to the revealed will of God, that is, because they are required by God. They spring from the principle of love to God and from the desire to do His will, Deuteronomy 6:2; 1 Samuel 15:22; Isaiah 1:12; Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:9. (3) Whatever their proximate aim may be, their final aim is not the welfare of man, but the glory of God, which is the highest conceivable aim of man’s life, 1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 12:1; Colossians 3:17; Colossians 3:23. b. Good works in a more general sense. Though the term “good works” is generally used in theology in the strict sense just indicated, it remains true that the unregenerate can also perform works that may be called good in a superficial sense of the word. They often perform works that are in outward conformity with the law of God and may be called objectively good, in distinction from flagrant transgressions of the law. Such works answer to a proximate aim that meets with the approval of God. Moreover, in virtue of the remains of the image of God in the natural man and of the light of nature, man may be guided in his relation to other men by motives which are laudable and in so far bear the stamp of God’s approval. Those good works, however, cannot be regarded as fruits of the corrupt heart of man. They find their explanation only in the common grace of God. Furthermore, we should bear in mind that, though these works can be called good in a certain sense and are so called in the Bible, Luke 6:33, they are yet essentially defective. The deeds of the unregenerate are divorced from the spiritual root of love to God. They represent no inner obedience to the law of God and no subjection to the will of the sovereign Ruler of heaven and earth. They have no spiritual aim, since they are not performed for the purpose of glorifying God, but only bear on the relations of the natural life. The real quality of the act is, of course, determined by the quality of its final aim. The ability of the unregenerate to perform good works in some sense of the word has often been denied. Barth goes one step further when he goes to the extreme of denying that believers can do good works, and asserts that all

their works are sins.

2. THE MERITORIOUS CHARACTER OF GOOD WORKS.

Even from the earliest ages of the Christian Church there was a tendency to ascribe a certain merit to-good works, but the doctrine of merit was really developed in the Middle Ages. At the time of the Reformation it was very prominent in Roman Catholic theology and was pushed to ridiculous extremes in practical life. The Reformers at once joined issue with the Church of Rome on this point. a. The position of Rome on the point in question. The Roman Catholic Church distinguishes between a meritum de condigno, which represents inherent dignity and worth, and a meritum de congruo, which is a sort of quasi-merit, something fit to be rewarded. The former attaches only to works done after regeneration by the aid of divine grace, and is a merit which intrinsically deserves the reward it receives from the hand of God. The latter attaches to those dispositions or works which a man may develop or do before regeneration, in virtue of a mere prevenient grace, and is a merit which makes it congruous or fitting for God to reward the agent by infusing grace into his heart. Since the decisions of the Council of Trent are rather dubious on this point, there is some uncertainty, however, as to the exact position of the Church. The general idea seems to be that the ability to perform good works in the strict sense of the word springs from grace infused into the sinner's heart for the sake of Christ; and that afterwards these good works merit, that is, give man a just claim to, salvation and glory. The Church goes even farther than that, and teaches that believers can perform works of supererogation, can do more than is necessary for their own salvation and can thus lay by a store of good works, which may accrue to the benefit of others. b. The Scriptural position on this point. Scripture clearly teaches that the good works of believers' are not meritorious in the proper sense of the word. We should bear in mind, however, that the word "merit" is employed in a twofold sense, the one strict and proper, and the other loose. Strictly speaking, a meritorious work is one to which, on account of its intrinsic value and dignity, the reward is justly due from commutative justice. Loosely speaking, however, a work that is deserving of approval and to which a reward is some-how attached (by promise, agreement, or otherwise) is also sometimes called meritorious. Such works are praiseworthy and are rewarded by God. But, however this may be, they are surely not meritorious in the strict sense of the word. They do not, by their own intrinsic moral value, make God a debtor to him who performs them. In strict justice the good works of believers merit nothing. Some of the most conclusive passages of Scripture to prove the point under consideration are the following: Luke 17:9-10; Romans 5:15-18; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-10; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5. These passages clearly show that believers do not receive the inheritance of salvation because it is due to them in virtue of their good works, but only as a free gift of God. It stands to reason also that such works cannot be meritorious, for: (1) Believers owe their whole life to God and therefore cannot merit anything by giving God simply what is His due, Luke 17:9-10. (2) They cannot perform good works in their own strength, but only in the strength which God imparts to them from day to day; and in view of that fact they cannot expect the credit for these works, 1 Corinthians 15:10; Php 2:13. (3) Even the best works of believers remain imperfect in this life; and all good works together represent only a partial obedience, while the law demands perfect obedience and can be satisfied with nothing less, Isaiah 64:6; James 3:2. (4) Moreover, the good works of believers are out of all proportion to the eternal reward of glory. A temporal and imperfect obedience can never merit an eternal and perfect reward.

3. THE NECESSITY OF GOOD WORKS.

There can be no doubt about the necessity of good works properly understood. They cannot be regarded as necessary to merit salvation, nor as a means to retain a hold on salvation, nor even as the only way along which to proceed to eternal glory, for children enter salvation without having done any good works. The Bible does not teach that no one can be saved apart from good works. At the same time good works necessarily follow from the union of believers with Christ. “He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit,” John 15:5. They are also necessary as required by God, Romans 7:4; Romans 8:12-13; Galatians 6:2, as the fruits of faith, James 2:14; James 2:17; James 2:20-22, as expressions of gratitude. 1 Corinthians 6:20, unto the assurance, of faith, 2 Peter 1:5-10, and to the glory of God, John 15:8; 1 Corinthians 10:31. The necessity of good works must be maintained over against the Antinomians, who claim that, since Christ not only bore the penalty of sin, but also met the positive demands of the law, the believer is free from the obligation to observe it, an error that is still with us to-day in some of the forms of dispensationalism. This is a thoroughly false position, for it is only the law as a system of penalty and as a method of salvation that is abolished in the death of Christ. The law as the standard of our moral life is a transcript of the holiness of God and is therefore of permanent validity also for the believer, though his attitude to the law has undergone a radical change. He has received the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of obedience, so that, without any constraint, he willingly obeys the law. Strong sums it up well, when he says: Christ frees us “(1) from the law as a system of curse and penalty; this He does by bearing the curse and penalty Himself... ; (2) from the law with its claims as a method of salvation; this He does by making His obedience and merits ours... ; (3) from the law as an outward and foreign compulsion; this He does by giving us the spirit of obedience and sonship, by which the law is progressively realized within.” [1] 1. Syst. Theo., p. 876.

03.30. The Revelation of John

The Revelation of John

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After the introduction and the apostolic blessing, Revelation 1:1-8, the book contains seven visions or series of visions, extending from Revelation 1:9-20, Revelation 2:1-29, Revelation 3:1-22, Revelation 4:1-11, Revelation 5:1-14, Revelation 6:1-17, Revelation 7:1-17, Revelation 8:1-13, Revelation 9:1-21, Revelation 10:1-11, Revelation 11:1-19, Revelation 12:1-17, Revelation 13:1-18, Revelation 14:1-20, Revelation 15:1-8, Revelation 16:1-21, Revelation 17:1-18, Revelation 18:1-24, Revelation 19:1-21, Revelation 20:1-15, Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-7, followed by a conclusion, Revelation 22:8-21.

I. The first Vision, Revelation 1:9-20, Revelation 2:1-29, Revelation 3:1-22, is that of the glorified Christ in the midst of the Church, directing John to write letters of reproof, of warning, of exhortation and of consolation to seven representative churches of proconsular Asia, viz. to Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatire, Sardis, Philadelphia and Laodicea.

II. The second Vision, Revelation 4:1-11, Revelation 5:1-14, Revelation 6:1-17, Revelation 7:1-17, Revelation 8:1, reveals God as ruling the world’s destiny, and the Lamb as taking the book of the divine decrees and breaking the seven seals of which each one represents a part of God’s purpose, the first four referring to the terrestrial, and the last three to the celestial sphere. Between the sixth and seventh seals an episode is introduced to show the safety of the people of God amid the judgments that are inflicted on the world.

III. The third Vision, Revelation 8:2-13, Revelation 9:1-21, Revelation 10:1-11, Revelation 11:1-19, shows us seven angels, each one having a trumpet. After an angel has offered up the prayers of the saints to God, the seven angels blow their trumpets, and each trumpet is followed by a vision of destruction on the sinful world, the destruction of the last three being more severe than that of the first four. Between the sixth and seventh trumpets there is again an episode describing the preservation of the Church.

IV. The fourth Vision, Revelation 12:1-17, Revelation 13:1-18, Revelation 14:1-20, describes the conflict of the world with the Church of God. The Church is represented as a woman bringing forth the Christ, against whom the dragon representing Satan wages war. In successive visions we behold the beasts which Satan will employ as his agents, the militant Church, and the advancing stages of Christ’s conquest.

V. The fifth Vision, Revelation 15:1-8, Revelation 16:1-21, once more reveals seven angels, now having seven vials or bowls containing the last plagues or judgments of God. First we have a description of the Church that triumphed over the beast, glorifying God; and this is followed by a picture of the sevenfold judgment of God on the world, represented by the seven vials.

VI. The sixth Vision, Revelation 17:1-18, Revelation 18:1-24, Revelation 19:1-21, Revelation 20:1-155, reveals the harlot city Babylon, the representative of the world, and the victory of Christ over her and over the enemies that are in league with her, the great conflict ending in the last judgment.

VII. The seventh Vision, Revelation 21:1-27, Revelation 22:1-7, discloses to the eye the ideal Church, the new Jerusalem, and pictures in glowing colors her surpassing beauty and the everlasting, transcendent bliss of her inhabitants. The book closes with an epilogue in which the seer describes its significance and urges the readers to keep the things that are written on its pages, Revelation 22:7-21.

CHARACTERISTICS

1. The Revelation of John is the only prophetic book in the New Testament. It is called a prophecy in Revelation 1:3; Revelation 22:7; Revelation 22:10; Revelation 22:18-19. A nearer description of the book is given, however, in the name Apocalypse, for there is a difference between the prophetic books of the Bible in general and that part of them that may be said to belong to the Apocalyptic literature. Naturally the two have some eicments in common: they both contain communications, mediated by the Holy Spirit, of the character, will and purposes of God; and the one as well as the other looks to the future of the Kingdom of God. But there are also points of difference. Prophecy, while it certainly has reference also to the future of God's Kingdom, is mainly concerned with a divine interpretation of the past and the present, while the chief interest of Apocalyptic lies in the future. Prophecy again, where it does reveal the future, shows this in its organic relation with principles and forces that are already working in the present, while Apocalyptic pictures the images of the future, not as they develop out of existing conditions, but as they are shown directly from heaven and to a great extent in supernatural forms.

2. A characteristic feature of the book is that its thought is largely clothed in symbolic language derived from some of the prophetic books of the Old Testament. Hence its correct understanding is greatly facilitated by studying the writer's Old Testament sources. Yet we must constantly bear in mind that he does not always employ the language so derived in its original significance. Compare Revelation 18:1-24 with Isaiah 13:1-22, Isaiah 14:1-32; Jeremiah 50:1-46, Jeremiah 51:64; Jeremiah 21:1 to Jeremiah 22:5 with various parts of Isaiah 40-66; Ezekiel 40-48; Revelation 1:12-20 with Daniel 7:1-28, Daniel 10:1-21; Revelation 4:1-11 with Isaiah 6:1-13; Ezekiel 1:1-28, Ezekiel 10:1-22. But however dependent the author may be on the prophets, he does not slavishly follow them, but uses their language with great freedom. The symbolic Numbers 3, 4, 7, 10, 12 and their multiples also play an important part in the book.

3. The language of the Apocalypse differs from that of all the rest of the New Testament. It, is very decidedly Hebraistic Greek. According to Simcox its vocabulary is far less eccentric than its style and grammar. This author in his, Writers of the New Testament pp. 80-89 classifies the most important peculiarities of the language of Revelation under several heads: (1) As in Hebrew the copula is generally ommited cf. 41,3, 52, 68, 97,10,16, 17, 101, 118, 191,12, 218,13,19. (2) Apparently the writer, at least in several instances, does not use the Greek tenses in their purely temporal sense, but more like the Hebrew perfect and imperfect, cf. 25,22,24, 410, 107, 124. (3) The use of a redundant pronoun or pronominal adverb is very frequent, cf. 38, 72,9, 126,14, 1312, 179, 208. (4) When two nouns are in opposition, the second is usually put in the nominative,

whatever be the case of the first, cf. 15, 213,20, 312, 74, 89, 914, 1412, 173, 202. (5) There are some irregularities which, considered abstractly are perfectly legitimate, but are contrary to established Greek usage, as the use of the dative instead of the double accusative in 2:14; and the use of the plural of verbs with a subject in the neuter nominative as in 34, 45, 1113. (6) False concords in get der, constructions ad sensum are also frequently found, 47,8, 74,8 95,6 etc.

AUTHORSHIP The external testimony for the authorship of the apostle John is quite strong. Justin Martyr clearly testifies that the book was written by “John one of the apostles of the Lord.” Irenaeus whose teacher was Polycarp, the disciple of John, gives very decisive and repeated testimony for the authorship of the apostle. The Muratorian Canon mentions John as the author of the book, and the context shows that the son of Zebedee is meant. Hippolytus quotes the Apocalypse several times as a work of John; and that the John which he has in mind is the apostle, is clear from a passage in which he speaks of him as “an apostle and disciple of the Lord.” Clement of Alexandria names the apostle as the author of the book, as do also Victorinus, Ephrem the Syrian, Epiphanius e.a. In the West Ambrose and Augustine repeatedly quote the Apocalypse as written by John the apostle, and Jerome speaks of the apostle John as also being a prophet. This strong external testimony is corroborated by internal evidence: (1) The author repeatedly calls himself John, 11,4,9, 228, and there is but one person who could use the name thus absolutely to designate himself without fear of being misunderstood, viz. John the apostle. (2) The writer evidently stood in some special relation to the churches. of proconsular Asia (i. e. Mysia, Lydia, Caria and a part of Phrygia), which is in perfect harmony with the fact that John spent the later years of his life at Ephesus. (3) The author was evidently banished to the island called Patmos in the Aegean sea, one of the Sporades to the South of Samos. Now a quite consistent tradition, which is, however, discredited by some scholars, says that this happened to the apostle John; and there are some features that seem to mark this as an independent tradition. (4) There are also notes of identity between the writer and the author of the fourth Gospel and of I John. Like in John 1:1 ff. and 1 John 1:1, so also in Revelation 19:13 the name ■ λ■γος is given to our Lord. He is called ■ρν■ον twenty-nine times in this book, a word that is used elsewhere only in John 21:15, as a designation of the disciples of the Lord. It is remarkable also that the only place, where Christ is called a Lamb outside of this book, is in John 1:29, the word ■μν■ς being used. The term ■ληθιν■ς, found but once in Luke, once in Paul and three times in Hebrews, is employed nine times in the gospel of John, four times in the first Epistle, and ten times in the Apocalypse, though not always in exactly the same sense. Compare also with the repeated expression ■ νιχ■ν, 27,11,17, etc.; John 1633; I John 213,14; 44, 54,5.

Still there have been dissentient voices from the beginning. The Alogi for dogmatical reasons impugned the authorship of John and ascribed the book to Cerinthus. Dionysius of Alexandria for more critical reasons, but also laboring with a strong anti-chiliastic bias, referred it to another John of Ephesus. Eusebius wavered in his opinion, but, led by considerations like those of Dionysius, was inclined to regard that shadowy person, John the presbyter, as the author. And Luther had a strong dislike for the book, because, as he said, Christ was neither taught nor recognized in it; and because the apostles did not deal in visions, but spoke in clear words, he declared that it was neither apostolic nor prophetic. The Tubingen school accepted the Johannine authorship of the Apocalypse, while it denied that the apostle had written any of the other books that are generally ascribed to him. A great and increasing number of critical scholars, however, do not believe that

the apostle John composed the Apocalypse. Some of them, as Hitzig, Weiss and Spitta, suggest John Mark as the author, while many others, such as Bleek, Credner, Dusterdieck, Keim, Ewald, Weizsacker e.a., regard it as the work of John the presbyter. The principal objections urged against the authorship of the apostle are the following: (1) While the apostle in the gospel and in the first Epistle does not mention his name, the writer of this book names himself both in the first and in the third person. (2) The genius of the two writers is quite different: the one is speculative and introspective, the other, imaginative, looking especially to the external course of events; the one is characterized by mildness and love, the other is stern and revengeful; the views of the one are spiritual and mystic, those of the other are sensuous and plastic. (3) The type of doctrine found in the Apocalypse has a Jewish stamp and is very unlike that of the gospel of John, which is idealizing and breaks away from the Mosaic basIsa. In this book we find the Old Testament conception of God as a fearful Judge, of angels and demons, and of the Church as the new Jerusalem. There are twenty-four elders round about the throne, twelve thousand of each tribe that are sealed, and the names of the apostles are engraved on the foundation stones of the heavenly city. Moreover the necessity of good works is strongly emphasized, cf. Revelation 2:1-29, Revelation 3:1-22 and also Revelation 14:13. (4) The style of the book is of a very distinct Hebraic type, different from anything that is found in the other writings of John. Instead of the regular and comparatively faultless construction of the Gospel, we here find a language full of irregularities. But we do not believe that these considerations necessitate the assumption that the author of the book cannot be identified with the writer of the fourth gospel. It is in perfect harmony with the usage of the historical and the prophetical writers of the Bible throughout that the writer conceals his name in the Gospel and mentions it in the Apocalypse. The different light in which we see him in his various books is the natural result of the vastly different character of these writings. We should also remember that a prophetic book naturally reflects far less of the personal character of its author than epistolary writings do. The alleged Judaeistic type of the teachings found in the Apocalypse does not militate against the authorship of John. In a symbolic description of the future condition of the Church it is perfectly natural and indeed very fitting that the author should derive his symbolism from Old Testament sources, since the Old Testament is symbolically and typically related to the New. It cannot be maintained that the Christological and Soteriological teaching of the Apocalypse is essentially Jewish. The Jews that oppose Jesus are denounced, Revelation 3:9; the Church is composed of people out of every nation, Revelation 7:9; salvation is the free gift of grace, Revelation 21:6; Revelation 22:17; and though the necessity of good works is emphasized, those are not regarded as meritorious, but as the fruits of righteousness, and are even called the works of Jesus, Revelation 2:26. The strongest argument against the authorship of John is undoubtedly that derived from the style and language of the book. There has been an attempt on the part of some scholars, as Olshausen and Guericke, to explain the linguistic differences between the Apocalypse and the Gospel of John by assuming that the former preceded the latter by about 20 or 25 years, in which time the authors knowledge of Greek gradually matured. But the differences are of such a kind that it may be doubted, whether the lapse of a few years can account for them. The language of the fourth Gospel is not that of the Apocalypse in a more developed form. While it is questionable, whether an altogether satisfactory explanation can be given with the data at hand, it seems certain that the solution must be found, at least in part, in the transcendent nature of the subject-matter and in the symbolic character of the book. The fact that the author so often violates the rules of Greek grammar, does not necessarily

mean that he did not know them, but may also indicate that under the stress of the lofty ideas that he wished to express, he naturally resorted to Aramaic usage, which was easier for him. The facts in the case do not prove that the Greek of the Gospel is superior to that of the Apocalypse. In the former writing the author does not attempt so much as in the latter; the language of the one is far simpler than that of the other.

DESTINATION The apostle addresses the Apocalypse to “the seven churches which are in Asia,” Revelation 1:4. Undoubtedly this number is not exhaustive but representative of the Church in general, the number seven, which is the number of completeness, forming a very important element in the texture of this prophetic writing. These churches are types that are constantly repeated in history. There are always some churches that are predominantly good and pure like those of Smyrna and Philadelphia, and therefore need no reproof but only words of encouragement; but there are also constantly others like Sardis and Laodicea in which evil preponderates, and that deserve severe censure and an earnest call to repentance. Probably the greater number of churches, however, will always resemble those of Ephesus, Pergamos and Thyatira in that good and evil are about equally balanced in their circle, so that they call for both commendation and censure, promise and threatening. But while there is a great difference both in the outward circumstances and in the internal condition of these churches, they all form a part of the militant Church that has a severe struggle on earth in which it must strive to overcome by faith (notice the constantly repeated ■ νιχ■ν) and that may expect the coming of the Lord to reward her according to her works.

COMPOSITION

1. Occasion and Purpose. The historical condition that led to the composition of the Apocalypse was one of increasing hardships for the Church and of an imminent life and death struggle with the hostile world, represented by the Roman empire. The demand for the deification of the emperor became ever more insistent and was extended to the provinces. Domitian was one of the emperors who delighted to be styled dominus et deus. To refuse this homage was disloyalty and treason; and since the Christians as a body were bound to ignore this demand from the nature of their religion, they stood condemned as constituting a danger to the empire. Persecution was the inevitable result and had already been suffered by the churches, when this book was written, while still greater persecution was in store for them. Hence they needed consolation and the Lord directed John to address the Apocalypse to them. Cf. especially Ramsay, The Church in the Roman Empire pp. 252-319.

It is but natural therefore that the contents of the book are mainly consolatory. It aims at revealing to the servants of Christ, i. e. to Christians in general the things that must shortly (not quickly, but before long) come to pass. This note of time is to be considered as a prophetic formula, in connection with the fact that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years and thousand years as one day. The central theme of the book is, “I come quickly,” and in the elaboration of this theme Christ is pictured as coming in terrible judgments on the world, and in the great final struggle in which He is conqueror, and after which the ecclesia militans is transformed into the ecclesia triumphans.

2. Time and Place. There are especially two opinions as to the composition of the Apocalypse, viz. (1) that it was written toward the end of Domitians reign, about A. D. 95 or 96; and (2) that it was

composed between the death of Nero in the year 68 and the destruction of Jerusalem.

(1). The late date was formerly the generally accepted time of composition (Hengstenberg, Lange, Alford, Godet e. a.) and, although for a time the earlier date was looked upon with great favor, there is now a noticeable return to the old position (Holtzmann, Warfield, Ramsay, Porter (Hastings D. B.), Moffat (Exp. Gk. Test.) e. a.). This view is favored by the following considerations: (a) The testimony of antiquity. While there are few witnesses that refer the book to an earlier date, the majority, and among them Irenaeus whose testimony should not lightly be set aside, point to the time of Domitian. (b) The antithesis of the Roman empire to the Church presupposed in the Apocalypse. The persecution of Nero was a purely local and somewhat private affair. The Church did not stand opposed to the empire as representing the world until the first century was approaching its close; and the Apocalypse already looks back on a period of persecution. Moreover we know that banishment was a common punishment in the time of Domitian. (c) The existence and condition of the seven churches in Asia. The utter silence of Acts and of the Epistles regarding the churches of Smyrna, Philadelphia, Sardis, Pergamos and Thyatira favors the supposition that they were founded after the death of Paul. And the condition of these churches presupposes a longer period of existence than the earlier date will allow. Ephesus has already left her first love; in Sardis and Laodicea spiritual life has almost become extinct; the Nicolaitans, who are not mentioned elsewhere in the New Testament, have already made their pernicious influence felt in the churches of Ephesus and Pergamos, while similar mischief was done in Thyatira by the woman Jezebel. Moreover Laodicea, which was destroyed by an earthquake in the 6th (Tacitus) or in the 10th (Eusebius) year of Nero, is here described as boasting of her wealth and self-sufficiency.

(2). Against this and in favor of the earlier date defended by Dusterdieck, Weiss, Guericke, Schaff, are urged: (a) The late testimony of the Syrian Apocalypse that John was banished in the time of Nero, and the obscure and self-contradictory passage in Epiphanius that places the banishment in the time of Claudius. Cf. Alford, Prolegamena Section II. 14, where the weakness of this testimony is pointed out. (b) The supposed references in the Apocalypse to the destruction of the Holy City as still future in 111,2,13. But it is quite evident that these passages must be understood symbolically. Regarded as historical predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem they did not come true, for according to Revelation 11:2 only the outer court would be abolished, and according to Revelation 11:13 merely the tenth part of the city would be destroyed, and that not by Rome but by an earthquake. (c) The supposed indications of the reigning emperor in Revelation 13:1 ff., especially in connection with the symbolical interpretation of the number 666 as being equal to the Hebrew form of Nero Caesar. But the great diversity of opinion as to the correct interpretation of these passages, even among the advocates of the early date, proves that their support is very questionable. (d) The difference between the language of this book and that of the Gospel of John is thought to favor an early date, but, as we have already pointed out, this is not necessarily the case.

It is impossible to tell, whether John wrote the Apocalypse while he was still on the island of Patmos, or after his return from there. The statement in Revelation 10:4 does not prove the former theory, nor the past tenses in Revelation 1:2; Revelation 1:9, the latter.

3. Method. Of late several theories have been broached to explain the origin the Apocalypse in such a manner as to account satisfactorily for the literary and psychological features of the book. (1) The Incorporation theory holds to the unity of the Apocalypse, but believes that several older fragments of Jewish or Christian origin are incorporated in it (Weizsacker, Sabatier, Bousset, McGiffert, Moffat, Baljon). (2) The Revision-hypothesis assumes that the book has been subject to one or more revisions, (Erbes, Briggs, Barth). The last named author is of the opinion that John himself in the time of Domitian revised an Apocalypse which he had written under Nero. (3) The Compilation-hypothesis teaches that two or more sources fairly complete in themselves have been pieced together by a redactor or redactors, (Weyland, Spitta, Volter at least in part). (4) The Jewish and Christian hypothesis maintains that the groundwork of the Apocalypse was a Jewish writing in the Aramaic language, written about 65-70, that was later translated and edited by a Christian (Vischer, Harnack, Martineau). In connection with these we can only say that to us these theories seem unnecessary and in the majority of cases very arbitrary. There is every reason to maintain the unity of the Apocalypse. The use of written sources in its composition is an unproved assumption; but the author was evidently impregnated with Old Testament ideas and modes of expression, and drew largely on the storehouse of his memory in the symbolic description of the supernatural scenes that were presented to his vision.

INTERPRETATION Various principles of interpretation have been adopted with reference to this book in the course of time:

1. The older expositors and the majority of orthodox Protestant commentators adopted the Continuist (kirchengeschichtliche) interpretation, which proceeds on the assumption that the book contains a prophetic compendium of Church history from the first Christian century until the return of Christ, so that some of its prophecies have now been realized and others still await fulfilment. This theory disregards the contemporaneous character of the seven series of visions and has often led to all sorts of vain speculations and calculations as to the historical facts in which particular prophecies are fulfilled.

2. In course of time the Futurist (endgeschichtliche) interpretation found favor with some, according to which all or nearly all the events described in the Apocalypse must be referred to the period immediately preceding the return of Christ (Zahn, Kliefoth). Some of the Futurists are so extreme that they deny even the past existence of the seven Asiatic churches and declare that we may yet expect them to arise in the last days. As a matter of course this interpretation fails to do justice to the historical element in the book.

3. Present day critical scholars are generally inclined to adopt the Praeterist (zeitgeschichtliche) interpretation, which holds that the view of the Seer was limited to matters within his own historical horizon, and that the book refers principally to the triumph of Christianity over Judaism and Paganism, signalized in the downfall of Jerusalem and Rome. On this view all or almost all the prophecies contained in the book have already been fulfilled (Bleek, Duisterdieck, Davidson, F. C. Porter e. a.). But this theory does not do justice to the prophetic element in the Apocalypse.

Though all these views must be regarded as one-sided, each one contains an element of truth that must be taken in consideration in the interpretation of the book. The descriptions in it certainly had a point of contact in the historical present of the Seer, but they go far beyond that present; they certainly pertain to historical conditions of the Church of God, and conditions that will exist in all

ages, but instead of arising successively in the order in which they are described in the Apocalypse, they make their appearance in every age contemporaneously; and finally they will certainly issue in a terrific struggle immediately preceding the parousia of Christ and in the transcendent glory of the bride of the Lamb.

INSPIRATION The particular form of inspiration in which the writer shared was the prophetic, as is perfectly evident from the book itself. The author, while in the Spirit, was the recipient of divine revelations, 11,10, and received his intelligence by means of visions, in part at least mediated and interpreted by angels, 110,19, 41,2, 51, 61, 177-18, 219. He received the command to write and to prophecy from God himself, 119, 104,11, 1413. And the “I” speaking in the book is sometimes that of the Lord himself and sometimes that of the prophet, which is also a characteristic mark of the prophetic inspiration. In chapters 2 and 3 the Lord speaks in the first person, and again in Revelation 16:15 and Revelation 22:7.

CANONICAL SIGNIFICANCE The canonical authority of the apocalypse has never been seriously doubted by the Church. Hermas, Papias and Melito recognized its canonicity, and according to Eusebius Theophilus cited passages from it. The three great witnesses of the end of the second century all quote it by name and thus recognize its authority. Hippolytus and Origen also regarded it as canonical. Similarly Victorinus, Ambrose, Jerome and Augustine. Gradually, however, the fact that Millenarians found their chief support in the book, made it obnoxious to some of the Church fathers, who deemed it inexpedient to read it in the churches. This explains, why it is absent from some MSS. and from some of the catalogues of the ancient councils. The book is primarily a book of consolation for the militant Church in its struggles with the hostile world and with the powers of darkness. It directs the glance of the struggling, suffering, sorrowing and often persecuted Church toward its glorious future. Its central teaching is, “I come quickly!” And while it reveals the future history of the Church as one of continual struggle, it unfolds in majestic visions the coming of the Lord, which issues in the destruction of the wicked and of the evil One, and in the everlasting bliss of the faithful witnesses of Jesus Christ. Hence the book comes to the enemies of God’s Kingdom with words of solemn warning and with threatenings of future punishment, while it encourages the followers of the Lord to ever greater faithfulness, and opens up to them bright visions of the future, thus inspiring the Church’s constant prayer: “Even so, come, Lord Jesus!”

Chapter 69

04.00. Systematic Theology

Systematic Theology by Louis Berkhof This module was created by dolous777

04.000C. Table of Contents

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04.000p. Preface

Preface

Now that my Systematic Theology is again being reprinted, the Preface can be very brief. It is not necessary to say much about the nature of the work, since it has been before the public for more than fifteen years and has been used extensively. I have every reason to be grateful for its kind reception, for the favourable testimony of many reviewers, and for the fact that the book is now used as a textbook in many Theological Seminaries and Bible Schools in our country, and that requests were even received from abroad for permission to translate it into other languages. These are blessings which I had not anticipated, and for which I am deeply grateful to God. To Him be all the honor. And if the work may continue to be a blessing in many sections of the Church of Jesus Christ, it will but increase my recognition of the abundant grace of God.

L. Berkhof Grand Rapids, Michigan,

August 1, 1949.

04.1.1.1. The Existence of God

I.The Existence of God A.PLACE OF THE DOCTRINE OF GOD IN DOGMATICS

WORKS on dogmatic or systematic theology generally begin with the doctrine of God. The prevailing opinion has always recognized this as the most logical procedure and still points in the same direction. In many instances even they whose fundamental principles would seem to require another arrangement, continue the traditional practice. There are good reasons for starting with the doctrine of God, if we proceed on the assumption that theology is the systematized knowledge of God, of whom, through whom, and unto whom, are all things. Instead of being surprised that Dogmatics should begin with the doctrine of God, we might well expect it to be a study of God throughout what it is intended to be, though only the first locus deals with God directly, while the succeeding ones treat of Him more indirectly. We start the study of theology with two presuppositions, namely (1) that God exists, and (2) that He has revealed Himself in His divine Word. And for that reason it is not impossible for us to start with the study of God. We can turn to His revelation, in order to learn what He has revealed concerning Himself and concerning His relation to His creatures. Attempts have been made in the course of time to distribute the material of Dogmatics in such a way as to exhibit clearly that it is, not merely in one locus, but in its entirety, a study of God. This was done by the application of the trinitarian method, which arranges the subject-matter of Dogmatics under the three headings of (1) the Father (2) the Son, and (3) the Holy Spirit. That method was applied in some of the earlier systematic works, was restored to favor by Hegel, and can still be seen in Martensen’s Christian Dogmatics. A similar attempt was made by Breckenridge, when he divided the subject-matter of Dogmatics into (1) The Knowledge of God Objectively Considered, and (2) The Knowledge of God Subjectively Considered. Neither one of these can be called very successful.

Up to the beginning of the nineteenth century the practice was all but general to begin the study of Dogmatics with the doctrine of God; but a change came about under the influence of Schleiermacher, who sought to safeguard the scientific character of theology by the introduction of a new method. The religious consciousness of man was substituted for the Word of God as the source of theology. Faith in Scripture as an authoritative revelation of God was discredited, and human insight based on man’s own emotional or rational apprehension became the standard of religious thought. Religion gradually took the place of God as the object of theology. Man ceased to recognize the knowledge of God as something that wasgiven in Scripture, and began to pride himself on being a seeker after God. In course of time it became rather common to speak of man’s discovering God, as if man ever discovered Him; and every discovery that was made in the process was dignified with the name of "revelation." God came in at the end of a syllogism, or as the last link in a chain of reasoning, or as the cap-stone of a structure of human thought. Under such circumstances it was but natural that some should regard it as incongruous to begin Dogmatics with the study of God. It is rather surprising that so many, in spite of their subjectivism, continued the traditional arrangement.

Some, however, sensed the incongruity and struck out in a different way. Schleiermacher's dogmatic work is devoted to a study and analysis of the religious consciousness and of the doctrines therein implied. He does not deal with the doctrine of God connectedly, but only in fragments, and concludes his work with a discussion of the Trinity. His starting point is anthropological rather than theological. Some of the mediating theologians were influenced to such an extent by Schleiermacher that they logically began their dogmatic treatises with the study of man. Even in the present day this arrangement is occasionally followed. A striking example of it is found in the work of O. A. Curtis on The Christian Faith. This begins with the doctrine of man and concludes with the doctrine of God. Ritschlian theology might seem to call for still another starting point, since it finds the objective revelation of God, not in the Bible as the divinely inspired Word, but in Christ as the Founder of the Kingdom of God, and considers the idea of the Kingdom as the central and all-controlling concept of theology. However, Ritschlian dogmaticians, such as Herrmann. Haering, and Kaftan follow, at least formally, the usual order. At the same time there are several theologians who in their works begin the discussion of dogmatics proper with the doctrine of Christ or of His redemptive work. T. B. Strong distinguishes betweentheology and Christian theology, defines the latter as "the expression and analysis of the Incarnation of Jesus Christ," and makes the incarnation the dominating concept throughout his Manual of Theology.

B. SCRIPTURE PROOF FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD For us the existence of God is the great presupposition of theology. There is no sense in speaking of the knowledge of God, unless it may be assumed that God exists. The presupposition of Christian theology is of a very definite type. The assumption is not merely that there is something, some idea or ideal, some power or purposeful tendency, to which the name of God may be applied, but that there is a self-existent, selfconscious, personal Being, which is the origin of all things, and which transcends the entire creation, but is at the same time immanent in every part of it. The question may be raised, whether this is a reasonable assumption, and this question may be answered in the affirmative. This does not mean, however, that the existence of God is capable of a logical demonstration that leaves no room whatever for doubt; but it does mean that, while the truth of God's existence is accepted by faith, this faith is based on reliable information. While Reformed theology regards the existence of God as an entirely reasonable assumption, it does not claim the ability to demonstrate this by rational argumentation. Dr. Kuyper speaks as follows of the attempt to do this: "The attempt to prove God's existence is either useless or unsuccessful. It is useless if the searcher believes that God is a rewarder of those who seek Him. And it is unsuccessful if it is an attempt to force a person who does not have this pistis by means of argumentation to an acknowledgment in a logical sense."1 The Christian accepts the truth of the existence of God by faith. But this faith is not a blind faith, but a faith that is based on evidence, and the evidence is found primarily in Scripture as the inspired Word of God, and secondarily in God's revelation in nature. Scripture proof on this point does not come to us in the form of an explicit declaration, and much less in the form of a logical argument. In that sense the Bible does not prove the existence of God. The closest it comes to a declaration is perhaps in Hebrews 11:6... "for he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of them that seek after Him." It presupposes the existence of God in its very opening statement, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." Not only does it describe God as the Creator of all things, but also as the Upholder of all His creatures, and as the Ruler of the destinies of individuals and nations. It testifies to the fact that God works all things according to the counsel of His will, and reveals the gradual realization of His great purpose

of redemption. The preparation for this work, especially in the choice and guidance of the old covenant people of Israel, is clearly seen in the Old Testament, and the initial culmination of it in the Person and work of Christ stands out with great clarity on the pages of the New Testament. God is seen on almost every page of Holy Writ as He reveals Himself in words and actions. This revelation of God is the basis of our faith in the existence of God, and makes this an entirely reasonable faith. It should be remarked, however, that it is only by faith that we accept the revelation of God, and that we obtain a real insight into its contents. Jesus said, "If any man will do his will, he shall know of the doctrine, whether it be of God, or whether I speak of myself," John 7:17. It is this intensive knowledge, resulting from intimate communion with God, which Hosea has in mind when he says, "And let us know, let us follow on to know the Lord," Hosea 6:3. The unbeliever has no real understanding of the Word of God. The words of Paul are very much to the point in this connection: "Where is the wise? where is the scribe? where is the disputer of this age (world)? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of the world? For, seeing that in the wisdom of God the world through its wisdom knew not God, it was God’s good pleasure through the foolishness of the preaching to save them that believe," 1 Corinthians 1:20-21.

C. DENIAL OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD IN ITS VARIOUS FORMS

Students of Comparitive Religion and missionaries often testify to the fact that the idea of God is practically universal in the human race. It is found even among the most uncivilized nations and tribes of the world. This does not mean, however, that there are no individuals who deny the existence of God altogether, nor even that there is not a goodly number in Christian lands who deny the existence of God as He is revealed in Scripture, a self-existent and self-conscious Person of infinite perfections, who works all things according to a pre-determined plan. It is the latter denial that we have in mind particularly here. This may and has assumed various forms in the course of history.

1. ABSOLUTE DENIAL OF THE EXISTENCE OF GOD. As stated above, there is strong evidence for the universal presence of the idea of God in the human mind, even amongtribes which are uncivilized and have not felt the impact of special revelation. In view of this fact some go so far as to deny that there are people who deny the existence of God, real atheists; but this denial is contradicted by the facts. It is customary to distinguish two kinds, namely, practical and theoretical atheists. The former are simply godless persons, who in their practical life do not reckon with God, but live as if there were no God. The latter are, as a rule, of a more intellectual kind, and base their denial on a process of reasoning. They seek to prove by what seem to them conclusive rational arguments, that there is no God. In view of thesemen religionis implanted in every man by his creation in the image of God, it is safe to assume that no one is born an atheist. In the last analysis atheism results from the perverted moral state of man and from his desire to escape from God. It is deliberately blind to and suppresses the most fundamental instinct of man, the deepest needs of the soul, the highest aspirations of the human spirit, and the longings of a heart that gropes after some higher Being. This practical or intellectual suppression of the operation of the semen religionis often involves prolonged and painful struggles.

There can be no doubt about the existence of practical atheists, since both Scripture and experience testify to it. Psalms 10:4 b declares of the wicked, "All his thoughts are, There is no God." According to Psalms 14:1 "The fool hath said in his heart, There is no God." And Paul

reminds the Ephesians that they were formerly "without God in the world," Ephesians 2:12. Experience also testifies abundantly to their presence in the world. They are not necessarily notoriously wicked in the eyes of men, but may belong to the so-called "decent men of the world," though respectably indifferent to spiritual things. Such people are often quite conscious of the fact that they are out of harmony with God, dread to think of meeting Him, and try to forget about Him. They seem to take a secret delight in parading their- atheism when they have smooth sailing, but have been known to get down on their knees for prayer when their life was suddenly endangered. At the present time thousands of these practical atheists belong to the American Association for the Advancement of Atheism.

Theoretical atheists are of a different kind. They are usually of a more intellectual type and attempt to justify the assertion that there is no God by rational argumentation. Prof. Flint distinguishes three kinds of theoretical atheism, namely, (1) dogmatic atheism, which flatly denies that there is a Divine Being; (2) sceptical atheism, which doubts the ability of the human mind to determine, whether or not there is a God; and (3)critical atheism, which maintains that there is no valid proof for the existence of God. These often go hand in hand, but even the most modest of them really pronounces all belief in God a delusion.2 In this division, it will be noticed, agnosticism also appears as a sort of atheism, a classification which many agnostics resent. But it should be borne in mind that agnosticism respecting the existence of God, while allowing the possibility of His reality, leaves us without an object of worship and adoration just as much as dogmatic atheism does. However the real atheist is thedogmatic atheist,the man who makes the positive assertion that there is no God. Such an assertion may mean one of two things: either that he recognizes no god of any kind, sets up no idol for himself, or that he does not recognize the God of Scripture. Now there are very few atheists who do not in practical life fashion some sort of god for themselves. There is a far greater number who theoretically set aside any and every god; and there is a still greater number that has broken with the God of Scripture. Theoretical atheism is generally rooted in some scientific or philosophical theory. Materialistic Monism in its various forms and atheism usually go hand in hand. Absolute subjective Idealism may still leave us the idea of God, but denies that there is any corresponding reality. To the modern Humanist "God" simply means "the Spirit of humanity," "the Sense of wholeness," "the Racial Goal" and other abstractions of that kind. Other theories not only leave room for God, but also pretend to maintain His existence, but certainly exclude the God of theism, a supreme personal Being, Creator, Preserver, and Ruler of the universe, distinct from His creation, and yet everywhere present in it. Pantheism merges the natural and supernatural, the finite and infinite, into one substance. It often speaks of God as the hidden ground of the phenomenal world, but does not conceive of Him as personal, and therefore as endowed with intelligence and will. It boldly declares that all is God, and thus engages in what Brightman calls "the expansion of God," so that we get "too much of God," seeing that He also includes all the evil of the world. It excludes the God of Scripture, and in so far is clearly atheistic. Spinoza may be called "the God-intoxicated man," but his God is certainly not the God whom Christians worship and adore. Surely, there can be no doubt about the presence of theoretical atheists in the world. When David Hume expressed doubt as to the existence of a dogmatic atheist, Baron d’Holbach replied, "My dear sir, you are at this moment sitting at table with seventeen such persons." They who are agnostic respecting the existence of God may differ somewhat from the dogmatic atheist, but they, as well as the latter, leave us without a God.

2. PRESENT DAY FALSE CONCEPTIONS OF GOD INVOLVING A DENIAL OF THE TRUE GOD. There are several false conceptions of God current in our day, which involve a denial of the theistic conception of God. A brief indication of the most important of these must suffice in this connection. a. An immanent and impersonal God. Theism has always believed in a God who is both transcendent and immanent. Deism removed God from the world, and stressed His transcendence at the expense of His immanence. Under the influence of Pantheism, however, the pendulum swung in the other direction. It identified God and the world, and did not recognize a Divine Being, distinct from, and infinitely exalted above, His creation. Through Schleiermacher the tendency to make God continuous with the world gained a footing in theology. He completely ignores the transcendent God, and recognizes only a God that can be known by human experience and manifests Himself in Christian consciousness as Absolute Causality, to which a feeling of absolute dependence corresponds. The attributes we ascribe to God are in this view merely symbolical expressions of the various modes of this feeling of dependence, subjective ideas without any corresponding reality. His earlier and his later representations of God seem to differ somewhat, and interpreters of Schleiermacher differ as to the way in which his statements must be harmonized. Brunner would seem to be quite correct, however, when he says that with him the universe takes the place of God, though the latter name is used; and that he conceives of God both as identical with the universe and as the unity lying behind it. It often seems as if his distinction between God and the world is only an ideal one, namely, the distinction between the world as a unity and the world in its manifold manifestations. He frequently speaks of God as the "Universum" or the "Welt-All," and argues against the personality of God; though, inconsistently, also speaking as if we could have communion with Him in Christ. These views of Schleiermacher, making God continuous with the world, largely dominated the theology of the past century, and it is this view that Barth is combatting with his strong emphasis on God as "the Wholly Other." b.A finite and personal God. The idea of a finite god or gods is not new, but as old as Polytheism and Henotheism. The idea fits in with Pluralism, but not with philosophical Monism or theological Monotheism. Theism has always regarded God as an absolute personal Being of infinite perfections. During the nineteenth century, when monistic philosophy was in the ascendant, it became rather common to identify the God of theology with the Absolute of philosophy. Toward the end of the century, however, the term "Absolute," as a designation of God, fell into disfavor, partly because of its agnostic and pantheistic implications, and partly as the result of the opposition to the idea of the "Absolute" in philosophy, and of the desire to exclude all metaphysics from theology. Bradley regarded the God of the Christian religion as a part of the Absolute, and James pleaded for a conception of God that was more in harmony with human experience than the idea of an infinite God. He eliminates from God the metaphysical attributes of self-existence, infinity, and immutability, and makes the moral attributes supreme. God has an environment, exists in time, and works out a history just like ourselves. Because of the evil that is in the world, He must be thought of as limited in knowledge or power, or in both. The condition of the world makes it impossible to believe in a good God infinite in knowledge and power. The existence of a larger power which is friendly to man and with which he can commune meets all the practical needs and experiences of religion. James conceived of this power as personal, but was not willing to express himself as to whether he believed in one finite God or a number of them. Bergson added to this conception of James the idea of a struggling and growing God, constantly drawing upon his environment. Others who defended the idea of a finite God, though in different ways, are

Hobhouse, Schiller, James Ward, Rashdall, and H. G. Wells. c. God as the personification of a mere abstract idea. It has become quite the vogue in modern liberal theology to regard the name "God" as a mere symbol, standing for some cosmic process, some universal will or power, or some lofty and comprehensive ideal. The statement is repeatedly made that, if God once created man in His image, man is now returning the compliment by creating God in his (man's) image. It is said of Harry Elmer Barnes that he once said in one of his laboratory classes: "Gentlemen, we shall now proceed to create God." That was a very blunt expression of a rather common idea. Most of those who reject the theistic view of God still profess faith in God, but He is a God of their own imagination. The form which He assumes at any particular time depends, according to Shailer Mathews, on the thought patterns of that day. If in pre-war times the controlling pattern was that of an autocratic sovereign, demanding absolute obedience, now it is that of a democratic ruler eager to serve all his subjects. Since the days of Comte there has been a tendency to personify the social order of humanity as a whole and to worship this personification. The so-called Meliorists or Social Theologians reveal a tendency to identify God in some way with the social order. And the New Psychologists inform us that the idea of God is a projection of the human mind, which in its early stages is inclined to make images of its experiences and to clothe them with quasi-personality. Leuba is of the opinion that this illusion of God has served a useful purpose, but that the time is coming when the idea of God will be no more needed. A few definitions will serve to show the present day trend. "God is the immanent spirit of the community" (Royce). He is "that quality in human society which supports and enriches humanity in its spiritual quest" (Gerald Birney Smith). "God is the totality of relations constituting the whole social order of growing humanity" (E. S. Ames). "The word 'god' is a symbol to designate the universe in its ideal forming capacity" (G. B. Foster). "God is our conception, born of social experience, of the personality-evolving and personally responsive elements of our cosmic environment with which we are organically related" (Shailer Mathews). It need hardly be said that the God so defined is not a personal God and does not answer to the deepest needs of the human heart.

D. THE SO CALLED PROOFS FOR THE EXISTENCE OF GOD. In course of time certain rational arguments for the existence of God were developed, and found a foothold in theology especially through the influence of Wolff. Some of these were in essence already suggested by Plato and Aristotle, and others were added in modern times by students of the Philosophy of Religion. Only the most common of these arguments can be mentioned here.

1. THE ONTOLOGICAL ARGUMENT. This has been presented in various forms by Anselm, Descartes, Samuel Clarke, and others. It has been stated in its most perfect form by Anselm. He argues that man has the idea of an absolutely perfect being; that existence is an attribute of perfection; and that therefore an absolutely perfect being must exist. But it is quite evident that we cannot conclude from abstract thought to real existence. The fact that we have an idea of God does not yet prove His objective existence. Moreover, this argument tacitly assumes, as already existing in the human mind, the very knowledge of God's existence which it would derive from logical demonstration. Kant stressed the untenableness of this argument, but Hegel hailed it as the one great argument for the existence of God. Some modern Idealists suggested that it might better be cast into a somewhat different form, which Hocking called "the report of experience." By virtue of it we can say, "I have an idea of God, therefore I have an experience of God."

2. THE COSMOLIGICAL ARGUMENT. This has also appeared in several forms. In general it runs as follows: Every existing thing in the world must have an adequate cause; and if this is so, the universe must also have an adequate cause, that is a cause which is indefinitely great. However, the argument did not carry general conviction. Hume called the law of causation itself in question, and Kant pointed out that, if every existing thing has an adequate cause, this also applies to God, and that we are thus led to an endless chain. Moreover, the argument does not necessitate the assumption that the cosmos had a single cause, a personal and absolute cause, — and therefore falls short of proving the existence of God. This difficulty led to a slightly different construction of the argument, as, for instance, by B. P. Bowne. The material universe appears as an interacting system, and therefore as a unit, consisting of several parts. Hence there must be a unitary Agent that mediates the interaction of the various parts or is the dynamic ground of their being.

3. THE TELEOLIGICAL ARGUMENT. This is also a causal argument, and is really but an extension of the preceding one. It may be stated in the following form: The world everywhere reveals intelligence, order, harmony, and purpose, and thus implies the existence of an intelligent and purposeful being, adequate to the production of such a world. Kant regards this argument as the best of the three which were named, but claims that it does not prove the existence of God, nor of a Creator, but only of a great architect who fashioned the world. It is superior to the cosmological argument in that it makes explicit what is not stated in the latter, namely, that the world contains evidences of intelligence and purpose, and thus leads on to the existence of a conscious, and intelligent, and purposeful being. That this being was the Creator of the world does not necessarily follow. "The teleological evidence," says Wright,3 "merely indicates the probable existence of a Mind that is, at least in considerable measure, in control of the world process, — enough to account for the amount of teleology apparent in it." Hegel treated this argument as a valid but subordinate one. The Social Theologians of our day reject it along with all the other arguments as so much rubbish, but the New Theists retain it.

4. THE MORAL ARGUMENT Just as the other arguments, this too assumed different forms. Kant took his starting point in the categorical imperative, and from it inferred the existence of someone who, as lawgiver and judge, has the absolute right to command man. In his estimation this argument is far superior to any of the others. It is the one on which he mainly relies in his attempt to prove the existence of God. This may be one of the reasons why it is more generally recognized than any other, though it is not always cast into the same form. Some argue from the disparity often observed between the moral conduct of men and the prosperity which they enjoy in the present life, and feel that this calls for an adjustment in the future which, in turn, requires a righteous arbiter. Modern theology also uses it extensively, especially in the form that man’s recognition of a Highest Good and his quest for a moral ideal demand and necessitate the existence of a God to give reality to that ideal. While this argument does point to the existence of a holy and just being, it does not compel belief in a God, a Creator, or a being of infinite perfections. THE HISTORICAL OR ETHNOLOGICAL ARGUMENT. In the main this takes the following form: Among all the peoples and tribes of the earth there is a sense of the divine, which reveals itself in an external cultus. Since the phenomenon is universal, it must belong to the very nature of man. And if the nature of man naturally leads to religious worship, this can only find its explanation in a higher Being who has constituted man a religious being. In answer to this argument, however, it may be said that this universal phenomenon may have originated in an error or misunderstanding

of one of the early progenitors of the human race, and that the religious cultus referred to appears strongest among primitive races, and disappears in the measure in which they become civilized. In evaluating these rational arguments it should be pointed out first of all that believers do not need them. Their conviction respecting the existence of God does not depend on them, but on a believing acceptance of God's self-revelation in Scripture. If many in our day are willing to stake their faith in the existence of God on such rational arguments, it is to a great extent due to the fact that they refuse to accept the testimony of the Word of God. Moreover, in using these arguments in an attempt to convince unbelievers, it will be well to bear in mind that none of them can be said to carry absolute conviction. No one did more to discredit them than Kant. Since his day many philosophers and theologians have discarded them as utterly worthless, but to-day they are once more gaining favor and their number is increasing. And the fact that in our day so many find in them rather satisfying indications of the existence of God, would seem to indicate that they are not entirely devoid of value. They have some value for believers themselves, but should be called testimonia rather than arguments. They are important as interpretations of God's general revelation and as exhibiting the reasonableness of belief in a divine Being. Moreover, they can render some service in meeting the adversary. While they do not prove the existence of God beyond the possibility of doubt, so as to compel assent, they can be so construed as to establish a strong probability and thereby silence many unbelievers.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. Why is modern theology inclined to give the study of man rather than the study of God precedence in theology? Does the Bible prove the existence of God or does it not? If it does, how does it prove it? What accounts for the general sensus divinitatis in man? Are there nations or tribes that are entirely devoid of it? Can the position be maintained that there are no atheists? Should present day Humanists be classed as atheists? What objections are there to the identification of God with the Absolute of philosophy? Does a finite God meet the needs of the Christian life? Is the doctrine of a finite God limited to Pragmatists? Why is a personified idea of God a poor substitute for the living God? What was Kant's criticism on the arguments of speculative reason for the existence of God? How should we judge of this criticism?

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04.1.1.2. The Knowability of God

II. The Knowability of God A. GOD INCOMPREHENSIBLE BUT YET KNOWABLE The Christian Church confesses on the one hand that God is the Incomprehensible One, but also on the other hand, that He can be known and that knowledge of Him is an absolute requisite unto salvation. It recognizes the force of Zophar’s question, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" Job 11:7Job 11:7">. And it feels that it has no answer to the question of Isaiah, "To whom then will ye liken God? or what likeness will ye compare unto Him?" Isaiah 40:18. But at the same time it is also mindful of Jesus’ statement, "And this is life eternal, that they should know Thee, the only true God, and Him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ," John 17:3. It rejoices in the fact that "the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we know Him that is true, and we are in Him that is true, even in His Son Jesus Christ." 1 John 5:20. The two ideas reflected in these passages were always held side by side in the Christian Church. The early Church Fathers spoke of the invisible God as an unbegotten, nameless, eternal, incomprehensible, unchangeable Being. They had advanced very little beyond the old Greek idea that the Divine Being is absolute attributeless existence. At the same time they also confessed that God revealed Himself in the Logos, and can therefore be known unto salvation. In the fourth century Eunomius, an Arian, argued from the simplicity of God, that there is nothing in God that is not perfectly known and comprehended by the human intellect, but his view was rejected by all the recognized leaders of the Church. The Scholastics distinguished between the quid and the qualis of God, and maintained that we do not know what God is in His essential Being, but can know something of His nature, of what He is to us, as He reveals Himself in His divine attributes. The same general ideas were expressed by the Reformers, though they did not agree with the Scholastics as to the possibility of acquiring real knowledge of God, by unaided human reason, from general revelation. Luther speaks repeatedly of God as the Deus Absconditus (hidden God), in distinction from Him as the Deus Revelatus (revealed God). In some passages he even speaks of the revealed God as still a hidden God in view of the fact that we cannot fully know Him even through His special revelation. To Calvin, God in the depths of His being is past finding out. "His essence," he says, "is incomprehensible; so that His divinity wholly escapes all human senses." The Reformers do not deny that man can learn something of the nature of God from His creation, but maintain that he can acquire true knowledge of Him only from special revelation, under the illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit. Under the influence of the pantheizing theology of immanence, inspired by Hegel and Schleiermacher, a change came about. The transcendence of God is soft-pedaled, ignored, or explicitly denied. God is brought down to the level of the world, is made continuous with it, and is therefore regarded as less incomprehensible, though still shrouded in mystery. Special revelation in the sense of a direct communication of God to man is denied. Sufficient knowledge of God can be obtained without it, since man can discover God for himself in the depths of his own being, in the material universe, and above all in Jesus Christ, since these are all but outward manifestations of the immanent God. It is over against this trend in theology that Barth now raises his voice and points out that God is not to be found in nature, in history, or in human experience of any kind, but only in the special

revelation that has reached us in the Bible. In his strong statements respecting the hidden God he uses the language of Luther rather than of Calvin.

Reformed theology holds that God can be known, but that it is impossible for man to have a knowledge of Him that is exhaustive and perfect in every way. To have such a knowledge of God would be equivalent to comprehending Him, and this is entirely out of the question: " Finitum non possit capere infinitum. " Furthermore, man cannot give a definition of God in the proper sense of the word, but only a partial description. A logical definition is impossible, because God cannot be subsumed under some higher genus. At the same time it is maintained that man can obtain a knowledge of God that is perfectly adequate for the realization of the divine purpose in the life of man. However, true knowledge of God can be acquired only from the divine self-revelation, and onlyby the man who accepts this with childlike faith. Religion necessarily presupposes such a knowledge. It is the most sacred relation between man and his God, a relation in which man is conscious of the absolute greatness and majesty of God as the supreme Being, and of his own utter insignificance and subjection to the High and Holy One. And if this is true, it follows that religion presupposes the knowledge of God in man. If man were left absolutely in the dark respecting the being of God, it would be impossible for him to assume a religious attitude. There could be no reverence, no piety, no fear of God, no worshipful service.

B. DENIAL OF THE KNOWABILITY OF GOD The possibility of knowing God has been denied on various grounds. This denial is generally based on the supposed limits of the human faculty of cognition, though it has been presented in several different forms. The fundamental position is that the human mind is incapable of knowing anything of that which lies beyond and behind natural phenomena, and is therefore necessarily ignorant of supersensible and divine things. Huxley was the first to apply to those who assume this position, himself included, the name "agnostics." They are entirely in line with the sceptics of former centuries and of Greek philosophy. As a rule agnostics do not like to be branded as atheists, since they do not deny absolutely that there is a God, but declare that they do not know whether He exists or not, and even if He exists, are not certain that they have any true knowledge of Him, and in many cases even deny that they can have any real knowledge of Him.

Hume has been called the father of modern agnosticism. He did not deny the existence of God, but asserted that we have no true knowledge of His attributes. All our ideas of Him are, and can only be, anthropomorphic. We cannot be sure that there is any reality corresponding to the attributes we ascribe to Him. His agnosticism resulted from the general principle that all knowledge is based on experience. It was especially Kant, however, who stimulated agnostic thought by his searching inquiry into the limits of the human understanding and reason. He affirmed that the theoretical reason knows only phenomena and is necessarily ignorant of that which underlies these phenomena, — the thing in itself. From this it followed, of course, that it is impossible for us to have any theoretical knowledge of God. But Lotze already pointed out that phenomena, whether physical or mental, are always connected with some substance lying back of them, and that in knowing the phenomena we also know the underlying substance, of which they are manifestations. The Scotch philosopher, Sir William Hamilton, while not in entire agreement with Kant, yet shared the intellectual agnosticism of the latter. He asserts that the human mind knows only that which is conditioned and exists in various relations, and that, since the Absolute and Infinite is entirely unrelated, that is exists in no relations, we can obtain no knowledge of it. But

while he denies that the Infinite can be known by us, he does not deny its existence. Says he, "Through faith we apprehend what is beyond our knowledge." His views were shared in substance by Mansel, and were popularized by him. To him also it seemed utterly impossible to conceive of an infinite Being, though he also professed faith in its existence. The reasoning of these two men did not carry conviction, since it was felt that the Absolute or Infinite does not necessarily exist outside of all relations, but can enter into various relations; and that the fact that we know things only in their relations does not mean that the knowledge so acquired is merely a relative or unreal knowledge.

Comte, the father of Positivism, was also agnostic in religion. According to him man can know nothing but physical phenomena and their laws. His senses are the sources of all true thinking, and he can know nothing except the phenomena which they apprehend and the relations in which these stand to each other. Mental phenomena can be reduced to material phenomena, and in science man cannot get beyond these. Even the phenomena of immediate consciousness are excluded, and further, everything that lies behind the phenomena. Theological speculation represents thought in its infancy. No positive affirmation can be made respecting the existence of God, and therefore both theism and atheism stand condemned. In later life Comte felt the need of some religion and introduced the so-called "religion of Humanity." Even more than Comte, Herbert Spencer is recognized as the great exponent of modern scientific agnosticism. He was influenced very much by Hamilton’s doctrine of the relativity of knowledge and by Mansel’s conception of the Absolute, and in the light of these worked out his doctrine of the Unknowable, which was his designation of whatever may be absolute, first or ultimate in the order of the universe, including God. He proceeds on the assumption that there is some reality lying back of phenomena, but maintains that all reflection on it lands us in contradictions. This ultimate reality is utterly inscrutable. While we must accept the existence of some ultimate Power, either personal or impersonal, we can form no conception of it. Inconsistently he devotes a great part of his First Principles to the development of the positive content of the Unknowable, as if it were well known indeed. Other agnostics, who were influenced by him, are such men as Huxley, Fiske, and Clifford. We meet with agnosticism also repeatedly in modern Humanism. Harry Elmer Barnes says: "To the writer it seems quite obvious that the agnostic position is the only one which can be supported by any scientifically-minded and critically-inclined person in the present state of knowledge.4

Besides the forms indicated in the preceding the agnostic argument has assumed several others, of which the following are some of the most important. (1) Man knows only by analogy. We know only that which bears some analogy to our own nature or experience:" Similia similibus percipiuntur. " But while it is true that we learn a great deal by analogy, we also learn by contrast. In many cases the differences are the very things that arrest our attention. The Scholastics spoke of the via negationis by which they in thought eliminated from God the imperfections of the creature. Moreover, we should not forget that man is made in the image of God, and that there are important analogies between the divine nature and the nature of man. (2) Man really knows only what he can grasp in its entirety. Briefly stated the position is that man cannot comprehend God, who is infinite, cannot have an exhaustive knowledge of Him, and therefore cannot know Him. But this position proceeds on the unwarranted assumption that partial knowledgecannot be real knowledge, an assumption which would really invalidate all our knowledge, since it always falls far short of completeness. Our knowledge of God, though not exhaustive, may yet be very real and

perfectly adequate for our present needs. (3) All predicates of God are negative and therefore furnish no real knowledge. Hamilton says that the Absolute and the Infinite can only be conceived as a negation of the thinkable; which really means that we can have no conception of them at all. But though it is true that much of what we predicate to God is negative in form, this does not mean that it may not at the same time convey some positive idea. The aseity of God includes the positive idea of his self-existence and self-sufficiency. Moreover, such ideas as love, spirituality, and holiness, are positive. (4) All our knowledge is relative to the knowing subject. It is said that we know the objects of knowledge, not as they are objectively, but only as they are related to our senses and faculties. In the process of knowledge we distort and colour them. In a sense it is perfectly true that all our knowledge is subjectively conditioned, but the import of the assertion under consideration seems to be that, because we know things only through the mediation of our senses and faculties, we do not know them as they are. But this is not true; in so far as we have any real knowledge of things, that knowledge corresponds to the objective reality. The laws of perception and thought are not arbitrary, but correspond to the nature of things. Without such correspondence, not only the knowledge of God, but all true knowledge would be utterly impossible.

Some are inclined to look upon the position of Barth as a species of agnosticism. Zerbe says that practical agnosticism dominates Barth's thinking and renders him a victim of the Kantian unknowableness of the Thing-in-Itself, and quotes him as follows: "Romans is a revelation of the unknown God; God comes to man, not man to God. Even after the revelation man cannot know God, for He is always the unknown God. In manifesting Himself to us He is farther away than ever before. (Rbr. p. 53)".5 At the same time he finds Barth's agnosticism, like that of Herbert Spencer, inconsistent. Says he: "It was said of Herbert Spencer that he knew a great deal about the 'Unknowable'; so of Barth, one wonders how he came to know so much of the 'Unknown God'."6 Dickie speaks in a similar vein: "In speaking of a transcendent God, Barth seems sometimes to be speaking of a God of Whom we can never know anything."7 He finds, however, that in this respect too there has been a change of emphasis in Barth. While it is perfectly clear that Barth does not mean to be an agnostic, it cannot be denied that some of his statements can readily be interpreted as having an agnostic flavor. He strongly stresses the fact that God is the hidden God, who cannot be known from nature, history, or experience, but only by His self-revelation in Christ, when it meets with the response of faith. But even in this revelation God appears only as the hidden God. God reveals Himself exactly as the hidden God, and through His revelation makes us more conscious of the distance which separates Him from man than we ever were before. This can easily be interpreted to mean that we learn by revelation merely that God cannot be known, so that after all we are face to face with an unknown God. But in view of all that Barth has written this is clearly not what he wants to say. His assertion, that in the light of revelation we see God as the hidden God, does not exclude the idea that by revelation we also acquire a great deal of useful knowledge of God as He enters into relations with His people. When He says that even in His revelation God still remains for us the unknown God, he really means, the incomprehensible God. The revealing God is God in action. By His revelation we learn to know Him in His operations, but acquire no real knowledge of His inner being. The following passage in The Doctrine of the Word of God8 is rather illuminating: "On this freedom (freedom of God) rests the inconceivability of God, the inadequacy of all knowledge of the revealed God. Even the three-in-oneness of God is revealed to us only in God's operations. Therefore the three-in-oneness of God is also

inconceivable to us. Hence, too, the inadequacy of all our knowledge of the three-in-oneness. The conceivability with which it has appeared to us, primarily in Scripture, secondarily in the Church doctrine of the Trinity, is a creaturely conceivability. To the conceivability in which God exists for Himself it is not only relative: it is absolutely separate from it. Only upon the free grace of revelation does it depend that the former conceivability, in its absolute separation from its object, is vet not without truth. In this sense the three-in-oneness of God, as we know it from the operation of God, is truth."

C. SELF-REVELATION THE PREREQUISITE OF ALL KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

1. GOD COMMUNICATES KNOWLEDGE OF HIMSELF TO MAN. Kuyper calls attention to the fact that theology as the knowledge of God differs in an important point from all other knowledge. In the study of all other sciences man places himself above the object of his investigation and actively elicits from it his knowledge by whatever method may seem most appropriate, but in theology he does not stand above but rather under the object of his knowledge. In other words, man can know God only in so far as the latter actively makes Himself known. God is first of all the subject communicating knowledge to man, and can only become an object of study for man in so far as the latter appropriates and reflects on the knowledge conveyed to him by revelation. Without revelation man would never have been able to acquire any knowledge of God. And even after God has revealed Himself objectively, it is not human reason that discovers God, but it is God who discloses Himself to the eye of faith. However, by the application of sanctified human reason to the study of God’s Word man can. under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, gain an ever-increasing knowledge of God. Barth also stresses the fact that man can know God only when God comes to him in an act of revelation. He asserts that there is no way from man to God, but only from God to man, and says repeatedly that God is always the subject, and never an object. Revelation is always something purely subjective, and can never turn into something objective like the written Word of Scripture, and as such become an object of study. It is given once for all in Jesus Christ, and in Christ comes to men in the existential moment of their lives. While there are elements of truth in what Barth says, his construction of the doctrine of revelation is foreign to Reformed theology. The position must be maintained, however, that theology would be utterly impossible without a self-revelation of God. And when we speak of revelation, we use the term in the strict sense of the word. It is not something in which God is passive, a mere "becoming manifest," but something in which He is actively making Himself known. It is not, as many moderns would have it, a deepened spiritual insight which leads to an ever-increasing discovery of God on the part of man; but a supernatural act of self-communication, a purposeful act on the part of the Living God. There is nothing surprising in the fact that God can be known only if, and in so far as, He reveals Himself. In a measure this is also true of man. Even after Psychology has made a rather exhaustive study of man, Alexis Carrell is still able to write a very convincing book on Man the Unknown. "For who among men," says Paul, "knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of the man, which is in him? even so the things of God none knoweth, save the Spirit of God." 1 Corinthians 2:11. The Holy Spirit searcheth all things, even the deep things of God, and reveals them unto man. God has made Himself known. Alongside of the archetypal knowledge of God, found in God Himself, there is also an ectypal knowledge of Him, given to man by revelation. The latter is related to the former as a copy is to the original, and therefore does not possess the same measure of clearness and perfection. All our knowledge of God is derived from His self-revelation

in nature and in Scripture. Consequently, our knowledge of God is on the one hand ectypal and analogical, but on the other hand also true and accurate, since it is a copy of the archetypal knowledge which God has of Himself.

2. INNATE AND ACQUIRED KNOWLEDGE OF GOD (COGNITO INSITA AND ACQUISTA). A distinction is usually made between innate and acquired knowledge of God. This is not a strictly logical distinction, because in the last analysis all human knowledge is acquired. The doctrine of innate ideas is philosophical rather than theological. The seeds of it are already found in Plato's doctrine of ideas, while it occurs in Cicero's De Natura Deorum in a more developed form. In modern philosophy it was taught first of all by Descartes, who regarded the idea of God as innate. He did not deem it necessary to consider this as innate in the sense that it was consciously present in the human mind from the start, but only in the sense that man has a natural tendency to form the idea when the mind reaches maturity. The doctrine finally assumed the form that there are certain ideas, of which the idea of God is the most prominent, which are inborn and are therefore present in human consciousness from birth. It was in this form that Locke rightly attacked the doctrine of innate ideas, though he went to another extreme in his philosophical empiricism. Reformed theology also rejected the doctrine in that particular form. And while some of its representatives retained the name "innate ideas," but gave it another connotation, others preferred to speak of a cognitio Dei insita(ingrafted or implanted knowledge of God). On the one hand this cognitio Dei insitadoes not consist in any ideas or formed notions which are present in man at the time of his birth; but on the other hand it is more than a mere capacity which enables man to know God. It denotes a knowledge that necessarily results from the constitution of the human mind, that is inborn only in the sense that it is acquired spontaneously, under the influence of the semen religionis by his creation in the image of God, and that is not acquired by the laborious process of reasoning and argumentation. It is a knowledge which man, constituted as he is, acquires of necessity, and as such is distinguished from all knowledge that is conditioned by the will of man. Acquired knowledge, on the other hand, is obtained by the study of God's revelation. It does not arise spontaneously in the human mind, but results from the conscious and sustained pursuit of knowledge. It can be acquired only by the wearisome process of perception and reflection, reasoning and argumentation. Under the influence of the Hegelian Idealism and of the modern view of evolution the innate knowledge of God has been over-emphasized; Barth on the other hand denies the existence of any such knowledge.

3. GENERAL AND SPECIAL REVELATION. The Bible testifies to a twofold revelation of God: a revelation in nature round about us, in human consciousness, and in the providential government of the world; and a revelation embodied in the Bible as the Word of God. It testifies to the former in such passages as the following: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmanent showeth His handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night showeth knowledge," Psalms 19:1-2. "And yet He left not Himself without witness, in that He did good and gave you from heaven rains and fruitful seasons, filling your hearts with food and gladness," Acts 14:17. "Because that which is known of God is manifest in them; for God manifested it unto them. For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity," Romans 1:19-20. Of the latter it gives abundant evidence in both the Old and the New Testament. "Yet Jehovah testified unto Israel, and unto Judah, by every prophet, and every seer, saying, Turn ye from your evil ways, and

keep my commandments and my statutes, according to all the law which I commanded your fathers, and which I sent to you by my servants the prophets," 1 Kings 17:13. "He hath made known His ways unto Moses, His doings unto the children of Israel," Psalms 103:7. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him," John 1:18. "God, having of old time spoken unto the fathers in the prophets by divers portions and in divers manners, hath at the end of these days spoken to us in His Son," Hebrews 1:1-2. On the basis of these scriptural data it became customary to speak of natural and supernatural revelation. The distinction thus applied to the idea of revelation is primarily a distinction based on the manner in which it is communicated to man; but in the course of history it has also been based in part on the nature of its subject-matter. The mode of revelation is natural when it is communicated through nature, that is, through the visible creation with its ordinary laws and powers. It is supernatural when it is communicated to man in a higher, supernatural manner, as when God speaks to him, either directly, or through supernaturally endowed messengers. The substance of revelation was regarded as natural, if it could be acquired by human reason from the study of nature; and was considered to be supernatural when it could not be known from nature, nor by unaided human reason. Hence it became quite common in the Middle Ages to contrast reason and revelation. In Protestant theology natural revelation was often called a revelatio realis, and supernatural revelation a revelatio verbalis, because the former is embodied in things, and the latter in words. In course of time, however, the distinction between natural and supernatural revelation was found to be rather ambiguous, since all revelation is supernatural in origin and, as a revelation of God, also in content. Ewald in his work on Revelation: its Nature and Record9 speaks of the revelation in nature as immediate revelation, and of the revelation in Scripture, which he regards as the only one deserving the name "revelation" in the fullest sense, as mediate revelation. A more common distinction, however, which gradually gained currency, is that of general and special revelation. Dr. Warfield distinguishes the two as follows: " The one is addressed generally to all intelligent creatures, and is therefore accessible to all men; the other is addressed to a special class of sinners, to whom God would make known His salvation. The one has in view to meet and supply the natural need of creatures for knowledge of their God; the other to rescue broken and deformed sinners from their sin and its consequences."10 General revelation is rooted in creation, is addressed to man as man, and more particularly to human reason, and finds its purpose in the realization of the end of his creation, to know God and thus enjoy communion with Him. Special revelation is rooted in the redemptive plan of God, is addressed to man as sinner, can be properly understood and appropriated only by faith, and serves the purpose of securing the end for which man was created in spite of the disturbance wrought by sin. In view of the eternal plan of redemption it should be said that this special revelation did not come in as an after-thought, but was in the mind of God from the very beginning.

There was considerable difference of opinion respecting the relation of these two to each other. According to Scholasticism natural revelation provided the necessary data for the construction of a scientific natural theology by human reason. But while it enabled man to attain to a scientific knowledge of God as the ultimate cause of all things, it did not provide for the knowledge of the mysteries, such as the Trinity, the incarnation, and redemption. This knowledge is supplied by special revelation. It is a knowledge that is not rationally demonstrable but must be accepted by faith. Some of the earlier Scholastics were guided by the slogan "Credo ut intelligam," and, afteraccepting the truths of special revelation by faith, considered it necessary to raise faith to

understanding by a rational demonstration of those truths, or at least to prove their rationality. Thomas Aquinas, however, considered this impossible, except in so far as special revelation contained truths which also formed a part of natural revelation. In his opinion the mysteries, which formed the real contents of supernatural revelation, did not admit of any logical demonstration. He held, however, that there could be no conflict between the truths of natural and those of supernatural revelation. If there appears to be a conflict, there is something wrong with one's philosophy. The fact remains, however, that he recognized, besides the structure reared by faith on the basis of supernatural revelation, a system of scientific theology on the foundation of natural revelation. In the former one assents to something because it is revealed, in the latter because it is perceived as true in the light of natural reason. The logical demonstration, which is out of the question in the one, is the natural method of proof in the other. The Reformers rejected the dualism of the Scholastics and aimed at a synthesis of God's twofold revelation. They did not believe in the ability of human reason to construct a scientific system of theology on the basis of natural revelation pure and simple. Their view of the matter may be represented as follows: As a result of the entrance of sin into the world, the handwriting of God in nature is greatly obscured, and is in some of the most important matters rather dim and illegible. Moreover, man is stricken with spiritual blindness, and is thus deprived of the ability to read aright what God had originally plainly written in the works of creation. In order to remedy the matter and to prevent the frustration of His purpose, God did two things. In His supernatural revelation He republished the truths of natural revelation, cleared them of misconception, interpreted them with a view to the present needs of man, and thus incorporated them in His supernatural revelation of redemption. And in addition to that He provided a cure for the spiritual blindness of man in the work of regeneration and sanctification, including spiritual illumination, and thus enabled man once more to obtain true knowledge of God, the knowledge that carries with it the assurance of eternal life. When the chill winds of Rationalism swept over Europe, natural revelation was exalted at the expense of supernatural revelation. Man became intoxicated with a sense of his own ability and goodness, refused to listen and submit to the voice of authority that spoke to him in Scripture, and reposed complete trust in the ability of human reason to lead him out of the labyrinth of ignorance and error into the clear atmosphere of true knowledge. Some who maintained that natural revelation was quite sufficient to teach men all necessary truths, still admitted that they might learn them sooner with the aid of supernatural revelation. Others denied that the authority of supernatural revelation was complete, until its contents had been demonstrated by reason. And finally Deism in some of its forms denied, not only the necessity, but also the possibility and reality of supernatural revelation. In Schleiermacher the emphasis shifts from the objective to the subjective, from revelation to religion, and that without any distinction between natural and revealed religion. The term "revelation" is still retained, but is reserved as a designation of the deeper spiritual insight of man, an insight which does not come to him, however, without his own diligent search. What is called revelation from one point of view, may be called human discovery from another. This view has become quite characteristic of modern theology. Says Knudson: "But this distinction between natural and revealed theology has now largely fallen into disuse. The present tendency is to draw no sharp line of distinction between revelation and the natural reason, but to look upon the highest insights of reason as themselves divine revelations. In any case there is no fixed body of revealed truth, accepted on authority, that stands opposed to the truths of reason. All truth to-day rests on its power of appeal to the human mind."11

It is this view of revelation that is denounced in the strongest terms by Barth. He is particularly interested in the subject of revelation, and wants to lead the Church back from the subjective to the objective, from religion to revelation. In the former he sees primarily man’s efforts to find God, and in the latter "God’s search for man" in Jesus Christ. Barth does not recognize any revelation in nature. Revelation never exists on any horizontal line, but always comes down perpendicularly from above. Revelation is always God in action, God speaking, bringing something entirely new to man, something of which he could have no previous knowledge, and which becomes a real revelation only for him who accepts the object of revelation by a God-given faith. Jesus Christ is the revelation of God, and only he who knows Jesus Christ knows anything about revelation at all. Revelation is an act of grace, by which man becomes conscious of his sinful condition, but also of God’s free, unmerited, and forgiving condescension in Jesus Christ. Barth even calls it the reconciliation. Since God is always sovereign and free in His revelation, it can never assume a factually present, objective form with definite limitations, to which man can turn at any time for instruction. Hence it is a mistake to regard the Bible as God’s revelation in any other than a secondary sense. It is a witness to, and a token of, God’s revelation. The same may be said, though in a subordinate sense, of the preaching of the gospel. But through whatever mediation the word of God may come to man in the existential moment of his life, it is always recognized by man as a word directly spoken to him, and coming perpendicularly from above. This recognition is effected by a special operation of the Holy Spirit, by what may be called an individual testimonium Spiritus Sancti. The revelation of God was given once for all in Jesus Christ: not in His historical appearance, but in the superhistorical in which thepowers of the eternal world become evident, such as His incarnation and His death and resurrection. And if His revelation is also continuous — as it is —, it is such only in the sense that God continues to speak to individual sinners, in the existential moment of their lives, through the revelation in Christ, mediated by the Bible and by preaching. Thus we are left with mere flashes of revelation coming to individuals, of which only those individuals have absolute assurance; and fallible witnesses to, or tokens of, the revelation in Jesus Christ, — a rather precarious foundation for theology. It is no wonder that Barth is in doubt as to the possibility of constructing a doctrine of God. Mankind is not in possession of any infallible revelation of God, and of His unique revelation in Christ and its extension in the special revelations that come to certain men it has knowledge only through the testimony of fallible witnesses.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: In what sense can we speak of the hidden or unknown God in spite of the fact that He has revealed Himself? How did the Scholastics and the Reformers differ on this point? What is the position of modern theology? Why is revelation essential to religion? How does agnosticism differ theoretically from atheism? Is the one more favorable to religion than the other? How did Kant promote agnosticism? What was Sir William Hamilton’s doctrine of the relativity of knowledge? What form did agnosticism take in Positivism? What other forms did it take? Why do some speak of Barth as an agnostic? How should this charge be met? Is "revelation" an active or a passive concept? Is theology possible without revelation? If not, why not? Can the doctrine of innate ideas be defended? What is meant by "cognitio Dei insita?" How do natural and supernatural revelation differ? Is the distinction between general and special revelation an exact parallel of the preceding one? What different views were held as to the relation between the two? How does revelation differ from human discovery? Does Barth believe in general revelation? How does he conceive of special revelation?

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04.1.1.3. Relation of the Being and Attributes of God

III. Relation of the Being and Attributes of God

Some dogmaticians devote a separate chapter or chapters to the Being of God, before taking up the discussion of His attributes. This is done, for instance, in the works of Mastricht, Ebrard, Kuyper, and Shedd. Others prefer to consider the Being of God in connection with His attributes in view of the fact that it is in these that He has revealed Himself. This is the more common method, which is followed in the Synopsis Purioris Theologiae, and in the works of Turretin, à Marck, Brakel, Bavinck, Hodge, and Honig. This difference of treatment is not indicative of any serious fundamental disagreement between them. They are all agreed that the attributes are not mere names to which no reality corresponds, nor separate parts of a composite God, but essential qualities in which the Being of God is revealed and with which it can be identified. The only difference would seem to be that some seek to distinguish between the Being and the attributes of God more than others do.

A.THE BEING OF GOD

It is quite evident that the Being of God does not admit of any scientific definition. In order to give a logical definition of God, we would have to begin by going in search of some higher concept, under which God could be co-ordinated with other concepts; and would then have to point out the characteristics that would be applicable to God only. Such a genetic-synthetic definition cannot be given of God, since God is not one of several species of gods, which can be subsumed under a single genus. At most only an analytical-descriptive definition is possible. This merely names the characteristics of a person or thing, but leaves the essential being unexplained. And even such a definition cannot be complete but only partial, because it is impossible to give an exhaustive positive (as opposed to negative) description of God. It would consist in an enumeration of all the known attributes of God, and these are to a great extent negative in character. The Bible never operates with an abstract concept of God, but always describes Him as the Living God, who enters into various relations with His creatures, relations which are indicative of several different attributes. In Kuyper’s Dictaten Dogmatiek12we are told that God, personified as Wisdom, speaks of His essence in Proverbs 8:14, when He ascribes to Himself tushiyyach, a Hebrew word rendered "wezen" in the Holland translation. But this rendering is very doubtful, and the English rendering "counsel" deserves preference. It has also been pointed out that the Bible speaks of the nature of God in 2 Peter 1:4, but this can hardly refer to the essential Being of God, for we are not made partakers of the divine essence. An indication of the very essence of God has been found in the name Jehovah, as interpreted by God Himself, "I am that I am." On the basis of this passage the essence of God was found in being itself, abstract being. And this has been interpreted to mean self-existence or self-contained permanence or absolute independence. Another passage is repeatedly quoted as containing an indication of the essence of God, and as the closest approach to a definition that is found in the Bible, namely, John 4:24, "God is Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship in spirit and truth." This statement of Christ is clearly indicative of the spirituality

of God. The two ideas derived from these passages occur repeatedly in theology as designations of the very Being of God. On the whole it may be said that Scripture does not exalt one attribute of God at the expense of the others, but represents them as existing in perfect harmony in the Divine Being. It may be true that now one, and then another attribute is stressed, but Scripture clearly intends to give due emphasis to every one of them. The Being of God is characterized by a depth, a fullness, a variety, and a glory far beyond our comprehension, and the Bible represents it as a glorious harmonious whole, without any inherent contradictions. And this fullness of life finds expression in no other way than in the perfections of God.

Some of the early Church Fathers were clearly under the influence of Greek philosophy in their doctrine of God and, as Seeberg expresses it, did not advance "beyond the mere abstract conception that the Divine Being is absolute attributeless Existence." For some time theologians were rather generally inclined to emphasize the transcendence of God, and to assume the impossibility of any adequate knowledge or definition of the divine essence. During the trinitarian controversy the distinction between the one essence and the three persons in the Godhead was strongly emphasized, but the essence was generally felt to be beyond human comprehension. Gregory of Nazianze, however, ventures to say: "So far as we can discern, ho on and ho theos are somehow more than other terms the names of the (divine) essence, and of these ho on is the preferable." He regards this as a description of absolute being. Augustine’s conception of the essence of God was closely akin to that of Gregory. In the Middle Ages too there was a tendency, either to deny that man has any knowledge of the essence of God, or to reduce such knowledge to a minimum. In some cases one attribute was singled out as most expressive of the essence of God. Thus Thomas Aquinas spoke of His aseity or self-existence, and Duns Scotus, of His infinity. It became quite common also to speak of God as actus purus in view of His simplicity. The Reformers and their successors also spoke of the essence of God as incomprehensible, but they did not exclude all knowledge of it, though Luther used very strong language on this point. They stressed the unity, simplicity, and spirituality of God. The words of the Belgic Confession are quite characteristic: "We all believe with the heart, and confess with the mouth, that there is one only simple and spiritual Being, which we call God."13 Later on philosophers and theologians found the essence of God in abstract being, in universal substance, in pure thought, in absolute causality, in love, in personality, and in majestic holiness or the numinous.

B. THE POSSIBILITY OF KNOWING THE BEING OF GOD From the preceding it already appears that the question as to the possibility of knowing God in His essential Being engaged the best minds of the Church from the earliest centuries. And the consensus of opinion in the early Church, during the Middle Ages, and at the time of the Reformation, was that God in His inmost Being is the Incomprehensible One. And in some cases the language used is so strong that it seemingly allows of no knowledge of the Being of God whatsoever. At the same time they who use it, at least in some cases, seem to have considerable knowledge of the Being of God. Misunderstanding can easily result from a failure to understand the exact question under consideration, and from neglecting to discriminate between "knowing" and "comprehending." The Scholastics spoke of three questions to which all the speculations respecting the Divine Being could be reduced, namely: An sit Deus? Quid sit Deus? and Qualis sit Deus?The first question concerns the existence of God, the second, His nature or essence, and the third, His attributes. In this paragraph it is particularly the second question that calls for attention. The question then is, What

is God? What is the nature of His inner constitution? What makes Him to be what He is? In order to answer that question adequately, we would have to be able to comprehend God and to offer a satisfactory explanation of His Divine Being, and this is utterly impossible. The finite cannot comprehend the Infinite. The question of Zophar, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" (Job 11:7Job 11:7">) has the force of a strong negative. And if we consider the second question entirely apart from the third, our negative answer becomes even more inclusive. Apart from the revelation of God in His attributes, we have no knowledge of the Being of God whatsoever. But in so far as God reveals Himself in His attributes, we also have some knowledge of His Divine Being, though even so our knowledge is subject to human limitations.

Luther uses some very strong expressions respecting our inability to know something of the Being or essence of God. On the one hand he distinguishes between the Deus absconditus (hidden God) and the Deus revelatus (revealed God); but on the other hand he also asserts that in knowing the Deus revelatus, we only know Him in his hiddenness. By this he means that even in His revelation God has not manifested Himself entirely as He is essentially but as to His essence still remains shrouded in impenetrable darkness. We know God only in so far as He enters into relations with us. Calvin too speaks of the Divine essence as incomprehensible. He holds that God in the depths of His Being is past finding out. Speaking of the knowledge of the quid and of the qualis of God, he says that it is rather useless to speculate about the former, while our practical interest lies in the latter. Says he: "They are merely toying with frigid speculations whose mind is set on the question of what God is (quid sit Deus), when what it really concerns us to know is rather what kind of a person He is (qualis sit) and what is appropriate to His nature."14 While he feels that God cannot be known to perfection, he does not deny that we can know something of His Being or nature. But this knowledge cannot be obtained by a priori methods, but only in an a posteriori manner through the attributes, which he regards as real determinations of the nature of God. They convey to us at least some knowledge of what God is, but especially of what He is in relation to us. In dealing with our knowledge of the Being of God we must certainly avoid the position of Cousin, rather rare in the history of philosophy, that God even in the depths of His Being is not at all incomprehensible but essentially intelligible; but we must also steer clear of the agnosticism of Hamilton and Mansel, according to which we can have no knowledge whatsoever of the Being of God. We cannot comprehend God, cannot have an absolute and exhaustive knowledge of Him, but we can undoubtedly have a relative or partial knowledge of the Divine Being. It is perfectly true that this knowledge of God is possible only, because He has placed Himself in certain relations to His moral creatures and has revealed Himself to them, and that even this knowledge is humanly conditioned; but it is nevertheless real and true knowledge, and is at least a partial knowledge of the absolute nature of God. There is a difference between an absolute knowledge, and a relative or partial knowledge of an absolute being. It will not do at all to say that man knows only the relations in which God stands to His creatures. It would not even be possible to have a proper conception of these relations without knowing something of both God and man. To say that we can know nothing of the Being of God, but can know only relations, is equivalent to saying that we cannot know Him at all and cannot make Him the object of our religion. Dr. Orr says: "We may not know God in the depths of His absolute being. But we can at least know Him in so far as He reveals Himself in His relation to us. The question, therefore, is not as to the possibility of a knowledge of God in the unfathomableness of His being, but is: Can we know God

as He enters into relations with the world and with ourselves? God has entered into relations with us in His revelations of Himself, and supremely in Jesus Christ; and we Christians humbly claim that through this Self-revelation we do know God to be the true God, and have real acquaintance with His character and will. Neither is it correct to say that this knowledge which we have of God is only a relative knowledge. It is in part a knowledge of the absolute nature of God as well."15 The last statements are probably intended to ward off the idea that all our knowledge of God is merely relative to the human mind, so that we have no assurance that it corresponds with the reality as it exists in God.

C. THE BEING OF GOD REVEALED IN HIS ATTRIBUTES From the simplicity of God it follows that God and His attributes are one. The attributes cannot be considered as so many parts that enter into the composition of God, for God is not, like men, composed of different parts. Neither can they be regarded as something added to the Being of God, though the name, derived from ad and tribuere, might seem to point in that direction, for no addition was ever made to the Being of God, who is eternally perfect. It is commonly said in theology that God's attributes are God Himself, as He has revealed Himself to us. The Scholastics stressed the fact that God is all that He has. He has life, light, wisdom, love, righteousness, and it may be said on the basis of Scripture that He is life, light, wisdom, love, and righteousness. It was further asserted by the Scholastics that the whole essence of God is identical with each one of the attributes, so that God's knowing is God, God's willing is God, and so on. Some of them even went so far as to say that each attribute is identical with every other attribute, and that there are no logical distinctions in God. This is a very dangerous extreme. While it may be said that there is an interpenetration of the attributes in God, and that they form a harmonious whole, we are moving in the direction of Pantheism, when we rule out all distinctions in God, and say that His self-existence is His infinity, His knowing is His willing, His love is His righteousness, and vice versa. It was characteristic of the Nominalists that they obliterated all real distinctions in God. They were afraid that by assuming real distinctions in Him, corresponding to the attributes ascribed to God, they would endanger the unity and simplicity of God, and were therefore motivated by a laudable purpose. According to them the perfections of the Divine Being exist only in our thoughts, without any corresponding reality in the Divine Being. The Realists, on the other hand, asserted the reality of the divine perfections. They realized that the theory of the Nominalists, consistently carried out, would lead in the direction of a pantheistic denial of a personal God, and therefore considered it of the utmost importance to maintain the objective reality of the attributes in God. At the same time they sought to safeguard the unity and simplicity of God by maintaining that the whole essence is in each attribute: God is All in all, All in each. Thomas Aquinas had the same purpose in mind, when he asserted that the attributes do not reveal what God is in Himself, in the depths of His Being, but only what He is in relation to His creatures.

Naturally, we should guard against separating the divine essence and the divine attributes or perfections, and also against a false conception of the relation in which they stand to each other. The attributes are real determinations of the Divine Being or, in other words, qualities that inhere in the Being of God. Shedd speaks of them as "an analytical and closer description of the essence."16 In a sense they are identical, so that it can be said that God's perfections are God Himself as He has revealed Himself to us. It is possible to go even farther and say with Shedd, "The whole essence is in each attribute, and the attribute in the essence."17 And because of the

close relation in which the two stand to each other, it can be said that knowledge of the attributes carries with it knowledge of the Divine Essence. It would be a mistake to conceive of the essence of God as existing by itself and prior to the attributes, and of the attributes as additive and accidental characteristics of the Divine Being. They are essential qualities of God, which inhere in His very Being and are co-existent with it. These qualities cannot be altered without altering the essential Being of God. And since they are essential qualities, each one of them reveals to us some aspect of the Being of God.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: How can we distinguish between the being, the nature, and the essence of God? How do the philosophical views of the essential Being of God generally differ from the theological views? How about the tendency to find the essence of God in the absolute, in love, or in personality? What does Otto mean when he characterizes it as "the Holy" or "the Numinous"? Why is it impossible for man to comprehend God? Has sin in any way affected man’s ability to know God? Is there any difference between Luther’s and Barth’s conception of the "hidden God"? Does Calvin differ from them on this point? Did Luther share the Nominalist views of Occam, by whom he was influenced in other respects? How did the Reformers, in distinction from the Scholastics, consider the problem of the existence of God? Could we have any knowledge of God, if He were pure attributeless being? What erroneous views of the attributes should be avoided? What is the proper view?

Literature: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. I, pp. 91-113,; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Deo I, pp. 124-158; Hodge, Syst. Theol. I, pp. 335-374; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. I, pp. 152-194; Thornwell, Collected Works, I, pp. 104-172; Dorner, Syst. of Chr. Doct. I, pp. 187-212; Orr, Chr. View of God and the World, pp. 75-93; Otten, Manual of the Hist. of Dogmas I, pp. 254-260; Clarke, The Chr. Doct. of God, pp. 56-70; Steenstra, The Being of God as Unity and Trinity, pp. 1-88; Thomson, The Christian Idea of God, pp. 117-159; Hendry, God the Creator (from the Barthian standpoint); Warfield, Calvin and Calvinism pp. 131-185 (Calvin’s Doctrine of God).

04.1.1.4. The Names of God

IV. The Names of God A. THE NAMES OF GOD IN GENERAL

While the Bible records several names of God, it also speaks of the name of God in the singular as, for instance in the following statements: "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain," Exodus 20:7; "How excellent is thy name in all the earth," Psalms 8:1; "As is thy name, O God, so is thy praise," Psalms 48:10; "His name is great in Israel," Psalms 76:2; "The name of Jehovah is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe," Proverbs 18:10. In such cases "the name" stands for the whole manifestation of God in His relation to His people, or simply for the person, so that it becomes synonymous with God. This usage is due to the fact that in oriental thought a name was never regarded as a mere vocable, but as an expression of the nature of the thing designated. To know the name of a person was to have power over him, and the names of the various gods were used in incantations to exercise power over them. In the most general sense of the word, then, the name of God is His self-revelation. It is a designation of Him, not as He exists in the depths of His divine Being, but as He reveals Himself especially in His relations to man. For us the one general name of God is split up into many names, expressive of the many-sided Being of God. It is only because God has revealed Himself in His name (nomen editum), that we can now designate Him by that name in various forms (nomina indita). The names of God are not of human invention, but of divine origin, though they are all borrowed from human language, and derived from human and earthly relations. They are anthropomorphic and mark a condescending approach of God to man. The names of God constitute a difficulty for human thought. God is the Incomprehensible One, infinitely exalted above all that is temporal; but in His names He descends to all that is finite and becomes like unto man. On the one hand we cannot name Him, and on the other hand He has many names. How can this be explained? On what grounds are these names applied to the infinite and incomprehensible God? It should be borne in mind that they are not of man’s invention, and do not testify to his insight into the very Being of God. They are given by God Himself with the assurance that they contain in a measure a revelation of the Divine Being. This was made possible by the fact that the world and all its relations is and was meant to be a revelation of God. Because the Incomprehensible One revealed Himself in His creatures, it is possible for man to name Him after the fashion of a creature. In order to make Himself known to man, God had to condescend to the level of man, to accommodate Himself to the limited and finite human consciousness, and to speak in human language. If the naming of God with anthropomorphic names involves a limitation of God, as some say, then this must be true to an even greater degree of the revelation of God in creation. Then the world does not reveal, but rather conceals, God; then man is not related to God, but simply forms an antithesis to Him; and then we are shut up to a hopeless agnosticism. From what was said about the name of God in general it follows that we can include under the names of God not only the appellatives by which He is indicated as an independent personal Being and by which He is addressed, but also the attributes of God; and then not merely the attributes of the Divine Being in general, but also those that qualify the separate Persons of the Trinity. Dr. Bavinck bases his division of the

names of God on that broad conception of them, and distinguishes between nomina propria (proper names), nomina essentialia (essential names, or attributes), and nomina personalia (personal names, as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit). In the present chapter we limit ourselves to the discussion of the first class.

B. THE OLD TESTAMENT NAMES AND THEIR MEANING

1. ’EL ’ELOHIM, and ’ELYON. The most simple name by which God is designated in the Old Testament, is the name ’El which is possibly derived from ’ul, either in the sense of being first, being lord, or in that of being strong and mighty. The name ’ Elohim (sing. ’Eloah) is probably derived from the same root, or from ’alah, to be smitten with fear; and therefore points to God as the strong and mighty One, or as the object of fear. The name seldom occurs in the singular, except in poetry. The plural is to be regarded as intensive, and therefore serves to indicate a fulness of power. The name ’Elyon is derived from ’ alah, to go up, to be elevated, and designates God as the high and exalted One, Genesis 14:19-20; Numbers 24:16; Isaiah 14:14. It is found especially in poetry. These names are not yet nomina propria in the strict sense of the word, for they are also used of idols, Psalms 95:3; Psalms 96:5, of men, Genesis 33:10; Exodus 7:1, and of rulers, Judges 5:8; Exodus 21:6; Exodus 22:8-10; Psalms 82:1

’ADONAI. This name is related in meaning to the preceding ones. It is derived from either dun (din) or ’adan, both of which mean to judge, to rule, and thus points to God as the almighty Ruler, to whom everything is subject, and to whom man is related as a servant. In earlier times it was the usual name by which the people of Israel addressed God. Later on it was largely supplanted by the name Jehovah (Yahweh). All the names so far mentioned describe God as the high and exalted One, the transcendent God. The following names point to the fact that this exalted Being condescended to enter into relations with His creatures.

3. SHADDAI and ’EL SHADDAI. The name Shaddai is derived from shadad, to be powerful, and points to God as possessing all power in heaven and on earth. Others, however, derive it from shad lord. It differs in an important point from ’Elohim, the God of creation and nature, in that it contemplates God as subjecting all the powers of nature and making them subservient to the work of divine grace. While it stresses the greatness of God, it does not represent Him as an object of fear and terror, but as a source of blessing and comfort. It is the name with which God appeared unto Abraham, the father of the faithful, Exodus 6:22.

4. YAHWEH and YAHWEH TSEBHAOTH. It is especially in the name Yahweh, which gradually supplanted earlier names, that God reveals Himself as the God of grace. It has always been regarded as the most sacred and the most distinctive name of God, the incommunicable name. The Jews had a superstitious dread of using it, since they read Leviticus 24:16 as follows: "He that nameth the name of Yahweh shall surely be put to death." And therefore in reading the Scriptures they substituted for it either ’Adonai or ’ Elohim; and the Massoretes, while leaving the consonants intact, attached to them the vowels of one of these names, usually those of ’ Adonai. The real derivation of the name and its original pronunciation and meaning are more or less lost in obscurity. The Pentateuch connects the name with the Hebrew verb hayah to be, Exodus 3:13-14. On the strength of that passage we may assume that the name is in all probability derived from an archaic form of that verb, namely, hawah. As far as the form is concerned, it may be regarded as a third person imperfect qal or hiphil. Most likely, however, it is the former. The meaning is explained

in Exodus 3:14, which is rendered "I am that I am," or "I shall be what I shall be." Thus interpreted, the name points to the unchangeableness of God. Yet it is not so much the unchangeableness of His essential Being that is in view, as the unchangeableness of His relation to His people. The name contains the assurance that God will be for the people of Moses' day what He was for their fathers, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It stresses the covenant faithfulness of God, is His proper name par excellence, Exodus 15:3; Hosea 12:6; Isaiah 42:8, and is therefore used of no one but Israel's God. The exclusive character of the name appears from the fact that it never occurs in the plural or with a suffix. Abbreviated forms of it, found especially in composite names, are Yah and Yahu. The name Yahweh is often strengthened by the addition of tsebhaoth. Origen and Jerome regard this as an apposition, because Yahweh does not admit of a construct state. But this interpretation is not sufficiently warranted and hardly yields an intelligible sense. It is rather hard to determine to what the wordtsebhaothrefers. There are especially three opinions: a. The armies of Israel. But the correctness of this view may well be doubted. Most of the passages quoted to support this idea do not prove the point; only three of them contain a semblance of proof, namely, 1 Samuel 4:4; 1 Samuel 17:45; 2 Samuel 6:2, while one of them, 2 Kings 19:31, is rather unfavorable to this view. While the plural tsebhaoth is used for the hosts of the people of Israel, the army is regularly indicated by the singular. This militates against the notion, inherent in this view, that in the name under consideration the term refers to the army of Israel. Moreover, it is clear that in the Prophets at least the name "Jehovah of hosts" does not refer to Jehovah as the God of war. And if the meaning of the name changed, what caused the change? b. The stars. But in speaking of the host of heaven Scripture always uses the singular, and never the plural. Moreover, while the stars are called the host of heaven, they are never designated the host of God. The angels. This interpretation deserves preference. The name Yahweh tsebhaoth is often found in connections in which angels are mentioned: 1 Samuel 4:4; 2 Samuel 6:2; Isaiah 37:16; Hosea 12:4-5; Psalms 80:1; Psalms 80:4 f.; Psalms 89:1-52; Psalms 6:1-10, Psalms 7:1-17, Psalms 8:1-9. The angels are repeatedly represented as a host that surrounds the throne of God, Genesis 28:12; Genesis 32:2; Joshua 5:14; 1 Kings 22:19; Psalms 68:17; Psalms 103:21; Psalms 148:2; Isaiah 6:2. It is true that in this case also the singular is generally used, but this is no serious objection, since the Bible also indicates that there were several divisions of angels Genesis 32:2; Deuteronomy 33:2; Psalms 68:17. Moreover, this interpretation is in harmony with the meaning of the name, which has no martial flavor, but is expressive of the glory of God as King, Deuteronomy 33:2; 1 Kings 22:19; Psalms 24:10; Isaiah 6:3; Isaiah 24:23; Zechariah 14:16. Jehovah of hosts, then, is God as the King of glory, who is surrounded by angelic hosts, who rules heaven and earth in the interest of His people, and who receives glory from all His creatures.

C. THE NEW TESTAMENT NAMES AND THEIR INTERPRETATION

1. THEOS. The New Testament has the Greek equivalents of the Old Testament names. For ' El, ' Elohim, and ' Elyon it has Theos , which is the most common name applied to God. Like ' Elohim, it may by accommodation be used of heathen gods, though strictly speaking it expresses essential deity. ' Elyon is rendered Hupsistos Theos, Mark 5:7; Luke 1:32; Luke 1:35; Luke 1:75; Acts 7:48; Acts 16:17; Hebrews 7:1. The names Shaddai and 'El-Shaddai are rendered Pantokrator and Theos Pantokrator, 2 Corinthians 6:18; Revelation 1:8; Revelation 4:8; Revelation 11:17; Revelation 15:3; Revelation 16:7; Revelation 16:14. More generally, however, Theos is found with a genitive of possession, such as mou, sou, hemon, humon, because in Christ God may be

regarded as the God of all and of each one of His children. The national idea of the Old Testament has made place for the individual in religion.

2. KURIOS. The name Yahweh is explicated a few times by variations of a descriptive kind, such as "the Alpha and the Omega," "who is and who was and who is to come," "the beginning and the end," "the first and the last," Revelation 1:4; Revelation 1:8; Revelation 1:17; Revelation 2:8; Revelation 21:6; Revelation 22:13. For the rest, however the New Testament follows the Septuagint, which substituted ’Adonai for it, and rendered this by Kurios derived from kuros , power. This name does not have exactly the same connotation as Yahweh but designates God as the Mighty One, the Lord, the Possessor, the Ruler who has legal power and authority. It is used not only of God, but also of Christ.

3. PATER. It is often said that the New Testament introduced a new name of God, namely,Pater (Father). But this is hardly correct. The name Father is used of the Godhead even in heathen religions. It is used repeatedly in the Old Testament to designate the relation of God to Israel, Deuteronomy 32:6; Psalms 103:13; Isaiah 63:16; Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 3:4; Jeremiah 3:19; Jeremiah 31:9; Malachi 1:6; Malachi 2:10, while Israel is called the son of God, Exodus 4:22; Deuteronomy 14:1; Deuteronomy 32:19; Isaiah 1:2; Jeremiah 31:20; Hosea 1:10; Hosea 11:1. In such cases the name is expressive of the special theocratic relation in which God stands to Israel. In the general sense of originator or creator it is used in the following New Testament passages: 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 3:15; Hebrews 12:9; James 1:18. In all other places it serves to express either the special relation in which the first Person of the Trinity stands to Christ, as the Son of God either in a metaphysical or a mediatorial sense, or the ethical relation in which God stands to all believers as His spiritual children.

04.1.1.5. The Attributes of God in General

V. The Attributes of God in General A. EVALUATION OF THE TERMS USED The name "attributes" is not ideal, since it conveys the notion of adding or assigning something to one, and is therefore apt to create the impression that something is added to the divine Being. Undoubtedly the term "properties" is better, as pointing to something that is proper to God and to God only. Naturally, in so far as some of the attributes are communicable, the absolute character of the proprium is weakened, for to that extent some of the attributes are not proper to God in the absolute sense of the word. But even this term contains the suggestion of a distinction between the essence or nature of God and that which is proper to it. On the whole it is preferable to speak of the "perfections" or "virtues" of God, with the distinct understanding, however, that in this case the term "virtues" is not used in a purely ethical sense. By so doing we (a) follow the usage of the Bible, which uses the term arete, rendered virtues or excellencies, in 1 Peter 2:9; and (b) avoid the suggestion that something is added to the Being of God. His virtues are not added to His Being, but His Being is the pleroma of His virtues and reveals itself in them. They may be defined as the perfections which are predicated of the Divine Being in Scripture, or are visibly exercised by Him in His works of creation, providence, and redemption. If we still continue to use the name "attributes," it is because it is commonly used and with the distinct understanding that the notion of something added to the Being of God must be rigidly excluded.

B. METHOD OF DETERMINING THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD

Scholastics in their attempt to construct a system of natural theology posited three ways in which to determine the attributes of God, which they designated as the via causalitatis, via negationis, and via eminentiae. By the way of causality we rise from the effects which we see in the world round about us to the idea of a first Cause, from the contemplation of creation, to the idea of an almighty Creator, and from the observation of the moral government of the world, to the idea of a powerful and wise Ruler. By way of negation we remove from our idea of God all the imperfections seen in His creatures, as inconsistent with the idea of a Perfect Being, and ascribe to Him the opposite perfection. In reliance on that principle we speak of God as independent, infinite, incorporeal, immense, immortal, and incomprehensible. And finally, by way of eminence we ascribe to God in the most eminent manner the relative perfections which we discover in man, according to the principle that what exists in an effect, pre-exists in its cause, and even in the most absolute sense in God as the most perfect Being. This method may appeal to some, because it proceeds from the known to the unknown, but is not the proper method of dogmatic theology. It takes its starting point in man, and concludes from what it finds in man to what is found in God. And in so far as it does this it makes man the measure of God. This is certainly not a theological method of procedure. Moreover, it bases its knowledge of God on human conclusions rather than on the self- revelation of God in His divine Word. And yet this is the only adequate source of the knowledge of God. While that method might be followed in a so-called natural theology, it does not fit in a theology of revelation. The same may be said of the methods suggested by modern representatives of experimental theology. A typical example of this may be found in Macintosh’s

Theology as an Empirical Science.18 He also speaks of three methods of procedure. We may begin with our intuitions of the reality of God, those unreasoned certitudes which are firmly rooted in immediate experience. One of these is that the Object of our religious dependence is absolutely sufficient for our imperative needs. Especially may deductions be drawn from the life of Jesus and the "Christlike" everywhere. We may also take our starting point, not in man's certainties, but in his needs. The practically necessary postulate is that God is absolutely sufficient and absolutely dependable with reference to the religious needs of man. On that basis man can build up his doctrine of the attributes of God. And, finally, it is also possible to follow a more pragmatic method, which rests on the principle that we can learn to a certain extent what things and persons are, beyond what they are immediately perceived to be, by observing what they do. Macintosh finds it necessary to make use of all three methods.

Ritschl wants us to start with the idea that God is love, and would have us ask what is involved in this most characteristic thought of God. Since love is personal, it implies the personality of God, and thus affords us a principle for the interpretation of the world and of the life of man. The thought that God is love also carries with it the conviction that He can achieve His purpose of love, that is, that His will is supremely effective in the world. This yields the idea of an almighty Creator. And by virtue of this basic thought we also affirm God's eternity, since, in controlling all things for the realization of His Kingdom, He sees the end from the beginning. In a somewhat similar vein Dr. W. A. Brown says: "We gain our knowledge of the attributes by analyzing the idea of God which we already won from the revelation in Christ; and we arrange them in such a way as to bring the distinctive features of that idea to clearest expression."19

All these methods take their starting point in human experience rather than in the Word of God. They deliberately ignore the clear self-revelation of God in Scripture and exalt the idea of the human discovery of God. They who rely on such methods have an exaggerated idea of their own ability to find out God and to determine the nature of God inductively by approved "scientific methods." At the same time they close their eyes to the only avenue through which they might obtain real knowledge of God, that is, His special revelation, apparently oblivious of the fact that only the Spirit of God can search and reveal the deep things of God and reveal them unto us. Their very method compels them to drag God down to the level of man, to stress His immanence at the expense of His transcendence, and to make Him continuous with the world. And as the final result of their philosophy we have a God made in the image of man. James condemns all intellectualism in religion, and maintains that philosophy in the form of scholastic theology fails as completely to define God's attributes in a scientific way as it does to establish His existence. After an appeal to the book of Job he says: "Ratiocination is a relatively superficial and unreal path to the deity." He concludes his discussion with these significant words: "In all sincerity I think we must conclude that the attempt to demonstrate by purely intellectual processes the truth of the deliverances of direct religious experiences is absolutely hopeless."20 He has more confidence in the pragmatic method which seeks for a God that meets the practical needs of man. In his estimation it is sufficient to believe that "beyond each man and in a fashion continuous with him there exists a larger power which is friendly to him and to his ideals. All that the facts require is that the power should be other and larger than our conscious selves. Anything larger will do, if it only be large enough to trust for the next step. It need not be infinite, it need not be solitary. It might conceivably even be only a larger and more godlike self, of which the present self would then be the mutilated expression, and

the universe might conceivably be a collection of such selves, of different degree and inclusiveness, with no absolute unity realized in it at all."21 Thus we are left with the idea of a finite God.22 The only proper way to obtain perfectly reliable knowledge of the divine attributes is by the study of God's self-revelation in Scripture. It is true that we can acquire some knowledge of the greatness and power, the wisdom and goodness of God through the study of nature, but for an adequate conception of even these attributes it will be necessary to turn to the Word of God. In the theology of revelation we seek to learn from the Word of God which are the attributes of the Divine Being. Man does not elicit knowledge from God as he does from other objects of study, but God conveys knowledge of Himself to man, a knowledge which man can only accept and appropriate. For the appropriation and understanding of this revealed knowledge it is, of course, of the greatest importance that man is created in the image of God, and therefore finds helpful analogies in his own life. In distinction from the a priori method of the Scholastics, who deduced the attributes from the idea of a perfect Being, this method may be called a posteriori since it takes its starting point, not in an abstract perfect Being, but in the fulness of the divine self-revelation, and in the light of this seeks to know the Divine Being.

C. SUGGESTED DIVISIONS OF THE ATTRIBUTES The question of the classification of the divine attributes has engaged the attention of theologians for a long time. Several classifications have been suggested, most of which distinguish two general classes. These classes are designated by different names and represent different points of view, but are substantially the same in the various classifications. The following are the most important of these:

1. Some speak of natural and moral attributes. The former, such as self-existence, simplicity, infinity, etc., belong to the constitutional nature of God, as distinguished from His will. The latter, as truth, goodness, mercy, justice, holiness, etc., qualify Him as a moral Being. The objection to this classification is that the so-called moral attributes are just as truly natural (i.e. original) in God as the others. Dabney prefers this division, but admits, in view of the objection raised, that the terms are not felicitous. He would rather speak of moral and non-moral attributes.

2. Others distinguish between absolute and relative attributes. The former belong to the essence of God as considered in itself, while the latter belong to the divine essence considered in relation to His creation. The one class includes such attributes as self- existence, immensity, eternity; and the other, such attributes as omnipresence and omniscience. This division seems to proceed on the assumption that we can have some knowledge of God as He is in Himself, entirely apart from the relations in which He stands to His creatures. But this is not so, and therefore, properly speaking, all the perfections of God are relative, indicating what He is in relation to the world. Strong evidently does not recognize the objection, and gives preference to this division.

3. Still others divide the divine perfections into immanent or intransitive and emanent or transitive attributes. Strong combines this division with the preceding one, when he speaks of absolute or immanent and relative or transitive attributes. The former are those which do not go forth and operate outside of the divine essence, but remain immanent, such as immensity, simplicity, eternity, etc.; and the latter are such as issue forth and produce effects external to God, as omnipotence, benevolence, justice, etc. But if some of the divine attributes are purely immanent, all knowledge of them would seem to be excluded. H. B. Smith remarks that every one of them must be both immanent and transeunt.

4. The most common distinction is that between incommunicable and communicable attributes. The former are those to which there is nothing analogous in the creature, as aseity, simplicity, immensity, etc.; the latter those to which the properties of the human spirit bear some analogy, as power, goodness, mercy, righteousness, etc. This distinction found no favor with the Lutherans, but has always been rather popular in Reformed circles, and is found in such representative works as those of the Leyden Professors,23 Mastricht and Turretin. It was felt from the very beginning, however, that the distinction was untenable without further qualification, since from one point of view every attribute may be called communicable. None of the divine perfections are communicable in the infinite perfection in which they exist in God, and at the same time there are faint traces in man even of the so-called incommunicable attributes of God. Among more recent Reformed theologians there is a tendency to discard this distinction in favor of some other divisions. Dick, Shedd, and Vos retain the old division. Kuyper expresses himself as dissatisfied with it, and yet reproduces it in his virtutes per antithesin and virtutes per synthesin; and Bavinck, after following another order in the first edition of his Dogmatics, returns to it in the second edition. Honig prefers to follow the division given by Bavinck in his first edition. And, finally, the Hodges, H. B. Smith, and Thornwell follow a division suggested by the Westminster Catechism. However, the classification of the attributes under two main heads, as found in the distinction under consideration, is really inherent in all the other divisions, so that they are all subject to the objection that they apparently divide the Being of God into two parts, that first God as He is in Himself, God as the absolute Being, is discussed, and then God as He is related to His creatures, God as a personal Being. It may be said that such a treatment does not result in a unitary and harmonious conception of the divine attributes. This difficulty may be obviated, however, by having it clearly understood that the two classes of attributes named are not strictly co-ordinate, but that the attributes belonging to the first class qualify all those belonging to the second class, so that it can be said that God is one, absolute, unchangeable and infinite in His knowledge and wisdom, His goodness and love, His grace and mercy, His righteousness and holiness. If we bear this in mind, and also remember that none of the attributes of God are incommunicable in the sense that there is no trace of them in man, and that none of them are communicable in the sense that they are found in man as they are found in God, we see no reason why we should depart from the old division which has become so familiar in Reformed theology. For practical reasons it seems more desirable to retain it.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What objections are there to the use of the term attributes as applied to God? Do the same objections apply to the German "Eigenschaften" and the Holland "eigenschappen"? What name does Calvin use for them? What objection is there to the conception of the attributes as parts of God or as additions to the Divine Being? What faulty conceptions of the attributes were current in the Middle Ages? Did the Scholastics in their search for the attributes follow an a priori or an a posteriori, a deductive or an inductive method? Why is their method inherently foreign to the theology of revelation? What classifications of the attributes were suggested in addition to those mentioned in the text? Why is it virtually out of the question to give a faultless division? What division is suggested by the Westminster Catechism?

LITERATURE: Bavinck,Geref. Dogm. II, pp. 100-123; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Deo I, pp. 268-287; Honig, Geref. Dogm., pp. 182-185; Hodge, Syst. Theol. I, pp. 368-376; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. I, pp. 334-338; Thornwell, Collected Works, I, pp. 158-172; Dabney, Lectures on Theol., pp. 147-151;

Pieper, Christl. Dogm. I, pp. 524-536; Kaftan, Dogm., pp. 168-181; Pope, Chr. Theol. I, pp. 287-291; Steenstra, The Being of God as Unity and Trinity, pp. 89-111.

04.1.1.6. The Incommunicable Attributes

VI. The Incommunicable Attributes (God as the Absolute Being)

It has been quite common in theology to speak of God as the absolute Being. At the same time the term "absolute" is more characteristic of philosophy than it is of theology. In metaphysics the term "the Absolute" is a designation of the ultimate ground of all existence; and because the theist also speaks of God as the ultimate ground of all existence, it is sometimes thought that the Absolute of philosophy and the God of theism are one and the same. But that is not necessarily so. In fact the usual conception of the Absolute renders it impossible to equate it with the God of the Bible and of Christian theology. The term "Absolute" is derived from the Latin absolutus, acompound of ab (from) and solvere (to loosen), and thus means free as to condition, or free from limitation or restraint. This fundamental thought was worked out in various ways, so that the Absolute was regarded as that which is free from all conditions (the Unconditioned or Self-Existent), from all relations (the (Unrelated), from all imperfections (the Perfect), or free from all phenomenal differences or distinctions, such as matter and spirit, being and attributes, subject and object, appearance and reality (the Real, or Ultimate Reality). The answer to the question, whether the Absolute of philosophy can be identified with the God of theology, depends on the conception one has of the Absolute. If Spinoza conceives of the Absolute as the one Self-subsistent Being of which all particular things are but transient modes, thus identifying God and the world, we cannot share his view of this Absolute as God. When Hegel views the Absolute as the unity of thought and being, as the totality of all things, which includes all relations, and in which all the discords of the present are resolved in perfect unity, we again find it impossible to follow him in regarding this Absolute as God. And when Bradley says that his Absolute is related to nothing, and that there cannot be any practical relation between it and the finite will, we agree with him that his Absolute cannot be the God of the Christian religion, for this God does enter into relations with finite creatures. Bradley cannot conceive of the God of religion as other than a finite God. But when the Absolute is defined as the First Cause of all existing things, or as the ultimate ground of all reality, or as the one self-existent Being, it can be considered as identical with the God of theology. He is the Infinite One, who does not exist in any necessary relations, because He is self-sufficient, but at the same time can freely enter into various relations with His creation as a whole and with His creatures. While the incommunicable attributes emphasize the absolute Being of God, the communicable attributes stress the fact that He enters into various relations with His creatures. In the present chapter the following perfections of God come into consideration.

A. THE SELFEXISTENCE OF GOD

God is self-existent, that is, He has the ground of His existence in Himself. This idea is sometimes expressed by saying that He is causa sui (His own cause), but this expression is hardly accurate, since God is the uncaused, who exists by the necessity of His own Being, and therefore necessarily. Man, on the other hand, does not exist necessarily, and has the cause of his existence outside of himself. The idea of God’s self-existence was generally expressed by the

term aseitas, meaning self-originated, but Reformed theologians quite generally substituted for it the word independentia (independence), as expressing, not merely that God is independent in His Being, but also that He is independent in everything else: in His virtues, decrees, works, and so on. It may be said that there is a faint trace of this perfection in the creature, but this can only mean that the creature, though absolutely dependent, yet has its own distinct existence. But, of course, this falls far short of being self-existent. This attribute of God is generally recognized, and is implied in heathen religions and in the Absolute of philosophy. When the Absolute is conceived of as the self-existent and as the ultimate ground of all things, which voluntarily enters into various relations with other beings, it can be identified with the God of theology. As the self-existent God, He is not only independent in Himself, but also causes everything to depend on Him. This self-existence of God finds expression in the name Jehovah. It is only as the self-existent and independent One that God can give the assurance that He will remain eternally the same in relation to His people. Additional indications of it are found in the assertion in John 5:26, "For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have life in Himself"; in the declaration that He is independent of all things and that all things exist only through Him, Psalms 94:8 ff.; Isaiah 40:18 ff.; Acts 7:25; and in statements implying that He is independent in His thought, Romans 11:33-34, and in His will, Daniel 4:35; Romans 9:19; Ephesians 1:5; Revelation 4:11, in His power, Psalms 115:3, and in His counsel, Psalms 33:11.

B. THE IMMUTABILITY OF GOD The Immutability of God is a necessary concomitant of His aseity. It is that perfection of God by which He is devoid of all change, not only in His Being, but also in His perfections, and in His purposes and promises. In virtue of this attribute He is exalted above all becoming, and is free from all accession or diminution and from all growth or decay in His Being or perfections. His knowledge and plans, His moral principles and volitions remain forever the same. Even reason teaches us that no change is possible in God, since a change is either for better or for worse. But in God, as the absolute Perfection, improvement and deterioration are both equally impossible. This immutability of God is clearly taught in such passages of Scripture as Exodus 3:14; Psalms 102:26-28; Isaiah 41:4; Isaiah 48:12; Malachi 3:6; Romans 1:23; Hebrews 1:11-12; James 1:17. At the same time there are many passages of Scripture which seem to ascribe change to God. Did not He who dwelleth in eternity pass on to the creation of the world, become incarnate in Christ, and in the Holy Spirit take up His abode in the Church? Is He not represented as revealing and hiding Himself, as coming and going, as repenting and changing His intention, and as dealing differently with man before and after conversion? Cf. Exodus 32:10-14; Jonah 3:10; Proverbs 11:20; Proverbs 12:22; Psalms 18:16-17. The objection here implied is based to a certain extent on misunderstanding. The divine immutability should not be understood as implying immobility as if there were no movement in God. It is even customary in theology to speak of God as actus purus, a God who is always in action. The Bible teaches us that God enters into manifold relations with man and, as it were, lives their life with them. There is change round about Him, change in the relations of men to Him, but there is no change in His Being, His attributes, His purpose, His motives of action, or His promises. The purpose to create was eternal with Him, and there was no change in Him when this purpose was realized by a single eternal act of His will. The incarnation brought no change in the Being or perfections of God, nor in His purpose, for it was His eternal good pleasure to send the Son of His love into the world. And if Scripture speaks of His repenting, changing His intention, and altering His relation to sinners when they repent, we should remember that this is only an

anthropopathic way of speaking. In reality the change is not in God, but in man and in man's relations to God. It is important to maintain the immutability of God over against the Pelagian and Arminian doctrine that God is subject to change, not indeed in His Being, but in His knowledge and will, so that His decisions are to a great extent dependent on the actions of man; over against the pantheistic notion that God is an eternal becoming rather than an absolute Being, and that the unconscious Absolute is gradually developing into conscious personality in man; and over against the present tendency of some to speak of a finite, struggling, and gradually growing God.

C. THE INFINITY OF GOD The infinity of God is that perfection of God by which He is free from all limitations. In ascribing it to God we deny that there are or can be any limitations to the divine Being or attributes. It implies that He is in no way limited by the universe, by this time- space world, or confined to the universe. It does not involve His identity with the sum- total of existing things, nor does it exclude the co-existence of derived and finite things, to which He bears relation. The infinity of God must be conceived as intensive rather than extensive, and should not be confused with boundless extension, as if God were spread out through the entire universe, one part being here and another there, for God has no body and therefore no extension. Neither should it be regarded as a merely negative concept, though it is perfectly true that we cannot form a positive idea of it. It is a reality in God fully comprehended only by Him. We distinguish various aspects of God's infinity.

1. HIS ABSOLUTE PERFECTION. This is the infinity of the Divine Being considered in itself. It should not be understood in a quantitative, but in a qualitative sense; it qualifies all the communicable attributes of God. Infinite power is not an absolute quantum, but an exhaustless potency of power; and infinite holiness is not a boundless quantum of holiness, but a holiness which is, qualitatively free from all limitation or defect. The same may be said of infinite knowledge and wisdom, and of infinite love and righteousness. Says Dr. Orr: "Perhaps we can say that infinity in God is ultimately: (a) internally and qualitatively, absence of all limitation and defect; (b) boundless potentiality."24 In this sense of the word the infinity of God is simply identical with the perfection of His Divine Being. Scripture proof for it is found in Job 11:7-10; Psalms 145:3; Matthew 5:48.

2. HIS ETERNITY. The infinity of God in relation to time is called His eternity. The form in which the Bible represents God's eternity is simply that of duration through endless ages, Psalms 90:2; Psalms 102:12; Ephesians 3:21. We should remember, however, that in speaking as it does the Bible uses popular language, and not the language of philosophy. We generally think of God's eternity in the same way, namely, as duration infinitely prolonged both backwards and forwards. But this is only a popular and symbolical way of representing that which in reality transcends time and differs from it essentially. Eternity in the strict sense of the word is abscribed to that which transcends all temporal limitations. That it applies to God in that sense is at least intimated in 2 Peter 3:8. "Time," says Dr. Orr, "strictly has relation to the world of objects existing in succession. God fills time; is in every part of it; but His eternity still is not really this being in time. It is rather that to which time forms a contrast."25 Our existence is marked off by days and weeks and months and years; not so the existence of God. Our life is divided into a past, present and future, but there is no such division in the life of God. He is the eternal "I am." His eternity may be defined as that perfection of God whereby He is elevated above all temporal limits and all succession of moments, and possesses the whole of His existence in one indivisible present. The relation of eternity to time

constitutes one of the most difficult problems in philosophy and theology, perhaps incapable of solution in our present condition.

3. HIS IMMENSITY. The infinity of God may also be viewed with reference to space, and is then called His immensity. It may be defined as that perfection of the Divine Being by which He transcends all spatial limitations, and yet is present in every point of space with His whole Being. It has a negative and a positive side, denying all limitations of space to the Divine Being, and asserting that God is above space and fills every part of it with His whole Being. The last words are added, in order to ward off the idea that God is diffused through space, so that one part of His Being is present in one place, and another part in some other place. We distinguish three modes of presence in space. Bodies are in space circumscriptively, because they are bounded by it; finite spirits are in space definitively, since they are not everywhere, but only in a certain definite place; and in distinction from both of these God is in space repletively, because He fills all space. He is not absent from any part of it, nor more present in one part than in another. In a certain sense the terms "immensity" and "omnipresence," as applied to God, denote the same thing, and can therefore be regarded as synonymous. Yet there is a point of difference that should be carefully noted. "Immensity" points to the fact that God transcends all space and is not subject to its limitations, while "omnipresence" denotes that He nevertheless fills every part of space with His entire Being. The former emphasizes the transcendence, and the latter, the immanence of God. God is immanent in all His creatures, in His entire creation, but is in no way bounded by it. In connection with God’s relation to the world we must avoid, on the one hand, the error of Pantheism, so characteristic of a great deal of present day thinking, with its denial of the transcendence of God and its assumption that the Being of God is really the substance of all things; and, on the other hand, the Deistic conception that God is indeed present in creation per potentiam (with His power), but not per essentiam et naturam (with His very Being and nature), and acts upon the world from a distance. Though God is distinct from the world and may not be identified with it, He is yet present in every part of His creation, not only per potentiam, but also per essentiam. This does not mean, however, that He is equally present and present in the same sense in all His creatures. The nature of His indwelling is in harmony with that of His creatures. He does not dwell on earth as He does in heaven, in animals as He does in man, in the inorganic as He does in the organic creation, in the wicked as He does in the pious, nor in the Church as He does in Christ. There is an endless variety in the manner in which He is immanent in His creatures, and in the measure in which they reveal God to those who have eyes to see. The omnipresence of God is clearly revealed in Scripture. Heaven and earth cannot contain Him, 1 Kings 8:27; Isaiah 66:1; Acts 7:48-49; and at the same time He fills both and is a God at hand, Psalms 139:7-10; Jeremiah 23:23-24; Acts 17:27-28.

D. THE UNITY OF GOD A distinction is made between the unitas singularitatis and the unitas simplicitatis.

1. THE UNITAS SINGULARITATIS. This attribute stresses both the oneness and the unicity of God, the fact that He is numerically one and that as such He is unique. It implies that there is but one Divine Being, that from the nature of the case there can be but one, and that all other beings exist of and through and unto Him. The Bible teaches us in several passages that there is but one true God. Solomon pleaded with God to maintain the cause of His people, "that all the peoples of the earth may know that Jehovah, He is God; there is none else," 1 Kings 8:60. And Paul writes to

the Corinthians, "But to us there is but one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we in Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we in Him," 1 Corinthians 8:6. Similarly he writes to Timothy, "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus," 1 Timothy 2:5. Other passages do not stress the numerical unity of God as much as they do His uniqueness. This is the case in the well known words of Deuteronomy 6:4, "Hear, O Israel; Jehovah our God is one Jehovah." The Hebrew word ’ echad, translated by "one" may also be rendered "an only," the equivalent of the German "einig" and the Dutch "eenig." And this would seem to be a better translation. Keil stresses that fact that this passage does not teach the numerical unity of God, but rather that Jehovah is the only God that is entitled to the name Jehovah. This is also the meaning of the term in Zechariah 14:9. The same idea is beautifully expressed in the rhetorical question of Exodus 15:11, "Who is like unto thee, O Jehovah, among the gods? Who is like thee, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" This excludes all polytheistic conceptions of God.

2. THE UNITAS SIMPLICITATIS. While the unity discussed in the preceding sets God apart from other beings, the perfection now under consideration is expressive of the inner and qualitative unity of the Divine Being. When we speak of the simplicity of God, we use the term to describe the state or quality of being simple, the condition of being free from division into parts, and therefore from compositeness. It means that God is not composite and is not susceptible of division in any sense of the word. This implies among other things that the three Persons in the Godhead are not so many parts of which the Divine essence is composed, that God’s essence and perfections are not distinct, and that the attributes are not superadded to His essence. Since the two are one, the Bible can speak of God as light and life, as righteousness and love, thus identifying Him with His perfections. The simplicity of God follows from some of His other perfections; from His Self-existence, which excludes the idea that something preceded Him, as in the case of compounds; and from His immutability, which could not be predicated of His nature, if it were made up of parts. This perfection was disputed during the Middle Ages, and was denied by Socinians and Arminians. Scripture does not explicitly assert it, but implies it where it speaks of God as righteousness, truth, wisdom, light, life, love, and so on, and thus indicates that each of these properties, because of their absolute perfection, is identical with His Being. In recent works on theology the simplicity of God is seldom mentioned. Many theologians positively deny it, either because it is regarded as a purely metaphysical abstraction, or because, in their estimation, it conflicts with the doctrine of the Trinity. Dabney believes that there is no composition in the substance of God, but denies that in Him substance and attributes are one and the same. He claims that God is no more simple in that respect than finite spirits.26

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. What different conceptions of the Absolute do we meet with in philosophy? Can the Absolute of philosophy always be identified with the God of theology? How does Bradley distinguish between the two? How is the finite God of James, Schiller, Ward, Wells and others, related to the Absolute? How do the incommunicable attributes of God link up with the Absolute? Does the immutability of God exclude all movement in God? In how far does it exclude changes of action and relations? Should the absolute perfection of God be regarded as an attribute? Why does the Bible represent God’s eternity as endless duration? Is it possible to harmonize the transcendence and the immanence of God? How is transcendence frequently interpreted in modern theology? What is implied in the simplicity of God?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. II, pp. 137-171; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., Deo I, pp. 287-318; Hodge, Syst. Theol. I, pp. 380-393; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. I, pp. 338-353; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., pp. 151-154; Thornwell, Collected Works I, pp. 189-205; Strong, Syst. Theol., pp. 254-260, 275-279; Pieper, Christl. Dogm. I, pp. 536-543, 547-549; Knudson, The Doct. of God, pp. 242-284; Steenstra, God as Unity and Trinity, pp. 112-139; Charnock, Existence and Attributes of God. pp. 276-405.

04.1.1.7. The Communicable Attributes

VII. The Communicable Attributes (God as a Personal Spirit)

If the attributes discussed in the previous chapter stressed the absolute Being of God, those that remain to be considered emphasize His personal nature. It is in the communicable attributes that God stands out as a conscious, intelligent, free, and moral Being, as a Being that is personal in the highest sense of the word. The question has long engaged the attention of philosophers, and is still a subject of debate, whether personal existence is consistent with the idea of absoluteness. The answer to that question depends to a great extent on the meaning one ascribes to the word "absolute." The word has been used in three different senses in philosophy, which may be denominated as the agnostic, the logical, and the causal sense. For the agnostic the Absolute is the unrelated, of which nothing can be known, since things are known only in their relations. And if nothing can be known of it, personality cannot be ascribed to it. Moreover, since personality is unthinkable apart from relations, it cannot be identified with an Absolute which is in its very essence the unrelated. In the logical Absolute the individual is subordinated to the universal, and the highest universal is ultimate reality. Such is the absolute substance of Spinoza, and the absolute spirit of Hegel. It may express itself in and through the finite, but nothing that is finite can express its essential nature. To ascribe personality to it would be to limit it to one mode of being, and would destroy its absoluteness. In fact, such an absolute or ultimate is a mere abstract and empty concept, that is barren of all content. The causal view of the Absolute represents it as the ultimate ground of all things. It is not dependent on anything outside of itself, but causes all things to depend on it. Moreover, it is not necessarily completely unrelated, but can enter into various relations with finite creatures. Such a conception of the Absolute is not inconsistent with the idea of personality. Moreover, we should bear in mind that in their argumentation philosophers were always operating with the idea of personality as it is realized in man, and lost sight of the fact that personality in God might be something infinitely more perfect. As a matter of fact, perfect personality is found only in God, and what we see in man is only a finite copy of the original. Still more, there is a tripersonality in God, of which no analogy is found in human beings.

Several natural proofs, quite similar to those adduced for the existence of God, have been urged to prove the personality of God. (1) Human personality demands a personal God for its explanation. Man is not a self-existent and eternal, but a finite being that has a beginning and an end. The cause assumed must be sufficient to account for the whole of the effect. Since man is a personal product, the power originating him must also be personal. Otherwise there is something in the effect which is superior to anything that is found in the cause; and this would be quite impossible. (2) The world in general bears witness to the personality of God. In its whole fabric and constitution it reveals the clearest traces of an infinite intelligence, of the deepest, highest and tenderest emotions, and of a will that is all-powerful. Consequently, we are constrained to mount from the world to the world’s Maker as a Being of intelligence, sensibility, and will, that is, as a person. (3) The moral and religious nature of man also points to the personality of God. His moral nature imposes on him a sense of obligation to do that which is right, and this necessarily implies

the existence of a supreme Lawgiver. Moreover, his religious nature constantly prompts him to seek personal communion with some higher Being; and all the elements and activities of religion demand a personal God as their object and final end. Even so-called pantheistic religions often testify unconsciously to belief in a personal God. The fact is that all such things as penitence, faith and obedience, fellowship and love, loyalty in service and sacrifice, trust in life and death, are meaningless unless they find their appropriate object in a personal God. But while all these considerations are true and have some value as testimonia, they are not the proofs on which theology depends in its doctrine of the personality of God. It turns for proof to God's Self-revelation in Scripture. The term "person" is not applied to God in the Bible, though there are words, such as the Hebrew panim and the Greek prosopon, that come very close to expressing the idea. At the same time Scripture testifies to the personality of God in more than one way. The presence of God, as described by Old and New Testament writers, is clearly a personal presence. And the anthropomorphic and anthropopathic representations of God in Scripture, while they must be interpreted so as not to militate against the pure spirituality and holiness of God, can hardly be justified, except on the assumption that the Being to whom they apply is a real person, with personal attributes, even though it be without human limitations. God is represented throughout as a personal God, with whom men can and may converse, whom they can trust, who sustains them in their trials, and fills their hearts with the joy of deliverance and victory. And, finally, the highest revelation of God to which the Bible testifies is a personal revelation. Jesus Christ reveals the Father in such a perfect way that He could say to Philip," He who hath seen me hath seen the Father," John 14:9. More detailed proofs will appear in the discussion of the communicable attributes.

A. THE SPIRITUALITY OF GOD The Bible does not give us a definition of God. The nearest approach to anything like it is found in the word of Christ to the Samaritan woman, "God is Spirit," John 4:24. This is at least a statement purporting to tell us in a single word what God is. The Lord does not merely say that God is a spirit, but that He is Spirit. And because of this clear statement it is but fitting that we should discuss first of all the spirituality of God. By teaching the spirituality of God theology stresses the fact that God has a substantial Being all His own and distinct from the world, and that this substantial Being is immaterial, invisible, and without composition or extension. It includes the thought that all the essential qualities which belong to the perfect idea of Spirit are found in Him: that He is a self-conscious and self-determining Being. Since He is Spirit in the most absolute, and in the purest sense of the word, there is in Him no composition of parts. The idea of spirituality of necessity excludes the ascription of anything like corporeity to God, and thus condemns the fancies of some of the early Gnostics and medieval Mystics, and of all those sectarians of our own day who ascribe a body to God. It is true that the Bible speaks of the hands and feet, the eyes and ears, the mouth and nose of God, but in doing this it is speaking anthropomorphically or figuratively of Him who far transcends our human knowledge, and of whom we can only speak in a stammering fashion after the manner of men. By ascribing spirituality to God we also affirm that He has none of the properties belonging to matter, and that He cannot be discerned by the bodily senses. Paul speaks of Him as "the King eternal, immortal, invisible" (1 Timothy 1:17), and again as "the King of kings, and Lord of lords, who only hath immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable; whom no man hath seen, nor can see: to whom be honor and power eternal," 1 Timothy 6:15-16.

B. INTELLECTUAL ATTRIBUTES

God is represented in Scripture as Light, and therefore as perfect in His intellectual life. This category comprises two of the divine perfections, namely, the knowledge and the wisdom of God.

1. THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. The knowledge of God may be defined as that perfection of God whereby He, in an entirely unique manner, knows Himself and all things possible and actual in one eternal and most simple act. The Bible testifies to the knowledge of God abundantly, as, for instance, in 1 Samuel 2:3; Job 12:13; Psalms 94:9; Psalms 147:4; Isaiah 29:15; Isaiah 40:27-28. In connection with the knowledge of God several points call for consideration. a.Its nature. The knowledge of God differs in some important points from that of men. It isarchetypal, which means that He knows the universe as it exists in His own eternal idea previous to its existence as a finite reality in time and space; and that His knowledge is not, like ours, obtained from without. It is a knowledge that is characterized by absolute perfection. As such it is intuitive rather than demonstrative or discursive. It is innate and immediate and does not result from observation or from a process of reasoning. Being perfect, it is also simultaneous and not successive, so that He sees things at once in their totality, and not piecemeal one after another. Furthermore, it is complete and fully conscious, while man's knowledge is always partial, frequently indistinct, and often fails to rise into the clear light of consciousness. A distinction is made between the necessary and free knowledge of God. The former is the knowledge which God has of Himself and of all things possible, a knowledge resting on the consciousness of His omnipotence. It is called necessary knowledge, because it is not determined by an action of the divine will. It is also known as the knowledge of simple intelligence, in view of the fact that it is purely an act of the divine intellect, without any concurrent action of the divine will. The free knowledge of God is the knowledge which He has of all things actual, that is, of things that existed in the past, that exist in the present, or that will exist in the future. It is founded on God's infinite knowledge of His own all comprehensive and unchangeable eternal purpose, and is called free knowledge, because it is determined by a concurrent act of the will. It is also called scientia visionis, knowledge of vision. b. Its extent. The knowledge of God is not only perfect in kind, but also in its inclusiveness. It is called omniscience because it is all-comprehensive. In order to promote a proper estimate of it, we may particularize as follows: God knows Himself and in Himself all things that come from Him (internal knowledge). He knows all things as they actually come to pass, past, present, and future, and knows them in their real relations. He knows the hidden essence of things, to which the knowledge of man cannot penetrate. He sees not as man sees, who observes only the outward manifestations of life, but penetrates to the depths of the human heart. Moreover, He knows what is possible as well as what is actual; all things that might occur under certain circumstances are present to His mind. The omniscience of God is clearly taught in several passages of Scripture. He is perfect in knowledge, Job 37:16Job 37:16">, looketh not on outward appearance but on the heart, 1 Samuel 16:7; 1 Chronicles 28:9; 1 Chronicles 28:17; Psalms 139:1-4; Jeremiah 17:10, observes the ways of men, Deuteronomy 2:7; Job 23:10; Job 24:23; Job 31:4; Psalms 1:6; Psalms 119:168, knows the place of their habitation, Psalms 33:13, and the days of their life, Psalms 37:18. This doctrine of the knowledge of God must be maintained over against all pantheistic tendencies to represent God as the unconscious ground of the phenomenal world, and of those who, like Marcion, Socinus and all who believe in a finite God, ascribe to Him only a limited knowledge.

There is one question, however, that calls for special discussion. It concerns God's foreknowledge of the free actions of men, and therefore of conditional events. We can understand how God can foreknow where necessity rules, but find it difficult to conceive of a previous knowledge of actions which man freely originates. The difficulty of this problem led some to deny the foreknowledge of free actions, and others to deny human freedom. It is perfectly evident that Scripture teaches the divine foreknowledge of contingent events, 1 Samuel 23:10-13; 2 Kings 13:19; Psalms 81:14-15; Isaiah 42:9; Isaiah 48:18; Jeremiah 2:2-3; Jeremiah 38:17-10; Ezekiel 3:6; Matthew 11:21. Moreover, it does not leave us in doubt as to the freedom of man. It certainly does not permit the denial of either one of the terms of the problem. We are up against a problem here, which we cannot fully solve, though it is possible to make an approach to a solution. God has decreed all things, and has decreed them with their causes and conditions in the exact order in which they come to pass; and His foreknowledge of future things and also of contingent events rests on His decree. This solves the problem as far as the foreknowledge of God is concerned. But now the question arises, Is the predetermination of things consistent with the free will of man? And the answer is that it certainly is not, if the freedom of the will be regarded as indifferentia (arbitrariness), but this is an unwarranted conception of the freedom of man. The will of man is not something altogether indeterminate, something hanging in the air that can be swung arbitrarily in either direction. It is rather something rooted in our very nature, connected with our deepest instincts and emotions, and determined by our intellectual considerations and by our very character. And if we conceive of our human freedom as lubentia rationalis (reasonable self-determination), then we have no sufficient warrant for saying that it is inconsistent with divine foreknowledge. Says Dr. Orr: "A solution of this problem there is, though our minds fail to grasp it. In part it probably lies, not in denying freedom, but in a revised conception of freedom. For freedom, after all, is not arbitrariness. There is in all rational action a why for acting — a reason which decides action. The truly free man is not the uncertain, incalculable man, but the man who is reliable. In short, freedom has its laws — spiritual laws — and the omniscient Mind knows what these are. But an element of mystery, it must be acknowledged, still remains."27

Jesuit, Lutheran, and Arminian theologians suggested the so-called scientia media as a solution of the problem. The name is indicative of the fact that it occupies a middle ground between the necessary and the free knowledge of God. It differs from the former in that its object is not all possible things, but a special class of things actually future; and from the latter in that its ground is not the eternal purpose of God, but the free action of the creature as simply foreseen.28 It is called mediate, says Dabney, "because they suppose God arrives at it, not directly by knowing His own purpose to effect it, but indirectly by His infinite insight into the manner in which the contingent second cause will act, under given outward circumstances, foreseen or produced by God."29 But this is no solution of the problem at all. It is an attempt to reconcile two things which logically exclude each other, namely, freedom of action in the Pelagian sense and a certain foreknowledge of that action. Actions that are in no way determined by God, directly or indirectly, but are wholly dependent on the arbitrary will of man, can hardly be the object of divine foreknowledge. Moreover, it is objectionable, because it makes the divine knowledge dependent on the choice of man, virtually annuls the certainty of the knowledge of future events, and thus implicitly denies the omniscience of God. It is also contrary to such passages of Scripture as Acts 2:23; Romans 9:16; Ephesians 1:11; Php 2:13.

2. THE WISDOM OF GOD. The wisdom of God may be regarded as a particular aspect of His knowledge. It is quite evident that knowledge and wisdom are not the same, though they are closely related. They do not always accompany each other. An uneducated man may be superior to a scholar in wisdom. Knowledge is acquired by study, but wisdom results from an intuitive insight into things. The former is theoretical, while the latter is practical, making knowledge subservient to some specific purpose. Both are imperfect in man, but in God they are characterized by absolute perfection. God’s wisdom is His intelligence as manifested in the adaptation of means to ends. It points to the fact that He always strives for the best possible ends, and chooses the best means for the realization of His purposes. H. B. Smith defines the divine wisdom as "that attribute of God whereby He produces the best possible results with the best possible means." We may be a little more specific and call it that perfection of God whereby He applies His knowledge to the attainment of His ends in a way which glorifies Him most. It implies a final end to which all secondary ends are subordinate; and according to Scripture this final end is the glory of God, Romans 11:33; Romans 14:7-8; Ephesians 1:11-12; Colossians 1:16. Scripture refers to the wisdom of God in many passages, and even represents it as personified in Proverbs 8:1-36. This wisdom of God is seen particularly in creation, Psalms 19:1-7; Psalms 104:1-34; in providence, Psalms 33:10-11; Romans 8:28; and in redemption, Romans 11:33; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 3:10.

3. THE VERACITY OF GOD. Scripture uses several words to express the veracity of God: in the Old Testament ’emeth,’ amunah, and ’amen, and in the New Testament alethes (aletheia), alethinos, andpistis. This already points to the fact that it includes several ideas, such as truth, truthfulness, and faithfulness. When God is called the truth, this is to be understood in its most comprehensive sense. He is the truth first of all in a metaphysical sense, that is, in Him the idea of the Godhead is perfectly realized; He is all that He as God should be, and as such is distinguished from all so-called gods, which are called vanity and lies, Psalms 96:5; Psalms 97:7; Psalms 115:4-8; Isaiah 44:9-10. He is also the truth in an ethical sense, and as such reveals Himself as He really is, so that His revelation is absolutely reliable, Numbers 23:19; Romans 3:4; Hebrews 6:18. Finally, He is also the truth in a logical sense, and in virtue of this He knows things as they really are, and has so constituted the mind of man that the latter can know, not merely the appearance, but also the reality, of things. Thus the truth of God is the foundation of all knowledge. It should be borne in mind, moreover, that these three are but different aspects of the truth, which is one in God. In view of the preceding we may define the veracity or truth of God as that perfection of His Being by virtue of which He fully answers to the idea of the Godhead, is perfectly reliable in His revelation, and sees things as they really are. It is because of this perfection that He is the source of all truth, not only in the sphere of morals and religion, but also in every field of scientific endeavor. Scripture is very emphatic in its references to God as the truth, Exodus 34:6; Numbers 23:19; Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalms 25:10; Psalms 31:6; Isaiah 65:16; Jeremiah 10:8; Jeremiah 10:10-11; John 14:6; John 17:3; Titus 1:2; Hebrews 6:18; 1 John 5:20-21. There is still another aspect of this divine perfection, and one that is always regarded as of the greatest importance. It is generally called His faithfulness in virtue of which He is ever mindful of His covenant and fulfils all the promises which He has made to His people. This faithfulness of God is of the utmost practical significance to the people of God. It is the ground of their confidence, the foundation of their hope, and the cause of their rejoicing. It saves them from the despair to which their own unfaithfulness might easily lead, gives them courage to carry on in spite of their failures,

and fills their hearts with joyful anticipations, even when they are deeply conscious of the fact that they have forfeited all the blessings of God. Numbers 23:19; Deuteronomy 7:9; Psalms 89:33; Isaiah 49:7; 1 Corinthians 1:9; 2 Timothy 2:13; Hebrews 6:17-18; Hebrews 10:23.

C. MORAL ATTRIBUTES The moral attributes of God are generally regarded as the most glorious of the divine perfections. Not that one attribute of God is in itself more perfect and glorious than another, but relatively to man the moral perfections of God shine with a splendor all their own. They are generally discussed under three heads: (1) the goodness of God; (2) the holiness of God; and (3) the righteousness of God.

1. THE GOODNESS OF GOD. This is generally treated as a generic conception, including several varieties, which are distinguished according to their objects. The goodness of God should not be confused with His kindness, which is a more restricted concept. We speak of something as good, when it answers in all parts to the ideal. Hence in our ascription of goodness to God the fundamental idea is that He is in every way all that He as God should be, and therefore answers perfectly to the ideal expressed in the word "God." He is good in the metaphysical sense of the word, absolute perfection and perfect bliss in Himself. It is in this sense that Jesus said to the young ruler: "None is good save one, even God," Mark 10:18. But since God is good in Himself, He is also good for His creatures, and may therefore be called the fons omnium bonorum. He is the fountain of all good, and is so represented in a variety of ways throughout the Bible. The poet sings: "For with thee is the fountain of life; in thy light shall we see light," Psalms 36:9. All the good things which the creatures enjoy in the present and expect in the future, flow to them out of this inexhaustible fountain. And not only that, but God is also the summum bonum, the highest good, for all His creatures, though in different degrees and according to the measure in which they answer to the purpose of their existence. In the present connection we naturally stress the ethical goodness of God and the different aspects of it, as these are determined by the nature of its objects. a.The goodness of God towards His creatures in general. This may be defined as that perfection of God which prompts Him to deal bountifully and kindly with all His creatures. It is the affection which the Creator feels towards His sentient creatures as such. The Psalmist sings of it in the well known words: "Jehovah is good to all; and His tender mercies are over all His works. . . . The eyes of all wait for thee; and thou givest them their food in due season. Thou openest thy hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing," Psalms 145:9; Psalms 145:15-16. This benevolent interest of God is revealed in His care for the creature’s welfare, and is suited to the nature and the circumstances of the creature. It naturally varies in degree according to the capacity of the objects to receive it. And while it is not restricted to believers, they only manifest a proper appreciation of its blessings, desire to use them in the service of their God, and thus enjoy them in a richer and fuller measure. The Bible refers to this goodness of God in many passages, such as Psalms 36:6; Psalms 104:21; Matthew 5:45; Matthew 6:26; Luke 6:35; Acts 14:17. b. The love of God. When the goodness of God is exercised towards His rational creatures, it assumes the higher character of love, and this love may again be distinguished according to the objects on which it terminates. In distinction from the goodness of God in general, it may be defined as that perfection of God by which He is eternally moved to self-communication. Since God is absolutely good in Himself, His love cannot find complete satisfaction in any object that falls short of absolute perfection. He loves His rational creatures for His own sake, or, to express it otherwise, He loves in them Himself, His virtues, His work, and His gifts. He does not even withdraw His love

completely from the sinner in his present sinful state, though the latter's sin is an abomination to Him, since He recognizes even in the sinner His image-bearer. John 3:16; Matthew 5:44-45. At the same time He loves believers with a special love, since He contemplates them as His spiritual children in Christ. It is to them that He communicates Himself in the fullest and richest sense, with all the fulness of His grace and mercy. John 16:27; Romans 5:8; 1 John 3:1. c. The grace of God. The significant word "grace" is a translation of the Hebrew chanan and of the Greek charis. According to Scripture it is manifested not only by God, but also by men, and then denotes the favor which one man shows another, Genesis 33:8; Genesis 33:10; Genesis 33:18; Genesis 39:4; Genesis 47:15; Ruth 2:2; 1 Samuel 1:18; 1 Samuel 16:22. In such cases it is not necessarily implied that the favor is undeserved. In general it can be said, however, that grace is the free bestowal of kindness on one who has no claim to it. This is particularly the case where the grace referred to is the grace of God. His love to man is always unmerited, and when shown to sinners, is even forfeited. The Bible generally uses the word to denote the unmerited goodness or love of God to those who have forfeited it, and are by nature under a sentence of condemnation. The grace of God is the source of all spiritual blessings that are bestowed upon sinners. As such we read of it in Ephesians 1:6-7; Ephesians 2:7-9; Titus 2:11; Titus 3:4-7. While the Bible often speaks of the grace of God as saving grace, it also makes mention of it in a broader sense, as in Isaiah 26:10; Jeremiah 16:13. The grace of God is of the greatest practical significance for sinful men. It was by grace that the way of redemption was opened for them, Romans 3:24; 2 Corinthians 8:9, and that the message of redemption went out into the world, Acts 14:3. By grace sinners receive the gift of God in Jesus Christ, Acts 18:27; Ephesians 2:8. By grace they are justified, Romans 3:24; Romans 4:16; Titus 3:7, they are enriched with spiritual blessings, John 1:16; 2 Corinthians 8:9; 2 Thessalonians 2:16, and they finally inherit salvation, Ephesians 2:8; Titus 2:11. Seeing they have absolutely no merits of their own, they are altogether dependent on the grace of God in Christ. In modern theology, with its belief in the inherent goodness of man and his ability to help himself, the doctrine of salvation by grace has practically become a "lost chord," and even the word "grace" was emptied of all spiritual meaning and vanished from religious discourses. It was retained only in the sense of "graciousness," something that is quite external. Happily, there are some evidences of a renewed emphasis on sin, and of a newly awakened consciousness of the need of divine grace. d. The mercy of God. Another important aspect of the goodness and love of God is His mercy or tender compassion. The Hebrew word most generally used for this ischesed. There is another word, however, which expresses a deep and tender compassion, namely, the word racham which is beautifully rendered by "tender mercy" in our English Bible. The Septuagint and the New Testament employ the Greek word eleos to designate the mercy of God. If the grace of God contemplates man as guilty before God, and therefore in need of forgiveness, the mercy of God contemplates him as one who is bearing the consequences of sin, who is in a pitiable condition, and who therefore needs divine help. It may be defined as the goodness or love of God shown to those who are in misery or distress, irrespective of their deserts. In His mercy God reveals Himself as a compassionate God, who pities those who are in misery and is ever ready to relieve their distress. This mercy is bountiful, Deuteronomy 5:10; Psalms 57:10; Psalms 86:5, and the poets of Israel delighted to sing of it as enduring forever, 1 Chronicles 16:34; 2 Chronicles 7:6; Psalms 136:1-26; Ezra 3:11. In the New Testament it is often mentioned alongside of the grace of God, especially in salutations, 1 Timothy 1:2; 2 Timothy 1:1; Titus 1:4. We are told repeatedly that it is shown to them that fear God, Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 7:9; Psalms 86:5; Luke 1:50. This

does not mean, however, that it is limited to them, though they enjoy it in a special measure. God's tender mercies are over all His works, Psalms 145:9, and even those who do not fear Him share in them, Ezekiel 18:23; Ezekiel 18:32; Ezekiel 33:11; Luke 6:35-36. The mercy of God may not be represented as opposed to His justice. It is exercised only in harmony with the strictest justice of God, in view of the merits of Jesus Christ. Other terms used for it in the Bible are "pity," "compassion," and "lovingkindness." e. The longsuffering of God. The longsuffering of God is still another aspect of His great goodness or love. The Hebrew uses the expression 'erek 'aph, which means literally "long of face," and then also "slow to anger," while the Greek expresses the same idea by the word makrothumia. It is that aspect of the goodness or love of God in virtue of which He bears with the froward and evil in spite of their long continued disobedience. In the exercise of this attribute the sinner is contemplated as continuing in sin, notwithstanding the admonitions and warnings that come to him. It reveals itself in the postponement of the merited judgment. Scripture speaks of it in Exodus 34:6; Psalms 86:15; Romans 2:4; Romans 9:22; 1 Peter 3:20; 2 Peter 3:15. A synonymous term of a slightly different connotation is the word "forbearance."

2. THE HOLINESS OF GOD. The Hebrew word for "to be holy,"quadash, is derived from the root qad, which means to cut or to separate. It is one of the most prominent religious words of the Old Testament, and is applied primarily to God. The same idea is conveyed by the New Testament words hagiazo and hagios. From this it already appears that it is not correct to think of holiness primarily as a moral or religious quality, as is generally done. Its fundamental idea is that of a position or relationship existing between God and some person or thing. a. Its nature. The Scriptural idea of the holiness of God is twofold. In its original sense it denotes that He is absolutely distinct from all His creatures, and is exalted above them in infinite majesty. So understood, the holiness of God is one of His transcendental attributes, and is sometimes spoken of as His central and supreme perfection. It does not seem proper to speak of one attribute of God as being more central and fundamental than another; but if this were permissible, the Scriptural emphasis on the holiness of God would seem to justify its selection. It is quite evident, however, that holiness in this sense of the word is not really a moral attribute, which can be co-ordinated with the others, such as love, grace and mercy, but is rather something that is co-extensive with, and applicable to, everything that can be predicated of God. He is holy in everything that reveals Him, in His goodness and grace as well as in His justice and wrath. It may be called the "majesty-holiness" of God, and is referred to in such passages as Exodus 15:11; 1 Samuel 2:2; Isaiah 57:15; Hosea 11:9. It is this holiness of God which Otto, in his important work on Das Heilige30 regards as that which is most essential in God, and which he designates as "the numinous. " He regards it as part of the non-rational in God, which cannot be thought of conceptually, and which includes such ideas as "absolute unapproachability" and "absolute overpoweringness" or "aweful majesty." It awakens in man a sense of absolute nothingness, a "creature-consciousness" or "creature-feeling," leading to absolute self-abasement. But the holiness of God also has a specifically ethical aspect in Scripture, and it is with this aspect of it that we are more directly concerned in this connection. The ethical idea of the divine holiness may not be dissociated from the idea of God's majesty- holiness. The former developed out of the latter. The fundamental idea of the ethical holiness of God is also that of separation, but in this case it is a separation from moral evil or sin. In virtue of His holiness God can have no communion with sin, Job 34:10; Habakkuk 1:13. Used in this sense, the word "holiness" points to God's majestic purity, or ethical majesty. But the idea of ethical holiness is not merely negative (separation from sin); it

also has a positive content, namely, that of moral excellence, or ethical perfection. If man reacts to God's majestic-holiness with a feeling of utter insignificance and awe, his reaction to the ethical holiness reveals itself in a sense of impurity, a consciousness of sin, Isaiah 6:5. Otto also recognizes this element in the holiness of God, though he stresses the other, and says of the response to it: "Mere awe, mere need of shelter from the 'tremendum', has here been elevated to the feeling that man in his 'profaneness' is not worthy to stand in the presence of the Holy One, and that his entire personal unworthiness might defile even holiness itself."31 This ethical holiness of God may be defined as that erfection of God, in virtue of which He eternally wills and maintains His own moral excellence, abhors sin, and demands purity in his moral creatures. b. Its manifestation. The holiness of God is revealed in the moral law, implanted in man's heart, and speaking through the conscience, and more particularly in God's special revelation. It stood out prominently in the law given to Israel. That law in all its aspects was calculated to impress upon Israel the idea of the holiness of God, and to urge upon the people the necessity of leading a holy life. This was the purpose served by such symbols and types as the holy nation, the holy land, the holy city, the holy place, and the holy priesthood. Moreover, it was revealed in the manner in which God rewarded the keeping of the law, and visited transgressors with dire punishments. The highest revelation of it was given in Jesus Christ, who is called "the Holy and Righteous One," Acts 3:14. He reflected in His life the perfect holiness of God. Finally, the holiness of God is also revealed in the Church as the body of Christ. It is a striking fact, to which attention is often called, that holiness is ascribed to God with far greater frequency in the Old Testament than in the New, though it is done occasionally in the New Testament, John 17:11; 1 Peter 1:16; Revelation 4:8; Revelation 6:10. This is probably due to the fact that the New Testament appropriates the term more particularly to qualify the third Person of the Holy Trinity as the One whose special task it is, in the economy of redemption, to communicate holiness to His people.

3. THE RIGHTEOUSNESS OF GOD. This attribute is closely related to the holiness of God. Shedd speaks of the justice of God as "a mode of His holiness"; and Strong calls it simply "transitive holiness." However, these terms apply only to what is generally called the relative, in distinction from the absolute, justice of God. a. The fundamental idea of righteousness. The fundamental idea of righteousness is that of strict adherence to the law. Among men it presupposes that there is a law to which they must conform. It is sometimes said that we cannot speak of righteousness in God, because there is no law to which He is subject. But though there is no law above God, there is certainly a law in the very nature of God, and this is the highest possible standard, by which all other laws are judged. A distinction is generally made between the absolute and the relative justice of God. The former is that rectitude of the divine nature, in virtue of which God is infinitely righteous in Himself while the latter isthat perfection of God by which He maintains Himself over against every violation of His holiness, and shows in every respect that He is the Holy One. It is to this righteousness that the term "justice" more particularly applies. Justice mani fests itself especially in giving every man his due, in treating him according to his deserts. The inherent righteousness of God is naturally basic to the righteousness which He reveals in dealing with His creatures, but it is especially the latter, also called the justice of God, that calls for special consideration here. The Hebrew terms for "righteous" and "righteousness" are tsaddik, tsedhek, and tsedhakah, and the corresponding Greek terms, dikaios and dikaiosune, all of which contain the idea of conformity to a standard. This perfection is repeatedly ascribed to God in Scripture, Ezra 9:15; Nehemiah 9:8; Psalms 119:137; Psalms 145:17; Jeremiah 12:1;

Lamentations 1:18; Daniel 9:14; John 17:15; 2 Timothy 4:8; 1 John 2:29; 1 John 3:7; Revelation 16:5. b.Distinctions applied to the justice of God. There is first of all arectoral justice of God. This justice, as the very name implies, is the rectitude which God manifests as the Ruler of both the good and the evil. In virtue of it He has instituted a moral government in the world, and imposed a just law upon man, with promises of reward for the obedient, and threats of punishment for the transgressor. God stands out prominently in the Old Testament as the Lawgiver of Israel, Isaiah 33:22, and of people in general, James 4:12, and His laws are righteous laws, Deuteronomy 4:8. The Bible refers to this rectoral work of God also in Psalms 99:4, and Romans 1:32. Closely connected with the rectoral is the distributive justice of God. This term usually serves to designate God's rectitude in the execution of the law, and relates to the distribution of rewards and punishments, Isaiah 3:10-11; Romans 2:6; 1 Peter 1:17. It is of two kinds: (1) Remunerative justice which manifests itself in the distribution of rewards to both men and angels, Deuteronomy 7:9; Deuteronomy 7:12-13; 2 Chronicles 6:15; Psalms 58:11; Micah 7:20; Matthew 25:21; Romans 2:7; Hebrews 11:26. It is really an expression of the divine love, dealing out its bounties, not on the basis of strict merit, for the creature can establish no absolute merit before the Creator, but according to promise and agreement, Luke 17:10; 1 Corinthians 4:7. God's rewards are gracious and spring from a covenant relation which He has established. (2) Retributive justice, which relates to the infliction of penalties. It is an expression of the divine wrath. While in a sinless world there would be no place for its exercise, it necessarily holds a very prominent place in a world full of sin. On the whole the Bible stresses the reward of the righteous more than the punishment of the wicked; but even the latter is sufficiently prominent. Romans 1:32; Romans 2:9; Romans 12:19; 2 Thessalonians 1:8, and many other passages. It should be noted that, while man does not merit the reward which he receives, he does merit the punishment which is meted out to him. Divine justice is originally and necessarily obliged to punish evil, but not to reward good, Luke 17:10; 1 Corinthians 4:7; Job 41:11Job 41:11">. Many deny the strict punitive justice of God and claim that God punishes the sinner to reform him, or to deter others from sin; but these positions are not tenable. The primary purpose of the punishment of sin is the maintenance of right and justice. Of course, it may incidentally serve, and may even, secondarily, be intended, to reform the sinner and to deter others from sin.

D. ATTRIBUTES OF SOVEREIGNTY The sovereignty of God is strongly emphasized in Scripture. He is represented as the Creator, and His will as the cause of all things. In virtue of His creative work heaven and earth and all that they contain belong to Him. He is clothed with absolute authority over the hosts of heaven and the inhabitants of the earth. He upholds all things with His almighty power, and determines the ends which they are destined to serve. He rules as King in the most absolute sense of the word, and all things are dependent on Him and subservient to Him. There is a wealth of Scripture evidence for the sovereignty of God, but we limit our references here to a few of the most significant passages: Genesis 14:19; Exodus 18:11; Deuteronomy 10:14; Deuteronomy 10:17; 1 Chronicles 29:11-12; 2 Chronicles 20:6; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalms 22:28; Psalms 47:2-3; Psalms 47:7-8; Psalms 50:10-12; Psalms 95:3-5; Psalms 115:3; Psalms 135:5-6; Psalms 145:11-13; Jeremiah 27:5; Luke 1:53; Acts 17:24-26; Revelation 19:6. Two attributes call for discussion under this head, namely (1) the sovereign will of God, and (2) the sovereign power of God.

1. THE SOVEREIGN WILL OF GOD. a. The will of God in general. The Bible employs several words to denote the will of God, namely the Hebrew words chaphets, tsebhu and ratson and the Greek words boule and thelema. The importance of the divine will appears in many ways in Scripture. It is represented as the final cause of all things. Everything is derived from it; creation and preservation, Psalms 135:6; Jeremiah 18:6; Revelation 4:11, government, Proverbs 21:1; Daniel 4:35, election and reprobation, Romans 9:15-16; Ephesians 1:11, the sufferings of Christ, Luke 22:42; Acts 2:23, regeneration, James 1:18, sanctification, Php 2:13, the sufferings of believers, 1 Peter 3:17, man's life and destiny, Acts 18:21; Romans 15:32; James 4:15, and even the smallest things of life, Matthew 10:29. Hence Christian theology has always recognized the will of God as the ultimate cause of all things, though philosophy has sometimes shown an inclination to seek a deeper cause in the very Being of the Absolute. However, the attempt to ground everything in the very Being of God generally results in Pantheism. The word "will" as applied to God does not always have the same connotation in Scripture. It may denote (1) the whole moral nature of God, including such attributes as love, holiness, righteousness, etc.; (2) the faculty of self-determination, i.e. the power to determine self to a course of action or to form a plan; (3) the product of this activity, that is, the predetermined plan or purpose; (4) the power to execute this plan and to realize this purpose (the will in action or omnipotence); and (5) the rule of life laid down for rational creatures. It is primarily the will of God as the faculty of self-determination with which we are concerned at present. It may be defined as that perfection of His Being whereby He, in a most simple act, goes out towards Himself as the highest good (i.e. delights in; Himself as such) and towards His creatures for His own name's sake, and is thus the ground of their being and continued existence. With reference to the universe and all the creatures which it contains this naturally includes the idea of causation. b. Distinctions applied to the will of God. Several distinctions have been applied to the will of God. Some of these found little favor in Reformed theology, such as the distinction between an antecedent and a consequent will of God, and that between an absolute and a conditional will. These distinctions were not only liable to misunderstanding, but were actually interpreted in objectionable ways. Others, however, were found useful, and were therefore more generally accepted. They may be stated as follows: (1) The decretive and the preceptive will of God. The former is that will of God by which He purposes or decrees whatever shall come to pass, whether He wills to accomplish it effectively (causatively), or to permit it to occur through the unrestrained agency of His rational creatures. The latter is the rule of life which God has laid down for His moral creatures, indicating the duties which He enjoins upon them. The former is always accomplished, while the latter is often disobeyed. (2) The will of eudokia and the will of eurestia. This division was made, not so much in connection with the purpose to do, as with respect to the pleasure in doing, or the desire to see something done. It corresponds with the preceding, however. in the fact that the will of eudokia, like that of the decree, comprises what shall certainly be accomplished, while the will of eurestia, like that of the precept, embraces simply what God is pleased to have His creatures do. The word eudokia should not mislead us to think that the will of eudokia has reference only to good, and not to evil, cf. Matthew 11:26. It is hardly correct to say that the element of complacency or delight is always present in it. (3) The will of the beneplacitum and the will of the signum. The former again denotes the will of God as embodied in His hidden counsel, until He makes it known by some revelation, or by the event itself. Any will that is so revealed becomes a signum. This distinction is meant to correspond to that between the decretive and the preceptive will of God, but can hardly be said to

do this. The good pleasure of God also finds expression in His preceptive will; and the decretive will sometimes also comes to our knowledge by a signum. (4) The secret and the revealed will of God. This is the most common distinction. The former is the will of God's decree, which is largely hidden in God, while the latter is the will of the precept, which is revealed in the law and in the gospel. The distinction is based on Deuteronomy 29:29. The secret will of God is mentioned in Psalms 115:3; Daniel 4:17; Daniel 4:25; Daniel 4:32; Daniel 4:35; Romans 9:18-19; Romans 11:33-34; Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 1:9; Ephesians 1:11; and His revealed will, in Matthew 7:21; Matthew 12:50; John 4:4; John 7:17; Romans 12:2. The latter is accessible to all and is not far from us, Deuteronomy 30:14; Romans 10:8. The secret will of God pertains to all things which He wills either to effect or to permit, and which are therefore absolutely fixed. The revealed will prescribes the duties of man, and represents the way in which he can enjoy the blessings of God. c. The freedom of God's will. The question is frequently debated whether God, in the exercise of His will, acts necessarily or freely. The answer to this question requires careful discrimination. Just as there is a scientia necessaria and a scientia libera, there is also a voluntas necessaria (necessary will) and a voluntas libera (free will) in God. God Himself is the object of the former. He necessarily wills Himself, His holy nature, and the personal distinctions in the Godhead. This means that He necessarily loves Himself and takes delight in the contemplation of His own perfections. Yet He is under no compulsion, but acts according to the law of His Being; and this, while necessary, is also the highest freedom. It is quite evident that the idea of causation is absent here, and that the thought of complacency or self-approval is in the foreground. God's creatures, however, are the objects of His voluntas libera. God determines voluntarily what and whom He will create, and the times, places, and circumstances, of their lives. He marks out the path of all His rational creatures, determines their destiny, and uses them for His purposes. And though He endows them with freedom, yet His will controls their actions. The Bible speaks of this freedom of God's will in the most absolute terms, Job 11:19; Job 33:13; Psalms 115:3; Proverbs 21:1; Isaiah 10:15; Isaiah 29:16; Isaiah 45:9; Matthew 20:15; Romans 9:15-18; Romans 9:20-21; 1 Corinthians 12:11; Revelation 4:11. The Church always defended this freedom, but also emphasized the fact that it may not be regarded as absolute indifference. Duns Scotus applied the idea of a will in no sense determined to God; but this idea of a blind will, acting with perfect indifference, was rejected by the Church. The freedom of God is not pure indifference, but rational self-determination. God has reasons for willing as He does, which induce Him to choose one end rather than another, and one set of means to accomplish one end in preference to others. There is in each case a prevailing motive, which makes the end chosen and the means selected the most pleasing to Him, though we may not be able to determine what this motive is. In general it may be said that God cannot will anything that is contrary to His nature, to His wisdom or love, to His righteousness or holiness. Dr. Bavinck points out that we can seldom discern why God willed one thing rather than another, and that it is not possible nor even permissible for us to look for some deeper ground of things than the will of God, because all such attempts result in seeking a ground for the creature in the very Being of God, in robbing it of its contingent character, and in making it necessary, eternal, divine.32 d. God's will in relation to sin. The doctrine of the will of God often gives rise to serious questions. Problems arise here which have never yet been solved and which are probably incapable of solution by man. (1) It is said that if the decretive will of God also determined the entrance of sin into the world, God thereby becomes the author of sin and really wills something that is contrary to His moral perfections. Arminians, to escape the difficulty, make the will of God to

permit sin dependent on His foreknowledge of the course which man would choose. Reformed theologians, while maintaining on the basis of such passages as Acts 2:23; Acts 3:8; etc., that God's decretive will also includes the sinful deeds of man, are always careful to point out that this must be conceived in such a way that God does not become the author of sin. They frankly admit that they cannot solve the difficulty, but at the same time make some valuable distinctions that prove helpful. Most of them insist on it that God's will with respect to sin is simply a will to permit sin and not a will to effectuate it, as He does the moral good. This terminology is certainly permissible, provided it is understood correctly. It should be borne in mind that God's will to permit sin carries certainty with it. Others call attention to the fact that, while the terms "will" or "to will" may include the idea of complacency or delight, they sometimes point to a simple determination of the will; and that therefore the will of God to permit sin need not imply that He takes delight or pleasure in sin. (2) Again, it is said that the decretive and preceptive will of God are often contradictory. His decretive will includes many things which He forbids in His preceptive will, and excludes many things which He commands in His preceptive will, cf. Genesis 22:1-24; Exodus 4:21-23; 2 Kings 20:1-7; Acts 2:23. Yet it is of great importance to maintain both the decretive and the preceptive will, but with the definite understanding that, while they appear to us as distinct, they are yet fundamentally one in God. Though a perfectly satisfactory solution of the difficulty is out of the question for the present, it is possible to make some approaches to a solution. When we speak of the decretive and the preceptive will of God, we use the word "will" in two different senses. By the former God has determined what He will do or what shall come to pass; in the latter He reveals to us what we are in duty bound to do.33 At the same time we should remember that the moral law, the rule of our life, is also in a sense the embodiment of the will of God. It is an expression of His holy nature and of what this naturally requires of all moral creatures. Hence another remark must be added to the preceding. The decretive and preceptive will of God do not conflict in the sense that in the former He does, and according to the latter He does not, take pleasure in sin; nor in the sense that according to the former He does not, and according to the latter He does, will the salvation of every individual with a positive volition. Even according to the decretive will God takes no pleasure in sin; and even according to the preceptive will He does not will the salvation of every individual with a positive volition.

2. THE SOVEREIGN POWER OF GOD. The sovereignty of God finds expression, not only in the divine will, but also in the omnipotence of God or the power to execute His will. Power in God may be called the effective energy of His nature, or that perfection of His Being by which He is the absolute and highest causality. It is customary to distinguish between a potentia Dei absoluta (absolute power of God) and a potentia Dei ordinata> (ordered power of God). However, Reformed theology rejects this distinction in the sense in which it was understood by the Scholastics, who claimed that God by virtue of His absolute power could effect contradictions, and could even sin and annihilate Himself. At the same time it adopts the distinction as expressing a real truth, though it does not always represent it in the same way. According to Hodge and Shedd absolute power is the divine efficiency, as exercised without the intervention of second causes; while ordinate power is the efficiency of God, as exercised by the ordered operation of second causes.34 The more general view is stated by Charnock as follows: "Absolute, is that power whereby God is able to do that which He will not do, but is possible to be done; ordinate, is that power whereby God doth that which He hath decreed to do, that is, which He hath ordained or appointed to be exercised; which are not distinct powers, but one and the same power. His

ordinate power is a part of His absolute; for if He had not power to do everything that He could will, He might not have the power to do everything that He doth will."35 The potentia ordinata can be defined as that perfection of God whereby He, through the mere exercise of His will, can realize whatsoever is present in His will or counsel. The power of God in actual exercise limits itself to that which is comprehended in His eternal decree. But the actual exercise of God's power does not represent its limits. God could do more than that, if He were so minded. In that sense we can speak of the potentia absoluta or absolute power, of God. This position must be maintained over against those who, like Schleiermacher and Strauss, hold that God's power is limited to that which He actually accomplishes. But in our assertion of the absolute power of God it is necessary to guard against misconceptions. The Bible teaches us on the one hand that the power of God extends beyond that which is actually realized, Genesis 18:14; Jeremiah 32:27; Zechariah 8:6; Matthew 3:9; Matthew 26:53. We cannot say, therefore, that what God does not bring to realization, is not possible for Him. But on the other hand it also indicates that there are many things which God cannot do. He can neither lie, sin, change, nor deny Himself, Numbers 23:19; 1 Samuel 15:29; 2 Timothy 2:13; Hebrews 6:18; James 1:13; James 1:7. There is no absolute power in Him that is divorced from His perfections, and in virtue of which He can do all kinds of things which are inherently contradictory. The idea of God's omnipotence is expressed in the name ' El-Shaddai; and the Bible speaks of it in no uncertain terms, Job 9:12; Psalms 115:3; Jeremiah 32:17; Matthew 19:26; Luke 1:37; Romans 1:20; Ephesians 1:19. God manifests His power in creation, Romans 4:17; Isaiah 44:24; in the works of providence, Hebrews 1:3, and in the redemption of sinners, 1 Corinthians 1:24; Romans 1:16.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. In what different senses can we speak of the foreknowledge of God? How do the Arminians conceive of this foreknowledge? What objections are there to the Jesuit idea of a scientia media? How must we judge of the modern emphasis on the love of God as the central and all-determining attribute of God? What is Otto's conception of "the Holy" in God? What objection is there to the position that the punishments of God simply serve to reform the sinner, or to deter others from sin? What is the Socinian and the Grotian conception of retributive justice in God? Is it correct to say that God can do everything in virtue of His omnipotence?

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04.1.1.8. The Holy Trinity

VIII. The Holy Trinity THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY IN HISTORY The doctrine of the Trinity has always bristled with difficulties, and therefore it is no wonder that the Church in its attempt to formulate it was repeatedly tempted to rationalize it and to give a construction of it which failed to do justice to the Scriptural data.

1. THE PRE REFORMATION PERIOD. The Jews of Jesus' days strongly emphasized the unity of God, and this emphasis was carried over into the Christian Church. The result was that some ruled out the personal distinctions in the Godhead altogether, and that others failed to do full justice to the essential deity of the second and third persons of the Holy Trinity. Tertullian was the first to use the term "Trinity" and to formulate the doctrine, but his formulation was deficient, since it involved an unwarranted subordination of the Son to the Father. Origen went even farther in this direction by teaching explicitly that the Son is subordinate to the Father in respect to essence, and that the Holy Spirit is subordinate even to the Son. He detracted from the essential deity of these two persons in the Godhead, and furnished a steppingstone to the Arians, who denied the deity of the Son and of the Holy Spirit by representing the Son as the first creature of the Father, and the Holy Spirit as the first creature of the Son. Thus the consubstantiality of the Son and the Holy Spirit with the Father was sacrificed, in order to preserve the unity of God; and the three persons of the Godhead were made to differ in rank. The Arians still retained a semblance of the doctrine of three persons in the Godhead, but this was sacrificed entirely by Monarchianism, partly in the interest of the unity of God and partly to maintain the deity of the Son. Dynamic Monarchianism saw in Jesus but a man and in the Holy Spirit a divine influence, while Modalistic Monarchianism regarded the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, merely as three modes of manifestation successively assumed by the Godhead. On the other hand there were also some who lost sight of the unity of God to such an extent that they landed in Tritheism. Some of the later Monophysites, such as John Ascunages and John Philoponus, fell into this error. During the Middle Ages the Nominalist, Roscelinus, was accused of the same error. The Church began to formulate its doctrine of the Trinity in the fourth century. The Council of Nicea declared the Son to be co-essential with the Father (325 A.D.), while the Council of Constantinople (381 A.D.) asserted the deity of the Holy Spirit, though not with the same precision. As to the interrelation of the three it was officially professed that the Son is generated by the Father, and that the Holy Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son. In the East the doctrine of the Trinity found its fullest statement in the work of John of Damascus, and in the West, in Augustine's great work De Trinitate. The former still retains an element of subordination, which is entirely eliminated by the latter.

2. THE POST REFORMATION PERIOD. We have no further development of the doctrine of the Trinity, but only encounter repeatedly some of the earlier erroneous constructions of it after the Reformation. The Arminians, Episcopius, Curcellæus, and Limborgh, revived the doctrine of subordination, chiefly again, so it seems, to maintain the unity of the Godhead. They ascribed to the Father a certain pre-eminence over the other persons, in order, dignity, and power. A somewhat similar position was taken by Samuel Clarke in England and by the Lutheran

theologian, Kahnis. Others followed the way pointed out by Sabellius by teaching a species of Modalism, as, for instance, Emanuel Swedenborg, who held that the eternal God-man became flesh in the Son, and operated through the Holy Spirit; Hegel, who speaks of the Father as God in Himself, of the Son as God objectifying Himself, and of the Holy Spirit as God returning unto Himself; and Schleiermacher, who regards the three persons simply as three aspects of God: the Father is God as the underlying unity of all things, the Son is God as coming to conscious personality in man, and the Holy Spirit is God as living in the Church. The Socinians of the days of the Reformation moved along Arian lines, but even went beyond Arius, by making Christ merely a man and the Holy Spirit but a power or influence. They were the forerunners of the Unitarians and also of the liberal theologians who speak of Jesus as a divine teacher, and identify the Holy Spirit with the immanent God. Finally, there were also some who, since they regarded the statement of the doctrine of an ontological Trinity as unintelligible, wanted to stop short of it and rest satisfied with the doctrine of an economic Trinity, a Trinity as revealed in the work of redemption and in human experience, as Moses Stuart, W. L. Alexander, and W. A. Brown. For a considerable time interest in the doctrine of the Trinity waned, and theological discussion centered more particularly on the personality of God. Brunner and Barth have again called attention to its importance. The latter places it very much in the foreground, discussing it in connection with the doctrine of revelation, and devotes 220 pages of his Dogmatics to it. Materially, he derives the doctrine from Scripture, but, formally and logically, he finds that it is involved in the simple sentence, "God speaks." He is Revealer (Father), Revelation (Son) and Revealedness (Holy Spirit). He reveals Himself, He is the Revelation, and He is also the content of the Revelation. God and His revelation are identified. He remains God also in His revelation, absolutely free and sovereign. This view of Barth is not a species of Sabellianism, for he recognizes three persons in the Godhead. Moreover, he does not allow for any subordination. Says he: "Thus, to the same God who in unimpaired unity is Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness, is also ascribed in unimpaired variety in Himself precisely this threefold mode of being."36 B. GOD AS TRINITY IN UNITY The word "Trinity" is not quite as expressive as the Holland word "Drieeenheid," for it may simply denote the state of being three, without any implication as to the unity of the three. It is generally understood, however, that, as a technical term in theology, it includes that idea. It goes without saying that, when we speak of the Trinity of God, we refer to a trinity in unity, and to a unity that is trinal.

1. THE PERSONALITY OF GOD AND THE TRINITY. As stated in the preceding, the communicable attributes of God stress His personality, since they reveal Him as a rational and moral Being. His life stands out clearly before us in Scripture as a personal life; and it is, of course, of the greatest importance to maintain the personality of God, for without it there can be no religion in the real sense of the word: no prayer, no personal communion, no trustful reliance and no confident hope. Since man is created in the image of God, we learn to understand something of the personal life of God from the contemplation of personality as we know it in man. We should be careful, however, not to set up man’s personality as a standard by which the personality of God must be measured. The original form of personality is not in man but in God; His is archetypal, while man’s is ectypal. The latter is not identical with the former, but does contain faint traces of similarity with it. We should not say that man is personal, while God is super- personal (a very unfortunate term), for what is super-personal is not personal; but rather, that what appears as imperfect in man exists in infinite perfection in God. The one outstanding difference between the two is that man is uni-personal, while God is tri-personal. And this tri-personal existence is a

necessity in the Divine Being, and not in any sense the result of a choice of God. He could not exist in any other than the tri- personal form. This has been argued in various ways. It is very common to argue it from the idea of personality itself. Shedd bases his argument on the general self-consciousness of the triune God, as distinguished from the particular individual self-consciousness of each one of the Persons in the Godhead, for in self-consciousness the subject must know itself as an object, and also perceive that it does. This is possible in God because of His trinal existence. He says that God could not be self-contemplating, self-cognitive, and self-communing, if He were not trinal in His constitution.37 Bartlett presents in an interesting way a variety of considerations to prove that God is necessarily tri-personal.38 The argument from personality, to prove at least a plurality in God, can be put in some such form as this: Among men the ego awakens to consciousness only by contact with the non-ego. Personality does not develop nor exist in isolation, but only in association with other persons. Hence it is not possible to conceive of personality in God apart from an association of equal persons in Him. His contact with His creatures would not account for His personality any more than man's contact with the animals would explain his personality. In virtue of the tri-personal existence of God there is an infinite fulness of divine life in Him. Paul speaks of this pleroma (fulness) of the Godhead in Ephesians 3:19 and Colossians 1:9; Colossians 2:9. In view of the fact that there are three persons in God, it is better to say that God is personal than to speak of Him as a Person.

2. SCRIPTURAL PROOF FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY. The doctrine of the Trinity is very decidedly a doctrine of revelation. It is true that human reason may suggest some thoughts to substantiate the doctrine, and that men have sometimes on purely philosophical grounds abandoned the idea of a bare unity in God, and introduced the idea of living movement and self-distinction. And it is also true that Christian experience would seem to demand some such construction of the doctrine of God. At the same time it is a doctrine which we would not have known, nor have been able to maintain with any degree of confidence, on the basis of experience alone, and which is brought to our knowledge only by God's special self-revelation. Therefore it is of the utmost importance that we gather the Scriptural proofs for it. a. Old Testament proofs. Some of the early Church Fathers and even some later theologians, disregarding the progressive character of God's revelation, gave the impression that the doctrine of the Trinity was completely revealed in the Old Testament. On the other hand Socinians and Arminians were of the opinion that it was not found there at all. Both were mistaken. The Old Testament does not contain a full revelation of the trinitarian existence of God, but does contain several indications of it. And this is exactly what might be expected. The Bible never deals with the doctrine of the Trinity as an abstract truth, but reveals the trinitarian life in its various relations as a living reality, to a certain extent in connection with the works of creation and providence, but particularly in relation to the work of redemption. Its most fundamental revelation is a revelation given in facts rather than in words. And this revelation increases in clarity in the measure in which the redemptive work of God is more clearly revealed, as in the incarnation of the Son and the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. And the more the glorious reality of the Trinity stands out in the facts of history, the clearer the statements of the doctrine become. The fuller revelation of the Trinity in the New Testament is due to the fact that the Word became flesh, and that the Holy Spirit took up His abode in the Church.

Proof for the Trinity has sometimes been found in the distinction of Jehovah and Elohim, and also in the plural Elohim, but the former is entirely unwarranted, and the latter is, to say the least, very

dubious, though Rottenberg still maintains it in his work on De Triniteit in Israels Godsbegrip.39 It is far more plausible that the passages in which God speaks of Himself in the plural, Genesis 1:16; Genesis 11:7, contain an indication of personal distinctions in God, though even these do not point to a trinity but only to a plurality of persons. Still clearer indications of such personal distinctions are found in those passages which refer to the Angel of Jehovah, who is on the one hand identified with Jehovah, and on the other hand distinguished from Him, Genesis 16:7-13; Genesis 18:1-21; Genesis 19:1-28; Malachi 3:1; and also in passages in which the Word or Wisdom of God is personified, Psalms 33:4; Psalms 33:6; Proverbs 8:12-31. In some cases more than one person is mentioned, Psalms 33:6; Psalms 45:6-7 (comp. Hebrews 1:8-9), and in others God is the speaker, and mentions both the Messiah and the Spirit, or the Messiah is the speaker who mentions both God and the Spirit, Isaiah 48:16; Isaiah 61:1; Isaiah 63:9-10. Thus the Old Testament contains a clear anticipation of the fuller revelation of the Trinity in the New Testament. b. New Testament proofs. The New Testament carries with it a clearer revelation of the distinctions in the Godhead. If in the Old Testament Jehovah is represented as the Redeemer and Saviour of His people, Job 19:15; Psalms 19:14; Psalms 78:35; Psalms 106:21; Isaiah 41:14; Isaiah 43:3; Isaiah 43:11; Isaiah 43:14; Isaiah 47:4; Isaiah 49:7; Isaiah 49:26; Isaiah 60:16; Jeremiah 14:3; Jeremiah 50:14; Hosea 13:3, in the New Testament the Son of God clearly stands out in that capacity, Matthew 1:21; Luke 1:76-79; Luke 2:17; John 4:42; Acts 5:3; Galatians 3:13; Galatians 4:5; Titus 2:13-14. And if in the Old Testament it is Jehovah that dwells among Israel and in the hearts of those that fear Him, Psalms 74:2; Psalms 135:21; Isaiah 8:18; Isaiah 57:15; Ezekiel 43:7-9; Joel 3:17; Joel 3:21; Zechariah 2:10-11, in the New Testament it is the Holy Spirit that dwells in the Church, Acts 2:4; Romans 8:9; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 3:16; Galatians 4:6; Ephesians 2:22; James 4:5. The New Testament offers the clear revelation of God sending His Son into the world, John 3:16; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 1:6; 1 John 4:9; and of both the Father and the Son, sending the Spirit, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7; Galatians 4:6. We find the Father addressing the Son, Mark 1:11; Luke 3:22, the Son communing with the Father, Matthew 11:25-26; Matthew 26:39; John 11:41; John 12:27-28, and the Holy Spirit praying to God in the hearts of believers, Romans 8:26. Thus the separate persons of the Trinity are made to stand out clearly before our minds. At the baptism of the Son the Father speaks from heaven, and the Holy Spirit descends in the form of a dove, Matthew 3:16-17. In the great commission Jesus mentions the three persons: "... baptizing them into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," Matthew 28:19. They are also named alongside of each other in 1 Corinthians 12:4-6; 2 Corinthians 13:14; and 1 Peter 1:2. The only passage speaking of tri-unity is 1 John 5:7 (Auth. Ver.), but this is of doubtful genuineness, and is therefore eliminated from the latest critical editions of the New Testament.

3. STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE TRINITY. The doctrine of the Trinity can best be discussed briefly in connection with various propositions, which constitute an epitome of the faith of the Church on this point. a. There is in the Divine Being but one indivisible essence (ousia, essentia). God is one in His essential being or constitutional nature. Some of the early Church Fathers used the term " substantia" as synonymous with "essentia," but later writers avoided this use of it in view of the fact that in the Latin Church " substantia" was used as a rendering of" hupostasis" as well as of " ousia ", and was therefore ambiguous. At present the two terms "substance" and "essence" are often used interchangeably. There is no objection to this, provided we bear in mind that they have slightly different connotations. Shedd distinguishes them as

follows: "Essence is from esse, to be, and denotes energetic being. Substance is from substare and denotes the latent possibility of being.... The term essence describes God as a sum-total of infinite perfections; the term substance describes Him as the underlying ground of infinite activities. The first is, comparatively, an active word; the last, a passive. The first is, comparatively, a spiritual, the last a material term. We speak of material substance rather than of material essence."40 Since the unity of God was already discussed in the preceding, it is not necessary to dwell on it in detail in the present connection. This proposition respecting the unity of God is based on such passages as Deuteronomy 6:4; James 2:19, on the self-existence and immutability of God, and on the fact that He is identified with His perfections as when He is called life, light, truth, righteousness, and so on. b. In this one Divine Being there are three Persons or individual subsistences, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. This is proved by the various passages referred to as substantiating the doctrine of the Trinity. To denote these distinctions in the Godhead, Greek writers generally employed the term hupostasis while Latin authors used the term persona, and sometimes substantia. Because the former was apt to be misleading and the latter was ambiguous, the Schoolmen coined the word subsistentia. The variety of the terms used points to the fact that their inadequacy was always felt. It is generally admitted that the word "person" is but an imperfect expression of the idea. In common parlance it denotes a separate rational and moral individual, possessed of self-consciousness, and conscious of his identity amid all changes. Experience teaches that where you have a person, you also have a distinct individual essence. Every person is a distinct and separate individual, in whom human nature is individualized. But in God there are no three individuals alongside of, and separate from, one another, but only personal self- distinctions within the Divine essence, which is not only generically, but also numerically, one. Consequently many preferred to speak of three hypostases in God, three different modes, not of manifestation, as Sabellius taught, but of existence or subsistence. Thus Calvin says: "By person, then, I mean a subsistence in the Divine essence. — a subsistence which, while related to the other two, is distinguished from them by incommunicable properties."41 This is perfectly permissible and may ward off misunderstanding, but should not cause us to lose sight of the fact that the self-distinctions in the Divine Being imply an "I" and "Thou" and "He," in the Being of God, which assume personal relations to one another. Matthew 3:16; Matthew 4:1; John 1:18; John 3:16; John 5:20-22; John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:13-15. c. The whole undivided essence of God belongs equally to each of the three persons. This means that the divine essence is not divided among the three persons, but is wholly with all its perfection in each one of the persons, so that they have a numerical unity of essence. The divine nature is distinguished from the human nature in that it can subsist wholly and indivisibly in more than one person. While three persons among men have only a specific unity of nature or essence, that is, share in the same kind of nature or essence, the persons in the Godhead have a numerical unity of essence, that is, possess the identical essence. Human nature or essence may be regarded as a species, of which each man has an individual part, so that there is a specific (from species) unity; but the divine nature is indivisible and therefore identical in the persons of the Godhead. It is numerically one and the same, and therefore the unity of the essence in the persons is a numerical unity. From this it follows that the divine essence is not an independent existence alongside of the three persons. It has no existence outside of and apart from the three persons. If it did, there would be no true unity, but a division that would lead into tetratheism. The personal distinction is one within the divine essence. This has, as it is usually termed, three modes of subsistence. Another conclusion which

follows from the preceding, is that there can be no subordination as to essential being of the one person of the Godhead to the other, and therefore no difference in personal dignity. This must be maintained over against the subordinationism of Origen and other early Church Fathers, and the Arminians, and of Clarke and other Anglican theologians. The only subordination of which we can speak, is a subordination in respect to order and relationship. It is especially when we reflect on the relation of the three persons to the divine essence that all analogies fail us and we become deeply conscious of the fact that the Trinity is a mystery far beyond our comprehension. It is the incomprehensible glory of the Godhead. Just as human nature is too rich and too full to be embodied in a single individual, and comes to its adequate expression only in humanity as a whole so the divine Being unfolds itself in its fulness only in its three fold subsistence of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. d. The subsistence and operation of the three persons in the divine Being is marked by a certain definite order. There is a certain order in the ontological Trinity. In personal subsistence the Father is first, the Son second, and the Holy Spirit third. It need hardly be said that this order does not pertain to any priority of time or of essential dignity, but only to the logical order of derivation. The Father is neither begotten by, nor proceeds from any other person; the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, and the Spirit proceeds from the Father and the Son from all eternity. Generation and procession take place within the Divine Being, and imply a certain subordination as to the manner of personal subsistence, but no subordination as far as the possession of the divine essence is concerned. This ontological Trinity and its inherent order is the metaphysical basis of the economical Trinity. It is but natural, therefore, that the order existing in the essential Trinity should be reflected in the opera ad extra that are more particularly ascribed to each one of the persons. Scripture clearly indicates this order in the so-called praepositiones distinctionales, ek, dia, and en, which are used in expressing the idea that all things are out of the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit. e. There are certain personal attributes by which the three persons are distinguished. These are also called opera ad intra, because they are works within the Divine Being, which do not terminate on the creature. They are personal operations, which are not performed by the three persons jointly and which are incommunicable. Generation is an act of the Father only; filiation belongs to the Son exclusively; and procession can only be ascribed to the Holy Spirit. As opera ad intra these works are distinguished from the opera ad extra,or those activities and effects by which the Trinity is manifested outwardly. These are never works of one person exclusively, but always works of the Divine Being as a whole. At the same time it is true that in the economical order of God’s works some of the opera ad extra are ascribed more particularly to one person, and some more especially to another. Though they are all works of the three persons jointly, creation is ascribed primarily to the Father, redemption to the Son, and sanctification to the Holy Spirit. This order in the divine operations points back to the essential order in God and forms the basis for what is generally known as the economic Trinity. f. The Church confesses the Trinity to be a mystery beyond the comprehension of man. The Trinity is a mystery, not merely in the Biblical sense that it is a truth, which was formerly hidden but is now revealed; but in the sense that man cannot comprehend it and make it intelligible. It is intelligible in some of its relations and modes of manifestation, but unintelligible in its essential nature. The many efforts that were made to explain the mystery were speculative rather than theological. They invariably resulted in the development of tritheistic or modalistic conceptions of God, in the denial of either the unity of the divine essence or the reality of the personal distinctions within the essence. The real difficulty lies in the relation in which the persons in the Godhead stand to the

divine essence and to one another; and this is a difficulty which the Church cannot remove, but only try to reduce to its proper proportion by a proper definition of terms. It has never tried to explain the mystery of the Trinity, but only sought to formulate the doctrine of the Trinity in such a manner that the errors which endangered it were warded off.

4. VARIOUS ANALOGIES SUGGESTED TO SHED LIGHT ON THE SUBJECT. From the very earliest time of the Christian era attempts were made to shed light on the trinitarian Being of God, on the trinity in unity and the unity in trinity, by analogies drawn from several sources. While these are all defective, it cannot be denied that they were of some value in the trinitarian discussion. This applies particularly to those derived from the constitutional nature, or from the psychology, of man. In view of the fact that man was created in the image of God, it is but natural to assume that, if there are some traces of the trinitarian life in the creature, the clearest of these will be found in man. a. Some of these illustrations or analogies were taken from inanimate nature or from plant life, as the water of the fountain, the creek, and the river, or of the rising mist, the cloud, and the rain, or in the form of rain, snow, and ice; and as the tree with its root, trunk, and branches. These and all similar illustrations are very defective. The idea of personality is, of course, entirely wanting; and while they do furnish examples of a common nature or substance, they are not examples of a common essence which is present, not merely in part, but in its entirety, in each of its constituent parts or forms. b. Others of greater importance were drawn from the life of man, particularly from the constitution and the processes of the human mind. These were considered to be of special significance, because man is the image-bearer of God. To this class belong the psychological unity of the intellect, the affections, and the will (Augustine); the logical unity of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis (Hegel); and the metaphysical unity of subject, object, and subject-object (Olshausen, Shedd). In all of these we do have a certain trinity in unity, but no tri-personality in unity of substance. c. Attention has also been called to the nature of love, which presupposes a subject and an object, and calls for the union of these two, so that, when love has its perfect work, three elements are included. But it is easy to see that this analogy is faulty, since it co-ordinates two persons and a relationship. It does not illustrate a tri-personality at all. Moreover, it only refers to a quality and not at all to a substance possessed in common by the subject and the object.

C.THE THREE PERSONS CONSIDERED SEPARATELY 1. THE FATHER OR THE FIRST PERSON IN THE TRINITY. a. The name "Father" as applied to God. This name is not always used of God in the same sense in Scripture. (1) Sometimes it is applied to the Triune God as the origin of all created things, 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 3:15; Hebrews 12:9; James 1:17. While in these cases the name applies to the triune God, it does refer more particularly to the first person, to whom the work of creation is more especially ascribed in Scripture. (2) The name is also ascribed to the triune God to express the theocratic relation in which He stands to Israel as His Old Testament people, Deuteronomy 32:6; Isaiah 63:16; Isaiah 64:8; Jeremiah 3:4; Malachi 1:6; Malachi 2:10; (3) In the New Testament the name is generally used to designate the triune God as the Father in an ethical sense of all His spiritual children, Matthew 5:45; Matthew 6:6-15; Romans 8:16; 1 John 3:1. (4) In an entirely different sense, however, the name is applied to the first person of the Trinity in His relation to the second person, John 1:14; John 1:18; John 5:17-26; John 8:54; John 14:12-13. The first person is the Father of the second in a metaphysical sense. This is the original fatherhood of God, of which all earthly fatherhood is but a faint reflection. b. The distinctive

property of the Father. The personal property of the Father is, negatively speaking, that He is not begotten or unbegotten, and positively speaking, the generation of the Son and the spiration of the Holy Spirit. It is true that spiration is also a work of the Son, but in Him it is not combined with generation. Strictly speaking, the only work that is peculiar to the Father exclusively is that of active generation. c.The opera ad extra ascribed more particularly to the Father. All the opera ad extra of God are works of the triune God, but in some of these works the Father is evidently in the foreground, such as: (1) Designing the work of redemption, including election, of which the Son was Himself an object, Psalms 2:7-9; Psalms 40:6-9; Isaiah 53:10; Matthew 12:32; Ephesians 1:3-6. (2) The works of creation and providence, especially in their initial stages, 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 2:9. (3) The work of representing the Trinity in the Counsel of Redemption, as the holy and righteous Being, whose right was violated, Psalms 2:7-9; Psalms 40:6-9; John 6:37-38; John 17:4-7.

2. THE SON OR THE SECOND PERSON IN THE TRINITY. a. The name "Son" as applied to the second person. The second person in the Trinity is called "Son" or "Son of God" in more than one sense of the word. (1) In a metaphysical sense. This must be maintained over against Socinians and Unitarians, who reject the idea of a tri-personal Godhead, see in Jesus a mere man, and regard the name "Son of God" as applied to Him primarily as an honorary title conferred upon Him. It is quite evident that Jesus Christ is represented as the Son of God in Scripture, irrespective of His position and work as Mediator. (a) He is spoken of as the Son of God from a pre- incarnation standpoint, for instance in John 1:14; John 1:18; Galatians 4:4. (b) He is called the "only-begotten" Son of God or of the Father, a term that would not apply to Him, if He were the Son of God only in an official or in an ethical sense, John 1:14; John 1:18; John 3:16; John 3:18; 1 John 4:9. Compare 2 Samuel 7:14; Job 2:1; Psalms 2:7; Luke 3:38; John 1:12. (c) In some passages it is abundantly evident from the context that the name is indicative of the deity of Christ, John 5:18-25; Hebrews 1:1-14. (d) While Jesus teaches His disciples to speak of God, and to address Him as "our Father," He Himself speaks of Him, and addresses Him, simply as "Father" or "my Father," and thereby shows that He was conscious of a unique relationship to the Father, Matthew 6:9; Matthew 7:21; John 20:17. (e) According to Matthew 11:27, Jesus as the Son of God claims a unique knowledge of God, a knowledge such as no one else can possess. (f) The Jews certainly understood Jesus to claim that He was the Son of God in a metaphysical sense, for they regarded the manner in which He spoke of Himself as the Son of God as blasphemy, Matthew 26:63; John 5:18; John 10:36. —— (2) In an official or Messianic sense. In some passages this meaning of the name is combined with the one previously mentioned. The following passages apply the name "Son of God" to Christ as Mediator, Matthew 8:29; Matthew 26:63 (where this meaning is combined with the other); Matthew 27:40; John 1:49; John 11:27. This Messiah-Sonship is, of course, related to the original Sonship of Christ. It was only because He was the essential and eternal Son of God, that He could be called the Son of God as Messiah. Moreover, the Messiah-Sonship reflects the eternal Sonship of Christ. It is from the point of view of this Messiah-Sonship that God is even called the God of the Son, 2 Corinthians 11:31; Ephesians 1:3, and is sometimes mentioned as God in distinction from the Lord, John 17:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:5-6. —— (3) In a nativistic sense. The name "Son of God" is given to Jesus also in view of the fact that He owed His birth to the paternity of God. He was begotten, according to His human nature, by the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit, and is in that sense the Son of God. This is clearly indicated in Luke 1:32; Luke 1:35, and may probably be inferred also from

John 1:13. b. The personal subsistence of the Son. The personal subsistence of the Son must be maintained over against all Modalists, who in one way or another deny the personal distinctions in the Godhead. The personality of the Son may be substantiated as follows: (1) The way in which the Bible speaks of the Father and the Son alongside of each other implies that the one is just as personal as the other, and is also indicative of a personal relationship existing between the two. (2) The use of the appelatives "only-begotten" and "firstborn" imply that the relation between the Father and the Son, while unique, can nevertheless be represented approximately as one of generation and birth. The name "firstborn" is found in Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:6, and emphasizes the fact of the eternal generation of the Son. It simply means that He was before all creation. (3) The distinctive use of the term "Logos" in Scripture points in the same direction. This term is applied to the Son, not in the first place to express His relation to the world (which is quite secondary), but to indicate the intimate relation in which He stands to the Father, the relation like that of a word to the speaker. In distinction from philosophy, the Bible represents the Logos as personal and identifies Him with the Son of God, John 1:1-14; 1 John 1:1-3. (4) The description of the Son as the image, or even as the very image of God in 2 Corinthians 4:4; Colossians 1:15; Hebrews 1:3. God clearly stands out in Scripture as a personal Being. If the Son of God is the very image of God, He too must be a person. c. The eternal generation of the Son. The personal property of the Son is that He is eternally begotten of the Father (briefly called "filiation"), and shares with the Father in the spiration of the Spirit. The doctrine of the generation of the Son is suggested by the Biblical representation of the first and second persons of the Trinity as standing in the relation of Father and Son to each other. Not only do the names "Father" and "Son" suggest the generation of the latter by the former, but the Son is also repeatedly called "the only-begotten," John 1:14; John 1:18; John 3:16; John 3:18; Hebrews 11:17; 1 John 4:9. Several particulars deserve emphasis in connection with the generation of the Son: (1) It is a neceesary act of God. Origen, one of the very first to speak of the generation of the Son, regarded it as an act dependent on the Father’s will and therefore free. Others at various times expressed the same opinion. But it was clearly seen by Athanasius and others that a generation dependent on the optional will of the Father would make the existence of the Son contingent and thus rob Him of His deity. Then the Son would not be equal to and homoousios with the Father, for the Father exists necessarily, and cannot be conceived of as non-existent. The generation of the Son must be regarded as a necessary and perfectly natural act of God. This does not mean that it is not related to the Father’s will in any sense of the word. It is an act of the Father’s necessary will, which merely means that His concomitant will takes perfect delight in it. (2) It is an eternal act of the Father. This naturally follows from the preceding. If the generation of the Son is a necessary act of the Father, so that it is impossible to conceive of Him as not generating, it naturally shares in the eternity of the Father. This does not mean, however, that it is an act that was completed in the far distant past, but rather that it is a timeless act, the act of an eternal present, an act always continuing and yet ever completed. Its eternity follows not only from the eternity of God, but also from the divine immutability and from the true deity of the Son. In addition to this it can be inferred from all those passages of Scripture which teach either the pre-existence of the Son or His equality with the Father, Micah 5:2; John 1:18; John 3:16; John 5:17-18; John 5:30; John 5:36; Acts 13:33; John 17:5; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:3. The statement of Psalms 2:7, "Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee," is generally quoted to prove the generation of the Son, but, according to some, with rather doubtful propriety, cf. Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5. They surmise that these words

refer to the raising up of Jesus as Messianic King, and to the recognition of Him as Son of God in an official sense, and should probably be linked up with the promise found in 2 Samuel 7:14, just as they are in Hebrews 1:5. (3) It is a generation of the personal subsistence rather than of the divine essence of the Son. Some have spoken as if the Father generated the essence of the Son, but this is equivalent to saying that He generated His own essence, for the essence of both the Father and the Son is exactly the same. It is better to say that the Father generates the personal subsistence of the Son, but thereby also communicates to Him the divine essence in its entirety. But in doing this we should guard against the idea that the Father first generated a second person, and then communicated the divine essence to this person, for that would lead to the conclusion that the Son was not generated out of the divine essence, but created out of nothing. In the work of generation there was a communication of essence; it was one indivisible act. And in virtue of this communication the Son also has life in Himself. This is in agreement with the statement of Jesus, "For as the Father hath life in Himself, even so gave He to the Son also to have -life in Himself," John 5:26. (4) It is a generation that must be conceived of as spiritual and divine. In opposition to the Arians, who insisted that the generation of the Son necessarily implied separation or division in the divine Being, the Church Fathers stressed the fact that this generation must not be conceived in a physical and creaturely way, but should be regarded as spiritual and divine, excluding all idea of division or change. It brings distinctio and distributio, but no diversitas and divisio in the divine Being. (Bavinck) The most striking analogy of it is found in man’s thinking and speaking, and the Bible itself seems to point to this, when it speaks of the Son as the Logos. (5) The following definition may be given of the generation of the Son: It is that eternal and necessary act of the first person in the Trinity, whereby He, within the divine Being, is the ground of a second personal subsistence like His own, and puts this second person in possession of the whole divine essence, without any division, alienation, or change. d. The deity of the Son. The deity of the Son was denied in the early Church by the Ebionites and the Alogi, and also by the dynamic Monarchians and the Arians. In the days of the Reformation the Socinians followed their example, and spoke of Jesus as a mere man. The same position is taken by Schleiermacher and Ritschl, by a host of liberal scholars, particularly in Germany, by the Unitarians, and by the Modernists and Humanists of the present day. This denial is possible only for those who disregard the teachings of Scripture, for the Bible contains an abundance of evidence for the deity of Christ.42 We find that Scripture (1) explicitly asserts the deity of the Son in such passages as John 1:1; John 20:28; Romans 9:5; Php 2:6; Titus 2:13; 1 John 5:20; (2) applies divine names to Him, Isaiah 9:6; Isaiah 40:3; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Joel 2:32 (comp. Acts 2:21); 1 Timothy 3:16; (3) ascribes to Him divine attributes, such as eternal existence, Isaiah 9:6; John 1:1-2; Revelation 1:8; Revelation 22:13, omnipresence, Matthew 18:20; Matthew 28:20; John 3:13, omniscience, John 2:24-25; John 21:17; Revelation 2:23, omnipotence. Isaiah 9:6; Php 3:21; Revelation 1:8, immutability, Hebrews 1:10-12; Hebrews 13:8, and in general every attribute belonging to the Father, Colossians 2:9; (4)speaks of Him as doing divine works, as creation, John 1:3; John 1:10; Colossians 1:16; Hebrews 1:2; Hebrews 1:10, providence, Luke 10:22; John 3:35; Ephesians 1:22; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3, the forgiveness of sins, Matthew 9:2-7; Mark 2:7-10; Colossians 3:13, resurrection and judgment, Matthew 25:31-32; John 5:19-29; Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31; Php 3:21; 2 Timothy 4:1, the final dissolution and renewal of all things, Hebrews 1:10-12; Php 3:21; Revelation 21:5, and (5) accords Him divine honour, John 5:22-23; John 14:1; 1 Corinthians 15:19; 2 Corinthians 13:13; Hebrews 1:6; Matthew 28:19. e. The place of the Son in

the economic Trinity. It should be noted that the order of existence in the essential or ontological Trinity is reflected in the economic Trinity. The Son occupies the second place in the opera ad extra. If all things are out of the Father, they are through the Son, 1 Corinthians 8:6. If the former is represented as the absolute cause of all things, the latter stands out clearly as the mediating cause. This applies in the natural sphere, where all things are created and maintained through the Son, John 1:3; John 1:10; Hebrews 1:2-3. He is the light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world, John 1:9. It applies also to the work of redemption. In the Counsel of Redemption He takes upon Himself to be Surety for His people, and to execute the Father's plan of redemption, Psalms 40:7-8. He works this out more particularly in His incarnation, sufferings, and death, Ephesians 1:3-14. In connection with His function the attributes of wisdom and power, 1 Corinthians 1:24; Hebrews 1:3, and of mercy and grace, are especially ascribed to Him, 2 Corinthians 13:13; Ephesians 5:2; Ephesians 5:25.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT OR THE THIRD PERSON IN THE TRINITY. a. The name applied to the third person of the Trinity. While we are told in John 4:24 that God is Spirit, the name is applied more particularly to the third person in the Trinity. The Hebrew term by which He is designated is ruach, and the Greek pneuma, both of which are, like the Latin spiritus derived from roots which mean "to breathe." Hence they can also be rendered "breath," Genesis 2:7; Genesis 6:17; Ezekiel 37:5-6, or "wind," Genesis 8:1; 1 Kings 19:11; John 3:8. The Old Testament generally uses the term "spirit" without any qualification, or speaks of "the Spirit of God" or "the Spirit of the Lord," and employs the term "Holy Spirit" only in Psalms 51:11; Isaiah 63:10-11, while in the New Testament this has become a far more common designation of the third person in the Trinity. It is a striking fact that, while the Old Testament repeatedly calls God "the Holy One of Israel," Psalms 71:22; Psalms 89:18; Isaiah 10:20; Isaiah 41:14; Isaiah 43:3; Isaiah 48:17, the New Testament seldom applies the adjective "holy" to God in general, but uses it frequently to characterize the Spirit. This is in all probability due to the fact that it was especially in the Spirit and His sanctifying work that God revealed Himself as the Holy One. It is the Holy Spirit that takes up His abode in the hearts of believers, that separates them unto God, and that cleanses them from sin. b. The personality of the Holy Spirit. The terms "Spirit of God" or "Holy Spirit" do not suggest personality as much as the term "Son" does. Moreover, the person of the Holy Spirit did not appear in a clearly discernible personal form among men, as the person of the Son of God did. As a result the personality of the Holy Spirit was often called in question, and therefore deserves special attention. The personality of the Spirit was denied in the early Church by the Monarchians and the Pneumatomachians. In this denial they were followed by the Socinians in the days of the Reformation. Still later Schleiermacher, Ritschl, the Unitarians, present-day Modernists, and all modern Sabellians reject the personality of the Holy Spirit. It is often said in the present day that those passages which seem to imply the personality of the Holy Spirit simply contain personifications. But personifications are certainly rare in the prose writings of the New Testament and can easily be recognized. Moreover, such an explanation clearly destroys the sense of some of these passages, e.g. John 14:26; John 16:7-11; Romans 8:26. Scripture proof for the personality of the Holy Spirit is quite sufficient: (1) Designations that are proper to personality are given to Him. Though pneuma is neuter, yet the masculine pronoun ekeinos is used of the Spirit in John 16:14; and in Ephesians 1:14 some of the best authorities have the masculine relative pronoun hos. Moreover, the name Parakletos is applied to Him, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:7, which cannot be translated by "comfort," or be regarded as the name of any abstract influence. That a person is

meant is indicated by the fact that the Holy Spirit as Comforter is placed in juxtaposition with Christ as the Comforter about to depart, to whom the same term is applied in 1 John 2:1. It is true that this term is followed by the neuters ho and auto in John 14:16-18, but this is due to the fact that pneuma intervenes. (2) The characteristics of a person are ascribed to Him, such as intelligence, John 14:26; John 15:26; Romans 8:16, will, Acts 16:7; 1 Corinthians 12:11, and affections, Isaiah 63:10; Ephesians 4:30. Moreover, He performs acts proper to personality. He searches, speaks, testifies, commands, reveals, strives, creates, makes intercession, raises the dead, etc., Genesis 1:2; Genesis 6:3; Luke 12:12; John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:8; Acts 8:29; Acts 13:2; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11. What does all these things cannot be a mere power or influence, but must be a person. (3) He is represented as standing in such relations to other persons as imply His own personality. He is placed in juxtaposition with the apostles in Acts 15:28, with Christ in John 16:14, and with the Father and the Son in Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:13; 1 Peter 1:1-2; Jude 1:20-21. Sound exegesis requires that in these passages the Holy Spirit be regarded as a -person. (4) There are also passages in which the Holy Spirit is distinguished from His own power, Luke 1:35; Luke 4:14; Acts 10:38; Romans 15:13; 1 Corinthians 2:4. Such passages would become tautological, meaningless, and even absurd, if they were interpreted on the principle that the Holy Spirit is merely a power. This can be shown by substituting for the name "Holy Spirit" such a word as "power" or "influence." c. The relation of the Holy Spirit to the other persons in the trinity. The early trinitarian controversies led to the conclusion that the Holy Spirit, as well as the Son, is of the same essence as the Father, and is therefore consubstantial with Him. And the long drawn dispute about the question, whether the Holy Spirit proceeded from the Father alone or also from the Son, was finally settled by the Synod of Toledo in 589 by adding the word "Filioque" to the Latin version of the Constantinopolitan Creed: " Credimus in Spiritum Sanctum qui a Patre Filioque procedit " ("We believe in the Holy Spirit, who proceeds from the Father and the Son"). This procession of the Holy Spirit, briefly called spiration, is his personal property. Much of what was said respecting the generation of the Son also applies to the spiration of the Holy Spirit, and need not be repeated. The following points of distinction between the two may be noted, however: (1) Generation is the work of the Father only; spiration is the work of both the Father and the Son. (2) By generation the Son is enabled to take part in the work of spiration, but the Holy Spirit acquires no such power. (3) In logical order generation precedes spiration. It should be remembered, however, that all this implies no essential subordination of the Holy Spirit to the Son. In spiration as well as in generation there is a communication of the whole of the divine essence, so that the Holy Spirit is on an equality with the Father and the Son. The doctrine of the procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son is based on John 15:26, and on the fact that the Spirit is also called the Spirit of Christ and of the Son, Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6, and is sent by Christ into the world. Spiration may be defined as that eternal and necessary act of the first and second persons in the Trinity whereby they, within the divine Being, become the ground of the personal subsistence of the Holy Spirit, and put the third person in possession of the whole divine essence, without any division, alienation or change. The Holy Spirit stands in the closest possible relation to the other persons. In virtue of His procession from the Father and the Son the Spirit is represented as standing in the closest possible relation to both of the other persons. From 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, we may infer, not that the Spirit is the same as the self- consciousness of God, but that He is as closely connected with God the Father as the soul of man is with man. In 2 Corinthians 3:17, we read, "Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Here

the Lord (Christ) is identified with the Spirit, not with respect to personality, but as to manner of working. In the same passage the Spirit is called "the Spirit of the Lord." The work for which the Holy Spirit was sent into the Church on the day of Pentecost was based on His unity with the Father and the Son. He came as the Parakletos to take the place of Christ and to do His work on earth, that is, to teach, proclaim, testify, bear witness, etc., as the Son had done. Now in the case of the Son this revelational work rested on His unity with the Father. Just so the work of the Spirit is based on His unity with the Father and the Son, John 16:14-15. Notice the words of Jesus in this passage: "He shall glorify me; for He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are mine: therefore said I, that He taketh of mine, and shall declare it unto you." d. The deity of the Holy Spirit. The deity of the Holy Spirit may be established from Scripture by a line of proof quite similar to that employed in connection with the Son: (1) Divine names are given to Him, Exodus 17:7 (comp. Hebrews 3:7-9); Acts 5:3-4; Acts 5:3-4; 1 Corinthians 3:16; 2 Timothy 3:16 (comp. 2 Peter 1:21). (2) Divine perfections are ascribed to Him, such as omnipresence, Psalms 139:7-10, omniscience, Isaiah 40:13-14 (comp. Romans 11:34); 1 Corinthians 2:10-11, omnipotence, 1 Corinthians 12:11; Romans 15:19, and eternity, Hebrews 9:14 (?). (3) Divine works are performed by Him, such as creation, Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Job 33:4Job 26:13">, providential renovation, Psalms 104:30, regeneration, John 3:5-6; Titus 3:5, and the resurrection of the dead, Romans 8:11. (4) Divine honour is also paid to Him, Matthew 28:19; Romans 9:1; 2 Corinthians 13:13. e. The work of the Holy Spirit in the divine economy. There are certain works which are more particularly ascribed to the Holy Spirit, not only in the general economy of God, but also in the special economy of redemption. In general it may be said that it is the special task of the Holy Spirit to bring things to completion by acting immediately upon and in the creature. Just as He Himself is the person who completes the Trinity, so His work is the completion of God’s contact with His creatures and the consummation of the work of God in every sphere. It follows the work of the Son, just as the work of the Son follows that of the Father. It is important to bear this in mind, for if the work of the Holy Spirit is divorced from the objective work of the Son, false mysticism is bound to result. The work of the Holy Spirit includes the following in the natural sphere: (1) The generation of life. As being is out of the Father, and thought through the Son, so life is mediated by the Spirit, Genesis 1:3; Job 26:13; Psalms 33:6 (?); Psalms 104:30. In that respect He puts the finishing touch to the work of creation. (2) The general inspiration and qualification of men. The Holy Spirit inspires and qualifies men for their official tasks, for work in science and art, etc., Exodus 28:3; Exodus 31:2-3; Exodus 31:6; Exodus 35:35; 1 Samuel 11:6; 1 Samuel 16:13-14. Of even greater importance is the work of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of redemption. Here the following points may be mentioned: (1) The preparation and qualification of Christ for His mediatorial work. He prepared Christ a body and thus enabled Him to become a sacrifice for sin, Luke 1:35; Hebrews 10:5-7. In the words "a body thou didst prepare for me," the writer of Hebrews follows the Septuagint. The meaning is: Thou hast enabled me by the preparation of a holy body to become a real sacrifice. At His baptism Christ was anointed with the Holy Spirit, Luke 3:22, and received the qualifying gifts of the Holy Spirit without measure, John 3:24. (2) The inspiration of Scripture. The Holy Spirit inspired Scripture, and thus brought to men the special revelation of God, 1 Corinthians 2:13; 2 Peter 1:21, the knowledge of the work of redemption which is in Christ Jesus. (3) The formation and augmentation of the Church. The Holy Spirit forms and increases the Church, the mystical body of Jesus Christ, by regeneration and sanctification, and dwells in it as the principle of the new life, Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 2:22;

1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 12:4 ff. (4) Teaching and guiding the Church. The Holy Spirit testifies to Christ and leads the Church in all the truth. By doing this He manifests the glory of God and of Christ, increases the knowledge of the Saviour, keeps the Church from error, and prepares her for her eternal destiny, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:13-14; Acts 5:32; Hebrews 10:15; 1 John 2:27.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. Does pagan literature contain any analogies of the doctrine of the Trinity? Does the development of the doctrine of the Trinity start from the ontological or from the economical Trinity? Can the economical Trinity be understood apart from the ontological? Why is the doctrine of the Trinity discussed by some as introductory to the doctrine of redemption? What is the Hegelian conception of the Trinity? How did Swedenborg conceive of it? Where do we find Sabellianism in modern theology? Why is it objectionable to hold that the Trinity is purely economical? What objections are there to the modern Humanitarian conception of the Trinity? Why does Barth treat of the Trinity in the Prolegomena to theology? What is the practical significance of the doctrine of the Trinity?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref Dogm. II, pp. 260-347; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Deo II, pp. 3-255; Vos. Geref. Dogm. I, pp. 36-81; Mastricht, Godgeleerdheit I, pp. 576-662; Turretin, Opera, Locus Tertius Hodge, Syst. Theol. I, pp. 442-534; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol. pp. 174-211; Curtiss, The Chr. Faith, pp. 483-510; Harris, God, Creator and Lord of All, I, pp. 194-407; Illingworth, The Doctrine of the Trinity; Adeney, The Christian Conception of God, pp. 215-246; Steenstra, The Being of God as Unity and Trinity, pp. 159-269; Clarke, The Chr. Doct. of God, pp. 227-248; Bartlett, The Triune God; Liddon, The Divinity of Our Lord; Mackintosh, The Doctrine of the Person of Jesus Christ; Warfield, The Lord of Glory; ibid, The Spirit of God in the Old Testament and The Biblical Doctrine of the Trinity (both in Biblical Doctrines), pp. 101 ff.; ibid., Calvin's Doctrine of the Trinity (in Calvin and Calvinism); Kuyper, Het Werk van den Heiligen Geest, cf. Index; Owen, A Discourse Concerning the Holy Spirit, cf. Index; Smeaton, The Doct. of the Holy Spirit; Pohle-Preuss, The Divine Trinity.

04.1.2.1. The Divine Decrees in General

I. The Divine Decrees in General THE DOCTRINE OF THE DECREES IN THEOLOGY

Reformed theology stresses the sovereignty of God in virtue of which He has sovereignly determined from all eternity whatsoever will come to pass, and works His sovereign will in His entire creation, both natural and spiritual, according to His pre- determined plan. It is in full agreement with Paul when he says that God "worketh all things after the counsel of His will," Ephesians 1:11. For that reason it is but natural that, in passing from the discussion of the Being of God to that of the works of God, it should begin with a study of the divine decrees. This is the only proper theological method. A theological discussion of the works of God should take its starting point in God, both in the work of creation and in that of redemption or recreation. It is only as issuing from, and as related to, God that the works of God come into consideration as a part of theology. In spite of this fact, however, Reformed theology stands practically alone in its emphasis on the doctrine of the decrees. Lutheran theology is less theological and more anthropological. It does not consistently take its starting point in God and consider all things as divinely pre-determined, but reveals a tendency to consider things from below rather than from above. And in so far as it does believe in pre-determination, it is inclined to limit this to the good that is in the world, and more particularly to the blessings of salvation. It is a striking fact that many Lutheran theologians are silent, or all but silent, respecting the doctrine of the decrees of God in general and discuss only the doctrine of pre-destination, and regard this as conditional rather than absolute. In the doctrine of predestination Lutheran theology shows strong affinity with Arminianism. Krauth (an influential leader of the Lutheran Church in our country) even says: "The views of Arminius himself, in regard to the five points, were formed under Lutheran influences, and do not differ essentially from those of the Lutheran Church; but on many points in the developed system now known as Arminianism, the Lutheran Church has no affinity whatever with it, and on these points would sympathize far more with Calvinism, though she has never believed that in order to escape from Pelagianism, it is necessary to run into the doctrine of absolute predestination. The ’Formula of Concord’ touches the five points almost purely on their practical sides, and on them arrays itself against Calvinism, rather by the negation of the inferences which result logically from that system, than by express condemnation of its fundamental theory in its abstract form."43 In so far as Lutheran theologians include the doctrine of predestination in their system, they generally consider it in connection with Soteriology.

Naturally, Arminian theology does not place the doctrine of the decrees in the foreground. That of the decrees in general is usually conspicuous by its absence. Pope brings in the doctrine of predestination only in passing, and Miley introduces it as an issue for discussion. Raymond discusses only the doctrine of election, and Watson devotes considerable space to this in considering the extent of the atonement. One and all reject the doctrine of absolute predestination, and substitute for it a conditional predestination. Modern liberal theology does not concern itself with the doctrine of predestination, since it is fundamentally anthropological. In the "theology of crisis" it is again recognized, but in a form that is neither Scriptural nor historical. In spite of its

appeal to the Reformers, it departs widely from the doctrine of predestination, as it was taught by Luther and Calvin.

B. SCRIPTURAL NAMES FOR THE DIVINE DECREES From the purely immanent works of God (opera ad intra) we must distinguish those which bear directly on the creatures (opera ad extra). Some theologians, in order to avoid misunderstanding, prefer to speak of opera immanentia and opera exeuntia, and subdivide the former into two classes, opera immanentia per se, which are the opera personalia (generation, filiation, spiration), and opera immanentia donec exeunt, which are opera essentialia, that is, works of the triune God, in distinction from works of any one of the persons of the Godhead, but are immanent in God, until they are realized in the works of creation, providence, and redemption. The divine decrees constitute this class of divine works. They are not described in the abstract in Scripture, but are placed before us in their historical realization. Scripture uses several terms for the eternal decree of God.

1. OLD TESTAMENT TERMS. There are some terms which stress the intellectual element in the decree, such as ’etsah from ya’ats, to counsel, to give advice, Job 38:2; Isaiah 14:26; Isaiah 46:11; sod from yasad, to sit together in deliberation (niphal), Jeremiah 23:18; Jeremiah 23:22; and mezimmah from zamam, to meditate, to have in mind, to purpose, Jeremiah 4:28; Jeremiah 51:12; Proverbs 30:32. Besides these there are terms which emphasize the volitional element, such as chaphets, inclination, will, good pleasure, Isaiah 53:10; and ratson, to please, to be delighted, and thus denoting delight, good pleasure, or sovereign will, Psalms 51:19; Isaiah 49:8.

2. NEW TESTAMENT TERMS. The New Testament also contains a number of significant terms. The most general word is boule designating the decree in general, but also pointing to the fact that the purpose of God is based on counsel and deliberation, Acts 2:23; Acts 4:28; Hebrews 6:17. Another rather general word is thelema, which, as applied to the counsel of God, stresses the volitional rather than the deliberative element, Ephesians 1:11. The word eudokia emphasizes more particularly the freedom of the purpose of God, and the delight with which it is accompanied, though this idea is not always present, Matthew 11:26; Luke 2:14; Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 1:9. Other words are used more especially to designate that part of the divine decree that pertains in a very special sense to God’s moral creatures, and is known as predestination. These terms will be considered in connection with the discussion of that subject.

C. THE NATURE OF THE DIVINE DECREES The decree of God may be defined with the Westminster Shorter Catechism as " His eternal purpose according to the counsel of His will, whereby, for His own glory, He hath foreordained whatsoever comes to pass."

1. THE DIVINE DECREE IS ONE. Though we often speak of the decrees of God in the plural, yet in its own nature the divine decree is but a single act of God. This is already suggested by the fact that the Bible speaks of it as a prothesis, a purpose or counsel. It follows also from the very nature of God. His knowledge is all immediate and simultaneous rather than successive like ours, and His comprehension of it is always complete. And the decree that is founded on it is also a single, all-comprehensive, and simultaneous act. As an eternal and immutable decree it could not be otherwise. There is, therefore, no series of decrees in God, but simply one comprehensive plan, embracing all that comes to pass. Our finite comprehension, however, constrains us to make distinctions, and this accounts for the fact that we often speak of the decrees of God in the plural. This manner of speaking is perfectly legitimate, provided we do not lose sight of the unity of the

divine decree, and of the inseparable connection of the various decrees as we conceive of them.

2. THE RELATION OF THE DECREE TO THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD. The decree of God bears the closest relation to the divine knowledge. There is in God, as we have seen, a necessary knowledge, including all possible causes and results. This knowledge furnishes the material for the decree; it is the perfect fountain out of which God drew the thoughts which He desired to objectify. Out of this knowledge of all things possible He chose, by an act of His perfect will, led by wise considerations, what He wanted to bring to realization, and thus formed His eternal purpose. The decree of God is, in turn, the foundation of His free knowledge or scientia libera. It is the knowledge of things as they are realized in the course of history. While the necessary knowledge of God logically precedes the decree, His free knowledge logically follows it. This must be maintained over against all those who believe in a conditional predestination (such as Semi-Pelagians and Arminians), since they make the pre-determinations of God dependent on His foreknowledge. Some of the words used to denote the divine decree point to an element of deliberation in the purpose of God. It would be a mistake, however, to infer from this that the plan of God is the result of any deliberation which implies short-sightedness or hesitation, for it is simply an indication of the fact that there is no blind decree in God, but only an intelligent and deliberate purpose.

3. THE DECREE RELATES TO BOTH GOD AND MAN. The decree has reference, first of all, to the works of God. It is limited, however, to God's opera ad extra or transitive acts, and does not pertain to the essential Being of God, nor to the immanent activities within the Divine Being which result in the trinitarian distinctions. God did not decree to be holy and righteous, nor to exist as three persons in one essence or to generate the Son. These things are as they are necessarily and are not dependent on the optional will of God. That which is essential to the inner Being of God can form no part of the contents of the decree. This includes only the opera ad extra or exeuntia. But while the decree pertains primarily to the acts of God Himself, it is not limited to these, but also embraces the actions of His free creatures. And the fact that they are included in the decree renders them absolutely certain, though they are not all effectuated in the same manner. In the case of some things God decided, not merely that they would come to pass, but that He Himself would bring them to pass, either immediately, as in the work of creation, or through the mediation of secondary causes, which are continually energized by His power. He Himself assumes the responsibility for their coming to pass. There are other things, however, which God included in His decree and thereby rendered certain, but which He did not decide to effectuate Himself, as the sinful acts of His rational creatures. The decree, in so far as it pertains to these acts, is generally called God's permissive decree. This name does not imply that the futurition of these acts is not certain to God, but simply that He permits them to come to pass by the free agency of His rational creatures. God assumes no responsibility for these sinful acts whatsoever.

4. THE DECREE TO ACT IS NOT THE ACT ITSELF. The decrees are an internal manifestation and exercise of the divine attributes, rendering the futurition of things certain but this exercise of the intelligent volition of God should not be confounded with the realization of its objects in creation, providence, and redemption. The decree to create is not creation itself, nor is the decree to justify justification itself. A distinction must be made between the decree and its execution. God's so ordering the universe that man will pursue a certain course of action, is also quite a

different thing from His commanding him to do so. The decrees are not addressed to man, and are not of the nature of a statute law; neither do they impose compulsion or obligation on the wills of men.

D. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIVINE DECREE

1. IT IS FOUNDED IN DIVINE WISDOM. The word "counsel," which is one of the terms by which the decree is designated, suggests careful deliberation and consultation. It may contain a suggestion of an intercommunion between the three persons of the Godhead. In speaking of God's revelation of the mystery that was formerly hid in Him, Paul says that this was "to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the Church the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which He purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," Ephesians 3:10-11. The wisdom of the decree also follows from the wisdom displayed in the realization of the eternal purpose of God. The poet sings in Psalms 104:24, "O Jehovah, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all." The same idea is expressed in Proverbs 3:19, "Jehovah by wisdom founded the earth; by understanding He established the heavens." Cf. also Jeremiah 10:12; Jeremiah 51:15. The wisdom of the counsel of the Lord can also be inferred from the fact that it stands fast forever, Psalms 33:11; Proverbs 19:21. There may be a great deal in the decree that passes human understanding and is inexplicable to the finite mind, but it contains nothing that is irrational or arbitrary. God formed his determination with wise insight and knowledge.

2. IT IS ETERNAL. The divine decree is eternal in the sense that it lies entirely in eternity. In a certain sense it can be said that all the acts of God are eternal, since there is no succession of moments in the Divine Being. But some of them terminate in time, as, for instance, creation and justification. Hence we do not call them eternal but temporal acts of God. The decree, however, while it relates to things outside of God, remains in itself an act within the Divine Being, and is therefore eternal in the strictest sense of the word. Therefore it also partakes of the simultaneousness and the successionlessness of the eternal, Acts 1:18; Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9. The eternity of the decree also implies that the order in which the different elements in it stand to each other may not be regarded as temporal, but only as logical. There is a real chronological order in the events as effectuated, but not in the decree respecting them.

3. IT IS EFFICACIOUS. This does not mean that God has determined to bring to pass Himself by a direct application of His power all things which are included in His decree, but only that what He has decreed will certainly come to pass; that nothing can thwart His purpose. Says Dr. A. A. Hodge: "The decree itself provides in every case that the event shall be effected by causes acting in a manner perfectly consistent with the nature of the event in question. Thus in the case of every free act of a moral agent the decree provides at the same time — (a) That the agent shall be a free agent. (b) That his antecedents and all the antecedents of the act in question shall be what they are. (c) That all the present conditions of the act shall be what they are. (d) That the act shall be perfectly spontaneous and free on the part of the agent. (e) That it shall be certainly future. Psalms 33:11; Proverbs 19:21; Isaiah 46:10."44

4. IT IS IMMUTABLE. Man may and often does alter his plans for various reasons. It may be that in making his plan he lacked seriousness of purpose, that he did not fully realize what the plan involved, or that he is wanting the power to carry it out. But in God nothing of the kind is

conceivable. He is not deficient in knowledge, veracity, or power. Therefore He need not change His decree because of a mistake of ignorance, nor because of inability to carry it out. And He will not change it, because He is the immutable God and because He is faithful and true. Job 23:13-14; Psalms 33:11; Isaiah 46:10; Luke 22:22; Acts 2:23.

5. IT IS UNCONDITIONAL OR ABSOLUTE. This means that it is not dependent in any of its particulars on anything that is not part and parcel of the decree itself. The various elements in the decree are indeed mutually dependent but nothing in the plan is conditioned by anything that is not in the decree. The execution of the plan may require means or be dependent on certain conditions, but then these means or conditions have also been determined in the decree. God did not simply decree to save sinners without determining the means to effectuate the decree. The means leading to the pre- determined end were also decreed, Acts 2:23; Ephesians 2:8; 1 Peter 1:2. The absolute character of the decree follows from its eternity, its immutability, and its exclusive dependence on the good pleasure of God. It is denied by all Semi-Pelagians and Arminians.

6. IT IS UNIVERSAL OR ALL-COMPREHENSIVE. The decree includes whatsoever comes to pass in the world, whether it be in the physical or in the moral realm, whether it be good or evil, Ephesians 1:11. It includes: (a) the good actions of men, Ephesians 2:10; (b) their wicked acts, Proverbs 16:4; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28; (c) contingent events, Genesis 45:8; Genesis 50:20; Proverbs 16:33; (d) the means as well as the end, Psalms 119:89-91; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Ephesians 1:4; (e) the duration of man’s life, Job 14:5; Psalms 39:4, and the place of his habitation, Acts 17:26.

7. WITH REFERENCE TO SIN IT IS PERMISSIVE. It is customary to speak of the decree of God respecting moral evil as permissive. By His decree God rendered the sinful actions of man infallibly certain without deciding to effectuate them by acting immediately upon and in the finite will. This means that God does not positively work in man "both to will and to do," when man goes contrary to His revealed will. It should be carefully noted, however, that this permissive decree does not imply a passive permission of something which is not under the control of the divine will. It is a decree which renders the future sinful act absolutely certain, but in which God determines (a) not to hinder the sinful self-determination of the finite will; and (b) to regulate and control the result of this sinful self-determination. Psalms 78:29; Psalms 106:15; Acts 14:16; Acts 17:30.

E. OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE DECREES As was said in the preceding, only Reformed theology does full justice to the doctrine of the decrees. Lutheran theologians do not, as a rule, construe it theologically but soteriologically, for the purpose of showing how believers can derive comfort from it. Pelagians and Socinians reject it as unscriptural; and Semi-Pelagians and Arminians show it scant favor: some ignoring it altogether; others stating it only to combat it; and still others maintaining only a decree conditioned by the foreknowledge of God. The objections raised to it are, in the main, always the same.

1. IT IS INCONSISTENT WITH THE MORAL FREEDOM OF MAN. Man is a free agent with the power of rational self-determination. He can reflect upon, and in an intelligent way choose, certain ends, and can also determine his action with respect to them. The decree of God however, carries with it necessity. God has decreed to effectuate all things or, if He has not decreed that, He has at least determined that they must come to pass. He has decided the course of man’s life for him.45

In answer to this objection it may be said that the Bible certainly does not proceed on the assumption that the divine decree is inconsistent with the free agency of man. It clearly reveals that God has decreed the free acts of man, but also that the actors are none the less free and therefore responsible for their acts, Genesis 50:19-20; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28. It was determined that the Jews should bring about the crucifixion of Jesus; yet they were perfectly free in their wicked course of action, and were held responsible for this crime. There is not a single indication in Scripture that the inspired writers are conscious of a contradiction in connection with these matters. They never make an attempt to harmonize the two. This may well restrain us from assuming a contradiction here, even if we cannot reconcile both truths.

Moreover, it should be borne in mind that God has not decreed to effectuate by His own direct action whatsoever must come to pass. The divine decree only brings certainty into the events, but does not imply that God will actively effectuate them, so that the question really resolves itself into this, whether previous certainty is consistent with free agency. Now experience teaches us that we can be reasonably certain as to the course a man of character will pursue under certain circumstances, without infringing in the least on his freedom. The prophet Jeremiah predicted that the Chaldeans would take Jerusalem. He knew the coming event as a certainty, and yet the Chaldeans freely followed their own desires in fulfilling the prediction. Such certainty is indeed inconsistent with the Pelagian liberty of indifference, according to which the will of man is not determined in any way, but is entirely indeterminate, so that in every volition it can decide in opposition, not only to all outward inducements, but also to all inward considerations and judgments, inclinations and desires, and even to the whole character and inner state of man. But it is now generally recognized that such freedom of the will is a psychological fiction. However, the decree is not necessarily inconsistent with human freedom in the sense of rational self-determination, according to which man freely acts in harmony with his previous thoughts and judgments, his inclinations and desires, and his whole character. This freedom also has its laws, and the better we are acquainted with them, the more sure we can be of what a free agent will do under certain circumstances. God Himself has established these laws. Naturally, we must guard against all determinism, materialistic, pantheistic, and rationalistic, in our conception of freedom in the sense of rational self-determination. The decree is no more inconsistent with free agency than foreknowledge is, and yet the objectors, who are generally of the Semi-Pelagian or Arminian type, profess to believe in divine foreknowledge. By His foreknowledge God knows from all eternity the certain futurition of all events. It is based on His foreordination, by which He determined their future certainty. The Arminian will of course, say that he does not believe in a foreknowledge based on a decree which renders things certain, but in a foreknowledge of facts and events which are contingent on the free will of man, and therefore indeterminate. Now such a foreknowledge of the free actions of man may be possible, if man even in his freedom acts in harmony with divinely established laws, which again bring in the element of certainty; but it would seem to be impossible to foreknow events which are entirely dependent on the chance decision of an unprincipled will, which can at any time, irrespective of the state of the soul, of existing conditions, and of the motives that present themselves to the mind, turn in different directions. Such events can only be foreknown as bare possibilities.

2. IT TAKES AWAY ALL MOTIVES FOR HUMAN EXERTION. This objection is to the effect that people will naturally say that, if all things are bound to happen as God has determined them, they

need not concern themselves about the future and need not make any efforts to obtain salvation. But this is hardly correct. In the case of people who speak after that fashion this is generally the mere excuse of indolence and disobedience. The divine decrees are not addressed to men as a rule of action, and cannot be such a rule, since their contents become known only through, and therefore after, their realization. There is a rule of action, however, embodied in the law and in the gospel, and this puts men under obligation to employ the means which God has ordained. This objection also ignores the logical relation, determined by God's decree, between the means and the end to be obtained. The decree includes not only the various issues of human life, but also the free human actions which are logically prior to, and are destined to bring about, the results. It was absolutely certain that all those who were in the vessel with Paul (Acts 27:1-44) were to be saved, but it was equally certain that, in order to secure this end, the sailors had to remain aboard. And since the decree establishes an interrelation between means and ends, and ends are decreed only as the result of means, they encourage effort instead of discouraging it. Firm belief in the fact that, according to the divine decrees, success will be the reward of toil, is an inducement to courageous and persevering efforts. On the very basis of the decree Scripture urges us to be diligent in using the appointed means, Php 2:13; Ephesians 2:10.

3. IT MAKES GOD THE AUTHOR OF SIN. This, if true, would naturally be an insuperable objection, for God cannot be the author of sin. This follows equally from Scripture, Psalms 92:15; Ecclesiastes 7:29; James 1:13; 1 John 1:5, from the law of God which prohibits all sin, and from the holiness of God. But the charge is not true; the decree merely makes God the author of free moral beings, who are themselves the authors of sin. God decrees to sustain their free agency, to regulate the circumstances of their life, and to permit that free agency to exert itself in a multitude of acts, of which some are sinful. For good and holy reasons He renders these sinful acts certain, but He does not decree to work evil desires or choices efficiently in man. The decree respecting sin is not an efficient but a permissive decree, or a decree to permit, in distinction from a decree to produce, sin by divine efficiency. No difficulty attaches to such a decree which does not also attach to a mere passive permission of what He could very well prevent, such as the Arminians, who generally raise this objection, assume. The problem of God's relation to sin remains a mystery for us, which we are not able to solve. It may be said, however, that His decree to permit sin, while it renders the entrance of sin into the world certain, does not mean that He takes delight in it; but only that He deemed it wise, for the purpose of His self-revelation, to permit moral evil, however abhorrent it may be to His nature.

04.1.2.2. Predestination

II. Predestination In passing from the discussion of the divine decree to that of predestination, we are still dealing with the same subject, but are passing from the general to the particular. The word "predestination" is not always used in the same sense. Sometimes it is employed simply as a synonym of the generic word "decree." In other cases it serves to designate the purpose of God respecting all His moral creatures. Most frequently, however, it denotes "the counsel of God concerning fallen men, including the sovereign election of some and the righteous reprobation of the rest. In the present discussion it is used primarily in the last sense, though not altogether to the exclusion of the second meaning. THE DOCTRINE OF PREDESTINATION IN HISTORY

Predestination does not form an important subject of discussion in history until the time of Augustine. Earlier Church Fathers allude to it, but do not as yet seem to have a very clear conception of it. On the whole they regard it as the prescience of God with reference to human deeds, on the basis of which He determines their future destiny. Hence it was possible for Pelagius to appeal to some of those early Fathers. "According to Pelagius," says Wiggers, "foreordination to salvation or to damnation, is founded on prescience. Consequently he did not admit an ’absolute predestination,’ but in every respect a ’conditional predestination’."46 At first, Augustine himself was inclined to this view, but deeper reflection on the sovereign character of the good pleasure of God led him to see that predestination was in no way dependent on God’s foreknowledge of human actions, but was rather the basis of the divine foreknowledge. His representation of reprobation is not as unambiguous as it might be. Some of his statements are to the effect that in predestination God foreknows what He will Himself do, while He is also able to foreknow what He will not do, as all sins; and speak of the elect as subjects of predestination, and of the reprobate as subjects of the divine foreknowledge.47 In other passages, however, he also speaks of the reprobate as subjects of predestination, so that there can be no doubt about it that he taught a double predestination. However, he recognized their difference, consisting in this that God did not predestinate unto damnation and the means unto it in the same way as He did to salvation, and that predestination unto life is purely sovereign, while predestination unto eternal death is also judicial and takes account of man’s sin.48

Augustine’s view found a great deal of opposition, particularly in France, where the semi-Pelagians, while admitting the need of divine grace unto salvation, reasserted the doctrine of a predestination based on foreknowledge. And they who took up the defense of Augustine felt constrained to yield on some important points. They failed to do justice to the doctrine of a double predestination. Only Gottschalk and a few of his friends maintained this, but his voice was soon silenced, and Semi-Pelagianism gained the upper hand at least among the leaders of the Church. Toward the end of the Middle Ages it became quite apparent that the Roman Catholic Church would allow a great deal of latitude in the doctrine of predestination. As long as its teachers maintained that God willed the salvation of all men, and not merely of the elect, they could with Thomas Aquinas move in the direction of Augustinianism in the doctrine of predestination, or with Molina follow the course of Semi-Pelagianism, as they thought best. This means that even in the

case of those who, like Thomas Aquinas, believed in an absolute and double predestination, this doctrine could not be carried through consistently, and could not be made determinative of the rest of their theology. The Reformers of the sixteenth century all advocated the strictest doctrine of predestination. This is even true of Melanchton in his earliest period. Luther accepted the doctrine of absolute predestination, though the conviction that God willed that all men should be saved caused him to soft-pedal the doctrine of predestination somewhat later in life. It gradually disappeared from Lutheran theology, which now regards it either wholly or in part (reprobation) as conditional. Calvin firmly maintained the Augustinian doctrine of an absolute double predestination. At the same time he, in his defense of the doctrine against Pighius, stressed the fact that the decree respecting the entrance of sin into the world was a permissive decree, and that the decree of reprobation should be so construed that God was not made the author of sin nor in any way responsible for it. The Reformed Confessions are remarkably consistent in embodying this doctrine, though they do not all state it with equal fulness and precision. As a result of the Arminian assault on the doctrine, the Canons of Dort contain a clear and detailed statement of it. In churches of the Arminian type the doctrine of absolute predestination has been supplanted by the doctrine of conditional predestination.

Since the days of Schleiermacher the doctrine of predestination received an entirely different form. Religion was regarded as a feeling of absolute dependence, a Hinneigung zum Weltall, a consciousness of utter dependence on the causality that is proper to the natural order with its invariable laws and second causes, which predetermine all human resolves and actions. And predestination was identified with this predetermination by nature or the universal causal connection in the world. The scathing denunciation of this view by Otto is none too severe: "There can be no more spurious product of theological speculation, no more fundamental falsification of religious conceptions than this; and it is certainly not against this that the Rationalist feels an antagonism, for it is itself a piece of solid Rationalism, but at the same time a complete abandonment of the real religious idea of 'predestination'."49 In modern liberal theology the doctrine of predestination meets with little favor. It is either rejected or changed beyond recognition. G. B. Foster brands it as determinism; Macintosh represents it as a predestination of all men to be conformed to the image of Jesus Christ; and others reduce it to a predestination to certain offices or privileges. In our day Barth has again directed attention to the doctrine of predestination, but has given a construction of it which is not even distantly related to that of Augustine and Calvin. With the Reformers he holds that this doctrine stresses the sovereign freedom of God in His election, revelation, calling, and so on.50 At the same time he does not see in predestination a predetermined separation of men, and does not understand election like Calvin as particular election. This is evident from what he says on page 332 of his Roemerbrief. Camfield therefore says in his Essay in Barthian Theology, entitled Revelation and the Holy Spirit51 "It needs to be emphasized that predestination does not mean the selection of a number of people for salvation and the rest for damnation according to the determination of an unknown and unknowable will. That idea does not belong to predestination proper." Predestination brings man into crisis in the moment of revelation and decision. It condemns him in the relation in which he stands to God by nature, as sinner, and in that relation rejects him, but it chooses him in the relation to which he is called in Christ, and for which he was destined in creation. If man responds to God's revelation by faith, he is what God intended him to be, an elect; but if he does not respond, he remains a reprobate. But since man is always in crisis, unconditional pardon and

complete rejection continue to apply to every one simultaneously. Esau may become Jacob, but Jacob may also become once more Esau. Says McConnachie: "For Barth, and as he believes, for St. Paul, the individual is not the object of election or reprobation, but rather the arena of election or reprobation. The two decisions meet within the same individual, but in such a way that, seen from the human side, man is always reprobate, but seen from the divine side, he is always elect. . . . The ground of election is faith. The ground of reprobation is want of faith. But who is he who believes? And who is he who disbelieves? Faith and unbelief are grounded in God. We stand at the gates of mystery."52 B. SCRIPTURAL TERMS FOR PREDESTINATION The following terms come into consideration here:

1. THE HEBREW WORD yada' AND THE GREEK WORDSginoskein, proginoskein, AND prognosis. The word yada' may simply mean "to know" or "to take cognizance" of someone or something, but may also be used in the more pregnant sense of "taking knowledge of one with loving care," or "making one the object of loving care or elective love." In this sense it serves the idea of election, Genesis 18:19; Amos 3:2; Hosea 13:5. The meaning of the words proginoskein and prognosis in the New Testament is not determined by their usage in the classics, but by the special meaning of yada'. They do not denote simple intellectual foresight or prescience, the mere taking knowledge of something beforehand, but rather a selective knowledge which regards one with favor and makes one an object of love, and thus approaches the idea of foreordination, Acts 2:23 (comp. Acts 4:28); Romans 8:29; Romans 11:2; 1 Peter 1:2. These passages simply lose their meaning, if the words be taken in the sense of simply taking knowledge of one in advance, for God foreknows all men in that sense. Even Arminians feel constrained to give the words a more determinative meaning, namely, to foreknow one with absolute assurance in a certain state or condition. This includes the absolute certainty of that future state, and for that very reason comes very close to the idea of predestination. And not only these words, but even the simple ginoskein has such a specific meaning in some cases, 1 Corinthians 8:3; Galatians 4:9; 2 Timothy 2:19. 53

2. THE HEBREW WORD bachar AND THE GREEK WORDS eklegesthai AND ekloge. These words stress the element of choice or selection in the decree of God respecting the eternal destiny of sinners, a choice accompanied with good pleasure. They serve to indicate the fact that God selects a certain number of the human race and places them in a special relation to Himself. Sometimes they include the idea of a call to a certain privilege, or of the call to salvation; but it is a mistake to think, as some do, that this exhausts their meaning. It is perfectly evident that they generally refer to a prior and eternal election, Romans 9:11; Romans 11:5; Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13.

3. THE GREEK WORDS proorizein AND proorismos. These words always refer to absolute predestination. In distinction from the other words, they really require a complement. The question naturally arises, Foreordained unto what? The words always refer to the foreordination of man to a certain end, and from the Bible it is evident that the end may be either good or bad, Acts 4:28; Ephesians 1:5. However, the end to which they refer is not necessarily the final end, but is even more frequently some end in time, which is in turn a means to the final end, Acts 4:28; Romans 8:29; 1 Corinthians 2:7; Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 1:11.

4. THE GREEK WORDS protithenai AND prothesis. In these words attention is directed to the fact that God sets before Him a definite plan to which He steadfastly adheres. They clearly refer to

God’s purpose of predestinating men unto salvation in Romans 8:29; Romans 9:11; Ephesians 1:9; Ephesians 1:11; 2 Timothy 1:9.

C. THE AUTHOR AND OBJECTS OF PREDESTINATION

1. THE AUTHOR. The decree of predestination is undoubtedly in all its parts the concurrent act of the three persons in the Trinity, who are one in their counsel and will. But in the economy of salvation, as it is revealed in Scripture, the sovereign act of predestination is more particularly attributed to the Father, John 17:6; John 17:9; Romans 8:29; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:2.

2. THE OBJECTS OF PREDESTINATION. In distinction from the decree of God in general, predestination has reference to God’s rational creatures only. Most frequently it refers to fallen men. Yet it is also employed in a wider sense, and we use it in the more inclusive sense here, in order to embrace all the objects of predestination. It includes all God’s rational creatures, that is: a. All men, both good and evil. These are included not merely as groups, but as individuals, Acts 4:28; Romans 8:29-30; Romans 9:11-13; Ephesians 1:5; Ephesians 1:11. b. The angels, both good and evil. The Bible speaks not only of holy angels, Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26, and of wicked angels, which kept not their first estate, 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6; but also makes explicit mention of elect angels, 1 Timothy 5:21, thereby implying that there were also non-elect angels. The question naturally arises, How are we to conceive of the predestination of angels? According to some it simply means that God determined in general that the angels which remained holy would be confirmed in a state of bliss, while the others would be lost. But this is not at all in harmony with the Scriptural idea of predestination. It rather means that God decreed, for reasons sufficient unto Himself, to give some angels, in addition to the grace with which they were endowed by creation and which included ample power to remain holy, a special grace of perseverance; and to withhold this from others. There are points of difference between the predestination of men and that of the angels: (1) While the predestination of men may be conceived of as infralapsarian, the predestination of the angels can only be understood as supralapsarian. God did not choose a certain number out of the fallen mass of angels. (2) The angels were not elected or predestined in Christ as Mediator, but in Him as Head, that is, to stand in a ministerial relation to Him. c. Christ as Mediator. Christ was the object of predestination in the sense that (1) a special love of the Father, distinct from His usual love to the Son, rested upon Him from all eternity, 1 Peter 1:20; 1 Peter 2:4; (2) in His quality as Mediator he was the object of God’s good pleasure, 1 Peter 2:4; (3) as Mediator He was adorned with the special image of God, to which believers were to be conformed, Romans 8:29; and (4) the Kingdom with all its glory and the means leading to its possession were ordained for Him, that He might pass these on to believers, Luke 22:29.

D. THE PARTS OF PREDESTINATION

Predestination includes two parts, namely, election and reprobation, the predetermination of both the good and the wicked to their final end, and to certain proximate ends which are instrumental in the realization of their final destiny.

1. ELECTION. a.The Biblical Idea of Election. The Bible speaks of election in more than one sense. There is (1) the election of Israel as a people for special privileges and for special service, Deuteronomy 4:37; Deuteronomy 7:6-8; Deuteronomy 10:15; Hosea 13:5. (2) The election of individuals to some office, or to the performance of some special service, as Moses, Exodus

3:1-22, the priests, Deuteronomy 18:5; the kings, 1 Samuel 10:24; Psalms 78:70, the prophets, Jeremiah 1:5, and the apostles, John 6:70; Acts 9:15. (3) The election of individuals to be children of God and heirs of eternal glory, Matthew 22:14; Romans 11:5; 1 Corinthians 1:27-28; Ephesians 1:4; 1 Thessalonians 1:4; 1 Peter 1:2; 2 Peter 1:10. The last is the election that comes into consideration here as a part of predestination. It may be defined as that eternal act of God whereby He, in His sovereign good pleasure, and on account of no foreseen merit in them, chooses a certain number of men to be the recipients of special grace and of eternal salvation. More briefly it may be said to be God's eternal purpose to save some of the human race in and by Jesus Christ. b. The characteristics of election. The characteristics of election are identical with the characteristics of the decrees in general. The decree of election: (1) Is an expression of the sovereign will of God, His divine good pleasure. This means among other things that Christ as Mediator is not the impelling, moving, or meritorious cause of election, as some have asserted. He may be called the mediate cause of the realization of election, and the meritorious cause of the salvation unto which believers are elected, but He is not the moving or meritorious cause of election itself. This is impossible, since He is Himself an object of predestination and election, and because, when He took His mediatorial work upon Him in the Counsel of Redemption, there was already a fixed number that was given unto Him. Election logically precedes the Counsel of Peace. The elective love of God precedes the sending of the Son, John 3:16; Romans 5:8; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 John 4:9. By saying that the decree of election originates in the divine good pleasure the idea is also excluded that it is determined by anything in man, such as foreseen faith or good works, Romans 9:11; 2 Timothy 1:9. (2) It is immutable, and therefore renders the salvation of the elect certain. God realizes the decree of election by His own efficiency, by the saving work which He accomplishes in Jesus Christ. It is His purpose that certain individuals should believe and persevere unto the end, and He secures this result by the objective work of Christ and the subjective operations of the Holy Spirit, Romans 8:29-30; Romans 11:29; 2 Timothy 2:19. It is the firm foundation of God which standeth, "having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." And as such it is the source of rich comfort for all believers. Their final salvation does not depend on their uncertain obedience, but has its guarantee in the unchangeable purpose of God. (3) It is eternal, that is, from eternity. This divine election should never be identified with any temporal selection, whether it be for the enjoyment of the special grace of God in this life, for special privileges and responsible services, or for the inheritance of glory hereafter, but must be regarded as eternal, Romans 8:29-30; Ephesians 1:4-5. (4) It is unconditional. Election does not in any way depend on the foreseen faith or good works of man, as the Arminians teach, but exclusively on the sovereign good pleasure of God, who is also the originator of faith and good works, Romans 9:11; Acts 13:48; 2 Timothy 1:9; 1 Peter 1:2. Since all men are sinners and have forfeited the blessings of God, there is no basis for such a distinction in them; and since even the faith and good works of the believers are the fruit of the grace of God, Ephesians 2:8; Ephesians 2:10; 2 Timothy 2:21, even these, as foreseen by God, could not furnish such a basis. (5) It is irresistible. This does not mean that man cannot oppose its execution to a certain degree, but it does mean that his opposition will not prevail. Neither does it mean that God in the execution of His decree overpowers the human will in a manner which is inconsistent with man's free agency. It does mean, however, that God can and does exert such an influence on the human spirit as to make it willing, Psalms 110:3; Php 2:13. (6) It is not chargeable with injustice. The fact that God favors some and passes by others, does not warrant the charge that He is guilty of injustice. We can

speak of injustice only when one party has a claim on another. If God owed the forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all men, it would be an injustice if He saved only a limited number of them. But the sinner has absolutely no right or claim on the blessings which flow from divine election. As a matter of fact he has forfeited these blessings. Not only have we no right to call God to account for electing some and passing others by, but we must admit that He would have been perfectly just, if He had not saved any, Matthew 20:14-15; Romans 9:14-15. c. The purpose of election. The purpose of this eternal election is twofold: (1) The proximate purpose is the salvation of the elect. That man is chosen or elected unto salvation is clearly taught in the Word of God, Romans 11:7-11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13. (2) The final aim is the glory of God. Even the salvation of men is subordinate to this. That the glory of God is the highest purpose of the electing grace is made very emphatic in Ephesians 1:6; Ephesians 1:12; Ephesians 1:14. The social gospel of our day likes to stress the fact that man is elected unto service. In so far as this is intended as a denial of man's election unto salvation and unto the glory of God, it plainly goes contrary to Scripture. Taken by itself, however, the idea that the elect are predestined unto service or good works is entirely Scriptural, Ephesians 2:10; 2 Timothy 2:21; but this end is subservient to the ends already indicated.

2. REPROBATION. Our confessional standards speak not only of election, but also of reprobation.54 Augustine taught the doctrine of reprobation as well as that of election, but this "hard doctrine" met with a great deal of opposition. Roman Catholics, the great majority of Lutherans, Arminians, and Methodists, generally reject this doctrine in its absolute form. If they still speak of reprobation, it is only of a reprobation based on foreknowledge. That Calvin was deeply conscious of the seriousness of this doctrine, is perfectly evident from the fact that he speaks of it as a " decretum horribile " (dreadful decree).55 Nevertheless, he did not feel free to deny what he regarded as an important Scriptural truth. In our day some scholars who claim to be Reformed balk at this doctrine. Barth teaches a reprobation which is dependent on man's rejection of God's revelation in Christ. Brunner seems to have a more Scriptural conception of election than Barth, but rejects the doctrine of reprobation entirely. He admits that it logically follows from the doctrine of election, but cautions against the guidance of human logic in this instance, since the doctrine of reprobation is not taught in Scripture.56 a.Statement of the doctrine. Reprobation may be defined as that eternal decree of God whereby He has determined to pass some men by with the operations of His special grace, and to punish them for their sins, to the manifestation of His justice. The following points deserve special emphasis: (1) It contains two elements. According to the most usual representation in Reformed theology the decree of reprobation comprises two elements, namely, preterition or the determination to pass by some men; and condemnation (sometimes called precondemnation) or the determination to punish those who are passed by for their sins. As such it embodies a twofold purpose: (a) to pass by some in the bestowal of regenerating and saving grace; and (b) to assign them to dishonor and to the wrath of God for their sins. The Belgic Confession mentions only the former, but the Canons of Dort name the latter as well. Some Reformed theologians would omit the second element from the decree of reprobation. Dabney prefers to regard the condemnation of the wicked as the foreseen and intended result of their preterition, thus depriving reprobation of its positive character; and Dick is of the opinion that the decree to condemn ought to be regarded as a separate decree, and not as a part of the decree of reprobation. It seems to us, however, that we are not warranted in excluding the second element from the decree of reprobation, nor to regard it as a different decree. The positive side of

reprobation is so clearly taught in Scripture as the opposite of election that we cannot regard it as something purely negative, Romans 9:21-22; Jude 1:4. However, we should notice several points of distinction between the two elements of the decree of reprobation: (a) Preterition is a sovereign act of God, an act of His mere good pleasure, in which the demerits of man do not come into consideration, while precondemnation is a judicial act, visiting sin with punishment. Even Supralapsarians are willing to admit that in condemnation sin is taken into consideration. (b) The reason for preterition is not known by man. It cannot be sin, for all men are sinners. We can only say that God passed some by for good and wise reasons sufficient unto Himself. On the other hand the reason for condemnation is known; it is sin. (c) Preterition is purely passive, a simple passing by without any action on man, but condemnation is efficient and positive. Those who are passed by are condemned on account of their sin. (2) We should guard against the idea, however, that as election and reprobation both determine with absolute certainty the end unto which man is predestined and the means by which that end is realized, they also imply that in the case of reprobation as well as in that of election God will bring to pass by His own direct efficiency whatsoever He has decreed. This means that, while it can be said that God is the author of the regeneration, calling, faith, justification, and sanctification, of the elect, and thus by direct action on them brings their election to realization, it cannot be said that He is also the responsible author of the fall, the unrighteous condition, and the sinful acts of the reprobate by direct action on them, and thus effects the realization of their reprobation. God’s decree undoubtedly rendered the entrance of sin into the world certain, but He did not predestinate some unto sin, as He did others unto holiness. And as the holy God He cannot be the author of sin. The position which Calvin takes on this point in his Institutes is clearly indicated in the following deliverances found in Calvin’s Articles on Predestination:

"Although the will of God is the supreme and first cause of all things and God holds the devil and all the impious subject to His will, God nevertheless cannot be called the cause of sin, nor the author of evil, neither is He open to any blame.

"Although the devil and reprobates are God’s servants and instruments to carry out His secret decisions, nevertheless in an incomprehensible manner God so works in them and through them as to contract no stain from their vice, because their malice is used in a just and righteous way for a good end, although the manner is often hidden from us.

"They act ignorantly and calumniously who say that God is made the author of sin, if all things come to pass by His will and ordinance; because they make no distinction between the depravity of men and the hidden appointments of God."57 (3) It should be noted that that with which God decided to pass some men by, is not His common but his special, His regenerating, grace, the grace that changes sinners into saints. It is a mistake to think that in this life the reprobate are entirely destitute of God’s favor. God does not limit the distribution of His natural gifts by the purpose of election. He does not even allow election and reprobation to determine the measure of these gifts. The reprobate often enjoy a greater measure of the natural blessings of life than the elect. What effectively distinguishes the latter from the former is that they are made recipients of the regenerating and saving grace of God. b.Proof for the doctrine of reprobation. The doctrine of reprobation naturally follows from the logic of the situation. The decree of election inevitably implies the decree of reprobation. If the all-wise God, possessed of infinite knowledge, has eternally purposed to save some, then He ipso facto also purposed not to save others. If He has

chosen or elected some, then He has by that very fact also rejected others. Brunner warns against this argument, since the Bible does not in a single word teach a divine predestination unto rejection. But it seems to us that the Bible does not contradict but justifies the logic in question. Since the Bible is primarily a revelation of redemption, it naturally does not have as much to say about reprobation as about election. But what it says is quite sufficient, cf. Matthew 11:25-26; Romans 9:13; Romans 9:17-18; Romans 9:21-22; Romans 11:7; Jude 1:4; 1 Peter 2:8.

E. SUPRA- AND INFRALAPSARIANISM The doctrine of predestination has not always been presented in exactly the same form. Especially since the days of the Reformation two different conceptions of it gradually emerged, which were designated during the Arminian controversy as Infra- and Supralapsarianism. Already existing differences were more sharply defined and more strongly accentuated as the results of the theological disputes of that day. According to Dr. Dijk the two views under consideration were in their original form simply a difference of opinion respecting the question, whether the fall of man was also included in the divine decree. Was the first sin of man, constituting his fall, predestinated, or was this merely the object of divine foreknowledge? In their original form Supralapsarianism held the former, and Infralapsarianism, the latter. In this sense of the word Calvin was clearly a Supralapsarian. The later development of the difference between the two began with Beza, the successor of Calvin at Geneva. In it the original point in dispute gradually retires into the background, and other differences are brought forward, some of which turn out to be mere differences of emphasis. Later Infralapsarians, such as Rivet, Walaeus, Mastricht, Turretin, à Mark, and de Moor, all admit that the fall of man was included in the decree; and of the later Supralapsarians, such as Beza, Gomarus, Peter Martyr, Zanchius, Ursinus, Perkins, Twisse, Trigland, Voetius, Burmannus, Witsius and Comrie, at least some are quite willing to admit that in the decree of Reprobation God in some way took sin into consideration. We are concerned at present with Supra- and Infralapsarianism in their more developed form.

1. THE EXACT POINT AT ISSUE. It is quite essential to have a correct view of the exact point or points at issue between the two. a. Negatively, the difference is not found: (1) In divergent views respecting the temporal order of the divine decrees. It is admitted on all hands that the decree of God is one and in all its parts equally eternal, so that it is impossible to ascribe any temporal succession to the various elements which it includes. (2) In any essential difference as to whether the fall of man was decreed or was merely the object of divine foreknowledge. This may have been, as Dr. Dijk says, the original point of difference; but, surely, anyone who asserts that the fall was not decreed but only foreseen by God, would now be said to be moving along Arminian rather than Reformed lines. Both Supra- and Infralapsarians admit that the fall is included in the divine decree, and that preterition is an act of God’s sovereign will. (3) In any essential difference as to the question, whether the decree relative to sin is permissive. There is some difference of emphasis on the qualifying adjective. Supralapsarians (with few exceptions) are willing to admit that the decree relative to sin is permissive, but hasten to add that it nevertheless makes the entrance of sin into the world a certainty. And Infralapsarians (with few exceptions) will admit that sin is included in God’s decree, but hasten to add that the decree, in so far as it pertains to sin, is permissive rather than positive. The former occasionally over-emphasize the positive element in the decree respecting sin, and thus expose themselves to the charge that they make God the author of sin. And the latter sometimes over-emphasize the permissive character of the decree, reducing it to a bare permission, and thus expose themselves to the charge of Arminianism. As a

whole, however, Supralapsarians emphatically repudiate every interpretation of the decree that would make God the author of sin; and Infralapsarians are careful to point out explicitly that the permissive decree of God relative to sin makes sin certainly future. (4) In any essential difference as to the question, whether the decree of reprobation takes account of sin. It is sometimes represented as if God destined some men for eternal destruction, simply by an act of His sovereign will, without taking account of their sin; as if, like a tyrant, He simply decided to destroy a large number of His rational creatures, purely for the manifestation of His glorious virtues. But Supralapsarians abhor the idea of a tyrannical God, and at least some of them explicitly state that, while preterition is an act of God's sovereign will, the second element of reprobation, namely, condemnation, is an act of justice and certainly takes account of sin. This proceeds on the supposition that logically preterition precedes the decree to create and to permit the fall, while condemnation follows this. The logic of this position may be questioned, but it at least shows that the Supralapsarians who assume it, teach that God takes account of sin in the decree of reprobation. b. Positively, the difference does concern: (1) The extent of predestination. Supralapsarians include the decree to create and to permit the fall in the decree of predestination, while Infralapsarians refer it to the decree of God in general, and exclude it from the special decree of predestination. According to the former, man appears in the decree of predestination, not as created and fallen, but as certain to be created and to fall; while according to the latter, he appears in it as already created and fallen. (2) The logical order of the decrees. The question is, whether the decrees to create and to permit the fall were means to the decree of redemption. Supralapsarians proceed on the assumption that in planning the rational mind passes from the end to the means in a retrograde movement, so that what is first in design is last in accomplishment. Thus they determine upon the following order: (a) The decree of God to glorify Himself, and particularly to magnify His grace and justice in the salvation of some and the perdition of other rational creatures, which exist in the divine mind as yet only as possibilities. (b) The decree to create those who were thus elected and reprobated. (c) The decree to permit them to fall. (d) The decree to justify the elect and to condemn the non-elect. On the other hand the Infralapsarians suggest a more historical order: (a) The decree to create man in holiness and blessedness. (b) The decree to permit man to fall by the self-determination of his own will. (c) The decree to save a certain number out of this guilty aggregate. (d) The decree to leave the remainder in their self-determination in sin, and to subject them to the righteous punishment which their sin deserves. (3) The extension of the personal element of predestination to the decrees to create and to permit the fall. According to Supralapsarians God, even in the decree to create and permit the fall, had His eye fixed on His elect individually, so that there was not a single moment in the divine decree, when they did not stand in a special relation to God as His beloved ones. Infralapsarians, on the other hand, hold that this personal element did not appear in the decree till after the decree to create and to permit the fall. In these decrees themselves the elect are simply included in the whole mass of humanity, and do not appear as the -special objects of God's love.

2. THE SUPRALAPSARIAN POSITION. a. Arguments in favor of it: (1) It appeals to all those passages of Scripture which emphasize the absolute sovereignty of God, and more particularly His sovereignty in relation to sin, such as Psalms 115:3; Proverbs 16:4; Isaiah 10:15; Isaiah 45:9; Jeremiah 18:6; Matthew 11:25-26; Matthew 20:15; Romans 9:17; Romans 9:19-21. Special emphasis is laid on the figure of the potter, which is found in more than one of these passages. It is said that this figure not merely stresses the sovereignty of God in general, but more especially

His sovereignty in determining the quality of the vessels at creation. This means that Paul in Romans 9:1-33 speaks from a pre- creation standpoint, an idea that is favored (a) by the fact that the potter's work is frequently used in Scripture as a figure of creation; and (b) by the fact that the potter determines each vessel for a certain use and gives it a corresponding quality, which might cause the vessel to ask, though without any right, Why didst Thou make me thus? (2) Attention is called to the fact that some passages of Scripture suggest that the work of nature or of creation in general was so ordered as to contain already illustrations of the work of redemption. Jesus frequently derives His illustrations for the elucidation of spiritual things from nature, and we are told in Matthew 13:35 that this was in fulfilment of the words of the prophet, "I will utter things hidden from the foundation of the world." Comp. Psalms 78:2. This is taken to mean that they were hidden in nature, but were brought to light in the parabolic teachings of Jesus. Ephesians 3:9 is also considered as an expression of the idea that the design of God in the creation of the world was directed to the manifestation of His wisdom, which would issue in the New Testament work of redemption. But the appeal to this passage seems, to say the least, very doubtful. (3) The order of the decrees, as accepted by the Supralapsarians, is regarded as the more ideal, the more logical and unified of the two. It clearly exhibits the rational order which exists between the ultimate end and the intermediate means. Therefore the Supralapsarians can, while the Infralapsarians cannot, give a specific answer to the question why God decreed to create the world and to permit the fall. They do full justice to the sovereignty of God and refrain from all futile attempts to justify God in the sight of men, while the Infralapsarians hesitate, attempt to prove the justice of God's procedure, and yet in the end must come to the same conclusion as the Supralapsarians, namely, that, in the last analysis, the decree to permit the fall finds its explanation only in the sovereign good pleasure of God.58 (4) The analogy of the predestination of the angels would seem to favor the Supralapsarian position, for it can only be conceived as supralapsarian. God decreed, for reasons sufficient to Himself, to grant some angels the grace of perseverance and to withhold this from others; and to connect with this righteously the confirmation of the former in a state of glory, and the eternal perdition of the latter. This means, therefore, that the decree respecting the fall of the angels forms a part of their predestination. And it would seem impossible to conceive of it in any other way. b. Objections to it: Notwithstanding its seeming pretensions, it does not give a solution of the problem of sin. It would do this, if it dared to say that God decreed to bring sin into the world by His own direct efficiency. Some Supralapsarians, it is true, do represent the decree as the efficient cause of sin, but yet do not want this to be interpreted in such a way that God becomes the author of sin. The majority of them do not care to go beyond the statement that God willed to permit sin. Now this is no objection to the Supralapsarian in distinction from the Infralapsarian, for neither one of them solves the problem. The only difference is that the former makes greater pretensions in this respect than the latter. (2) According to its representations man appears in the divine decree first as creabilis et labilis (certain to be created and to fall). The objects of the decree are first of all men considered as mere possibilities, as non- existent entities. But such a decree necessarily has only a provisional character, and must be followed by another decree. After the election and reprobation of these possible men follows the decree to create them and to permit them to fall, and this must be followed by another decree respecting these men whose creation and fall have now been definitely determined, namely, the decree to elect some and to reprobate the rest of those who now appear in the divine purpose as real men. Supralapsarians claim that this is no insuperable objection because, while it is true that on their position the actual existence

of men has not yet been determined when they are elected and reprobated, they do exist in the divine idea. (3) It is said that Supralapsarianism makes the eternal punishment of the reprobate an object of the divine will in the same sense and in the same manner as the eternal salvation of the elect; and that it makes sin, which leads to eternal destruction, a means unto this end in the same manner and in the same sense as the redemption in Christ is a means unto salvation. If consistently carried through, this would make God the author of sin. It should be noted, however, that the Supralapsarian does not, as a rule, so represent the decree, and explicitly states that the decree may not be so interpreted as to make God the author of sin. He will speak of a predestination unto the grace of God in Jesus Christ, but not of a predestination unto sin. (4) Again, it is objected that Supralapsarianism makes the decree of reprobation just as absolute as the decree of election. In other words, that it regards reprobation as purely an act of God's sovereign good pleasure, and not as an act of punitive justice. According to its representation sin does not come into consideration in the decree of reprobation. But this is hardly correct, though it may be true of some Supralapsarians. In general, however, it may be said that, while they regard preterition as an act of God's sovereign good pleasure, they usually regard precondemnation as an act of divine justice which does take sin into consideration. And the Infralapsarian himself cannot maintain the idea that reprobation is an act of justice pure and simple, contingent on the sin of man. In the last analysis, he, too, must declare that it is an act of God's sovereign good pleasure, if he wants to avoid the Arminian camp. (5) Finally, it is said that it is not possible to construe a serviceable doctrine of the covenant of grace and of the Mediator on the basis of the Supralapsarian scheme. Both the covenant and the Mediator of the covenant can only be conceived as infralapsarian. This is frankly admitted by some Supralapsarians. Logically, the Mediator appears in the divine decree only after the entrance of sin; and this is the only point of view from which the covenant of grace can be construed. This will naturally have an important bearing on the ministry of the Word.

3. THE INFRALAPSARIAN POSITION. a.Arguments in favor of it. (1) Infralapsarians appeal more particularly to those passages of Scripture in which the objects of election appear as in a condition of sin, as being in close union with Christ, and as objects of God's mercy and grace, such as Matthew 11:25-26; John 15:19; Romans 8:28, Romans 8:30; Romans 9:15-6; Ephesians 1:4-12; 2 Timothy 1:9. These passages would seem to imply that in the thought of God the fall of man preceded the election of some unto salvation. (2) It also calls attention to the fact that in its representation the order of the divine decrees is less philosophical and more natural than that proposed by Supralapsarians. It is in harmony with the historical order in the execution of the decrees, which would seem to reflect the order in the eternal counsel of God. Just as in the execution, so there is in the decree a causal order. It is more modest to abide by this order, just because it reflects the historical order revealed in Scripture and does not pretend to solve the problem of God's relation to sin. It is considered to be less offensive in its presentation of the matter and to be far more in harmony with the requirements of practical life.59 (3) While Supralapsarians claim that their construction of the doctrine of the decrees is the more logical of the two, Infralapsarians make the same claim for their position. Says Dabney: "The Supralapsarian (scheme) under the pretense of greater symmetry, is in reality the more illogical of the two."60 It is pointed out that the supralapsarian scheme is illogical in that it makes the decree of election and preterition refer to non-entities, that is, to men who do not exist, except as bare possibilities, even in the mind of God; who do not yet exist in the divine decree and are therefore not contemplated

as created, but only as creatable. Again, it is said that the supralapsarian construction is illogical in that it necessarily separates the two elements in reprobation, placing preterition before, and condemnation after, the fall. (4) Finally, attention is also called to the fact that the Reformed Churches in their official standards have always adopted the infralapsarian position, even though they have never condemned, but always tolerated, the other view. Among the members of the Synod of Dort and of the Westminster Assembly there were several Supralapsarians who were held in high honour (the presiding officer in both cases belonging to the number), but in both the Canons of Dort and the Westminster Confession the infralapsarian view finds expression. b.Objections to it. The following are some of the most important objections raised against Infralapsarianism: (1) It does not give, nor does it claim to give a solution of the problem of sin. But this is equally true of the other view, so that, in a comparison of the two, this cannot very well be regarded as a real objection, though it is sometimes raised. The problem of the relation of God to sin has proved to be insoluble for the one as well as for the other. (2) While Infralapsarianism may be actuated by the laudable desire to guard against the possibility of charging God with being the author of sin, it is, in doing this, always in danger of overshooting the mark, and some of its representatives have made this mistake. They are averse to the statement that God willed sin, and substitute for it the assertion that He permitted it. But then the question arises as to the exact meaning of this statement. Does it mean that God merely took cognizance of the entrance of sin, without in any way hindering it, so that the fall was in reality a frustration of His plan? The moment the Infralapsarian answers this question in the affirmative, he enters the ranks of the Arminians. While there have been some who took this stand, the majority of them feel that they cannot consistently take this position, but must incorporate the fall in the divine decree. They speak of the decree respecting sin as a permissive decree, but with the distinct understanding that this decree rendered the entrance of sin into the world certain. And if the question be raised, why God decreed to permit sin and thus rendered it certain, they can only point to the divine good pleasure, and are thus in perfect agreement with the Supralapsarian. (3) The same tendency to shield God reveals itself in another way and exposes one to a similar danger. Infralapsarianism really wants to explain reprobation as an act of God's justice. It is inclined to deny either explicitly or implicitly that it is an act of the mere good pleasure of God. This really makes the decree of reprobation a conditional decree and leads into the Arminian fold. But infralapsarians on the whole do not want to teach a conditional decree, and express themselves guardedly on this matter. Some of them admit that it is a mistake to consider reprobation purely as an act of divine justice. And this is perfectly correct. Sin is not the ultimate cause of reprobation any more than faith and good works are the cause of election, for all men are by nature dead in sin and trespasses. When confronted with the problem of reprobation, Infralapsarians, too, can find the answer only in the good pleasure of God. Their language may sound more tender than that of the Supralapsarians, but is also more apt to be misunderstood, and after all proves to convey the same idea. (4) The Infralapsarian position does not do justice to the unity of the divine decree, but represents the different members of it too much as disconnected parts. First God decrees to create the world for the glory of His name, which means among other things also that He determined that His rational creatures should live according to the divine law implanted in their hearts and should praise their Maker. Then He decreed to permit the fall, whereby sin enters the world. This seems to be a frustration of the original plan, or at least an important modification of it, since God no more decrees to glorify Himself by the voluntary obedience of all His rational creatures. Finally, there follow the decrees of

election and reprobation, which mean only a partial execution of the original plan.

4. From what was said it would seem to follow that we cannot regard Supra- and Infralapsarianism as absolutely antithetical. They consider the same mystery from different points of view, the one fixing its attention on the ideal or teleological; the other, on the historical, order of the decrees. To a certain extent they can and must go hand in hand. Both find support in Scripture. Supralapsarianism in those passages which stress the sovereignty of God, and Infralapsarianism in those which emphasize the mercy and justice of God, in connection with election and reprobation. Each has something in its favor: the former that it does not undertake to justify God, but simply rests in the sovereign and holy good pleasure of God; and the latter, that it is more modest and tender, and reckons with the demands and requirements of practical life. Both are necessarily inconsistent; the former because it cannot regard sin as a progression, but must consider it as a disturbance of creation, and speaks of a permissive decree; and the latter, since in the last analysis it must also resort to a permissive decree, which makes sin certain. But each one of them also emphasizes an element of truth. The true element in Supralapsarianism is found in its emphasis on the following: that the decree of God is a unit; that God had one final aim in view; that He willed sin in a certain sense; and that the work of creation was immediately adapted to the recreative activity of God. And the true element in Infralapsarianism is, that there is a certain diversity in the decrees of God; that creation and fall cannot be regarded merely as means to an end, but also had great independent significance; and that sin cannot be regarded as an element of progress, but should rather be considered as an element of disturbance in the world. In connection with the study of this profound subject we feel that our understanding is limited, and realize that we grasp only fragments of the truth. Our confessional standards embody the infralapsarian position, but do not condemn Supralapsarianism. It was felt that this view was not necessarily inconsistent with Reformed theology. And the conclusions of Utrecht, adopted in 1908 by our Church, state that, while it is not permissible to represent the supralapsarian view as the doctrine of the Reformed churches in the Netherlands, it is just as little permissible to molest any one who cherishes that view for himself.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. Is a foreknowledge of future events which is not based on the decree possible in God? What is the inevitable result of basing God’s decree on His foreknowledge rather than vice versa his foreknowledge on His decree? How does the doctrine of the decrees differ from fatalism and from determinism? Does the decree of predestination necessarily exclude the possibility of a universal offer of salvation? Are the decrees of election and reprobation equally absolute and unconditional or not? Are they alike in being causes from which human actions proceed as effects? How is the doctrine of predestination related to the doctrine of the divine sovereignty;— to the doctrine of total depravity;—to the doctrine of the atonement;—to the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints? Do the Reformed teach a predestination unto sin?

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04.1.2.3. Creation in General

III. Creation in General The discussion of the decrees naturally leads on to the consideration of their execution, and this begins with the work of creation. This is not only first in order of time, but is also a logical prius. It is the beginning and basis of all divine revelation, and consequently also the foundation of all ethical and religious life. The doctrine of creation is not set forth in Scripture as a philosophical solution of the problem of the world, but in its ethical and religious significance, as a revelation of the relation of man to his God. It stresses the fact that God is the origin of all things, and that all things belong to Him and are subject to Him. The knowledge of it is derived from Scripture only and is accepted by faith (Hebrews 11:3), though Roman Catholics maintain that it can also be gathered from nature.

A. THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION IN HISTORY

While Greek philosophy sought the explanation of the world in a dualism, which involves the eternity of matter, or in a process of emanation, which makes the world the outward manifestation of God, the Christian Church from the very beginning taught the doctrine of creation ex nihilo and as a free act of God. This doctrine was accepted with singular unanimity from the start. It is found in Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and others. Theophilus was the first Church Father to stress the fact that the days of creation were literal days. This seems to have been the view of Irenaeus and Tertullian as well, and was in all probability the common view in the Church. Clement and Origen thought of creation as having been accomplished in a single indivisible moment, and conceived of its description as the work of several days merely as a literary device to describe the origin of things in the order of their worth or of their logical connection. The idea of an eternal creation, as taught by Origen, was commonly rejected. At the same time some of the Church Fathers expressed the idea that God was always Creator, though the created universe began in time. During the trinitarian controversy some of them emphasized the fact that, in distinction from the generation of the Son, which was a necessary act of the Father, the creation of the world was a free act of the triune God. Augustine dealt with the work of creation more in detail than others did. He argues that creation was eternally in the will of God, and therefore brought no change in Him. There was no time before creation, since the world was brought into being with time rather than in time. The question what God did in the many ages before creation is based on a misconception of eternity. While the Church in general still seems to have held that the world was created in six ordinary days, Augustine suggested a somewhat different view. He strongly defended the doctrine of creatio ex nihilo, but distinguished two moments of creation: the production of matter and spirits out of nothing, and the organization of the material universe. He found it difficult to say what kind of days the days of Genesis were, but was evidently inclined to think that God created all things in a moment of time and that the thought of days was simply introduced to aid the finite intelligence. The Scholastics debated a great deal about the possibility of eternal creation; some, such as, Alexander of Hales, Bonaventura, Albertus Magnus, Henry of Ghent, and the great majority of the Scholastics denying this; and others, such as Thomas Aquinas, Duns Scotus, Durandus, Biel, and others affirming it. Yet the doctrine of

creation with or in time carried the day. Erigena and Eckhart were exceptional in teaching that the world originated by emanation. Seemingly the days of creation were regarded as ordinary days, though Anselm suggested that it might be necessary to conceive of them as different from our present days. The Reformers held firmly to the doctrine of creation out of nothing by a free act of God in or with time, and regarded the days of creation as six literal days. This view is also generally maintained in the Post-Reformation literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, though a few theologians (as Maresius) occasionally speak of continuous creation. In the eighteenth century, however, under the dominating influence of Pantheism and Materialism, science launched an attack on the Church's doctrine of creation. It substituted the idea of evolution or development for that of absolute origination by a divine fiat. The world was often represented as a necessary manifestation of the Absolute. Its origin was pushed back thousands and even millions of years into an unknown past. And soon theologians were engaged in various attempts to harmonize the doctrine of creation with the teachings of science and philosophy. Some suggested that the first chapters of Genesis should be interpreted allegorically or mythically; others, that a long period elapsed between the primary creation of Genesis 1:1-2 and the secondary creation of the following verses; and still others, that the days of creation were in fact long periods of time.

B. SCRIPTURAL PROOF FOR THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION The Scriptural proof for the doctrine of creation is not found in a single and limited portion of the Bible, but is found in every part of the Word of God. It does not consist of a few scattered passages of doubtful interpretation, but of a large number of clear and unequivocal statements, which speak of the creation of the world as a historical fact. We have first of all the extended narrative of creation found in Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-25, which will be discussed in detail when the creation of the material universe is considered. These chapters certainly appear to the unbiased reader as a historical narrative, and as the record of a historical fact. And the many cross-references scattered throughout the Bible do not regard them in any other light. They all refer to creation as a fact of history. The various passages in which they are found may be classified as follows: (1) Passages which stress the omnipotence of God in the work of creation, Isaiah 40:26; Isaiah 40:28; Amos 4:13. (2) Passages which point to His exaltation above nature as the great and infinite God, Psalms 90:2; Psalms 102:26-27; Acts 17:24. (3) Passages which refer to the wisdom of God in the work of creation, Isaiah 40:12-14; Jeremiah 10:12-16; John 1:3; (4) Passages regarding creation from the point of view of God's sovereignty and purpose in creation, Isaiah 43:7; Romans 1:25. (5) Passages that speak of creation as a fundamental work of God, 1 Corinthians 11:9; Colossians 1:16. One of the fullest and most beautiful statements is that found in Nehemiah 9:6 : "Thou art Jehovah, even thou alone; thou hast made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all things that are thereon, the seas and all that is in them, and thou preservest them all; and the host of heaven worshippeth thee." This passage is typical of several other, less extensive, passages that are found in the Bible, which emphasize the fact that Jehovah is the Creator of the universe, Isaiah 42:5; Isaiah 45:18; Colossians 1:16; Revelation 4:11; Revelation 10:6.

C. THE IDEA OF CREATION The faith of the Church in the creation of the world is expressed in the very first article of the Apostolic Confession of Faith, "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth." This is an expression of the faith of the early Church, that God by His almighty power brought forth the universe out of nothing. The words "Maker of heaven and earth" were not contained in the original form of the creed, but represent a later addition. It ascribes to

the Father, that is, to the first person in the Trinity, the origination of all things. This is in harmony with the representation of the New Testament that all things are of the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit. The word "Maker" is a rendering of the word poieten, found in the Greek form of the Apostolic Confession, while the Latin form has creatorem. Evidently, it is to be understood as a synonymous term for "Creator." "To create" was understood in the early Church in the strict sense of "to bring forth something out of nothing." It should be noted that Scripture does not always use the Hebrew word bara' and the Greek term ktizein in that absolute sense. It also employs these terms to denote a secondary creation, in which God made use of material that was already in existence but could not of itself have produced the result indicated, Genesis 1:21; Genesis 1:27; Genesis 5:1; Isaiah 45:7; Isaiah 45:12; Isaiah 54:16; Amos 3:13; 1 Corinthians 11:9; Revelation 10:6. It even uses them to designate that which comes into existence under the providential guidance of God, Psalms 104:30; Isaiah 45:7-8; Isaiah 65:18; 1 Timothy 4:4. Two other terms are used synonymously with the term "to create," namely, "to make" (Heb., 'asah; Greek, poiein) and "to form" (Heb. yatsar; Greek, plasso). The former is clearly used in all the three senses indicated in the preceding: of primary creation in Genesis 2:4; Proverbs 16:4; Acts 17:24; more frequently of secondary creation, Genesis 1:7; Genesis 1:16; Genesis 1:26; Genesis 2:22; Psalms 89:47; and of the work of providence in Psalms 74:17. The latter is used similarly of primary creation, Psalms 90:2 (perhaps the only instance of this use); of secondary creation, Genesis 2:7; Genesis 2:19; Psalms 104:26; Amos 4:13; Zechariah 12:1; and of the work of providence, Deuteronomy 32:18; Isaiah 43:7; Isaiah 43:21; Isaiah 45:7. All three words are found together in Isaiah 45:7. Creation in the strict sense of the word may be defined as that free act of God whereby He, according to His sovereign; will and for His own glory, in the beginning brought forth the whole visible and invisible; universe, without the use of preexistent material, and thus gave it an existence, distinct from His own and yet always dependent on Him. In view of the Scriptural data indicated in the preceding, it is quite evident, however, that this definition applies only to what is generally known as primary or immediate creation, that is, the creation described in Genesis 1:1. But the Bible clearly uses the word "create" also in cases in which God did make use of pre-existing materials, as in the creation of sun, moon, and stars, of the animals and of man. Hence many theologians add an element to the definition of creation. Thus Wollebius defines: "Creation is that act by which God produces the world and all that is in it, partly out of nothing and partly out of material that is by its very nature unfit, for the manifestation of the glory of His power, wisdom, and goodness." Even so, however, the definition does not cover those cases, also designated in Scripture as creative work, in which God works through secondary causes, Psalms 104:30; Isaiah 45:7-8; Jeremiah 31:22; Amos 4:13, and produces results which only He could produce. The definition given includes several elements which call for further consideration.

1. CREATION IS AN ACT OF THE TRIUNE GOD. Scripture teaches us that the triune God is the author of creation, Genesis 1:1; Isaiah 40:12; Isaiah 44:24; Isaiah 45:12, and this distinguishes Him from the idols, Psalms 96:5; Isaiah 37:16; Jeremiah 10:11-12. Though the Father is in the foreground in the work of creation, 1 Corinthians 8:6, it is also clearly recognized as a work of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. The Son's participation in it is indicated in John 1:3; 1 Corinthians 8:6; Colossians 1:15-17, and the activity of the Spirit in it finds expression in Genesis 1:2; Job 26:13; Job 33:4; Psalms 104:30; Isaiah 40:12-13. The second and third persons are not dependent powers or mere intermediaries, but independent authors together with the Father. The work was not divided among the three persons, but the whole work, though from different aspects, is

ascribed to each one of the persons. All things are at once out of the Father, through the Son, and in the Holy Spirit. In general it may be said that being is out of the Father, thought or the idea out of the Son, and life out of the Holy Spirit. Since the Father takes the initiative in the work of creation, it is often ascribed to Him economically.

2. CREATION IS A FREE ACT OF GOD. Creation is sometimes represented as a necessary act of God rather than as a free act determined by His sovereign will. The old theories of emanation and their modern counterpart, the Pantheistic theories, naturally make the world but a mere moment in the process of divine evolution (Spinoza, Hegel), and therefore regard the world as a necessary act of God. And the necessity which they have in mind is not a relative necessity resulting from the divine decree, but an absolute necessity which follows from the very nature of God, from his omnipotence (Origen) or from His love (Rothe). However, this is not a Scriptural position. The only works of God that are inherently necessary with a necessity resulting from the very nature of God, are the opera ad intra, the works of the separate persons within the Divine Being: generation, filiation, and procession. To say that creation is a necessary act of God, is also to declare that it is just as eternal as those immanent works of God. Whatever necessity may be ascribed to God's opera ad extra is a necessity conditioned by the divine decree and the resulting constitution of things. It is a necessity dependent on the sovereign will of God, and therefore no necessity in the absolute sense of the word. The Bible teaches us that God created all things, according to the counsel of His will, Ephesians 1:11; Revelation 4:11; and that He is self-sufficient and is not dependent on His creatures in any way, Job 22:2-3; Acts 17:25.

3. CREATION IS A TEMPORAL ACT OF GOD. a. The teaching of Scripture on this point. The Bible begins with the very simple statement, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," Genesis 1:1. As addressed to all classes of people, it employs the ordinary language of daily life, and not the technical language of philosophy. The Hebrew term bereshith (lit. "in beginning") is itself indefinite, and naturally gives rise to the question, In the beginning of what? It would seem best to take the expression in the absolute sense as an indication of the beginning of all temporal things and even of time itself; but Keil is of the opinion that it refers to the beginning of the work of creation. Technically speaking, it is not correct to assume that time was already in existence when God created the world, and that He at some point in that existing time, called "the beginning" brought forth the universe. Time is only one of the forms of all created existence, and therefore could not exist before creation. For that reason Augustine thought it would be more correct to say that the world was created cum tempore (with time) than to assert that it was created in tempore (in time). The great significance of the opening statement of the Bible lies in its teaching that the world had a beginning. Scripture speaks of this beginning also in other places, Matthew 19:4; Matthew 19:8; Mark 10:1-52; Mark 6:1-56; John 1:1-2; Hebrews 1:10. That the world had a beginning is also clearly implied in such passages as Psalms 90:2, "Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting to everlasting thou art God"; and Psalms 102:25, "Of old didst thou lay the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the work of thy hands." b. Difficulties which burden this doctrine. Prior to the beginning mentioned in Genesis 1:1, we must postulate a beginningless eternity, during which God only existed. How must we fill up these blank ages in the eternal life of God? What did God do before the creation of the world? It is so far from possible to think of Him as a Deus otiosus (a God who is not active), that He is usually conceived of as actus purus (pure

action). He is represented in Scripture as always working, John 5:17. Can we then say that He passed from a state of inactivity to one of action? Moreover, how is the transition from a non-creative to a creative state to be reconciled with His immutability? And if He had the eternal purpose to create, why did He not carry it out at once? Why did He allow a whole eternity to elapse before His plan was put into execution? Moreover, why did He select that particular moment for His creative work? c. Suggested solutions of the problem. (1) The theory of eternal creation. According to some, such as Origen, Scotus Erigina, Rothe, Dorner, and Pfleiderer, God has been creating from all eternity, so that the world, though a creature and dependent, is yet just as eternal as God Himself. This has been argued from the omnipotence, the timelessness, the immutability, and the love of God; but neither one of these necessarily imply or involve it. This theory is not only contradicted by Scripture, but is also contrary to reason, for (a) creation from eternity is a contradiction in terms; and (b) the idea of eternal creation, as applied to the present world, which is subject to the law of time, is based on an identification of time and eternity, while these two are essentially different. (2) The theory of the subjectivity of time and eternity. Some speculative philosophers, such as Spinoza, Hegel, and Green, claim that the distinction of time and eternity is purely subjective and due to our finite position. Hence they would have us rise to a higher point of vantage and consider things sub specie aeternitatis (from the point of view of eternity). What exists for our consciousness as a time development, exists for the divine consciousness only as an eternally complete whole. But this theory is contradicted by Scripture just as much as the preceding one, Genesis 1:1; Psalms 90:2; Psalms 102:25; John 1:3. Moreover, it changes objective realities into subjective forms of consciousness, and reduces all history to an illusion. After all, time-development is a reality; there is a succession in our conscious life and in the life of nature round about us. The things that happened yesterday are not the things that are happening today.61 d.Direction in which the solution should be sought. In connection with the problem under consideration, Dr. Orr correctly says, "The solution must lie in getting a proper idea of the relation of eternity to time." He adds that, as far as he can see, this has not yet been satisfactorily accomplished. A great deal of the difficulty encountered here is undoubtedly due to the fact that we think of eternity too much as an indefinite extension of time, as, for instance, when we speak of the ages of comparative inaction in God before the creation of the world. God’s eternity is no indefinitely extended time, but something essentially different, of which we can form no conception. His is a timeless existence, an eternal presence. The hoary past and the most distant future are both present to Him. He acts in all His works, and therefore also in creation, as the Eternal One, and we have no right to draw creation as an act of God into the temporal sphere. In a certain sense this can be called an eternal act, but only in the sense in which all the acts of God are eternal. They are all as acts of God, works that are done in eternity. However, it is not eternal in the same sense as the generation of the Son, for this is an immanent act of God in the absolute sense of the word, while creation results in a temporal existence and thus terminates in time.62 Theologians generally distinguish between active and passive creation, the former denoting creation as an act of God, and the latter, its result, the world’s being created. The former is not, but the latter is, marked by temporal succession, and this temporal succession reflects the order determined in the decree of God. As to the objection that a creation in time implies a change in God, Wollebius remarks that "creation is not the Creator’s but the creature’s passage from potentiality to actuality."63 4. CREATION AS AN ACT BY WHICH SOMETHING IS BROUGHT FORTH OUT OF NOTHING. a. The doctrine of creation is absolutely unique. There has been a

great deal of speculation about the origin of the world, and several theories have been proposed. Some declared the world to be eternal, while others saw in it the product of an antagonistic spirit (Gnostics). Some maintained that it was made out of pre-existing matter which God worked up into form (Plato); others held that it originated by emanation out of the divine substance (Syrian Gnostics, Swedenborg); and still others regarded it as the phenomenal appearance of the Absolute, the hidden ground of all things (Pantheism). In opposition to all these vain speculations of men the doctrine of Scripture stands out in grand sublimity: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." b. Scriptural terms for "to create." In the narrative of creation, as was pointed out in the preceding, three verbs are used, namely, bara', ' asah, and yatsar, and they are used interchangeably in Scripture, Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 2:7. The first word is the most important. Its original meaning is to split, to cut, to divide; but in addition to this it also means to fashion, to create, and in a more derivative sense, to produce, to generate, and to regenerate. The word itself does not convey the idea of bringing forth something out of nothing, for it is even used of works of providence, Isaiah 45:7; Jeremiah 31:22; Amos 4:13. Yet it has a distinctive character: it is always used of divine and never of human production; and it never has an accusative of material, and for that very reason serves to stress the greatness of the work of God. The word ' asah is more general, meaning to do or to make, and is therefore used in the general sense of doing, making, manufacturing, or fashioning. The word yatsar has, more distinctively, the meaning of fashioning out of pre-existent materials, and is therefore used of the potter's fashioning vessels out of clay. The New Testament words are ktizein, Mark 13:19, poiein, Matthew 19:4; themelioun, Hebrews 1:10,katartizein, Romans 9:22, kataskeuazein, Hebrews 3:4, and plassein, Romans 9:20. None of these words in themselves express the idea of creation out of nothing. c. Meaning of the term "creation out of nothing." The expression "to create or bring forth out of nothing" is not found in Scripture. It is derived from one of the Apocrypha, namely, 2Ma 7:28. The expression ex nihilo has been both misinterpreted and criticized. Some even considered the word nihilum (nothing) as the designation of a certain matter out of which the world was created, a matter without qualities and without form. But this is too puerile to be worthy of serious consideration. Others took the expression "to create out of nothing" to mean that the world came into being without a cause, and proceeded to criticize it as conflicting with what is generally regarded as an axiomatic truth, ex nihilo nihil fit (out of nothing comes nothing). But this criticism is entirely unwarranted. To say that God created the world out of nothing is not equivalent to saying that the world came into being without a cause. God Himself or, more specifically, the will of God is the cause of the world. Martensen expresses himself in these words: "The nothing out of which God creates the world are the eternal possibilities of His will, which are the sources of all the actualities of the world."64 If the Latin phrase "ex nihilo nihil fit" be taken to mean that no effect can be without a cause, its truth may be admitted, but it cannot be regarded as a valid objection against the doctrine of creation out of nothing. But if it be understood to express the idea that nothing can originate, except out of previously existing material, it certainly cannot be regarded as a self-evident truth. Then it is rather a purely arbitrary assumption which, as Shedd points out, does not even hold true of man's thoughts and volitions, which are ex nihilo.65 But even if the phrase does express a truth of common experience as far as human works are concerned, this does not-yet prove its truth with respect to the work of the almighty power of God. However, in view of the fact that the expression "creation out of nothing" is liable to misunderstanding, and has often been misunderstood, it is preferable to speak of creation without the use of pre-existing material.

d. Scriptural basis for the doctrine of creation out of nothing. Genesis 1:1 records the beginning of the work of creation, and it certainly does not represent God as bringing the world forth out of pre-existent material. It was creation out of nothing, creation in the strict sense of the word, and therefore the only part of the work recorded in Genesis 1:1-31 to which Calvin would apply the term. But even in the remaining part of the chapter God is represented as calling forth all things by the word of His power, by a simple divine fiat. The same truth is taught in such passages as Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9; Psalms 148:5. The strongest passage is Hebrews 11:3, "By faith we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, so that what is seen hath not been made out of things which appear." Creation is here represented as a fact which we apprehend only by faith. By faith we understand (perceive, not comprehend) that the world was framed or fashioned by the word of God, that is, the word of God's power, the divine fiat, so that the things which are seen, the visible things of this world, were not made out of things which do appear, which are visible, and which are at least occasionally seen. According to this passage the world certainly was not made out of anything that is palpable to the senses. Another passage that may be quoted in this connection is Romans 4:7, which speaks of God, "who quickeneth the dead, and calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Moffatt: "who makes the dead alive and calls into being what does not exist"). The apostle, it is true, does not speak of the creation of the world in this connection, but of the hope of Abraham that he would have a son. However, the description here given of God is general and is therefore also of a general application. It belongs to the very nature of God that He is able to call into being what does not exist, and does so call it into being.

5. CREATION GIVES THE WORLD A DISTINCT, YET ALWAYS DEPENDENT EXISTENCE. a. The world has a distinct existence. This means that the world is not God nor any part of God, but something absolutely distinct from God; and that it differs from God, not merely in degree, but in its essential properties. The doctrine of creation implies that, while God is self-existent and self-sufficient, infinite and eternal, the world is dependent, finite, and temporal. The one can never change into the other. This doctrine is an absolute barrier against the ancient idea of emanation, as well as against all pantheistic theories. The universe is not the existence-form of God nor the phenomenal appearance of the Absolute; and God is not simply the life, or soul, or inner law of the world, but enjoys His own eternally complete life above the world, in absolute independence of it. He is the transcendent God, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders. This doctrine is supported by passages of Scripture which (1) testify to the distinct existence of the world, Isaiah 42:5; Acts 17:24; (2) speak of the immutability of God, Psalms 102:27; Malachi 3:6; James 1:17; (3) draw a comparison between God and the creature, Psalms 90:2; Psalms 102:25-27; Psalms 103:15-17; Isaiah 2:21; Isaiah 22:17, etc.; and (4) speak of the world as lying in sin or sinful, Romans 1:18-32; 1 John 2:15-17, etc. b. The world is always dependent on God. While God gave the world an existence distinct from His own, He did not withdraw from the world after its creation, but remained in the most intimate connection with it. The universe is not like a clock which was wound up by God and is now allowed to run off without any further divine intervention. This deistic conception of creation is neither biblical nor scientific. God is not only the transcendent God, infinitely exalted above all His creatures; He is also the immanent God, who is present in every part of His creation, and whose Spirit is operative in all the world. He is essentially and not merely per potentiam, present in all His creatures, but He is not present in every one of them in the same manner. His immanence should not be interpreted as boundless extension throughout all the

spaces of the universe, nor as a partitive presence, so that He is partly here and partly there. God is Spirit, and just because He is Spirit He is everywhere present as a whole. He is said to fill heaven and earth, Psalms 139:7-10; Jeremiah 23:24, to constitute the sphere in which we live and move and have our being, Acts 17:28, to renew the face of the earth by His Spirit, Psalms 104:30, to dwell in those that are of a broken heart, Psalms 51:11; Isaiah 57:15, and in the Church as His temple, 1 Corinthians 3:16; 1 Corinthians 6:19; Ephesians 2:22. Both transcendence and immanence find expression in a single passage of Scripture, namely, Ephesians 4:6, where the apostle says that we have "one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all. " The doctrine of divine immanence has been stretched to the point of Pantheism in a great deal of modern theology. The world, and especially man, was regarded as the phenomenal manifestation of God. At present there is a strong reaction to this position in the so-called "theology of crisis." It is sometimes thought that this theology, with its emphasis on the "infinite qualitative difference" between time and eternity, on God as the "wholly Other" and the hidden God, and on the distance between God and man, naturally rules out the immanence of God. Brunner gives us the assurance, however, that this is not so. Says he, "Much nonsense has been talked about the 'Barthian theology' having perception only for the transcendence of God, not for His immanence. As if we too were not aware of the fact that God the Creator upholds all things by His power, that He has set the stamp of His divinity on the world and created man to be His own image."66 And Barth says, "Dead were God Himself if He moved His world only from the outside, if He were a 'thing in Himself' and not the One in all, the Creator of all things visible and invisible, the beginning and the ending."67 These men oppose the modern pantheistic conception of the divine immanence, and also the idea that, in virtue of this immanence, the world is a luminous revelation of God.

6. THE FINAL END OF GOD IN CREATION. The question of the final end of God in the work of creation has frequently been debated. In the course of history the question has received especially a twofold answer. a. The happiness of man or of humanity. Some of the earlier philosophers, such as Plato, Philo, and Seneca, asserted that the goodness of God prompted Him to create the world. He desired to communicate Himself to His creatures; their happiness was the end He had in view. Though some Christian theologians chimed in with this idea, it became prominent especially through the Humanism of the Reformation period and the Rationalism of the eighteenth century. This theory was often presented in a very superficial way. The best form in which it is stated is to the effect that God could not make Himself the end of creation, because He is sufficient unto Himself and could need nothing. And if He could not make Himself the end, then this can be found only in the creature, especially in man, and ultimately in his supreme happiness. The teleological view by which the welfare or happiness of man or humanity is made the final end of creation, was characteristic of the thinking of such influential men as Kant, Schleiermacher, and Ritschl, though they did not all present it in the same way. But this theory does not satisfy for several reasons: (1) Though God undoubtedly reveals His goodness in creation, it is not correct to say that His goodness or love could not express itself, if there were no world. The personal relations within the triune God supplied all that was necessary for a full and eternal life of love. (2) It would seem to be perfectly self-evident that God does not exist for the sake of man, but man for the sake of God. God only is Creator and the supreme Good, while man is but a creature, who for that very reason cannot be the end of creation. The temporal finds its end in the eternal, the human in the divine, and not vice versa. (3) The theory does not fit the facts. It is impossible to subordinate all that is

found in creation to this end, and to explain all in relation to human happiness. This is perfectly evident from a consideration of all the sufferings that are found in the world. b. The declarative glory of God. The Church of Jesus Christ found the true end of creation, not in anything outside of God, but in God Himself, more particularly in the external manifestation of His inherent excellency. This does not mean that God's receiving glory from others is the final end. The receiving of glory through the praises of His moral creatures, is an end included in the supreme end, but is not itself that end. God did not create first of all to receive glory, but to make His glory extant and manifest. The glorious perfections of God are manifested in His entire creation; and this manifestation is not intended as an empty show, a mere exhibition to be admired by the creatures, but also aims at promoting their welfare and perfect happiness. Moreover, it seeks to attune their hearts to the praises of the Creator, and to elicit from their souls the expression of their gratefulness and love and adoration. The supreme end of God in creation, the manifestation of His glory, therefore, includes, as subordinate ends, the happiness and salvation of His creatures, and the reception of praise from grateful and adoring hearts. This doctrine is supported by the following considerations: (1) It is based on the testimony of Scripture, Isaiah 43:7; Isaiah 60:21; Isaiah 61:3; Ezekiel 36:21-22; Ezekiel 39:7; Luke 2:14; Romans 9:17; Romans 11:36; 1 Corinthians 15:28; Ephesians 1:5-6; Ephesians 1:9; Ephesians 1:12; Ephesians 1:14; Ephesians 3:9--10; Colossians 1:16. (2) The infinite God would hardly choose any but the highest end in creation, and this end could only be found in Himself. If whole nations, as compared with Him, are but as a drop in a bucket and as the small dust of the balance, then, surely, His declarative glory is intrinsically of far greater value than the good of His creatures, Isaiah 40:15-16. (3) The glory of God is the only end that is consistent with His independence and sovereignty. Everyone is dependent on whomsoever or whatsoever he makes his ultimate end. If God chooses anything in the creature as His final end, this would make Him dependent on the creature to that extent. (4) No other end would be sufficiently comprehensive to be the true end of all God's ways and works in creation. It has the advantage of comprising, in subordination, several other ends. (5) It is the only end that is actually and perfectly attained in the universe. We cannot imagine that a wise and omnipotent God would choose an end destined to fail wholly or in part, Job 23:13Job 23:13">. Yet many of His creatures never attain to perfect happiness. c. Objections to the doctrine that the glory of God is the end of creation. The following are the most important of these: (1) It makes the scheme of the universe a selfish scheme. But we should distinguish between selfishness and reasonable self-regard or self-love. The former is an undue or exclusive care for one's own comfort or pleasure, regardless of the happiness or rights of others; the latter is a due care for one's own happiness and well-being, which is perfectly compatible with justice, generosity, and benevolence towards others. In seeking self-expression for the glory of His name, God did not disregard the well-being, the highest good of others, but promoted it. Moreover, this objection draws the infinite God down to the level of finite and even sinful man and judges Him by human standards, which is entirely unwarranted. God has no equal, and no one can claim any right as over against Him. In making His declarative glory the end of creation, He has chosen the highest end; but when man makes himself the end of all his works, he is not choosing the highest end. He would rise to a higher level, if he chose the welfare of humanity and the glory of God as the end of his life. Finally, this objection is made primarily in view of the fact that the world is full of suffering, and that some of God's rational creatures are doomed to eternal destruction. But this is not due to the creative work of God, but to the sin of man, which thwarted the work of God in creation. The fact that man suffers

the consequences of sin and insurrection does not warrant anyone in accusing God of selfishness. One might as well accuse the government of selfishness for upholding its dignity and the majesty of the law against all wilful transgressors. (2) It is contrary to God's self-sufficiency and independence. By seeking His honour in this way God shows that He needs the creature. The world is created to glorify God, that is, to add to His glory. Evidently, then, His perfection is wanting in some respects; the work of creation satisfies a want and contributes to the divine perfection. But this representation is not correct. The fact that God created the world for His own glory does not mean that He needed the world. It does not hold universally among men, that the work which they do not perform for others, is necessary to supply a want. This may hold in the case of the common laborer, who is working for his daily bread, but is scarcely true of the artist, who follows the spontaneous impulse of his genius. In the same way there is a good pleasure in God, exalted far above want and compulsion, which artistically embodies His thoughts in creation and finds delight in them. Moreover, it is not true that, when God makes His declarative glory the final end of creation, He aims primarily at receiving something. The supreme end which He had in view, was not to receive glory, but to manifest His inherent glory in the works of His hands. It is true that in doing this, He would also cause the heavens to declare His glory, and the firmament to show His handiwork, the birds of the air and the beasts of the field to magnify Him, and the children of men to sing His praises. But by glorifying the Creator the creatures add nothing to the perfection of His being, but only acknowledge His greatness and ascribe to Him the glory which is due unto Him.

D. DIVERGENT THEORIES RESPECTING THE ORIGIN OF THE WORLD The Biblical doctrine is not the only view respecting the origin of the world. Three alternative theories, which were suggested, deserve brief consideration at this point.

1. THE DUALISTIC THEORY. Dualism is not always presented in the same form, but in its most usual form posits two self-existent principles, God and matter, which are distinct from and co-eternal with each other. Original matter, however, is regarded as but a negative and imperfect substance (sometimes regarded as evil), which is subordinate to God and is made the instrument of His will (Plato, Aristotle, the Gnostics, the Manichaeans). According to this theory God is not the creator, but only the framer and artificer of the world. This view is objectionable for several reasons. (a) It is wrong in its fundamental idea that there must have been some substance out of which the world was created, since ex nihilo nihil fit. This maxim is true only as an expression of the idea that no event takes place without a cause, and is false if it means to assert that nothing can ever be made except out of pre-existing material. The doctrine of creation does not dispense with a cause, but finds the all-sufficient cause of the world in the sovereign will of God. (b) Its representation of matter as eternal is fundamentally unsound. If matter is eternal, it must be infinite for it cannot be infinite in one way (duration) and finite in other respects. But it is impossible that two infinites or absolutes should exist side by side. The absolute and the relative may exist simultaneously, but there can be only one absolute and self-existent being. (c) It is unphilosophical to postulate two eternal substances, when one self-existent cause is perfectly adequate to account for all the facts. For that reason philosophy does not rest satisfied with a dualistic explanation of the world, but seeks to give a monistic interpretation of the universe. (d) If the theory assumes — as it does in some of its forms — the existence of an eternal principle of evil, there is absolutely no guarantee that good will triumph over evil in the world. It would seem that what is eternally necessary is bound to maintain itself and can never go down.

2. THE EMANATION THEORY IN VARIOUS FORMS. This theory is to the effect that the world is a necessary emanation out of the divine being. According to it God and the world are essentially one, the latter being the phenomenal manifestation of the former. The idea of emanation is characteristic of all pantheistic theories, though it is not always represented in the same way. Here, again, we may register several objections. (a) This view of the origin of the world virtually denies the infinity and transcendence of God by applying to Him a principle of evolution, of growth and progress, which characterizes only the finite and imperfect; and by identifying Him and the world. All visible objects thus become but fleeting modifications of a self-existent, unconscious, and impersonal essence, which may be called God, Nature, or the Absolute. (b) It robs God of His sovereignty by denuding Him of His power of self-determination in relation to the world. He is reduced to the hidden ground from which the creatures necessarily emanate, and which determines their movement by an inflexible necessity of nature. At the same time it deprives all rational creatures of their relative independence, of their freedom, and of their moral character. (c) It also compromises the holiness of God in a very serious manner. It makes God responsible for all that happens in the world, for the evil as well as for the good. This is, of course, a very serious consequence of the theory, from which Pantheists have never been able to escape.

3. THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION. The theory of evolution is sometimes spoken of as if it could be a substitute for the doctrine of creation. But this is clearly a mistake. It certainly cannot be a substitute for creation in the sense of absolute origination, since it presupposes something that evolves, and this must in the last resort be either eternal or created, so that, after all, the evolutionist must choose between the theory of the eternity of matter and the doctrine of creation. At best, it might conceivably serve as a substitute for what is called secondary creation, by which the substance already in existence is given a definite form. (a) Some evolutionists, as, for instance, Haeckel, believe in the eternity of matter, and ascribe the origin of life to spontaneous generation. But belief in the eternity of matter is not only decidedly un-Christian and even atheistic; it is also generally discredited. The idea that matter, with force as its universal and inseparable property, is quite sufficient for the explanation of the world, finds little favor to-day in scientific circles. It is felt that a material universe, composed of finite parts (atoms, electrons, and so on) cannot itself be infinite; and that that which is subject to constant change cannot be eternal. Moreover, it has become increasingly clear that blind matter and force or energy cannot account for life and personality, for intelligence and free will. And the idea of spontaneous generation is a pure hypothesis, not only unverified, but practically exploded. The general law of nature seems to be " omne vivum e vivo " or " ex vivo." (b) Other evolutionists advocate what they call theistic evolution. This postulates the existence of God back of the universe, who works in it, as a rule according to the unalterable laws of nature and by physical forces only, but in some cases by direct miraculous intervention, as, for instance, in the case of the absolute beginning, the beginning of life, and the beginning of rational and moral existence. This has often been called derisively a "stop-gap" theory. It is really a child of embarrassment, which calls God in at periodic intervals to help nature over the chasms that yawn at her feet. It is neither the Biblical doctrine of creation, nor a consistent theory of evolution, for evolution is defined as "a series of gradual progressive changes effected by means of resident forces " (Le Conte). In fact, theistic evolution is a contradiction in terms. It is just as destructive of faith in the Biblical doctrine of creation as naturalistic evolution is; and by calling in the creative activity of God time and again it also nullifies the evolutionary hypothesis. Besides these two views we may also mention Bergson’s Creative

evolution, and C. Lloyd Morgan’s Emergent evolution. The former is a vitalistic pantheist, whose theory involves the denial of the personality of God; and the latter in the end comes to the conclusion that he cannot explain his so-called emergents without positing some ultimate factor which might be called "God."

04.1.2.4. Creation of the Spiritual World

IV. Creation of the Spiritual World A. THE DOCTRINE OF THE ANGELS IN HISTORY

There are clear evidences of belief in the existence of angels from the very beginning of the Christian era. Some of them were regarded as good, and others as evil. The former were held in high esteem as personal beings of a lofty order, endowed with moral freedom, engaged in the joyful service of God, and employed by God to minister to the welfare of men. According to some of the early Church Fathers they had fine ethereal bodies. The general conviction was that all angels were created good, but that some abused their freedom and fell away from God. Satan, who was originally an angel of eminent rank, was regarded as their head. The cause of his fall was found in pride and sinful ambition, while the fall of his subordinates was ascribed to their lusting after the daughters of men. This view was based on what was then the common interpretation of Genesis 6:2. Alongside of the general idea that the good angels ministered to the needs and welfare of believers, the specific notion of guardian angels for individual churches and individual men was cherished by some. Calamities of various kinds, such as sicknesses, accidents, and losses, were frequently ascribed to the baneful influence of evil spirits. The idea of a hierarchy of angels already made its appearance (Clement of Alexandria), but it was not considered proper to worship any of the angels. As time went on the angels continued to be regarded as blessed spirits, superior to men in knowledge, and free from the encumbrance of gross material bodies. While some still ascribed to them fine ethereal bodies, there was an ever increasing uncertainty as to whether they had any bodies at all. They who still clung to the idea that they were corporeal did this, so it seems, in the interest of the truth that they were subject to spatial limitations. Dionysius the Areopagite divided the angels into three classes: the first class consisting of Thrones, Cherubim, and Seraphim; the second, of Mights, Dominions, and Powers; and the third, of Principalities, Archangels, and Angels. The first class is represented as enjoying the closest communion with God; the second, as being enlightened by the first; and the third, as being enlightened by the second. This classification was adopted by several later writers. Augustine stressed the fact that the good angels were rewarded for their obedience by the gift of perseverance, which carried with it the assurance that they would never fall. Pride was still regarded as the cause of Satan’s fall, but the idea that the rest of the angels fell as the result of their lusting after the daughters of men, though still held by some, was gradually disappearing under the influence of a better exegesis of Genesis 6:2. A beneficent influence was ascribed to the unfallen angels, while the fallen angels were regarded as corrupting the hearts of men, as stimulating to heresy. and as engendering diseases and calamities. The polytheistic tendencies of many of the converts to Christianity fostered an inclination to worship the angels. Such worship was formally condemned by a council which convened at Laodicea in the fourth century.

During the Middle Ages there were still a few who were inclined to assume that the angels have ethereal bodies, but the prevailing opinion was that they were incorporeal. The angelic appearances were explained by assuming that in such cases angels adopted temporal bodily forms for revelational purposes. Several points were in debate among the Scholastics. As to the

time of the creation of the angels the prevailing opinion was that they were created at the same time as the material universe. While some held that the angels were created in the state of grace, the more common opinion was that they were created in a state of natural perfection only. There was little difference of opinion respecting the question, whether angels can be said to be in a place. The common answer to this question was affirmative, though it was pointed out that their presence in space is not circumscriptive but definitive, since only bodies can be in space circumscriptively. While all the Scholastics agreed that the knowledge of the angels is limited, the Thomists and Scotists differed considerably respecting the nature of this knowledge. It was admitted by all that the angels received infused knowledge at the time of their creation, but Thomas Aquinas denied, while Duns Scotus affirmed, that they could acquire new knowledge through their own intellectual activity. The former held that the knowledge of the angels is purely intuitive, but the latter asserted that it may also be discursive. The idea of guardian angels found considerable favor during the Middle Ages. The period of the Reformation brought nothing new respecting the doctrine of the angels. Both Luther and Calvin had a vivid conception of their ministry, and particularly of the presence and power of Satan. The latter stresses the fact that he is under divine control, and that, while he is sometimes the instrument of God, he can only work within prescribed limits. Protestant theologians generally regarded the angels as pure spiritual beings, though Zanchius and Grotius still speak of them as having ethereal bodies. As to the work of the good angels the general opinion was that it is their special task to minister to the heirs of salvation. There was no general agreement, however, respecting the existence of guardian angels. Some favored this view, others opposed it, and still others refused to commit themselves on this point. Our Belgic Confession says in Article XII, which deals with creation: "He also created the angels good, to be His messengers and to serve His elect: some of whom are fallen from that excellency, in which God created them, into everlasting perdition; and the others have, by the grace of God, remained steadfast, and continued in their primitive state. The devils and evil spirits are so depraved that they are enemies of God and every good thing to the utmost of their power, as murderers watching to ruin the Church and every member thereof, and by their wicked stratagems to destroy all; and are therefore, by their own wickedness, adjudged to eternal damnation, daily expecting their horrible torments."

Up to the present time Roman Catholics generally regarded the angels as pure spirits, while some Protestants, such as Emmons, Ebrard, Kurtz, Delitzsch, and others, still ascribe to them some special kind of bodies. But even the great majority of the latter take the opposite view. Swedenborg holds that all angels were originally men and exist in bodily form. Their position in the angelic world depends on their life in this world. Eighteenth century Rationalism boldly denied the existence of angels and explained what the Bible teaches about them as a species of accommodation. Some modern liberal theologians consider it worthwhile to retain the fundamental idea expressed in the doctrine of the angels. They find in it a symbolic representation of the protecting care and helpfulness of God.

B. THE EXISTENCE OF THE ANGELS

All religions recognize the existence of a spiritual world. Their mythologies speak of gods, half-gods, spirits, demons, genii, heroes, and so on. It was especially among the Persians that the doctrine of the angels was developed, and many critical scholars assert that the Jews derived their angelology from the Persians. But this is an unproved and, to say the least, very doubtful theory. It

certainly cannot be harmonized with the Word of God, in which angels appear from the very beginning. Moreover, some great scholars, who made special study of the subject, came to the conclusion that the Persian angelology was derived from that current among the Hebrews. The Christian Church has always believed in the existence of angels, but in modern liberal theology this belief has been discarded, though it still regards the angel-idea as useful, since it imprints upon us "the living power of God in the history of redemption, His providentia specialissima for His people, especially for the 'little ones.'"68 Though such men as Leibnitz and Wolff, Kant and Schleiermacher, admitted the possibility of the existence of an angelic world, and some of them even tried to prove this by rational argumentation, it is quite evident that philosophy can neither prove nor disprove the existence of angels. From philosophy, therefore, we turn to Scripture, which makes no deliberate attempt to prove the existence of angels, but assumes this throughout, and in its historical books repeatedly shows us the angels in action. No one who bows before the authority of the Word of God can doubt the existence of angels.

C. THE NATURE OF THE ANGELS Under this heading several points call for consideration.

1. IN DISTINCTION FROM GOD THEY ARE CREATED BEINGS. The creation of the angels has sometimes been denied, but is clearly taught in Scripture. It is not certain that those passages which speak of the creation of the host of heaven (Genesis 2:1; Psalms 33:6; Nehemiah 9:6) refer to the creation of the angels rather than to the creation of the starry host; but Psalms 148:2; Psalms 148:5, and Colossians 1:16 clearly speak of the creation of the angels, (comp. 1 Kings 22:19; Psalms 103:20-21). The time of their creation cannot be fixed definitely. The opinion of some, based on Job 38:7Job 38:7">, that they were created before all other things, really finds no support in Scripture. As far as we know, no creative work preceded the creation of heaven and earth. The passage in the book of Job (Job 38:7) teaches, indeed, in a poetic vein that they were present at the founding of the world just as the stars were, but not that they existed before the primary creation of heaven and earth. The idea that the creation of the heavens was completed on the first day, and that the creation of the angels was simply a part of the day's work, is also an unproved assumption, though the fact that the statement in Genesis 1:2 applies to the earth only would seem to favor it. Possibly the creation of the heavens was not completed in a single moment any more than that of the earth. The only safe statement seems to be that they were created before the seventh day. This at least follows from such passages as Genesis 2:1; Exodus 20:11; Job 38:7; Nehemiah 9:6.

2. THEY ARE SPIRITUAL AND INCORPOREAL BEINGS. This has always been disputed. The Jews and many of the early Church Fathers ascribed to them airy or fiery bodies; but the Church of the Middle Ages came to the conclusion that they are pure spiritual beings. Yet even after that some Roman Catholic, Arminian, and even Lutheran and Reformed theologians ascribed to them a certain corporeity, most subtle and pure. They regarded the idea of a purely spiritual and incorporeal nature as metaphysically inconceivable, and also as incompatible with the conception of a creature. They also appealed to the fact that the angels are subject to spatial limitations, move about from place to place, and were sometimes seen by men. But all these arguments are more than counter- balanced by the explicit statements of Scripture to the effect that the angels are pneumata, Matthew 8:16; Matthew 12:45; Luke 7:21; Luke 8:2; Luke 11:26; Acts 19:12; Ephesians 6:12; Hebrews 1:14. They have no flesh and bone, Luke 24:39, do not marry, Matthew 22:30, can be present in great numbers in a very limited space, Luke 8:30, and are invisible, Colossians 1:16.

Such passages as Psalms 104:4 (comp. Hebrews 1:7); Matthew 22:30; and 1 Corinthians 11:10 do not prove the corporeity of the angels. Neither is this proved by the symbolical descriptions of the angels in the prophecy of Ezekiel and in the book of Revelation, nor by their appearance in bodily forms, though it is difficult to say, whether the bodies which they assumed on certain occasions were real or only apparent. It is clear, however, that they are creatures and therefore finite and limited, though they stand in a freer relation to time and space than man. We cannot ascribe to them an ubi repletivum, nor an ubi circumscriptivum, but only an ubi definitivum. They cannot be in two or more places simultaneously.

3. THEY ARE RATIONAL, MORAL, AND IMMORTAL BEINGS. This means that they are personal beings endowed with intelligence and will. The fact that they are intelligent beings would seem to follow at once from the fact that they are spirits; but it is also taught explicitly in Scripture, 2 Samuel 14:20; Matthew 22:36; Ephesians 3:10; 1 Peter 1:12; 2 Peter 2:11. While not omniscient, they are superior to men in knowledge, Matthew 24:36. Moreover, they are possessed of moral natures, and as such are under moral obligation; they are rewarded for obedience, and are punished for disobedience. The Bible speaks of the angels which remained loyal as "holy angels," Matthew 25:31; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Acts 10:22; Revelation 14:10, and pictures those who fell away as lying and sinning, John 8:44; 1 John 3:8-10. The good angels are also immortal in the sense that they are not subject to death. In that respect the saints in heaven are said to be like them, Luke 20:35-36. In addition to all this, great power is ascribed to them. They form the army of God, a host of mighty heroes, always ready to do the Lord’s bidding, Psalms 103:20; Colossians 1:16; Ephesians 1:21; Ephesians 3:10; Hebrews 1:14; and the evil angels form the army of Satan, bent on destroying the work of the Lord, Luke 11:21; 2 Thessalonians 2:9; 1 Peter 5:8.

4. THEY ARE PARTLY GOOD AND PARTLY EVIL. The Bible furnishes very little information respecting the original state of the angels. We read, however, that at the end of His creative work God saw everything that He had made and, behold, it was very good. Moreover, John 8:44; 2 Peter 2:4; and Jude 1:6 presupposes an original good condition of all angels. The good angels are called elect angels in 1 Timothy 5:21. They evidently received, in addition to the grace with which all angels were endowed, and which was sufficient to enable them to retain their position, a special grace of perseverance, by which they were confirmed in their position. There has been a great deal of useless speculation about the time and character of the fall of the angels. Protestant theology, however, was generally satisfied with the knowledge that the good angels retained their original state, were confirmed in their position, and are now incapable of sinning. They are not only called holy angels, but also angels of light, 2 Corinthians 11:14. They always behold the face of God, Matthew 18:10, are our exemplars in doing the will of God, Matthew 6:10, and possess immortal life, Luke 20:36.

D. THE NUMBER AND ORGANIZATION OF THE ANGELS

1. THEIR NUMBER. The Bible contains no definite information respecting the number of the angels, but indicates very clearly that they constitute a mighty army. They are repeatedly called the host of heaven or of God, and this term itself already points to a goodly number. In Deuteronomy 33:2 we read that "Jehovah came from Sinai... from the ten thousands of holy ones," and in Psalms 68:17 the poet sings, "The chariots of God are twenty thousand, even thousands upon thousands: the Lord is among them, as in Sinai, in the sanctuary." In reply to the question of

Jesus addressed to an unclean spirit, the answer was, "my name is legion; for we are many," Mark 5:9; Mark 5:15. The Roman legion was not always the same, but varied at different times all the way from 3000 to 6000, In Gethsemane Jesus said to the band that came to take him captive, "Or thinkest thou that I cannot beseech my Father, and He shall even now send me more than twelve legions of angels?" Matthew 26:53. And, finally, we read in Revelation 5:11, "And I saw, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne and the living creatures and the elders; and the number of them was ten thousand times ten thousand, and thousands of thousands." In view of all these data it is perfectly safe to say that the angels constitute an innumerable company, a mighty host. They do not form an organism like mankind, for they are spirits, which do not marry and are not born the one out of the other. Their full number was created in the beginning; there has been no increase in their ranks.

2. THEIR ORDERS. Though the angels do not constitute an organism, they are evidently organized in some way. This follows from the fact that, alongside of the general name "angel," the Bible uses certain specific names to indicate different classes of angels. The name "angel," by which we designate the higher spirits generally, is not a nomen naturae in Scripture, but a nomen officii. The Hebrew word mal'ak simply means messenger, and serves to designate one sent by men, Job 1:14; 1 Samuel 11:3, or by God, Haggai 1:13; Malachi 2:7; Malachi 3:1. The Greek term aggelos is also frequently applied to men, Matthew 11:10; Mark 1:2; Luke 7:24; Luke 9:51; Galatians 4:14. There is no general distinctive name for all spiritual beings in Scripture. They are called sons of God, Job 1:6; Job 2:1; Psalms 29:1; Psalms 89:6, spirits, Hebrews 1:14, saints, Psalms 89:5; Psalms 89:7; Zechariah 14:5; Daniel 8:13, watchers, Daniel 4:13; Daniel 4:17; Daniel 4:24. There are several specific names, however, which point to different classes of angels. a. Cherubim. Cherubim are repeatedly mentioned in Scripture. They guard the entrance of paradise, Genesis 3:24, gaze upon the mercy-seat, Exodus 25:18; Psalms 80:1; Psalms 99:1; Isaiah 37:16; Hebrews 9:5, and constitute the chariot on which God descends to the earth, 2 Samuel 22:11; Psalms 18:10. In Ezekiel 1:1-28 and Revelation 4:1-11 they are represented as living beings in various forms. These symbolical representations simply serve to bring out their extraordinary power and majesty. More than other creatures they were destined to reveal the power, the majesty, and the glory of God, and to guard His holiness in the garden of Eden, in tabernacle and temple, and in the descent of God to the earth. b. Seraphim. A related class of angels are the Seraphim, mentioned only in Isaiah 6:2; Isaiah 6:6. They are also symbolically represented in human form, but with six wings, two covering the face, two the feet, and two for the speedy execution of the Lord's commandments. In distinction from the Cherubim, they stand as servants round about the throne of the heavenly King, sing His praises, and are ever ready to do His bidding. While the Cherubim are the mighty ones, they might be called the nobles among the angels. While the former guard the holiness of God, they serve the purpose of reconciliation, and thus prepare men for the proper approach to God. c. Principalities, powers, thrones, and dominions. In addition to the preceding the Bible speaks of certain classes of angels, which occupy places of authority in the angelic world, as archai and exousiai (principalities and powers), Ephesians 3:10; Colossians 2:10, thronoi (thrones), Colossians 1:16, kureotetoi (dominions), Ephesians 1:21; Colossians 1:16, and dunameis (powers), Ephesians 1:21; 1 Peter 3:22. These appellations do not point to different kinds of angels, but simply to differences of rank or dignity among them. d. Gabriel and Michael. In distinction from all the other angels, these two are mentioned by name. Gabriel appears in Daniel 8:16; Daniel 9:21; Luke 1:19; Luke 1:26. The great

majority of commentators regard him as a created angel, but some of these deny that the name Gabriel is a proper name and look upon it as common noun, meaning man of God, a synonym for angel. But this is an untenable position.69 Some earlier and later commentators see in him an uncreated being, some even suggesting that he might be the third person of the Holy Trinity, while Michael was the second. But a simple reading of the passages in question shows the impossibility of this interpretation. He may be one of the seven angels that are said to stand before God in Revelation 8:2 (comp. Luke 1:19). It seems to have been his special task to mediate and interpret divine revelations. The name Michael (lit., "who as God?") has been interpreted as a designation of the second person of the Trinity. But this is no more tenable than the identification of Gabriel with the Holy Spirit. Michael is mentioned in Daniel 10:13; Daniel 10:21; Jude 1:9; Revelation 12:7. From the fact that he is called "the archangel" in Jude 1:9, and from the expression used in Revelation 12:7 it would seem that he occupies an important place among the angels. The passages in Daniel also point to the fact that he is a prince among them. We see in him the valiant warrior fighting the battles of Jehovah against the enemies of Israel and against the evil powers in the spirit-world. It is not impossible that the title "archangel" also applies to Gabriel and a few other angels.

E. THE SERVICE OF THE ANGELS We can distinguish between an ordinary and an extraordinary service of the angels.

1. THEIR ORDINARY SERVICE. This consists first of all in their praising God day and night, Job 38:7; Isaiah 6:1-13; Psalms 103:20; Psalms 148:2; Revelation 5:11. Scripture gives the impression that they do this audibly, as at the birth of Christ, though we can form no conception of this speaking and singing of the angels. Since the entrance of sin into the world they are sent forth to minister to them that are heirs of salvation, Hebrews 1:14. They rejoice at the conversion of a sinner, Luke 15:10, watch over believers, Psalms 34:7; Psalms 91:11, protect the little ones, Matthew 18:10, are present in the Church, 1 Corinthians 11:10; 1 Timothy 5:21, learning from her the manifold riches of the grace of God, Ephesians 3:10; 1 Peter 1:12, and convey believers into the bosom of Abraham, Luke 16:22. The idea that some of them serve as guardians of individual believers finds no support in Scripture. The statement in Matthew 18:10 is too general to prove the point, though it seems to indicate that there is a group of angels who are particularly charged with the care of the little ones. Neither is it proved by Acts 12:15, for this passage merely goes to show that there were some even among the disciples of that early day who believed in guardian angels.

2. THEIR EXTRAORDINARY SERVICE. The extraordinary service of the angels was made necessary by the fall of man, and forms an important element in the special revelation of God. They often mediate the special revelations of God, communicate blessings to His people, and execute judgment upon His enemies. Their activity is most prominent in the great turning points of the economy of salvation, as in the days of the patriarchs, the time of the lawgiving, the period of the exile and of the restoration, and at the birth, the resurrection, and the ascension of the Lord. When the period of God’s special revelation closed, the extraordinary service of the angels ceased, to be resumed only at the return of the Lord.

F. THE EVIL ANGELS

1. THEIR ORIGIN. Besides the good there also are evil angels, who delight in opposing God and antagonizing His work. Though they are also creatures of God, they were not created as evil

angels. God saw everything that He had created, and it was very good, Genesis 1:31. There are two passages in Scripture which clearly imply that some of the angels did not retain their original position, but fell from the state in which they were created, 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6. The special sin of these angels is not revealed, but has generally been thought to consist in this that they exalted themselves over against God, and aspired to supreme authority. If this ambition played an important part in the life of Satan and led to his downfall, it would at once explain why he tempted man on this particular point, and sought to lure him to his destruction by appealing to a possible similar ambition in man. Some of the early Church Fathers distinguished between Satan and the subordinate devils in explaining the cause of their fall. That of the fall of Satan was found in pride, but that of the more general fall in the angelic world, in fleshly lust, Genesis 6:2. That interpretation of Genesis 6:2 was gradually discarded, however, during the Middle Ages. In view of this it is rather surprising to find that several modern commentators are reiterating the idea in their interpretation of 2 Peter 2:4 and Jude 1:6 as, for instance, Meyer, Alford, Mayor, Wohlenberg. It is an explanation, however, that is contrary to the spiritual nature of the angels, and to the fact that, as Matthew 22:30 would seem to imply, there is no sexual life among the angels. Moreover, on that interpretation we shall have to assume a double fall in the angelic world, first the fall of Satan, and then, considerably later, the fall resulting in the host of devils that now serves Satan. It is much more likely that Satan dragged the others right along with him in his fall.

2. THEIR HEAD. Satan appears in Scripture as the recognized head of the fallen angels. He was originally, it would seem, one of the mightiest princes of the angelic world, and became the leader of those that revolted and fell away from God. The name "Satan" points to him as "the Adversary," not in the first place of man, but of God. He attacks Adam as the crown of God’s handiwork, works destruction and is therefore called Apollyon (the Destroyer), and assaults Jesus when He undertakes the work of restoration. After the entrance of sin into the world he became Diabolos (the Accuser), accusing the people of God continually, Revelation 12:10. He is represented in Scripture as the originator of sin, Genesis 3:1; Genesis 3:4; John 8:44; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 John 3:8; Revelation 12:9; Revelation 20:2; Revelation 20:10, and appears as the recognized head of those that fell away, Matthew 25:41; Matthew 9:34; Ephesians 2:2. He remains the leader of the angelic hosts which he carried with him in his fall, and employs them in desperate resistance to Christ and His Kingdom. He is also called repeatedly "the prince of this (not, "of the") world, John 12:31; John 14:30; John 16:11, and even "the god of this world," 2 Corinthians 4:4. This does not mean that he is in control of the world, for God is in control, and He has given all authority to Christ, but it does convey the idea that he is in control of this evil world, the world in so far as it is ethically separated from God. This is clearly indicated in Ephesians 2:2, where he is called "the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience." He is superhuman, but not divine; has great power, but is not omnipotent; wields influence on a large but restricted scale, Matthew 12:29; Revelation 20:2, and is destined to be cast into the bottomless pit, Revelation 20:10.

3. THEIR ACTIVITY. Like the good angels, the fallen angels, too, are possessed of superhuman power, but their use of it contrasts sadly with that of the good angels. While the latter perennially praise God, fight His battles, and serve Him faithfully, they as powers of darkness are bent on cursing God, battling against Him and His Anointed, and destroying His work. They are in constant revolt against God, seek to blind and mislead even the elect, and encourage sinners in their evil.

But they are lost and hopeless spirits. They are even now chained to hell and pits of darkness, and though not yet limited to one place, yet, as Calvin says, drag their chains with them wherever they go, 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6.

04.1.2.5. Creation of the Material World

V. Creation of the Material World THE SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF CREATION

Other nations, as well as the Hebrews, had their accounts respecting the origin of the material universe, and of the way in which the original chaos was changed into a cosmos or habitable world. Some of those accounts reveal traces of similarity with the Biblical record, but contain even more striking dissimilarities. They are as a rule characterized by dualistic or polytheistic elements, represent the present world as the result of a fierce struggle among the gods, and are far removed from the simplicity and sobriety of the Biblical account. It may be advisable to preface our discussion of its details with a few general remarks.

1. THE POINT OF VIEW FROM WHICH THE BIBLE CONTEMPLATES THE WORK OF CREATION. It is a significant thing that the narrative of creation, while it mentions the creation of the heavens, devotes no further attention to the spiritual world. It concerns the material world only, and represents this primarily as the habitation of man and as the theater of his activities. It deals not with unseen realities such as spirits, but with the things that are seen. And because these things are palpable to the human senses, they come up for discussion, not only in theology, but also in other sciences and in philosophy. But while philosophy seeks to understand the origin and nature of all things by the light of reason, theology takes its starting point in God, allows itself to be guided by His special revelation respecting the work of creation, and considers everything in relation to Him. The narrative of creation is the beginning of God’s self-revelation, and acquaints us with the fundamental relation in which everything, man included, stands to Him. It stresses the original position of man, in order that men of all ages might have a proper understanding of the rest of Scripture as a revelation of redemption. While it does not pretend to give us a complete philosophical cosmogony, it does contain important elements for the construction of a proper cosmogony.

2. THE ORIGIN OF THE ACCOUNT OF CREATION. The question as to the origin of the narrative of creation has been raised repeatedly, and the interest in it was renewed by the discovery of the Babylonian story of creation. This story, as it is known to us, took shape in the city of Babylon. It speaks of the generation of several gods, of whom Marduk proves supreme. He only was sufficiently powerful to overcome the primeval dragon Tiamat, and becomes the creator of the world, whom men worship. There are some points of similarity between the narrative of creation in Genesis and this Babylonian story. Both speak of a primeval chaos, and of a division of the waters below and above the firmament. Genesis speaks of seven days, and the Babylonian account is arranged in seven tablets. Both accounts connect the heavens with the fourth epoch of creation, and the creation of man with the sixth. Some of these resemblances are of little significance, and the differences of the two accounts are far more important. The Hebrew order differs on many points from the Babylonian. The greatest difference is found, however, in the religious conceptions of the two. The Babylonian account, in distinction from that of Scripture, is mythological and polytheistic. The gods do not stand on a high level, but scheme and plot and fight. And Marduk

succeeds only after a prolonged struggle, which taxes his strength, in overcoming the evil forces and reducing chaos to order. In Genesis, on the other hand, we encounter the most sublime monotheism, and see God calling forth the universe and all created things by the simple word of His power. When the Babylonian account was discovered, many scholars hastily assumed that the Biblical narrative was derived from the Babylonian source, forgetting that there are at least two other possibilities, namely, (a) that the Babylonian story is a corrupted reproduction of the narrative in Genesis; or (b) that both are derived from a common, more primitive, source. But however this question may be answered, it does not settle the problem of the origin of the narrative. How did the original, whether written or oral, come into existence? Some regard it simply as the natural product of man's reflection on the origin of things. But this explanation is extremely unlikely in view of the following facts: (a) the idea of creation is incomprehensible; (b) science and philosophy both equally oppose the doctrine of creation out of nothing; and (c) it is only by faith that we understand that the worlds have been framed by the word of God, Hebrews 11:3. We therefore come to the conclusion that the story of creation was revealed to Moses or to one of the earlier patriarchs. If this revelation was pre-Mosaic, it passed in tradition (oral or written) from one generation to another, probably lost something of its original purity, and was finally incorporated in a pure form, under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, in the first book of the Bible.

3. THE INTERPRETATION OF Genesis 1:1-2. Some regard Genesis 1:1 as the superscription or title of the whole narrative of creation. But this is objectionable for three reasons: (a) because the following narrative is connected with the first verse by the Hebrew conjunction waw (and), which would not be the case if the first verse were a title; (b) because, on that supposition, there would be no account whatsoever of the original and immediate creation; and (c) since the following verses contain no account of the creation of heaven at all. The more generally accepted interpretation is that Genesis 1:1 records the original and immediate creation of the universe, Hebraistically called "heaven and earth." In this expression the word "heaven" refers to that invisible order of things in which the glory of God reveals itself in the most perfect manner. It cannot be regarded as a designation of the cosmical heavens, whether of the clouds or of the stars, for these were created on the second and on the fourth day of the creative week. Then in the second verse the author describes the original condition of the earth (comp. Psalms 104:5-6). It is a debatable question, whether the original creation of matter formed a part of the work of the first day, or was separated from this by a shorter or longer period of time. Of those who would interpose a long period between the two, some hold that the world was originally a dwelling place of angels, was destroyed as the result of a fall in the angelic world, and was then reclaimed and turned into a fit habitation for men. We shall refer to this restitution theory in another connection.

B. THE HEXAEMERON, OR THE WORK OF THE SEPARATE DAYS

After the creation of the universe out of nothing in a moment of time, the existing chaos was gradually changed into a cosmos, a habitable world, in six successive days. Before the work of the separate days is indicated, the. question as to the length of the days of creation calls for a brief discussion.

1. CONSIDERATION OF THE THEORY THAT THEY WERE LONG PERIODS OF TIME. Some scholars assume that the days of Genesis 1:1-31 were long periods of time, in order to make them harmonize with the geological periods. The opinion that these days were not ordinary days of

twenty-four hours was not entirely foreign to early Christian theology, as E. C. Messenger shows in detail in his learned work on Evolution and Theology. But some of the Church Fathers, who intimated that these days were probably not to be regarded as ordinary days, expressed the opinion that the whole work of creation was finished in a moment of time, and that the days merely constituted a symbolical frame- work, which facilitated the description of the work of creation in an orderly fashion, so as to make it more intelligible to finite minds. The opinion that the days of creation were long periods came to the foreground again in recent years, not, however, as the result of exegetical studies, but under the influence of the disclosures of science. Previous to the nineteenth century the days of Genesis were most generally regarded as literal days. But, of course, human interpretation is fallible, and may have to be revised in the light of later discoveries. If traditional exegesis conflicts, not merely with scientific theories — which are themselves interpretations —, but with well established facts, re-thinking and reinterpretation is naturally in order. It can hardly be maintained, however, that the assumed geological periods necessitate a change of front, since they are by no means generally recognized, even in scientific circles, as well established facts. Some Christian scholars, such as Harris, Miley, Bettex, and Geesink, assume that the days of Genesis are geological days, and both Shedd and Hodge call attention to the remarkable agreement between the record of creation and the testimony of the rocks, and are inclined to regard the days of Genesis as geological periods. The question may be raised, whether it is exegetically possible to conceive of the days of Genesis as long periods of time. And then it must be admitted that the Hebrew word yom does not always denote a period of twenty-four hours in Scripture, and is not always used in the same sense even in the narrative of creation. It may mean daylight in distinction from darkness, Genesis 1:5; Genesis 1:16; Genesis 1:18; day-light and darkness together, Genesis 1:5; Genesis 1:8; Genesis 1:13 etc.; the six days taken together, Genesis 2:4; and an indefinite period marked in its entire length by some characteristic feature, as trouble, Psalms 20:1, wrath, Job 20:28Job 20:28">, prosperity, Ecclesiastes 7:14, or salvation 2 Corinthians 6:2. Now some hold that the Bible favors the idea that the days of creation were indefinite periods of time, and call attention to the following: (a) The sun was not created until the fourth day, and therefore the length of the previous days could not yet be determined by the earth’s relation to the sun. This is perfectly true, but does not prove the point. God had evidently, even previous to the fourth day, established a rhythmic alternation of light and darkness, and there is no ground for the assumption that the days so measured were of longer duration than the later days. Why should we assume that God greatly increased the velocity of the earth’s revolutions after the light was concentrated in the sun? (b) The days referred to are God’s days, the archetypal days, of which the days of men are merely ectypal copies; and with God a thousand years are as a single day, Psalms 90:4; 2 Peter 3:8. But this argument is based on a confusion of time and eternity. God ad intra has no days, but dwells in eternity, exalted far above all measurements of time. This is also the idea conveyed by Psalms 90:4; and 2 Peter 3:8. The only actual days of which God has knowledge are the days of this time- space world. How does it follow from the fact that God is exalted above the limitations of time, as they exist in this world, where time is measured by days and weeks and months and years, that a day may just as well be a period of 100,000 years as one of twenty-four hours? (c) The seventh day, the day in which God rested from His labours, is said to continue up to the present time, and must therefore be regarded as a period of thousands of years. It is God’s sabbath, and that sabbath never ends. This argument represents a similar confusion. The whole idea of God’s beginning the work of creation

at a certain point of time, and then ceasing it after a period of six days, does not apply to God as He is in Himself, but only to the temporal results of His creative activity. He is unchangeably the same from age to age. His sabbath is not an indefinitely prolonged period of time; it is eternal. On the other hand, the sabbath of the creation week was a day equal in length to the other days. God not only rested on that day, but He also blessed and hallowed it, setting it aside as a day of rest for man, Exodus 20:11. This would hardly apply to the whole period from the time of creation up to the rpesent day.

2. CONSIDERATION OF THE VIEW THAT THEY WERE LITERAL DAYS. The prevailing view has always been that the days of Genesis 1:1-31 are to be understood as literal days. Some of the early Church Fathers did not regard them as real indications of the time in which the work of creation was completed, but rather as literary forms in which the writer of Genesis cast the narrative of creation, in order to picture the work of creation — which was really completed in a moment of time — in an orderly fashion for human intelligence. It was only after the comparatively new sciences of geology and palæontology came forward with their theories of the enormous age of the earth, that theologians began to show an inclination to identify the days of creation with the long geological ages. To-day some of them regard it as an established fact that the days of Genesis 1:1-31 were long geological periods; others are somewhat inclined to assume this position, but show considerable hesitation. Hodge, Sheldon, Van Oosterzee, and Dabney, some of whom are not entirely averse to this view, are all agreed that this interpretation of the days is exegetically doubtful, if not impossible. Kuyper and Bavinck hold that, while the first three days may have been of somewhat different length, the last three were certainly ordinary days. They naturally do not regard even the first three days as geological periods. Vos in his Gereformeerde Dogmatiek defends the position that the days of creation were ordinary days. Hepp takes the same position in his Calvinism and the Philosophy of Nature.70 Noortzij in Gods Woord en der Eeuwen Getuigenis,71 asserts that the Hebrew word yom (day) in Genesis 1:1-31 cannot possibly designate anything else than an ordinary day, but holds that the writer of Genesis did not attach any importance to the concept "day," but introduces it simply as part of a frame-work for the narrative of creation, not to indicate historical sequence, but to picture the glory of the creatures in the light of the great redemptive purpose of God. Hence the sabbath is the great culminating point, in which man reaches his real destiny. This view reminds us rather strongly of the position of some of the early Church Fathers. The arguments adduced for it are not very convincing, as Aalders has shown in his De Eerste Drie Hoofdstukken van Genesis.72 This Old Testament scholar holds, on the basis of Genesis 1:5, that the term yom in Genesis 1:1-31 denotes simply the period of light, as distinguished from that of darkness; but this view would seem to involve a rather unnatural interpretation of the repeated expression "and there was evening and there was morning." It must then be interpreted to mean, and there was evening preceded by a morning. According to Dr. Aalders, too, Scripture certainly favors the idea that the days of creation were ordinary days, though it may not be possible to determine their exact length, and the first three days may have differed somewhat from the last three. The literal interpretation of the term "day" in Genesis 1:1-31 is favored by the following considerations: (a) In its primary meaning the word yom denotes a natural day; and it is a good rule in exegesis, not to depart from the primary meaning of a word, unless this is required by the context. Dr. Noortzij stresses the fact that this word simply does not mean anything else than "day," such as this is known by man on earth. (b) The author of Genesis would seem to shut us up absolutely to the literal interpretation by adding in the case of every day

the words, "and there was evening and there was morning." Each one of the days mentioned has just one evening and morning, something that would hardly apply to a period of thousands of years. And if it should be said that the periods of creation were extraordinary days, each one consisting of one long day and one long night, then the question naturally arises, What would become of all vegetation during the long, long night? (c) In Exodus 20:9-11 Israel is commanded to labor six days and to rest on the seventh, because Jehovah made heaven and earth in six days and rested on the seventh day. Sound exegesis would seem to require that the word "day" be taken in the same sense in both instances. Moreover the sabbath set aside for rest certainly was a literal day; and the presumption is that the other days were of the same kind. (d) The last three days were certainly ordinary days, for they were determined by the sun in the usual way. While we cannot be absolutely sure that the preceding days did not differ from them at all in length, it is extremely unlikely that they differed from them, as periods of thousands upon thousands of years differ from ordinary days. The question may also be asked, why such a long period should be required, for instance, for the separation of light and darkness.

3. THE WORK OF THE SEPARATE DAYS. We notice in the work of creation a definite gradation, the work of each day leads up to and prepares for the work of the next, the whole of it culminating in the creation of man, the crown of God’s handiwork, entrusted with the important task of making the whole of creation subservient to the glory of God. a. The first day. On the first day the light was created, and by the separation of light and darkness day and night were constituted. This creation of light on the first day has been ridiculed in view of the fact that the sun was not created until the fourth day, but science itself silenced the ridicule by proving that light is not a substance emanating from the sun, but consists of ether waves produced by energetic electrons. Notice also that Genesis does not speak of the sun as light (or), but as light-bearer (ma’or), exactly what science has discovered it to be. In view of the fact that light is the condition of all life, it was but natural that it should be created first. God also at once instituted the ordinance of the alternation of light and darkness, calling the light day and the darkness night. We are not told, however, how this alternation was effected. The account of each day’s work closes with the words, "and there was evening and there was morning." The days are not reckoned from evening to evening, but from morning to morning. After twelve hours there was evening, and after another twelve hours there was morning. b.The second day. The work of the second day was also a work of separation: the firmament was established by dividing the waters above and the waters below. The waters above are the clouds, and not, as some would have it, the sea of glass, Revelation 4:6; Revelation 15:2, and the river of life, Revelation 22:1. Some have discredited the Mosaic account on the supposition that it represents the firmament as a solid vault; but this is entirely unwarranted, for the Hebrew word raqia does not denote a solid vault at all, but is equivalent to our word "expanse." c. The third day. The separation is carried still further in the separation of the sea from the dry land, cf. Psalms 104:8. In addition to that the vegetable kingdom of plants and trees was established. Three great classes are mentioned, namely, deshe’, that is flowerless plants, which do not fructify one another in the usual way; ’ esebh, consisting of vegetables and grain yielding seed; and ’ets peri or fruit trees, bearing fruit according to their kind. It should be noted here: (1) That, when God said, "Let the earth put forth grass" etc., this was not equivalent to saying: Let inorganic matter develop by its own inherent force into vegetable life. It was a word of power by which God implanted the principle of life in the earth, and thus enabled it to bring forth grass and herbs and trees. That it was a creative word is evident from Genesis 2:9. (2) That the statement, "and the

earth brought forth grass, herbs yielding seed after their kind, and trees bearing fruit, wherein is the seed thereof, after their kind" (Genesis 1:12), distinctly favors the idea that the different species of plants were created by God, and did not develop the one out of the other. Each one brought forth seed after its kind, and could therefore only reproduce its kind. The doctrine of evolution, of course, negatives both of these assertions; but it should be borne in mind that both spontaneous generation and the development of one species from another, are unproved, and now largely discredited, assumptions.73 d. The fourth day. Sun, moon, and stars, were created as light-bearers, to serve a variety of purposes: (1) to divide the day and the night; (2) to be for signs, that is, to indicate the cardinal points, to presage changes of weather conditions, and to serve as signs of important future events and coming judgments; (3) to be for seasons, and for days and years, that is, to serve the purpose of effecting the change of seasons, the succession of years, and the regular recurrence of special festive days; and (4) to serve as lights for the earth and thus to make the development of organic life on earth possible. e. The fifth day. This day brings the creation of the birds and the fishes, the inhabitants of the air and the waters. Birds and fishes belong together, because there is a great similarity in their organic structure. Moreover, they are characterized by an instability and mobility which they have in common with the element in which they move, in distinction from the solid ground. They also agree in their method of procreation. Notice that they, too, were created after their kind, that is, the species were created. f. The sixth day. This day brings the climax of the work of creation. In connection with the creation of the animals the expression is once more used, "Let the earth bring forth," and this should again be interpreted as was indicated under (c). The animals did not naturally develop out of the earth, but were brought forth by the creative fiat of God. We are told distinctly in Genesis 1:25 that God made the beasts of the earth, the cattle and the creeping things of the earth, after their kind. But even if the expression did refer to natural development, it would not be in harmony with the doctrine of evolution, since that does not teach that the animals developed directly out of the mineral world. The creation of man is distinguished by the solemn counsel that precedes it: "Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness"; and this is no wonder, since all that preceded was but a preparation for the coming of man, the crowning work of God, the king of creation; and because man was destined to be the image of God. The words tselem and demuth do not denote exactly the same thing, but are nevertheless used interchangeably. When it is said that man is created in the image of God, this means that God is the archetype of which man is is the ectype; and when it is added that he is created according to the likeness of God, this merely adds the idea that the image is in every way like the original. In his entire being man is the very image of God.

Before passing on to the seventh day it may be well to call attention to the remarkable parallel between the work of the first, and that of the second three days of creation.

1. The creationof light.

4. The creation of light-bearers.

2. Creation of expanse and separation of waters.

5. Creation of fowls of the air and fishes of the sea.

3. Separation of waters and dry land, and preparation of the earth as a habitation for man and beast.

6. Creation of the beasts of the field, the cattle, and all creeping things; and man.

g. The seventh day. The rest of God on the seventh day contains first of all a negative element. God ceased from His creative work. But to this must be added a positive element, namely, that He took delight in His completed work. His rest was as the rest of the artist, after He has completed His masterpiece, and now gazes upon it with profound admiration and delight, and finds perfect satisfaction in the contemplation of His production. "And God saw everything that He had made, and, behold, it was very good." It answered the purpose of God and corresponded to the divine ideal. Hence God rejoices in His creation, for in it He recognizes the reflection of His glorious perfections. His radiant countenance shines upon it and is productive of showers of blessings.

4. NO SECOND ACCOUNT OF CREATION IN Genesis 2:1-25. It is quite common for advanced higher criticism to assume that Genesis 2:1-25 contains a second and independent account of creation. The first account is regarded as the work of the Elohist, and the second as that of the Jehovist. The two, it is said, do not agree, but conflict on several points. According to the second account, as distinguished from the first, the earth is dry before the creation of plants; man is created before the animals, and that alone, not as man and woman; then God created the animals, in order to see whether they will be fit companions for man; seeing that they fail in that respect, He creates woman as a helpmeet for man; and, finally, He places man in the garden which He had prepared for him. But this is clearly a complete misunderstanding of the second chapter. Genesis 2:1-25 is not, and does not pretend to be, a narrative of creation. The superscription ’eleh toledoth, which is found ten times in Genesis, never refers to the birth or origin of things, but always to their births, that is, their later history. The expression dates from a time when history still consisted in the description of generations. Genesis 2:1-25 begins the description of the history of man, arranges its material to suit this purpose, and only repeats so much of what was said in the previous chapter, without any consideration of chronological order, as is necessary for the author’s purpose.

5. ATTEMPTS TO HARMONIZE THE NARRATIVE OF CREATION WITH THE FINDINGS OF SCIENCE. a. The ideal or allegorical interpretation. This gives prominence to the idea rather than to the letter of the narrative. It regards Genesis 1:1-31 as a poetic description of the creative work of God, representing this from different points of view. But (1) it is quite evident that the narrative is intended as a record of history, and is clearly so regarded in Scripture, cf. Exodus 20:11; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9; Psalms 145:2-6; (2) the opening chapter of Genesis "lacks nearly every element of acknowledged Hebrew poetry" (Strong); and (3) this narrative is inseparably connected with the succeeding history, and is therefore most naturally regarded as itself historical. b. The mythical theory of modern philosophy. Modern philosophy has advanced beyond the preceding position. It rejects not only the historical narrative of creation, but also the idea of creation, and regards the contents of Genesis 1:1-31 as a myth embodying a religious lesson. There is no intentional allegory here, it is said, but only a naive mythical representation with a religious core or nucleus. This is also contrary to the fact that Genesis 1:1-31 certainly comes to us with the pretension of being a historical narrative, and in the cross references, referred to above, it certainly is not regarded as a myth. c. The restitution theory. Some theologians attempted to reconcile the narrative of creation with the discoveries of science in the study of the earth by adopting the restitution theory. It was advocated by Chalmers, Buckland, Wisemann, and Delitzsch, and assumes that a long period of time elapsed between the primary

creation mentioned in Genesis 1:1 and the secondary creation described in Genesis 1:3-31. This long period was marked by several catastrophic changes, resulting in the destruction supposedly described in the words "waste and void." The second verse should then read, "And the earth became waste and void." This destruction was followed by a restitution, when God changed the chaos into a cosmos, a habitable world for man. This theory might offer some explanation of the different strata of the earth, but it offers no explanation of the fossils in the rocks, unless it is assumed that there were also successive creations of animals, followed by mass destructions. This theory never found favor in scientific circles, and finds no support in Scripture. The Bible does not say that the earth became, but that it was waste and void. And even if the Hebrew verb hayetha can be rendered "became," the words "waste and void" denote an unformed condition, and not a condition resulting from destruction. Delitzsch combined with this theory the idea that the earth was originally inhabited by the angels, and that the fall in the angelic world was the cause of the destruction which resulted in the chaos referred to in Genesis 1:2. For some reason or other this view finds considerable favor among present day dispensationalists, who find support for it in such passages as Isaiah 24:1; Jeremiah 4:23-26; Job 9:4-7; 2 Peter 2:4. But even a careful reading of these passages is sufficient to convince one that they do not prove the point in question at all. Moreover, the Bible clearly teaches us that God created heaven and earth "and all the host of them" in six days, Genesis 2:1; Exodus 20:11. d. The concordistic theory. This seeks to harmonize Scripture and science by assuming that the days of creation were periods of thousands of years. In addition to what was said about this in discussing the days of creation, we may now add that the idea that the earth's strata positively point to long and successive periods of development in the history of its origin, is simply a theory of the geologists, and a theory based on unwarranted generalizations. We would call attention to the following considerations: (1) The science of geology is not only young, but it is still in bondage to speculative thought. It cannot be considered as an inductive science, since it is largely the fruit of a priori or deductive reasoning. Spencer called it "Illogical Geology" and ridiculed its methods, and Huxley spoke of its grand hypotheses as "not proven and not provable."74 (2) Up to the present time it has done little more than scratch the surface of the earth, and that in a very limited number of places. As a result its conclusions are often mere generalizations, based on insufficient data. Facts observed in some places are contradicted by those found in others. (3) Even if it had explored large areas in all parts of the globe, it could only increase our knowledge of the present condition of the earth, but would never be able to give us perfectly reliable information respecting its past history. You cannot write the history of a nation on the basis of the facts observed in its present constitution and life. (4) Geologists once proceeded on the assumption that the strata of rocks were found in the same order all over the globe; and that by estimating the length of time required by the formation of each it could determine the age of the earth. But (a) it was found that the order of the rocks differs in various localities; (b) the experiments made to determine the time required for the formation of the different strata, led to widely different results; and (c) the uniformitarian theory of Lyell, that the physical and chemical action of today are safe guides in estimating those of all previous times, was found to be unreliable.75 (5) When the attempt to determine the age of the various strata or rocks by their mineral and mechanical make-up failed, geologists began to make the fossils the determining factor. Palaeontology became the really important subject, and under the influence of the uniformitarian principle of Lyell developed into one of the important proofs of evolution. It is simply assumed that certain fossils are older than others; and if the question is asked on what

basis the assumption rests, the answer is that they are found in the older rocks. This is just plain reasoning in a circle. The age of the rocks is determined by the fossils which they contain, and the age of the fossils by the rocks in which they are found. But the fossils are not always found in the same order; sometimes the order is reversed. (6) The order of the fossils as now determined by geology does not correspond to the order which the narrative of creation leads us to expect, so that even the acceptance of the geological theory would not serve the purpose of harmonizing Scripture and science.

6. THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION AND THE THEORY OF EVOLUTION. The question naturally arises in our day, How does the theory of evolution affect the doctrine of creation? a. The theory of evolution cannot take the place of the doctrine of creation. Some speak as if the hypothesis of evolution offered an explanation of the origin of the world; but this is clearly a mistake, for it does no such thing. Evolution is development, and all development presupposes the prior existence of an entity or principle or force, out of which something develops. The non-existent cannot develop into existence. Matter and force could not have evolved out of nothing. It has been customary for evolutionists to fall back on the nebular hypothesis, in order to explain the origin of the solar system, though in present day science this is supplanted by the planetesimal hypothesis. But these only carry the problem one step farther back, and fail to solve it. The evolutionist must either resort to the theory that matter is eternal, or accept the doctrine of creation. b.The theory of naturalistic evolution is not in harmony with the narrative of creation. If evolution does not account for the origin of the world, does it not at least give a rational account of the development of things out of primordial matter, and thus explain the origin of the present species of plants and animals (including man), and also the various phenomena of life, such as sentiency, intelligence, morality, and religion? Does it necessarily conflict with the narrative of creation? Now it is perfectly evident that naturalistic evolution certainly does conflict with the Biblical account. The Bible teaches that plants and animals and man appeared on the scene at the creative fiat of the Almighty; but according to the evolutionary hypothesis they evolved out of the inorganic world by a process of natural development. The Bible represents God as creating plants and animals after their kind, and yielding seed after their kind, that is, so that they would reproduce their own kind; but the theory of evolution points to natural forces, resident in nature, leading to the development of one species out of another. According to the narrative of creation, the vegetable and animal kingdoms and man were brought forth in a single week; but the hypothesis of evolution regards them as the product of a gradual development in the course of millions of years. Scripture pictures man as standing on the highest plane at the beginning of his career, and then descending to lower levels by the deteriorating influence of sin; the theory of evolution, on the other hand, represents original man as only slightly different from the brute, and claims that the human race has risen, through its own inherent powers, to ever higher levels of existence. c. The theory of naturalistic evolution is not well established and fails to account for the facts. The conflict referred to in the preceding would be a serious matter, if the theory of evolution were an established fact. Some think it is and confidently speak of the dogma of evolution. Others, however, correctly remind us of the fact that evolution is still only a hypothesis. Even so great a scientist as Ambrose Fleming says that "the close analysis of the ideas connected with the term Evolution shows them to be insufficient as a philosophic or scientific solution of the problems of reality and existence."76 The very uncertainty which prevails in the camp of the evolutionists is proof positive that evolution is only a hypothesis. Moreover, it is frankly admitted to-day by many who still cling to the principle of evolution that they

do not understand its method of operation. It was thought at one time that Darwin had furnished the key to the whole problem, but that key is now rather generally discarded. The foundation pillars, on which the Darwinian structure was reared, such as the principle of use and disuse, the struggle for existence, natural selection, and the transmission of acquired characteristics, have been removed one after another. Such evolutionists as Weissmann, De Vries, Mendel, and Bateson, all contributed to the collapse of the Darwinian edifice. Nordenskioeld, in his History of Biology, speaks of the "dissolution of Darwinism" as an established fact. Dennert calls us to the deathbed of Darwinism, and O'Toole says, "Darwinism is dead, and no grief of mourners can resuscitate the corpse." Morton speaks of "the bankruptcy of evolution," and Price of the "phantom of organic evolution." Darwinism, then, has admittedly failed to explain the origin of species, and evolutionists have not been able to offer a better explanation. The Mendelian law accounts for variations, but not for the origin of new species. It really points away from the development of new species by a natural process. Some are of the opinion that the mutation theory of De Vries or Lloyd Morgan's theory of emergent evolution points the way, but neither one of these has proved to be a successful explanation of the origin of species by natural development pure and simple. It is now admitted that the mutants of De Vries are varietal rather than specific, and cannot be regarded as the beginnings of new species. And Morgan feels constrained to admit that he cannot explain his emergents without falling back upon some creative power that might be called God. Morton says: "The fact is that, besides creation, there is not even a theory of origins to hold the field today."77 The hypothesis of evolution fails at several points. It cannot explain the origin of life. Evolutionists sought its explanation in spontaneous generation, an unproved assumption, which is now discredited. It is a well established fact in science that life can only come from antecedent life. Further, it has failed utterly to adduce a single example of one species producing another distinct (organic as distinguished from varietal) species. Bateson said in 1921: "We cannot see how the differentiation in species came about. Variations of many kinds, often considerable, we daily witness, but no origin of species.... Meanwhile, though our faith in evolution stands unshaken, we have no acceptable account of the origin of species."78 Neither has evolution been able successfully to cope with the problems presented by the origin of man. It has not even succeeded in proving the physical descent of man from the brute. J. A. Thomson, author of The Outline of Science and a leading evolutionist, holds that man really never was an animal, a fierce beastly looking creature, but that the first man sprang suddenly, by a big leap, from the primate stock into a human being. Much less has it been able to explain the psychical side of man's life. The human soul, endowed with intelligence, self- consciousness, freedom, conscience, and religious aspirations, remains an unsolved enigma. d. Theistic evolution is not tenable in the light of Scripture. Some Christian scientists and theologians seek to harmonize the doctrine of creation, as taught by Scripture, and the theory of evolution by accepting what they call theistic evolution. It is a protest against the attempt to eliminate God, and postulates Him as the almighty worker back of the whole process of development. Evolution is regarded simply as God's method of working in the development of nature. Theistic evolution really amounts to this, that God created the world (the cosmos) by a process of evolution, a process of natural development, in which He does not miraculously intervene, except in cases where this is absolutely necessary. It is willing to admit that the absolute beginning of the world could only result from a direct creative activity of God; and, if it can find no natural explanation, will also grant a direct intervention of God in the origination of life and of man. It has been hailed as Christian evolution, though there is not

necessarily anything Christian about it. Many, otherwise opposed to the theory of evolution, have welcomed it, because it recognizes God in the process and is supposed to be compatible with the Scriptural doctrine of creation. Hence it is freely taught in churches and Sunday Schools. As a matter of fact, however, it is a very dangerous hybrid. The name is a contradiction in terms, for it is neither theism nor naturalism, neither creation nor evolution in the accepted sense of the terms. And it does not require a great deal of penetration to see that Dr. Fairhurst is right in his conviction "that theistic evolution destroys the Bible as the inspired book of authority as effectively as does atheistic evolution."79 Like naturalistic evolution it teaches that it required millions of years to produce the present habitable world; and that God did not create the various species of plants and animals, and that, so that they produced their own kind; that man, at least on his physical side, is a descendant of the brute and therefore began his career on a low level; that there has been no fall in the Biblical sense of the word, but only repeated lapses of men in their upward course; that sin is only a weakness, resulting from man's animal instincts and desires, and does not constitute guilt; that redemption is brought about by the ever-increasing control of the higher element in man over his lower propensities; that miracles do not occur, either in the natural or in the spiritual world; that regeneration, conversion, and sanctification are simply natural psychological changes, and so on. In a word, it is a theory that is absolutely subversive of Scripture truth.

Some Christian scholars of the present day feel that Bergson's theory of Creative Evolution commends itself to those who do not want to leave God out of consideration. This French philosopher assumes an élan vital a vital impulse in the world, as the ground and animating principle of all life. This vital principle does not spring from matter, but is rather the originating cause of matter. It pervades matter, overcomes its inertia and resistance by acting as a living force on that which is essentially dying, and ever creates, not new material, but new movements adapted to ends of its own, and thus creates very much as the artist creates. It is directive and purposive and yet, though conscious, does not work according to a preconceived plan, however that may be possible. It determines evolution itself as well as the direction in which evolution moves. This ever creating life, "of which every individual and every species is an experiment," is Bergson's God, a God who is finite, who is limited in power, and who is seemingly impersonal, though Hermann says that "we shall, perhaps, not go far wrong in believing that he will be 'the ideal tendency of things' made personal."80 Haas speaks of Bergson as a vitalistic pantheist rather than a theist. At any rate, his God is a God that is wholly within the world. This view may have a special appeal for the modern liberal theologian, but is even less in harmony with the narrative of creation than theistic evolution.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. What is the real alternative to the doctrine of creation? Wherein lies the importance of the doctrine of creation? Should the first chapters of Genesis be allowed to have any bearing on the scientific study of the origin of things? Does the Bible in any way determine the time when the world was created? What extremes should be avoided as to the relation of God and the world to each other? Should the Bible always be interpreted in harmony with widely accepted scientific theories? What is the status of the hypothesis of evolution in the scientific world today? What is the characteristic element in the Darwinian theory of evolution? How do you account for its widespread repudiation at the present time? How does Bergson's Creative Evolution or the Neo-vitalism of Hans Driesch affect the mechanistic view of the universe? In what respect is theistic evolution an improvement over naturalistic evolution?

LITERATURE. Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. II. pp. 426-543; ibid., Schepping of Ontwikkeling; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Creatione, pp. 3-127; De Creaturis A, pp. 5-54; B. pp. 3-42; ibid., Evolutie; Vos Geref. Dogm. I, De Schepping; Hodge. Syst. Theol. I, pp. 550-574; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. I, pp. 463-526; McPherson, Chr. Dogm., pp. 163-174; Dabney, Syst. and Polemic Theol., pp. 247-274; Harris, God, Creator and Lord of All, I, pp. 463-518; Hepp, Calvinism and the Philosophy of Nature, Chap. V; Honig,Geref. Dogm., pp. 281-324; Noordtzij, God's Woord en der Eeuwen Getuigenis, pp. 77-98; Aalders, De Goddelijke Openbaring in de Eerste Drie Hoofdstukken van Genesis; Geesink, Van's Heeren Ordinantien, Inleidend Deel, pp. 216-332; various works of Darwin, Wallace, Weissman, Osborne, Spencer, Haeckel, Thomson, and others on Evolution; Dennert, The Deathbed of Darwinism; Dawson, The Bible Confirmed by Science; Fleming, Evolution and Creation; Hamilton, The Basis of Evolutionary Faith; Johnson, Can the Christian Now Believe in Evolution? McCrady, Reason and Revelation; More, The Dogma of Evolution; Morton, The Bankruptcy of Evolution; O'Toole, The Case Against Evolution; Price, The Fundamentals of Geology; ibid., The Phantom of Organic Evolution; Messenger, Evolution and Theology; Rimmer, The Theory of Evolution and the Facts of Science. 1 Corinthians 16:22

04.1.2.6. Providence

VI. Providence

Christian theism is opposed to both a deistic separation of God from the world and a pantheistic confusion of God with the world. Hence the doctrine of creation is immediately followed by that of providence, in which the Scriptural view of God’s relation to the world is clearly defined. While the term "providence" is not found in Scripture, the doctrine of providence is nevertheless eminently Scriptural. The word is derived from the Latin providentia which corresponds to the Greek pronoia. These words mean primarily prescience or foresight, but gradually acquired other meanings. Foresight is associated, on the one hand, with plans for the future, and on the other hand, with the actual realization of these plans. Thus the word "providence" has come to signify the provision which God makes for the ends of His government, and the preservation and government of all His creatures. This is the sense in which it is now generally used in theology, but it is not the only sense in which theologians have employed it. Turretin defines the term in its widest sense as denoting (1) foreknowledge, (2) foreordination, and (3) the efficacious administration of the things decreed. In general usage, however, it is now generally restricted to the last sense.

A. PROVIDENCE IN GENERAL

1. HISTORY OF THE DOCTRINE OF PROVIDENCE. With its doctrine of providence the Church took position against both, the Epicurean notion that the world is governed by chance, and the Stoic view that it is ruled by fate. From the very start theologians took the position that God preserves and governs the world. However, they did not always have an equally absolute conception of the divine control of all things. Due to the close connection between the two, the history of the doctrine of providence follows in the main that of the doctrine of predestination. The earliest Church Fathers present no definite views on the subject. In opposition to the Stoic doctrine of fate and in their desire to guard the holiness of God, they sometimes over-emphasized the free will of man, and to that extent manifested a tendency to deny the absolute providential rule of God with respect to sinful actions. Augustine led the way in the development of this doctrine. Over against the doctrines of fate and chance, he stressed the fact that all things are preserved and governed by the sovereign, wise, and beneficent will of God. He made no reservations in connection with the providence of God, but maintained the control of God over the good and the evil that is in the world alike. By defending the reality of second causes. he safeguarded the holiness of God and upheld the responsibility of man. During the Middle Ages there was very little controversy on the subject of divine providence. Not a single council expressed itself on this doctrine. The prevailing view was that of Augustine, which subjected everything to the will of God. This does not mean, however, that there were no dissenting views. Pelagianism limited providence to the natural life, and excluded the ethical life. And Semi-Pelagians moved in the same direction, though they did not all go equally far. Some of the Scholastics considered the conservation of God as a continuation of His creative activity, while others made a real distinction between the two. Thomas Aquinas’ doctrine of divine providence follows in the main that of

Augustine, and holds that the will of God, as determined by His perfections, preserves and governs all things; while Duns Scotus and such Nominaltists as Biel and Occam made everything dependent on the arbitrary will of God. This was a virtual introduction of the rule of chance. The Reformers on the whole subscribed to the Augustinian doctrine of divine providence, though they differed somewhat in details. While Luther believed in general providence, he does not stress God's preservation and government of the world in general as much as Calvin does. He considers the doctrine primarily in its soteriological bearings. Socinians and Arminians, though not both to the same degree, limited the providence of God by stressing the independent power of man to initiate action and thus to control his life. The control of the world was really taken out of the hands of God, and given into the hands of man. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries providence was virtually ruled out by a Deism which represented God as withdrawing Himself from the world after the work of creation; and by a Pantheism which identified God and the world, obliterated the distinction between creation and providence, and denied the reality of second causes. And while Deism may now be considered as a thing of the past, its view of the control of the world is continued in the position of natural science that the world is controlled by an iron-clad system of laws. And modern liberal theology, with its pantheistic conception of the immanence of God, also tends to rule out the doctrine of divine providence.

2.THE IDEA OF PROVIDENCE. Providence may be defined as that continued exercise of the divine energy whereby the Creator preserves all His creatures, is operative in all that comes to pass in the world, and directs all things to their appointed end. This definition indicates that there are three elements in providence, namely, preservation (conservatio, sustentatio), concurrence or cooperation (concursus, co-operatio), and government (gubernatio) Calvin, the Heidelberg Catechism, and some of the more recent dogmaticians (Dabney, the Hodges, Dick, Shedd, McPherson) speak of only two elements, namely, preservation and government. This does not mean, however, that they want to exclude the element of concurrence but only that they regard it as included in the other two as indicating the manner in which God preserves and governs the world. McPherson seems to think that only some of the great Lutheran theologians adopted the threefold division; but in this he is mistaken, for it is very common in the works of Dutch dogmaticians from the seventeenth century on (Mastricht, à Marck, De Moor, Brakel, Francken, Kuyper, Bavinck, Vos, Honig). They departed from the older division, because they wanted to give the element of concurrence greater prominence, in order to guard against the dangers of both Deism and Pantheism. But while we distinguish three elements in providence, we should remember that these three are never separated in the work of God. While preservation has reference to the being, concurrence to the activity and government to the guidance of all things, this should never be understood in an exclusive sense. In preservation there is also an element of government, in government an element of concursus, and in concursus an element of preservation. Pantheism does not distinguish between creation and providence, but theism stresses a twofold distinction: (a) Creation is the calling into existence of that which did not exist before, while providence continues or causes to continue what has already been called into existence. (b) In the former there can be no cooperation of the creature with the Creator, but in the latter there is a concurrence of the first Cause with second causes. In Scripture the two are always kept distinct.

3. MISCONCEPTIONS CONCERNING THE NATURE OF PROVIDENCE. a. Limiting it to prescience or prescience plus foreordination. This limitation is found in some of the early Church Fathers. The fact is, however, that when we speak of the providence of God, we generally have in mind neither His prescience nor His foreordination, but simply His continued activity in the world for the realization of His plan. We realize that this cannot be separated from His eternal decree, but also feel that the two can and should be distinguished. The two have often been distinguished as immanent and transeunt providence. b. The deistic conception of divine providence. According to Deism God's concern with the world is not universal, special and perpetual, but only of a general nature. At the time of creation He imparted to all His creatures certain inalienable properties, placed them under invariable laws, and left them to work out their destiny by their own inherent powers. Meanwhile He merely exercises a general oversight, not of the specific agents that appear on the scene, but of the general laws which He has established. The world is simply a machine which God has put in motion, and not at all a vessel which He pilots from day to day. This deistic conception of providence is characteristic of Pelagianism, was adopted by several Roman Catholic theologians, was sponsored by Socinianism, and was only one of the fundamental errors of Arminianism. It was clothed in a philosophic garb by the Deists of the eighteenth century, and appeared in a new form in the nineteenth century, under the influence of the theory of evolution and of natural science, with its strong emphasis on the uniformity of nature as controlled by an inflexible system of iron-clad laws. c. The pantheistic view of divine providence. Pantheism does not recognize the distinction between God and the world. It either idealistically absorbs the world in God, or materialistically absorbs God in the world. In either case it leaves no room for creation and also eliminates providence in the proper sense of the word. It is true that Pantheists speak of providence, but their so-called providence is simply identical with the course of nature, and this is nothing but the self-revelation of God, a self-revelation that leaves no room for the independent operation of second causes in any sense of the word. From this point of view the supernatural is impossible, or, rather, the natural and the supernatural are identical, the consciousness of free personal self-determination in man is a delusion, moral responsibility is a figment of the imagination, and prayer and religious worship are superstition. Theology has always been quite careful to ward off the dangers of Pantheism, but during the last century this error succeeded in entrenching itself in a great deal of modern liberal theology under the guise of the doctrine of the immanence of God.81 4. THE OBJECTS OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE. a. The teachings of Scripture on this point. The Bible clearly teaches God's providential control (1) over the universe at large, Psalms 103:19; Daniel 5:3-5; Ephesians 1:11; (2) over the physical world, Job 37:5; Job 37:10; Psalms 104:14; Psalms 135:6; Matthew 5:45; (3) over the brute creation, Psalms 104:21; Psalms 104:28; Matthew 6:26; Matthew 20:29; (4) over the affairs of nations, Job 12:23; Psalms 22:28; Psalms 66:7; Acts 17:26; (5) over man's birth and lot in life, 1 Samuel 16:1; Psalms 139:16; Isaiah 45:5; Galatians 1:15-16; (6) over the outward successes and failures of men's lives, Psalms 75:6-7; Luke 1:52; (7) over things seemingly accidental or insignificant, Proverbs 16:33; Matthew 10:30; (8) in the protection of the righteous, Psalms 4:8; Psalms 5:12; Psalms 63:8; Psalms 121:3; Romans 8:28; (9) in supplying the wants of God's people, Genesis 22:8; Genesis 22:14; Deuteronomy 8:3; Php 4:19; (10) in giving answers to prayer, 1 Samuel 1:19; Isaiah 20:5-6; 2 Chronicles 33:13; Psalms 65:2; Matthew 7:7; Luke 18:7-8; and (11) in the exposure and punishment of the wicked, Psalms 7:12-13; Psalms 11:6. b. General and special providence. Theologians generally distinguish between general and special providence, the former denoting

God’s control of the universe as a whole, and the latter, His care for each part of it in relation to the whole. These are not two kinds of providence, but the same providence exercised in two different relations. The term "special providence," however, may have a more specific connotation, and in some cases refers to God’s special care for His rational creatures. Some even speak of a very special providence (providentia specialissima) with reference to those who stand in the special relationship of sonship to God. Special providences are special combinations in the order of events, as in the answer to prayer, in deliverance out of trouble, and in all instances in which grace and help come in critical circumstances. c. The denial of special providence. There are those who are willing to admit a general providence, an administration of the world under a fixed system of general laws, but deny that there is also a special providence in which God concerns Himself with the details of history, the affairs of human life, and particularly the experiences of the righteous. Some hold that God is too great to concern Himself with the smaller things of life, while others maintain that He simply cannot do it, since the laws of nature bind His hands, and therefore smile significantly when they hear of God’s answering man’s prayers. Now it need not be denied that the relation of special providence to the uniform laws of nature constitutes a problem. At the same time it must be said that it involves a very poor, superficial, and un-Biblical view of God to say that He does not and cannot concern Himself with the details of life, cannot answer prayer, give relief in emergencies, or intervene miraculously in behalf of man. A ruler that simply laid down certain general principles and paid no attention to particulars, or a business man who failed to look after the details of his business, would soon come to grief. The Bible teaches that even the minutest details of life are of divine ordering. In connection with the question, whether we can harmonize the operation of the general laws of nature and special providence, we can only point to the following: (1) The laws of nature should not be represented as powers of nature absolutely controlling all phenomena and operations. They are really nothing more than man’s, often deficient, description of the uniformity in variety discovered in the way in which the powers of nature work. (2) The materialistic conception of the laws of nature as a close-knit system, acting independently of God and really making it impossible for Him to interfere in the course of the world, is absolutely wrong. The universe has a personal basis, and the uniformity of nature is simply the method ordained by a personal agent. (3) The so-called laws of nature produce the same effects only if all the conditions are the same. Effects are not generally the results of a single power, but of a combination of natural powers. Even a man can vary the effects by combining one power of nature with some other power or powers, while yet each one of these powers works in strict accordance with its laws. And if this is possible for man, it is infinitely more possible for God. By all kinds of combinations He can bring about the most varied results.

B. PRESERVATION 1. BASIS FOR THE DOCTRINE OF PRESERVATION. Proof for the doctrine of preservation is both direct and inferential. a. Direct proof. The divine preservation of all things is clearly and explicitly taught in several passages of Scripture. The following are but a few of the many passages that might be mentioned: Deuteronomy 33:12; Deuteronomy 33:25-28; 1 Samuel 2:9; Nehemiah 9:6; Psalms 107:9; Psalms 127:1; Psalms 145:14-15; Matthew 10:29; Acts 17:28; Colossians 1:17; Hebrews 1:3. Very numerous are the passages that speak of the Lord as preserving His people, such as, Genesis 28:15; Genesis 49:24; Exodus 14:29-30; Deuteronomy 1:30-31; 2 Chronicles 20:15; 2 Chronicles 20:17; Job 1:10; Job 36:7; Psalms 31:20; Psalms 32:6; Psalms 34:15; Psalms 34:17; Psalms 34:19; Psalms 37:15; Psalms 37:17; Psalms 37:19-20; Psalms 91:1; Psalms 121:3-4; Psalms 121:7-8; Psalms 125:1-2; Isaiah 40:11; Isaiah 43:2; Isaiah

63:9; Jeremiah 30:7-8; Jeremiah 30:11; Ezekiel 34:11-12; Ezekiel 34:15-16; Daniel 12:1; Zechariah 2:5; Luke 21:18; 1 Corinthians 10:13; 1 Peter 3:12; Revelation 3:10. b. Inferential proof. The idea of divine preservation follows from the doctrine of the sovereignty of God. This can only be conceived of as absolute; but it would not be absolute, if anything existed or occurred independently of His will. It can be maintained only on condition that the whole universe and all that is in it, is in its being and action absolutely dependent on God. It follows also from the dependent character of the creature. It is characteristic of all that is creature, that it cannot continue to exist in virtue of its own inherent power. It has the ground of its being and continuance in the will of its Creator. Only He who created the world by the word of His power, can uphold it by His omnipotence.

2. THE PROPER CONCEPTION OF DIVINE PRESERVATION. The doctrine of preservation proceeds on the assumption that all created substances, whether they be spiritual or material, possess real and permanent existence, distinct from the existence of God, and have only such active and passive properties as they have derived from God; and that their active powers have a real, and not merely an apparent, efficiency as second causes, so that they are able to produce the effects proper to them. Thus it guards against Pantheism, with its idea of a continued creation, which virtually, if not always expressly, denies the distinct existence of the world, and makes God the sole agent in the universe. But it does not regard these created substances as self-existent, since self-existence is the exclusive property of God, and all creatures have the ground of their continued existence in Him and not in themselves. From this it follows that they continue to exist, not in virtue of a merely negative act of God, but in virtue of a positive and continued exercise of divine power. The power of God put forth in upholding all things is just as positive as that exercised in creation. The precise nature of His work in sustaining all things in being and action is a mystery, though it may be said that, in His providential operations, He accommodates Himself to the nature of His creatures. With Shedd we say: "In the material world, God immediately works in and through material properties and laws. In the mental world, God immediately works in and through the properties of mind. Preservation never runs counter to creation. God does not violate in providence what He has established in creation."82 Preservation may be defined as that continuous work of God by which He maintains the things which He created, together with the properties and powers with which He endowed them.

3. ERRONEOUS CONCEPTIONS OF DIVINE PRESERVATION. The nature of this work of God is not always properly understood. There are two views of it which ought to be avoided: (a) That it is purely negative. According to Deism divine preservation consists in this, that God does not destroy the work of His hands. By virtue of creation God endowed matter with certain properties, placed it under invariable laws, and then left it to shift for itself, independently of all support or direction from without. This is an unreasonable, irreligious, and an un-Biblical representation. It is unreasonable, because it implies that God communicated self-subsistence to the creature, while self-subsistence and self-sustenation are incommunicable properties, which characterize only the Creator. The creature can never be self-sustaining, but must be upheld from day to day by the almighty power of the Creator. Hence it would not require a positive act of omnipotence on the part of God to annihilate created existences. A simple withdrawal of support would naturally result in destruction. — This view is irreligious, because it removes God so far from His creation that communion with Him becomes a practical impossibility. History plainly testifies to the fact that it uniformly spells

death for religion. — It is also un-Biblical, since it puts God altogether outside of His creation, while the Bible teaches us in many passages that He is not only transcendent but also immanent in the works of His hands. (b) That it is a continuous creation. Pantheism represents preservation as a continuous creation, so that the creatures or second causes are conceived as having no real or continuous existence, but as emanating in every successive moment out of that mysterious Absolute which is the hidden ground of all things. Some who were not Pantheists had a similar view of preservation. Descartes laid the basis for such a conception of it, and Malebranche pushed this to the farthest extreme consistent with theism. Even Jonathan Edwards teaches it incidentally in his work on Original Sin, and thus comes dangerously near to teaching Pantheism. Such a view of preservation leaves no room for second causes, and therefore necessarily leads to Pantheism. It is contrary to our original and necessary intuitions, which assure us that we are real, self-determining causes of action, and consequently moral agents. Moreover, it strikes at the very root of free agency, moral accountability, moral government, and therefore of religion itself. Some Reformed theologians also use the term "continuous creation,"83 but do not thereby mean to teach the doctrine under consideration. They simply desire to stress the fact that the world is maintained by the same power which created it. In view of the the fact that the expression is liable to misunderstanding, it is better to avoid it.

C. CONCURRENCE 1. THE IDEA OF DIVINE CONCURRENCE AND SCRIPTURAL PROOF FOR IT. a. Definition and explanation. Concurrence may be defined as the co-operation of the divine power with all subordinate powers, according to the pre-established laws of their operation, causing them to act and to act precisely as they do. Some are inclined to limit its operation, as far as man is concerned. to human actions that are morally good and therefore commendable; others. more logically, extend it to actions of every kind. It should be noted at the outset that this doctrine implies two things: (1) That the powers of nature do not work by themselves, that is, simply by their own inherent power, but that God is immediately operative in every act of the creature. This must be maintained in opposition to the deistic position. (2) That second causes are real, and not to be regarded simply as the operative power of God. It is only on condition that second causes are real, that we can properly speak of a concurrence or co-operation of the First Cause with secondary causes. This should be stressed over against the pantheistic idea that God is the only agent working in the world. b. Scripture proof for divine concurrence. The Bible clearly teaches that the providence of God pertains not only to the being but also to the actions or operations of the creature. The general truth that men do not work independently, but are controlled by the will of God, appears from several passages of Scripture. Joseph says in Genesis 45:5 that God rather than his brethren had sent him to Egypt. In Exodus 4:11-12 the Lord says that He will be with Moses’ mouth and teach him what to say; and in Joshua 11:6 He gives Joshua the assurance that He will deliver the enemies to Israel. Proverbs 21:1 teaches us that "the king’s heart is in the hand of Jehovah. . . . He turneth it whithersoever He will"; and Ezra 6:22, that Jehovah "had turned the heart of the king of Assyria" unto Israel. In Deuteronomy 8:18 Israel is reminded of the fact that it was Jehovah that gave it power to get wealth. More particularly, it is also evident from Scripture that there is some kind of divine co-operation in that which is evil. According to 2 Samuel 16:11 Jehovah bade Shimei to curse David. The Lord also calls the Assyrian "the rod of mine anger, the staff in whose hand is mine indignation," Isaiah 10:5. Moreover, He provided for a lying spirit in the mouth of the prophets of Ahab, 1 Kings 22:20-23.

2. ERRORS THAT SHOULD BE AVOIDED. There are several errors against which we should guard in connection with this doctrine. a.That it consists merely in a general communication of power, without determining the specific action in any way. Jesuits, Socinians, and Arminians maintain that the divine concurrence is only a general and indifferent co-operation, so that it is the second cause that directs the action to its particular end. It is common alike to all causes, quickening them into action, but in a way that is entirely indeterminate. While it stimulates the second cause, it leaves this to determine its own particular kind and mode of action. But if this were the situation, it would be in the power of man to frustrate the plan of God, and the First Cause would become subservient to the second. Man would be in control, and there would be no divine providence. b. That it is of such a nature that man does part of the work and God a part. The cooperation of God and man is sometimes represented as if it were something like the joint efforts of a team of horses pulling together, each one doing his part. This is a mistaken view of the distribution of the work. As a matter of fact each deed is in its entirety both a deed of God and a deed of the creature. It is a deed of God in so far as there is nothing that is independent of the divine will, and in so far as it is determined from moment to moment by the will of God. And it is a deed of man in so far as God realizes it through the self-activity of the creature. There is interpenetration here, but no mutual limitation. c. That the work of God and that of the creature in concurrence are co-ordinate. This is already excluded by what was said in the preceding. The work of God always has the priority, for man is dependent on God in all that he does. The statement of Scripture, "Without me ye can do nothing," applies in every field of endeavor. The exact relation of the two is best indicated in the following characteristics of the divine concurrence.

3. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DIVINE CONCURRENCE. a. It is previous and pre-determining, not in a temporal but in a logical sense. There is no absolute principle of self-activity in the creature, to which God simply joins His activity. In every instance the impulse to action and movement proceeds from God. There must be an influence of divine energy before the creature can work. It should be noted particularly that this influence does not terminate on the activity of the creature, but on the creature itself. God causes everything in nature to work and to move in the direction of a pre-determined end. So God also enables and prompts His rational creatures, as second causes, to function, and that not merely by endowing them with energy in a general way, but by energizing them to certain specific acts. He worketh all things in all, 1 Corinthians 12:6, and worketh all things, also in this respect, according to the counsel of His will, Ephesians 1:11. He gave Israel power to get wealth, Deuteronomy 8:18, and worketh in believers both to will and to do according to His good pleasure, Php 2:13. Pelagians and Semi-Pelagians of all kinds are generally willing to admit that the creature cannot act apart from an influx of divine power, but maintain that this is not so specific that it determines the character of the action in any way. b. It is also a simultaneous concurrence. After the activity of the creature is begun, the efficacious will of God must accompany it at every moment, if it is to continue. There is not a single moment that the creature works independently of the will and the power of God. It is in Him that we live and move and have our being, Acts 17:28. This divine activity accompanies the action of man at every point, but without robbing man in any way of his freedom. The action remains the free act of man, an act for which he is held responsible. This simultaneous concurrence does not result in an identification of the causa prima and the causa secunda. In a very real sense the operation is the product of both causes. Man is and remains the real subject of the action. Bavinck illustrates this by pointing to the fact that wood burns, that God only causes it to burn, but that formally this burning cannot be

ascribed to God but only to the wood as subject. It is evident that this simultaneous action cannot be separated from the previous and pre-determining concurrence, but should be distinguished from it. Strictly speaking it, in distinction from the previous concurrence, terminates, not on the creature, but on its activity. Since it does not terminate on the creature, it can in the abstract be interpreted as having no ethical bearings. This explains that the Jesuits taught that the divine concurrence was simultaneous only, and not previous and pre-determining, and that some Reformed theologians limited the previous concurrence to the good deeds of men, and for the rest satisfied themselves with teaching a simultaneous concurrence. c. It is, finally, an immediate concurrence. In His government of the world God employs all kinds of means for the realization of His ends; but He does not so work in the divine concurrence. When He destroys the cities of the plain by fire, this is an act of divine government in which He employs means. But at the same time it is His immediate concurrence by which He enables the fire to fall, to burn, and to destroy. So God also works in man in endowing him with power, in the determination of his actions, and in sustaining his activities all along the line.

4. THE DIVINE CONCURRENCE AND SIN. Pelagians, Semi-Pelagians, and Arminians raise a serious objection to this doctrine of providence. They maintain that a previous concurrence, which is not merely general but predetermines man to specific actions, makes God the responsible author of sin. Reformed theologians are well aware of the difficulty that presents itself here, but do not feel free to circumvent it by denying God's absolute control over the free actions of His moral creatures, since this is clearly taught in Scripture, Genesis 45:5; Genesis 50:19-20; Exodus 10:1; Exodus 10:20; 2 Samuel 16:10-11; Isaiah 10:5-7; Acts 2:23; Acts 4:27-28. They feel constrained to teach: (a) that sinful acts are under divine control and occur according to God's pre-determination and purpose, but only by divine permission, so that He does not efficiently cause men to sin, Genesis 45:5; Genesis 50:20; Exodus 14:17; Isaiah 66:4; Romans 9:22; 2 Thessalonians 2:11; (b) that God often restrains the sinful works of the sinner, Genesis 3:6; Job 1:12; Job 2:6; Psalms 76:10; Isaiah 10:15; Acts 7:51; and (c) that God in behalf of His own purpose overrules evil for good, Genesis 50:20; Psalms 76:10; Acts 3:13. This does not mean, however, that they all agree in answering the question. whether there is a direct, immediate and physical energizing of the active power of the creature, disposing and pre-determining it efficaciously to the specific act, and also enabling it to do that act. Dabney, for instance, while admitting such a physical concurrence in the lower creation, denies it with respect to free agents. The great majority, however, maintain it also in the case of free moral beings. Even Dabney agrees that God's control over all of the acts of His creatures is certain, sovereign, and efficacious; and therefore must, along with the others, face the question as to the responsibility of God for sin. He gives his conclusion in the following words: "This, then, is my picture of the providential evolution of God's purpose as to sinful acts; so to arrange and group events and objects around free agents by his manifold wisdom and power, as to place each soul, at every step, in the presence of those circumstances, which, He knows, will be a sufficient objective inducement to it to do, of its own native, free activity, just the thing called for by God's plan. Thus the act is man's alone, though its occurrence is efficaciously secured by God. And the sin is man's only. God's concern in it is holy, first, because all His personal agency in arranging to secure its occurrence was holy; and second, His ends or purposes are holy. God does not will the sin of the act, for the sake of its sinfulness; but only wills the result to which the act is a means, and that result is always worthy of His holiness."84 The vast majority of Reformed theologians, however, maintain the concursus in question, and seek the solution of the difficulty by

distinguishing between the materia and the forma of the sinful act, and by ascribing the latter exclusively to man. The divine concursus energizes man and determines him efficaciously to the specific act, but it is man who gives the act its formal quality, and who is therefore responsible for its sinful character. Neither one of these solutions can be said to give entire satisfaction, so that the problem of God's relation to sin remains a mystery.

D. GOVERNMENT

1. NATURE OF THE DIVINE GOVERNMENT. The divine government may be defined as that continued activity of God whereby He rules all things teleologically so as to secure the accomplishment of the divine purpose. This government is not simply a part of divine providence but, just as preservation and concurrence, the whole of it, but now considered from the point of view of the end to which God is guiding all things in creation, namely, to the glory of His name. a. It is the government of God as King of the universe. In the present day many regard the idea of God as King to be an antiquated Old Testament notion, and would substitute for it the New Testament idea of God as Father. The idea of divine sovereignty must make place for that of divine love. This is thought to be in harmony with the progressive idea of God in Scripture. But it is a mistake to think that divine revelation, as it rises to ever higher levels, intends to wean us gradually from the idea of God as King, and to substitute for it the idea of God as Father. This is already contradicted by the prominence of the idea of the Kingdom of God in the teachings of Jesus. And if it be said that this involves merely the idea of a special and limited kingship of God, it may be replied that the idea of the Fatherhood of God in the Gospels is subject to the same restrictions and limitations. Jesus does not teach a universal Fatherhood of God. Moreover, the New Testament also teaches the universal kingship of God in such passages as Matthew 11:25; Acts 17:24; 1 Timothy 1:17; 1 Timothy 6:15; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 19:6. He is both King and Father, and is the source of all authority in heaven and on earth, the King of kings and the Lord of lords. b. It is a government adapted to the nature of the creatures which He governs. In the physical world He has established the laws of nature, and it is by means of these laws that He administers the government of the physical universe. In the mental world He administers His government mediately through the properties and laws of mind, and immediately, by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit. In the government and control of moral agents He makes use of all kinds of moral influences, such as circumstances, motives, instruction, persuasion, and example, but also works directly by the personal operation of the Holy Spirit on the intellect, the will, and the heart.

2. THE EXTENT OF THIS GOVERNMENT. Scripture explicitly declares this divine government to be universal, Psalms 22:28-29; Psalms 103:17-19; Daniel 4:34-35; 1 Timothy 6:15. It is really the execution of His eternal purpose, embracing all His works from the beginning, all that was or is or ever shall be. But while it is general, it also descends to particulars. The most insignificant things, Matthew 10:29-31, that which is seemingly accidental, Proverbs 16:33, the good deeds of men, Php 2:13, as well as their evil deeds, Acts 14:16, — they are all under divine control. God is King of Israel, Isaiah 33:22, but He also rules among the nations, Psalms 47:9. Nothing can be withdrawn from His government.

E. EXTRAORDINARY PROVIDENCES OR MIRACLES

1. THE NATURE OF MIRACLES. A distinction is usually made between providentia ordinaria and providentia extraordinaria. In the former God works through second causes in strict accordance

with the laws of nature, though He may vary the results by different combinations. But in the latter He works immediately or without the mediation of second causes in their ordinary operation. Says McPherson: "A miracle is something done without recourse to the ordinary means of production, a result called forth directly by the first cause without the mediation, at least in the usual way, of second causes."85 The distinctive thing in the miraculous deed is that it results from the exercise of the supernatural power of God. And this means, of course, that it is not brought about by secondary causes that operate according to the laws of nature. If it were, it would not be supernatural (above nature), that is, it would not be a miracle. If God in the performance of a miracle did sometimes utilize forces that were present in nature, He used them in a way that was out of the ordinary, to produce unexpected results, and it was exactly this that constituted the miracle.86 Every miracle is above the established order of nature, but we may distinguish different kinds, though not degrees, of miracles. There are miracles which are altogether above nature, so that they are in no way connected with any means. But there are also miracles which are contra media, in which means are employed, but in such a way that something results which is quite different from the usual result of those means.

2. THE POSSIBILITY OF MIRACLES. Miracles are objected to especially on the ground that they imply a violation of the laws of nature. Some seek to escape the difficulty by assuming with Augustine that they are merely exceptions to nature as we know it, implying that, if we had a fuller knowledge of nature, we would be able to account for them in a perfectly natural way. But this is an untenable position, since it assumes two orders of nature, which are contrary to each other. According to the one the oil in the cruse would decrease, but according to the other it did not diminish; according to the one the loaves would gradually be consumed, but according to the other they multiplied. It must further suppose that the one system is superior to the other, for if it were not, there would merely be a collision and nothing would result; but if it were, it would seem that the inferior order would gradually be overcome and disappear. Moreover, it robs the miracle of its exceptional character, while yet miracles stand out as exceptional events on the pages of Scripture.

There is undoubtedly a certain uniformity in nature; there are laws controlling the operation of second causes in the physical world. But let us remember that these merely represent God’s usual method of working in nature. It is His good pleasure to work in an orderly way and through secondary causes. But this does not mean that He cannot depart from the established order, and cannot produce an extraordinary effect, which does not result from natural causes, by a single volition, if He deems it desirable for the end in view. When God works miracles, He produces extraordinary effects in a supernatural way. This means that miracles are above nature. Shall we also say that they are contrary to nature? Older Reformed theologians did not hesitate to speak of them as a breach or a violation of the laws of nature. Sometimes they said that in the case of a miracle the order of nature was temporarily suspended. Dr. Bruin maintains that this view is correct in his Het Christelijk Geloof en de Beoefening der Natuur-wetenschap, and takes exception to the views of Woltjer, Dennert, and Bavinck. But the correctness of that older terminology may well be doubted. When a miracle is performed the laws of nature are not violated, but superseded at a particular point by a higher manifestation of the will of God. The forces of nature are not annihilated or suspended, but are only counteracted at a particular point by a force superior to the powers of nature.

3. THE PURPOSE OF THE MIRACLES OF SCRIPTURE. It may be assumed that the miracles of Scripture were not performed arbitrarily, but with a definite purpose. They are not mere wonders, exhibitions of power, destined to excite amazement, but have revelational significance. The entrance of sin into the world makes the supernatural intervention of God in the course of events necessary for the destruction of sin and for the renewal of creation. It was by a miracle that God gave us both, His special verbal revelation in Scripture, and His supreme factual revelation in Jesus Christ. The miracles are connected with the economy of redemption, a redemption which they often prefigure and symbolize. They do not aim at a violation, but rather at a restoration of God's creative work. Hence we find cycles of miracles connected with special periods in the history of redemption, and especially during the time of Christ's public ministry and of the founding of the Church. These miracles did not yet result in the restoration of the physical universe. But at the end of time another series of miracles will follow, which will result in the renewal of nature to the glory of God, — the final establishment of the Kingdom of God in a new heaven and on a new earth.

QUESTIONS FORFURTHER STUDY. Is the doctrine of divine providence an articulus purus or an articulus mixtus? Who was the first one of the Church Fathers to develop this doctrine? How do Luther and Calvin differ in their conception of divine providence? What accounts for the fact that the Arminians accept the Socinian position on this point? How must we judge of the assertion of some Reformed theologians that God is the only true cause in the world? What are second causes, and why is it important to maintain that they are real causes? Does the doctrine of divine concursus conflict with the free agency of man? What was Augustine's conception of miracles? Why is it important to maintain the miraculous? Do miracles admit of a natural explanation? Do they imply a suspension of the laws of nature? What is the special significance of the miracles of the Bible? Can miracles happen even now? Do they still happen? What about the miracles of the Roman Catholic Church?

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04.2.1.1. The Origin of Man

I. The Origin of Man A. THE DOCTRINE OF MAN IN DOGMATICS The transition from Theology to Anthropology, that is, from the study of God to the study of man, is a natural one. Man is not only the crown of creation, but also the object of God’s special care. And God’s revelation in Scripture is a revelation that is not only given to man, but also a revelation in which man is vitally concerned. It is not a revelation of God in the abstract, but a revelation of God in relation to His creatures, and particularly in relation to man. It is a record of God’s dealings with the human race, and especially a revelation of the redemption which God has prepared for, and for which He seeks to prepare, man. This accounts for the fact that man occupies a place of central importance in Scripture, and that the knowledge of man in relation to God is essential to its proper understanding. The doctrine of man must follow immediately after the doctrine of God, since the knowledge of it is presupposed in all the following loci of Dogmatics. We should not confuse the present subject of study with general Anthropology or the science of mankind, which includes all those sciences which have men as the object of study. These sciences concern themselves with the origin and history of mankind, with the physiological structure and the psychical characteristics of man in general and of the various races of mankind in particular, with their ethnological, linguistic, cultural and religious development, and so on. Theological Anthropology is concerned only with what the Bible says respecting man and the relation in which he stands and should stand to God. It recognizes Scripture only as its source, and reads the teachings of human experience in the light of God’s Word.

B. SCRIPTURAL ACCOUNT OF ORIGIN OF MAN.

Scripture offers us a twofold account of the creation of man, the one in Genesis 1:26-27, and the other in Genesis 2:7; Genesis 2:21-23. Higher criticism is of the opinion that the writer of Genesis pieced together two creation narratives, the first found in Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-3, and the second in Genesis 2:4-25; and that these two are independent and contradictory. Laidlaw in his work on The Bible Doctrine of Man 1:1 is willing to admit that the author of Genesis made use of two sources, but refuses to find here two different accounts of creation. He very properly denies that in Genesis 2:1-25 we have "a different account of creation, for the plain reason that it takes no account of the creation at large." In fact, the introductory words of the narrative beginning with Genesis 2:4, "These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth, when they were created," seen in the light of the repeated use of the words "these are the generations" in the book of Genesis, point to the fact that we have something quite different here. The expression invariably points, not to the origin or beginning of those named, but to their family history. The first narrative contains the account of the creation of all things in the order in which it occurred, while the second groups things in their relation to man, without implying anything respecting the chronological order of man’s appearance in the creative work of God, and clearly indicates that everything preceding it served to prepare a fit habitation for man as the king of creation. It shows us how man was situated in God’s creation, surrounded by the vegetable and animal world, and how he began his history. There are certain particulars in which the creation of man stands out in distinction from that

of other living beings:

1. MAN’S CREATION WAS PRECEDED BY A SOLEMN DIVINE COUNSEL. Before the inspired writer records the creation of man, he leads us back, as it were, into the council of God, acquainting us with the divine decree in the words, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness," Genesis 1:26. The Church has generally interpreted the plural "us" on the basis of the trinitarian existence of God. Some scholars, however, regard it as a plural of majesty; others, as a plural of communication, in which God includes the angels with Himself; and still others, as a plural of self-exhortation. Of these three suggestions the first is very unlikely, since the plural of majesty originated at a much later date; the second is impossible, because it would imply that the angels were cocreators with God, and that man is also created in the image of the angels, which is an un-Scriptural idea; and the third is an entirely gratuitous assumption, for which no reason can be assigned. Why should such a self-exhortation be in the plural, except for the reason that there is a plurality in God.

2. THE CREATION OF MAN WAS IN THE STRICTEST SENSE OF THE WORD AN IMMEDIATE ACT OF GOD. Some of the expressions used in the narrative preceding that of the creation of man indicate mediate creation in some sense of the word. Notice the following expressions: "And God said, Let the earth put forth grass, herbs, yielding seed, and fruit-trees bearing fruit after their kind" — "Let the waters swarm with swarms of living creatures" ...and, "Let the earth bring forth living creatures after their kind"; and compare these with the simple statement, "And God created man." Whatever indication of mediacy in the work of creation is contained in the former expressions, is entirely wanting in the latter. Evidently the work of God in the creation of man was not mediated in any sense of the word. He did make use of pre-existent material in forming the body of man, but even this was excluded in the creation of the soul.

3. IN DISTINCTION FROM THE LOWER CREATURES MAN WAS CREATED AFTER A DIVINE TYPE. With respect to fishes, birds, and beasts we read that God created them after their kind, that is, on a typical form of their own. Man, however, was not so created and much less after the type of an inferior creature. With respect to him God said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness. " We shall see what this implies, when we discuss the original condition of man, and merely call attention to it here, in order to bring out the fact that in the narrative of creation the creation of man stands out as something distinctive.

4. THE TWO DIFFERENT ELEMENTS OF HUMAN NATURE ARE CLEARLY DISTINGUISHED. In Genesis 2:7 a clear distinction is made between the origin of the body and that of the soul. The body was formed out of the dust of the ground; in the production of it God made use of pre-existing material. In the creation of the soul, however, there was no fashioning of pre-existing materials, but the production of a new substance. The soul of man was a new production of God in the strict sense of the word. Jehovah "breathed into his (man’s) nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." In these simple words the twofold nature of man is clearly asserted, and their teaching is corroborated by other passages of Scripture, such as, Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 10:28; Luke 8:55; 2 Corinthians 5:1-8; Php 1:22-24; Hebrews 12:9. The two elements are the body and the breath or spirit of life breathed into it by God, and by the combination of the two man became "a living soul," which means in this connection simply "a living being."

5. MAN IS AT ONCE PLACED IN AN EXALTED POSITION. Man is represented as standing at the apex of all the created orders. He is crowned as king of the lower creation, and is given dominion over all the inferior creatures. As such it was his duty and privilege to make all nature and all the created beings that were placed under his rule, subservient to his will and purpose, in order that he and his whole glorious dominion might magnify the almighty Creator and Lord of the universe, Genesis 1:28; Psalms 8:4-9.

C. THE EVOLUTIONARY THEORY OF THE ORIGIN OF MAN.

Among the various theories that have been broached to explain the origin of man, the theory of evolution at present holds the field, and therefore deserves brief consideration.

1. STATEMENT OF THE THEORY. The theory of evolution is not always stated in the same form. It is sometimes represented as if man is a direct descendant of one of the species of anthropoid apes now in existence, and then again, as if man and the higher apes have a common ancestry. But whatever difference of opinion there may be on this point, it is certain that, according to thorough-going naturalistic evolution, man descended from the lower animals, body and soul, by a perfectly natural process, controlled entirely by inherent forces. One of the leading principles of the theory is that of strict continuity between the animal world and man. It cannot allow for discontinuity anywhere along the line, for every break is fatal to the theory. Nothing that is absolutely new and unpredictable can appear in the process. What is now found in man must have been potentially present in the original germ out of which all things developed. And the whole process must be controlled from start to finish by inherent forces. Theistic evolution, which seems more acceptable to many theologians, simply regards evolution as God’s method of working. It is sometimes represented in a form in which God is merely called in to bridge the gaps between the inorganic and the organic, and between the irrational and the rational, creation. But to the extent to which a special operation of God is assumed, gaps are admitted which evolution cannot bridge, and something new is called into being, the theory naturally ceases to be a pure theory of evolution. It is sometimes held that only the body of man is derived by a process of evolution from the lower animals, and that God endowed this body with a rational soul. This view meets with considerable favor in Roman Catholic circles.

2. OBJECTIONS TO THE THEORY. Several objections can be raised against the theory of the evolutionary descent of man from the lower animals. a. From the point of view of the theologian the greatest objection to this theory is, of course, that it is contrary to the explicit teachings of the Word of God. The Bible could hardly teach more clearly than it does that man is the product of a direct and special creative act of God, rather than of a process of development out of the simian stock of animals. It asserts that God formed man out of the dust of the ground, Genesis 2:7. Some theologians, in their eagerness to harmonize the teachings of Scripture with the theory of evolution, suggest that this may be interpreted to mean that God formed the body of man out of the body of the animals, which is after all but dust. But this is entirely unwarranted, since no reason can be assigned why the general expression "of the dust of the ground" should be used after the writer had already described the creation of the animals and might therefore have made the statement far more specific. Moreover, this interpretation is also excluded by the statement in Genesis 3:19, "In the sweat of thy face shalt thou eat bread, till thou return unto the ground: for out of it wast thou taken: for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." This certainly does not

mean that man shall return to his former animal state. Beast and man alike return again to the dust. Ecclesiastes 3:19-20. Finally, we are told explicitly in 1 Corinthians 15:39 that "All flesh is not the same flesh: but there is one flesh of men, and another flesh of beasts." As to the spirit of man the Bible teaches explicitly that it came directly from God, Genesis 2:7, and therefore cannot be regarded as a natural development of some previously existing substance. In perfect harmony with this Elihu says, "The Spirit of God hath made me, and the breath of the Almighty giveth me life," Job 33:4Job 33:4">. Furthermore, Scripture also teaches that man was at once separated from the lower creation by an enormous chasm. He at once stood on a high intellectual, moral, and religious level, as created in the image of God and was given dominion over the lower creation, Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 1:31; Genesis 2:19-20; Psalms 8:5-8. By his fall in sin, however, he fell from his high estate and became subject to a process of degeneration which sometimes results in bestiality. This is quite the opposite of what the evolutionary hypothesis teaches us. According to it man stood on the lowest level at the beginning of his career, but slightly removed from the brute, and has been rising to higher levels ever since. b. The second great objection is that the theory has no adequate basis in well established facts. It should be borne in mind that, as was pointed out before, the evolutionary theory in general, though often represented as an established doctrine, is up to the present time nothing but an unproved working hypothesis, and a hypothesis that has not yet given any great promise of success in demonstrating what it set out to prove. Many of the most prominent evolutionists frankly admit the hypothetical character of their theory. They still avow themselves to be firm believers in the doctrine of descent, but do not hesitate to say that they cannot speak with any assurance of its method of operation. When Darwin published his works, it was thought that the key to the process was found at last, but in course of time it was found that the key did not fit the lock. Darwin truly said that his theory depended entirely on the possibility of transmitting acquired characteristics, and it soon became one of the corner-stones of Weismann’s biological theory that acquired characteristics are not inherited. His opinion received abundant confirmation by the later study of genetics. On the basis of the assumed transmission of acquired characteristics, Darwin spoke with great assurance of the transmutation of species and envisaged a continuous line of development from the primordial cell to man; but the experiments of De Vries, Mendel, and others tended to discredit his view. The gradual and imperceptible changes of Darwin made place for the sudden and unexpected mutations of De Vries. While Darwin assumed endless variation in several directions, Mendel pointed out that the variations or mutations never take the organism outside of the species and are subject to a definite law. And modern cytology in its study of the cell, with its genes and chromosones as the carriers of the inherited characters, confirmed this idea. The so-called new species of the evolutionists were proved to be no true species at all, but only varietal species, that is varieties of the same species. Nordenskioeld in his History of Biology quotes the following sentence from a popular account of the results of heredity research, as reflecting the true state of affairs: "For the very reason of the great number of facts that modern heredity-research has brought to light, chaos prevails at present in regard to the views on the formation of species," p. 613. Prominent evolutionists now frankly admit that the origin of species is a complete mystery to them. And as long as that is so, there is not much chance of their explaining the origin of man.

Darwin in his attempt to prove the descent of man from a species of anthropoid apes relied on (1) the argument from the structural similarity between man and the higher animals; (2) the embryological argument; and (3) the argument from rudimentary organs. To these three were

added later on, (4) the argument derived from blood tests; and (5) the palaeontological argument. But none of these arguments furnish the desired proof. The argument from structural likeness unwarrantably assumes that the similarity can be explained in only one way. Yet it can very well be accounted for by the assumption that God in creating the animal world made certain typical forms basic throughout, so as to have unity in variety, just as a great musician builds up his mighty composition on a single theme, which is repeated time and again, and at each repetition introduces new variations. The principle of preformation gives an adequate explanation of the similarities under consideration. The embryological similarity, such as it is, can be explained on the same principle. Moreover recent biological studies would seem to indicate that no structural similarity but only a genetic relationship can prove affinity or descent. As far as the rudimentary organs are concerned, more than one scientist has expressed doubt as to their vestigial character. Instead of being the useless remains of animal organs, it may very well be that they serve a definite purpose in the human organism. The blood tests in their original form, while pointing to a certain likeness between the blood of animals and man, do not prove genetic relationship, since in these tests only part of the blood, the sterile serum which contains no living matter, was used, while it is an established fact that the solid portion of the blood, containing the red and white cells, is the carrier of hereditary factors. Later tests, in which the spectroscope was called into use and the entire blood was examined, proved conclusively that there is an essential difference between the blood of animals and that of man. The palaeontological argument is equally inconclusive. If man really descended from the anthropoid apes, it might be expected that the intermediate forms would be in existence somewhere. But Darwin was not able to find this missing link any more than the thousands of missing links between the various species of animals. We are told that the early progenitors of man have long since died out. This being so, it was still possible that they might be found among the fossil remains. And to-day scientists actually claim that they have found some bones of very ancient men. They have reconstructed these men for us, and we can now enjoy looking at the imaginary photos of the reconstructed Java man (Pithecanthropus erectus), the Heidelberg man (Homo Heidelbergensis), the Neanderthal man (Homo Neanderthalensis), the Cro-Magnon, the Piltdown man, and others. These reconstructions seem to be taken seriously by some, but really have very little value. Since only a few bones were found of each, and even these were scattered in some cases, so that it is not certain that they belong to the same body, they merely testify to the ingenuity of the scientists who reconstructed them. In some cases the specialists are by no means agreed as to whether the bones in question belonged to a man or to an animal. Dr. Wood, professor of anatomy in the University of London, says in a booklet on the Ancestry of Man: "I find no occupation less worthy of the science of Anthropology than the not unfashionable business of modelling, painting, or drawing these nightmare pictures of the imagination, and lending them in the process, an utterly false value of apparent reality."2 Fleming, one of the most prominent present day scientists, says: "The upshot of it all is that we cannot arrange all the known fossil remains of supposed ’man’ in a lineal series gradually advancing in type or form from that of any anthropoid ape, or other mammal, up to the modern and now existing types of true man. Any supposition or statement that it can be done, and is true, is certainly incorrect. It is certainly misleading and unspeakably pernicious to put forward in popular magazines or other publications read by children pictures of gorillas or chimpanzees labelled ’Man’s cousin’ or ’Man’s nearest relative,’ or to publish perfectly imaginary and grotesque pictures of a supposed ’Java man’ with brutish face as an ancestor of modern man, as is occasionally

done. Those who do such things are guilty of ignorance or deliberate mis-representation. Neither is it justifiable for preachers in the pulpit to tell their congregations that there is general agreement among scientific men as to the evolutionary origin of Man from an animal ancestor."3 But the body of man does not even present the greatest difficulties to the evolutionist. These arise from the consideration of the spiritual element in man, or what is usually called "the origin of mind." It is at this point that his helplessness becomes most painfully apparent. In spite of all his attempts, he has signally failed to give a plausible explanation of the origin of the human mind, or intelligence (progressiveness), language, conscience, and religion. This might be pointed out in detail, but we do not deem it necessary. There are many who, like Dennert and Batison, still profess to believe in the doctrine of descent, but disown the Darwinian method of evolution and regard it as a well-nigh complete failure. Yet they know of no other method which might take its place. This means that for them evolution has ceased to be a science, and has become once more a mere philosophical theory. Batison said: "We read his (Darwin's) scheme of evolution as we would those of Lucretius or of Lamarck. . . . We are just about where Boyle was in the seventeenth century." The testimony of Dr. D. H. Scott is very similar. In a presidential address before the British Association for the Advancement of Science he made the following statements: "All is again in the melting-pot. . . . Is evolution, then, not a scientifically established fact? No, it is not . . . It is an act of faith — because there is no alternative." Creation, of course, is not to be thought of. He further said that there is in natural science "a return to pre-Darwinian chaos." Dr. Fleischmann of Erlangen writes: "The Darwinian theory has not a single fact to support it . . . is purely the product of the imagination." Even stronger is the assertion of Dr. B. Kidd: "Darwinism is a compound of astonishing presumption and incomparable ignorance."4 Such scientists as Fleming, Dawson, Kelly, and Price do not hesitate to reject the theory of evolution and to accept the doctrine of creation. Respecting the origin of man, Sir William Dawson says: "I know nothing about the origin of man, except what I am told in the Scripture — that God created him. I do not know anything more than that, and I do not know of anyone who does."5 Fleming says: "All that science can say at present in the light of definitely ascertained and limited human knowledge is that it does not know, and has no certain proof how, where, and when man was originated. If any true knowledge of it is to come to us, it must come from some source other than present modern anthropology."6 D. THE ORIGIN OF MAN AND THE UNITY OF THE ROCE.

1. SCRIPTURE TESTIMONY TO THE UNITY OF THE RACE. Scripture teaches that the whole human race descended from a single pair. This is the obvious sense of the opening chapters of Genesis. God created Adam and Eve as the beginning of the human species, and commanded them to be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth. Moreover, the subsequent narrative in Genesis clearly shows that the following generations down to the time of the flood stood in unbroken genetic relation with the first pair, so that the human race constitutes not only a specific unity, a unity in the sense that all men share the same human nature, but also a genetic or genealogical unity. This is also taught by Paul in Acts 17:26, "And God made of one every nation of man to dwell on all the face of the earth." The same truth is basic to the organic unity of the human race in the first transgression, and of the provision for the salvation of the race in Christ, Romans 5:12; Romans 5:19; 1 Corinthians 15:21-22. This unity of the race is not to be understood realistically, as it is represented by Shedd, who says: "Human nature is a specific or general substance created in and with the first individuals of a human species, which is not yet individualized, but which by ordinary generation is subdivided into parts, and those parts are

formed into distinct and separate individuals of the species. The one specific substance, by propagation, is metamorphosed into millions of individual substances, or persons. An individual is a fractional part of human nature separated from the common mass, and constituted a particular person, having all the essential properties of human nature."7The objections to this view will be stated in another connection.

2. THE TESTIMONY OF SCIENCE TO THE UNITY OF THE RACE. Science in various ways confirms the testimony of Scripture as to the unity of the human race. Scientific men have not always believed in this. The ancient Greeks had their theory of autochtonism, to the effect that men sprang from the earth by a sort of spontaneous generation, a theory that has no solid foundation whatever, since spontaneous generation has never been proved but rather discredited. Agassiz propounded the theory of the Coadamites, which assumes that there were different centers of creation. As early as 1655 Peyrerius developed the theory of the Preadamites, which proceeds on the assumption that there were men before Adam was created. This theory was revived by Winchell, who did not deny the unity of the race, but regarded Adam as the first ancestor of the Jews rather than as the head of the human race. And in recent years Fleming, without being dogmatic in the matter, says that there are reasons to assume that there were inferior races of man preceding the appearance of Adam on the scene about 5500 B.C. While inferior to the Adamites, they already had powers distinct from those of the animals. The later Adamic man was endowed with greater and nobler powers and probably destined to bring the whole of the other existing humanity into allegiance to the Creator. He failed to preserve his own allegiance to God, and therefore God provided for the coming of a descendant who was human and yet far more than man, in order that He might accomplish what the Adamic man failed to do. The view which Fleming has been led to hold is "that the unquestionably Caucasian branch is alone the derivation by normal generation from the Adamic race, namely, from the God-worshipping members of the Adamic race which survived the flood — Noah and his sons and daughters."88 But these theories, one and all, find no support in Scripture, and are contrary to Acts 17:26 and to all that the Bible teaches concerning the apostasy and deliverance of man. Moreover, science presents several arguments in favor of the unity of the human race, such as: a. The argument from history. The traditions of the race of men point decisively to a common origin and ancestry in Central Asia. The history of the migrations of man tends to show that there has been a distribution from a single center. b. The argument from philology. The study of the languages of mankind indicates a common origin. The Indo-Germanic languages are traced to a common primitive tongue, an old remnant of which still exists in the Sanskrit language. Moreover, there is evidence which goes to show that the old Egyptian is the connecting link between the Indo-European and the Semitic tongue. c. The argument from psychology. The soul is the most important part of the constitutional nature of man, and psychology clearly reveals the fact that the souls of all men, to whatever tribes or nations they may belong, are essentially the same. They have in common the same animal appetites, instincts, and passions, the same tendencies and capacities, and above all the same higher qualities, the mental and moral characteristics that belong exclusively to man. d. The argument from natural science or physiology. It is now the common judgment of comparative physiologists that the human race constitutes but a single species. The differences that exist between the various families of mankind are regarded simply as varieties of this one species. Science does not positively assert that the human race descended from a single pair, but nevertheless demonstrates that this may have been the case and probably

is.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What can be said against the view that we have in Genesis 1:1-31, Genesis 2:1-25 two different and more or less contradictory accounts of creation? Does it seem reasonable to think that the world existed millions of years before man appeared on the scene? Is the hypothesis of theistic evolution in harmony with the Scriptural account of the origin of man? Is the notion that the body of man at least is derived from the animals tenable in the light of Scripture? Has evolution established its case on this point? What has it proved in connection with the far more difficult question of the derivation of the human soul? What becomes of the doctrine of the fall in the theory of evolution? What is the theological significance of the doctrine of the unity of the human race?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. II pp. 543-565,; Hodge, Syst. Theol. II, pp. 3-41; Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 107-113; Miley, Syst. Theol. I, pp. 355-392; Alexander, Syst. of Bibl. Theol. I, pp. 156-167; Laidlaw, The Bible Doct. of Man, pp. 24-46; Darwin, Descent of Man; Drummond, The Ascent of Man; Fleming, The Origin of Mankind; O'Toole, The Case Against Evolution, Part II, Chaps. II and III. Cf. further the works on Evolution referred to at the end of the previous chapter.

04.2.1.2. The Constitutional Nature of Man

II. The Constitutional Nature of Man The previous chapter is of a more or less introductory nature, and does not, strictly speaking, form an integral part of the systematic presentation of the doctrine of man in dogmatics. This explains why many treatises on systematic theology fail to devote a separate chapter to the origin of man. Yet it seemed desirable to insert it here, since it furnishes a fitting background for what follows. Under the present caption we shall consider the essential constituents of human nature, and the question of the origin of the soul in the individuals that constitute the race. THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF HUMAN NATURE.

1. THE DIFFERENT VIEWS THAT WERE CURRENT IN HISTORY and DICHOTOMY AND TRICHOTOMY. It is customary, especially in Christian circles, to conceive of man as consisting of two. and only two, distinct parts, namely, body and soul. This view is technically called dichotomy. Alongside of it, however, another made its appearance, to the effect that human nature consists of three parts, body, soul, and spirit. It is designated by the term trichotomy. The tri-partite conception of man originated in Greek philosophy, which conceived of the relation of the body and the spirit of man to each other after the analogy of the mutual relation between the material universe and God. It was thought that, just as the latter could enter into communion with each other only by means of a third substance or an intermediate being, so the former could enter into mutual vital relationships only by means of a third or intermediate element, namely, the soul. The soul was regarded as, on the one hand, immaterial, and on the other, adapted to the body. In so far as it appropriated the nous or pneuma, it was regarded as immortal, but in so far as it was related to the body, as carnal and mortal. The most familiar but also the crudest form of trichotomy is that which takes the body for the material part of man’s nature, the soul as the principle of animal life, and the spirit as the God-related rational and immortal element in man. The trichotomic conception of man found considerable favor with the Greek or Alexandrian Church Fathers of the early Christian centuries. It is found, though not always in exactly the same form, in Clement of Alexandria, Origen, and Gregory of Nyssa. But after Apollinaris employed it in a manner impinging on the perfect humanity of Jesus, it was gradually discredited. Some of the Greek Fathers still adhered to it, though Athanasius and Theodoret explicitly repudiated it. In the Latin Church the leading theologians distinctly favored the twofold division of human nature. It was especially the psychology of Augustine that gave prominence to this view. During the Middle Ages it had become a matter of common belief. The Reformation brought no change in this respect, though a few lesser lights defended the trichotomic theory. The Roman Catholic Church adhered to the verdict of Scholasticism, but in the circles of Protestantism other voices were heard. During the nineteenth century trichotomy was revived in some form or other by certain German and English theologians, as Roos, Olshausen, Beck, Delitzsch, Auberlen, Oehler, White, and Heard; but it did not meet with great favor in the theological world. The recent advocates of this theory do not agree as to the nature of the psuche, nor as to the relation in which it stands to the other elements in man’s nature. Delitzsch conceives of it as an efflux of the pneuma while Beck, Oehler, and Heard, regard it as the point of union between the body and the spirit. Delitzsch is not altogether consistent and

occasionally seems to waver, and Beck and Oehler admit that the Biblical representation of man is fundamentally dichotomic. Their defense of a Biblical trichotomy can hardly be said to imply the existence of three distinct elements in man. Besides these two theological views there were, especially in the last century and a half, also the philosophical views of absolute Materialism and of absolute Idealism, the former sacrificing the soul to the body, and the latter, the body to the soul.

2. THE TEACHINGS OF SCRIPTURE AS TO THE CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS OF HUMAN NATURE. The prevailing representation of the nature of man in Scripture is clearly dichotomic. On the one hand the Bible teaches us to view the nature of man as a unity, and not as a duality, consisting of two different elements, each of which move along parallel lines but do not really unite to form a single organism. The idea of a mere parallelism between the two elements of human nature, found in Greek philosophy and also in the works of some later philosophers, is entirely foreign to Scripture. While recognizing the complex nature of man, it never represents this as resulting in a twofold subject in man. Every act of man is seen as an act of the whole man. It is not the soul but man that sins; it is not the body but man that dies; and it is not merely the soul, but man, body and soul, that is redeemed in Christ. This unity already finds expression in the classical passage of the Old Testament — the first passage to indicate the complex nature of man — namely, Genesis 2:7 : "And Jehovah God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." The whole passage deals with man: "God formed man . . . and man became a living soul." This work of God should not be interpreted as a mechanical process, as if He first formed a body of clay and then put a soul into it. When God formed the body, He formed it so that by the breath of His Spirit man at once became a living soul. Job 33:4; Job 32:8Job 33:4">. The word "soul" in this passage does not have the meaning which we usually ascribe to it — a meaning rather foreign to the Old Testament — but denotes an animated being, and is a description of man as a whole. The very same Hebrew term, nephesh chayyah (living soul or being) is also applied to the animals in Genesis 1:21; Genesis 1:24; Genesis 1:30. So this passage, while indicating that there are two elements in man, yet stresses the organic unity of man. And this is recognized throughout the Bible. At the same time it also contains evidences of the dual composition of man’s nature. We should be careful, however, not to expect the later distinction between the body as the material element, and the soul as the spiritual element, of human nature, in the Old Testament. This distinction came into use later on under the influence of Greek philosophy. The antithesis — soul and body — even in its New Testament sense, is not yet found in the Old Testament. In fact, the Hebrew has no word for the body as an organism. The Old Testament distinction of the two elements of human nature is of a different kind. Says Laidlaw in his work on The Bible Doctrine of Man:9 "The antithesis is clearly that of lower and higher, earthly and heavenly, animal and divine. It is not so much two elements, as two factors uniting in a single and harmonious result, — ’man became a living soul.’" It is quite evident that this is the distinction in Genesis 2:7. Cf. also Job 27:3; Job 32:8; Job 33:4; Ecclesiastes 12:7. A variety of words is used in the Old Testament to denote the lower element in man or parts of it, such as "flesh," "dust," "bones," "bowels," "kidneys," and also the metaphorical expression "house of clay," Job 4:19Job 4:19">. And there are also several words to denote the higher element, such as "spirit," "soul," "heart," and "mind." As soon as we pass from the Old to the New Testament, we meet with the antithetic expressions that are most familiar to us, as "body and soul," "flesh and spirit." The corresponding Greek words were undoubtedly moulded by Greek philosophical

thought, but passed through the Septuagint into the New Testament, and therefore retained their Old Testament force. At the same time the antithetic idea of the material and the immaterial is now also connected with them.

Trichotomists seek support in the fact that the Bible, as they see it, recognizes two constituent parts of human nature in addition to the lower or material element, namely, the soul (Heb., nephesh; Greek, psuche) and the spirit (Heb., ruach; Greek, pneuma). But the fact that these terms are used with great frequency in Scripture does not warrant the conclusion that they designate component parts rather than different aspects of human nature. A careful study of Scripture clearly shows that it uses the words interchangeably. Both terms denote the higher or spiritual element in man, but contemplate it from different points of view. It should be pointed out at once, however, that the Scriptural distinction of the two does not agree with that which is rather common in philosophy, that the soul is the spiritual element in man, as it is related to the animal world, while the spirit is that same element in its relation to the higher spiritual world and to God. The following facts militate against this philosophical distinction: Ruach-pneuma, as well as nephesh-psuche, is used of the brute creation, Ecclesiastes 3:21; Revelation 16:3. The word psuche is even used with reference to Jehovah, Isaiah 42:1; Jeremiah 9:9; Amos 6:8 (Heb.); Hebrews 10:38. The disembodied dead are called psuchai, Revelation 6:9; Revelation 20:4. The highest exercises of religion are ascribed to the psuche, Mark 12:30; Luke 1:46; Hebrews 6:18-19; James 1:21. To lose the psuche is to lose all. It is perfectly evident that the Bible uses the two words interchangeably. Notice the parallelism in Luke 1:46-47 : "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." The Scriptural formula for man is in some passages "body and soul," Matthew 6:25; Matthew 10:28; and in others, "body and spirit," Ecclesiastes 12:7; 1 Corinthians 5:3; 1 Corinthians 5:5. Death is sometimes described as the giving up of the soul, Genesis 35:18; 1 Kings 17:21; Acts 15:26; and then again as the giving up of the spirit, Psalms 31:5; Luke 23:46; Acts 7:59. Moreover both "soul" and "spirit" are used to designate the immaterial element of the dead, 1 Peter 3:19; Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 6:9; Revelation 20:4. The main Scriptural distinction is as follows: the word "spirit" designates the spiritual element in man as the principle of life and action which controls the body; while the word "soul" denominates the same element as the subject of action in man, and is therefore often used for the personal pronoun in the Old Testament, Psalms 10:1-2; Psalms 104:1; Psalms 146:1; Isaiah 42:1; cf. also Luke 12:19. In several instances it, more specifically, designates the inner life as the seat of the affections. All this is quite in harmony with Genesis 2:7, "And Jehovah God . . . breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Thus it may be said that man has spirit, but is soul. The Bible therefore points to two, and only two, constitutional elements in the nature of man, namely, body and spirit or soul. This Scriptural representation is also in harmony with the self-consciousness of man. While man is conscious of the fact that he consists of a material and a spiritual element, no one is conscious of possessing a soul in distinction from a spirit.

There are two passages, however, that seem to conflict with the usual dichotomic representation of Scripture, namely, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, "And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be preserved entire, without blame at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ"; and Hebrews 4:12, "For the word of God is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit, of both joints and

marrow, and quick to discern the thoughts and intents of the heart." But it should be noted that: (a) It is a sound rule in exegesis that exceptional statements should be interpreted in the light of the analogia Scriptura, the usual representation of Scripture. In view of this fact some of the defenders of trichotomy admit that these passages do not necessarily prove their point. (b) The mere mention of spirit and soul alongside of each other does not prove that, according to Scripture, they are two distinct substances, any more than Matthew 22:37 proves that Jesus regarded heart and soul and mind as three distinct substances. (c) In 1 Thessalonians 5:23 the apostle simply desires to strengthen the statement, "And the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly," by an epexigetical statement, in which the different aspects of man's existence are summed up, and in which he feels perfectly free to mention soul and spirit alongside of each other, because the Bible distinguishes between the two. He cannot very well have thought of them as two different substances here, because he speaks elsewhere of man as consisting of two parts, Romans 8:10; 1 Corinthians 5:5; 1 Corinthians 7:34; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Ephesians 2:3; Colossians 2:5. (d) Hebrews 4:12 should not be taken to mean that the word of God, penetrating to the inner man, makes a separation between his soul and his spirit, which would naturally imply that these two are different substances; but simply as declaring that it brings about a separation in both between the thoughts and intents of the heart.10

3. THE RELATION OF BODY AND SOUL TO EACH OTHER. The exact relation of body and soul to each other has been represented in various ways, but remains to a great extent a mystery. The following are the most important theories relating to this point: a.Monistic.There are theories which proceed on the assumption that body and soul are of the same primitive substance. According to Materialism this primitive substance is matter, and spirit is a product of matter. And according to absolute Idealism and Spiritualism the primitive substance is spirit, and this becomes objective to itself in what is called matter. Matter is a product of the spirit. The objection to this monistic view is that things so different as body and soul cannot be deduced the one from the other. b. Dualistic. Some theories proceed on the assumption that there is an essential duality of matter and spirit, and present their mutual relations in various ways: (1) Occasionalism. According to this theory, suggested by Cartesius, matter and spirit each works, according to laws peculiar to itself, and these laws are so different that there is no possibility of joint action. What appears to be such can only be accounted for on the principle that, on the occasion of the action of the one, God by His direct agency produces a corresponding action in the other. (2) Parallelism. Leibnitz proposed the theory of pre-established harmony. This also rests on the assumption that there is no direct interaction between the material and the spiritual, but does not assume that God produces apparently joint actions by continual interference. Instead it holds that God made the body and the soul so that the one perfectly corresponds to the other. When a motion takes place in the body, there is a corresponding movement in the soul, according to a law of pre-established harmony. (3)Realistic Dualism. The simple facts to which we must always return, and which are embodied in the theory of realistic dualism, are the following: body and soul are distinct substances, which do interact, though their mode of interaction escapes human scrutiny and remains a mystery for us. The union between the two may be called a union of life: the two are organically related, the soul acting on the body and the body on the soul. Some of the actions of the body are dependent on the conscious operation of the soul, while others are not. The operations of the soul are connected with the body as its instrument in the present life; but from the continued conscious existence and activity of the soul after death it appears that it can also work without the body. This view is

certainly in harmony with the representations of Scripture on this point. A great deal of present day psychology is definitely moving in the direction of materialism. Its most extreme form is seen in Behaviorism with its denial of the soul, of the mind, and even of consciousness. All that it has left as an object of study is human behavior.

B. THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUL IN THE INDIVIDUAL.

1. HISTORICAL VIEWS RESPECTING THE ORIGIN OF THE SOUL. Greek philosophy devoted considerable attention to the problem of the human soul and did not fail to make its influence felt in Christian theology. The nature, the origin, and the continued existence of the soul, were all subjects of discussion. Plato believed in the pre-existence and transmigration of the soul. In the early Church the doctrine of the pre-existence of the soul was practically limited to the Alexandrian school. Origen was the chief representative of this view and combined it with the notion of a pre-temporal fall. Two other views at once made their appearance and proved to be far more popular in Christian circles. The theory of creationism holds that God creates a new soul at the birth of every individual. It was the dominant theory in the Eastern Church, and also found some advocates in the West. Jerome and Hilary of Pictavium were its most prominent representatives. In the Western Church the theory of Traducianism gradually gained ground. According to this view the soul as well as the body of man originates by propagation. It is usually wedded to the realistic theory that human nature was created in its entirety by God and is ever-increasingly individualized as the human race multiplies. Tertullian was the first to state this theory of Traducianism and under his influence it continued to gain favor in the North African and Western Church. It seemed to fit in best with the doctrine of the transmission of sin that was current in those circles. Leo the Great called it the teaching of the catholic faith. In the East it found no favorable reception. Augustine hesitated to choose between the two views. Some of the earlier Scholastics were somewhat undecided, though they regarded creationism as the more probable of the two; but in course of time it became the consensus of opinion among the Schoolmen that the individual souls were created. Says Peter the Lombard: "The Church teaches that souls are created at their infusion into the body." And Thomas Aquinas went even further by saying: "It is heretical to say that the intellectual soul is transmitted by way of generation." This remained the prevailing view in the Roman Catholic Church. From the days of the Reformation there was a difference of opinion among the Protestants. Luther expressed himself in favor of Traducianism, and this became the prevailing opinion in the Lutheran Church. Calvin, on the other hand, decidedly favored creationism. Says he in his commentary on Genesis 3:16 : "Nor is it necessary to resort to that ancient figment of certain writers, that souls are derived by descent from our first parents." Ever since the days of the Reformation this has been the common view in Reformed circles. This does not mean that there were no exceptions to the rule. Jonathan Edwards and Hopkins in New England theology favored Traducianism. Julius Mueller in his work on The Christian Doctrine of Sin again put up an argument in favor of the pre-existence of the soul, coupled with that of a pre-temporal fall, in order to explain the origin of sin.

2. PRE-EXISTENTIANISM. Some speculative theologians, among whom Origen, Scotus Erigena, and Julius Mueller are the most important, advocated the theory that the souls of men existed in a previous state, and that certain occurrences in that former state account for the condition in which those souls are now found. Origen looks upon man’s present material existence, with all its inequalities and irregularities, physical and moral, as a punishment for sins committed in a

previous existence. Scotus Erigena also holds that sin made its entrance into the world of humanity in the pre-temporal state, and that therefore man begins his career on earth as a sinner. And Julius Mueller has recourse to the theory, in order to reconcile the doctrines of the universality of sin and of individual guilt. According to him each person must have sinned willingly in that previous existence. This theory is open to several objections. (a) It is absolutely devoid of both Scriptural and philosophical grounds, and is, at least in some of its forms, based on the dualism of matter and spirit as taught in heathen philosophy, making it a punishment for the soul to be connected with the body. (b) It really makes the body something accidental. The soul was without the body at first, and received this later on. Man was complete without the body. This virtually wipes out the distinction between man and the angels. (c) It destroys the unity of the human race, for it assumes that all individual souls existed long before they entered the present life. They do not constitute a race. (d) It finds no support in the consciousness of man. Man has absolutely no consciousness of such a previous existence; nor does he feel that the body is a prison or a place of punishment for the soul. In fact, he dreads the separation of body and soul as something that is unnatural.

3. TRADUCIANISM. According to Traducianism the souls of men are propagated along with the bodies by generation, and are therefore transmitted to the children by the parents. In the early Church Tertullian, Rufinus, Apollinarus, and Gregory of Nvssa were Traducianists. From the days of Luther Traducianism has been the prevailing view of the Lutheran Church. Among the Reformed it is favored by H. B. Smith and Shedd. A. H. Strong also prefers it. a. Arguments in favor of Traducianism. Several arguments are adduced in favor of this theory. (1) It is said to be favored by the Scriptural representation (a) that God but once breathed into man’s nostrils the breath of life, and then left it to man to propagate the species, Genesis 1:28; Genesis 2:7; (b) that the creation of Eve’s soul was included in that of Adam, since she is said to be "of the man" (1 Corinthians 11:8), and nothing is said about the creation of her soul, Genesis 2:23; (c) that God ceased from the work of creation after He had made man, Genesis 2:2; and (d) that descendants are said to be in the loins of their fathers, Genesis 46:26; Hebrews 7:9-10. Cf. also such passages as John 3:6; John 1:13; Romans 1:3; Acts 17:26. (2) It is supported by the analogy of vegetable and animal life, in which the increase in numbers is secured, not by a continually increasing number of immediate creations, but by the natural derivation of new individuals from a parent stock. But cf. Psalms 104:30. (3) It also seeks support in the inheritance of mental peculiarities and family traits, which are so often just as noticeable as physical resemblances, and which cannot be accounted for by education or example, since they are in evidence even when parents do not live to bring up their children. (4) Finally, it seems to offer the best basis for the explanation of the inheritance of moral and spiritual depravity, which is a matter of the soul rather than of the body. It is quite common to combine with Traducianism the realistic theory to account for original sin. b. Objections to Traducianism. Several objections may be urged against this theory. (1) It is contrary to the philosophical doctrine of the simplicity of the soul. The soul is a pure spiritual substance that does not admit of division. The propagation of the soul would seem to imply that the soul of the child separates itself in some way from the soul of the parents. Moreover, the difficult question arises, whether it originates from the soul of the father or from that of the mother. Or does it come from both; and if so, is it not a compositum? (2) In order to avoid the difficulty just mentioned, it must resort to one of three theories: (a) that the soul of the child had a previous existence, a sort of pre-existence; (b) that the soul is potentially present in the seed of man or woman or both, which is

materialism; or (c) that the soul is brought forth, that is, created in some way, by the parents, thus making them in a sense creators. (3) It proceeds on the assumption that, after the original creation, God works only mediately. After the six days of creation His creative work ceased. The continued creation of souls, says Delitzsch, is inconsistent with God's relation to the world. But the question may be raised, What, then, becomes of the doctrine of regeneration, which is not effected by second causes? (4) It is generally wedded to the theory of realism, since this is the only way in which it can account for original guilt. By doing this it affirms the numerical unity of the substance of all human souls, an untenable position; and also fails to give a satisfactory answer to the question, why men are held responsible only for the first sin of Adam, and not for his later sins, nor for the sins of the rest of their forebears. (5) Finally, in the form just indicated it leads to insuperable difficulties in Christology. If in Adam human nature as a whole sinned, and that sin was therefore the actual sin of every part of that human nature, then the conclusion cannot be escaped that the human nature of Christ was also sinful and guilty because it had actually sinned in Adam.

4. CREATIONISM. This view is to the effect that each individual soul is to be regarded as an immediate creation of God, owing its origin to a direct creative act, of which the time cannot be precisely determined. The soul is supposed to be created pure, but united with a depraved body. This need not necessarily mean that the soul is created first in separation from the body, and then polluted by being brought in contact with the body, which would seem to assume that sin is something physical. It may simply mean that the soul, though called into being by a creative act of God, yet is pre-formed in the psychical life of the fœtus, that is, in the life of the parents, and thus acquires its life not above and outside of, but under and in, that complex of sin by which humanity as a whole is burdened.11 a. Arguments in favor of Creationism. The following are the more important considerations in favor of this theory: (1) It is more consistent with the prevailing representations of Scripture than Traducianism. The original account of creation points to a marked distinction between the creation of the body and that of the soul. The one is taken from the earth, while the other comes directly from God. This distinction is kept up throughout the Bible, where body and soul are not only represented as different substances, but also as having different origins, Ecclesiastes 12:7; Isaiah 42:5; Zechariah 12:1; Hebrews 12:9. Cf. Numbers 16:22. Of the passage in Hebrews even Delitzsch, though a Traducianist, says, "There can hardly be a more classical proof text for creationism."12 (2) It is clearly far more consistent with the nature of the human soul than Traducianism. The immaterial and spiritual, and therefore indivisible nature of the soul of man, generally admitted by all Christians, is clearly recognized by Creationism. The traducian theory on the other hand, posits a derivation of essence, which, as is generally admitted, necessarily implies separation or division of essence. (3) It avoids the pitfalls of Traducianism in Christology and does greater justice to the Scriptural representation of the person of Christ. He was very man, possessing a true human nature, a real body and a rational soul, was born of a woman, was made in all points like as we are, — and yet, without sin. He did not, like all other men, share in the guilt and pollution of Adam's transgression. This was possible, because he did not share the same numerical essence which sinned in Adam. b. Objections to Creationism. Creationism is open to the following objections: (1) The most serious objection is stated by Strong in the following words: "This theory, if it allows that the soul is originally possessed of depraved tendencies, makes God the direct author of moral evil; if it holds the soul to have been created pure, it makes God indirectly the author of moral evil, by teaching that He put this pure soul into a

body which will inevitably corrupt it." This is undoubtedly a serious difficulty, and is generally regarded as the decisive argument against Creationism. Augustine already called attention to the fact that the Creationist should seek to avoid this pitfall. But it should be borne in mind that the Creationist does not, like the Traducianist, regard original sin entirely as a matter of inheritance. The descendants of Adam are sinners, not as a result of their being brought into contact with a sinful body, but in virtue of the fact that God imputes to them the original disobedience of Adam. And it is for that reason that God withholds from them original righteousness, and the pollution of sin naturally follows. (2) It regards the earthly father as begetting only the body of his child, — certainly not the most important part of the child, — and therefore does not account for the re-appearance of the mental and moral traits of the parents in the children. Moreover, by taking this position it ascribes to the beast nobler powers of propagation than to man, for the beast multiplies itself after its kind. The last consideration is one of no great importance. And as far as mental and moral similarities of parents and children are concerned, it need not necessarily be assumed that these can be accounted for only on the basis of heredity. Our knowledge of the soul is still too deficient to speak with absolute assurance on this point. But this similarity may find its explanation partly in the example of the parents, partly in the influence of the body on the soul, and partly in the fact that God does not create all souls alike, but creates in each particular case a soul adapted to the body with which it will be united and the complex relationship into which it will be introduced. (3) It is not in harmony with God’s present relationship to the world and His manner of working in it, since it teaches a direct creative activity of God, and thus ignores the fact that God now works through secondary causes and ceased from His creative work. This is not a very serious objection for those who do not have a deistic conception of the world. It is a gratuitous assumption that God has ceased from all creative activity in the world.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS. a.Caution required in speaking on the subject. It must be admitted that the arguments on both sides are rather well balanced. In view of this fact it is not surprising that Augustine found it rather hard to choose between the two. The Bible makes no direct statement respecting the origin of the soul of man, except in the case of Adam. The few Scriptural passages that are adduced as favoring the one theory or the other, can hardly be called conclusive on either side. And because we have no clear teaching of Scripture on the point in question, it is necessary to speak with caution on the subject. We ought not to be wise above that which is written. Several theologians are of the opinion that there is an element of truth in both of these theories, which must be recognized.13 Dorner even suggests the idea that each one of the three theories discussed represents one aspect of the whole truth: "Traducianism, generic consciousness; Pre- existentianism, self-consciousness or the interest of the personality as a separate eternal divine thought; Creationism, God-consciousness."14 b. Some form of Creationism deserves preference. It seems to us that Creationism deserves the preference, because (1) it does not encounter the insuperable philosophical difficulty with which Traducianism is burdened; (2) it avoids the Christological errors which Traducianism involves; and (3) it is most in harmony with our covenant idea. At the same time we are convinced that the creative activity of God in originating human souls must be conceived as being most closely connected with the natural process in the generation of new individuals. Creationism does not claim to be able to clear up all difficulties, but at the same time it serves as a warning against the following errors: (1) that the soul is divisible; (2) that all men are numerically of the same substance; and (3) that Christ assumed the same numerical nature which fell in Adam.15

04.2.1.3. Man as the Image of God

III. Man as the Image of God A. HISTORICAL VIEWS OF THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN.

According to Scripture man was created in the image of God, and is therefore God- related. Traces of this truth are found even in Gentile literature. Paul pointed out to the Athenians that some of their own poets have spoken of man as the offspring of God, Acts 17:28. The early Church Fathers were quite agreed that the image of God in man consisted primarily in man's rational and moral characteristics, and in his capacity for holiness; but some were inclined to include also bodily traits. Irenæus and Tertullian drew a distinction between the "image" and the "likeness" of God, finding the former in bodily traits, and the latter in the spiritual nature of man. Clement of Alexandria and Origen, however, rejected the idea of any bodily analogy, and held that the word "image" denoted the characteristics of man as man, and the word "likeness," qualities which are not essential to man, but may be cultivated or lost. This view is also found in Athanasius, Hilary, Ambrose, Augustine, and John of Damascus. According to Pelagius and his followers the image consisted merely in this, that man was endowed with reason, so that he could know God; with free will, so that he was able to choose and do the good; and with the necessary power to rule the lower creation. The distinction already made by some of the early Church Fathers between the image and the likeness of God, was continued by the Scholastics, though it was not always expressed in the same way. The former was conceived of as including the intellectual powers of reason and freedom, and the latter as consisting of original righteousness. To this was added another point of distinction, namely, that between the image of God as a natural gift to man, something belonging to the very nature of man as man, and the likeness of God, or original righteousness, as a supernatural gift, which served as a check on the lower nature of man. There was a difference of opinion as to whether man was endowed with this original righteousness at once at creation, or received it later on as a reward for a temporary obedience. It was this original righteousness that enabled man to merit eternal life. The Reformers rejected the distinction between the image and the likeness, and considered original righteousness as included in the image of God, and as belonging to the very nature of man in its original condition. There was a difference of opinion, however, between Luther and Calvin. The former did not seek the image of God in any of the natural endowments of man, such as his rational and moral powers, but exclusively in original righteousness, and therefore regarded it as entirely lost by sin. Calvin, on the other hand, expresses himself as follows, after stating that the image of God extends to everything in which the nature of man surpasses that of all other species of animals: "Accordingly, by this term ('image of God') is denoted the integrity with which Adam was endued when his intellect was clear, his affections subordinated to reason, all his senses duly regulated, and when he truly ascribed all his excellence to the admirable gifts of his Maker. And though the primary seat of the divine image was in the mind and the heart, or in the soul and its powers, there was no part even of the body in which some rays of glory did not shine."16 It included both natural endowments and those spiritual qualities designated as original righteousness, that is, true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. The whole image was vitiated by sin, but only those

spiritual qualities were completely lost. The Socinians and some of the earlier Arminians taught that the image of God consisted only in man's dominion over the lower creation. Schleiermacher rejected the idea of an original state of integrity and of original righteousness as a necessary doctrine. Since, as he sees it, moral perfection or righteousness and holiness can only be the result of development, he regards it as a contradiction in terms to speak of man as being created in a state of righteousness and holiness. Hence the image of God in man can only be a certain receptivity for the divine, a capacity to answer to the divine ideal, and to grow into God-likeness. Such modern theologians as Martensen and Kaftan are quite in line with this idea.

B. SCRIPTURAL DATA RESPECTING THE IMAGE OF GOD IN MAN.

Scriptural teachings respecting the image of God in man warrant the following statements:

1. The words "image" and "likeness" are used synonymously and interchangeably, and therefore do not refer to two different things. In Genesis 1:26 both words are used, but in the twenty-seventh verse only the first. This is evidently considered sufficient to express the whole idea. In Genesis 5:1 only the word "likeness" occurs, but in Genesis 5:3 both terms are again found. Genesis 9:6 contains only the word "image" as a complete expression of the idea. Turning to the New Testament, we find -"image" and "glory" used in 1 Corinthians 11:7, "image" alone in Colossians 3:10, and "likeness" only in James 3:9. Evidently the two are used interchangeably in Scripture. This naturally implies that man was created also in the likeness of God, and that this likeness was not something with which he was endowed later on. The usual opinion is that the word "likeness" was added to "image" to express the idea that the image was most like, a perfect image. The idea is that by creation that which was archetypal in God became ectypal in man. God was the original of which man was made a copy. This means, of course, that man not only bears the image of God, but is His very image. This is clearly stated in 1 Corinthians 11:7, but does not mean that he cannot also be said to bear the image of God, cf. 1 Corinthians 15:49. Some have considered the change of prepositions in Genesis 1:27, " in our image, after our likeness," as significant. Böhl even based on it the idea that we are created in the image as a sphere, but this is entirely unwarranted. While the first meaning of the Hebrew preposition be (rendered "in" here) is undoubtedly "in," it can also have the same meaning as the preposition le (rendered "after"), and evidently has that meaning here. Notice that we are said to be renewed "after the image" of God in Colossians 3:10; and also that the prepositions used in Genesis 1:26 are reversed in Genesis 5:3.

2. The image of God in which man was created certainly includes what is generally called "original righteousness," or more specifically, true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. We are told that God made man "very good," Genesis 1:31, and "upright," Ecclesiastes 7:29. The New Testament indicates very specifically the nature of man's original condition where it speaks of man as being renewed in Christ, that is, as being brought back to a former condition. The condition to which he is restored in Christ is clearly not one of neutrality, neither good nor bad, in which the will is in a state of perfect equilibrium, but one of true knowledge, Colossians 3:10, righteousness and holiness, Ephesians 4:24. These three elements constitute the original righteousness, which was lost by sin, but is regained in Christ. It may be called the moral image of God, or the image of God in the more restricted sense of the word. Man's creation in this moral image implies that the original condition of man was one of positive holiness, and not a state of innocence or moral neutrality.

3. But the image of God is not to be restricted to the original knowledge, righteousness, and holiness which was lost by sin, but also includes elements which belong to the natural constitution of man. They are elements which belong to man as man, such as intellectual power, natural affections, and moral freedom. As created in the image of God man has a rational and moral nature, which he did not lose by sin and which he could not lose without ceasing to be man. This part of the image of God has indeed been vitiated by sin, but still remains in man even after his fall in sin. Notice that man even after the fall, irrespective of his spiritual condition, is still represented as the image of God, Genesis 9:1-29; Genesis 6:1-22; 1 Corinthians 11:7; James 3:9. The crime of murder owes its enormity to the fact that it is an attack on the image of God. In view of these passages of Scripture it is unwarranted to say that man has completely lost the image of God.

4. Another element usually included in the image of God is that of spirituality. God is Spirit, and it is but natural to expect that this element of spirituality also finds expression in man as the image of God. And that this is so is already indicated in the narrative of man’s creation. God "breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul." Genesis 2:7. The "breath of life" is the principle of his life, and the "living soul" is the very being of man. The soul is united with and adapted to a body, but can, if need be, also exist without the body. In view of this we can speak of man as a spiritual being, and as also in that respect the image of God. In this connection the question may be raised, whether the body of man also constitutes a part of the image. And it would seem that this question should be answered in the affirmative. The Bible says that man — not merely the soul of man — was created in the image of God, and man, the "living soul," is not complete without the body. Moreover, the Bible represents murder as the destruction of the body, Matthew 10:28, and also as the destruction of the image of God in man, Genesis 9:6. We need not look for the image in the material substance of the body; it is found rather in the body as the fit instrument for the self-expression of the soul. Even the body is destined to become in the end a spiritual body, that is, a body which is completely spirit-controlled, a perfect instrument of the soul.

5. Still another element of the image of God is immortality. The Bible says that God only hath immortality, 1 Timothy 6:16, and this would seem to exclude the idea of human immortality. But it is perfectly evident from Scripture that man is also immortal in some sense of the word. The meaning is that God alone hath immortality as an essential quality, has it in and of Himself, while man’s immortality is an endowment, is derived from God. Man was created immortal, not merely in the sense that his soul was endowed with an endless existence, but also in the sense that he did not carry within himself the seeds of physical death, and in his original condition was not subject to the law of death. Death was threatened as a punishment for sin, Genesis 2:17, and that this included bodily or physical death is evident from Genesis 3:19. Paul tells us that sin brought death into the world, Romans 5:12; 1 Corinthians 15:20-21; and that death must be regarded as the wages of sin, Romans 6:23.

6. There is considerable difference of opinion as to whether man’s dominion over the lower creation also formed a part of the image of God. This is not surprising in view of the fact that Scripture does not express itself explicitly on this point. Some regard the dominion in question simply as an office conferred on man, and not as a part of the image. But notice that God mentions man’s creation in the divine image and his dominion over the lower creation in a single breath, Genesis 1:26. It is indicative of the glory and honour with which man is crowned, Psalms 8:5-6.

C. MAN AS THE IMAGE OF GOD.

According to Scripture the essence of man consists in this, that he is the image of God. As such he is distinguished from all other creatures and stands supreme as the head and crown of the entire creation. Scripture asserts that man was created in the image and after the likeness of God, Genesis 1:26-27; Genesis 9:6; James 3:9, and speaks of man as being and as bearing the image of God, 1 Corinthians 11:7; 1 Corinthians 15:49. The terms "image" and "likeness" have been distinguished in various ways. Some were of the opinion that "image" had reference to the body, and "likeness," to the soul. Augustine held that the former referred to the intellectual, and the latter, to the moral faculties of the soul. Bellarmin regarded "image" as a designation of the natural gifts of man, and "likeness" as a description of that which was supernaturally added to man. Still others asserted that "image" denoted the inborn, and "likeness," the acquired conformity to God. It is far more likely, however, as was pointed out in the preceding, that both words express the same idea, and that "likeness" is merely an epexegetical addition to designate the image as most like or very similar. The idea expressed by the two words is that of the very image of God. The doctrine of the image of God in man is of the greatest importance in theology, for that image is the expression of that which is most distinctive in man and in his relation to God. The fact that man is the image of God distinguishes him from the animal and from every other creature. As far as we can learn from Scripture even the angels do not share that honor with him, though it is sometimes represented as if they do. Calvin goes so far as to say that "it cannot be denied that the angels also were created in the likeness of God, since, as Christ declares (Matthew 22:30), our highest perfection will consist in being like them."17 But in this statement the great Reformer does not have due regard for the point of comparison in the statement of Jesus. In many cases the assumption that the angels were also created in the image of God results from a conception of the image which limits it to our moral and intellectual qualities. But the image also includes the body of man and his dominion over the lower creation. The angels are never represented as lords of creation, but as ministering spirits sent out for the service of those that inherit salvation. The following are the most important conceptions of the image of God in man.

1. THE REFORMED CONCEPTION. The Reformed Churches, following in the footsteps of Calvin, have a far more comprehensive conception of the image of God than either the Lutherans or the Roman Catholics. But even they do not all agree as to its exact contents. Dabney, for instance, holds that it does not consist in anything absolutely essential to man’s nature, for then the loss of it would have resulted in the destruction of man’s nature; but merely in some accidens.18 McPherson, on the other hand, asserts that it belongs to the essential nature of man, and says that "Protestant theology would have escaped much confusion and many needless and unconvincing doctrinal refinements, if it had not encumbered itself with the idea that it was bound to define sin as the loss of the image, or of something belonging to the image. If the image were lost man would cease to be man."19 These two, then, would seem to be hopelessly at variance. Other differences are also in evidence in Reformed theology. Some would limit the image to the moral qualities of righteousness and holiness with which man was created, while others would include the whole moral and rational nature of man, and still others would also add the body. Calvin says that the proper seat of the image of God is in the soul, though some rays of its glory also shine in the body. He finds that the image consisted especially in that original integrity of man’s nature, lost by sin, which reveals itself in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness. At

the same time he adds further "that the image of God extends to everything in which the nature of man surpasses that of all other species of animals."20 This broader conception of the image of God became the prevalent one in Reformed theology. Thus Witsius says: "The image of God consisted antecendenter, in man's spiritual and immortal nature; formaliter, in his holiness; consequenter, in his dominion."21 A very similar opinion is expressed by Turretin.22To sum up it may be said that the image consists: (a) In the soul or spirit of man, that is, in the qualities of simplicity, spirituality, invisibility, and immortality. (b) In the psychical powers or faculties of man as a rational and moral being, namely, the intellect and the will with their functions. (c) In the intellectual and moral integrity of man's nature, revealing itself in true knowledge, righteousness, and holiness, Ephesians 4:24; Colossians 3:10. (d) In the body, not as a material substance, but as the fit organ of the soul, sharing its immortality; and as the instrument through which man can exercise dominion over the lower creation. (e) In man's dominion over the earth. In opposition to the Socinians, some Reformed scholars went too far in the opposite direction, when they regarded this dominion as something that did not belong to the image at all but was the result of a special disposal of God. In connection with the question, whether the image of God belongs to the very essence of man, Reformed theology does not hesitate to say that it constitutes the essence of man. It distinguishes, however, between those elements in the image of God which man cannot lose without ceasing to be man, consisting in the essential qualities and powers of the human soul; and those elements which man can lose and still remain man, namely, the good ethical qualities of the soul and its powers. The image of God in this restricted sense is identical with what is called original righteousness. It is the moral perfection of the image, which could be, and was, lost by sin.

2. THE LUTHERAN CONCEPTION. The prevailing Lutheran conception of the image of God differs materially from that of the Reformed. Luther himself sometimes spoke as if he had a broad conception of it, but in reality he had a restricted view of it.23 While there were during the seventeenth century, and there are even now, some Lutheran theologians who have a broader conception of the image of God, the great majority of them restrict it to the spiritual qualities with which man was originally endowed, that is, what is called original righteousness. In doing this they do not sufficiently recognize the essential nature of man as distinct from that of the angels on the one hand, and from that of the animals on the other hand. In the possession of this image men are like the angels, who also possess it; and in comparison with what the two have in common, their difference is of little importance. Man lost the image of God entirely through sin, and what now distinguishes him from the animals has very little religious or theological significance. The great difference between the two lay in the image of God, and this man has lost entirely. In view of this it is also natural that the Lutherans should adopt Traducianism, and thus teach that the soul of man originates like that of the animal, that is, by procreation. It also accounts for the fact that the Lutherans hardly recognize the moral unity of the human race, but emphasize strongly its physical unity and the exclusively physical propagation of sin. Barth comes closer to the Lutheran than to the Reformed position when he seeks the image of God in "a point of contact" between God and man, a certain conformity with God, and then says that this was not only ruined but even annihilated by sin.24

3. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW. Roman Catholics do not altogether agree in their conception of the image of God. We limit ourselves here to a statement of the prevailing view among them. They hold that God at creation endowed man with certain natural gifts, such as the spirituality of the

soul, the freedom of the will, and the immortality of the body. Spirituality, freedom, and immortality, are natural endowments, and as such constitute the natural image of God. Moreover, God "attempered" (adjusted) the natural powers of man to one another, placing the lower in due subordination to the higher. The harmony thus established is called justitia — natural righteousness. But even so there remained in man a natural tendency of the lower appetites and passions to rebel against the authority of the higher powers of reason and conscience. This tendency, called concupiscence, is not itself sin, but becomes sin when it is consented to by the will and passes into voluntary action. In order to enable man to hold his lower nature in check, God added to the dona naturalia certain dona supernaturalia. These included the donum superadditum of original righteousness (the supernatural likeness to God), which was added as a foreign gift to the original constitution of man, either immediately at the time of creation, or at some later point as a reward for the proper use of the natural powers. These supernatural gifts, including the donum superadditum of original righteousness, were lost by sin, but their loss did not disrupt the essential nature of man.

4. OTHER VIEWS OF THE IMAGE OF GOD. According to the Socinians and some of the earlier Arminians the image of God consists in man’s dominion over the lower creation, and in this only. Anabaptists maintained that the first man, as a finite and earthly creature, was not yet the image of God, but could become this only by regeneration. Pelagians, most of the Arminians, and Rationalists all, with little variation, find the image of God only in the free personality of man, in his rational character, his ethico- religious disposition, and his destiny to live in communion with God.

D. THE ORIGINAL CONDITION OF MAN AS THE IMAGE OF GOD.

There is a very close connection between the image of God and the original state of man, and therefore the two are generally considered together. Once again we shall have to distinguish between different historical views as to the original condition of man.

1. THE PROTESTANT VIEW. Protestants teach that man was created in a state of relative perfection, a state of righteousness and holiness. This does not mean that he had already reached the highest state of excellence of which he was susceptible. It is generally assumed that he was destined to reach a higher degree of perfection in the way of obedience. He was, something like a child, perfect in parts, but not yet in degree. His condition was a preliminary and temporary one, which would either lead on to greater perfection and glory or terminate in a fall. He was by nature endowed with that original righteousness which is the crowning glory of the image of God, and consequently lived in a state of positive holiness. The loss of that righteousness meant the loss of something that belonged to the very nature of man in its ideal state. Man could lose it and still remain man, but he could not lose it and remain man in the ideal sense of the word. In other words, its loss would really mean a deterioration and impairment of human nature. Moreover, man was created immortal. This applies not only to the soul, but to the whole person of man; and therefore does not merely mean that the soul was destined to have a continued existence. Neither does it mean that man was raised above the possibility of becoming a prey to death; this can only be affirmed of the angels and the saints in heaven. It does mean, however, that man, as he was created by God, did not bear within him the seeds of death and would not have died necessarily in virtue of the original constitution of his nature. Though the possibility of his becoming a victim of death was not excluded, he was not liable to death as long as he did not sin. It should be borne in

mind that man's original immortality was not something purely negative and physical, but was something positive and spiritual as well. It meant life in communion with God and the enjoyment of the favor of the Most High. This is the fundamental conception of life in Scripture, just as death is primarily separation from God and subjection to His wrath. The loss of this spiritual life would spell death, and would also result in physical death.25

2. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW. Roman Catholics naturally have a somewhat different view of the original condition of man. According to them original righteousness did not belong to the nature of man in its integrity, but was something supernaturally added. In virtue of his creation man was simply endowed with all the natural powers and faculties of human nature as such, and by the justitia naturalis these powers were nicely adjusted to each other. He was without sin and lived in a state of perfect innocency. In the very nature of things, however, there was a natural tendency of the lower appetites and passions to rebel against the higher powers of reason and conscience. This tendency, called concupiscence was not itself sin, but could easily become the occasion and fuel for sin. (But cf. Romans 7:8; Colossians 3:5; 1 Thessalonians 4:5, Auth. Ver.). Man, then, as he was originally constituted, was by nature without positive holiness, but also without sin, though burdened with a tendency which might easily result in sin. But now God added to the natural constitution of man the supernatural gift of original righteousness, by which he was enabled to keep the lower propensities and desires in due subjection. When man fell, he lost that original righteousness, but the original constitution of human nature remained intact. The natural man is now exactly where Adam was before he was endowed with original righteousness, though with a somewhat stronger bias towards evil.

3. RATIONALIZING VIEWS. Pelagians, Socinians, Arminians, Rationalists, and Evolutionists, all discount the idea of a primitive state of holiness altogether. The first four are agreed that man was created in a state of innocence, of moral and religious neutrality, but was endowed with a free will, so that he could turn in either direction. Evolutionists assert that man began his career in a state of barbarism, in which he was but slightly removed from the brute. Rationalists of all kinds believe that a concreated righteousness and holiness is a contradiction in terms. Man determines his character by his own free choice; and holiness can only result from a victorious struggle against evil. From the nature of the case, therefore, Adam could not have been created in a state of holiness. Moreover. Pelagians. Socinians, and Rationalists hold that man was created mortal. Death did not result from the entrance of sin into the world, but was simply the natural termination of human nature as it was constituted. Adam would have died in virtue of the original constitution of his nature.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What is the precise distinction which Delitzsch makes between the soul and the spirit in man? How does Heard make use of the tripartite conception of man in the interpretation of original sin, conversion, and sanctification? What accounts for the fact that Lutherans are prevailingly Traducianists, and Reformed prevailingly Creationists? How about the objection that Creationism virtually destroys the unity of the human race? What objections are there against realism with its assumption of the numerical unity of human nature? What criticism would you offer on Dorner's view, that the theories of Pre-existentianism, Traducianism, and Creationism, are simply three different aspects of the whole truth respecting the origin of the soul? How do Roman Catholics generally distinguish between the "image" and the "likeness" of God? Do they believe that man lost his justitia or natural righteousness by the fall or not? How do those

Lutherans who restrict the image of God to man's original righteousness explain Genesis 9:6 and James 3:9?

LITERATURE. Bavinck, Geref. Dogm., II, pp. 566-635; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Creaturis C. pp. 3-131; Vos, Geref. Dogm. II, pp. 1-21; Hodge, Syst. Theol. II, pp. 42-116; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., pp. 292-302; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. II, pp. 4-114; Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 107-122; Dorner, Syst, of Chr. Doct. II, pp. 68-96; Schmidt, Doct. Theol. of the Ev. Luth. Church, pp. 225-238; Martensen, Chr. Dogm., pp. 136-148; Pieper, Chr. Dogm. I, pp. 617-630; Valentine, Chr. Theol. I, pp. 383-415; Pope, Chr. Theol. I, pp. 421-436; Raymond, Syst. Theol. II, pp. 7-49; Wilmers, Handbook of the Chr. Rel., pp. 219-233; Orr, God's Image in Man, pp. 3-193; A. Kuyper, Jr., Het Beeld Gods pp. 8-143; Talma, De Anthropologie van Calvijn, pp. 29-68; Heard, The Tri-partite Nature of Man; Dickson, St. Paul's Use of the Terms Flesh and Spirit, chaps. V-XI; Delitzsch, Syst. of Bibl. Psych., pp. 103-144; Laidlaw, The Bibl. Doct. of Man, pp. 49-108; H. W. Robinson, The Chr. Doct. of Man pp. 4-150.

04.2.1.4. Man in the Covenant of Works

IV. Man in the Covenant of Works The discussion of the original state of man, thestatus integritatis, would not be complete without considering the mutual relationship between God and man, and especially the origin and nature of the religious life of man. That life was rooted in a covenant, just as the Christian life is today, and that covenant is variously known as the covenant of nature, the covenant of life, the Edenic covenant, and the covenant of works. The first name, which was rather common at first, was gradually abandoned, since it was apt to give the impression that this covenant was simply a part of the natural relationship in which man stood to God. The second and third names are not sufficiently specific, since both of them might also be applied to the covenant of grace, which is certainly a covenant of life, and also originated in Eden, Genesis 3:15. Consequently the name "Covenant of Works" deserves preference.

A. THE DOCTRINE OF THE COVENANT OF WORKS IN HISTORY. The history of the doctrine of the covenant of works is comparatively brief. In the early Church Fathers the covenant idea is seldom found at all, though the elements which it includes, namely, the probationary command, the freedom of choice, and the possibility of sin and death, are all mentioned. Augustine in his de Civitates Dei speaks of the relation in which Adam originally stood to God as a covenant (testamentum, pactum), while some others inferred the original covenant relationship from the well known passage of Hosea 6:7. In the scholastic literature and in the writings of the Reformers, too, all the elements which later on went into the construction of the doctrine of the covenant of works were already present, but the doctrine itself was not yet developed. Though they contain some expressions which point to the imputation of Adam’s sin to his descendants, it is clear that on the whole the transmission of sin was conceived realistically rather than federally. Says Thornwell in his analysis of Calvin’s Institutes: "Federal representation was not seized as it should be, but a mystic realism in place of it."26 The development of the doctrine of the covenant of grace preceded that of the doctrine of the covenant of works and paved the way for it. When it was clearly seen that Scripture represented the way of salvation in the form of a covenant, the parallel which Paul draws in Romans 5:1-21 between Adam and Christ soon gave occasion for thinking of the state of integrity also as a covenant. According to Heppe the first work which contained the federal representation of the way of salvation, was Bullinger’s Compendium of the Christian Religion; and Olevianus was the real founder of a well developed federal theology, in which the concept of the covenant became for the first time the constitutive and determinative principle of the entire system.27 From the Reformed Churches of Switzerland and Germany federal theology passed over to the Netherlands and to the British Isles, especially Scotland. Its earliest representatives in the Netherlands were Gomarus, Trelcatius, Ravensperger, and especially Cloppenburg. The latter is regarded as the forerunner of Coccejus, who is often mistakenly called "the father of federal theology." The real distinction of Coccejus lies, at least partly, in the fact that he sought to substitute for the usual scholastic method of studying theology, which was rather common in his day, what he considered a more Scriptural method. He was followed in that respect by Burmannus and Witsius. Coccejus and his followers were not the only ones to embrace the

doctrine of the covenant of works. This was done by others as well, such as Voetius, Mastricht, à Marck, and De Moor. Ypeij and Dermout point out that in those days a denial of the covenant of works was regarded as a heresy.28 The Socinians rejected this doctrine altogether, since they did not believe in the imputation of Adam's sin to his descendants; and some of the Arminians, such as Episcopius, Limborgh, Venema, and J. Alting, who called it a human doctrine, followed suit. About the middle of the eighteenth century, when the doctrine of the covenant in the Netherlands had all but passed into oblivion, Comrie and Holtius in their Examen van het Ontwerp van Tolerantie once more brought it to the attention of the Church. In Scotland several important works were written on the covenants, including the covenant of works, such as those of Fisher (Marrow of Modern Divinity), Ball, Blake, Gib, and Boston. Says Walker: "The old theology of Scotland might be emphatically described as covenant theology."29 The doctrine found official recognition in the Westminster Confession, and in the Formula Consensus Helvetica. It is significant that the doctrine of works met with very little response in Roman Catholic and Lutheran theology. This finds its explanation in their attitude to the doctrine of the immediate imputation of the sin of Adam to his descendants. Under the influence of Rationalism and of Placæus' theory of mediate imputation, which also found acceptance in New England theology, the doctrine of the covenant gradually suffered eclipse. Even such conservative scholars as Doedes and Van Oosterzee in the Netherlands rejected it; and in New England theology it was short-lived. In Scotland the situation is not much better. Hugh Martin already wrote in his work on The Atonement (published in 1887): "It has come to pass, we fear, that the federal theology is at present suffering a measure of neglect which does not bode well for the immediate future of the Church amongst us."30 And while in our own country such Presbyterian scholars as the Hodges, Thornwell, Breckenridge, and Dabney, take due account of the doctrine in their theological works, in the Churches which they represent it has all but lost its vitality. In the Netherlands there has been a revival of federal theology under the influence of Kuyper and Bavinck, and through the grace of God it still continues to be a living reality in the hearts and minds of the people.

B. THE SCRIPTURAL FOUNDATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE COVENANT OF WORKS. The widespread denial of the covenant of works makes it imperative to examine its Scriptural foundation with care.

1. THE ELEMENTS OF A COVENANT ARE PRESENT IN THE EARLY NARRATIVE. It must be admitted that the term "covenant" is not found in the first three chapters of Genesis, but this is not tantamount to saying that they do not contain the necessary data for the construction of a doctrine of the covenant. One would hardly infer from the absence of the term "trinity" that the doctrine of the Trinity is not found in the Bible. All the elements of a covenant are indicated in Scripture, and if the elements are present, we are not only warranted but, in a systematic study of the doctrine, also in duty bound to relate them to one another, and to give the doctrine so construed an appropriate name. In the case under consideration two parties are named, a condition is laid down, a promise of reward for obedience is clearly implied, and a penalty for transgression is threatened. It may still be objected that we do not read of the two parties as coming to an agreement, nor of Adam as accepting the terms laid down, but this is not an insuperable objection. We do not read of such an explicit agreement and acceptance on the part of man either in the cases of Noah and Abraham. God and man do not appear as equals in any of these covenants. All God's covenants are of the nature of sovereign dispositions imposed on man. God is absolutely sovereign in His dealings with

man, and has the perfect right to lay down the conditions which the latter must meet, in order to enjoy His favor. Moreover Adam was, even in virtue of his natural relationship, in duty bound to obey God; and when the covenant relation was established, this obedience also became a matter of self-interest. When entering into covenant relations with men, it is always God who lays down the terms, and they are very gracious terms, so that He has, also from that point of view, a perfect right to expect that man will assent to them. In the case under consideration God had but to announce the covenant, and the perfect state in which Adam lived was a sufficient guarantee for his acceptance.

2. THERE WAS A PROMISE OF ETERNAL LIFE. Some deny that there is any Scripture evidence for such a promise. Now it is perfectly true that no such promise is explicitly recorded, but it is clearly implied in the alternative of death as the result of disobedience. The clear implication of the threatened punishment is that in the case of obedience death would not enter, and this can only mean that life would continue. It has been objected that this would only mean a continuation of Adam's natural life, and not what Scripture calls life eternal. But the Scriptural idea of life is life in communion with God; and this is the life which Adam possessed, though in his case it was still amissible. If Adam stood the test, this life would be retained not only, but would cease to be amissible, and would therefore be lifted to a higher plane. Paul tells us explicitly in Romans 7:10 that the commandment, that is the law, was unto life. In commenting on this verse Hodge says: "The law was designed and adapted to secure life, but became in fact the cause of death." This is also clearly indicated in such passages as Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:13. Now it is generally admitted that this glorious promise of unending life was in no way implied in the natural relation in which Adam stood to God, but had a different basis. But to admit that there is something positive here, a special condescension of God, is an acceptance of the covenant principle. There may still be some doubt as to the propriety of the name "Covenant of Works," but there can be no valid objection to the covenant idea.

3. BASICALLY, THE COVENANT OF GRACE IS SIMPLY THE EXECUTION OF THE ORIGINAL AGREEMENT BY CHRIST AS OUR SURETY. He undertook freely to carry out the will of God. He placed Himself under the law, that He might redeem them that were under the law, and were no more in a position to obtain life by their own fulfilment of the law. He came to do what Adam failed to do, and did it in virtue of a covenant agreement. And if this is so, and the covenant of grace is, as far as Christ is concerned, simply the carrying out of the original agreement, it follows that the latter must also have been of the nature of a covenant. And since Christ met the condition of the covenant of works, man can now reap the fruit of the original agreement by faith in Jesus Christ. There are now two ways of life, which are in themselves ways of life, the one is the way of the law: "the man that doeth the righteousness which is of the law shall live thereby," but it is a way by which man can no more find life; and the other is the way of faith in Jesus Christ, who met the demands of the law, and is now able to dispense the blessing of eternal life.

4. THE PARALLEL BETWEEN ADAM AND CHRIST. The parallel which Paul draws between Adam and Christ in Romans 5:12-21, in connection with the doctrine of justification, can only be explained on the assumption that Adam, like Christ, was the head of a covenant. According to Paul the essential element in justification consists in this, that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to us, without any personal work on our part to merit it. And he regards this as a perfect parallel to the manner in which the guilt of Adam is imputed to us. This naturally leads to the

conclusion that Adam also stood in covenant relationship to his descendants.

5. THE PASSAGE IN Hosea 6:7. In Hosea 6:7 we read: "But they like Adam have transgressed the covenant." Attempts have been made to discredit this reading. Some have suggested the reading "at Adam," which would imply that some well-known transgression occurred at a place called Adam. But the preposition forbids this rendering. Moreover, the Bible makes no mention whatever of such a well-known historical transgression at Adam. The Authorized Version renders "like men," which would then mean, in human fashion. To this it may be objected that there is no plural in the original, and that such a statement would be rather inane, since man could hardly transgress in any other way. The rendering "like Adam" is after all the best. It is favored by the parallel passage in Job 31:33Job 31:33">; and is adopted by the American Revised Version.

C. ELEMENTS OF THE COVENANT OF WORKS. The following elements must be distinguished:

1. THE CONTRACTING PARTIES. On the one hand there was the triune God, the Creator and Lord, and on the other hand, Adam as His dependent creature. A twofold relationship between the two should be distinguished: a. The natural relationship. When God created man, He by that very fact established a natural relationship between Himself and man. It was a relationship like that between the potter and the clay, between an absolute sovereign and a subject devoid of any claim. In fact, the distance between the two was so great that these figures are not even an adequate expression of it. It was such that a life in communion with each other seemed to be out of the question. As the creature of God man was naturally under the law, and was in duty bound to keep it. And while transgression of the law would render him liable to punishment, the keeping of it would not constitute an inherent claim to a reward. Even if he did all that was required of him, he would still have to say, I am but an unprofitable servant, for I have merely done that which it was my duty to do. Under this purely natural relationship man could not have merited anything. But though the infinite distance between God and man apparently excluded a life of communion with each other, man was created for just such communion, and the possibility of it was already given in his creation in the image of God. In this natural relationship Adam was the father of the human race. b. The covenant relationship. From the very beginning, however. God revealed Himself, not only as an absolute Sovereign and Lawgiver, but also as a loving Father, seeking the welfare and happiness of His dependent creature. He condescended to come down to the level of man, to reveal Himself as a Friend, and to enable man to improve his condition in the way of obedience. In addition to the natural relationship He, by a positive enactment, graciously established a covenant relationship. He entered into a legal compact with man, which includes all the requirements and obligations implied in the creaturehood of man, but at the same time added some new elements. (1) Adam was constituted the representative head of the human race, so that he could act for all his descendants. (2) He was temporarily put on probation, in order to determine whether he would willingly subject his will to the will of God. (3) He was given the promise of eternal life in the way of obedience, and thus by the gracious disposition of God acquired certain conditional rights. This covenant enabled Adam to obtain eternal life for himself and for his descendants in the way of obedience.

2. THE PROMISE OF THE COVENANT. The great promise of the covenant of works was the promise of eternal life. They who deny the covenant of works generally base their denial in part on the fact that there is no record of such a promise in the Bible. And it is perfectly true that Scripture

contains no explicit promise of eternal life to Adam. But the threatened penalty clearly implies such a promise. When the Lord says, "for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die," his statement clearly implies that, if Adam refrains from eating, he will not die, but will be raised above the possibility of death. The implied promise certainly cannot mean that, in the case of obedience, Adam would be permitted to live on in the usual way, that is, to continue the ordinary natural life, for that life was his already in virtue of his creation, and therefore could not be held out as a reward for obedience. The implied promise evidently was that of life raised to its highest development of perennial bliss and glory. Adam was indeed created in a state of positive holiness, and was also immortal in the sense that he was not subject to the law of death. But he was only at the beginning of his course and did not yet possess the highest privileges that were in store for man. He was not yet raised above the possibility of erring, sinning, and dying. He was not yet in possession of the highest degree of holiness, nor did he enjoy life in all its fulness. The image of God in man was still limited by the possibility of man's sinning against God, changing from good to evil, and becoming subject to the power of death. The promise of life in the covenant of works was a promise of the removal of all the limitations of life to which Adam was still subject, and of the raising of his life to the highest degree of perfection. When Paul says in Romans 7:10 that the commandment was unto life, he means life in the fullest sense of the word. The principle of the covenant of works was: the man that does these things shall live thereby; and this principle is reiterated time and again in Scripture, Leviticus 18:5; Ezekiel 20:11; Ezekiel 20:13; Ezekiel 20:20; Luke 10:28l Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:12.

3. THE CONDITION OF THE COVENANT. The promise in the covenant of works was not unconditional. The condition was that of implicit and perfect obedience. The divine law can demand nothing less than that, and the positive command not to eat of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, relating as it did, to a thing indifferent in itself, was clearly a test of pure obedience in the absolute sense of the word. Man was, of course, also subject to the moral law of God, which was written on the tablets of his heart. He knew this by nature, so that it did not have to be revealed supernaturally, as the special test was. Essentially, the moral law, as Adam knew it, was undoubtedly like the ten commandments, but the form was different. In its present form the moral law presupposes a knowledge of sin, and is therefore primarily negative; in Adam's heart, however, it must have had a positive character. But just because it was positive, it did not bring to his consciousness the possibility of sin. Therefore a negative commandment was added. Moreover, in order that the test of Adam might be a test of pure obedience, God deemed it necessary to add to the commandments of which Adam perceived the naturalness and reasonableness, a commandment which was in a certain sense arbitrary and indifferent. Thus the demands of the law were, so to say, concentrated on a single point. The great question that had to be settled was, whether man would obey God implicitly or follow the guidance of his own judgment. Dr. Bavinck says: "Het proefgebod belichaamde voor hem (Adam) het dilemma: God of de mensch, Zijn gezag of eigen inzicht, onvoorwaardelijke gehoorzaamheid of zelfstandig onderzoek, geloof of twijfel."31

4. THE PENALTY OF THE COVENANT. The penalty that was threatened was death, and what this means can best be gathered from the general meaning of the term as it is used in Scripture, and from the evils that came upon the guilty in the execution of the penalty. Evidently death in the most inclusive sense of the word is meant, including physical, spiritual, and eternal death. The

fundamental Scriptural idea of death is not that of extinction of being, but that of separation from the source of life, and the resulting dissolution or misery and woe. Fundamentally, it consists in the separation of the soul from God, which manifests itself in spiritual misery, and finally terminates in eternal death. But it also includes the separation of body and soul and the consequent dissolution of the body. Undoubtedly the execution of the penalty began at once after the first transgression. Spiritual death entered instantly, and the seeds of death also began to operate in the body. The full execution of the sentence, however, did not follow at once, but was arrested, because God immediately introduced an economy of grace and restoration.

5. THE SACRAMENT(S) OF THE COVENANT. We have no definite information in Scripture respecting the sacrament(s) or seal(s) of this covenant. Hence there is a great variety of opinions on the subject. Some speak of four: the tree of life, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, paradise, and the sabbath; others of three: the two trees and paradise; still others of two: the tree of life and paradise; and still others of one: the tree of life. The last opinion is the most prevalent one, and would seem to be the only one to find any support in Scripture. We should not think of the fruit of this tree as magically or medically working immortality in Adam's frame. Yet it was in some way connected with the gift of life. In all probability it must be conceived of as an appointed symbol or seal of life. Consequently, when Adam forfeited the promise, he was debarred from the sign. So conceived the words of Genesis 3:22 must be understood sacramentally.

D. THE PRESENT STTATUS OF THE COVENANT OF WORKS. With respect to the question, whether the covenant of works is still in force or was abrogated at the time of Adam's fall, there is considerable difference of opinion between Arminian and Reformed theologians.

1. THE ARMINIAN VIEW. Arminians claim that this legal covenant was wholly abrogated at the fall of Adam, and argue this as follows: (a) The promise was then revoked and thus the compact annulled, and where there is no compact there can be no obligation. (b) God could not continue to exact obedience of man, when the latter was by nature unable, and was not enabled by the grace of God, to render the required service. (c) It would be derogatory to God's wisdom, holiness, and majesty to call the depraved creature to a service of holy and undivided love. They maintain that God established a new covenant and enacted a new law, the law of faith and evangelical obedience, which man in spite of his impaired powers can keep when assisted by the enabling helps of common or sufficient grace. However, the following considerations militate against this view: (a) Man's obligation to God was never rooted merely in the covenant requirement, but fundamentally in the natural relation in which he stood to God. This natural relationship was incorporated in the covenant relationship. (b) Man's inability is self-induced, and therefore does not relieve him of his just obligation. His self-imposed limitations, his criminal and voluntary hostility to God did not deprive the sovereign Ruler of the universe of the right to demand the hearty and loving service which is His due. (c) The reductio ad absurdum of the Arminian view is that the sinner can gain complete emancipation from righteous obligations by sinning. The more a man sins, the more he becomes a slave of sin, unable to do that which is good; and the deeper he sinks into this slavery which robs him of his capacity for good, the less responsible he becomes. If man continues to sin long enough, he will in the end be absolved of all moral responsibility.

2. THE REFORMED VIEW. Even some Reformed theologians speak of the abrogation of the legal covenant, and seek proof for this in such passages as Hebrews 8:13. This naturally raised the

question, whether, and in how far, the covenant of works can be considered as a thing of the past; or whether, and in how far, it must be regarded as still in force. It is generally agreed that no change in the legal status of man can ever abrogate the authority of the law; that God's claim to the obedience of His creatures is not terminated by their fall in sin and its disabling effects; that the wages of sin continues to be death; and that a perfect obedience is always required to merit eternal life. This means with respect to the question under consideration: a.That the covenant of works is not abrogated: (1) in so far as the natural relation of man to God was incorporated in it, since man always owes God perfect obedience; (2) in so far as its curse and punishment for those who continue in sin are concerned; and (3) in so far as the conditional promise still holds. God might have withdrawn this promise, but did not, Leviticus 18:5; Romans 10:5; Galatians 3:12. It is evident, however, that after the fall no one can comply with the condition. b. That the covenant of works is abrogated: (1) in so far as it contained new positive elements, for those who are under the covenant of grace; this does not mean that it is simply set aside and disregarded, but that its obligations were met by the Mediator for His people; and (2) as an appointed means to obtain eternal life, for as such it is powerless after the fall of man.

04.2.2.1. The Origin of Sin

I. The Origin of Sin THE PROBLEM of the origin of the evil that is in the world has always been considered as one of the profoundest problems of philosophy and theology. It is a problem that naturally forces itself upon the attention of man, since the power of evil is both great and universal, is an ever present blight on life in all its manifestations, and is a matter of daily experience in the life of every man. Philosophers were constrained to face the problem and to seek an answer to the question as to the origin of all the evil, and particularly of the moral evil, that is in the world. To some it seemed to be so much a part of life itself that they sought the solution for it in the natural constitution of things. Others, however, were convinced that it had a voluntary origin, that is, that it originated in the free choice of man, either in the present or in some previous existence. These are much closer to the truth as it is revealed in the Word of God.

HISTORICAL VIEWS RESPECTING THE ORIGIN OF SIN. The earliest Church Fathers do not speak very definitely on the origin of sin, though the idea that it originated in the voluntary transgression and fall of Adam in paradise is already found in the writings of Irenæus. This soon became the prevailing view in the Church, especially in opposition to Gnosticism, which regarded evil as inherent in matter, and as such the product of the Demiurge. The contact of the human soul with matter at once rendered it sinful. This theory naturally robbed sin of its voluntary and ethical character. Origen sought to maintain this by his theory of pre-existentianism. According to him the souls of men sinned voluntarily in a previous existence, and therefore all enter the world in a sinful condition. This Platonic view was burdened with too many difficulties to meet with wide acceptance. During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, however, it was advocated by Mueller and Rueckert, and by such philosophers as Lessing, Schelling, and J. H. Fichte. In general the Greek Church Fathers of the third and fourth centuries showed an inclination to discount the connection between the sin of Adam and those of his descendants, while the Latin Church Fathers taught with ever-increasing clearness that the present sinful condition of man finds its explanation in the first transgression of Adam in paradise. The teachings of the Eastern Church finally culminated in Pelagianism, which denied that there was any vital connection between the two, while those of the Western Church reached their culmination in Augustinianism which stressed the fact that we are both guilty and polluted in Adam. Semi-Pelagianism admitted the Adamic connection, but held that it accounted only for the pollution of sin. During the Middle Ages the connection was generally recognized. It was sometimes interpreted in an Augustinian, but more often in a Semi-Pelagian manner. The Reformers shared the views of Augustine, and the Socinians those of Pelagius, while the Arminians moved in the direction of Semi- Pelagianism. Under the influence of Rationalism and evolutionary philosophy the doctrine of the fall of man and its fatal effects on the human race was gradually discarded. The idea of sin was replaced by that of evil, and this evil was explained in various ways. Kant regarded it as something belonging to the supersensible sphere, which he could not explain. For Leibnitz it was due to the necessary limitations of the universe. Schleiermacher found its origin in the sensuous nature of man, and Ritschl, in human ignorance, while the evolutionist ascribes it to the opposition of the lower

propensities to a gradually developing moral consciousness. Barth speaks of the origin of sin as the mystery of predestination. Sin originated in the fall, but the fall was not a historical event; it belongs to superhistory (Urgeschichte). Adam was indeed the first sinner, but his disobedience cannot be regarded as the cause of the sin of the world. The sin of man is in some manner bound up with his creatureliness. The story of paradise simply conveys to man the cheering information that he need not necessarily be a sinner.

B. SCRIPTURAL DATA RESPECTING THE ORIGIN OF SIN. In Scripture the moral evil that is in the world stands out clearly as sin, that is, as trangression of the law of God. Man ever appears in it as a transgressor by nature, and the question naturally arises, How did he acquire that nature? What does the Bible reveal on that point?

1. GOD CANNOT BE REGARDED AS ITS AUTHOR. God's eternal decree certainly rendered the entrance of sin into the world certain, but this may not be interpreted so as to make God the cause of sin in the sense of being its responsible author. This idea is clearly excluded by Scripture. "Far be it from God, that He should do wickedness, and from the Almighty, that He should commit iniquity," Job 34:10Job 34:10">. He is the holy God, Isaiah 6:3, and there is absolutely no unrighteousness in Him, Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalms 92:15. He cannot be tempted with evil, and He Himself tempteth no man, James 1:13. When He created man, He created Him good and in His image. He positively hates sin, Deuteronomy 25:16; Psalms 5:4; Psalms 11:5; Zechariah 8:17; Luke 16:15, and made provision in Christ for man's deliverance from sin. In the light of all this it would be blasphemous to speak of God as the author of sin. And for that reason all those deterministic views which represent sin as a necessity inherent in the very nature of things should be rejected. They by implication make God the author of sin, and are contrary, not only to Scripture, but also to the voice of conscience, which testifies to the responsibility of man.

2. SIN ORIGINATED IN THE ANGELIC WORLD. The Bible teaches us that in the attempt to trace the origin of sin, we must even go back of the fall of man as described in Genesis 3:1-24, and fix the attention on something that happened in the angelic world. God created a host of angels, and they were all good as they came forth from the hand of their Maker, Genesis 1:31. But a fall occurred in the angelic world, in which legions of angels fell away from God. The exact time of this fall is not designated, but in John 8:44 Jesus speaks of the devil as a murderer from the beginning (kat' arches), and John says in 1 John 3:8, that he sins from the beginning. The prevailing opinion is that this kat' arches means from the beginning of the history of man. Very little is said about the sin that caused the fall of the angels. From Paul's warning to Timothy, that no novice should be appointed as bishop, "lest being puffed up he fall into the condemnation of the devil," 1 Timothy 3:6, we may in all probability conclude that it was the sin of pride, of aspiring to be like God in power and authority. And this idea would seem to find corroboration in Jude 1:6, where it is said that the fallen angels "kept not their own principality, but left their proper habitation." They were not satisfied with their lot, with the government and power entrusted to them. If the desire to be like God was their peculiar temptation, this would also explain why they tempted man on that particular point.

3. THE ORIGIN OF SIN IN THE HUMAN RACE. With respect to the origin of sin in the history of mankind, the Bible teaches that it began with the transgression of Adam in paradise, and therefore with a perfectly voluntary act on the part of man. The tempter came from the spirit world with the

suggestion that man, by placing himself in opposition to God, might become like God. Adam yielded to the temptation and committed the first sin by eating of the forbidden fruit. But the matter did not stop there, for by that first sin Adam became the bond-servant of sin. That sin carried permanent pollution with it, and a pollution which, because of the solidarity of the human race, would affect not only Adam but all his descendants as well. As a result of the fall the father of the race could only pass on a depraved human nature to his offspring. From that unholy source sin flows on as an impure stream to all the generations of men, polluting everyone and everything with which it comes in contact. It is exactly this state of things that made the question of Job so pertinent, "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one." Job 14:4Job 14:4">. But even this is not all. Adam sinned not only as the father of the human race, but also as the representative head of all his descendants; and therefore the guilt of his sin is placed to their account, so that they are all liable to the punishment of death. It is primarily in that sense that Adam's sin is the sin of all. That is what Paul teaches us in Romans 5:12 : "Through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin; and so death passed unto all men, for that all sinned." The last words can only mean that they all sinned in Adam, and sinned in such a way as to make them all liable to the punishment of death. It is not sin considered merely as pollution, but sin as guilt that carries punishment with it. God adjudges all men to be guilty sinners in Adam, just as He adjudges all believers to be righteous in Jesus Christ. That is what Paul means, when he says: "So then as through one trespass the judgment came unto all men to condemnation; even so through one act of righteousness the free gift came unto all men to justification of life. For as through the one man's disobedience the many were made sinners, even so through the obedience of the one shall the many be made righteous," Romans 5:18-19.

C. THE NATURE OF THE FIRST SIN OR THE FALL OF MAN.

1. ITS FORMAL CHARACTER. It may be said that, from a purely formal point of view, man's first sin consisted in his eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. We do not know what kind of tree this was. It may have been a date or a fig tree, or any other kind of fruit tree. There was nothing injurious in the fruit of the tree as such. Eating of it was not per se sinful. for it was not a transgression of the moral law. This means that it would not have been sinful, if God had not said, "Of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil thou shalt not eat." There is no unanimous opinion as to the reason why the tree was called the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. A rather common view is that the tree was so called, because the eating of it would impart a practical knowledge of good and evil; but this is hardly in keeping with the Scriptural representation that man by eating it would become like God in knowing good and evil, for God does not commit evil, and therefore has no practical knowledge of it. It is far more likely that the tree was so called, because it was destined to reveal (a) whether man's future state would be good or evil; and (b) whether man would allow God to determine for him what was good and evil, or would undertake to determine this for himself. But whatever explanation may be given of the name, the command given by God not to eat of the fruit of the tree simply served the purpose of testing the obedience of man. It was a test of pure obedience, since God did not in any way seek to justify or to explain the prohibition. Adam had to show his willingness to submit his will to the will of his God with implicit obedience.

2. ITS ESSENTIAL AND MATERIAL CHARACTER. The first sin of man was a typical sin, that is, a sin in which the real essence of sin clearly reveals itself. The essence of that sin lay in the fact that

Adam placed himself in opposition to God, that he refused to subject his will to the will of God, to have God determine the course of his life; and that he actively attempted to take the matter out of God's hand, and to determine the future for himself. Man, who had absolutely no claim on God, and who could only establish a claim by meeting the condition of the covenant of works, cut loose from God and acted as if he possesed certain rights as over against God. The idea that the command of God was really an infringement on the rights of man seems to have been present already in the mind of Eve when, in answer to the question of Satan, she added the words, "Neither shall ye touch it," Genesis 3:3. She evidently wanted to stress the fact that the command had been rather unreasonable. Starting from the pre-supposition that he had certain rights as over against God, man allowed the new center, which he found in himself, to operate against his Maker. This explains his desire to be like God and his doubt of the good intention of God in giving the command. Naturally different elements can be distinguished in his first sin. In the intellect it revealed itself as unbelief and pride, in the will, as the desire to be like God, and in the affections, as an unholy satisfaction in eating of the forbidden fruit.

D. THE FIRST SIN OR THE FALL AS OCCASIONED BY TEMPTATION.

1.THE PROCEDURE OF THE TEMPTER. The fall of man was occasioned by the temptation of the serpent, who sowed in man's mind the seeds of distrust and unbelief. Though it was undoubtedly the intention of the tempter to cause Adam, the head of the covenant, to fall, yet he addressed himself to Eve, probably because (a) she was not the head of the covenant and therefore would not have the same sense of responsibility; (b) she had not received the command of God directly but only indirectly, and would consequently be more susceptible to argumentation and doubt; and (c) she would undoubtedly prove to be the most effective agent in reaching the heart of Adam. The course followed by the tempter is quite clear. In the first place he sows the seeds of doubt by calling the good intention of God in question and suggesting that His command was really an infringement of man's liberty and rights. When he notices from the response of Eve that the seed has taken root, he adds the seeds of unbelief and pride, denying that transgression will result in death, and clearly intimating that the command was prompted by the selfish purpose of keeping man in subjection. He asserts that by eating from the tree man would become like God. The high expectations thus engendered induced Eve to look intently at the tree, and the longer she looked, the better the fruit seemed to her. Finally, desire got the upper hand, and she ate and also gave unto her husband, and he ate.

2. INTERPRETATION OF THE TEMPTATION. Frequent attempts have been made and are still being made to explain away the historical character of the fall. Some regard the whole narrative in Genesis 3:1-24 as an allegory, representing man's self-depravation and gradual change in a figurative way. Barth and Brunner regard the narrative of man's original state and of the fall as a myth. Creation and the fall both belong, not to history, but to super-history (Urgeschichte), and therefore both are equally incomprehensible. The story in Genesis merely teaches us that, though man is now unable to do any good and is subject to the law of death, this is not necessarily so. It is possible for a man to be free from sin and death by a life in communion with God. Such is the life portrayed for us in the story of paradise, and it prefigures the life that will be granted to us in Him of whom Adam was but a type, namely, Christ. But it is not the kind of life that man now lives or ever has lived from the beginning of history. Paradise is not a certain locality to which we can point, but is there where God is Lord, and man and all other creatures are His willing subjects. The paradise

of the past lies beyond the pale of human history. Says Barth: "When the history of man began; when man's time had its beginning; when time and history commenced where man has the first and the last word, paradise had disappeared."32 Brunner speaks in a similar vein when he says: "Just as in respect of the Creation we ask in vain. How, where and when has this taken place, so also is it with the Fall. The Creation and the Fall both lie behind the historical visible reality."33

Others who do not deny the historical character of the narrative in Genesis, maintain that the serpent at least should not be regarded as a literal animal, but merely as a name or a symbol for covetousness, for sexual desire, for erring reason, or for Satan. Still others assert that, to say the least, the speaking of the serpent should be understood figuratively. But all these and similar interpretations are untenable in the light of Scripture. The passages preceding and following Genesis 3:1-7 are evidently intended as a plain historical narrative. That they were so understood by the Biblical authors, can be proved by many cross-references, such as Job 31:33; Ecclesiastes 7:29; Isaiah 43:27; Hosea 6:7; Romans 5:12; Romans 5:18-19; 2 Corinthians 11:3; 1 Timothy 2:14, and therefore we have no right to hold that these verses, which form an integral part of the narrative, should be interpreted figuratively. Moreover, the serpent is certainly counted among the animals in Genesis 3:1, and it would not yield good sense to substitute for "serpent" the word "Satan." The punishment in Genesis 3:14-15 presupposes a literal serpent, and Paul conceives of the serpent in no other way, 2 Corinthians 11:3. And while it may be possible to conceive of the serpent as saying something in a figurative sense by means of cunning actions, it does not seem possible to think of him as carrying on the conversation recorded in Genesis 3:1-24 in that way. The whole transaction, including the speaking of the serpent, undoubtedly finds its explanation in the operation of some superhuman power, which is not mentioned in Genesis 3:1-24. Scripture clearly intimates that the serpent was but the instrument of Satan, and that Satan was the real tempter, who was working in and through the serpent, just as at a later time he worked in men and swine, John 8:44; Romans 16:20; 2 Corinthians 11:3; Revelation 12:9. The serpent was a fit instrument for Satan, for he is the personification of sin, and the serpent symbolizes sin (a) in its cunning and deceptive nature, and (b) in its poisonous sting by which it kills man.

3. THE FALL BY TEMPTATION AND MAN'S SALVABILITY. It has been suggested that the fact that man's fall was occasioned by temptation from without, may be one of the reasons why man is salvable, in distinction from the fallen angels, who were not subject to external temptation, but fell by the promptings of their own inner nature. Nothing certain can be said on this point, however. But whatever the significance of the temptation in that respect may be, it certainly does not suffice to explain how a holy being like Adam could fall in sin. It is impossible for us to say how temptation could find a point of contact in a holy person. And it is still more difficult to explain the origin of sin in the angelic world.

E. THE EVOLUTIONARY EXPLANATION OF THE ORIGIN OF SIN.

Naturally, a consistent theory of evolution cannot admit the doctrine of the fall, and a number of liberal theologians have rejected it as incompatible with the theory of evolution. It is true, there are some rather conservative theologians, such as Denney, Gore, and Orr, who accept, though with reservations, the evolutionary account of the origin of man, and feel that it leaves room for the doctrine of the fall in some sense of the word. But it is significant that they all conceive of the story of the fall as a mythical or allegorical representation of an ethical experience or of some actual

moral catastrophe at the beginning of history which resulted in suffering and death. This means that they do not accept the narrative of the fall as a real historical account of what occurred in the garden of Eden. Tennant in his Hulsean Lectures on The Origin and Propagation of Sin34 gave a rather detailed and interesting account of the origin of sin from the evolutionary point of view. He realizes that man could not very well derive sin from his animal ancestors, since these had no sin. This means that the impulses, propensities, desires, and qualities which man inherited from the brute cannot themselves be called sin. In his estimation these constitute only the material of sin, and do not become actual sins until the moral consciousness awakens in man, and they are left in control in determining the actions of man, contrary to the voice of conscience, and to ethical sanctions. He holds that in the course of his development man gradually became an ethical being with an indeterminate will, without explaining how such a will is possible where the law of evolution prevails, and regards this will as the only cause of sin. He defines sin "as an activity of the will expressed in thought, word, or deed contrary to the individual's conscience. to his notion of what is good and right, his knowledge of the moral law and the will of God."35 As the human race develops, the ethical standards become more exacting and the heinousness of sin increases. A sinful environment adds to the difficulty of refraining from sin. This view of Tennant leaves no room for the fall of man in the generally accepted sense of the word. As a matter of fact, Tennant explicitly repudiates the doctrine of the fall, which is recognized in all the great historical confessions of the Church. Says W. H. Johnson: "Tennant's critics are agreed that his theory leaves no room for that cry of the contrite heart which not only confesses to separate acts of sin, but declares; 'I was shapen in iniquity; there is a law of death in my members.'"36 F. THE RESULTS OF THE FIRST SIN. The first transgression of man had the following results:

1. The immediate concomitant of the first sin, and therefore hardly a result of it in the strict sense of the word, was the total depravity of human nature. The contagion of his sin at once spread through the entire man, leaving no part of his nature untouched, but vitiating every power and faculty of body and soul. This utter corruption of man is clearly taught in Scripture, Genesis 6:5; Psalms 14:3; Romans 7:18. Total depravity here does not mean that human nature was at once as thoroughly depraved as it could possibly become. In the will this depravity manifested itself as spiritual inability.

2. Immediately connected with the preceding was the loss of communion with God through the Holy Spirit. This is but the reverse side of the utter corruption mentioned in the preceding paragraph. The two can be combined in the single statement that man lost the image of God in the sense of original righteousness. He broke away from the real source of life and blessedness, and the result was a condition of spiritual death, Ephesians 2:1; Ephesians 2:5; Ephesians 2:12; Ephesians 4:18.

3. This change in the actual condition of man also reflected itself in his consciousness. There was, first of all, a consciousness of pollution, revealing itself in the sense of shame, and in the effort of our first parents to cover their nakedness. And in the second place there was a consciousness of guilt, which found expression in an accusing conscience and in the fear of God which it inspired.

4. Not only spiritual death, but physical death as well resulted from the first sin of man. From a state of posse non mori he descended to a state of non posse non mori. Having sinned, he was doomed to return to the dust from which he was taken, Genesis 3:19. Paul tells us that by one man

death entered the world and passed on to all men, Romans 5:12, and that the wages of sin is death, Romans 6:23.

5. This change also resulted in a necessary change of residence. Man was driven from paradise, because it represented the place of communion with God, and was a symbol of the fuller life and greater blessedness in store for man, if he continued steadfast. He was barred from the tree of life, because it was the symbol of the life promised in the covenant of works.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. What different theories are there as to the origin of sin? What Scriptural proof is there that sin originated in the angelic world? Can the allegorical interpretation of the narrative of the fall be maintained in the light of Scripture? Is there any place for the fall in the theory of evolution? Did God will the fall of man or did He merely permit it? Does our Reformed doctrine make God the author of sin? What objections are there to the notion that the souls of men sinned in a previous existence? Was God justified in making the spiritual state of mankind in general contingent on the obedience or non-obedience of the first man? What do Barth and Brunner mean when they speak of the fall of man as super-historical? Why is it that the doctrine of the covenant of works finds so little acceptance outside of Reformed circles? What accounts for the widespread neglect of this doctrine in our day? Why is it important to maintain this doctrine?

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04.2.2.2. The Essential Character of Sin

II. The Essential Character of Sin

Sin is one of the saddest but also one of the most common phenomena of human life. It is a part of the common experience of mankind, and therefore forces itself upon the attention of all those who do not deliberately close their eyes to the realities of human life. Some may for a time dream of the essential goodness of man and speak indulgently of those separate words and actions that do not measure up to the ethical standards of good society as mere foibles and weaknesses, for which man is not responsible, and which readily yield to corrective measures; but as time goes on, and all measures of external reform fail, and the suppression of one evil merely serves to release another, such persons are inevitably disillusioned. They become conscious of the fact that they have merely been fighting the symptoms of some deep-seated malady, and that they are confronted, not merely with the problem of sins, that is, of separate sinful deeds, but with the much greater and deeper problem of sin. of an evil that is inherent in human nature. This is exactly what we are beginning to witness at the present time. Many Modernists at present do not hesitate to say that the doctrine of Rousseau respecting the inherent goodness of man has proved to be one of the most pernicious teachings of the Enlightenment, and now call for a greater measure of realism in the recognition of sin Thus Walter Horton, who pleads for a realistic theology and believes that this calls for the acceptance of some Marxian principles, says: "I believe that orthodox Christianity represents a profound insight into the whole human predicament. I believe that the basic human difficulty is that perversion of the will, that betrayal of divine trust, which is called sin; and I believe that sin is in a sense a racial disease, transmissible from generation to generation In affirming these things the Christian Fathers and the Protestant Reformers spoke as realists, and could have assembled masses of empirical evidence to support their views."37 In view of the fact that sin is real and that no man can get away from it in this present life, it is no wonder that philosophers as well as theologians undertook to grapple with the problem of sin, though in philosophy it is known as the problem of evil rather than as the problem of sin. We shall briefly consider some of the most important philosophical theories of evil before we state the Scriptural doctrine of sin.

A. PHILOSOPHIC THEORIES RESPECTING THE NATURE OF EVIL.

1. THE DUALISTIC THEORY. This is one of the views that were current in Greek philosophy. In the form of Gnosticism it found entrance into the early Church. It assumes the existence of an eternal principle of evil, and holds that in man the spirit represents the principle of good, and the body, that of evil. It is objectionable for several reasons: (a) The position is philosophically untenable, that there is something outside of God that is eternal and independent of His will. (b) This theory robs sin of its ethical character by making it something purely physical and independent of the human will, and thereby really destroys the idea of sin. (c) It also does away with the responsibility of man by representing sin as a physical necessity. The only escape from sin lies in deliverance from the body.

2. THE THEORY THAT SIN IS MERELY PRIVATION. According to Leibnitz the present world is the best possible one. The existence of sin in it must be considered as unavoidable. It cannot be referred to the agency of God, and therefore must be regarded as a simple negation or privation, for which no efficient cause is needed. The limitations of the creature render it unavoidable. This theory makes sin a necessary evil, since creatures are necessarily limited, and sin is an unavoidable consequence of this limitation. Its attempt to avoid making God the author of sin is not successful, for even if sin is a mere negation requiring no efficient cause, God is nevertheless the author of the limitation from which it results. Moreover, it tends to obliterate the distinction between moral and physical evil, since it represents sin as little more than a misfortune which has befallen man. Consequently, it has a tendency to blunt man's sense of the evil or pollution of sin, to destroy the sense of guilt, and to abrogate man's moral responsibility.

3. THE THEORY THAT SIN IS AN ILLUSION. For Spinoza, as for Leibnitz, sin is simply a defect, a limitation of which man is conscious; but while Leibnitz regards the notion of evil, arising from this limitation, as necessary, Spinoza holds that the resulting consciousness of sin is simply due to the inadequacy of man's knowledge, which fails to see everything sub specie aeternitatis, that is, in unity with the eternal and infinite essence of God. If man's knowledge were adequate, so that he saw everything in God, he would have no conception of sin; it would simply be non-existent for him. But this theory, representing sin as something purely negative, does not account for its terrible positive results, to which the universal experience of mankind testifies in the most convincing manner. Consistently carried through, it abrogates all ethical distinctions, and reduces such concepts as "moral character" and "moral conduct" to meaningless phrases. In fact, it reduces the whole life of man to an illusion: his knowledge, his experience, the testimony of conscience, and so on, for all his knowledge is inadequate. Moreover, it goes contrary to the experience of mankind, that the greatest intellects are often the greatest sinners, Satan being the greatest of all.

4. THE THEORY THAT SIN IS A WANT OF GOD-CONSCIOUSNESS, DUE TO MAN'S SENSUOUS NATURE. This is the view of Schleiermacher. According to him man's consciousness of sin is dependent on his God-consciousness. When the sense of God awakens in man, he is at once conscious of the opposition of his lower nature to it. This opposition follows from the very constitution of his being, from his sensuous nature, from the soul's connection with a physical organism. It is therefore an inherent imperfection, but one which man feels as sin and guilt. Yet this does not make God the author of sin, since man wrongly conceives of this imperfection as sin. Sin has no objective existence, but exists only in man's consciousness. But this theory makes man constitutionally evil. The evil was present in man even in his original state, when the God-consciousness was not sufficiently strong to control the sensuous nature of man. It is in flagrant opposition to Scripture, when it holds that man wrongly adjudges this evil to be sin, and thus makes sin and guilt purely subjective. And though Schleiermacher wishes to avoid this conclusion, it does make God the responsible author of sin, for He is the creator of man's sensuous nature. It also rests upon an incomplete induction of facts, since it fails to take account of the fact that many of the most hateful sins of man do not pertain to his physical but to his spiritual nature, such as avarice, envy, pride, malice, and others. Moreover, it leads to the most absurd conclusions as, for instance, that asceticism, by weakening the sensuous nature, necessarily weakens the power of sin; that man becomes less sinful as his senses fail with age;

that death is the only redeemer; and that disembodied spirits, including the devil himself, have no sin.

5. THE THEORY OF SIN AS WANT OF TRUST IN GOD AND OPPOSITION TO HIS KINGDOM, DUE TO IGNORANCE. Like Schleiermacher, Ritschl too stresses the fact that sin is understood only from the standpoint of the Christian consciousness. They who are outside of the pale of the Christian religion, and they who are still strangers to the experience of redemption, have no knowledge of it. Under the influence of the redemptive work of God man becomes conscious of his lack of trust in God and of his opposition to the Kingdom of God, which is the highest good. Sin is not determined by man's attitude to the law of God, but by his relation to the purpose of God, to establish the Kingdom. Man imputes his failure to make the purpose of God his own to himself as guilt, but God regards it merely as ignorance, and because it is ignorance, it is pardonable. This view of Ritschl reminds us by way of contrast of the Greek dictum that knowledge is virtue. It fails completely to do justice to the Scriptural position that sin is above all transgression of the law of God, and therefore renders man guilty in the sight of God and worthy of condemnation. Moreover, the idea that sin is ignorance goes contrary to the voice of Christian experience. The man who is burdened with the sense of sin certainly does not feel that way about it. He is grateful, too, that not only the sins which he committed in ignorance are pardonable, but all the others as well, with the single exception of the blasphemy against the Holy Spirit.

6. THE THEORY THAT SIN IS SELFISHNESS. This position is taken among others by Mueller and A. H. Strong. Some who take this position conceive of selfishness merely as the opposite of altruism or benevolence; others understand by it the choice of self rather than God as the supreme object of love. Now this theory, especially when it conceives of selfishness as a putting of self in the place of God, is by far the best of the theories named. Yet it can hardly be called satisfactory. Though all selfishness is sin, and there is an element of selfishness in all sin, it cannot be said that selfishness is the essence of sin. Sin can be properly defined only with reference to the law of God, a reference that is completely lacking in the definition under consideration. Moreover, there is a great deal of sin in which selfishness is not at all the governing principle. When a poverty-stricken father sees his wife and children pine away for lack of food, and in his desperate desire to help them finally resorts to theft, this can hardly be called pure selfishness. It may even be that the thought of self was entirely absent. Enmity to God, hardness of heart, impenitence, and unbelief, are all heinous sins, but cannot simply be qualified as selfishness. And certainly the view that all virtue is disinterestedness or benevolence, which seems to be a necessary corollary of the theory under consideration, at least in one of its forms, does not hold. An act does not cease to be virtuous, when its performance meets and satisfies some demand of our nature. Moreover, justice, fidelity, humility, forbearance, patience, and other virtues may be cultivated or practiced, not as forms of benevolence, but as virtues inherently excellent, not merely as promoting the happiness of others, but for what they are in themselves.

7. THE THEORY THAT SIN CONSISTS IN THE OPPOSITION OF THE LOWER PROPENSITIES OF HUMAN NATURE TO A GRADUALLY DEVELOPING MORAL CONSCIOUSNESS. This view was developed, as we pointed out in the preceding, by Tennant in his Hulsean Lectures. It is the doctrine of sin constructed according to the theory of evolution. Natural impulses and inherited qualities, derived from the brute, form the material of sin, but do not actually become sin until they are indulged in contrary to the gradually awakening moral sense of mankind. The theories of

McDowall and Fiske move along similar lines. The theory as presented by Tennant halts somewhat between the Scriptural view of man and that presented by the theory of evolution, inclining now to the one and anon to the other side. It assumes that man had a free will even before the awakening of his moral consciousness, so that he was able to choose when he was placed before a moral ideal; but does not explain how we can conceive of a free and indeterminate will in a process of evolution. It limits sin to those transgressions of the moral law, which are committed with a clear consciousness of a moral ideal and are therefore condemned by conscience as evil. As a matter of fact, it is merely the old Pelagian view of sin grafted into the theory of evolution, and is therefore open to all the objections with which Pelagianism is burdened. The radical defect in all these theories is that they seek to define sin without taking into consideration that sin is essentially a breaking away from God, opposition to God, and transgression of the law of God. Sin should always be defined in terms of man's relation to God and to His will as expressed in the moral law.

B. THE SCRIPTURAL IDEA OF SIN. In giving the Scriptural idea of sin it is necessary to call attention to several particulars.

1. SIN IS A SPECIFIC KIND OF EVIL. At the present time we hear a great deal about evil, and comparatively little about sin; and this is rather misleading. Not all evil is sin. Sin should not be confused with physical evil, with that which is injurious or calamitous. It is possible to speak not only of sin but also of sickness as an evil, but then the word "evil" is used in two totally different senses. Above the physical lies the ethical sphere, in which the contrast between moral good and evil applies, and it is only in this sphere that we can speak of sin. And even in this sphere it is not desirable to substitute the word "evil" for "sin" without any further qualification, for the latter is more specific than the former. Sin is a moral evil. Most of the names that are used in Scripture to designate sin point to its moral character. Chatta'th directs attention to it as an action that misses the mark and consists in a deviation from the right way. ' Avel and 'avon indicate that it is a want of integrity and rectitude, a departure from the appointed path. Pesha' refers to it as a revolt or a refusal of subjection to rightful authority, a positive transgression of the law, and a breaking of the covenant. And resha' points to it as a wicked and guilty departure from the law. Furthermore, it is designated as guilt by 'asham, as unfaithfulness and treason, by ma'al, as vanity, by ' aven, and as perversion or distortion of nature (crookedness) by 'avah. The corresponding New Testament words, such as hamartia, adikia, parabasis, paraptoma, anomia, paranomia, and others, point to the same ideas. In view of the use of these words, and of the way in which the Bible usually speaks of sin, there can be no doubt about its ethical character. It is not a calamity that came upon man unawares, poisoned his life, and ruined his happiness, but an evil course which man has deliberately chosen to follow and which carries untold misery with it. Fundamentally, it is not something passive, such as a weakness, a fault, or an imperfection, for which we cannot be held responsible, but an active opposition to God, and a positive transgression of His law, which constitutes guilt. Sin is the result of a free but evil choice of man. This is the plain teaching of the Word of God, Genesis 3:1-6; Isaiah 48:8; Romans 1:18-32; 1 John 3:4. The application of the philosophy of evolution to the study of the Old Testament led some scholars to the conviction that the ethical idea of sin was not developed until the time of the prophets, but this view is not borne out by the way in which the earliest books of the Bible speak of sin.

2. SIN HAS AN ABSOLUTE CHARACTER. In the ethical sphere the contrast between good and evil is absolute. There is no neutral condition between the two. While there are undoubtedly degrees in both, there are no gradations between the good and the evil. The transition from the one to the other is not of a quantitative, but of a qualitative character. A moral being that is good does not become evil by simply diminishing his goodness, but only by a radical qualitative change, by turning to sin. Sin is not a lesser degree of goodness, but a positive evil. This is plainly taught in the Bible. He who does not love God is thereby characterized as evil. Scripture knows of no position of neutrality. It urges the wicked to turn to righteousness, and sometimes speaks of the righteous as falling into evil; but it does not contain a single indication that either the one or the other ever lands in a neutral position. Man is either on the right side or on the wrong side, Matthew 10:32-33; Matthew 12:30; Luke 11:23; James 2:10.

3. SIN ALWAYS HAS RELATION TO GOD AND HIS WILL. The older dogmaticians realized that it was impossible to have a correct conception of sin without contemplating it in relation to God and His will, and therefore emphasized this aspect and usually spoke of sin as "lack of conformity to the law of God." This is undoubtedly a correct formal definition of sin. But the question arises, Just what is the material content of the law? What does it demand? If this question is answered, it will be possible to determine what sin is in a material sense. Now there is no doubt about it that the great central demand of the law is love to God. And if from the material point of view moral goodness consists in love to God, then moral evil must consist in the opposite. It is separation from God, opposition to God, hatred of God, and this manifests itself in constant transgression of the law of God in thought, word, and deed. The following passages clearly show that Scripture contemplates sin in relation to God and His law, either as written on the tablets of the heart, or as given by Moses, Romans 1:32; Romans 2:12-14; Romans 4:15; James 2:9; 1 John 3:4.

4. SIN INCLUDES BOTH GUILT AND POLLUTION. Guilt is the state of deserving condemnation or of being liable to punishment for the violation of a law or a moral requirement. It expresses the relation which sin bears to justice or to the penalty of the law. But even so the word has a twofold meaning. It may denote an inherent quality of the sinner, namely, his demerit, ill-desert, or guiltiness, which renders him worthy of punishment. Dabney speaks of this as "potential guilt." It is inseparable from sin, is never found in one who is not personally a sinner, and is permanent, so that once established, it cannot be removed by pardon. But it may also denote the obligation to satisfy justice, to pay the penalty of sin, "actual guilt," as Dabney calls it.38 It is not inherent in man, but is the penal enactment of the lawgiver, who fixes the penalty of the guilt. It may be removed by the satisfaction of the just demands of the law personally or vicariously. While many deny that sin includes guilt, this does not comport with the fact that sin was threatened and is indeed visited with punishment, and clearly contradicts the plain statements of Scripture, Matthew 6:12; Romans 3:19; Romans 5:18; Ephesians 2:3. By pollution we understand the inherent corruption to which every sinner is subject. This is a reality in the life of every individual. It is not conceivable without guilt, though guilt as included in a penal relationship, is conceivable without immediate pollution. Yet it is always followed by pollution. Every one who is guilty in Adam is, as a result, also born with a corrupt nature. The pollution of sin is clearly taught in such passages as Job 14:4; Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 7:15-20; Romans 8:5-8; Ephesians 4:17-19.

5. SIN HAS ITS SEAT IN THE HEART. Sin does not reside in any one faculty of the soul, but in the heart, which in Scriptural psychology is the central organ of the soul, out of which are the

issues of life. And from this center its influence and operations spread to the intellect, the will, the affections, in short, to the entire man, including his body. In his sinful state the whole man is the object of God's displeasure. There is a sense in which it can be said that sin originated in the will of man, but then the will does not designate some actual volition as much as it does the volitional nature of man. There was a tendency of the heart underlying the actual volition when sin entered the world. This view is in perfect harmony with the representations of Scripture in such passages as the following: Proverbs 4:23; Jeremiah 17:9; Matthew 15:19-20; Luke 6:45; Hebrews 3:12.

6. SIN DOES NOT CONSIST EXCLUSIVELY IN OVERT ACTS. Sin does not consist only in overt acts, but also in sinful habits and in a sinful condition of the soul. These three are related to one another as follows: The sinful state is the basis of the sinful habits, and these manifest themselves in sinful deeds. There is also truth, however, in the contention that repeated sinful deeds lead to the establishment of sinful habits. The sinful acts and dispositions of man must be referred to and find their explanation in a corrupt nature. The passages referred to in the preceding paragraph substantiate this view, for they clearly prove that the state or condition of man is thoroughly sinful. And if the question should still be raised, whether the thoughts and affections of the natural man, called "flesh" in Scripture, should be regarded as constituting sin, it might be answered by pointing to such passages as the following: Matthew 5:22; Matthew 5:28; Romans 7:7; Galatians 5:17; Galatians 5:24, and others. In conclusion it may be said that sin may be defined as lack of conformity to the moral law of God, either in act, disposition, or state.

C. THE PELAGIAN VIEW OF SIN. The Pelagian view of sin is quite different from that presented above. The only point of similarity lies in this that the Pelagian also considers sin in relation to the law of God, and regards it as a transgression of the law. But in all other particulars his conception differs widely from the Scriptural and Augustinian view.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PELAGIAN VIEW. Pelagius takes his startingpoint in the natural ability of man. His fundamental proposition is: God has commanded man to do that which is good; hence the latter must have the ability to do it. This means that man has a free will in the absolute sense of the word, so that it is possible for him to decide for or against that which is good, and also to do the good as well as the evil. The decision is not dependent on any moral character in man, for the will is entirely indeterminate. Whether a man will do good or evil simply depends on his free and independent will. From this it follows, of course, that there is no such thing as a moral development of the individual. Good and evil are located in the separate actions of man. From this fundamental position the doctrinal teaching of Pelagius respecting sin naturally follows. Sin consists only in the separate acts of the will. There is no such thing as a sinful nature, neither are there sinful dispositions. Sin is always a deliberate choice of evil by a will which is perfectly free, and can just as well choose and follow the good. But if this is so, then the conclusion inevitably follows that Adam was not created in a state of positive holiness, but in a state of moral equilibrium. His condition was one of moral neutrality. He was neither good nor bad, and therefore had no moral character; but he chose the course of evil, and thus became sinful. Inasmuch as sin consists only in separate acts of the will, the idea of its propagation by procreation is absurd. A sinful nature, if such a thing should exist, might be passed on from father to son, but sinful acts cannot be so propagated. This is in the nature of the case an impossibility. Adam was the first sinner, but his sin was in no sense passed on to his descendants. There is no such thing as original sin. Children are born in a state of neutrality, beginning exactly where Adam began, except that they are

handicapped by the evil examples which they see round about them. Their future course must be determined by their own free choice. The universality of sin is admitted, because all experience testifies to it. It is due to imitation and to the habit of sinning that is gradually formed. Strictly speaking, there are, on the Pelagian standpoint, no sinners, but only separate sinful acts. This makes a religious conception of the history of the race utterly impossible.

2. OBJECTIONS TO THE PELAGIAN VIEW. There are several weighty objections to the Pelagian view of sin, of which the following are the most important: a. The fundamental position that man is held responsible by God only for what he is able to do, is absolutely contrary to the testimony of conscience and to the Word of God. It is an undeniable fact that, as a man increases in sin, his ability to do good decreases. He becomes in an ever greater measure the slave of sin. According to the theory under consideration this would also involve a lessening of his responsibility. But this is equivalent to saying that sin itself gradually redeems its victims by relieving them of their responsibility. The more sinful a man, the less responsible he is. Against this position conscience registers a loud protest. Paul does not say that the hardened sinners, which he describes in Romans 1:18-32 were virtually without responsibility, but regards them as worthy of death. Jesus said of the wicked Jews who gloried in their freedom, but manifested their extreme wickedness by seeking to kill Him, that they were bond- servants of sin, did not understand His speech, because they could not hear His word, and would die in their sins, John 8:21-22; John 8:34; John 8:43. Though slaves of sin, they were yet responsible. b. To deny that man has by nature a moral character, is simply bringing him down to the level of the animal. According to this view everything in the life of man that is not a conscious choice of the will, is deprived of all moral quality. But the consciousness of men in general testifies to the fact that the contrast between good and evil also applies to man's tendencies, desires, moods, and affections, and that these also have a moral character. In Pelagianism sin and virtue are reduced to superficial appendages of man, in no way connected with his inner life. That the estimate of Scripture is quite different appears from the following passages: Jeremiah 17:9; Psalms 51:6; Psalms 51:10; Matthew 15:19; James 4:1-2. c. A choice of the will that is in no way determined by man's character, is not only psychologically unthinkable, but also ethically worthless. If a good deed of man simply happens to fall out as it does, and no reason can be given why it did not turn out to be the opposite, in other words, if the deed is not an expression of man's character, it lacks all moral value. It is only as an exponent of character that a deed has the moral value that is ascribed to it. d. The Pelagian theory can give no satisfactory account of the universality of sin. The bad example of parents and grandparents offers no real explanation. The mere abstract possibility of man's sinning, even when strengthened by the evil example, does not explain how it came to pass that all men actually sinned. How can it be accounted for that the will invariably turned in the direction of sin, and never in the opposite direction? It is far more natural to think of a general disposition to sin.

D. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW OF SIN.

Though the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent are somewhat ambigious in the doctrine of sin, the prevailing Roman Catholic view of sin may be expressed as follows: Real sin always consists in a conscious act of the will. It is true that the dispositions and habits that are not in accord with the will of God, are of a sinful character; yet they cannot be called sins in the strict sense of the word. The indwelling concupiscence, which lies back of sin, gained the upper hand in man in paradise, and thus precipitated the loss of the donum superadditum of original

righteousness, cannot be regarded as sin, but only as the fomes or fuel of sin. The sinfulness of Adam's descendants is primarily only a negative condition, consisting in the absence of something that ought to be present, that is, of original righteousness, which is not essential to human nature. Something essential is wanting only if, as some hold, the justitia naturalis was also lost. The objections to this view are perfectly evident from what was said in connection with the Pelagian theory. A bare reminder of them would seem to be quite sufficient. In so far as it holds that real sin consists only in a deliberate choice of the will and in overt acts, the objections raised against Pelagianism are pertinent. The idea that original righteousness was supernaturally added to man's natural constitution, and that its loss did not detract from human nature, is an un-Scriptural idea, as was pointed out in our discussion of the image of God in man. According to the Bible concupiscence is sin, real sin, and the root of many sinful actions. This was brought out when the Biblical view of sin was considered.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. Has philosophy succeeded in explaining the origin of sin? Does Scripture bear out the view that sin originally had no ethical quality? What objection is there to the view that sin is mere privation? Must we conceive of sin as a substance? With whose name is this view associated? Does this sin exist apart from the sinner? How can we prove that sin must always be judged by the law of God? Did Paul favor the old Greek dualism, when he spoke of "the body of sin" and used the term "flesh" to denote man's sinful nature? Is the present tendency to speak of 'evil' ratherthan of 'sin' commendable? What is meant by the social interpretation of sin? Does this recognize sin for what it is fundamentally?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. III, pp. 121-158; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Peccato, pp. 27-35; Hodge, Syst. Theol. II, pp. 130-192; Vos, Geref. Dogm, II, pp. 21-32; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., pp. 306-317; McPherson, Chr. Dogm., pp. 257-264; Pope, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 29-42; Orchard, Modern Theories of Sin; Moxon, The Doctrine of Sin; Alexander, Syst. of Bibl. Theol. I. pp. 232-265; Brown, Chr. Theol. in Outline, pp. 261-282; Clarke, An Outline of Chr. Theol. pp. 227-239; Orr, God's Image in Man pp. 197-246; Mackintosh, Christianity and Sin, cf. Index; Candlish, The Bibl. Doct. of Sin. pp. 31-44; Talma, De Anthropologie van Calvijn, pp. 92-117; Tennant, The Concept of Sin.

04.2.2.3. The Transmission of Sin

III. The Transmission of Sin

Scripture and experience both teach us that sin is universal, and according to the Bible the explanation for this universality lies in the fall of Adam. These two points, the universality of sin, and the connection of Adam's sin with that of mankind in general, now call for consideration. While there has been rather general agreement as to the universality of sin, there have been different representations of the connection between the sin of Adam and that of his descendants.

A. HISTORICAL REVIEW.

1. BEFORE THE REFORMATION. The writings of the Apologists contain nothing definite respecting original sin, while those of Irenaeus and Tertullian clearly teach that our sinful condition is the result of Adam's fall. But the doctrine of the direct imputation of Adam's sin to his descendants is foreign even to them. Tertullian had a realistic conception of mankind. The whole human race was potentially and numerically present in Adam, and therefore sinned when he sinned and became corrupt when he became corrupt. Human nature as a whole sinned in Adam, and therefore every individualization of that nature is also sinful. Origen, who was profoundly influenced by Greek philosophy, had a different view of the matter, and scarcely recognized any connection between the sin of Adam and that of his descendants. He found the explanation of the sinfulness of the human race primarily in the personal sin of each soul in a pre-temporal state, though he also mentions some mystery of generation. Augustine shared the realistic conception of Tertullian. Though he also spoke of "imputation," he did not yet have in mind the direct or immediate imputation of the guilt of Adam to his posterity. His doctrine of original sin is not entirely clear. This may be due to the fact that he hesitated to choose between Traducianism and Creationism. While he stresses the fact that all men were seminally present in Adam and actually sinned in him, he also comes very close to the idea that they sinned in Adam as their representative. However, his main emphasis was on the transmission of the corruption of sin. Sin is passed on by propagation, and this propagation of Adam's sin is at the same time a punishment for his sin. Wiggers states the idea very briefly in these words: "The corruption of human nature, in the whole race, was the righteous punishment of the transgression of the first man, in whom all men already existed."39 Augustine's great opponent, Pelagius, denied such a connection between the sin of Adam and those of his posterity. As he saw it, the propagation of sin by generation involved the Traducianist theory of the origin of the soul, which he regarded as a heretical error; and the imputation of Adam's sin to anyone but himself would be in conflict with the divine rectitude. The Pelagian view was rejected by the Church, and the Scholastics in general thought along the lines indicated by Augustine, the emphasis all the while being on the transmission of the pollution of Adam's sin rather than on that of his guilt. Hugo St. Victor and Peter the Lombard held that actual concupiscence stains the semen in the act of procreation, and that this stain in some way defiles the soul on its union with the body. Anselm, Alexander of Hales, and Bonaventura stressed the realistic conception of the connection between Adam and his posterity. The whole

human race was seminally present in Adam, and therefore also sinned in him. His disobedience was the disobedience of the entire human race. At the same time generation was regarded as the sine qua non of the transmission of the sinful nature. In Bonaventura and others after him the distinction between original guilt and original pollution was more clearly expressed. The fundamental idea was, that the guilt of Adam's sin is imputed to all his descendants. Adam suffered the loss of original righteousness, and thereby incurred the divine displeasure. As a result all his descendants are deprived of original righteousness, and as such the objects of divine wrath. Moreover, the pollution of Adam's sin is in some way passed on to his posterity, but the manner of this transmission was a matter of dispute among the Scholastics. Since they were not Traducianists, and therefore could not say that the soul, which is after all the real seat of evil, was passed on from father to son by generation, they felt that something more had to be said to explain the transmission of inherent evil. Some said that it is passed on through the body, which in turn contaminates the soul as soon as it comes in contact with it. Others, sensing the danger of this explanation sought it in the mere fact that every man is now born in the state in which Adam was before he was endowed with original righteousness, and thus subject to the struggle between the unchecked flesh and the spirit. In Thomas Aquinas the realistic strain again appears rather strongly, though in a modified form. He pointed out that the human race constitutes an organism, and that, just as the act of one bodily member — say, the hand — is regarded as the act of the person, so the sin of one member of the organism of humanity is imputed to the whole organism.

2. AFTER THE REFORMATION. While the Reformers did not agree with the Scholastics as to the nature of original sin, their view of its transmission did not contain any new elements. The ideas of Adam as the representative of the human race, and of the "immediate" imputation of his guilt to his descendants are not yet clearly expressed in their works. According to Luther we are accounted guilty by God because of the indwelling sin inherited from Adam. Calvin speaks in a somewhat similar vein. He holds that, since Adam was not only the progenitor but the root of the human race, all his descendants are born with a corrupt nature; and that both the guilt of Adam's sin and their own inborn corruption are imputed to them as sin. The development of the federal theology brought the idea of Adam as the representative of the human race to the foreground, and led to a clearer distinction between the transmission of the guilt and of the pollution of Adam's sin. Without denying that our native corruption also constitutes guilt in the sight of God, federal theology stressed the fact that there is an "immediate" imputation of Adam's guilt to those whom he represented as the head of the covenant.

Socinians and Arminians both rejected the idea of the imputation of Adam's sin to his descendants. Placeus, of the school of Saumur, advocated the idea of "mediate" imputation. Denying all immediate imputation, he held that because we inherit a sinful nature from Adam, we are deserving of being treated as if we had committed the original offense. This was something new in Reformed theology, and Rivet had no difficulty in proving this by collecting a long line of testimonies. A debate ensued in which "immediate" and "mediate" imputation were represented as mutually exclusive doctrines; and in which it was made to appear as if the real question was, whether man is guilty in the sight of God solely on account of Adam's sin, imputed to him, or solely on account of his own inherent sin. The former was not the doctrine of the Reformed Churches, and the latter was not taught in them before the time of Placeus. The teachings of the latter found their way into New England theology, and became especially characteristic of the New School

(New Haven) theology. In modern liberal theology the doctrine of the transmission of sin from Adam to his posterity is entirely discredited. It prefers to seek the explanation of the evil that is in the world in an animal inheritance, which is not itself sinful. Strange to say, even Barth and Brunner, though violently opposed to liberal theology, do not regard the universal sinfulness of the human race as the result of Adam's sin. Historically, the latter occupies a unique place merely as the first sinner.

B. THE UNIVERSALITY OF SIN.

Few will be inclined to deny the presence of evil in the human heart, however much they may differ as to the nature of this evil and as to the way in which it originated. Even Pelagians and Socinians are ready to admit that sin is universal. This is a fact that forces itself upon the attention of every one.

1. THE HISTORY OF RELIGIONS AND OF PHILOSOPHY TESTIFY TO IT. The history of religions testifies to the universality of sin. The question of Job, "How shall a man be just with God?" is a question that was asked not merely in the realm of special revelation, but also outside of it in the Gentile world. The heathen religions testify to a universal consciousness of sin and of the need of reconciliation with a Supreme Being. There is a general feeling that the gods are offended and must be propitiated in some way. There is a universal voice of conscience, testifying to the fact that man falls short of the ideal and stands condemned in the sight of some higher Power. Altars reeking with the blood of sacrifices, often the sacrifices of dear children, repeated confessions of wrongdoing, and prayers for deliverance from evil, — all point to the consciousness of sin. Missionaries find this wherever they go. The history of philosophy is indicative of the same fact. Early Greek philosophers were already wrestling with the problem of moral evil, and since their day no philosopher of name was able to ignore it. They were all constrained to admit the universality of it, and that in spite of the fact they were not able to explain the phenomenon. There was, it is true, a superficial optimism in the eighteenth century, which dreamt of the inherent goodness of man, but in its stupidity flew in the face of the facts and was sharply rebuked by Kant. Many liberal theologians were induced to believe and to preach this inherent goodness of man as gospel truth, but to-day many of them qualify it as one of the most pernicious errors of the past. Surely, the facts of life do not warrant such optimism.

2. THE BIBLE CLEARLY TEACHES IT. There are direct statements of Scripture that point to the universal sinfulness of man, such as 1 Kings 8:46; Psalms 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:1-12; Romans 3:19-20; Romans 3:23; Galatians 3:22; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8; 1 John 1:10. Several passages of Scripture teach that sin is the heritage of man from the time of his birth, and is therefore present in human nature so early that it cannot possibly be considered as the result of imitation, Psalms 51:5; Job 14:4; John 3:6. In Ephesians 2:3 Paul says of the Ephesians that they "were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." In this passage the term "by nature" points to something inborn and original, as distinguished from what is subsequently acquired. Sin, then, is something original, in which all men participate, and which makes them guilty before God. Moreover, according to Scripture, death is visited even upon those who have never exercised a personal and conscious choice, Romans 5:12-14. This passage implies that sin exists in the case of infants prior to moral consciousness. Since infants die, and therefore the effect of sin is present in their case, it is but natural to assume that the cause is also present.

Finally, Scripture also teaches that all men are under condemnation and therefore need the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Children are never made an exception to this rule, cf. the preceding passages and also John 3:3;

John 3:5; 1 John 5:12. This is not contradicted by those passages which ascribe a certain righteousness to man, such as, Matthew 9:12-13; Acts 10:35; Romans 2:14; Php 3:6; 1 Corinthians 1:30, for this may be either civil righteousness, ceremonial or covenant righteousness, the righteousness of the law, or the righteousness which is in Christ Jesus.

C. THE CONNECTION OF ADAM'S SIN WITH THAT OF THE RACE.

1. THE DENIAL OF THIS CONNECTION. Some deny the causal connection of the sin of Adam with the sinfulness of the human race either wholly or in part. a. Pelagians and Socinians deny absolutely that there is any necessary connection between our sin and the sin of Adam. The first sin was Adam's sin only and does not concern his posterity in any way. The most they will admit is that the evil example of Adam led to imitation. b. Semi-Pelagians and the earlier Arminians teach that man inherited a natural inability from Adam, but is not responsible for this inability, so that no guilt attaches to it, and it may even be said that God is somewhat under obligation to provide a cure for it. The Wesleyan Arminians admit that this inborn corruption also involves guilt. c. The New School (New Haven) theory teaches that man is born with an inherent tendency to sin, in virtue of which his moral preference is invariably wrong; but that this tendency cannot itself be called sin, since sin always consists exclusively in conscious and intentional transgression of the law. d. The Theology of crisis stresses the solidarity of sin in the human race, but denies that sin originated in an act of Adam in paradise. The fall belongs to pre- or super- history, and is already a thing of the past when the historical Adam appears upon the scene. It is the secret of God's predestination. The story of the fall is a myth. Adam appears as the type of Christ in so far as it can be seen in him that life without sin is possible in communion with God. Says Brunner: "In Adam all have sinned — that is the Biblical statement; but how? The Bible does not tell us that. The doctrine of original sin is read into it."40 2. DIFFERENT THEORIES TO EXPLAIN THE CONNECTION. a. The realistic theory. The earliest method of explaining the connection between the sin of Adam and the guilt and pollution of all his descendants was the realistic theory. This theory is to the effect that human nature constitutes, not only generically but numerically as well, a single unit. Adam possessed the whole human nature, and in him it corrupted itself by its own voluntary apostatizing act in Adam. Individual men are not separate substances, but manifestations of the same general substance; they are numerically one. This universal human nature became corrupt and guilty in Adam, and consequently every individualization of it in the descendants of Adam is also corrupt and guilty from the very beginning of its existence. This means that all men actually sinned in Adam before the individualization of human nature began. This theory was accepted by some of the early Church Fathers and by some of the Scholastics, and was defended in more recent times by Dr. Shedd. However, it is open to several objections: (1) By representing the souls of men as individualizations of the general spiritual substance that was present in Adam, it would seem to imply that the substance of the soul is of a material nature, and thus to land us inevitably in some sort of materialism. (2) It is contrary to the testimony of consciousness and does not sufficiently guard the interests of human personality. Every man is conscious of being a separate personality, and therefore far more than a mere passing wave in the general ocean of existence. (3) It does not explain why Adam's descendants are held responsible for his first sin only, and not

for his later sins, nor for the sins of all the generations of forefathers that followed Adam. (4) Neither does it give an answer to the important question, why Christ was not held responsible for the actual commission of sin in Adam, for He certainly shared the same human nature, the nature that actually sinned in Adam. b. The doctrine of the covenant of works. This implies that Adam stood in a twofold relationship to his descendants, namely, that of the natural head of all mankind, and that of the representative head of the entire human race in the covenant of works. (1) The natural relationship. In his natural relationship Adam was the father of all mankind. As he was created by God he was subject to change, and had no rightful claim to an unchangeable state. He was in duty bound to obey God, and this obedience did not entitle him to any reward. On the other hand, if he sinned, he would become subject to corruption and to punishment, but the sin would be only his own, and could not be placed to the account of his descendants. Dabney holds that, according to the law that like begets like, his corruption would have passed on to his descendants. But however this may be — and it is rather useless to speculate about it — they certainly could not have been held responsible for this corruption. They could not have been considered guilty in Adam merely in virtue of the natural relationship in which Adam stood to the race. The usual Reformed representation is a different one. (2) The covenant relationship. To the natural relationship in which Adam stood to his descendants God graciously added a covenant relationship containing several positive elements: (a) An element of representation. God ordained that in this covenant Adam should not stand for himself only, but as the representative of all his descendants. Consequently, he was the head of the race not only in a parental, but also in a federal sense. (b) An element of probation. While apart from this covenant Adam and his descendants would have been in a continual state of trial, with a constant danger of sinning, the covenant guaranteed that persistent perseverance for a fixed period of time would be rewarded with the establishment of man in a permanent state of holiness and bliss. (c) An element of reward or punishment. According to the terms of the covenant Adam would obtain a rightful claim to eternal life, if he fulfilled the conditions of the covenant. And not only he, but all his descendants as well would have shared in this blessing. In its normal operation, therefore, the covenant arrangement would have been of incalculable benefit for mankind. But there was a possibility that man would disobey, thereby reversing the operation of the covenant, and in that case the results would naturally be correspondingly disastrous. Transgression of the covenant commandment would result in death. Adam chose the course of disobedience, corrupted himself by sin, became guilty in the sight of God, and as such subject to the sentence of death. And because he was the federal representative of the race, his disobedience affected all his descendants. In His righteous judgment God imputes the guilt of the first sin, committed by the head of the covenant, to all those that are federally related to him. And as a result they are born in a depraved and sinful condition as well, and this inherent corruption also involves guilt. This doctrine explains why only the first sin of Adam, and not his following sins nor the sins of our other forefathers, is imputed to us, and also safeguards the sinlessness of Jesus, for He was not a human person and therefore not in the covenant of works. c. The theory of mediate imputation. This theory denies that the guilt of Adam’s sin is directly imputed to his descendants, and represents the matter as follows: Adam’s descendants derive their innate corruption from him by a process of natural generation, and only on the basis of that inherent depravity which they share with him are they also considered guilty of his apostasy. They are not born corrupt because they are guilty in Adam, but they are considered guilty because they are corrupt. Their condition is not based on their legal status, but their legal

status on their condition. This theory, first advocated by Placeus, was adopted by the younger Vitringa and Venema, by several New England theologians, and by some of the New School theologians in the Presbyterian Church. This theory is objectionable for several reasons: (1) A thing cannot be mediated by its own consequences. The inherent depravity with which the descendants of Adam are born is already the result of Adam's sin, and therefore cannot be considered as the basis on which they are guilty of the sin of Adam. (2) It offers no objective ground whatsoever for the transmission of Adam's guilt and depravity to all his descendants. Yet there must be some objective legal ground for this. (3) If this theory were consistent, it ought to teach the mediate imputation of the sins of all previous generations to those following, for their joint corruption is passed on by generation. (4) It also proceeds on the assumption that there can be moral corruption that is not at the same time guilt, a corruption that does not in itself make one liable to punishment. (5) And finally, if the inherent corruption which is present in the descendants of Adam can be regarded as the legal ground for the explanation of something else, there is no more need of any mediate imputation.

04.2.2.4. Sin in the Life of the Human Race

IV. Sin in the Life of the Human Race A. ORIGINAL SIN. The sinful state and condition in which men are born is designated in theology by the name peccatum originale, which is literally translated in the English "original sin." This term is better than the Holland name "erfzonde," since the latter, strictly speaking, does not cover all that belongs to original sin. It is not a proper designation of original guilt, for this is not inherited but imputed to us. This sin is called "original sin," (1) because it is derived from the original root of the human race; (2) because it is present in the life of every individual from the time of his birth, and therefore cannot be regarded as the result of imitation; and (3) because it is the inward root of all the actual sins that defile the life of man. We should guard against the mistake of thinking that the term in any way implies that the sin designated by it belongs to the original constitution of human nature, which would imply that God created man as a sinner.

1. HISTORICAL REVIEW. The early Church Fathers contain nothing very definite about original sin. According to the Greek Fathers there is a physical corruption in the human race, which is derived from Adam, but this is not sin and does not involve guilt. The freedom of the will was not affected directly by the fall, but is affected only indirectly by the inherited physical corruption. The tendency apparent in the Greek Church finally culminated in Pelagianism, which flatly denied all original sin. In the Latin Church a different tendency appeared especially in Tertullian, according to whom the propagation of the soul involves the propagation of sin. He regarded original sin as a hereditary sinful taint or corruption, which did not exclude the presence of some good in man. Ambrose advanced beyond Tertullian by regarding original sin as a state and by distinguishing between the inborn corruption and the resulting guilt of man. The free will of man was weakened by the fall. It is especially in Augustine that the doctrine of original sin comes to fuller development. According to him the nature of man, both physical and moral, is totally corrupted by Adam’s sin, so that he cannot do otherwise than sin. This inherited corruption or original sin is a moral punishment for the sin of Adam. It is such a quality of the nature of man, that in his natural state, he can and will do evil only. He has lost the material freedom of the will, and it is especially in this respect that original sin constitutes a punishment. In virtue of this sin man is already under condemnation. It is not merely corruption, but also guilt. Semi-Pelagianism reacted against the absoluteness of the Augustinian view. It admitted that the whole human race is involved in the fall of Adam, that human nature is tainted with hereditary sin, and that all men are by nature inclined to evil and not able, apart from the grace of God, to complete any good work; but denied the total depravity of man, the guilt of original sin, and the loss of the freedom of the will. This became the prevalent view during the Middle Ages, though there were some prominent Scholastics who were on the whole Augustinian in their conception of original sin. Anselm’s view of original sin was altogether in harmony with that of Augustine. It represents original sin as consisting of the guilt of nature (the nature of the entire human race), contracted by a single act of Adam, and the resulting inherent corruption of human nature, handed down to posterity and manifesting itself in a tendency to sin. This sin also involves the loss of the power of self-determination in the direction of holiness

(material freedom of the will), and renders man a slave of sin. The prevailing opinion among the Scholastics was that original sin is not something positive, but rather the absence of something that ought to be present, particularly the privation of original righteousness, though some would add a positive element, namely, an inclination to evil. Thomas Aquinas held that original sin, considered in its material element, is concupiscence, but considered in its formal element, is the privation of original justice. There is a dissolution of the harmony in which original justice consisted, and in this sense original sin can be called a languor of nature. Speaking generally, the Reformers were in agreement with Augustine, though Calvin differed from him especially on two points, by stressing the fact that original sin is not something purely negative, and is not limited to the sensuous nature of man. At the time of the Reformation the Socinians followed the Pelagians in the denial of original sin, and in the seventeenth century the Arminians broke with the Reformed faith, and accepted the Semi-Pelagian view of original sin. Since that time various shades of opinion were advocated in the Protestant Churches both in Europe and in America.

2. THE TWO ELEMENTS OF ORIGINAL SIN. Two elements must be distinguished in original sin, namely: a. Original guilt. The word "guilt" expresses the relation which sin bears to justice or, as the older theologians put it, to the penalty of the law. He who is guilty stands in a penal relation to the law. We can speak of guilt in a twofold sense, namely, as reatus culpae and as reatus poenae. The former, which Turretin calls "potential guilt," is the intrinsic moral ill-desert of an act or state. This is of the essence of sin and is an inseparable part of its sinfulness. It attaches only to those who have themselves committed sinful deeds, and attaches to them permanently. It cannot be removed by forgiveness, and is not removed by justification on the basis of the merits of Jesus Christ, and much less by mere pardon. Man’s sins are inherently ill-deserving even after he is justified. Guilt in this sense cannot be transferred from one person to another. The usual sense, however, in which we speak of guilt in theology, is that of reatus poenae. By this is meant desert of punishment, or obligation to render satisfaction to God’s justice for self-determined violation of the law. Guilt in this sense is not of the essence of sin, but is rather a relation to the penal sanction of the law. If there had been no sanction attached to the disregard of moral relations, every departure from the law would have been sin, but would not have involved liability to punishment. Guilt in this sense may be removed by the satisfaction of justice, either personally or vicariously. It may be transferred from one person to another, or assumed by one person for another. It is removed from believers by justification, so that their sins, though inherently ill- deserving, do not make them liable to punishment. Semi-Pelagians and the older Arminians or Remonstrants deny that original sin involves guilt. The guilt of Adam’s sin, committed by him as the federal head of the human race, is imputed to all his descendants. This is evident from the fact that, as the Bible teaches, death as the punishment of sin passes on from Adam to all his descendants. Romans 5:12-19; Ephesians 2:3; 1 Corinthians 15:22. b. Original pollution. Original pollution includes two things, namely, the absence of original righteousness, and the presence of positive evil. It should be noted: (1) That original pollution is not merely a disease, as some of the Greek Fathers and the Arminians represent it, but sin in the real sense of the word. Guilt attaches to it; he who denies this does not have a Biblical conception of original corruption. (2) That this pollution is not to be regarded as a substance infused into the human soul, nor as a change of substance in the metaphysical sense of the word. This was the error of the Manichæans and of Flacius Illyricus in the days of the Reformation. If the substance of the soul were sinful, it would have to be replaced by a new substance in regeneration; but this does not take place. (3) That it is not merely a

privation. In his polemic with the Manichæans, Augustine not merely denied that sin was a substance, but also asserted that it was merely a privation. He called it a privatio boni. But original sin is not merely negative; it is also an inherent positive disposition toward sin. This original pollution may be considered from more than one point of view, namely, as total depravity and as total inability. c. Total depravity. In view of its pervasive character, inherited pollution is called total depravity. This phrase is often misunderstood, and therefore calls for careful discrimination. Negatively, it does not imply: (1) that every man is as thoroughly depraved as he can possibly become; (2 that the sinner has no innate knowledge of the will of God, nor a conscience that discriminates between good and evil; (3) that sinful man does not often admire virtuous character and actions in others, or is incapable of disinterested affections and actions in his relations with his fellow-men; nor (4) that every unregenerate man will, in virtue of his inherent sinfulness, indulge in every form of sin; it often happens that one form excludes the other. Positively, it does indicate: (1) that the inherent corruption extends to every part of man's nature, to all the faculties and powers of both soul and body; and (2) that there is no spiritual good, that is, good in relation to God, in the sinner at all, but only perversion. This total depravity is denied by Pelagians, Socinians, and seventeenth century Arminians, but is clearly taught in Scripture, John 5:42; Romans 7:18;

Romans 7:23; Romans 8:7; Ephesians 4:18; 2 Timothy 3:2-4; Titus 1:5; Hebrews 3:12. d. Total inability. With respect to its effect on man's spiritual powers, it is called total inability. Here, again, it is necessary to distinguish. By ascribing total inability to the natural man we do not mean to say that it is impossible for him to do good in any sense of the word. Reformed theologians generally say that he is still able to perform: (1) natural good; (2) civil good or civil righteousness; and (3) externally religious good. It is admitted that even the unrenewed possess some virtue, revealing itself in the relations of social life, in many acts and sentiments that deserve the sincere approval and gratitude of their fellow-men, and that even meet with the approval of God to a certain extent. At the same time it is maintained that these same actions and feelings, when considered in relation to God, are radically defective. Their fatal defect is that they are not prompted by love to God, or by any regard for the will of God as requiring them. When we speak of man's corruption as total inability, we mean two things: (1) that the unrenewed sinner cannot do any act, however insignificant, which fundamentally meets with God's approval and answers to the demands of God's holy law; and (2) that he cannot change his fundamental preference for sin and self to love for God, nor even make an approach to such a change. In a word, he is unable to do any spiritual good. There is abundant Scriptural support for this doctrine: John 1:13; John 3:5; John 6:44; John 8:34; John 15:4-5; Romans 7:18; Romans 8:7-8; 1 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 3:5; Ephesians 2:1; Ephesians 2:8-10; Hebrews 11:6. Pelagians, however, believe in the plenary ability of man, denying that his moral faculties were impaired by sin. Arminians speak of a gracious ability, because they believe that God imparts His common grace to all men, which enables them to turn to God and believe. The New School theologians ascribe to man natural as distinguished from moral ability, a distinction borrowed from Edwards' great work On the Will. The import of their teaching is that man in his fallen state is still in possession of all the natural faculties that are required for doing spiritual good (intellect, will, etc.), but lacks moral ability, that is, the ability to give proper direction to those faculties, a direction well-pleasing to God. The distinction under consideration is advanced, in order to stress the fact that man is wilfully sinful, and this may well be emphasized. But the New School theologians assert that man would be able to do spiritual good if he only wanted to do it. This means that the "natural ability" of which they speak, is after all

an ability to do real spiritual good.41 On the whole it may be said that the distinction between natural and moral ability is not a desirable one, for: (1) it has no warrant in Scripture, which teaches consistently that man is not able to do what is required of him; (2) it is essentially ambiguous and misleading: the possession of the requisite faculties to do spiritual good does not yet constitute an ability to do it; (3) "natural" is not a proper antithesis of "moral," for a thing may be both at the same time; and the inability of man is also natural in an important sense, that is, as being incident to his nature in its present state as naturally propagated; and (4) the language does not accurately express the important distinction intended; what is meant is that it is moral, and not either physical or constitutional; that it has its ground, not in the want of any faculty, but in the corrupt moral state of the faculties, and of the disposition of the heart.

3. ORIGINAL SIN AND HUMAN FREEDOM. In connection with the doctrine of the total inability of man the question naturally arises, whether original sin then also involves the loss of freedom, or of what is generally called the liberum arbitrium, the free will. This question should be answered with discrimination for, put in this general way, it may be answered both negatively and positively. In a certain sense man has not, and in another sense he has, lost his liberty. There is a certain liberty that is the inalienable possession of a free agent, namely, the liberty to choose as he pleases, in full accord with the prevailing dispositions and tendencies of his soul. Man did not lose any of the constitutional faculties necessary to constitute him a responsible moral agent. He still has reason, conscience, and the freedom of choice. He has ability to acquire knowledge, and to feel and recognize moral distinctions and obligations; and his affections, tendencies, and actions are spontaneous, so that he chooses and refuses as he sees fit. Moreover, he has the ability to appreciate and do many things that are good and amiable, benevolent and just, in the relations he sustains to his fellow-beings. But man did lose his material freedom, that is, the rational power to determine his course in the direction of the highest good, in harmony with the original moral constitution of his nature. Man has by nature an irresistible bias for evil. He is not able to apprehend and love spiritual excellence, to seek and do spiritual things, the things of God that pertain to salvation. This position, which is Augustinian and Calvinistic, is flatly contradicted by Pelagianism and Socinianism, and in part also by Semi-Pelagianism and Arminianism. Modern liberalism, which is essentially Pelagian, naturally finds the doctrine, that man has lost the ability to determine his life in the direction of real righteousness and holiness, highly offensive, and glories in the ability of man to choose and do what is right and good. On the other hand the dialectical theology (Barthianism) strongly reasserts the utter inability of man to make even the slightest move in a Godward direction. The sinner is a slave of sin and cannot possibly turn in the opposite direction.

4. THE THEOLOGY OF CRISIS AND ORIGINAL SIN. It may be well at this point to define briefly the position of the Theology of Crisis or of Barthianism with respect to the doctrine of original sin. Walter Lowrie correctly says: "Barth has much to say about the Fall — but nothing about 'original sin.' That man is fallen we can plainly see; but the Fall is not an event we can point to in history, it belongs decidedly to pre-history, Urgeschichte, in a metaphysical sense."42 Brunner has something to say about it in his recent work on Man in Revolt.43 He does not accept the doctrine of original sin in the traditional and ecclesiastical sense of the word. The first sin of Adam was not and could not be placed to the account of all his descendants; nor did this sin result in a sinful state, which is passed on to his posterity, and which is now the fruitful root of all actual sin. "Sin is

never a state, but it is always an act. Even being a sinner is not a state but an act, because it is being a person." In Brunner's estimation the traditional view has an undesirable element of determinism in it, and does not sufficiently safeguard the responsibility of man. But his rejection of the doctrine of original sin does not mean that he sees no truth in it at all. It rightly stresses the solidarity of sin in the human race, and the transmission "of the spiritual nature, of the 'character,' from parents to children." However, he seeks the explanation of the universality of sin in something else than in "original sin." The man whom God created was not simply some one man, but a responsible person created in and for community with others. The isolated individual is but an abstraction. "In the Creation we are an individualized, articulated unity, one body with many members." If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it. He goes on to say: "If that is our origin, then our opposition to this origin cannot be an experience, an act, of the individual as an individual.... Certainly each individual is a sinner as an individual; but he is at the same time the whole in its united solidarity, the body, actual humanity as a whole." There was therefore solidarity in sinning; the human race fell away from God; but it belongs to the very nature of sin that we deny this solidarity in sin. The result of this initial sin is that man is now a sinner; but the fact that man is now a sinner should not be regarded as the cause of his individual sinful actions. Such a causal connection cannot be admitted, for every sin which man commits is a fresh decision against God. The statement that man is a sinner does not mean that he is in a state or condition of sin, but that he is actually engaged in rebellion against God. As Adam we turned away from God, and "he who commits this apostasy can do no other than repeat it continually, not because it has become a habit, but because this is the distinctive character of this act." Man cannot reverse the course, but continues to sin right along. The Bible never speaks of sin except as the act of turning away from God. "But in the very concept of 'being a sinner' this act is conceived as one which determines man's whole existence." There is much in this representation that reminds one of the realistic representation of Thomas Aquinas.

5. OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF TOTAL DEPRAVITY AND TOTAL INABILITY. a. It is inconsistent with moral obligation. The most obvious and the most plausible objection to the doctrine of total depravity and total inability, is that it is inconsistent with moral obligation. It is said that a man cannot be held justly responsible for anything for which he has not the required ability. But the general implication of this principle is a fallacy. It may hold in cases of disability resulting from a limitation which God has imposed on man's nature; but it certainly does not apply in the sphere of morals and religion, as already pointed out in the preceding. We should not forget that the inability under consideration is self-imposed, has a moral origin, and is not due to any limitation which God has put upon man's being. Man is unable as a result of the perverted choice made in Adam. b. It removes all motives for exertion. A second objection is that this doctrine removes all motives for exertion and destroys all rational grounds for the use of the means of grace. If we know that we cannot accomplish a given end, why should we use the means recommended for its accomplishment? Now it is perfectly true that the sinner, who is enlightened by the Holy Spirit and is truly conscious of his own natural inability, ceases from work-righteousness. And this is exactly what is necessary. But it does not hold with respect to the natural man, for he is thoroughly self-righteous. Moreover, it is not true that the doctrine of inability naturally tends to foster neglect in the use of the means of grace ordained by God. On this principle the farmer might also say, I cannot produce a harvest; why should I cultivate my fields? But this would be utter folly. In every department of human endeavor the result depends on the co-operation of causes over which man

has no control. The Scriptural grounds for the use of means remain: God commands the use of means; the means ordained by God are adapted to the end contemplated; ordinarily the end is not attained, except by the use of the appointed means; and God has promised to bless the use of those means. c. It encourages delay in conversion. It is also asserted that this doctrine encourages delay in conversion. If a man believes that he cannot change his heart, cannot repent and believe the gospel, he will feel that he can only passively abide the time when it will please God to change the direction of his life. Now there may be, and experience teaches that there are, some who actually adopt that attitude; but as a rule the effect of the doctrine under consideration will be quite different. If sinners, to whom sin has grown very dear, were conscious of the power to change their lives at will, they would be tempted to defer it to the last moment. But if one is conscious of the fact that a very desirable thing is beyond the compass of his own powers, he will instinctively seek help outside of himself. The sinner who feels that way about salvation, will seek help with the great Physician of the soul, and thus acknowledge his own disability.

B. ACTUAL SIN.

Roman Catholics and Arminians minimized the idea of original sin, and then developed doctrines, such as those of the washing away of original sin (though not only that) by baptism, and of sufficient grace, by which its seriousness is greatly obscured. The emphasis is clearly altogether on actual sins. Pelagians, Socinians, modern liberal theologians, and — strange as it may seem — also the Theology of Crisis, recognize only actual sins. It must be said, however, that this theology does speak of sin in the singular as well as in the plural, that is, it does recognize a solidarity in sin, which some of the others have not recognized. Reformed theology has always given due recognition to original sin and to the relation in which it stands to actual sins.

1. THE RELATION BETWEEN ORIGINAL AND ACTUAL SIN. The former originated in a free act of Adam as the representative of the human race, a transgression of the law of God and a corruption of human nature, which rendered him liable to the punishment of God. In the sight of God his sin was the sin of all his descendants, so that they are born as sinners, that is in a state of guilt and in a polluted condition. Original sin is both a state and an inherent quality of pollution in man. Every man is guilty in Adam, and is consequently born with a depraved and corrupt nature. And this inner corruption is the unholy fountain of all actual sins. When we speak of actual sin or peccatum actuale, we use the word "actual" or "actuale" in a comprehensive sense. The term "actual sins" does not merely denote those external actions which are accomplished by means of the body, but all those conscious thoughts and volitions which spring from original sin. They are the individual sins of act in distinction from man’s inherited nature and inclination. Original sin is one, actual sin is manifold. Actual sin may be interior, such as a particular conscious doubt or evil design in the mind, or a particular conscious lust or desire in the heart; but they may also be exterior, such as deceit, theft, adultery, murder, and so on. While the existence of original sin has met with widespread denial, the presence of actual sin in the life of man is generally admitted. This does not mean, however, that people have always had an equally profound consciousness of sin. We hear a great deal nowadays about the "loss of the sense of sin," though Modernists hasten to assure us that, while we have lost the sense of sin, we have gained the sense of sins, in the plural, that is, of definite actual sins. But there is no doubt about it that people have to an alarming extent lost the sense of the heinousness of sin, as committed against a holy God, and have largely thought of it merely as an infringement on the rights of one’s fellow-men. They fail to see that sin is

a fatal power in their lives which ever and anon incites their rebellious spirits, which makes them guilty before God, and which brings them under a sentence of condemnation. It is one of the merits of the Theology of Crisis that it is calling attention once more to the seriousness of sin as a revolt against God, as a revolutionary attempt to be like God.

2. CLASSIFICATION OF ACTUAL SINS. It is quite impossible to give a unified and comprehensive classification of actual sins. They vary in kind and degree, and can be differentiated from more than one point of view. Roman Catholics make a well-known distinction between venial and mortal sins, but admit that it is extremely difficult and dangerous to decide whether a sin is mortal or venial. They were led to this distinction by the statement of Paul in Galatians 5:21 that they "who do such things (as he has enumerated) shall not inherit the kingdom of God." One commits a mortal sin when one willfully violates the law of God in a matter which one believes or knows to be important. It renders the sinner liable to eternal punishment. And one commits a venial sin when one transgresses the law of God in a matter that is not of grave importance, or when the transgression is not altogether voluntary. Such a sin is forgiven more easily, and even without confession. Forgiveness for mortal sins can be obtained only by the sacrament of penance. The distinction is not a Scriptural one, for according to Scripture every sin is essentially anomia (unrighteousness), and merits eternal punishment. Moreover, it has a deleterious effect in practical life, since it engenders a feeling of uncertainty, sometimes a feeling of morbid fear on the one hand, or of unwarranted carelessness on the other. The Bible does distinguish different kinds of sins, especially in connection with the different degrees of guilt attaching to them. The Old Testament makes an important distinction between sins committed presumptuously (with a high hand), and sins committed unwittingly, that is, as the result of ignorance, weakness, or error, Numbers 15:29-31. The former could not be atoned by sacrifice and were punished with great severity, while the latter could be so atoned and were judged with far greater leniency. The fundamental principle embodied in this distinction still applies. Sins committed on purpose, with full consciousness of the evil involved, and with deliberation, are greater and more culpable than sins resulting from ignorance, from an erroneous conception of things, or from weakness of character. Nevertheless the latter are also real sins and make one guilty in the sight of God, Galatians 6:1; Ephesians 4:18; 1 Timothy 1:13; 1 Timothy 5:24. The New Testament further clearly teaches us that the degree of sin is to a great extent determined by the degree of light possessed. The heathen are guilty indeed, but they who have God’s revelation and enjoy the privileges of the gospel ministry are far more guilty, Matthew 10:15; Luke 12:47-48; Luke 23:34; John 19:11; Acts 17:30; Romans 1:32; Romans 2:12; 1 Timothy 1:13; 1 Timothy 1:15-16.

3. THE UNPARDONABLE SIN. Several passages of Scripture speak of a sin that cannot be forgiven, after which a change of heart is impossible, and for which it is not necessary to pray. It is generally known as the sin or blasphemy against the Holy Spirit. The Saviour speaks of it explicitly in Matthew 12:31-32 and parallel passages; and it is generally thought that Hebrews 6:4-6; Hebrews 10:26-27, and John 5:16 also refer to this sin. a. Unwarranted opinions respecting this sin. There has been quite a variety of opinions respecting the nature of the unpardonable sin. (1) Jerome and Chrysostom thought of it as a sin that could be committed only during Christ’s sojourn on earth, and held that it was committed by those who were convinced in their hearts that Christ performed His miracles by the power of the Holy Spirit, but in spite of their conviction refused to recognize these miracles as such and ascribed them to the operation of Satan. However, this

limitation is entirely unwarranted, as the passages in Hebrews and I John would seem to prove. (2) Augustine, the Melanchtonian dogmaticians of the Lutheran Church, and a few Scottish theologians (Guthrie, Chalmers) conceived of it as consisting in impoenitentia finalis, that is, impenitence persisted in to the end. A related view is that expressed by some in our own day, that it consists in continued unbelief, a refusal up to the very end to accept Jesus Christ by faith. But on this supposition it would follow that every one who died in a state of impenitence and unbelief had committed this sin, while according to Scripture it must be something of a very specific nature. (3) In connection with their denial of the perseverance of the saints, later Lutheran theologians taught that only regenerate persons could commit this sin, and sought support for this view in Hebrews 6:4-6. But this is an un-Scriptural position, and the Canons of Dort reject, among others, also the error of those who teach that the regenerate can commit the sin against the Holy Spirit. b. The Reformed conception of this sin. The name "sin against the Holy Spirit" is too general, for there are also sins against the Holy Spirit that are pardonable, Ephesians 4:30. The Bible speaks more specifically of a "speaking against the Holy Spirit," Matthew 12:32; Mark 3:29; Luke 12:10. It is evidently a sin committed during the present life, which makes conversion and pardon impossible. The sin consists in the conscious, malicious, and willful rejection and slandering, against evidence and conviction, of the testimony of the Holy Spirit respecting the grace of God in Christ, attributing it out of hatred and enmity to the prince of darkness. It presupposes, objectively, a revelation of the grace of God in Christ, and a powerful operation of the Holy Spirit; and, subjectively, an illumination and intellectual conviction so strong and powerful as to make an honest denial of the truth impossible. And then the sin itself consists, not in doubting the truth, nor in a simple denial of it, but in a contradiction of it that goes contrary to the conviction of the mind, to the illumination of the conscience, and even to the verdict of the heart. In committing that sin man willfully, maliciously, and intentionally attributes what is clearly recognized as the work of God to the influence and operation of Satan. It is nothing less than a decided slandering of the Holy Spirit, an audacious declaration that the Holy Spirit is the spirit of the abyss, that the truth is the lie, and that Christ is Satan. It is not so much a sin against the person of the Holy Spirit as a sin against His official work in revealing, both objectively and subjectively, the grace and glory of God in Christ. The root of this sin is the conscious and deliberate hatred of God and of all that is recognized as divine. It is unpardonable, not because its guilt transcends the merits of Christ, or because the sinner is beyond the renewing power of the Holy Spirit, but because there are also in the world of sin certain laws and ordinances, established by God and maintained by Him. And the law in the case of this particular sin is, that it excludes all repentance, sears the conscience, hardens the sinner, and thus renders the sin unpardonable. In those who have committed this sin we may therefore expect to find a pronounced hatred to God, a defiant attitude to Him and all that is divine, delight in ridiculing and slandering that which is holy, and absolute unconcern respecting the welfare of their soul and the future life. In view of the fact that this sin is not followed by repentance, we may be reasonably sure that they who fear that they have committed it and worry about this, and who desire the prayers of others for them, have not committed it. c. Remarks on the passages in the Epistles that speak of it. Except in the Gospels, this sin is not mentioned by name in the Bible. Thus the question arises, whether the passages in Hebrews 6:4-6; Hebrews 10:26-27; Hebrews 10:29, and 1 John 5:16 also refer to it. Now it is quite evident that they all speak of an unpardonable sin; and because Jesus says in Matthew 12:31, "Therefore I say unto you, Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit

shall not be forgiven," thereby indicating that there is but one unpardonable sin, it is but reasonable to think that these passages refer to the same sin. It should be noted, however, that Hebrews 6:1-20 speaks of a specific form of this sin, such as could only occur in the apostolic age, when the Spirit revealed itself in extraordinary gifts and powers. The fact that this was not borne in mind, often led to the erroneous opinion that this passage, with its unusually strong expressions, referred to such as were actually regenerated by the Spirit of God. But Hebrews 6:4-6, while speaking of experiences that transcend those of the ordinary temporal faith, yet do not necessarily testify to the presence of regenerating grace in the heart.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. What objections are raised to the idea of the federal headship of Adam? What Scriptural ground is there for the imputation of Adam's sin to his descendants? Was Placeus' theory of mediate imputation in any way connected with Amyraldus' view of universal atonement? What objection does Dabney raise to the doctrine of immediate imputation? Is the doctrine of inherited evil the same as the doctrine of original sin, and if not, how do they differ? How do Pelagians, Semi- Pelagians, and Arminians differ in their view of original sin? How does the doctrine of original sin affect the doctrine of infant salvation? Does the Bible teach that one can be lost purely as the result of orginal sin? What is the connection between the doctrine of original sin and that of baptismal regeneration? What becomes of the doctrine of original sin in modern liberal theology? How do you account for the denial of original sin in Barthian theology? Can you name some additional classes of actual sins?

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04.2.2.5. The Punishment of Sin

V. The Punishment of Sin

Sin is a very serious matter, and is taken seriously by God, though men often make light of it. It is not only a transgression of the law of God, but an attack on the great Lawgiver Himself, a revolt against God. It is an infringement on the inviolable righteousness of God, which is the very foundation of His throne (Psalms 97:2), and an affront to the spotless holiness of God, which requires of us that we be holy in all manner of living (1 Peter 1:16). In view of this it is but natural that God should visit sin with punishment. In a word of fundamental significance He says: "I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generation of them that hate me," Exodus 20:5. The Bible abundantly testifies to the fact that God punishes sin both in this life and in the life to come.

A. NATURAL AND POSITIVE PENALTIES. A rather common distinction applied to the punishments for sin, is that between natural and positive penalties. There are punishments which are the natural results of sin, and which men cannot escape, because they are the natural and necessary consequences of sin. Man is not saved from them by repentance and forgiveness. In some cases they may be mitigated and even checked by the means which God has placed at our disposal, but in other cases they remain and serve as a constant reminder of past transgressions. The slothful man comes to poverty, the drunkard brings ruin upon himself and his family, the fornicator contracts a loathsome and incurable disease, and the criminal is burdened with shame and even when leaving the prison walls finds it extremely hard to make a new start in life. The Bible speaks of such punishments in Job 4:8; Psalms 9:15; Psalms 94:23; Proverbs 5:22; Proverbs 23:21; Proverbs 24:14; Proverbs 31:3. But there are also positive punishments, and these are punishments in the more ordinary and legal sense of the word. They presuppose not merely the natural laws of life, but a positive law of the great Lawgiver with added sanctions. They are not penalties which naturally result from the nature of the transgression, but penalties which are attached to the transgressions by divine enactments. They are superimposed by the divine law, which is of absolute authority. It is to this type of punishment that the Bible usually refers. This is particularly evident in the Old Testament. God gave Israel a detailed code of laws for the regulation of its civil, moral, and religious life, and clearly stipulated the punishment to be meted out in the case of each transgression, cf. Exodus 20:1-26, Exodus 21:1-36, Exodus 22:1-31; Exodus 23:1-33. And though many of the civil and religious regulations of this law were, in the form in which they were couched, intended for Israel only, the fundamental principles which they embody also apply in the New Testament dispensation. In a Biblical conception of the penalty of sin we shall have to take into account both the natural and necessary outcome of wilful opposition to God and the penalty legally affixed and adjusted to the offense by God. Now there are some Unitarians, Universalists, and Modernists who deny the existence of any punishment of sin, except such consequences as naturally result from the sinful action. Punishment is not the execution of a sentence pronounced by the divine Being on the merits of the case, but simply the operation of a general law. This position is taken by J. F. Clarke, Thayer, Williamson, and Washington Gladden.

The latter says: "The old theology made this penalty (penalty of sin) to consist in suffering inflicted upon the sinner by a judicial process in the future life . . . The penalty of sin, as the new theology teaches, consists in the natural consequences of sin. . . . The penalty of sin is sin. Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap."44 The idea is not new; it was present to the mind of Dante, for in his famous poem the torments of hell symbolize the consequences of sin; and Schelling had it in mind, when he spoke of the history of the world as the judgment of the world. It is abundantly evident from Scripture, however, that this is an entirely un-Biblical view. The Bible speaks of penalties, which are in no sense the natural result or consequences of the sin committed, for instance in Exodus 32:33; Leviticus 16:21; Numbers 15:31; 1 Chronicles 10:13; Psalms 11:6; Psalms 75:8; Isaiah 1:24; Isaiah 1:28; Matthew 3:10; Matthew 24:51. All these passages speak of a punishment of sin by a direct act of God. Moreover, according to the view under consideration there is really no reward or punishment; virtue and vice both naturally include their various issues. Furthermore, on that standpoint there is no good reason for considering suffering as punishment, for it denies guilt, and it is exactly guilt that constitutes suffering a punishment. Then, too, it is in many cases not the guilty that receives the severest punishment, but the innocent as, for instance, the dependents of a drunkard or a debauchee. And, finally, on this view, heaven and hell are not places of future punishment, but states of mind or conditions in which men find themselves here and now. Washington Gladden expresses this very explicitly.

B. NATURE AND PURPOSE OF PUNISHMENTS. The word "punishment" is derived from the Latin poena, meaning punishment, expiation, or pain. It denotes pain or suffering inflicted because of some misdeed. More specifically, it may be defined as that pain or loss which is directly or indirectly inflicted by the Lawgiver, in vindication of His justice outraged by the violation of the law. It originates in the righteousness or punitive justice of God, by which He maintains Himself as the Holy One and necessarily demands holiness and righteousness in all His rational creatures. Punishment is the penalty that is naturally and necessarily due from the sinner because of his sin; it is, in fact, a debt that is due to the essential justice of God. The punishments of sin are of two different kinds. There is a punishment that is the necessary concomitant of sin, for in the nature of the case sin causes separation between God and man, carries with it guilt and pollution, and fills the heart with fear and shame. But there is also a kind of punishment that is superimposed on man from without by the supreme Lawgiver, such as all kinds of calamities in this life and the punishment of hell in the future. Now the question arises as to the object or the purpose of the punishment of sin. And on this point there is considerable difference of opinion. We should not regard the punishment of sin as a mere matter of vengeance and as inflicted with the desire to harm one who has previously done harm. The following are the three most important views respecting the purpose of punishment.

1. TO VINDICATE DIVINE RIGHTEOUSNESS OR JUSTICE. Turretin says: "If there be such an attribute as justice belonging to God, then sin must have its due, which is punishment." The law requires that sin be punished because of its inherent demerit, irrespective of all further considerations. This principle applies in the administration of both human and divine laws. Justice requires the punishment of the transgressor. Back of the law stands God, and therefore it may also be said that punishment aims at the vindication of the righteousness and holiness of the great Lawgiver. The holiness of God necessarily reacts against sin, and this reaction manifests itself in the punishment of sin. This principle is fundamental to all those passages of Scripture that speak

of God as a righteous Judge, who renders unto every man according to his deserts. "He is the rock, His work is perfect: for all His ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He," Deuteronomy 32:4. "Far be it from God, that He should do wickedness; and from the Almighty, that He should commit iniquity. For the work of a man shall He render unto him, and cause every man to find according to his ways," Job 34:10-11Job 34:10">. "Thou renderest to every man according to his work," Psalms 62:12. "Righteous art thou, O Lord, and upright are thy judgments," Psalms 119:37. "I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth," Jeremiah 9:24. "And if ye call on the Father, who without respect of persons judgest according to every man's work, pass the time of your sojourning here in fear," 1 Peter 1:17. The vindication of the righteousness and holiness of God, and of that just law which is the very expression of His being, is certainly the primary purpose of the punishment of sin. There are two other views, however, which erroneously put something else in the foreground.

2. TO REFORM THE SINNER. The idea is very much in the foreground at the present time that there is no punitive justice in God which inexorably calls for the punishment of the sinner, and that God is not angry with the sinner but loves him, and only inflicts hardships upon him, in order to reclaim him and to bring him back to his Father's home. This is an un-Scriptural view, which obliterates the distinction between punishment and chastisement. The penalty of sin does not proceed from the love and mercy of the Lawgiver, but from His justice. If reformation follows the infliction of punishment, this is not due to the penalty as such, but is the fruit of some gracious operation of God by which He turns that which is in itself an evil for the sinner into something that is beneficial. The distinction between chastisement and punishment must be maintained. The Bible teaches us on the one hand that God loves and chastens -His people, Job 5:17; Psalms 6:1; Psalms 94:12; Psalms 118:18; Proverbs 3:11; Isaiah 26:16; Hebrews 12:5-8; Revelation 3:19; and on the other hand, that He hates and punishes evil-doers, Psalms 5:5; Psalms 7:11; Nahum 1:2; Romans 1:18; Romans 2:5-6; Romans 11:1-36; Hebrews 10:26-27. Moreover, a punishment must be recognized as just, that is, as according to justice, in order to be reformatory. According to this theory a sinner who has already reformed could no more be punished; nor could one beyond the possibility of reformation, so that there could be no punishment for Satan; the death penalty would have to be abolished, and eternal punishment would have no reason for existence. TO DETER MEN FROM SIN. Another theory rather prevalent in our day is that the sinner must be punished for the protection of society, by deterring others from the commission of similar offenses. There can be no doubt about it that this end is often secured in the family, in the state, and in the moral government of the world, but this is an incidental result which God graciously effects by the infliction of the penalty. It certainly cannot be the ground for the infliction of the penalty. There is no justice whatever in punishing an individual simply for the good of society. As a matter of fact the sinner is always punished for his sin, and incidentally this may be for the good of society. And here again it may be said that no punishment will have a deterring effect, if it is not just and right in itself. Punishment has a good effect only when it is evident that the person on whom it is afflicted really deserves punishment. If this theory were true, a criminal might at once be set free, if it were not for the possibility that others might be deterred from sin by his punishment. Moreover, a man might rightly commit a crime, if he were only willing to bear the penalty. According to this view punishment is in no sense grounded in the past, but is wholly prospective. But on that supposition it is very hard to explain how it invariably causes the repentant sinner to look back and to confess with contrite heart the sins of the past, as we notice in such passages as the following: Genesis

42:21; Numbers 21:7; 1 Samuel 15:24-25; 2 Samuel 12:13; 2 Samuel 24:10; Ezra 9:6; Ezra 9:10; Ezra 9:13; Nehemiah 9:33-35; Job 7:21; Psalms 51:1-4; Jeremiah 3:25. These examples might easily be multiplied. In opposition to both of the theories considered it must be maintained that the punishment of sin is wholly retrospective in its primary aim, though the infliction of the penalty may have beneficial consequences both for the individual and for society.

C. THE ACTUAL PENALTY OF SIN. The penalty with which God threatened man in paradise was the penalty of death. The death here intended is not the death of the body, but the death of man as a whole, death in the Scriptural sense of the word. The Bible does not know the distinction, so common among us, between a physical, a spiritual, and an eternal death; it has a synthetic view of death and regards it as separation from God. The penalty was also actually executed on the day that man sinned, though the full execution of it was temporarily stayed by the grace of God. In a rather un-Scriptural way some carry their distinction into the Bible, and maintain that physical death should not be regarded as the penalty of sin, but rather as the natural result of the physical constitution of man. But the Bible knows of no such exception. It acquaints us with the threatened penalty, which is death in the comprehensive sense of the word, and it informs us that death entered the world through sin (Romans 5:12), and that the wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). The penalty of sin certainly includes physical death, but it includes much more than that. Making the distinction to which we have grown accustomed, we may say that it includes the following:

1. SPIRITUAL DEATH. There is a profound truth in the saying of Augustine that sin is also the punishment of sin. This means that the sinful state and condition in which man is born by nature form part of the penalty of sin. They are, it is true, the immediate consequences of sin, but they are also a part of the threatened penalty. Sin separates man from God, and that means death, for it is only in communion with the living God that man can truly live. In the state of death, which resulted from the entrance of sin into the world, we are burdened with the guilt of sin, a guilt that can only be removed by the redemptive work of Jesus Christ. We are therefore under obligation to bear the sufferings that result from transgression of the law. The natural man carries the sense of the liability to punishment with him wherever he goes. Conscience is a constant reminder of his guilt, and the fear of punishment often fills the heart. Spiritual death means not only guilt, but also pollution. Sin is always a corrupting influence in life, and this is a part of our death. We are by nature not only unrighteous in the sight of God, but also unholy. And this unholiness manifests itself in our thoughts, in our words, and in our deeds. It is always active within us like a poisoned fountain polluting the streams of life. And if it were not for the restraining influence of the common grace of God, it would render social life entirely impossible.

2. THE SUFFERINGS OF LIFE. The sufferings of life, which are the result of the entrance of sin into the world, are also included in the penalty of sin. Sin brought disturbance in the entire life of man. His physical life fell a prey to weaknesses and diseases, which result in discomforts and often in agonizing pains; and his mental life became subject to distressing disturbances, which often rob him of the joy of life, disqualify him for his daily task, and sometimes entirely destroy his mental equilibrium. His very soul has become a battle-field of conflicting thoughts, passions, and desires. The will refuses to follow the judgment of the intellect, and the passions run riot without the control of an intelligent will. The true harmony of life is destroyed, and makes way for the curse of the divided life. Man is in a state of dissolution, which often carries with it the most poignant sufferings. And not only that, but with and on account of man the whole creation was made subject

to vanity and to the bondage of corruption. The evolutionists especially have taught us to look upon nature as "red in tooth and claw." Destructive forces are often released in earthquakes, cyclones, tornadoes, volcanic eruptions, and floods, which bring untold misery on mankind. Now there are many, especially in our day, who do not see the hand of God in all this, and do not regard these calamities as a part of the penalty of sin. And yet that is exactly what they are in a general sense. However, it will not be safe to particularize, and to interpret them as special punishments for some grievous sins committed by those who live in the stricken areas. Neither will it be wise to ridicule the idea of such a causal connection as existed in the case of the Cities of the Plain (Sodom and Gomorrah), which were destroyed by fire from heaven. We should always bear in mind that there is a collective responsibility, and that there are always sufficient reasons why God should visit cities, districts or nations with dire calamities. It is rather a wonder that He does not more often visit them in His wrath and in His sore displeasure. It is always well to bear in mind what Jesus once said to the Jews who brought to Him the report of a calamity which had befallen certain Galileans, and evidently intimated that these Galileans must have been very sinful: "Think ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they have suffered these things? I tell you, Nay: but except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and killed them, think ye that they were offenders above all the men that dwell in Jerusalem? I tell you you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish." Luke 13:2-5.

3. PHYSICAL DEATH. The separation of body and soul is also a part of the penalty of sin. That the Lord had this in mind also in the threatened penalty is quite evident from the explication of it in the words, "dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return," Genesis 3:19. It also appears from the whole argument of Paul in Romans 5:12-21 and in 1 Corinthians 15:12-23. The position of the Church has always been that death in the full sense of the word, including physical death, is not only the consequence but the penalty of sin. The wages of sin is death. Pelagianism denied this connection, but the North African General Synod of Carthage (418) pronounced an anathema against any man who says "that Adam, the first man, was created mortal, so that whether he sinned or not he would have died, not as the wages of sin, but through the necessity of nature." Socinians and Rationalists continued the Pelagian error, and in even more recent times it was reproduced in the systems of those Kantian, Hegelian, or Ritschlian theologians who virtually make sin a necessary moment in man’s moral and spiritual development. Their views found support in present day natural science, which regards physical death as a natural phenomenon of the human organism. Man’s physical constitution is such that he necessarily dies. But this view does not commend itself in view of the fact that man’s physical organism is renewed every seven years, and that comparatively few people die in old age and from complete exhaustion. By far the greater number of them die as the result of sickness and accidents. It is also contrary to the fact that man does not feel that death is something natural, but fears it as an unnatural separation of that which belongs together.

4. ETERNAL DEATH. This may be regarded as the culmination and completion of spiritual death. The restraints of the present fall away, and the corruption of sin has its perfect work. The full weight of the wrath of God descends on the condemned. Their separation from God, the source of life and joy, is complete, and this means death in the most awful sense of the word. Their outward condition is made to correspond with the inward state of their evil souls. There are pangs of

conscience and physical pain. And the smoke of their torment goeth up for ever and ever. Revelation 14:11. The further discussion of this subject belongs to eschatology.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. Why do many modern liberals deny all positive punishments for sin? Is the position at all tenable that the punishments of sin consist exclusively in the natural consequences of sin? What objections do you have to this position? How do you account for the widespread aversion to the idea that the punishment of sin is a vindication of the law and of the righteousness of God? Do the punishments of sin also serve as deterrents, and as means of reformation? What is the Biblical conception of death? Can you prove from Scripture that it includes physical death? Is the doctrine of eternal death consistent with the idea that the punishment of sin serves merely as a means of reformation, or as a deterrent?

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Chapter 95

04.2.3.0. Man in Covenant of Grace

Man in Covenant of Grace I. Name and Concept of the Covenant II The Covenant of Redemption III. Nature of the Covenant of Grace IV. The Dual Aspect of the Covenant V. The Different Dispensations of the Covenant

04.2.3.1. Name and Concept of the Covenant

I. Name and Concept of the Covenant

A.THE NAME

1. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. The Hebrew word for covenant is always berith, a word of uncertain derivation. The most general opinion is that it is derived from the Hebrew verb barah, to cut, and therefore contains a reminder of the ceremony mentioned in

Genesis 15:17. Some, however, prefer to think that it is derived from the Assyrian word beritu, meaning "to bind." This would at once point to the covenant as a bond. The question of the derivation is of no great importance for the construction of the doctrine. The word berith may denote a mutual voluntary agreement (dipleuric), but also a disposition or arrangement imposed by one party on another (monopleuric). Its exact meaning does not depend on the etymology of the word, nor on the historical development of the concept, but simply on the parties concerned. In the measure in which one of the parties is subordinate and has less to say, the covenant acquires the character of a disposition or arrangement imposed by one party on the other. Berith then becomes synonymous with choq (appointed statute or ordinance), Exodus 34:10; Isaiah 59:21; Jeremiah 31:36; Jeremiah 33:20; Jeremiah 34:13. Hence we also find that karath berith (to cut a covenant) is construed not only with the prepositions ’ am and ben (with), but also with lamedh (to), Joshua 9:6; Isaiah 55:3; Isaiah 61:8; Jeremiah 32:40. Naturally, when God establishes a covenant with man, this monopleuric character is very much in evidence, for God and man are not equal parties. God is the Sovereign who imposes His ordinances upon His creatures.

2. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. In the Septuagint the word berith is rendered diatheke in every passage where it occurs with the exception of Deuteronomy 9:15 (marturion) and 1 Kings 11:11 (entole). The word diatheke is confined to this usage, except in four passages. This use of the word seems rather peculiar in view of the fact that it is not the usual Greek word for covenant, but really denotes a disposition and consequently also a testament. The ordinary word for covenant is suntheke. Did the translators intend to substitute another idea for the covenant idea? Evidently not, for in Isaiah 28:15 they use the two words synonymously, and there diatheke evidently means a pact or an agreement. Hence there is no doubt about it that they ascribe this meaning to diatheke. But the question remains, Why did they so generally avoid the use of suntheke and substitute for it a word which denotes a disposition rather than an agreement? In all probability the reason lies in the fact that in the Greek world the covenant idea expressed by suntheke was based to such an extent on the legal equality of the parties, that it could not, without considerable modification, be incorporated in the Scriptural system of thought. The idea that the priority belongs to God in the establishment of the covenant, and that He sovereignly imposes His covenant on man was absent from the usual Greek word. Hence the substitution of the word in which this was very prominent. The word diatheke thus, like many other words, received a new meaning, when it became the vehicle of divine thought, This change is important in connection with the New Testament use of the word. There has been considerable difference of opinion respecting the

proper translation of the word. In about half of the passages in which it occurs the Holland and the Authorized Versions render the word "covenant," while in the other half they render it "testament." The American Revised Version, however, renders it "covenant"throughout, except in Hebrews 9:16-17. It is but natural, therefore, that the question should be raised, What is the New Testament meaning of the word? Some claim that it has its classical meaning of disposition or testament, wherever it is found in the New Testament, while others maintain that it means testament in some places, but that in the great majority of passages the covenant idea is prominently in the foreground. This is undoubtedly the correct view. We would expect a priorily that the New Testament usage would be in general agreement with that of the LXX; and a careful study of the relevant passages shows that the American Revised Version is undoubtedly on the right track, when it translates diatheke by "testament" only in Hebrews 9:16-17. In all probability there is not a single other passage where this rendering would be correct, not even 2 Corinthians 3:6; 2 Corinthians 3:14. The fact that several translations of the New Testament substituted "testament" for "covenant" in so many places is probably due to three causes: (a) the desire to emphasize the priority of God in the transaction; (b) the assumption that the word had to be rendered as much as possible in harmony with Hebrews 9:16-17; and (c) the influence of the Latin translation, which uniformly rendered diatheke by "testamentum."

B. THE CONCEPT. The covenant idea developed in history before God made any formal use of the concept in the revelation of redemption. Covenants among men had been made long before God established His covenant with Noah and with Abraham, and this prepared men to understand the significance of a covenant in a world divided by sin, and helped them to understand the divine revelation, when it presented man’s relation to God as a covenant relation. This does not mean, however, that the covenant idea originated with man and was then borrowed by God as an appropriate form for the description of the mutual relationship between Himself and man. Quite the opposite is true; the archetype of all covenant life is found in the trinitarian being of God, and what is seen among men is but a faint copy (ectype) of this. God so ordered the life of man that the covenant idea should develop there as one of the pillars of social life, and after it had so developed, He formally introduced it as an expression of the existing relation between Himself and man. The covenant relationship between God and man existed from the very beginning, and therefore long before the formal establishment of the covenant with Abraham. While the word berith is often used of covenants among men, yet it always includes a religious idea. A covenant is a pact or agreement between two or more parties. It may be, and among men most generally is, an agreement to which parties, which can meet on a footing of equality, voluntarily come after a careful stipulation of their mutual duties and privileges; but it may also be of the nature of a disposition or arrangement imposed by a superior party on one that is inferior and accepted by the latter. It is generally confirmed by a solemn ceremony as in the presence of God, and thereby obtains an inviolable character. Each one of the parties binds himself to the fulfilment of certain promises on the basis of stipulated conditions. Now we should not say that we cannot properly speak of a covenant between God and man, because the parties are too unequal, and therefore proceed on the assumption that the covenant of grace is nothing but the promise of salvation in the form of a covenant. By doing that we would fail to do justice to the covenant idea as it is revealed in Scripture. It is perfectly true that both the covenant of works and (as the sequel will show) the covenant of grace are monopleuric in origin, that they are of the nature of arrangements ordained and instituted by God, and that God has the priority in both; but they are nevertheless

covenants. God graciously condescended to come down to the level of man, and to honor him by dealing with him more or less on the footing of equality. He stipulates His demands and vouchsafes His promises, and man assumes the duties thus imposed upon him voluntarily and thus inherits the blessings. In the covenant of works man could meet the requirements of the covenant in virtue of his natural endowments, but in the covenant of grace he is enabled to meet them only by the regenerating and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. God works in man both to will and to do, graciously bestowing upon him all that He requires of him. It is called the covenant of grace, because it is an unparalleled revelation of the grace of God, and because man receives all its blessings as gifts of divine grace.

04.2.3.2. The Covenant of Redemption

II. The Covenant of Redemption A. SEPARATE DISCUSSION OF THIS DESIRABLE.

There are different representations respecting the parties in the covenant of grace. Some consider them to be the triune God and man, either without qualification, or qualified in some way, as "the sinner," "the elect," or "man in Christ"; others, God the Father, as representing the Trinity, and Christ as representing the elect;45 and still others, since the days of Coccejus, distinguish two covenants, namely, the covenant of redemption (pactum salutis) between the Father and the Son, and, as based on this, the covenant of grace between the triune God and the elect, or the elect sinner. The second of these representations has a certain advantage from a systematic point of view. It may claim the support of such passages as Romans 5:12-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22; 1 Corinthians 15:47-49, and stresses the inseparable connection between the pactum salutis and the covenant of grace. It brings out the unity of the covenant in Christ, and is advocated among others by Boston, Gib, Dick, A. Kuyper Sr., H. Kuyper, and A. Kuyper, Jr. The third representation is more perspicuous, however, is easier to understand, and is therefore more serviceable in a practical discussion of the doctrine of the covenant. It escapes a great deal of confusion that is incidental to the other view, and is followed by the majority of Reformed theologians, such as Mastricht, à Marck, Turretin, Witsius, Heppe, the Hodges, Shedd, Vos, Bavinck, and Honig. There is no essential difference between these two representations. Says Dr. Hodge: "There is no doctrinal difference between those who prefer the one statement and those who prefer the other; between those who comprise all the facts of Scripture relating to the subject under one covenant between God and Christ as the representative of His people, and those who distribute them under two."46 This being the case, the third mode of representing the whole matter undoubtedly deserves the preference. But in following it we should bear in mind what Shedd says: "Though this distinction (between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace) is favored by Scripture statements, it does not follow that there are two separate and independent covenants antithetic to the covenant of works. The covenant of grace and redemption are two modes or phases of the one evangelical covenant of mercy."47 B. SCRIPTURAL DATA FOR THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION. The name "counsel of peace" is derived from Zechariah 6:13. Coccejus and others found in this passage a reference to an agreement between the Father and the Son. This was clearly a mistake, for the words refer to the union of the kingly and priestly offices in the Messiah. The Scriptural character of the name cannot be maintained, but this, of course, does not detract from the reality of the counsel of peace. The doctrine of this eternal counsel rests on the following Scriptural basis.

1. Scripture clearly points to the fact that the plan of redemption was included in the eternal decree or counsel of God, Ephesians 1:4 ff; Ephesians 3:11; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 2 Timothy 1:9; James 2:5; 1 Peter 1:2, etc. Now we find that in the economy of redemption there is, in a sense, a division of labor: the Father is the originator, the Son the executor, and the Holy Spirit the applier. This can only be the result of a voluntary agreement among the persons of the Trinity, so that their internal relations assume the form of a covenant life. In fact, it is exactly in the trinitarian life that we find

the archetype of the historical covenants, a covenant in the proper and fullest sense of the word, the parties meeting on a footing of equality, a true suntheke.

2. There are passages of Scripture which not only point to the fact that the plan of God for the salvation of sinners was eternal, Ephesians 1:4; Ephesians 3:9; Ephesians 3:11, but also indicate that it was of the nature of a covenant. Christ speaks of promises made to Him before his advent, and repeatedly refers to a commission which He had received from the Father, John 5:30; John 5:43; John 6:38-40; John 17:4-12. And in Romans 5:12-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:22 He is clearly regarded as a representative head, that is, as the head of a covenant.

3. Wherever we have the essential elements of a covenant, namely, contracting parties, a promise or promises, and a condition, there we have a covenant. In Psalms 2:7-9 the parties are mentioned and a promise is indicated. The Messianic character of this passage is guaranteed by Acts 13:33; Hebrews 1:5; Hebrews 5:5. Again, in Psalms 40:7-9, also attested as Messianic by the New Testament (Hebrews 10:5-7), the Messiah expresses His readiness to do the Father's will in becoming a sacrifice for sin. Christ repeatedly speaks of a task which the Father has entrusted to Him, John 6:38-39; John 10:18; John 17:4. The statement in Luke 22:29 is particularly significant: "I appoint unto you a kingdom, even as my Father appointed unto me." The verb used here is diatithemi, the word from which diatheke is derived, which means to appoint by will, testament or covenant. Moreover, in John 17:5 Christ claims a reward, and in John 17:6; John 17:9; John 17:24 (cf. also Php 2:9-11) He refers to His people and His future glory as a reward given Him by the Father.

4. There are two Old Testament passages which connect up the idea of the covenant immediately with the Messiah, namely, Psalms 89:3, which is based on 2 Samuel 7:12-14, and is proved to be a Messianic passage by Hebrews 1:5; and Isaiah 42:6, where the person referred to is the Servant of the Lord. The connection clearly shows that this Servant is not merely Israel. Moreover, there are passages in which the Messiah speaks of God as His God, thus using covenant language, namely, Psalms 22:1-2, and Psalms 40:8.

C. THE SON IN THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION.

1. THE OFFICIAL POSITION OF CHRIST IN THIS COVENANT. The position of Christ in the covenant of redemption is twofold. In the first place He is Surety (Gr. egguos), a word that is used only in Hebrews 7:22. The derivation of this word is uncertain, and therefore cannot aid us in establishing its meaning. But the meaning is not doubtful. A surety is one who engages to become responsible for it that the legal obligations of another will be met. In the covenant of redemption Christ undertook to atone for the sins of His people by bearing the necessary punishment, and to meet the demands of the law for them. And by taking the place of delinquent man He became the last Adam, and is as such also the Head of the covenant, the Representative of all those whom the Father has given Him. In the covenant of redemption, then, Christ is both Surety and Head. He took upon Himself the responsibilities of His people. He is also their Surety in the covenant of grace, which develops out of the covenant of redemption. The question has been raised, whether the suretyship of Christ in the counsel of peace was conditional or unconditional. Roman jurisprudence recognizes two kinds of suretyship, the one designated fidejussor, and the other expromissor. The former is conditional, and the latter unconditional. The former is a surety who undertakes to pay for another, provided this person does not himself render satisfaction. The

burden of guilt remains on the guilty party until the time of payment. The latter, however, is a surety who takes upon himself unconditionally to pay for another, thus relieving the guilty party of his responsibility at once. Coccejus and his school maintained that in the counsel of peace Christ became a fidejussor, and that consequently Old Testament believers enjoyed no complete forgiveness of sins. From Romans 3:25 they inferred that for those saints there was only a paresis, an overlooking of sin, and no aphesis or complete forgiveness, until Christ really made atonement for sin. Their opponents asserted, however, that Christ took upon Himself unconditionally to render satisfaction for His people, and therefore became a surety in the specific sense of an expromissor. This is the only tenable position, for: (a) Old Testament believers received full justification or forgiveness, though the knowledge of it was not as full and clear as it is in the New Testament dispensation. There was no essential difference between the status of the Old, and that of the New Testament believers, Psalms 32:1-2; Psalms 32:5; Psalms 51:1-3; Psalms 51:9-11; Psalms 103:3; Psalms 103:12; Isaiah 43:25; Romans 3:3; Romans 3:6-16;

Galatians 3:6-9. The position of Coccejus reminds one of that of the Roman Catholics with their Limbus Patrum. (b) Coccejus' theory makes the work of God in making provision for the redemption of sinners dependent on the uncertain obedience of man in an entirely unwarranted way. There is no sense in saying that Christ became a conditional surety, as if it were still possible that the sinner should pay for himself. God's provision for the redemption of sinners is absolute. This is not the same as saying that He does not treat and address the sinner as personally guilty until he is justified by faith, for this is exactly what God does do. (c) In Romans 3:25, the passage to which Coccejus appeals, the apostle uses the word paresis (overlooking or passing over), not because the individual believers in the Old Testament did not receive full pardon of sin, but because during the old dispensation the forgiveness of sin assumed the form of a paresis, as long as sin had not been adequately punished in Christ, and the absolute righteousness of Christ had not been revealed in the cross.

2. THE CHARACTER THIS COVENANT ASSUMED FOR CHRIST. Though the covenant of redemption is the eternal basis of the covenant of grace, and, as far as sinners are concerned, also its eternal prototype, it was for Christ a covenant of works rather than a covenant of grace. For Him the law of the original covenant applied, namely, that eternal life could only be obtained by meeting the demands of the law. As the last Adam Christ obtains eternal life for sinners in reward for faithful obedience, and not at all as an unmerited gift of grace. And what He has done as the Representative and Surety of all His people, they are no more in duty bound to do. The work has been done, the reward is merited, and believers are made partakers of the fruits of Christ's accomplished work through grace.

3. CHRIST'S WORK IN THE COVENANT LIMITED BY THE DECREE OF ELECTION. Some have identified the covenant of redemption and election; but this is clearly a mistake. Election has reference to the selection of the persons destined to be the heirs of everlasting glory in Christ. The counsel of redemption, on the other hand, refers to the way in which and the means by which grace and glory are prepared for sinners. Election, indeed, also has reference to Christ and reckons with Christ, for believers are said to be elected in Him. Christ Himself is, in a sense, the object of election, but in the counsel of redemption He is one of the contracting parties. The Father deals with Christ as the Surety of His people. Logically, election precedes the counsel of redemption, because the suretyship of Christ, like His atonement, is particular. If there were no

preceding election, it would necessarily be universal. Moreover, to turn this around would be equivalent to making the suretyship of Christ the ground of election, while Scripture bases election entirely on the good pleasure of God.

4. CONNECTION OF THE SACRAMENTS USED BY CHRIST WITH THE COVENANT. Christ used the sacraments of both the Old and the New Testament. It is evident, however, that they could not mean for Him what they do for believers. In His case they could be neither symbols nor seals of saving grace; nor could they be instrumental in strengthening saving faith. If we distinguish, as we are doing, between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace, then the sacraments were for Christ in all probability sacraments of the former rather than of the latter. Christ took upon Himself in the covenant of redemption to meet the demands of the law. These had assumed a definite form when Christ was on earth and also included positive religious regulations. The sacraments formed a part of this law, and therefore Christ had to subject Himself to them, Matthew 3:15. At the same time they could serve as seals of the promises which the Father had given to the Son. The objection may be raised to this representation that the sacraments were indeed fit symbols and seals of the removal of sin and of the nourishment of spiritual life, but from the nature of the case could not have this meaning for Christ, who had no sin and needed no spiritual nourishment. The objection may be met, at least to a certain extent, by calling attention to the fact that Christ appeared on earth in a public and official capacity. Though He had no personal sin, and no sacrament could therefore signify and seal to Him its removal, yet He was made to be sin for His people, 2 Corinthians 5:21, by being burdened with their guilt; and consequently the sacraments could signify the removal of this burden, according to the promise of the Father, after He had completed His atoning work. Again, though we cannot speak of Christ as exercising saving faith in the sense in which this is required of us, yet as Mediator He had to exercise faith in a wider sense by accepting the promises of the Father believingly, and by trusting the Father for their fulfilment. And the sacraments could serve as signs and seals to strengthen this faith as far as His human nature was concerned.

D. REQUIREMENTS AND PROMISES IN THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION.

1. REQUIREMENTS. The Father required of the Son, who appeared in this covenant as the Surety and Head of His people, and as the last Adam, that He should make amends for the sin of Adam and of those whom the Father had given Him, and should do what Adam failed to do by keeping the law and thus securing eternal life for all His spiritual progeny. This requirement included the following particulars: a. That He should assume human nature by being born of a woman, and thus enter into temporal relations; and that He should assume this nature with its present infirmities, though without sin, Galatians 4:4-5; Hebrews 2:10-11; Hebrews 2:14-15; Hebrews 4:15. It was absolutely essential that He should become one of the human race. b. That He, who as the Son of God was superior to the law, should place Himself under the law; that He should enter, not merely into the natural, but also into the penal and federal relation to the law, in order to pay the penalty for sin and to merit everlasting life for the elect, Psalms 40:8; Matthew 5:17-18; John 8:28-29; Galatians 4:4-5; Php 2:6-8. That He, after having merited forgiveness of sins and eternal life for His own, should apply to them the fruits of His merits: complete pardon, and the renewal of their lives through the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit. By doing this He would render it absolutely certain that believers would consecrate their lives to God, John 10:16; John 16:14-15; John 17:12; John 17:19-22;

Hebrews 2:10-13; Hebrews 7:25.

2. PROMISES. The promises of the Father were in keeping with His requirements. He promised the Son all that was required for the performance of His great and comprehensive task, thereby excluding all uncertainty in the operation of this covenant. These promises included the following: a. That He would prepare the Son a body, which would be a fit tabernacle for him; a body in part prepared by the immediate agency of God and uncontaminated by sin, Luke 1:35; Hebrews 10:5. b. That He would endow Him with the necessary gifts and graces for the performance of His task, and particularly would anoint Him for the Messianic offices by giving Him the Spirit without measure, a promise that was fulfilled especially at the time of His baptism, Isaiah 42:1-2; Isaiah 61:1; John 3:31. c. That He would support Him in the performance of His work, would deliver Him from the power of death, and would thus enable Him to destroy the dominion of Satan and to establish the Kingdom of God, Isaiah 42:1-7; Isaiah 49:8; Psalms 16:8-11; Acts 2:25-28. d. That He would enable Him, as a reward for His accomplished work, to send out the Holy Spirit for the formation of His spiritual body, and for the instruction, guidance, and protection of the Church, John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:13-14; Acts 2:33. e. That He would give unto Him a numerous seed in reward for His accomplished work, a seed so numerous that it would be a multitude which no man could number, so that ultimately the Kingdom of the Messiah would embrace the people of all nations and tongues, Psalms 22:27; Psalms 72:17. f. That He would commit to Him all power in heaven and on earth for the government of the world and of His Church, Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-22; Php 2:9-11; Hebrews 2:5-9; and would finally reward Him as Mediator with the glory which He as the Son of God had with the Father before the world was, John 17:5.

E. THE RELATION OF THIS COVENANT TO THE COVENANT OF GRACE The following points indicate the relation in which this covenant stands to the covenant of grace:

1. The counsel of redemption is the eternal prototype of the historical covenant of grace. This accounts for the fact that many combine the two into a single covenant. The former is eternal, that is, from eternity, and the latter, temporal in the sense that it is realized in time. The former is a compact between the Father and the Son as the Surety and Head of the elect, while the latter is a compact between the triune God and the elect sinner in the Surety.

2. The counsel of redemption is the firm and eternal foundation of the covenant of grace. If there had been no eternal counsel of peace between the Father and the Son, there could have been no agreement between the triune God and sinful men. The counsel of redemption makes the covenant of grace possible.

3. The counsel of redemption consequently also gives efficacy to the covenant of grace, for in it the means are provided for the establishment and execution of the latter. It is only by faith that the sinner can obtain the blessings of the covenant, and in the counsel of redemption the way of faith is opened. The Holy Spirit, which produces faith in the sinner, was promised to Christ by the Father, and the acceptance of the way of life through faith was guaranteed by Christ. The covenant of redemption may be defined as the agreement between the Father, giving the Son as Head and Redeemer of the elect, and the Son, voluntarily taking the place of those whom the Father had given Him.

04.2.3.3. Nature of the Covenant of Grace

III. Nature of the Covenant of Grace In a discussion of the nature of the covenant of grace several points come up for consideration, such as the distinction between it and the covenant of works, the contracting parties, the contents, the characteristics of the covenant, and the place of Christ in the covenant.

A. COMPARISON OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE AND THE COVENANT OF WORKS.

1. POINTS OF SIMILARITY. The points of agreement are of a rather general nature. The two covenants agree as to (a) the author: God is the author of both; He only could establish such covenants; (b) the contracting parties, which are in both cases God and man; (c) the external form, namely, condition and promise; (d) the contents of the promise which is in both cases eternal life; and (e) the general aim, which is the glory of God.

2. POINTS OF DIFFERENCE. (a) In the covenant of works God appears as Creator and Lord; in the covenant of grace, as Redeemer and Father. The establishment of the former was prompted by God's love and benevolence; that of the latter, by His mercy and special grace. (b) In the covenant of works man appears simply as God's creature, rightly related to his God; in the covenant of grace he appears as a sinner who has perverted his ways, and can only appear as a party in Christ, the Surety. Consequently, there is no mediator in the former, while there is in the latter. (c) The covenant of works was contingent on the uncertain obedience of a changeable man, while the covenant of grace rests on the obedience of Christ as Mediator, which is absolute and certain. (d) In the covenant of works the keeping of the law is the way of life; in the covenant of grace, it is faith in Jesus Christ. Whatever faith was required in the covenant of works was a part of the righteousness of the law; in the covenant of grace, however, it is merely the organ by which we take possession of the grace of God in Jesus Christ. (e) The covenant of works was partly known by nature, since the law of God was written in the heart of man; but the covenant of grace is known exclusively through a special positive revelation.

B. THE CONTRACTING PARTIES.

Just as in the covenant of works, so in the covenant of grace God is the first of the contracting parties, the party that takes the initiative, and graciously determines the relation in which the second party will stand to Him. He appears in this covenant, however, not merely as a sovereign and a benevolent God, but also, and especially, as a gracious and forgiving Father, willing to pardon sin and to restore sinners to His blessed communion.

It is not easy to determine precisely who the second party is. In general it may be said that God naturally established the covenant of grace with fallen man. Historically, there is no definite indication of any limitation until we come to the time of Abraham. In course of time it became perfectly evident, however, that this new covenant relation was not meant to include all men. When God formally established the covenant with Abraham, He limited it to the patriarch and his seed. Consequently, the question arises as to the exact limits of the covenant.

Reformed theologians are not unanimous in answering this question. Some simply say that God made the covenant with the sinner, but this suggests no limitation whatsoever, and therefore does not satisfy. Others assert that He established it with Abraham and his seed, that is, his natural, but especially his spiritual, descendants; or, put in a more general form, with believers and their seed. The great majority of them, however, maintain that He entered into covenant relationship with the elect or the elect sinner in Christ. This position was taken by earlier as well as by later representatives of federal theology. Even Bullinger says the "covenant of God includes the entire seed of Abraham, that is, the believers." He finds this to be in harmony with Paul's interpretation of "the seed" in Galatians 3:1-29. At the same time he also holds that the children of believers are in a certain sense included in the covenant.48 And Olevianus, co-author with Ursinus of the Heidelberg Catechism, says that God established the covenant with "all those whom God, out of the mass of lost men, has decreed to adopt as children by grace, and to endow them with faith."49 This is also the position of Mastricht, Turretin, Owen, Gib, Boston, Witsius, à Marck, Francken, Brakel, Comrie, Kuyper, Bavinck, Hodge, Vos, and others. But now the question arises, What induced these theologians to speak of the covenant as made with the elect in spite of all the practical difficulties involved? Were they not aware of these difficulties? It appears from their writings that they were fully conscious of them. But they felt that it was necessary to contemplate the covenant first of all in its most profound sense, as it is realized in the lives of believers. While they understood that others had a place in the covenant in some sense of the word, they nevertheless felt that it was a subordinate place, and that their relation to it was calculated to be subservient to the full realization of it in a life of friendship with God. And this is no wonder in view of the following considerations:

1. They who identified the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace, and considered it un-Scriptural to distinguish the two, naturally thought of it first of all as a covenant established with Christ as the representative Head of all those whom the Father had given Him; a covenant in which He became the Surety of the elect and thus guaranteed their complete redemption. In fact, in the covenant of redemption only the elect come into consideration. The situation is practically the same in the case of those who distinguish two covenants, but insist on their close relationship and represent the covenant of redemption as the eternal basis of the covenant of grace, for in the former only the grace of God, as it is glorified and perfected in the elect, comes into consideration.

2. Even in the history of the establishment of the covenant with Abraham, interpreted in the light of the rest of Scripture, Reformed theologians found abundant evidence that fundamentally the covenant of grace is a covenant established with those who are in Christ. The Bible distinguishes a twofold seed of Abraham. The beginning of this is distinctly found in Genesis 21:12, where we find God saying to Abraham, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," thus ruling out Ishmael. Paul, in interpreting these words speaks of Isaac as a child of promise, and by "a child of promise" he does not simply mean a promised child, but a child that was not born in the ordinary way, but, in virtue of a promise, by a supernatural operation of God. He also connects with it the idea of a child to whom the promise belongs. According to him the expression, "in Isaac shall thy seed be called," indicates that "it is not the children of the flesh that are children of God; but the children of the promise are reckoned for a seed." Romans 9:8. The same idea is expressed in Galatians 4:28, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are children of promise," and as such also heirs of the promised blessings, cf. Galatians 4:30. This is entirely in harmony with what the apostle says in Galatians

3:16 : "Now to Abraham were the promises spoken, and to his seed. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." But the seed is not limited to Christ, but includes all believers. "And if ye are Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise." Galatians 3:29. W. Strong in his Discourse of the Two Covenants calls attention to the following subordination in the establishment of the covenant. He says that it was made "(1) first and immediately with Christ the second Adam: (2) in Him with all the faithful: (3) in them with their seed."50

3. Still another factor should be taken into consideration. Reformed theologians were deeply conscious of the contrast between the covenant of works and the covenant of grace. They felt that in the former the reward of the covenant was dependent on the uncertain obedience of man and as a result failed to materialize, while in the covenant of grace the full realization of the promises is absolutely sure in virtue of the perfect obedience of Jesus Christ. Its realization is sure through the operation of the grace of God, but, of course, sure only for those who are partakers of that grace. They felt constrained to stress this aspect of the covenant especially over against the Arminians and Neonomians, who virtually changed it into a new covenant of works, and made salvation once more dependent on the work of man, that is, on faith and evangelical obedience. For this reason they stressed the close connection between the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace, and even hesitated to speak of faith as the condition of the covenant of grace. Walker tells us that some of the Scottish divines were opposed to the distinction of two covenants, because they saw in it a "tendency . . . to Neonomianism, or, as the covenant of reconciliation (i.e., the covenant of grace as distinguished from that of redemption) was external in the visible Church, even a sort of bar to immediate dealing with the Saviour, and entrance by an appropriating faith into living union with Him."51

4. All in all it would seem safe to say that Reformed theology contemplated the covenant, not primarily as a means ministering to an end, but as an end in itself, a relation of friendship; not first of all as representing and including a number of external privileges, a set of promises, conditionally held out to man, a good merely offered unto him; but primarily as the expression of blessings freely given, of privileges improved by the grace of God for spiritual ends, of promises accepted by a faith which is the gift of God, and of a good realized, at least in principle, through the operation of the Holy Spirit in the heart. And because in its estimation all this was included in the covenant idea, and the blessings of the covenant are realized only in those that are actually saved, it stressed the fact that the covenant of grace was established between God and the elect. But in doing this it did not intend to deny that the covenant also has a broader aspect.

Dr. Vos says with reference to this view: "Het behoeft nauwelijks herinnerd to worden, hoe met dit alles geenszins bedoeld is, dat de verbondsbediening van de verkiezing uitgaat, noch ook dat alle niet-uitverkorenen buiten iedere relatie tot deze verbonds-bediening staan. Het is veelmeer zoo bedoeld, dat uit 't gesterkt verbondsbewustzijn de zekerheid aangaande de verkiezing zich ontwikkelen moet; dat door heel de verbonds-bediening heen, ook de volstrekte, alomvattende beloften Gods, zooals zij uit de verkiezing voortvloeien moeten worden in het oog gehouden, bij Woord en Sacrament beide; dat eindelijk het wezen des verbonds, deszelfs volle realiseering slechts bij de ware kinderen Gods wordt aangetroffen, en dus niet wijder is dan de uitverkiezing. Vooral op het tweede punt dient gelet te worden. Behalve dat er overal, waar Gods verbond bediend wordt, eene verzegeling is van dezen inhoud: In de vooronderstelling der aanwezigheid

van geloof, wordt u het recht op alle verbondsgoederen verzekerd — behalve dat, zeggen wij, is er steeds een plechtige betuiging en verzegeling, dat God in alle uitverkorenen den geheelen omvang des verbonds will verwerkelijken."52 The idea that the covenant is fully realized only in the elect is a perfectly Scriptural idea, as appears, for instance, from Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hebrews 8:8-12. Moreover, it is also entirely in line with the relation in which the covenant of grace stands to the covenant of redemption. If in the latter Christ becomes Surety only for the elect, then the real substance of the former must be limited to them also. Scripture strongly emphasizes the fact that the covenant of grace, in distinction from the covenant of works, is an inviolable covenant, in which the promises of God are always realized, Isaiah 54:10. This cannot be intended conditionally, for then it would be no special characteristic of the covenant of grace, but would apply to the covenant of works as well. And yet, this is exactly one of the important points in which the former differs from the latter, that it is no more dependent on the uncertain obedience of man, but only on the absolute faithfulness of God. The covenant promises will surely be realized, but — only in the lives of the elect. But now the question arises, whether in the estimation of these Reformed theologians all the non-elect are outside of the covenant of grace in every sense of the word. Brakel virtually takes this position, but he is not in line with the majority. They realized very well that a covenant of grace, which in no sense of the word included others than the elect, would be purely individual, while the covenant of grace is represented in Scripture as an organic idea. They were fully aware of the fact that, according to God’s special revelation in both the Old and the New Testament, the covenant as a historical phenomenon is perpetuated in successive generations and includes many in whom the covenant life is never realized. And whenever they desired to include this aspect of the covenant in their definition, they would say that it was established with believers and their seed. It should be borne in mind, however, that this description of the second party in the covenant does not imply that the covenant is established with men in the quality of believers, for faith itself is a fruit of the covenant. Dr. Bavinck correctly says: "Maar het verbond der genade gaat aan het geloof vooraf. Het geloof is geen voorwaarde tot het verbond, maar in het verbond; de weg, om al de andere goederen van dat verbond deelachtig te worden en te genieten."53 The description "believers and their seed" merely serves as a convenient practical designation of the limits of the covenant. The question of harmonizing these two aspects of the covenant will come up later on. The covenant of grace may be defined as that gracious agreement between the offended God and the offending but elect sinner, in which God promises salvation through faith in Christ, and the sinner accepts this believingly, promising a life of faith and obedience.

C. THE CONTENTS OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

1. THE PROMISES OF GOD. The main promise of God, which includes all other promises, is contained in the oft-repeated words, "I will be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee." Genesis 17:7. This promise is found in several Old and New Testament passages which speak of the introduction of a new phase of the covenant life, or refer to a renewal of the covenant, Jeremiah 31:33; Jeremiah 32:38-40; Ezekiel 34:23-25; Ezekiel 34:30-31; Ezekiel 36:25-28; Ezekiel 37:26-27; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; Hebrews 8:10. The promise is fully realized when at last the new Jerusalem descends out of heaven from God, and the tabernacle of God is pitched among men. Consequently we hear the last echo of it in Revelation 21:3. This grand promise is re-echoed time and again in the jubilant exaltation of those who stand in covenant relationship to God, "Jehovah is my God." This one promise really includes all other promises, such as (a) the

promise of various temporal blessings, which often serve to symbolize those of a spiritual kind; (b) the promise of justification, including the adoption of children, and a claim to life eternal; (c) the promise of the Spirit of God for the application, full and free, of the work of redemption and of all the blessings of salvation; and (d) the promise of final glorification in a life that never ends. Cf. Job 19:25-27; Psalms 16:11; Psalms 73:24-26; Isaiah 43:25; Jeremiah 31:33-34; Ezekiel 36:27; Daniel 12:2-3; Galatians 4:5-6; Titus 3:7; Hebrews 11:7; James 2:5.

2. THE RESPONSE OF MAN. The assent or response of man to these promises of God naturally appears in various forms, the nature of the response being determined by the promises. (a) In general the relation between the covenant God and the single believer or believers collectively is represented as the close relationship between man and wife, bridegroom and bride, a father and his children. This implies that the response of those who share the covenant blessings will be one of true, faithful, trustful, consecrated, and devoted love. (b) To the general promise, "I will be thy God," man responds by saying, "I will belong to thy people," and by casting his lot with the people of God. (c) And to the promise of justification unto the forgiveness of sins, the adoption of children, and eternal life, he responds by saving faith in Jesus Christ, by trust in Him for time and eternity, and by a life of obedience and consecration to God.

D. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

1. IT IS A GRACIOUS COVENANT. This covenant may be called a gracious covenant, (a) because in it God allows a Surety to meet our obligations; (b) because He Himself provides the Surety in the person of His Son, who meets the demands of justice; and (c) because by His grace, revealed in the operation of the Holy Spirit, He enables man to live up to His covenant responsibilities. The covenant originates in the grace of God, is executed in virtue of the grace of God, and is realized in the lives of sinners by the grace of God. It is grace from the beginning to the end for the sinner.

2. IT IS A TRINITARIAN COVENANT. The triune God is operative in the covenant of grace. It has its origin in the elective love and grace of the Father, finds its judicial foundation in the suretyship of the Son, and is fully realized in the lives of sinners only by the effective application of the Holy Spirit, John 1:16; Ephesians 1:1-14; Ephesians 2:8; 1 Peter 1:2.

3. IT IS AN ETERNAL AND THEREFORE UNBREAKABLE COVENANT. When we speak of it as an eternal covenant, we have reference to a future rather than to a past eternity, Genesis 17:19; 2 Samuel 23:5; Hebrews 13:20. Past eternity can be ascribed to it only, if we do not distinguish between it and the covenant of redemption. The fact that the covenant is eternal also implies that it is inviolable; and this is one of the reasons why it can be called a testament, Hebrews 9:17. God remains forever true to His covenant and will invariably bring it to full realization in the elect. This does not mean, however, that man cannot and never will break the covenant relationship in which he stands.

4. IT IS A PARTICULAR AND NOT A UNIVERSAL COVENANT. This means (a) that it will not be realized in all men, as some Universalists claim, and also that God did not intend that it should be realized in the lives of all, as Pelagians, Arminians, and Lutherans teach; (b) that even as an external covenant relation it does not extend to all those to whom the gospel is preached, for many of them are not willing to be incorporated in the covenant; and (c) that the offer of the covenant

does not come to all, since there have been many individuals and even nations who were never made acquainted with the way of salvation. Some of the older Lutherans claim that the covenant may be called universal, because there have been periods in history when it was offered to the human race as a whole, as for instance, in Adam, in Noah and his family, and even in the days of the apostles. But there is no ground for making Adam and Noah representative recipients of the offer of the covenant; and the apostles certainly did not evangelize the whole world. Some Reformed theologians, as Musculus, Polanus, and Wollebius, and others, spoke of a foedus generale, in distinction from the foedus speciale ac sempiternum, but in doing this they had in mind the general covenant of God with all creatures, men and beasts, established by Noah. The New Testament dispensation of the covenant may be called universal in the sense that in it the covenant is extended to all nations, and is no more limited to the Jews, as it was in the old dispensation.

5. IT IS ESSENTIALLY THE SAME IN ALL DISPENSATIONS, THOUGH ITS FORM OF ADMINISTRATION CHANGES. This is contradicted by all those who claim that Old Testament saints were saved in another manner than New Testament believers, as for instance, Pelagians and Socinians, who hold that God gave additional help in the example and teachings of Christ; the Roman Catholics, who maintain that the Old Testament saints were in the Limbus Patrum until Christ's descent into hades; the followers of Coccejus, who assert that Old Testament believers enjoyed only a paresis (a passing over) and no aphesis (full forgiveness of sins); and present-day dispensationalists, who distinguish several different covenants (Scofield mentions 7; Milligan 9), and insist on the necessity of keeping them distinct. The unity of the covenant in all dispensations is proved by the following: a. The summary expression of the covenant is the same throughout, both in the Old and New Testament: "I will be thy God." It is the expression of the essential content of the covenant with Abraham, Genesis 17:7, of the Sinaitic covenant, Exodus 19:5; Exodus 20:1, of the covenant of the Plains of Moab, Deuteronomy 29:13, of the Davidic covenant, 2 Samuel 7:14, and of the new covenant, Jeremiah 31:33; Hebrews 8:10. This promise is really an all-comprehensive summary and contains a guarantee of the most perfect covenant blessings. Christ infers from the fact that God is called the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, that those patriarchs are in possession of eternal life, Matthew 22:32. b. The Bible teaches that there is but a single gospel by which men can be saved. And because the gospel is nothing but the revelation of the covenant of grace, it follows that there is also but one covenant. This gospel was already heard in the maternal promise, Genesis 3:15, was preached unto Abraham, Galatians 3:8, and may not be supplanted by any Judaistic gospel, Galatians 1:8-9. c. Paul argues at length over against the Judaists that the way in which Abraham obtained salvation is typical for New Testament believers, no matter whether they be Jews or Gentiles, Romans 4:9-25; Galatians 3:7-9; Galatians 3:17-18. He speaks of Abraham as the father of believers, and clearly proves that the covenant with Abraham is still in force. It is perfectly clear from the argument of the apostle in Romans 4:1-25 and Galatians 3:1-29 that the law has not annulled nor altered the covenant. Cf. also Hebrews 6:13-18. d. The Mediator of the covenant is the same yesterday, to-day, and forever, Hebrews 13:8. In none other is there salvation, John 14:6; for neither is there any other name under heaven, that is given among men, whereby we must be saved, Acts 4:12. The seed promised to Abraham is Christ, Galatians 3:16, and those that are identified with Christ are the real heirs of the covenant, Galatians 3:16-29. e. The way of salvation revealed in the covenant is the same. Scripture insists on the identical conditions all along, Genesis 15:6, compared with Romans

4:11; Hebrews 2:4; Acts 15:11; Galatians 3:6-7; Hebrews 11:9. The promises, for the realization of which the believers hoped, were also the same, Genesis 15:6; Psalms 51:12; Matthew 13:17; John 8:56. And the sacraments, though differing in form have essentially the same signification in both dispensations, Romans 4:11; 1 Corinthians 5:7; Colossians 2:11-12. f. It is both conditional and unconditional. The question is repeatedly asked, whether the covenant is conditional or unconditional. This is a question that cannot be answered without careful discrimination, for the answer will depend on the point of view from which the covenant is considered. On the one hand the covenant is unconditional. There is in the covenant of grace no condition that can be considered as meritorious. The sinner is exhorted to repent and believe, but his faith and repentance do not in any way merit the blessings of the covenant. This must be maintained in opposition to both the Roman Catholic and the Arminian position. Neither is it conditional in the sense that man is expected to perform in his own strength what the covenant requires of him. In placing him before the demands of the covenant, we must always remind him of the fact that he can obtain the necessary strength for the performance of his duty only from God. In a sense it may be said that God Himself fulfills the condition in the elect. That which may be regarded as a condition in the covenant, is for those who are chosen unto everlasting life also a promise, and therefore a gift of God. Finally, the covenant is not conditional in the sense that the reception of every separate blessing of the covenant is dependent on a condition. We may say that faith is the conditio sine qua non of justification, but the reception of faith itself in regeneration is not dependent on any condition, but only on the operation of the grace of God in Christ. On the other hand the covenant may be called conditional. There is a sense in which the covenant is conditional. If we consider the basis of the covenant, it is clearly conditional on the suretyship of Jesus Christ. In order to introduce the covenant of grace, Christ had to, and actually did, meet the conditions originally laid down in the covenant of works, by His active and passive obedience. Again, it may be said that the covenant is conditional as far as the first conscious entrance into the covenant as a real communion of life is concerned. This entrance is contingent on faith, a faith, however, which is itself a gift of God. When we speak of faith as a condition here, we naturally refer to faith as a spiritual activity of the mind. It is only through faith that we can obtain a conscious enjoyment of the blessings of the covenant. Our experimental knowledge of the covenant life is entirely dependent on the exercise of faith. He who does not live a life of faith is, as far as his consciousness is concerned, practically outside of the covenant. If in our purview we include not only the beginning, but also the gradual unfolding and completion of the covenant life, we may regard sanctification as a condition in addition to faith. Both are conditions, however, within the covenant.

Reformed Churches have often objected to the use of the word "condition" in connection with the covenant of grace. This was largely due to a reaction against Arminianism, which employed the word "condition" in an un-Scriptural sense, and therefore to a failure to discriminate properly.54 Bearing in mind what was said in the preceding, it would seem to be perfectly proper to speak of a condition in connection with the covenant of grace, for (1) the Bible clearly indicates that the entrance upon the covenant life is conditioned on faith, John 3:16; John 3:36; Acts 8:37 (not found in some MSS.); Romans 10:9; (2) Scripture often threatens covenant children, but these threatenings apply exactly to those who ignore the condition, that is, who refuse to walk in the way of the covenant; and (3) if there were no condition, God only would be bound by the covenant, and there would be no "bond of the covenant" for man (but cf. Ezekiel 20:37); and thus the covenant of

grace would lose its character as a covenant, for there are two parts in all covenants. g. The covenant may in a sense be called a testament. In view of the fact that a testament is an absolute declaration and knows of no conditions, the question is raised whether it is proper at all to apply the term "testament" to the covenant. There is but one passage in the New Testament where it seems to be justifiable to render the word diatheke by "testament," namely, Hebrews 9:16-17. There Christ is represented as the testator, in whose death the covenant of grace, considered as a testament, becomes effective. There was a testamentary disposal of the blessings of the covenant, and this came into force through the death of Christ. This is the only passage in which the covenant is explicitly referred to as a testament. But the idea that believers receive the spiritual blessings of the covenant in a testamentary way is implied in several passages of Scripture, though the implied representation is slightly different from that in Hebrews 9:16-17. It is God rather than Christ who is testator. In both the Old and the New Testament, but especially in the latter, believers are represented as children of God, legally by adoption, and ethically by the new birth, John 1:12; Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 4:4-6; 1 John 3:1-3; 1 John 3:9. Now the ideas of heirship and inheritance are naturally associated with that of sonship, and therefore it is no wonder that they are frequently found in Scripture. Paul says: "And if children, then heirs," Romans 8:17; cf. also Romans 4:14; Galatians 3:29; Galatians 4:1; Galatians 4:7 Titus 3:7; Hebrews 6:17; Hebrews 11:7; James 2:5. In view of these passages there is no doubt that the covenant and the covenant blessings are represented in Scripture as an inheritance. But this representation is again based on the idea of a testament, with this difference, however, that the confirmation of the covenant does not imply the death of the testator. Believers are heirs of God (who cannot die) and joint-heirs with Christ, Romans 8:17. It is perfectly evident that for the sinner the covenant has a testamentary side and can be regarded as an inheritance; but now the question arises, whether it can also assume this character for Christ. An affirmative answer would seem to be required in view of the fact that we are called co-heirs with Christ. Is He then also an heir? This question may be answered in the affirmative in view of the statement found in Luke 22:29. The inheritance referred to here is the mediatorial glory of Christ, which He received as an inheritance from the Father, and which He, in turn, communicates as an inheritance to all those that are His. But though there is undoubtedly a testamentary side to the covenant, this is but one side of the matter, and does not preclude the idea that the covenant is really a covenant. It can be called a testament, because (1) it is as a whole a gift from God; (2) the New Testament dispensation of it was ushered in by the death of Christ; (3) it is firm and inviolable; and (4) in it God Himself gives what He demands of man. Yet this should not be interpreted to mean that there are no two sides to the covenant, and that it is therefore absolutely monopleuric. However unequal the parties in themselves may be, God condescends to come down to the level of man and by His grace enables him to act as the second party in the covenant. A monopleuric covenant in the absolute sense of the word is really a contradictio in adjecto. At the same time those theologians who stress the monopleuric character of the covenant did this to emphasize an important truth, namely, that God and man do not meet each other half way in the covenant, but that God comes down to man and graciously establishes His covenant with him, freely giving all that He demands, and that man is really the only one that profits by the covenant. It is essential, however, that the dipleuric character of the covenant be maintained, because man really appears in it as meeting the demands of the covenant in faith and conversion, though it be only as God works in him both to will and to do, according to His good pleasure.

E. THE RELATION OF CHRIST TO THE COVENANT OF GRACE.

Christ is represented in Scripture as the Mediator of the covenant. The Greek word mesites is not found in classical Greek, but does occur in Philo and in later Greek authors. In the Septuagint it is found but once, Job 9:33Job 9:33">. The English word "Mediator," as well as the Holland "Middelaar" and the German "Mittler," might lead us to think that it (mesites) simply designates one who arbitrates between two parties, an intermediary in the general sense of the word. It should be borne in mind, however, that the Scriptural idea is far more profound. Christ is Mediator in more than one sense. He intervenes between God and man, not merely to sue for peace and to persuade to it, but as armed with plenipotentiary power, to do all that is necessary to establish peace. The use of the word mesites in the New Testament justifies our speaking of a twofold Mediatorship of Christ, namely, that of surety and that of access (Gr.prosagoge, Romans 5:2). In most of the passages in which the word is found in the New Testament, it is equal to egguos, and therefore points to Christ as one who, by taking upon Himself the guilt of sinners, terminated their penal relation to the law and restored them to the right legal relationship to God. This is the meaning of the word in Hebrews 8:6; Hebrews 9:15; Hebrews 12:24. In Hebrews 7:22 the term egguos itself is applied to Christ. There is one passage, however, in which the word mesites has a meaning that is more in accord with the ordinary sense of the word "mediator," as one who is called in to arbitrate between two parties and to reconcile them, namely, 1 Timothy 2:5. Here Christ is represented as Mediator in the sense that, on the basis of His sacrifice, He brings God and man together. The work of Christ, as indicated by the word mesites is twofold. He labors in things pertaining to God and in things pertaining to man, in the objective legal sphere, and in the subjective moral sphere. In the former He propitiates the just displeasure of God by expiating the guilt of sin, makes intercession for those whom the Father has given Him, and actually makes their persons and services acceptable to God. And in the latter He reveals to men the truth concerning God and their relation to Him with the conditions of acceptable service, persuades and enables them to receive the truth, and directs and sustains them in all circumstances of life, so as to perfect their deliverance. In doing this work He employs the ministry of men, 2 Corinthians 5:20.

04.2.3.4. The Dual Aspect of the Covenant

IV. The Dual Aspect of the Covenant In speaking of the contracting parties in the covenant of grace it was already intimated that the covenant may be considered from two different points of view. There are two different aspects of the covenant, and now the question arises, In what relation do these two stand to each other? This question has been answered in different ways.

A. AN EXTERNAL AND AN INTERNAL COVENANT.

Some have distinguished between an external and an internal covenant. The external covenant was conceived as one in which a person's status depends entirely on the performance of certain external religious duties. His position is entirely correct, if he does what is required of him, somewhat in the Roman Catholic sense. Among Israel this covenant assumed a national form. Perhaps no one worked out the doctrine of an external covenant with greater consistency than Thomas Blake. The dividing line between the external and the internal covenant was not always represented in the same way. Some connected baptism with the external, and confession of faith and the Lord's Supper, with the internal covenant; others thought of baptism and confession as belonging to the external covenant, and of the Lord's Supper as the sacrament of the internal covenant. But the trouble is that this whole representation results in a dualism in the conception of the covenant that is not warranted by Scripture; it yields an external covenant that is not interpenetrated by the internal. The impression is created that there is a covenant in which man can assume an entirely correct position without saving faith; but the Bible knows of no such covenant. There are, indeed, external privileges and blessings of the covenant, and there are persons who enjoy these only; but such cases are abnormalities that cannot be systematized. The distinction between an external and an internal covenant does not hold. This view must not be confused with another and related view, namely, that there is an external and an internal aspect of the covenant of grace (Mastricht and others). According to this some accept their covenant responsibilities in a truly spiritual way, from the heart, while others accept them only by an external profession with the mouth, and therefore are only apparently in the covenant. Mastricht refers to Judas Iscariot, Simon the sorcerer, those who have temporal faith, and others. But the trouble is that, according to this view, the non-elect and non-regenerate are merely external appendages to the covenant, and are simply regarded as children of the covenant by us because of our short-sightedness, but are no covenant children at all in the sight of God. They are not really in the covenant, and therefore cannot really become covenant breakers either. It offers no solution of the problem in what sense the non-elect and non- regenerate, who are members of the visible Church, are children of the covenant also in the sight of God, and can therefore become covenant breakers.

B. THE ESSENCE AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE COVENANT.

Others, as for instance, Olevianus and Turretin, distinguish between the essence and the administration of the covenant. According to Turretin the former corresponds to the internal calling and the invisible Church formed by means of this calling; and the latter, to the external calling and

the visible Church, as consisting of those who are called externally by the Word. The administration of the covenant consists only in the offer of salvation in the preaching of the Word, and in the other external privileges in which all share who have a place in the Church, including many non-elect. The essence of the covenant, however, also includes the spiritual reception of all the blessings of the covenant, the life in union with Christ, and therefore extends to the elect only. This distinction certainly contains an element of truth, but is not altogether logical and clear. While essence and form would constitute an antithesis, essence and administration do not. They may refer to the invisible and the visible Church, as Turretin seems to intend, or to the final end or realization and the announcement of the covenant, as Olevianus understands the distinction. But if the former is meant, it would be better to speak of essence and revelation; and if the latter is intended, it would be preferable to speak of the aim and the means of its realization. Here, too, the question remains unanswered, whether and in how far the non-elect are covenant children also in the sight of God.

C. A CONDITIONAL AND AN ABSOLUTE COVENANT.

Still others, as for instance, Koelman, speak of a conditional and an absolute covenant. Koelman emphasizes the fact that, when an external and an internal covenant are distinguished, only a single covenant is meant, and the terms "external" and "internal" simply serve to stress the fact that all are not in the covenant in exactly the same way. Some are in it merely by an external confession, to the enjoyment of external privileges, and others by a hearty acceptance of it, to the enjoyment of the blessings of salvation. Likewise, he wishes it to be clearly understood that, when he says that some are in the covenant externally and conditionally, he does not mean to assert that they are not really in the covenant, but only that they cannot obtain the promised blessings of the covenant, except by complying with the condition of the covenant. This representation, too, undoubtedly contains an element of truth, but in Koelman it is linked up in such a way with the notion of an external and an internal covenant, that he comes dangerously near to the error of accepting two covenants, especially when he claims that during the New Testament dispensation God incorporates whole nations and kingdoms in the covenant.

D. THE COVENANT AS A PURELY LEGAL RELATIONSHIP AND AS A COMMUNION OF LIFE.

Reformed theologians, such as Kuyper, Bavinck, and Honig, speak of two sides of the covenant, the one external and the other internal. Dr. Vos uses terms that are more specific, when he distinguishes between the covenant as a purely legal relationship and the covenant as a communion of life. There is clearly a legal and a moral side to the covenant. The covenant may be regarded as an agreement between two parties, with mutual conditions and stipulations, and therefore as something in the legal sphere. The covenant in that sense may exist even when nothing is done to realize its purpose, namely the condition to which it points and for which it calls as the real ideal. The parties that live under this agreement are in the covenant, since they are subject to the mutual stipulations agreed upon. In the legal sphere everything is considered and regulated in a purely objective way. The determining factor in that sphere is simply the relation which has been established, and not the attitude which one assumes to that relation. The relation exists independently of one’s inclination or disinclination, one’s likes and dislikes, in connection with it. It would seem to be in the light of this distinction that the question should be answered, Who are in the covenant of grace? If the question is asked with the legal relationship, and that

only, in mind, and really amounts to the query, Who are in duty bound to live in the covenant, and of whom may it be expected that they will do this? —the answer is, believers and their children. But if the question is asked with a view to the covenant as a communion of life, and assumes the quite different form, In whom does this legal relationship issue in a living communion with Christ? — the answer can only be, only in the regenerate, who are endowed with the principle of faith, that is, in the elect. This distinction is warranted by Scripture. It is hardly necessary to cite passages proving that the covenant is an objective compact in the legal sphere, for it is perfectly evident that we have such a compact wherever two parties agree as in the presence of God to perform certain things affecting their mutual relation, or one party promises to bestow certain benefits on the other, provided the latter fulfills the conditions that are laid down. That the covenant of grace is such a compact is abundantly evident from Scripture. There is the condition of faith, Genesis 15:6, compared with Romans 4:3 ff., Romans 4:20 ff.; Habakkuk 2:4; Galatians 3:14-18; Hebrews 11:1-40; and there is also the promise of spiritual and eternal blessings, Genesis 17:7; Genesis 12:3; Isaiah 43:25; Ezekiel 36:27; Romans 4:5 ff.; Galatians 3:14; Galatians 3:18. But it is also clear that the covenant in its full realization is something more than that, namely, a communion of life. This may be already symbolically expressed in the act of passing between the parts of the animals slain at the establishment of the covenant with Abraham, Genesis 15:9-17. Moreover, it is indicated in such passages as Psalms 25:14; Psalms 89:33-34; Psalms 103:17-18; Jeremiah 31:33-34 (Hebrews 8:10-12); Ezekiel 36:25-28; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Revelation 21:2-3. Now the question arises as to the relation between the sinner’s being under the "bond of the covenant" as a legal relationship and his living in the communion of the covenant. The two cannot be conceived of as existing alongside of each other without some inner connection, but must be regarded as being most intimately related to each other, in order to avoid all dualism. When one takes the covenant relation upon himself voluntarily, the two must naturally go together; if they do not, a false relation ensues. But in the case of those who are born in the covenant the question is more difficult. Is the one then possible without the other? Is the covenant in that case a bare legal relationship, in which that which ought to be — but is not — takes the place of the glorious realities for which the covenant stands? Is there any reasonable ground to expect that the covenant relation will issue in a living communion; that for the sinner, who is of himself unable to believe, the covenant will actually become a living reality? In answer to this question it may be said that God undoubtedly desires that the covenant relationship shall issue in a covenant life. And He Himself guarantees by His promises pertaining to the seed of believers that this will take place, not in the case of every individual, but in the seed of the covenant collectively. On the basis of the promise of God we may believe that, under a faithful administration of the covenant, the covenant relation will, as a rule, be fully realized in a covenant life.

E. MEMBERSHIP IN THE COVENANT AS A LEGAL RELATIONSHIP. In discussing membership in the covenant as a legal relationship, it should be borne in mind that the covenant in this sense is not merely a system of demands and promises, demands that ought to be met, and promises that ought to be realized; but that it also includes a reasonable expectation that the external legal relationship will carry with it the glorious reality of a life in intimate communion with the covenant God. This is the only way in which the idea of the covenant is fully realized.

1. ADULTS IN THE COVENANT. Adults can only enter this covenant voluntarily by faith and confession. From this it follows that in their case, unless their confession be false, entrance into

the covenant as a legal relationship and into the covenant as a communion of life coincide. They not merely take upon themselves the performance of certain external duties; nor do they merely promise in addition to this, that they will exercise saving faith in the future; but they confess that they accept the covenant with a living faith, and that it is their desire and intention to continue in this faith. They enter upon the full covenant life at once therefore, and this is the only way in which they can enter the covenant. This truth is implicitly or explicitly denied by all those who connect the confession of faith with a merely external covenant.

2. CHILDREN OF BELIEVERS IN THE COVENANT. With respect to the children of believers, who enter the covenant by birth, the situation is, of course, somewhat different. Experience teaches that, though by birth they enter the covenant as a legal relationship, this does not necessarily mean that they are also at once in the covenant as a communion of life. It does not even mean that the covenant relation will ever come to its full realization in their lives. Yet even in their case there must be a reasonable assurance that the covenant is not or will not remain a mere legal relationship, with external duties and privileges, pointing to that which ought to be, but is also or will in time become a living reality. This assurance is based on the promise of God, which is absolutely reliable, that He will work in the hearts of the covenant youth with His saving grace and transform them into living members of the covenant. The covenant is more than the mere offer of salvation, more even than the offer of salvation plus the promise to believe the gospel. It also carries with it the assurance, based on the promises of God, who works in the children of the covenant "when, where, and how He pleaseth," that saving faith will be wrought in their hearts. As long as the children of the covenant do not reveal the contrary, we shall have to proceed on the assumption that they are in possession of the covenant life. Naturally, the course of events may prove that this life is not yet present; it may even prove that it is never realized in their lives. The promises of God are given to the seed of believers collectively, and not individually. God’s promise to continue His covenant and to bring it to full realization in the children of believers, does not mean that He will endow every last one of them with saving faith. And if some of them continue in unbelief, we shall have to bear in mind what Paul says in Romans 9:6-8. They are not all Israel who are of Israel; the children of believers are not all children of promise. Hence it is necessary to remind even children of the covenant constantly of the necessity of regeneration and conversion. The mere fact that one is in the covenant does not carry with it the assurance of salvation. When the children of believers grow up and come to years of discretion, it is, of course, incumbent on them to accept their covenant responsibilities voluntarily by a true confession of faith. Failure to do this is, strictly speaking, a denial of their covenant relationship. It may be said therefore that the legal relationship in which the children of believers stand, precedes the covenant as a communion of life and is a means to its realization. But in emphasizing the significance of the covenant as a means to an end, we should not stress exclusively, nor even primarily, the demands of God and the resulting duty of man, but especially the promise of the effectual operation of the grace of God in the hearts of covenant children. If we stress the covenant responsibilities only or excessively, and fail to give due prominence to the fact that in the covenant God gives whatsoever He demands of us, in other words, that His promises cover all His requirements, we are in danger of falling into the snare of Arminianism.

3. UNREGENERATE IN THE COVENANT. From the preceding it follows that even unregenerate and unconverted persons may be in the covenant. Ishmael and Esau were originally in the

covenant, the wicked sons of Eli were covenant children, and the great majority of the Jews in the days of Jesus and the apostles belonged to the covenant people and shared in the covenant promises, though they did not follow the faith of their father Abraham. Hence the question arises, in what sense such persons may be regarded as being in the covenant. Dr. Kuyper says that they are not essential participants of the covenant, though they are really in it; and Dr. Bavinck says that they are in foedere (in the covenant), but not de foedere (of the covenant). The following may be said regarding their position in the covenant: a. They are in the covenant as far as their responsibility is concerned. Because they stand in the legal covenant relationship to God, they are in duty bound to repent and believe. If they do not turn to God and accept Christ by faith, when they come to years of discretion, they will be judged as breakers of the covenant. The special relationship in which they are placed to God, therefore, means added responsibility. b. They are in the covenant in the sense that they may lay claim to the promises which God gave when He established His covenant with believers and their seed. Paul even says of his wicked kinsmen, "whose is the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises," Romans 9:4. As a rule God gathers the number of His elect out of those who stand in this covenant relationship. c. They are in the covenant in the sense that they are subject to the ministrations of the covenant. They are constantly admonished and exhorted to live according to the requirements of the covenant. The Church treats them as covenant children, offers them the seals of the covenant, and exhorts them to a proper use of these. They are the guests who are first called to the supper, the children of the kingdom, to whom the Word must be preached first of all, Matthew 8:12; Luke 14:16-24; Acts 13:46. d. They are in the covenant also as far as the common covenant blessings are concerned. Though they do not experience the regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit, yet they are subject to certain special operations and influences of the Holy Spirit. The Spirit strives with them in a special manner, convicts them of sin, enlightens them in a measure, and enriches them with the blessings of common grace, Genesis 6:3; Matthew 13:18-22; Hebrews 6:4-6.

It should be noted that, while the covenant is an eternal and inviolable covenant, which God never nullifies, it is possible for those who are in the covenant to break it. If one who stands in the legal covenant relationship does not enter upon the covenant life, he is nevertheless regarded as a member of the covenant. His failure to meet the requirements of the covenant involves guilt and constitutes him a covenant breaker, Jeremiah 31:32; Ezekiel 44:7. This explains how there may be, not merely a temporary, but a final breaking of the covenant, though there is no falling away of the saints.

04.2.3.5. The Different Dispensations of the Covenant

V. The Different Dispensations of the Covenant A. THE PROPER CONCEPTION OF THE DIFFERENT DISPENSATIONS. The question arises, whether we ought to distinguish two or three, or with the modern Dispensationalists, seven or even more dispensations.

1. THE DISPENSATIONAL VIEW. According to Scofield "a dispensation is a period of time during which man is tested in respect of obedience to some specific revelation of the will of God."55 In further explanation of this he says on page 20 of his pamphlet on Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth: "Each of the dispensations may be regarded as a new test of the natural man, and each ends in judgment, — marking his failure." Every dispensation has a character of its own, and is so distinct that it cannot be commingled with any of the others. Seven such dispensations are usually distinguished, namely, the dispensation of innocency, of conscience, of human government, of promise, of the law, of grace, and of the kingdom. In answer to the question, whether God is then so fickle-minded that He must change His will as regards man seven times, Frank E. Gaebelein replies: "It is not God who has vacillated. Though there are seven dispensations, they are all one in principle, being throughout based upon the single test of obedience. And had man been found able to keep the conditions laid down by the first dispensation, the other six would have been unnecessary. But man failed. Yet, instead of casting off His guilty creature, God was moved with compassion, and gave him a fresh trial under new conditions. Thus each dispensation ends with failure, and each dispensation shows forth God’s mercy."56 There are serious objections to this view. (a) The word "dispensation" (oikonomia), which is a Scriptural term (cf. Luke 16:2-4; 1 Corinthians 9:17; Ephesians 1:10; Ephesians 3:2; Ephesians 3:9; Colossians 1:25; 1 Timothy 1:4) is here used in an un-Scriptural sense. It denotes a stewardship, an arrangement, or an administration, but never a testing time or a time of probation. (b) The distinctions are clearly quite arbitrary. This is evident already from the fact that dispensationalists themselves sometimes speak of them as overlapping. The second dispensation is called the dispensation of conscience, but according to Paul conscience was still the monitor of the Gentiles in his day, Romans 2:14-15. The third is known as the dispensation of human government, but the specific command in it which was disobeyed and therefore rendered man liable to judgment, was not the command to rule the world for God — of which there is no trace—, but the command to replenish the earth. The fourth is designated the dispensation of promise and is supposed to terminate with the giving of the law, but Paul says that the law did not disannul the promise, and that this was still in effect in his own day, Romans 4:13-17; Galatians 3:15-29. The so-called dispensation of the law is replete with glorious promises, and the so-called dispensation of grace did not abrogate the the law as a rule of life. Grace offers escape from the law only as a condition of salvation — as it is in the covenant of works —, from the curse of the law, and from the law as an extraneous power. (c) According to the usual representation of this theory man is on probation right along. He failed in the first test and thus missed the reward of eternal life, but God was compassionate and in mercy gave him a new trial. Repeated failures led to repeated manifestations of the mercy of God in the introduction of new trials, which, however, kept man on probation all the time. This is not equivalent to saying that

God in justice holds the natural man to the condition of the covenant of works — which is perfectly true — but that God in mercy and compassion — and therefore seemingly to save — gives man one chance after another to meet the ever varying conditions, and thus to obtain eternal life by rendering obedience to God. This representation is contrary to Scripture, which does not represent fallen man as still on probation, but as an utter failure, totally unable to render obedience to God, and absolutely dependent on the grace of God for salvation. Bullinger, himself a dispensationalist, though of a somewhat different type, is right when he says: "Man was then (in the first dispensation) what is called 'under probation.' This marks off that Administration sharply and absolutely; for man is not now under probation. To suppose that he is so, is a popular fallacy which strikes at the root of the doctrines of grace. Man has been tried and tested, and has proved to be a ruin."57 (d) This theory is also divisive in tendency, dismembering the organism of Scripture with disastrous results. Those parts of Scripture that belong to any one of the dispensations are addressed to, and have normative significance for, the people of that dispensation, and for no one else. This means in the words of Charles C. Cook "that in the Old Testament there is not one sentence that applies to the Christian as a Rule of Faith and Practice — not a single command that is binding on him, as there is not a single promise there given him at first hand, except what is included in the broad flow of the Plan of Redemption as there taught in symbol and prophecy."58 This does not mean that we can derive no lessons from the Old Testament. The Bible is divided into two books, the Book of the Kingdom, comprising the Old Testament and part of the New, addressed to Israel; and the Book of the Church, consisting of the remainder of the New Testament, and addressed to us. Since the dispensations do not intermingle, it follows that in the dispensation of the law there is no revelation of the grace of God, and in the dispensation of grace there is no revelation of the law as binding on the New Testament people of God. If space permitted, it would not be difficult to prove that this is an entirely untenable position.

2. THE THEORY OF THREE DISPENSATIONS. Irenæus spoke of three covenants, the first characterized by the law written in the heart, the second, by the law as an external commandment given at Sinai, and the third, by the law restored to the heart through the operation of the Holy Spirit; and thus suggests the idea of three dispensations. Coccejus distinguished three dispensations of the covenant of grace, the first ante legem, the second sub lege, and the third post legem. He made a sharp distinction, therefore, between the administration of the covenant before and after Moses. Now it is undoubtedly true that there is considerable difference between the administration of the covenant before and after the giving of the law, but the similarity is greater than the difference, so that we are not justified in co-ordinating the work of Moses with that of Christ as a dividing-line in the administration of the covenant. The following points of difference may be noted: a. In the manifestation of the gracious character of the covenant. In the patriarchal period the gracious character of the covenant stood out more prominently than in the later period. The promise was more in the foreground, Romans 4:13; Galatians 3:18. Yet even this should not be stressed unduly, as if there were no legal burdens, both moral and ceremonial, before the time of Moses, and no gracious promises during the period of the law. The substance of the law was in force before Moses, and sacrifices were already required. And gracious promises are found in great abundance in the post-Mosaic writings. The only real point of difference is this: because the law constituted for Israel an explicit reminder of the demands of the covenant of works, there was a greater danger of mistaking the way of the law for the way of salvation. And the history of Israel teaches us that it did not escape the danger. b. In the emphasis on the spiritual character of the

blessings. The spiritual character of the blessings of the covenant stands out more clearly in the patriarchial period. Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were mere sojourners in the land of promise, dwelling there as strangers and pilgrims. The temporal promise of the covenant was not yet fulfilled. Hence there was less danger of fixing the mind too exclusively on the material blessings, as the Jews did later on. The early patriarchs had a clearer understanding of the symbolical significance of those temporal possessions, and looked for a heavenly city, Galatians 4:25-26; Hebrews 11:9-10. c. In the understanding of the universal destination of the covenant. The universal destination of the covenant was more clearly evident in the patriarchal period. Abraham was told that in his seed all the nations of the world would be blessed, Genesis 22:18; Romans 4:13-25; Galatians 3:8. The Jews gradually lost sight of this important fact, and proceeded on the assumption that the blessings of the covenant were to be restricted to the Jewish nation. The later prophets, however, stressed the universality of the promises, and thus revived the consciousness of the world-wide significance of the covenant. But while these differences existed, there were several important points in which the pre- and post-Mosaic periods agreed, and in which they together differed from the Christian dispensation. While their difference from each other is simply one of degree, their common difference from the New Testament dispensation is one of contrast. As over against the Christian dispensation, the two Old Testament periods agree: a. In the representation of the Mediator as a seed that was still future. The whole Old Testament points forward to the coming Messiah. This forward look characterizes the protevangel, the promise given to the patriarchs, the whole Mosaic ritual, and the central messages of the prophets. b. In prefiguring the coming Redeemer in ceremonies and types. It s perfectly true that these increased after the giving of the law, but they were present long before that time. Sacrifices were offered as early as the days of Cain and Abel, and also had a piacular character, pointing forward to the great sacrifice of Jesus Christ. Those who served as priests foreshadowed the coming of the great High Priest. In distinction from the Old Testament, the New is commemorative rather than prefigurative. c. In prefiguring the vicissitudes of those who were destined to share in the spiritual realities of the covenant in the earthly career of those groups which stood in covenant relationship with God. The pilgrimage of the patriarchs in the Holy Land, the servitude in Egypt, the entrance into Canaan, all pointed forward to higher spiritual things. In the New Testament all these types reach their fulfilment and therefore cease. On the basis of all that has been said it is preferable to follow the traditional lines by distinguishing just two dispensations or administrations, namely, that of the Old, and that of the New Testament; and to subdivide the former into several periods or stages in the revelation of the covenant of grace.

B. THE OLD TESTAMENT DISPENSATION.

1. THE FIRST REVELATION OF THE COVENANT. The first revelation of the covenant is found in the protevangel, Genesis 3:15. Some deny that this has any reference to the covenant; and it certainly does not refer to any formal establishment of a covenant. The revelation of such an establishment could only follow after the covenant idea had been developed in history. At the same time Genesis 3:15 certainly contains a revelation of the essence of the covenant. The following points should be noted: a. By putting enmity between the serpent and the woman God establishes a relation, as He always does in making a covenant. The fall brought man in league with Satan, but God breaks that newly formed alliance by turning man’s friendship with Satan into enmity and re-establishing man in friendship with Himself; and this is the covenant idea. This

rehabilitation of man included the promise of sanctifying grace, for it was only by such grace that man's friendship with Satan could be turned into enmity. God Himself had to reverse the condition by regenerating grace. In all probability He at once wrought the grace of the covenant in the hearts of our first parents. And when God by His saving power generates enmity to Satan in the heart of man, this implies that He chooses the side of man, that He becomes man's confederate in the struggle with Satan, and thus virtually establishes an offensive and defensive covenant. b. This relationship between God and man on the one side and Satan on the other side, is not limited to the individuals, but extends to their seed. The covenant is organic in its operation and includes the generations. This is an essential element in the covenant idea. There will not only be a seed of man. but also a seed of the serpent, that is, of the devil, and there will be a prolonged struggle between the two, in which the seed of man will be victorious. c. The struggle, then, will not be indecisive. Though the heel of the woman's seed will be bruised, the head of the serpent will be crushed. It can only bite the heel, and by doing this endangers its very head. There will be suffering on the part of the seed of the woman, but the deadly sting of the serpent will terminate in its own death. The death of Christ, who is in a preeminent sense the seed of the woman, will mean the defeat of Satan. The prophecy of redemption is still impersonal in the protevangel, but it is nevertheless a Messianic prophecy. In the last analysis the seed of the woman is Christ, who assumes human nature, and, being put to death on the cross, gains the decisive victory over Satan. It goes without saying that our first parents did not understand all this.

2. THE COVENANT WITH NOAH. The covenant with Noah is evidently of a very general nature: God promises that He will not again destroy all flesh by the waters of a flood, and that the regular succession of seed time and harvest, cold and heat, winter and summer, day and night will continue. The forces of nature are bridled, the powers of evil are put under greater restraint, and man is protected against the violence of both man and beast. It is a covenant conferring only natural blessings, and is therefore often called the covenant of nature or of common grace. There is no objection to this terminology, provided it does not convey the impression that this covenant is dissociated altogether from the covenant of grace. Though the two differ, they are also most intimately connected. a.Points of difference. The following points of difference should be noted: (1) While the covenant of grace pertains primarily, though not exclusively, to spiritual blessings, the covenant of nature assures man only of earthly and temporal blessings. (2) While the covenant of grace in the broadest sense of the word includes only believers and their seed, and is fully realized only in the lives of the elect, the covenant with Noah was not only universal in its inception, but was destined to remain all-inclusive. Up to the days of the covenant transaction with Abraham there was no seal of the covenant of grace, but the covenant with Noah was confirmed by the token of the rainbow, a seal quite different from those that were later on connected with the covenant of grace. b.Points of connection. Notwithstanding the differences just mentioned, there is a most intimate connection between the two covenants. (1) The covenant of nature also originated in the grace of God. In this covenant, just as in the covenant of grace, God bestows on man not only unmerited favors, but blessings that were forfeited by sin. By nature man has no claim whatsoever on the natural blessings promised in this covenant. (2) This covenant also rests on the covenant of grace. It was established more particularly with Noah and his seed, because there were clear evidences of the realization of the covenant of grace in this family, Genesis 6:9; Genesis 7:1; Genesis 9:9; Genesis 9:2-27. (3) It is also a necessary appendage (Witsius: "aanhangsel") of the covenant of grace. The revelation of the covenant of grace in Genesis

3:16-19 already pointed to earthly and temporal blessings. These were absolutely necessary for the realization of the covenant of grace. In the covenant with Noah the general character of these blessings is clearly brought out, and their continuance is confirmed.

3. THE COVENANT WITH ABRAHAM. With Abraham we enter upon a new epoch in the Old Testament revelation of the covenant of grace. There are several points that deserve attention here: a. Up to the time of Abraham there was no formal establishment of the covenant of grace. While Genesis 3:15 already contains the elements of this covenant, it does not record a formal transaction by which the covenant was established. It does not even speak explicitly of a covenant. The establishment of the covenant with Abraham marked the beginning of an institutional Church. In pre-Abrahamic times there was what may be called "the church in the house." There were families in which the true religion found expression, and undoubtedly also gatherings of believers, but there was no definitely marked body of believers, separated from the world, that might be called the Church. There were "sons of God" and "sons of men," but these were not yet separated by a visible line of demarcation. At the time of Abraham, however, circumcision was instituted as a sealing ordinance, a badge of membership, and a seal of the righteousness of faith. b. In the transaction with Abraham the particularistic Old Testament administration of the covenant had its beginning, and it becomes perfectly evident that man is a party in the covenant and must respond to the promises of God by faith. The great central fact emphasized in Scripture, is that Abraham believed God and it was reckoned unto him for righteousness. God appears unto Abraham again and again, repeating His promises, in order to engender faith in his heart and to prompt its activity. The greatness of his faith was apparent in his believing against hope, in his trusting in the promise even when its fulfilment seemed to be a physical impossibility. c. The spiritual blessings of the covenant of grace become far more apparent in the covenant with Abraham than they were before. The best Scriptural exposition of the Abrahamic covenant is contained in Romans 3:1-31, Romans 4:1-25, and Galatians 3:1-29. In connection with the narrative found in Genesis these chapters teach that Abraham received in the covenant justification, including the forgiveness of sins and adoption into the very family of God, and also the gifts of the Spirit unto sanctification and eternal glory. d. The covenant with Abraham already included a symbolical element. On the one hand it had reference to temporal blessings, such as the land of Canaan, a numerous offspring, protection against and victory over the enemies; and on the other, it referred to spiritual blessings. It should be borne in mind, however, that the former were not coordinate with, but subordinate to, the latter. These temporal blessings did not constitute an end in themselves, but served to symbolize and typify spiritual and heavenly things. The spiritual promises were not realized in the natural descendants of Abraham as such, but only in those who followed in the footsteps of Abraham. e. In view of this establishment of the covenant of grace with Abraham, he is sometimes considered as the head of the covenant of grace. But the word "head" is rather ambiguous, and therefore liable to misunderstanding. Abraham cannot be called the representative head of the covenant of grace, just as Adam was of the covenant of works, for (1) the Abrahamic covenant did not include the believers that preceded him and who were yet in the covenant of grace, and (2) he could not accept the promises for us nor believe in our stead, thereby exempting us from these duties. If there is a representative head in the covenant of grace, it can only be Christ (cf. Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. III, pp. 239,241); but, strictly speaking, we can consider Him as the Head only on the assumption that the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace are one. Abraham can be called the head of the covenant

only in the sense that it was formally established with him, and that he received the promise of its continuance in the line of his natural, but above all, of his spiritual, descendants. Paul speaks of him as "the father of all them that believe," Romans 4:11. It is clear that the word "father" can only be understood figuratively here, for believers do not owe their spiritual life to Abraham. Says Dr. Hodge in his Commentary of Romans (Romans 4:11): "The word father expresses community of character, and is often applied to the head or founder of any school or class of men, whose character is determined by the relation to the person so designated; as Genesis 4:20-21. . . . Believers are called the children of Abraham, because of this identity of religious nature or character, as he stands out in Scripture as the believer; and because it was with him that the covenant of grace, embracing all the children of God, whether Jews or Gentiles, was re-enacted; and because they are his heirs, inheriting the blessings promised to him." f. Finally, we must not lose sight of the fact that the stage of the Old Testament covenant revelation which is most normative for us in the New Testament dispensation, is not that of the Sinaitic covenant, but that of the covenant established with Abraham. The Sinaitic covenant is an interlude, covering a period in which the real character of the covenant of grace, that is, its free and gracious character, is somewhat eclipsed by all kinds of external ceremonies and forms which, in connection with the theocratic life of Israel, placed the demands of the law prominently in the foreground, cf. Galatians 3:1-29. In the covenant with Abraham, on the other hand, the promise and the faith that responds to the promise are made emphatic.

4. THE SINAITIC COVENANT. The covenant of Sinai was essentially the same as that established with Abraham, though the form differed somewhat. This is not always recognized, and is not recognized by present day dispensationalists. They insist on it that it was a different covenant, not only in form but in essence. Scofield speaks of it as a legal covenant, a "conditional Mosaic covenant of works,"59 under which the point of testing was legal obedience as the condition of salvation.60 If that covenant was a covenant of works, it certainly was not the covenant of grace. The reason why it is sometimes regarded as an entirely new covenant is that Paul repeatedly refers to the law and the promise as forming an antithesis, Romans 4:13 ff.; Galatians 3:17. But it should be noted that the apostle does not contrast with the covenant of Abraham the Sinaitic covenant as a whole, but only the law as it functioned in this covenant, and this function only as it was misunderstood by the Jews. The only apparent exception to that rule is Galatians 4:21 ff., where two covenants are indeed compared. But these are not the Abrahamic and the Sinaitic covenants. The covenant that proceeds from Sinai and centers in the earthly Jerusalem, is placed over against the covenant that proceeds from heaven and centers in the Jerusalem that is above, that is, — the natural and the spiritual.

There are clear indications in Scripture that the covenant with Abraham was not supplanted by the Sinaitic covenant, but remained in force. Even at Horeb the Lord reminded the people of the covenant with Abraham, Deuteronomy 1:8; and when the Lord threatened to destroy the people after they had made the golden calf, Moses based his plea for them on that covenant, Exodus 32:13. He also assured them repeatedly that, whenever they repented of their sins and returned unto Him, He would be mindful of His covenant with Abraham, Leviticus 26:42; Deuteronomy 4:31. The two covenants are clearly represented in their unity in Psalms 105:8-10 : "He hath remembered His covenant forever, the word which He commanded to a thousand generations, the covenant which He made with Abraham, and His oath to Isaac, and confirmed the same unto

Jacob for a statute, to Israel for an everlasting covenant. "This unity also follows from the argument of Paul in Galatians 3:1-20, where he stresses the fact that an unchangeable God does not arbitrarily alter the essential nature of a covenant once confirmed; and that the law was not intended to supplant but to serve the gracious ends of the promise, Galatians 3:15-22. If the Sinaitic covenant was indeed a covenant of works, in which legal obedience was the way of salvation, then it certainly was a curse for Israel, for it was imposed on a people that could not possibly obtain salvation by works. But this covenant is represented in Scripture as a blessing bestowed upon Israel by a loving Father, Exodus 19:5; Leviticus 26:44-45; Deuteronomy 4:8. But though the covenant with Abraham and the Sinaitic covenant were essentially the same, yet the covenant of Sinai had certain characteristic features. a. At Sinai the covenant became a truly national covenant. The civil life of Israel was linked up with the covenant in such a way that the two could not be separated. In a large measure Church and State became one. To be in the Church was to be in the nation, and vice versa; and to leave the Church was to leave the nation. There was no spiritual excommunication; the ban meant cutting off by death. b. The Sinaitic covenant included a service that contained a positive reminder of the strict demands of the covenant of works. The law was placed very much in the foreground, giving prominence once more to the earlier legal element. But the covenant of Sinai was not a renewal of the covenant of works; in it the law was made subservient to the covenant of grace. This is indicated already in the introduction to the ten commandments, Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6, and further in Romans 3:20; Galatians 3:24. It is true that at Sinai a conditional element was added to the covenant, but it was not the salvation of the Israelite but his theocratic standing in the nation, and the enjoyment of external blessings that was made dependent on the keeping of the law, Deuteronomy 28:1-14. The law served a twofold purpose in connection with the covenant of grace: (1) to increase the consciousness of sin, Romans 3:20; Romans 4:15; Galatians 3:19; and (2) to be a tutor unto Christ, Galatians 3:24. c. The covenant with the nation of Israel included a detailed ceremonial and typical service. To some extent this was also present in the earlier period, but in the measure in which it was introduced at Sinai it was something new. A separate priesthood was instituted, and a continuous preaching of the gospel in symbols and types was introduced. These symbols and types appear under two different aspects: as the demands of God imposed on the people; and as a divine message of salvation to the people. The Jews lost sight of the latter aspect, and fixed their attention exclusively on the former. They regarded the covenant ever increasingly, but mistakenly, as a covenant of works, and saw in the symbols and types a mere appendage to this. d. The law in the Sinaitic covenant also served Israel as a rule of life, so that the one law of God assumed three different aspects, designated as the moral, the civil, and the ceremonial or religious law. The civil law is simply the application of the principles of the moral law to the social and civic life of the people in all its ramifications. Even the social and civil relations in which the people stood to each other had to reflect the covenant relation in which they stood. There have been several deviating opinions respecting the Sinaitic covenant which deserve attention. a. Coccejus saw in the decalogue a summary expression of the covenant of grace, particularly applicable to Israel. When the people, after the establishment of this national covenant of grace, became unfaithful and made a golden calf, the legal covenant of the ceremonial service was instituted as a stricter and harsher dispensation of the covenant of grace. Thus the revelation of grace is found particularly in the decalogue, and that of servitude in the ceremonial law. Before the covenant of Sinai the fathers lived under the promise. There were sacrifices, but these were not obligatory. b. Others regarded

the law as the formula of a new covenant of works established with Israel. God did not really intend that Israel should merit life by keeping the law, since this had become utterly impossible. He simply wanted them to try their strength and to bring them to a consciousness of their own inability. When they left Egypt, they stood strong in the conviction that they could do all that the Lord commanded; but at Sinai they soon discovered that they could not. In view of their consciousness of guilt the Lord now reestablished the Abrahamic covenant of grace, to which also the ceremonial law belonged. This reverses the position of Coccejus. The element of grace is found in the ceremonial law. This is somewhat in line with the view of present day dispensationalists, who regard the Sinaitic covenant as a "conditional Mosaic covenant of works" (Scofield), containing in the ceremonial law, however, some adumbrations of the coming redemption in Christ. c. Still others are of the opinion that God established three covenants at Sinai, a national covenant, a covenant of nature or of works, and a covenant of grace. The first was made with all the Israelites, and was the continuation of the particularistic line which began with Abraham. In it God demands external obedience, and promises temporal blessings. The second was a repetition of the covenant of works by the giving of a decalogue. And the last a renewal of the covenant of grace, as it was established with Abraham, in the giving of the ceremonial law. These views are all objectionable for more than one reason: (1) They are contrary to Scripture in their multiplication of the covenants. It is un-Scriptural to assume that more than one covenant was established at Sinai, though it was a covenant with various aspects. (2) They are mistaken in that they seek to impose undue limitations on the decalogue and on the ceremonial law. It is very evident that the ceremonial law has a double aspect; and it is clear also that the decalogue, though placing the demands of the law clearly in the foreground, is made subservient to the covenant of grace.

C. THE NEW TESTAMENT DISPENSATION.

Little need be said respecting the New Testament dispensation of the covenant. The following points should be noted:

1. The covenant of grace, as it is revealed in the New Testament, is essentially the same as that which governed the relation of Old Testament believers to God. It is entirely unwarranted to represent the two as forming an essential contrast, as is done by present day dispensationalism. This is abundantly evident from Romans 4:1-25 and Galatians 3:1-29. If it is sometimes spoken of as a new covenant, this is sufficiently explained by the fact that its administration differs in several particulars from that of the Old Testament. The following points will indicate what is meant.

2. The New Testament dispensation differs from that of the Old in that it is universal, that is, extends to all nations. The covenant of grace was originally universal; its particularism began with Abraham, and was continued and intensified in the Sinaitic covenant. This particularism, however, was not intended to be permanent, but to disappear after it had served its purpose. Even during the period of the law it was possible for Gentiles to join the people of Israel and thus to share in the blessings of the covenant. And when Christ brought His sacrifice, the blessing of Abraham flowed out to the nations; — those that were afar off were brought nigh.

3. The New Testament dispensation places greater emphasis on the gracious character of the covenant. The promise is very much in the foreground. In fact, it is clearly brought out that in the covenant of grace God freely gives what He demands. In this respect the new dispensation connects up with the Abrahamic rather than with the Sinaitic covenant, as Paul clearly brings out in

Romans 4:1-25 and Galatians 3:1-29. This does not mean, however, that there were no gracious promises during the period of the law. When Paul in 2 Corinthians 3:1-18 contrasts the ministry of the law with that of the gospel, he has in mind particularly the ministry of the law as it was understood by the later Jews, who turned the Sinaitic covenant into a covenant of works.

4. Finally, the New Testament dispensation brings richer blessings than the Old Testament dispensation. The revelation of God's grace reached its climax, when the Word became flesh and dwelt among men "full of grace and truth." The Holy Spirit is poured out upon the Church, and out of the fulness of the grace of God in Christ enriches believers with spiritual and eternal blessings. The present dispensation of the covenant of grace will continue until the return of Christ, when the covenant relation will be realized in the fullest sense of the word in a life of intimate communion with God.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. How did the introduction of the doctrine of the covenant affect the presentation of the truth in Reformed theology? Why did this doctrine meet with little favor outside of Reformed circles? Who were the first to introduce this doctrine? What characterized the federal theology of Coccejus? Why did some insist on treating the covenant of redemption and the covenant of grace as a single covenant? Why do others prefer to treat them separately? What can be said in answer to the flippant rejection of the covenant idea as a legal fiction? How can Christ be both party and surety in the same covenant? What can be said against the idea of Blake that the covenant of grace is a purely external relationship? What objections are there to the idea of two covenants, the one external, and the other internal? Why does Kuyper maintain that Christ, and Christ only, is the second party in the covenant of grace? In what sense does he regard the covenant of grace as an eternal covenant? What must we think of the tendency of modern Premillennialism, to multiply the covenants and the dispensations? How did modern dispensationalism originate? How does it conceive of the relation between the Old and the New Testament?

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04.3.1.0. The Person of Christ

The Person of Christ I. The Doctrine of Christ in History II The Names and Natures of Christ III. The Unipersonality of Christ

04.3.1.1. The Doctrine of Christ in History

I. The Doctrine of Christ in History THE RELATION BETWEEN ANTHROPOLOGY AND CHRISTOLOGY.

THERE is a very close connection between the doctrine of man and the doctrine of Christ. The former deals with man, created in the image of God and endowed with true knowledge, righteousness and holiness, but through wilful transgression of the law of God despoiled of his true humanity and transformed into a sinner. It points to man as a highly privileged creature of God, still bearing some of the traces of his original glory, but yet as a creature that has lost its birthright, its true freedom, and its original righteousness and holiness. This means that it directs attention, not merely, nor even primarily, to the creatureliness, but to the sinfulness of man. It emphasizes the ethical distance between God and man, the distance resulting from the fall of man, which neither man nor angels can bridge; and is as such virtually a cry for divine help. Christology is in part the answer to that cry. It acquaints us with the objective work of God in Christ to bridge the chasm, and to remove the distance. It shows us God coming to man, to remove the barriers between God and man by meeting the conditions of the law in Christ, and to restore man to His blessed communion. Anthropology already directs attention to the gracious provision of God for a covenant of friendship with man, which provides for a life of blessed communion with God; but it is a covenant which is effective only in and through Christ. And therefore the doctrine of Christ, as the Mediator of the covenant, must necessarily follow. Christ, typified and predicted in the Old Testament as the Redeemer of man, came in the fulness of time, to tabernacle among men and to effect an eternal reconciliation.

B. THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST BEFORE THE REFORMATION.

1. UP TO THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON. In the early Christian literature Christ stands out as both human and divine, the Son of Man, but also the Son of God. His sinless character is maintained, and He is regarded as a proper object of worship. Naturally, the problem presented by Christ, as at once God and man, and the difficulties involved in such a conception, were not fully felt by the early Christian mind and only dawned on it in the light of controversy. It was but natural that Judaism, with its strong emphasis on monotheism, should exercise considerable influence on the early Christians of Jewish extraction. The Ebionites (or part of them) felt constrained, in the interest of monotheism, to deny the deity of Christ. They regarded Him as a mere man, the son of Joseph and Mary, who was qualified at His baptism to be the Messiah, by the descent of the Holy Spirit upon Him. There were others in the early Church whose doctrine of Christ was constructed on similar lines. The Alogi, who rejected the writings of John, because they regarded his doctrine of the Logos as in conflict with the rest of the New Testament, also saw in Jesus a mere man, though miraculously born of a virgin, and taught that Christ descended on Him at baptism, conferring on Him supernatural powers. In the main this was also the position of the Dynamic Monarchians. Paul of Samosata, its main representative, distinguished between Jesus and the Logos. He regarded the former as a man like every other man, born of Mary, and the latter, as the

impersonal divine reason, which took up its abode in Christ in a pre-eminent sense, from the time of His baptism, and thus qualified Him for His great task. In view of this denial it was part of the task of the early Apologetes to defend the doctrine of the deity of Christ.

If there were some who sacrificed the deity to the humanity of Christ, there were others who reversed the order. The Gnostics were profoundly influenced by the dualistic conception of the Greeks, in which matter as inherently evil is represented as utterly opposed to spirit; and by a mystic tendency to regard earthly things as allegorical representations of great cosmic redeeming processes. They rejected the idea of an incarnation, a manifestation of God in a visible form, since it involved a direct contact of spirit with matter. Harnack says that the majority of them regarded Christ as a Spirit consubstantial with the Father. According to some He descended upon the man Jesus at the time of His baptism, but left Him again before His crucifixion; while according to others He assumed a merely phantasmal body. The Modalistic Monarchians also denied the humanity of Christ, partly in the interest of His deity, and partly to preserve the unity of the Divine Being. They saw in Him merely a mode or manifestation of the one God, in whom they recognized no distinction of persons. The Anti-Gnostic and Alexandrian Fathers took up the defense of the deity of Christ, but in their defense did not altogether escape the error of representing Him as subordinate to the Father. Even Tertullian taught a species of subordination, but especially Origen, who did not hesitate to speak of a subordination as to essence. This became a steppingstone for Arianism, in which Christ is distinguished from the Logos as the divine reason, and is represented as a pre-temporal, superhuman creature, the first of the creatures, not God and yet more than man. Athanasius took issue with Arius, and strongly defended the position that the Son is consubstantial with, and of the same essence as, the Father, a position that was officially adopted by the council of Nicea in 321. Semi-Arianism proposed a via media by declaring the Son to be of a similar essence as the Father. When the doctrine of the deity of the Son was officially established, the question naturally arose as to the relation in which the two natures in Christ stand to each other. Apollinaris offered a solution of the problem. Accepting the Greek trichotomic conception of man as consisting of body, soul, and spirit, he took the position that the Logos took the place of the spirit (pneuma) in man, which he regarded as the seat of sin. His chief interest was to secure the unity of the person in Christ, without sacrificing His real deity; and also to guard the sinlessness of Christ. But he did so at the expense of the complete humanity of the Saviour, and consequently his position was explicitly condemned by the Council of Constantinople in 381. One of the things for which Apollinaris contended was the unity of the person in Christ. That this was really in danger became quite apparent in the position taken by the school of Antioch, which exaggerated the distinction of the two natures in Christ. Theodore of Mopsuestia and Nestorius stressed the complete manhood of Christ, and conceived of the indwelling of the Logos in Him as a mere moral indwelling, such as believers also enjoy, though not to the same degree. They saw in Christ a man side by side with God, in alliance with God, sharing the purpose of God, but not one with Him in the oneness of a single personal life, — a Mediator consisting of two persons. In opposition to them Cyril of Alexandria strongly emphasized the unity of the person in Christ, and in the estimation of his opponents denied the two natures. While they in all probability misunderstood him, Eutychus and his followers certainly appealed to him, when they took up the position that the human nature of Christ was absorbed by the divine, or that the two were fused into a single nature, a position involving the denial of the two natures in Christ. The Council of Chalcedon in 451 condemned both of these views and maintained the unity of the person as well as the duality of the

natures.

2. AFTER THE COUNCIL OF CHALCEDON. For some time the Eutychian error was continued by the Monophysites and the Monothelites, but was finally overcome by the Church. The further danger that the human nature of Christ would be regarded as entirely impersonal was warded off by Leontius of Byzantium, when he pointed out that it is not impersonal but in-personal, having its personal subsistence in the person of the Son of God. John of Damascus, in whom the Christology of the East reached its highest development, added the idea that there is a circumincession of the divine and the human in Christ, a communication of the divine attributes to the human nature, so that the latter is deified and we may also say that God suffered in the flesh. He shows a tendency to reduce the human nature to the position of a mere organ or instrument of the Logos, yet he admits that there is a co-operation of the two natures, and that the one person acts and wills in each nature, though the human will is always subject to the divine. In the Western Church Felix, bishop of Urgella, advocated adoptionism. He regarded Christ as to His divine nature, that is, the Logos, as the onlybegotten Son of God in the natural sense, but considered Christ on His human side as a Son of God merely by adoption. He sought to preserve the unity of the person by stressing the fact that, from the time of His conception, the Son of Man was taken up into the unity of the person of the Son of God. Thus a distinction was made between a natural and an adoptive sonship, and the latter did not begin with the natural birth of Christ, but had its inception at the time of His baptism and was consummated in the resurrection. It was a spiritual birth that made Christ the adopted Son of God. The Church saw the unity of the person in Christ once more endangered by this view, and therefore it was condemned by the Synod of Frankfort in 794 A.D. The Middle Ages added very little to the doctrine of the person of Christ. Due to various influences, such as the emphasis on the imitation of Christ, the theories of the atonement, and the development of the doctrine of the mass, the Church retained a strong grasp on the full humanity of Christ. "The deity of Christ," says Mackintosh, "came into view rather as the infinite co-efficient raising human action and passion to an infinite value." And yet some of the Scholastics in their Christology set forth a docetic view of Christ. Peter the Lombard did not hesitate to say that in respect of His humanity Christ was nothing at all. But this Nihilism was condemned by the Church. Some new points were stressed by Thomas Aquinas. According to him the person of the Logos became composite at the incarnation, and its union with the manhood "hindered" the latter from arriving at an independent personality. The human nature of Christ received a twofold grace in virtue of its union with the Logos, (a) the gratia unionis, imparting to it a special dignity, so that it even became an object of worship, and (b) the gratia habitualis, which sustained it in its relationship to God. The human knowledge of Christ was twofold, namely, an infused and an acquired knowledge. There are two wills in Christ, but ultimate causality belongs to the divine will, to which the human will is always subject.

C. THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST AFTER THE REFORMATION.

1. UP TO THE NINETEENTH CENTURY. The Reformation did not bring any great changes in the doctrine of the person of Christ. Both the Church of Rome and the Churches of the Reformation subscribed to the doctrine of Christ as it was formulated by the Council of Chalcedon. Their important and deep-seated differences lay elsewhere. There is one peculiarity of Lutheran Christology that deserves special mention. Luther’s doctrine of the physical presence of Christ in the Lord’s supper led to the characteristically Lutheran view of the communicatio idiomatum, to the

effect "that each of Christ's natures permeates the other (perichoresis), and that His humanity participates in the attributes of His divinity."1It is held that the attributes of omnipotence, omniscience, and omnipresence were communicated to the human nature of Christ at the time of the incarnation. The question naturally arose, how this could be harmonized with what we know of the earthly life of Jesus. This question led to a difference of opinion among Lutheran theologians. Some held that Christ laid aside the divine attributes received in the incarnation, or used them only occasionally, while others said that He continued in possession of them during His entire earthly life, but concealed them or used them only secretly. Some Lutherans now seem inclined to discard this doctrine.

Reformed theologians saw in this Lutheran doctrine a species of Eutychianism or of the fusion of the two natures in Christ. Reformed theology also teaches a communication of attributes, but conceives of it in a different way. It believes that, after the incarnation, the properties of both natures can be attributed to the one person of Christ. The person of Christ can be said to be omniscient, but also, to have but limited knowledge; can be regarded as omnipresent, but also as being limited at any particular time to a single place. Hence we read in the Second Helvetic Confession: "We acknowledge, therefore, that there be in one and the same Jesus our Lord two natures — the divine and the human nature; and we say that these are so conjoined or united that they are not swallowed up, confounded, or mingled together, but rather united or joined together in one person (the properties of each being safe and remaining still), so that we do worship one Christ, our Lord, and not two. . . . Therefore we do not think nor teach that the divine nature in Christ did suffer, or that Christ, according to His human nature, is yet in the world, and so in every place."2

2. IN THE NINTEENTH CENTURY. About the beginning of the nineteenth century a great change took place in the study of the person of Christ. Up to that time the point of departure had been prevailingly theological, and the resulting Christology was theocentric; but during the last part of the eighteenth century there was a growing conviction that better results could be attained by starting closer at home, namely, with the study of the historical Jesus. Thus the so-called "second Christological period" was ushered in. The new point of view was anthropological, and the result was anthropocentric. It proved to be destructive of the faith of the Church. A far-reaching and pernicious distinction was made between the historical Jesus, delineated by the writers of the Gospels, and the theological Christ, who was the fruit of the fertile imagination of theological thinkers, and whose image is now reflected in the creeds of the Church. The supernatural Christ made way for a human Jesus; and the doctrine of the two natures, for the doctrine of a divine man.

Schleiermacher stood at the head of the new development. He regarded Christ as a new creation, in which human nature is elevated to the plane of ideal perfection. Yet his Christ can hardly be said to rise above the human level. The uniqueness of His person consists in the fact that He possesses a perfect and unbroken sense of union with the divine, and also realizes to the full the destiny of man in His character of sinless perfection. His supreme dignity finds its explanation in a special presence of God in Him, in His unique God-consciousness. Hegel's conception of Christ is part and parcel of his pantheistic system of thought. The Word become flesh means for him God become incarnate in humanity, so that the incarnation really expresses the oneness of God and man. The incarnation of Christ was, so it seems, merely the culmination of a racial process. While mankind in general regards Jesus only as a human teacher, faith recognizes Him as divine and

finds that by His coming into the world the transcendence of God is changed into immanence. Here we meet with a pantheistic identification of the human and the divine in the doctrine of Christ.

Something of this is also seen in the Kenotic theories, which represent a rather remarkable attempt to improve on the construction of the doctrine of the person of Christ. The term kenosis is derived from Php 2:7, which teaches that Christ "emptied (ekenosen) Himself, taking the form of a servant." The Kenoticists take this to mean that the Logos literally became, that is, was changed into a man by reducing (depotentiating) Himself, either wholly or in part, to the dimensions of a man, and then increased in wisdom and power until at last He again became God. This theory appeared in various forms, of which the most absolute is that of Gess, and for a time enjoyed considerable popularity. It aimed at maintaining the reality and integrity of the manhood of Christ, and to throw into strong relief the greatness of His humiliation in that He, being rich, for our sakes became poor. It involves, however, a pantheistic obliteration of the line of demarcation between God and man. Dorner, who was the greatest representative of the Mediating school, strongly opposed this view, and substituted for it the doctrine of a progressive incarnation. He saw in the humanity of Christ a new humanity with a special receptivity for the divine. The Logos, the principle of self-bestowal in God, joined Himself to this humanity; the measure in which He did this was determined at every stage by the ever-increasing receptivity of the human nature for the divine, and did not reach its final stage until the resurrection. But this is merely a new and subtle form of the old Nestorian heresy. It yields a Christ consisting of two persons. With the exception of Schleiermacher, no one has exercised greater influence on present day theology than Albrecht Ritschl. His Christology takes its starting point in the work, rather than in the person of Christ. The work of Christ determines the dignity of His person. He was a mere man, but in view of the work which He accomplished and the service He rendered, we rightly attribute to Him the predicate of Godhead. He rules out the pre-existence, the incarnation, and the virgin birth of Christ, since this finds no point of contact in the believing consciousness of the Christian community. Christ was the founder of the kingdom of God, thus making the purpose of God His own, and now in some way induces men to enter the Christian community and to live a life that is motivated entirely by love. He redeems man by His teaching, example, and unique influence, and is therefore worthy to be called God. This is virtually a renewal of the doctrine of Paul of Samosata. On the basis of the modern pantheistic idea of the immanence of God, the doctrine of Christ is to-day often represented in a thoroughly naturalistic way. The representations may vary greatly, but the fundamental idea is generally the same, that of an essential unity of God and man. The doctrine of the two natures of Christ has disappeared from modern theology, and instead we have a pantheistic identification of God and man. Essentially all men are divine, since they all have a divine element in them; and they are all sons of God, differing from Christ only in degree. Modern teaching about Christ is all based on the doctrine of the continuity of God and man. And it is exactly against this doctrine that Barth and those who are like-minded with him have raised their voice. There are in some circles to-day signs of a return to the two- nature doctrine. Micklem confesses in his What Is the Faith? that for many years he confidently asserted that the ascription to Christ of two natures in one person had to be abandoned, but now sees that this rested on a misunderstanding.3

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. What was the background of the Christological controversy in the early centuries? What ancient errors were revived by Roscelinus and Abelard?

What was the Christological Nihilism in vogue among the disciples of Abelard? How did Peter the Lombard view Christ? Did the Scholastics bring any new points to the fore? Where do we find the official Lutheran Christology? How can we account for the seemingly inconsistent representations of the formula of Concord? What objections are there to the Lutheran view that divine attributes may be predicated of the human nature? How did the Lutherans and the Reformed differ in their interpretation of Php 2:5-11? How does the Reformed Christology differ from the Lutheran? What is the main difference between recent and earlier Christologies? What objections are there to the Kenosis doctrine? What are the objectionable features of modern Christology? How do Barth and Brunner view Christ?

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04.3.1.2. The Names and Natures of Christ

II. The Names and Natures of Christ A. THE NAMES OF CHRIST.

There are especially five names that call for a brief discussion at this point. They are partly descriptive of His natures, partly of His official position, and partly of the work for which He came into the world.

1. THE NAME JESUS. The name Jesus is the Greek form of the Hebrew Jehoshua, Joshua, Joshua 1:1; Zechariah 3:1, or Jeshua (regular form in the post exilic historical books), Ezra 2:2. The derivation of this common name of the Saviour is veiled in obscurity. The generally accepted opinion is that it is derived from the root yasha', hiph., hoshia', to save, but it is not easy to explain how Jehoshua' became Jeshua'. Probably Hoshea', derived from the infinitive, was the original form (cf. Numbers 13:8; Numbers 13:16; Deuteronomy 32:44), expressing merely the idea of redemption. The yod which is the sign of the imperfect, may have been added to express the certainty of redemption. This would best agree with the interpretation of the name given in Matthew 1:21. For another derivation from Jeho (Jehovah) and shua, that is help (Gotthilf) cf. Kuyper, Dict. Dogm.4 The name was borne by two well known types of Jesus in the Old Testament.

2. THE NAME CHRIST. If Jesus is the personal, Christ is the official, name of the Messiah. It is the equivalent of the Old Testament Mashiach (from mashach, to anoint), and thus means "the anointed one." Kings and priests were regularly anointed during the old dispensation, Exodus 29:7; Leviticus 4:3; Judges 9:8; 1 Samuel 9:16; 1 Samuel 10:1; 2 Samuel 19:10. The King was called "the anointed of Jehovah," 1 Samuel 24:10. Only a single instance of the anointing of a prophet is recorded, 1 Kings 19:16, but there are probably references to it in Psalms 105:15 and Isaiah 61:1. The oil used in anointing these officers symbolized the Spirit of God, Isaiah 61:1; Zechariah 4:1-6, and the anointing represented the transfer of the Spirit to the consecrated person, 1 Samuel 10:1; 1 Samuel 10:6; 1 Samuel 10:10; 1 Samuel 16:13-14. The anointing was a visible sign of (a) an appointment to office; (b) the establishment of a sacred relationship and the consequent sacrosanctness of the person anointed, 1 Samuel 24:6; 1 Samuel 26:9; 2 Samuel 1:14; and (c) a communication of the Spirit to the anointed one, 1 Samuel 16:13, cf. also 2 Corinthians 1:21-22. The Old Testament refers to the anointing of the Lord in Psalms 2:2; Psalms 45:7, and the New Testament, in Acts 4:27; Acts 10:38. Formerly references to it were also found in Psalms 2:6 and Proverbs 8:23, but to-day Hebraists assert that the word nasak, used in these passages, means "to set up" rather than "to anoint." But even cf. also Isaiah 11:2; Isaiah 42:1. Christ was set up or appointed to His offices from so the word points to the reality of the first thing symbolized in the anointing, eternity, but historically His anointing took place when He was conceived by the Holy Spirit, Luke 1:35, and when he received the Holy Spirit, especially at the time of His baptism, Matthew 3:16; Mark 1:10; Luke 3:22; John 1:32; John 3:34. It served to qualify Him for His great task. The name "Christ" was first applied to the Lord as a common noun with the article, but gradually developed into a proper noun, and was used without the article.

3. THE NAME SON OF MAN. In the Old Testament this name is found in Psalms 8:4; Daniel 7:13, and frequently in the Prophecy of Ezekiel. It is also found in the Apochrypha, Enoch 46 and 62, and 2Es 13:1-58. The dependence of the New Testament usage of it on the passage in Daniel is now quite generally admitted, though in that prophecy it is merely a descriptive phrase, and not yet a title. The transition from the one to the other was made later on, and was apparently already an accomplished fact when the book of Enoch was written. It was the most common self-designation of Jesus. He applied the name to Himself on more than forty occasions, while others all but refrained from employing it. The only exception in the Gospels is in John 12:34, where it appears in an indirect quotation of a word of Jesus; and in the rest of the New Testament only Stephen and John employ it, Acts 7:56; Revelation 1:13; Revelation 14:14.

Dr. Vos in his work on The Self-Disclosure of Jesus divides the passages in which the name occurs into four classes: (a) Passages which clearly refer to the eschatological coming of the Son of Man, as for instance, Matthew 16:27-28; Mark 8:38; Mark 13:26, etc. and parallels. (b) Passages which speak particularly of Jesus' sufferings, death, and (sometimes) resurrection, as, for instance, Matthew 17:22; Matthew 20:18-19; Matthew 20:28; Matthew 12:40, etc. and parallels. (c) Passages in the Fourth Gospel, in which the heavenly superhuman side and the pre-existence of Jesus is stressed, as for instance, John 1:51; John 3:13-14; John 6:27; John 6:53; John 6:62; John 8:28, and so on. (d) A small group of passages, in which Jesus reflects upon His human nature, Mark 2:27-28; John 5:27; John 6:27; John 6:51; John 6:62. It is hard to determine why Jesus preferred this name as a self-designation. Formerly the name was generally regarded as a cryptic title, by the use of which Jesus intended to veil rather than to reveal His Messiahship. This explanation was discarded when more attention was paid to the eschatological element in the Gospels, and to the use of the name in the apocalyptic literature of the Jews. Dalman revived the idea and regarded the title once more as "an intentional veiling of the Messianic character under a title which affirms the humanity of Him who bore it."5 The supposed proof for this is found in Matthew 16:13; John 12:34. But the proof is doubtful; the latter passage even shows that the people understood the name Messianically. Dr. Vos is of the opinion that Jesus probably preferred the name, because it stood farthest removed from every possible Jewish prostitution of the Messianic office. By calling Himself the Son of Man, Jesus imparted to the Messiahship His own heaven-centered spirit. And the height to which He thus lifted His person and work may well have had something to do with the hesitancy of His early followers to name Him with the most celestial of all titles.6

4. THE NAME SON OF GOD. The name "Son of God" was variously applied in the Old Testament: (a) to the people of Israel, Exodus 4:22; Jeremiah 31:9; Hosea 11:1; (b) to officials among Israel, especially to the promised king of the house of David, 2 Samuel 7:14; Psalms 89:27; (c) to angels, Job 1:6; Job 2:1; Job 38:7; Psalms 29:1; Psalms 89:6; and (d) to pious people in general, Genesis 6:2; Psalms 73:15; Proverbs 14:26. Among Israel the name acquired theocratic significance. In the New Testament we find Jesus appropriating the name, and others also ascribing it to Him. The name is applied to Jesus in four different senses, which are not always kept distinct in Scripture but are sometimes combined. The name is applied to Him: a. In the official or Messianic sense, as a description of the office rather than of the nature of Christ. The Messiah could be called Son of God as God's heir and representative. The demons evidently understood the name Messianically, when they applied it to Jesus. It seems to have this meaning

also in Matthew 24:36; Mark 13:32. Even the name, as uttered by the voice at the baptism of Jesus and at His transfiguration, Matthew 3:17; Matthew 17:5; Mark 1:11; Mark 9:7; Luke 3:22; Luke 9:35, can be so interpreted, but in all probability has a deeper meaning. There are several passages in which the Messianic sense is combined with the trinitarian sense, cf. under (b). b. In the trinitarian sense. The name is sometimes used to denote the essential deity of Christ. As such it points to a pre-existent sonship, which absolutely transcends the human life of Christ and His official calling as Messiah. Instances of this use are found in Matthew 11:27; Matthew 14:28-33; Matthew 16:16, and parallels; Matthew 21:33-46, and parallels; Matthew 22:41-46; Matthew 26:63, and parallels. In some of these cases the idea of the Messianic sonship also enters more or less. We find the ontological and the Messianic sonship interwoven also in several Johannine passages, in which Jesus clearly intimates that He is the Son of God, though He does not use the name, as in John 6:69; John 8:16, John 8:18, John 8:23; John 10:15, John 10:30; John 14:20, and so on. In the Epistles Christ is frequently designated as the Son of God in the metaphysical sense, Romans 1:3; Romans 8:3; Galatians 4:4; Hebrews 1:1, and many other passages. In modern liberal theology it is customary to deny the metaphysical sonship of Christ. c. In the nativistic sense. Christ is also called the Son of God in virtue of His supernatural birth. The name is so applied to Him in the well known passage in the Gospel of Luke, in which the origin of His human nature is ascribed to the direct, supernatural paternity of God, namely, Luke 1:35. Dr. Vos also finds indications of this sense of the name in Matthew 1:18-24; John 1:13. Naturally, this meaning of the name is also denied by modern liberal theology, which does not believe in the virgin birth, nor in the supernatural conception of Christ. d. In the ethico-religious sense. It is in this sense that the name "sons" or "children of God" is applied to believers in the New Testament. It is possible that we have an example of the application of the name "Son of God" to Jesus in that ethico-religious sense in Matthew 27:24-27. This depends on the question, whether Peter is here represented as also exempt from the templetax. It is especially in this sense that modern liberal theology ascribes the name to Jesus. It finds that the sonship of Jesus is only an ethico- religious sonship, somewhat heightened indeed, but not essentially different from that of His disciples.

5. THE NAME LORD (Kurios). The name "Lord" is applied to God in the Septuagint, (a) as the equivalent of Jehovah; (b) as the rendering of Adonai; and (c) as the translation of a human honorific title applied to God (chiefly Adon), Joshua 3:11; Psalms 97:5. In the New Testament we find a somewhat similar threefold application of the name to Christ, (a) as a polite and respectful form of address, Matthew 8:2; Matthew 20:33; (b) as expressive of ownership and authority, without implying anything as to Christ’s divine character and authority, Matthew 21:3; Matthew 24:42; and (c) with the highest connotation of authority, expressive of an exalted character, and in fact practically equivalent to the name "God," Mark 12:36-37; Luke 2:11; Luke 3:4; Acts 2:36; 1 Corinthians 12:3; Php 2:11. In some cases it is hard to determine the exact connotation of the title. Undoubtedly, after the exaltation of Christ, the name was generally applied to Him in the most exalted sense. But there are instances of its use even before the resurrection, where the specifically divine import of the title has evidently already been reached, as in Matthew 7:22; Luke 5:8; John 20:28. There is a great difference of opinion among scholars respecting the origin and development of this title as applied to Jesus. In spite of all that has been advanced to the contrary, there is no reason to doubt that the use of the name, as applied to Jesus, is rooted in the Old Testament. There is one constant element in the history of the conception, and that is the element of authoritative ownership. The Epistles of Paul suggest the additional idea that it is an authority

and ownership resting on antecedently acquired rights. It is doubtful, whether this element is already present in the Gospels.

B. THE NATURES OF CHRIST. From the earliest times, and more particularly since the Council of Chalcedon, the Church confessed the doctrine of the two natures of Christ. The Council did not solve the problem presented by a person who was at once human and divine, but only sought to ward off some of the solutions which were offered and were clearly recognized as erroneous. And the Church accepted the doctrine of the two natures in one person, not because it had a complete understanding of the mystery, but because it clearly saw in it a mystery revealed by the Word of God. It was and remained ever since for the Church an article of faith, far beyond human comprehension. Rationalistic attacks on the doctrine were not entirely wanting, but the Church remained firm in the confession of this truth, in spite of the fact that it was once and again declared to be contrary to reason. In this confession Roman Catholics and Protestants stand shoulder to shoulder. But from the last part of the eighteenth century on this doctrine was made the butt of persistent attacks. The Age of Reason set in, and it was declared to be unworthy of man to accept on the authority of Scripture what was clearly contrary to human reason. That which did not commend itself to this new arbiter was simply declared to be erroneous. Individual philosophers and theologians now tried their hand at solving the problem presented by Christ, in order that they might offer the Church a substitute for the two- nature doctrine. They took their starting point in the human Jesus, and even after a century of painstaking research found in Jesus no more than a man with a divine element in Him. They could not rise to the recognition of Him as their Lord and their God. Schleiermacher spoke of a man with a supreme God-consciousness, Ritschl, of a man having the value of a God, Wendt, of a man standing in a continual inward fellowship of love with God, Beyschlag, of a God-filled man, and Sanday, of a man with an inrush of the divine in the sub-consciousness; — but Christ is and remains merely a man. To-day the liberal school represented by Harnack, the eschatological school of Weiss and Schweitzer, and the more recent school of comparative religion, headed by Bousset and Kirsopp Lake, all agree in denuding Christ of His true deity, and in reducing Him to human dimensions. To the first our Lord is merely a great ethical teacher; to the second, an apocalyptic seer; and to the third a peerless leader to an exalted destiny. They regard the Christ of the Church as the creation of Hellenism, or of Judaism, or of the two combined. To-day, however, the whole epistemology of the previous century is called in question, and the sufficiency of human reason for the interpretation of ultimate truth is seriously questioned. There is a new emphasis on revelation. And influential theologians, such as Barth and Brunner, Edwin Lewis and Nathaniel Micklem, do not hesitate to confess faith once more in the doctrine of the two natures. It is of the utmost importance to maintain this doctrine, as it was formulated by the Council of Chalcedon and is contained in our Confessional Standards.7

1. SCRIPTURE PROOFS FOR THE DEITY OF CHRIST. In view of the widespread denial of the deity of Christ, it is of the utmost importance to be thoroughly conversant with the Scripture proof for it. The proof is so abundant that no one who accepts the Bible as the infallible Word of God can entertain any doubt on this point. For the ordinary classification of the Biblical proofs, as derived from the divine names, the divine attributes, the divine works, and the divine honor ascribed to Him, we would refer to the chapter on the Trinity. A somewhat different arrangement is followed here in view of the recent trend of historical criticism. a. In the Old Testament. Some have shown an inclination to deny that the Old Testament contains predictions of a divine Messiah, but this

denial is quite untenable in view of such passages as Psalms 2:6-12 (Hebrews 1:5); Psalms 45:6-7 (Hebrews 1:8-9); Psalms 110:1 (Hebrews 1:13); Isaiah 9:6; Jeremiah 23:6; Daniel 7:13; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 13:7; Malachi 3:1. Several of the latest historical scholars strongly insist on the fact that the doctrine of a superhuman Messiah was native to pre-Christian Judaism. Some even find in it the explanation for the supernatural Christology of parts of the New Testament. b. In the writings of John and Paul. It has been found quite impossible to deny that both John and Paul teach the deity of Christ. In the Gospel of John the most exalted view of the person of Christ is found, as appears from the following passages: John 1:1-3; John 1:14; John 1:18; John 2:24-25; John 3:16-18; John 3:35-36; John 4:14-15; John 5:18; John 5:20-22; John 5:25-27; John 11:41-44; John 20:28; 1 John 1:3; 1 John 2:23; 1 John 4:14-15; 1 John 5:5; 1 John 5:10-13; 1 John 5:20. A similar view is found in the Pauline Epistles and in the Epistle to the Hebrews, Romans 1:7; Romans 9:5; 1 Corinthians 1:1-3; 1 Corinthians 2:8; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 4:4; Php 2:6; Colossians 2:9; 2 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:1-3; Hebrews 1:5; Hebrews 1:8; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 5:8, and so on. Critical scholars sought escape from the doctrine clearly taught in these writings in various ways as, for instance, by denying the historicity of the Gospel of John and the authenticity of many of the Epistles of Paul; by regarding the representations of John, Paul, and Hebrews as unwarranted interpretations, in the case of John and Hebrews especially under the influence of the Philonic Logos doctrine, and in the case of Paul under the same influence, or under that of his pre-Christian, Jewish views; or by ascribing to Paul a lower view than is found in John, namely, that of Christ as a pre-existent, heavenly man. c. In the Synoptics. Some maintain that the Synoptics only furnish us with a true picture of Christ. They, it is said, portray the human, the truly historical Jesus, as contrasted with the idealized picture of the Fourth Gospel. But it is perfectly evident that the Christ of the Synoptics is just as truly divine as the Christ of John. He stands out as a supernatural person throughout, the Son of Man and the Son of God. His character and works justify His claim. Notice particularly the following passages: Matthew 5:17; Matthew 9:6; Matthew 11:1-6; Matthew 11:27; Matthew 14:33; Matthew 16:16-17; Matthew 28:18; Matthew 24:31 ff.; Mark 8:38, and many similar and parallel passages. Dr. Warfield’s The Lord of Glory is very illuminating on this point. d. In the self-consciousness of Jesus. In recent years there has been a tendency to go back to the self-consciousness of Jesus and to deny that He was conscious of being the Messiah or the Son of God. Naturally, it is not possible to have any knowledge of the consciousness of Jesus, except through His words, as these are recorded in the Gospels; and it is always possible to deny that they correctly express the mind of Jesus. For those who accept the Gospel testimony there can be no doubt as to the fact that Jesus was conscious of being the very Son of God. The following passages bear witness to this: Matthew 11:27 (Luke 10:22); Matthew 21:37-38 (Mark 12:6; Luke 20:13); Matthew 22:41-46 (Mark 13:35-37; Luke 20:41-44); Matthew 24:36 (Mark 13:32); Matthew 28:19. Some of these passages testify to Jesus’ Messianic consciousness; others to the fact that He was conscious of being the Son of God in the most exalted sense. There are several passages in Matthew and Luke, in which He speaks of the first person of the Trinity as "my Father," Matthew 7:21; Matthew 10:32-33; Matthew 11:27; Matthew 12:50; Matthew 15:13; Matthew 16:17; Matthew 18:10; Matthew 18:19; Matthew 18:35; Matthew 20:23; Matthew 25:34; Matthew 26:29; Matthew 26:53; Luke 2:49; Luke 22:29; Luke 24:49. In the Gospel of John the consciousness of being the very Son of God is even more apparent in such passages as John 3:13; John 5:17-27; John 6:37-40; John 6:58; John 8:34-36; John 10:17-18; John 10:30; John 10:35-36, and other passages.

2. SCRIPTURE PROOF FOR THE REAL HUMANITY OF CHRIST. There has been a time, when the reality (Gnosticism) and the natural integrity (Docetism, Apollinarianism) of the human nature of Christ was denied, but at present no one seriously questions the real humanity of Jesus Christ. In fact, there is at present an extreme emphasis on His veritable humanity, an ever-growing humanitarianism. The only divinity many still ascribe to Christ, is simply that of His perfect humanity. This modern tendency is, no doubt, in part a protest against a one-sided emphasis on the deity of Christ. Men have sometimes forgotten the human Christ in their reverence for the divine. It is very important to maintain the reality and integrity of the humanity of Jesus by admitting his human development and human limitations. The splendor of His deity should not be stressed to the extent of obscuring His real humanity. Jesus called Himself man, and is so called by others, John 8:40; Acts 2:22; Romans 5:15; 1 Corinthians 15:21. The most common self-designation of Jesus, "the Son of Man," whatever connotation it may have, certainly also indicates the veritable humanity of Jesus. Moreover, it is said that the Lord came or was manifested in the flesh, John 1:14; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 4:2. In these passages the term "flesh" denotes human nature. The Bible clearly indicates that Jesus possessed the essential elements of human nature, that is, a material body and a rational soul, Matthew 26:26; Matthew 26:28; Matthew 26:38; Luke 23:46; Luke 24:39; John 11:33; Hebrews 2:14. There are also passages which show that Jesus was subject to the ordinary laws of human development, and to human wants and sufferings, Luke 2:40; Luke 2:52; Hebrews 2:10; Hebrews 2:18; Hebrews 5:8. It is brought out in detail that the normal experiences of man’s life were His, Matthew 4:2; Matthew 8:24; Matthew 9:36; Mark 3:5; Luke 22:44; John 4:6; John 11:35; John 12:27; John 19:28; John 19:30; Hebrews 5:7.

3.SCRIPTURE PROOF FOR THE SINLESS HUMANITY OF CHRIST. We ascribe to Christ not only natural, but also moral, integrity or moral perfection, that is sinlessness. This means not merely that Christ could avoid sinning (potuit non peccare), and did actually avoid it, but also that it was impossible for Him to sin (non potuit peccare) because of the essential bond between the human and the divine natures. The sinlessness of Christ has been denied by Martineau, Irving, Menken, Holsten, and Pfleiderer, but the Bible clearly testifies to it in the following passages: Luke 1:35; John 8:46; John 14:30; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 2:22; 1 John 3:5. While Christ was made to be sin judicially, yet ethically He was free from both hereditary depravity and actual sin. He never makes a confession of moral error; nor does He join His disciples in praying, "Forgive us our sins." He is able to challenge His enemies to convince Him of sin. Scripture even represents Him as the one in whom the ideal man is realized, Hebrews 2:8-9; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 2 Corinthians 3:18; Php 3:21. Moreover, the name "Son of Man," appropriated by Jesus, seems to intimate that He answered to the perfect ideal of humanity.

4. THE NECESSITY OF THE TWO NATURES IN CHRIST. It appears from the preceding that, in the present day, many do not recognize the necessity of assuming two natures in Christ. To them Jesus is but a man; yet at the same time they feel constrained to ascribe to Him the value of a God, or to claim divinity for Him in virtue of the immanence of God in Him, or of the indwelling Spirit. The necessity of the two natures in Christ follows from what is essential to the Scriptural doctrine of the atonement. a. The necessity of His manhood. Since man sinned, it was necessary that the penalty should be borne by man. Moreover, the paying of the penalty involved suffering of body and soul, such as only man is capable of bearing, John 12:27; Acts 3:18; Hebrews 2:14; Hebrews 9:22. It was necessary that Christ should assume human nature, not only with all its

essential properties, but also with all the infirmities to which it is liable after the fall, and should thus descend to the depths of degradation to which man had fallen, Hebrews 2:17-18. At the same time, He had to be a sinless man, for a man who was himself a sinner and who had forfeited his own life, certainly could not atone for others, Hebrews 7:26. Only such a truly human Mediator, who had experimental knowledge of the woes of mankind and rose superior to all temptations, could enter sympathetically into all the experiences, the trials, and the temptations of man, Hebrews 2:17-18; Hebrews 4:15 to Hebrews 5:2, and be a perfect human example for His followers, Matthew 11:29; Mark 10:39; John 13:13-15; Php 2:5-8; Hebrews 12:2-4; 1 Peter 2:21. b. The necessity of His Godhead. In the divine plan of that the Mediator should also be very God. This was necessary, in order that (1) He might bring a sacrifice of infinite value and render perfect obedience to the law of God; (2) He might bear the wrath of God redemptively, that is, so as to free others from the curse of the law; and (3) He might be able to apply the fruits of His accomplished work to those who accepted Him by faith. Man with his bankrupt life can neither pay the penalty of sin, nor render perfect obedience to God. He can bear the wrath of God and, except for the redeeming grace of God, will have to bear it eternally, but he cannot bear it so as to open a way of escape, Psalms 49:7-10; Psalms 130:3.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. What Old Testament persons bore the name 'Jesus,' and in what respect did they typify the Saviour? Is the bare title 'the Messiah,' without a genitive or a pronominal suffix, ever found in the Old Testament? How does Dalman account for its occurence in Jewish apocalyptic literature? Do the terms 'the anointed of Jehovah,' 'His anointed,' and 'my anointed' always have the same meaning in the Old Testament? Whence comes the idea that believers share the anointing of Christ? What about the idea that the name 'Son of Man,' reduced to its probable Aramaic original, simply means 'man'? How about the idea of Weiss and Schweitzer that Jesus employed the name only in a futuristic sense? Did He use it before Peter's confession at Cæsarea-Philippi? How do the liberals square their conception of Jesus as the Son of God only in a religious and ethical sense with the data of Scripture? What is the usual view of the origin of the Kurios-title? What theory was broached by Bousset and other liberal scholars? What accounts for the opposition to the two-natures doctrine? Is it a necessary doctrine, or is there some other doctrine that might take its place? What objections are there to the adoptionist doctrine;—to the Kenotic theories;—to the idea of a gradual incarnation;—to the Ritschlian view;—to Sanday's theory?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. III, pp. 259-265, 328-335, 394-396; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Christo I, pp. 44-61, 128-153; II, pp. 2-23; Hodge, Syst. Theol. II, pp. 378-387; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol. pp. 464-477; Vos, Geref. Dogm. III, pp. 1-31; ibid. The Self-Disclosure of Jesus, pp. 104-256; ibid. on the Kurios-title Princeton Theol. Review, Vol. XIII, pp. 151 ff.; Vol. XV, pp. 21 ff.; Dalman, The Words of Jesus, pp. 234-331; Warfield, The Lord of Glory, cf. Index; Liddon, The Divinity of our Lord, Lect. V; Rostron, The Christology of St. Paul, pp. 154 ff.; Machen, The Origin of Paul's Religion, pp. 293-317; Stanton, The Jewish and the Christian Messiah, pp. 239-250.

04.3.1.3. The Unipersonality of Christ

III. The Unipersonality of Christ In the year 451 A.D. the Council of Chalcedon met and formulated the faith of the Church respecting the person of Christ, and declared Him "to be acknowledged in two natures, inconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseperably; the distinction of the natures being in no wise taken away by the union, but rather the property of each nature being preserved, and concurring in one Person and one Subsistence, not parted or divided into two persons." This formulation is mainly negative, and simply seeks to guard the truth against various heretical views. It clearly states the faith of the early Church respecting the person of Christ, but makes no attempt to explain the mystery involved, a mystery that is not susceptible of a natural explanation. The great central miracle of history was permitted to stand forth in all its grandeur, the supreme paradox, to use Barthian language, God and man in one person. We are simply told what Jesus is, without any attempt to show how He became what He is. The great truth enunciated is that the eternal Son of God took upon Himself our humanity, and not, as Brunner reminds us, that the man Jesus acquired divinity. The deliverance of the Council of Chalcedon testifies to a movement from God to man, rather than vice versa. Centuries have gone by since that time, but, barring certain explications, the Church has really never gotten beyond the formula of Chalcedon. It has always recognized the incarnation as a mystery which defies explanation. And so it will remain, because it is the miracle of miracles. Several attempts have been made in course of time to give a psychological explanation of the person of Jesus Christ, but they were all bound to fail, because He is the Son of God, Himself very God, and a psychological explanation of God is out of the question. The following paragraphs are intended as a brief statement of the doctrine of the Church.

A. STATEMENT OF THE CHURCH’S VIEW RESPECTING THE PERSON OF CHRIST.

1. DEFINITION OF THE TERMS "NATURE" AND "PERSON." With a view to the proper understanding of the doctrine, it is necessary to know the exact meaning of the terms "nature" and "person," as used in this connection. The term "nature" denotes the sum- total of all the essential qualities of a thing, that which makes it what it is. A nature is a substance possessed in common, with all the essential qualities of such a substance. The term "person" denotes a complete substance endowed with reason, and, consequently, a responsible subject of its own actions. Personality is not an essential and integral part of a nature, but is, as it were, the terminus to which it tends. A person is a nature with something added, namely, independent subsistence, individuality. Now the Logos assumed a human nature that was not personalized, that did not exist by itself.

2. PROPOSITIONS IN WHICH THE VIEW OF THE CHURCH MAY BE STATED. a. There is but one person in the Mediator, the unchangeable Logos. The Logos furnishes the basis for the personality of Christ. It would not be correct, however, to say that the person of the mediator is divine only. The incarnation constituted Him a complex person, constituted of two natures. He is the Godman. b. The human nature of Christ as such does not constitute a human person. The Logos did not adopt a human person, so that we have two persons in the Mediator, but simply

assumed a human nature. Brunner declares that it is the mystery of the person of Jesus Christ that at the point where we have a sinful person, He has, or rather is, the divine person of the Logos. c. At the same time it is not correct to speak of the human nature of Christ as impersonal. This is true only in the sense that this nature has no independent subsistence of its own. Strictly speaking, however, the human nature of Christ was not for a moment impersonal. The Logos assumed that nature into personal subsistence with Himself. The human nature has its personal existence in the person of the Logos. It is in-personal rather than impersonal. d. For that very reason we are not warranted to speak of the human nature of Christ as imperfect or incomplete. His human nature is not lacking in any of the essential qualities belonging to that nature, and also has individuality, that is, personal subsistence, in the person of the Son of God. e. This personal subsistence should not be confused with consciousness and free will. The fact that the human nature of Christ, in and by itself, has no personal subsistence, does not mean that it has no consciousness and will. The Church has taken the position that these belong to the nature rather than to the person. f. The one divine person, who possessed a divine nature from eternity, assumed a human nature, and now has both. This must be maintained over against those who, while admitting that the divine person assumed a human nature, jeopardize the integrity of the two natures by conceiving of them as having been fused or mixed into a tertium quid, a sort of divine-human nature.

B. SCRIPTURAL PROOF FOR THE UNIPERSONALITY OF CHRIST. The doctrine of the two natures in one person transcends human reason. It is the expression of a supersensible reality, and of an incomprehensible mystery, which has no analogy in the life of man as we know it, and finds no support in human reason, and therefore can only be accepted by faith on the authority of the Word of God. For that reason it is doubly necessary to pay close attention to the teachings of Scripture on this point.

1. NO EVIDENCE OF A DUAL PERSONALITY IN SCRIPTURE. In the first place there is a negative consideration of considerable importance. If there had been a dual personality in Jesus, we would naturally expect to find some traces of it in Scripture; but there is not a single trace of it. There is no distinction of an "I" and a "Thou" in the inner life of the Mediator, such as we find in connection with the triune Being of God, where one person addresses the other, Psalms 2:7; Psalms 40:7-8; John 17:1; John 17:4-5; John 17:21-24. Moreover, Jesus never uses the plural in referring to Himself, as God does in Genesis 1:26; Genesis 3:22; Genesis 11:7. It might seem as if John 3:11 were a case in point. The plural is peculiar, but in all probability refers to Jesus and those who were associated with Him, in opposition to Nicodemus and the group which he represented.

2. BOTH NATURES ARE REPRESENTED IN SCRIPTURE AS UNITED IN ONE PERSON. There are passages of Scripture which refer to both natures in Christ, but in which it is perfectly evident that only one person is intended, Romans 1:3-4; Galatians 4:4-5; Php 2:6-11. In several passages both natures are set forth as united. The Bible nowhere teaches that divinity in the abstract, or some divine power, was united to, or manifested in, a human nature; but always that the divine nature in the concrete, that is, the divine person of the Son of God, was united to a human nature, John 1:14; Romans 8:3; Galatians 4:4; Galatians 4:9; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 2:11-14; 1 John 4:2-3.

3. THE ONE PERSON IS SPOKEN OF IN TERMS TRUE OF EITHER ONE OF THE NATURES. Repeatedly the attributes of one nature are predicated of the person, while that person is designated by a title derived from the other nature. On the one hand human attributes and actions are predicated of the person while he is designated by a divine title, Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 2:8; Colossians 1:13-14. And on the other hand divine attributes and actions are predicated of the person while he is designated by a human title, John 3:3; John 6:62; Romans 9:5.

C. THE EFFECTS OF THE UNION OF THE TWO NATURES IN ONE PERSON.

1. NO ESSENTIAL CHANGE IN THE DIVINE NATURE. The doctrine of creation and the doctrine of the incarnation always constituted a problem in connection with the immutability of God. This was already pointed out in the discussion of that attribute. However this problem may be solved, it should be maintained that the divine nature did not undergo any essential change in the incarnation. This also means that it remained impassible, that is, incapable of suffering and death, free from ignorance, and insusceptible to weakness and temptation. It is well to stress the fact that the incarnation was a personal act. It is better to say that the person of the Son of God became incarnate than to say that the divine nature assumed human flesh. If Reformed theologians do occasionally speak of the divine nature as incarnate, they speak of it "not immediately but mediately," to use the language of scholastic theology; they consider this nature not absolutely and in itself, but in the person of the Son of God. The result of the incarnation was that the divine Saviour could be ignorant and weak, could be tempted, and could suffer and die, not in His divine nature, but derivatively, by virtue of His possession of a human nature.

2. A THREEFOLD COMMUNICATION RESULTED FROM THE INCARNATION. a.A communicatio idiomatum, or communication of properties. This means that the properties of both, the human and the divine natures, are now the properties of the person, and are therefore ascribed to the person. The person can be said to be almighty, omniscient, omnipresent, and so on, but can also be called a man of sorrows, of limited knowledge and power, and subject to human want and miseries. We must be careful not to understand the term to mean that anything peculiar to the divine nature was communicated to the human nature, or vice versa; or that there is an interpenetration of the two natures, as a result of which the divine is humanized, and the human is deified (Rome). The deity cannot share in human weaknesses; neither can man participate in any of the essential perfections of the Godhead. b.A communicatio apotelesmatum or operationum. This means that the redemptive work of Christ, and particularly the final result of that work, the apotelesma, bears a divine-human character. Analyzing this, we can say that it means: (1) that the efficient cause of the redemptive work of Christ is the one undivided personal subject in Christ; (2) that it is brought about by the co-operation of both natures; (3) that each of these natures works with its own special energeia; and (4) that, notwithstanding this, the result forms an undivided unity, because it is the work of a single person. c. A communicatio charismatum or gratiarum. This means that the human nature of Christ, from the very first moment of its existence, was adorned with all kinds of rich and glorious gifts, as for instance, (1) the gratia unionis cum persona tou Logou, that is, the grace and glory of being united to the divine Logos, also called the gratia eminentiae, by which the human nature is elevated high above all creatures, and even becomes the object of adoration; and (2) the gratia habitualis, consisting of those gifts of the Spirit, particularly of the intellect, of the will, and of power, by which the human nature of Christ was exalted high above all intelligent creatures. His impeccability, the non posse peccare, especially

should be mentioned here.

3. THE GOD-MAN IS THE OBJECT OF PRAYER. Another effect of the union is, that the Mediator just as He now exists, that is, in both natures, is the object of our prayer. It should be borne in mind that the honor adorationis does not belong to the human nature as such, but belongs to it only in virtue of its union with the divine Logos, who is in His very nature adorabilis. We must distinguish between the object and the ground of this adoration. The object of our religious worship is the God-man Jesus Christ, but the ground on which we adore Him lies in the person of the Logos.

D. THE UNIPERSONALITY OF CHRIST A MYSTERY. The union of the two natures in one person is a mystery which we cannot grasp, and which for that very reason is often denied. It has sometimes been compared with the union of body and soul in man; and there are some points of similarity. In man there are two substances, matter and spirit, most closely united and yet not mixed; so also in the Mediator. In man the principle of unity, the person, does not have its seat in the body but in the soul; in the Mediator, not in the human, but in the divine nature. As the influence of the soul on the body and of the body on the soul is a mystery, so also the connection of the two natures in Christ and their mutual influence on each other. Everything that happens in the body and in the soul is ascribed to the person; so all that takes place in the two natures of Christ is predicated of the person. Sometimes a man is denominated according to his spiritual element, when something is predicated of him that applies more particularly to the body, and vice versa. Similarly things that apply only to the human nature of Christ are ascribed to Him when He is named after His divine nature, and vice versa. As it is an honor for the body to be united with the soul, so it is an honor for the human nature of Christ to be united with the person of the Logos. Of course, the comparison is defective. It does not illustrate the union of the divine and the human, of the infinite and the finite. It does not even illustrate the unity of two spiritual natures in a single person. In the case of man the body is material and the soul is spiritual. It is a wonderful union, but not as wonderful as the union of the two natures in Christ.

E. THE LUTHERAN DOCTRINE OF THE COMMUNICATION OF ATTRIBUTES.

1. STATEMENT OF THE LUTHERANPOSITION. The Lutherans differ from the Reformed in their doctrine of the communicatio idiomatum. They teach that the attributes of one nature are ascribed to the other on the basis of an actual transference, and feel that it is only by such a transference that the real unity of the person can be secured. This position does not involve a denial of the fact that the attributes of both natures can be ascribed to the person, but adds something to that in the interest, as they see it, of the unity of the person. They did not always state their doctrine in the same form. Luther and some of the early Lutherans occasionally spoke of a communication in both directions, from the divine nature to the human, and also from the human to the divine. In the subsequent development of the doctrine, however, the communication from the human nature to the divine soon receded from sight, and only that from the divine to the human nature was stressed. A still greater limitation soon followed. Lutheran scholastics distinguished between the operative attributes of God (omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience), and His quiescent attributes (infinitude, eternity, etc.), and taught that only the former were transferred to the human nature. They were all agreed that the communication took place at the time of the incarnation. But the question naturally arose how this could be squared with the picture of Christ in the Gospels, which is not the picture of an omniscient and omnipresent man. This gave rise to a difference of

opinion. According to some, Christ necessarily exercised these attributes during His humiliation, but did it secretly; but according to others their exercise was subject to the will of the divine person, who voluntarily left them inoperative during the period of His humiliation. Opposition to this doctrine repeatedly manifested itself in the Lutheran Church. It was pointed out that it is inconsistent with the idea of a truly human development in the life of Christ, so clearly taught by Luther himself. The great Reformer's insistence on the communication of attributes finds its explanation partly in his mystical tendencies, and partly in his teachings respecting the physical presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.

2. OBJECTIONS TO THIS LUTHERAN DOCTRINE. There are serious objections to the Lutheran doctrine of the communicatio idiomatum. a. It has no Scriptural foundation. If it is inferred from such a statement as that in John 3:13, then, in consistency, it ought also to be concluded from 1 Corinthians 2:8 that the ability to suffer was communicated to the divine nature. Yet the Lutherans shrink back from that conclusion. b. It implies a fusion of the divine and the human natures in Christ. Lutherans speak as if the attributes can be abstracted from the nature, and can be communicated while the natures remain separate, but substance and attributes cannot be so separated. By a communication of divine attributes to the human nature that nature as such ceases to exist. Omnipresence and omniscience are not compatible with humanity. Such a communication results in a mixture of the divine and the human, which the Bible keeps strictly separate. c. In the form in which the doctrine is now generally accepted by the Lutherans, the doctrine suffers from inconsistency. If the divine attributes are communicated to the human nature, the human must also be communicated to the divine. And if some attributes are communicated, they must all be communicated. But the Lutherans evidently do not dare to go the full length, and therefore stop half way. d. It is inconsistent with the picture of the incarnate Christ during the time of His humiliation, as we find it in the Gospels. This is not the picture of a man who is omnipresent and omniscient. The Lutheran explanations of this inconsistency failed to commend themselves to the mind of the Church in general, and even to some of the followers of Luther. e. It virtually destroys the incarnation. Lutherans distinguish between the incarnatio and the exinanitio. The Logos is the subject only of the former. He makes the human nature receptive for the inhabitation of the fulness of the Godhead and communicates to it some of the divine attributes. But by doing this He virtually abrogates the human nature by assimilating it to the divine. Thus only the divine remains. f. It also practically obliterates the distinction between the state of humiliation and the state of exaltation. Brenz even says that these were not successive states, but states that co-existed during the earthly life of Christ. To escape the difficulty here, the Lutherans brought in the doctrine of the exinanitio, of which not the Logos but the God-man is the subject, to the effect that He practically emptied Himself, or laid aside the divine attributes. Some spoke of a constant but secret, and others of an intermittent use of them.

F. THE KENOSIS DOCTRINE IN VARIOUS FORMS.

About the middle of the nineteenth century a new form of Christology made its appearance in the Kenotic theories. It found favor especially among the Lutherans, but also with some Reformed theologians. It represents part of an attempt to bring the Lutheran and the Reformed sections of the Church closer together. The advocates of this new view desired to do full justice to the reality and integrity of the manhood of Christ, and to stress the magnitude of His self-denial and self-sacrifice.

1. STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE. The term "kenosis" is used in a two-fold sense in theology. Originally it was used by Lutheran theologians to denote the self-limitation, not of the Logos, but of the God-man, whereby He, in the interest of His humiliation, laid aside the actual use of His divine attributes. In the teachings of the Kenoticists, however, it signalized the doctrine that the Logos at the incarnation was denuded of His transitive or of all His attributes, was reduced to a mere potentiality, and then, in union with the human nature, developed again into a divine-human person. The main forms in which this doctrine were taught are the following: a. The theory of Thomasius, Delitzsch and Crosby. Thomasius distinguishes between the absolute and essential attributes of God, such as absolute power, holiness, truth, and love, and His relative attributes, which are not essential to the Godhead, such as omnipotence, omnipresence, and omniscience; and maintains that the Logos while retaining His divine self-consciousness, laid the latter aside, in order to take unto Himself veritable human nature. b. The theory of Gess and H. W. Beecher. This is far more thorough-going. La Touche speaks of it as "incarnation by divine suicide." The Logos so depotentiated Himself of all His divine attributes that He literally ceased from His cosmic functions and His eternal consciousness during the years of His earthly life. His consciousness became purely that of a human soul, and consequently He could and did take the place of the human soul in Christ. Thus the true manhood of Christ, even to the extent of His peccability, was secured. c. The theory of Ebrard. Ebrard agrees with Gess in making the incarnate Logos take the place of the human soul. The eternal Son gave up the form of eternity, and in full self-limitation assumed the existence-form of a human life-center. But with him this self- reduction does not amount to a complete depotentiation of the Logos. The divine properties were retained, but were possessed by the God-man in the time-form appropriate to a human mode of existence. d. The theory of Martensen and Gore. Martensen postulated the existence of a double life in the incarnate Logos from two non-communicating life-centers. As being in the bosom of God, He continued to function in the trinitarian life and also in His cosmic relations to the world as Creator and Sustainer. But at the same time He, as the depotentiated Logos, united with a human nature, knew nothing of His trinitarian and cosmic functions, and only knew Himself to be God in such a sense as that knowledge is possible to the faculties of manhood.

2. SUPPOSED SCRIPTURAL BASIS FOR THE DOCTRINE. The Kenotics seek Scriptural support for their doctrine, especially in Php 2:6-8, but also in 2 Corinthians 8:9 and John 17:5. The term "kenosis" is derived from the main verb in Php 2:7, ekenosen. This is rendered in the American Revised Version, "emptied Himself." Dr. Warfield calls this a mistranslation.8 The verb is found in only four other New Testament passages, namely, Romans 4:14; 1 Corinthians 1:17; 1 Corinthians 9:15; 2 Corinthians 9:3. In all of these it is used figuratively and means "to make void," "of no effect," "of no account," "of no reputation."9 If we so understand the word here, it simply means that Christ made Himself of no account, of no reputation, did not assert His divine prerogative, but took the form of a servant. But even if we take the word in its literal sense, it does not support the Kenosis theory. It would, if we understood that which He laid aside to be the morphe theou (form of God), and then conceived of morphe strictly as the essential or specific character of the Godhead. In all probability morphe must be so understood, but the verb ekenosen does not refer to morphe theou, but to einai isa theoi (dat.) that is, His being on an equality with God. The fact that Christ took the form of a servant does not involve a laying aside of the form of God. There was no exchange of the one for the other. Though He pre-existed in the form of God, Christ did not count the being on an equality with God as a prize which He must not let slip, but

emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant. Now what does His becoming a servant involve? A state of subjection in which one is called upon to render obedience. And the opposite of this is a state of sovereignty in which one has the right to command. The being on an equality with God does not denote a mode of being, but a state which Christ exchanged for another state.10 3. OBJECTIONS TO THE KENOSIS DOCTRINE. a. The theory is based on the pantheistic conception that God and man are not so absolutely different but that the one can be transformed into the other. The Hegelian idea of becoming is applied to God, and the absolute line of demarcation is obliterated. b. It is altogether subversive of the doctrine of the immutability of God, which is plainly taught in Scripture, Malachi 3:6; James 1:17, and which is also implied in the very idea of God. Absoluteness and mutability are mutually exclusive; and a mutable God is certainly not the God of Scripture. c. It means a virtual destruction of the Trinity, and therefore takes away our very God. The humanized Son, self-emptied of His divine attributes, could no longer be a divine subsistence in the trinitarian life. d. It assumes too loose a relation between the divine mode of existence, the divine attributes, and the divine essence, when it speaks of the former as if they might very well be separated from the latter. This is altogether misleading, and involves the very error that is condemned in connection with the Roman Catholic doctrine of transubstantiation. e. It does not solve the problem which it was intended to solve. It desired to secure the unity of the person and the reality of the Lord’s manhood. But, surely, the personal unity is not secured by assuming a human Logos as co-existent with a human soul. Nor is the reality of the manhood maintained by substituting for the human soul a depotentiated Logos. The Christ of the Kenotics is neither God nor man. In the words of Dr. Warfield His human nature is "just shrunken deity." The Kenotic theory enjoyed great popularity in Germany for a while, but has now practically died out there. When it began to disappear in Germany, it found supporters in England in such scholars as D. W. Forrest, W. L. Walker, P. T. Forsyth, Ch. Gore, R. L. Ottley, and H. R. Mackintosh. It finds very little support at the present time.

G. THE THEORY OF GRADUAL INCARNATION.

Dorner was one of the first and the greatest of the opponents of the Kenosis doctrine. He set himself the task of suggesting another theory which, while escaping the errors of Kenoticism, would do full justice to the humanity of Christ. He proposed to solve the problem by the theory of a gradual or progressive incarnation. According to him the incarnation was not an act consummated at the moment of the conception of Jesus, but a gradual process by which the Logos joined Himself in an ever-increasing measure to the unique and representative Man (virtually a new creation), Christ Jesus, until the full union was finally consummated at the time of the resurrection. The union resulted in the God-man with a single consciousness and a single will. In this God-man the Logos does not supply the personality, but gives it its divine quality. This theory finds no support in Scripture, which always represents the incarnation as a momentary fact rather than as a process. It logically leads to Nestorianism or the doctrine of two persons in the Mediator. And since it finds the real seat of the personality in the man Jesus, it is utterly subversive of the real pre-existence of our Lord. Rothe and Bovon are two of the most important supporters of this doctrine. The crucial difference between the ancient and the really modern theories respecting the person of Christ, lies in the fact that the latter, as appears also from the theory of Dorner, distinguish the person of the Logos, conceived as a special mode of the personal life of God, from the personality of Christ as a concrete human person uniquely divine in quality. According to

modern views it is not the Logos but the man Jesus that constitutes the ego in Christ. The personality of Jesus is human in type of consciousness and also in moral growth, but at the same time uniquely receptive for the divine, and thus really the climax of an incarnation of which humanity itself is the general cosmic expression. This is true also of the theory suggested by Sanday in his Christologies Ancient and Modern, a theory which seeks to give a psychological explanation of the person of Jesus, which will do justice to both the human and the divine in Jesus. He stresses the fact that the subliminal consciousness is the proper seat of all divine indwelling, or divine action upon the human soul; and holds that the same or a corresponding subliminal self is also the proper seat or locus of the deity of the incarnate Christ. The ordinary consciousness of Jesus was the human consciousness, but there appeared in Him occasionally an uprush of the divine consciousness from the subliminal self. This theory has rightly been criticized severely. It ascribes a significance to the subliminal in the life of man which it does not possess, wrongly supposes that the deity can be located in some particular place in the person of Christ, and suggests a picture of Christ, as being only intermittently conscious of His deity, which is not in harmony with the data of Scripture. It reveals once more the folly of trying to give a psychological explanation of the person of Christ. Besides Sanday some of the more influential representatives of modern Christology are Kunze, Schaeder, Kaehler, Moberly, and Du Bose.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY. What change did the eighteenth century effect in Christology? What causes contributed to the present widespread denial of the deity of Christ? How do negative critics deal with the Scriptural proofs for the deity of Christ? Did the Liberal-Jesus-School succeed in presenting a tolerable picture of Jesus, which really squares with the facts? What is the distinction between the Jesus of history and the Christ of faith, and what purpose did it serve? What about the argument aut Deus auto homo non bonus? How is the reality of Christ's manhood sometimes endangered? Was there a single or a double self-consciousness in Christ? One or two wills? On what grounds is the Messianic consciousness of Jesus denied? How can it be defended? Did Jesus regard the Messiahship merely as a dignity that would be His in the future? Has the eschatological school any advantages over the liberal school? How do the Reformed, the Lutheran, and the Roman Catholic conceptions of the union of the two natures in Christ differ? What does the Formula Concordiae teach on this point? What was the Giessen-Tuebingen controversy? How did Kant, Hegel, and Schleiermacher conceive of this union? In what respect do the Kenosis theories reveal the influence of Hegel? How did the modern conception of the immanence of God affect more recent Christologies? Is Sanday's psychological theory an acceptable construction?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm., III, pp. 264-349; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Christo I, pp. 62—II, p. 58; Vos, The Self-Disclosure of Jesus, pp. 35-103; Temple, The Boyhood Consciousness of Christ; Orr, The Christian View of God and the World pp. 248-257; H. R. Mackintosh, The Doct. of the Person of Jesus Christ, pp. 141-284; Liddon, The Divinity of our Lord; Relton, A Study in Christology, pp. 3-222; Warfield, Christology and Criticism, Lectures VI-VIII; Rostron, The Christology of St. Paul, pp. 196-229; Schweitzer, The Quest of the Historical Jesus; La Touche, The Person of Christ in Modern Thought; Gore, The Reconstruction of Belief, pp. 297-526; Honig, De Persoon Van den Middelaar in de Nieuwere Duitsche Dogmatiek; Sheldon, Hist. of Chr. Doct. II, 134-137, 348-353; Krauth, Conservative Reformation and Its Theology, pp. 456-517; Bruce, The Humiliation of Christ, Lectures III, IV and V; Loofs, What Is the

Truth about Jesus Christ? chap. VI; Sanday,, Christologies, Ancient and Modern, Chaps. III, IV, VII; Cooke, The Incarnation and Recent Criticism, Chap. X; Brunner, The Mediator, especially Chap. XII.

Chapter 105

04.3.2.0. The States of Christ

The States of Christ I. The State of Humiliation II. The State of Exaltation

04.3.2.1. The State of Humiliation

I. The State of Humiliation A. INTRODUCTORY: THE DOCTRINE OF THE STATES OF CHRIST IN GENERAL.

1. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN A STATE AND A CONDITION. It should be borne in mind that, though the word "state" is sometimes used synonymously with "condition," the word as applied to Christ in this connection denotes a relationship rather than a condition. In general a state and a condition may be distinguished as follows: A state is one’s position or status in life, and particularly the forensic relationship in which one stands to the law, while a condition is the mode of one’s existence, especially as determined by the circumstances of life. One who is found guilty in a court of justice is in a state of guilt or condemnation, and this is usually followed by a condition of incarceration with all its resulting deprivation and shame. In theology the states of the Mediator are generally considered as including the resulting conditions. In fact, the different stages of the humiliation and of the exaltation, as usually stated, have a tendency to make the conditions stand out more prominently than the states. Yet the states are the more fundamental of the two and should be so considered.11 In the state of humiliation Christ was under the law, not only as a rule of life, but as the condition of the covenant of works, and even under the condemnation of the law; but in the state of exaltation He is free from the law, having met the condition of the covenant of works and having paid the penalty for sin.

2. THE DOCTRINE OF THE STATES OF CHRIST IN HISTORY. The doctrine of the states of Christ really dates from the seventeenth century, though traces of it are already found in the writings of the Reformers, and even in some of the early Church Fathers. It was first developed among the Lutherans when they sought to bring their doctrine of the communicatio idiomatum in harmony with the humiliation of Christ as it is pictured in the Gospels, but was soon adopted also by the Reformed. They differed, however, as to the real subject of the states. According to the Lutherans it is the human nature of Christ, but according to the Reformed, the person of the Mediator. There was considerable difference of opinion even among the Lutherans on the subject. Under the influence of Schleiermacher the idea of the states of the Mediator gradually disappeared from theology. By his pantheizing tendency the lines of demarcation between the Creator and the creature were practically obliterated. The emphasis was shifted from the transcendent to the immanent God; and the sovereign God whose law is the standard of right disappeared. In fact, the idea of objective right was banished from theology, and under such conditions it became impossible to maintain the idea of a judicial position, that is, of a state of the Mediator. Moreover, in the measure in which the humanity of Christ was stressed to the exclusion of His deity, and on the one hand His pre-existence, and on the other, His resurrection was denied, all speaking about the humiliation and exaltation of Christ lost its meaning. The result is that in many present day works on Dogmatics we look in vain for a chapter on the states of Christ.

3. THE NUMBER OF THE STATES OF THE MEDIATOR. There is a difference of opinion as to the number of the states of the Mediator. Some are of the opinion that, if we assume that the

person of the Mediator is the subject of the states, strict logic requires that we speak of three states or modes of existence: the pre-existent state of eternal divine being, the earthly state of temporal human existence, and the heavenly state of exaltation and glory.12 But since we can speak of the humiliation and exaltation of the person of Christ only in connection with Him as the God-man, it is best to speak of only two states. Reformed theologians do find an anticipation of both the humiliation and the exaltation of Christ in His pre-existent state: of His humiliation in that He freely took upon Himself in the pactum salutis to merit and administer our salvation; and of His exaltation in the glory which He as our prospective Mediator enjoyed before the incarnation, cf. John 17:5. The two states are clearly indicated in 2 Corinthians 8:9; Galatians 4:4-5; Php 2:6-11; Hebrews 2:9.

B. THE STATE OF HUMILIATION. On the basis of Php 2:7-8, Reformed theology distinguishes two elements in the humiliation of Christ, namely, (1) the kenosis (emptying, exinanitio), consisting in this that He laid aside the divine majesty, the majesty of the sovereign Ruler of the universe, and assumed human nature in the form of a servant; and (2) the tapeinosis (humiliatio), consisting in that He became subject to the demands and to the curse of the law, and in His entire life became obedient in action and suffering to the very limit of a shameful death. On the basis of the passage in Philippians it may be said that the essential and central element in the state of humiliation is found in the fact that He who was the Lord of all the earth, the supreme Lawgiver, placed Himself under the law, in order to discharge its federal and penal obligations in behalf of His people. By doing this He became legally responsible for our sins and liable to the curse of the law. This state of the Saviour, briefly expressed in the words of Galatians 4:4, "born under the law," is reflected in the corresponding condition, which is described in the various stages of the humiliation. While Lutheran theology speaks of as many as eight stages in the humiliation of Christ, Reformed theology generally names only five, namely: (1) incarnation, (2) suffering, (3) death, (4) burial, and (5) descent into hades.

1. THE INCARNATION AND BIRTH OF CHRIST. Under this general heading several points deserve attention. a. The subject of the incarnation. It was not the triune God but the second person of the Trinity that assumed human nature. For that reason it is better to say that the Word became flesh than that God became man. At the same time we should remember that each of the divine persons was active in the incarnation, Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:35; John 1:14; Acts 2:30; Romans 8:3; Galatians 4:4; Php 2:7. This also means that the incarnation was not something that merely happened to the Logos, but was an active accomplishment on His part. In speaking of the incarnation in distinction from the birth of the Logos, His active participation in this historical fact is stressed, and His pre-existence is assumed. It is not possible to speak of the incarnation of one who had no previous existence. This pre-existence is clearly taught in Scripture: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God," John 1:1. "I am come down from heaven," John 6:38. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for our sakes He became poor," 2 Corinthians 8:9. "Who, existing in the form of God, counted not the being on an equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied Himself, taking the form of a servant, being made in the likeness of men," Php 2:6-7. "But when the fulness of the time came God sent forth His Son," Galatians 4:4. The pre-existent Son of God assumes human nature and takes to Himself human flesh and blood, a miracle that passes our limited understanding. It clearly shows that the infinite can and does enter into finite relations, and that the

supernatural can in some way enter the historical life of the world. b. The necessity of the incarnation. Since the days of Scholasticism the question has been debated, whether the incarnation should be regarded as involved in the idea of redemption, or as already involved in the idea of creation. Popularly stated, the question was, whether the Son of God would have come in the flesh even if man had not sinned. Rupert of Deutz was the first to assert clearly and positively that He would have become incarnate irrespective of sin. His view was shared by Alexander of Hales and Duns Scotus, but Thomas Aquinas took the position that the reason for the incarnation lay in the entrance of sin into the world. The Reformers shared this view, and the Churches of the Reformation teach that the incarnation was necessitated by the fall of man. Some Lutheran and Reformed scholars, however, such as Osiander, Rothe, Dorner, Lange, Van Oosterzee, Martensen, Ebrard, and Westcott, were of the contrary opinion. The arguments adduced by them are such as the following: Such a stupendous fact as the incarnation cannot be contingent, and cannot find its cause in sin as an accidental and arbitrary act of man. It must have been included in the original plan of God. Religion before and after the fall cannot be essentially different. If a Mediator is necessary now, He must have been necessary also before the fall. Moreover, Christ's work is not limited to the atonement and His saving operations. He is Mediator, but also Head; He is not only the arche, but also the telos of creation, 1 Corinthians 15:45-47; Ephesians 1:10; Ephesians 1:21-23; Ephesians 5:31-32; Colossians 1:15-17.

However, it should be noted that Scripture invariably represents the incarnation as conditioned by human sin. The force of such passages as Luke 19:10; John 3:16; Galatians 4:4; 1 John 3:8; and Php 2:5-11 is not easily broken. The idea, sometimes expressed, that the incarnation in itself was fitting and necessary for God, is apt to lead to the pantheistic notion of an eternal self-revelation of God in the world. The difficulty connected with the plan of God, supposed to burden this view, does not exist, if we consider the matter sub specie aeternitatis. There is but one plan of God, and this plan includes sin and the incarnation from the very beginning. In the last analysis, of course, the incarnation, as well as the whole work of redemption was contingent, not on sin, but on the good pleasure of God. The fact that Christ also has cosmical significance need not be denied, but this too is linked up with His redemptive significance in Ephesians 1:10; Ephesians 1:20-23; Colossians 1:14-20. c. The change effected in the incarnation. When we are told that the Word became flesh, this does not mean that the Logos ceased to be what He was before. As to His essential being the Logos was exactly the same before and after the incarnation. The verb egeneto in John 1:14 (the Word became flesh) certainly does not mean that the Logos changed into flesh, and thus altered His essential nature, but simply that He took on that particular character, that He acquired an additional form, without in any way changing His original nature. He remained the infinite and unchangeable Son of God. Again, the statement that the Word became flesh does not mean that He took on a human person, nor, on the other hand, merely that He took on a human body. The word sarx (flesh) here denotes human nature, consisting of body and soul. The word is used in a somewhat similar sense in Romans 8:3; 1 Timothy 3:16; 1 John 4:2; 2 John 1:7 (comp. Php 2:7). d. The incarnation constituted Christ one of the human race. In opposition to the teachings of the Anabaptists, our Confession affirms that Christ assumed His human nature from the substance of His mother. The prevailing opinion among the Anabaptists was that the Lord brought His human nature from heaven, and that Mary was merely the conduit or channel through which it passed. On this view His human nature was really a new creation, similar to ours, but not organically connected with it. The importance of opposing this view will be readily seen. If the

human nature of Christ was not derived from the same stock as ours but merely resembled it, there exists no such relation between us and Him as is necessary to render His mediation available for our good. e. The incarnation effected by a supernatural conception and a virgin birth. Our Confession affirms that the human nature of Christ was "conceived in the womb of the blessed virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Ghost, without the means of man." This emphasizes the fact that the birth of Christ was not at all an ordinary but a supernatural birth, in virtue of which He was called "the Son of God." The most important element in connection with the birth of Jesus was the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit, for it was only through this that the virgin birth became possible. The Bible refers to this particular feature in Matthew 1:18-20; Luke 1:34-35; Hebrews 10:5. The work of the Holy Spirit in connection with the conception of Jesus was twofold: (1) He was the efficient cause of what was conceived in the womb of Mary, and thus excluded the activity of man as an efficient factor. This was entirely in harmony with the fact that the person who was born was not a human person, but the person of the Son of God, who as such was not included in the covenant of works and was in Himself free from the guilt of sin. (2) He sanctified the human nature of Christ in its very inception, and thus kept it free from the pollution of sin. We cannot say exactly how the Holy Spirit accomplished this sanctifying work, because it is not yet sufficiently understood just how the pollution of sin ordinarily passes from parent to child. It should be noted, however, that the sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit was not limited to the conception of Jesus, but was continued throughout His life, John 3:34; Hebrews 9:14.

It was only through this supernatural conception of Christ that He could be born of a virgin. The doctrine of the virgin birth is based on the following passages of Scripture: Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18; Matthew 1:20; Luke 1:34-35, and is also favored by Galatians 4:4. This doctrine was confessed in the Church from the earliest times. We meet with it already in the original forms of the Apostolic Confession, and further in all the great Confessions of the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches. Its present denial is not due to the lack of Scriptural evidence for it, nor to any want of ecclesiastical sanction, but to the current general aversion to the supernatural. The passages of Scripture on which the doctrine is based are simply ruled out of court on critical grounds which are far from convincing; and that in spite of the fact that the integrity of the narratives is proved to be beyond dispute; and it is gratuitously assumed that the silence of the other New Testament writers respecting the virgin birth proves that they were not acquainted with the supposed fact of the miraculous birth. All kinds of ingenious attempts are made to explain how the story of the virgin birth arose and gained currency. Some seek it in Hebrew, and others in Gentile, traditions. We cannot enter upon a discussion of the problem here, and therefore merely refer to such works as Machen, The Virgin Birth of Christ; Orr, The Virgin Birth of Christ; Sweet, The Birth and Infancy of Jesus Christ; Cooke, Did Paul Know the Virgin Birth? Knowling, The Virgin Birth. The question is sometimes asked, whether the virgin birth is a matter of doctrinal importance. Brunner declares that he is not interested in the subject at all. He rejects the doctrine of the miraculous birth of Christ and holds that it was purely natural, but is not sufficiently interested to defend his view at length. Moreover, he says: "The doctrine of the virgin birth would have been given up long ago were it not for the fact that it seemed as though dogmatic interests were concerned in its retention."13 Barth recognizes the miracle of the virgin birth, and sees in it a token of the fact that God has creatively established a new beginning by condescending to become Man 1:14 He also finds in it doctrinal significance. According to him the "sin-inheritance" is passed on by the male parent, so that Christ could assume "creatureliness" by being born of Mary,

and at the same time escape the "sin-inheritance" by the elimination of the human father.15 In answer to the question, whether the virgin birth has doctrinal significance, it may be said that it would be inconceivable that God should cause Christ to be born in such an extraordinary manner, if it did not serve some purpose. Its doctrinal purpose may be stated as follows: (1) Christ had to be constituted the Messiah and the Messianic Son of God. Consequently, it was necessary that He should be born of a woman, but also that He should not be the fruit of the will of man, but should be born of God. What is born of flesh is flesh. In all probability this wonderful birth of Jesus was in the background of the mind of John when he wrote as he did in John 1:13. (2) If Christ had been generated by man, He would have been a human person, included in the covenant of works, and as such would have shared the common guilt of mankind. But now that His subject, His ego, His person, is not out of Adam, He is not in the covenant of works and is free from the guilt of sin. And being free from the guilt of sin, His human nature could also be kept free, both before and after His birth, from the pollution of sin. f. The incarnation itself part of the humiliation of Christ. Was the incarnation itself a part of the humiliation of Christ or not? The Lutherans, with their distinction between the incarnatio and the exinanitio, deny that it was, and base their denial on the fact that His humiliation was limited to His earthly existence, while His humanity continues in heaven. He still has His human nature, and yet is no more in a state of humiliation. There was some difference of opinion on this point even among Reformed theologians. It would seem that this question should be answered with discrimination. It may be said that the incarnation, altogether in the abstract, the mere fact that God in Christ assumed a human nature, though an act of condescension, was not in itself a humiliation, though Kuyper thought it was.16 But it certainly was a humiliation that the Logos assumed "flesh," that is, human nature as it is since the fall, weakened and subject to suffering and death, though free from the taint of sin. This would seem to be implied in such passages as Romans 8:3; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Php 2:6-7.

2. THE SUFFERINGS OF THE SAVIOUR. Several points should be stressed in connection with the sufferings of Christ. a. He suffered during His entire life. In view of the fact that Jesus began to speak of His coming sufferings towards the end of His life, we are often inclined to think that the final agonies constituted the whole of His sufferings. Yet His whole life was a life of suffering. It was the servant-life of the Lord of Hosts, the life of the Sinless One in daily association with sinners, the life of the Holy One in a sin-cursed world. The way of obedience was for Him at the same time a way of suffering. He suffered from the repeated assaults of Satan, from the hatred and unbelief of His own people, and from the persecution of His enemies. Since He trod the wine-press alone, His loneliness must have been oppressive, and His sense of responsibility, crushing. His suffering was consecrated suffering, increasing in severity as He approached the end. The suffering that began in the incarnation finally reached its climax in the passio magna at the end of His life. Then all the wrath of God against sin bore down upon Him. b. He suffered in body and soul. There has been a time when the attention was fixed too exclusively on the bodily sufferings of the Saviour. It was not the blind physical pain as such that constituted the essence of His suffering, but that pain accompanied with anguish of soul and with a mediatorial consciousness of the sin of humanity with which He was burdened. Later on it became customary to minimize the importance of the bodily sufferings, since it was felt that sin, being of a spiritual nature, could only be atoned for by purely spiritual sufferings. These one-sided views must be avoided. Both body and soul were affected by sin, and in both the punishment had to be borne. Moreover, the Bible clearly teaches that Christ suffered in both. He agonized in the garden, where

His soul was "exceeding sorrowful, even unto death," and He was buffeted and scourged and crucified. c. His sufferings resulted from various causes. In the last analysis all the sufferings of Christ resulted from the fact that He took the place of sinners vicariously. But we may distinguish several proximate causes, such as: (1) The fact that He who was the Lord of the universe had to occupy a menial position, even the position of a bond-servant or slave, and that He who had an inherent right to command was in duty bound to obey. (2) The fact that He who was pure and holy had to live in a sinful, polluted atmosphere, in daily association with sinners, and was constantly reminded of the greatness of the guilt with which He was burdened by the sins of His contemporaries. (3) His perfect awareness and clear anticipation, from the very beginning of His life, of the extreme sufferings that would, as it were, overwhelm Him in the end. He knew exactly what was coming, and the outlook was far from cheerful. (4) Finally, also the privations of life, the temptations of the devil, the hatred and rejection of the people, and the maltreatment and persecutions to which He was subjected. d. His sufferings were unique. We sometimes speak of the "ordinary" sufferings of Christ, when we think of those sufferings that resulted from the ordinary causes of misery in the world. But we should remember that these causes were far more numerous for the Saviour than they are for us. Moreover, even these common sufferings had an extraordinary character in His case, and were therefore unique. His capacity for suffering was commensurate with the ideal character of His humanity, with His ethical perfection, and with His sense of righteousness and holiness and veracity. No one could feel the poignancy of pain and grief and moral evil as Jesus could. But besides these more common sufferings there were also the sufferings caused by the fact that God caused our iniquities to come upon Him like a flood. The sufferings of the Saviour were not purely natural, but also the result of a positive deed of God, Isaiah 53:6; Isaiah 53:10. To the more special sufferings of the Saviour may also be reckoned the temptations in the desert, and the agonies of Gethsemane and Golgotha. e. His sufferings in temptations. The temptations of Christ formed an integral part of His sufferings. They are temptations that are encountered in the pathway of suffering, Matthew 4:1-11 (and parallels); Luke 22:28; John 12:27; Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 5:7-8. His public ministry began with a period of temptation, and even after that time temptations were repeated at intervals right on into dark Gethsemane. It was only by entering into the very trials of men, into their temptations, that Jesus could become a truly sympathetic High Priest and attain to the heights of a proved and triumphant perfection, Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 5:7-9. We may not detract from the reality of the temptations of Jesus as the last Adam, however difficult it may be to conceive of one who could not sin as being tempted. Various suggestions have been made to relieve the difficulty, as for instance, that in the human nature of Christ, as in that of the first Adam, there was the nuda possibilitas peccandi, the bare abstract possibility of sinning (Kuyper); that Jesus' holiness was an ethical holiness, which had to come to high development through, and maintain itself in, temptation (Bavinck); and that the things with which Christ was tempted were in themselves perfectly lawful, and appealed to perfectly natural instincts and appetites (Vos). But in spite of all this the problem remains, How was it possible that one who in concreto, that is, as He was actually constituted, could not sin nor even have an inclination to sin, nevertheless be subject to real temptation?

3. THE DEATH OF THE SAVIOUR. The sufferings of the Saviour finally culminated in His death. In connection with this the following points should be emphasized: a. The extent of His death. It is but natural that, when we speak of the death of Christ in this connection, we have in mind first of all physical death, that is, the separation of body and soul. At the same time we should remember

that this does not exhaust the idea of death as it is represented in Scripture. The Bible takes a synthetic view of death, and regards physical death merely as one of its manifestations. Death is separation from God, but this separation can be viewed in two different ways. Man separates himself from God by sin, and death is the natural result, so that it can even be said that sin is death. But it was not in that way that Jesus became subject to death, since He had no personal sin. In this connection it should be borne in mind that death is not merely the natural consequence of sin, but above all the judicially imposed and inflicted punishment of sin. It is God's withdrawing Himself with the blessings of life and happiness from man and visiting man in wrath. It is from this judicial point of view that the death of Christ must be considered. God imposed the punishment of death upon the Mediator judicially, since the latter undertook voluntarily to pay the penalty for the sin of the human race. Since Christ assumed human nature with all its weaknesses, as it exists after the fall, and thus became like us in all things, sin only excepted, it follows that death worked in Him from the very beginning and manifested itself in many of the sufferings to which He was subject. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. The Heidelberg Catechism correctly says that "all the time He lived on earth, but especially at the end of His life, He bore, in body and soul, the wrath of God against the sin of the whole human race."17 These sufferings were followed by His death on the cross. But this was not all; He was subject not only to physical, but also to eternal death, though He bore this intensively and not extensively, when He agonized in the garden and when He cried out on the cross, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" In a short period of time He bore the infinite wrath against sin to the very end and came out victoriously. This was possible for Him only because of His exalted nature. At this point we should guard against misunderstanding, however. Eternal death in the case of Christ did not consist in an abrogation of the union of the Logos with the human nature, nor in the divine nature's being forsaken of God, nor in the withdrawal of the Father's divine love or good pleasure from the person of the Mediator. The Logos remained united with the human nature even when the body was in the grave; the divine nature could not possibly be forsaken of God; and the person of the Mediator was and ever continued to be the object of divine favor. It revealed itself in the human consciousness of the Mediator as a feeling of Godforsakenness. This implies that the human nature for a moment missed the conscious comfort which it might derive from its union with the divine Logos, and the sense of divine love, and was painfully conscious of the fulness of the divine wrath which was bearing down upon it. Yet there was no despair, for even in the darkest hour, while He exclaims that He is forsaken, He directs His prayer to God. b. The judicial character of His death. It was quite essential that Christ should die neither a natural nor an accidental death; and that He should not die by the hand of an assassin, but under a judicial sentence. He had to be counted with the transgressors, had to be condemned as a criminal. Moreover, it was providentially arranged by God that He should be tried and sentenced by a Roman judge. The Romans had a genius for law and justice, and represented the highest judicial power in the world. It might be expected that a trial before a Roman judge would serve to bring out clearly the innocence of Jesus, which it did, so that it became perfectly clear that He was not condemned for any crime which He had committed. It was a testimony to the fact that, as the Lord says, "He was cut off out of the land of the living for the transgression of my people, to whom the stroke was due." And when the Roman judge nevertheless condemned the innocent, he, it is true, also condemned himself and human justice as he applied it, but at the same time imposed sentence on Jesus as the representative of the highest judicial power in the world, functioning by the grace of

God and dispensing justice in God’s name. The sentence of Pilate was also the sentence of God, though on entirely different grounds. It was significant too that Christ was not beheaded or stoned to death. Crucifixion was not a Jewish but a Roman form of punishment. It was accounted so infamous and ignominious that it might not be applied to Roman citizens, but only to the scum of mankind, to the meanest criminals and slaves. By dying that death, Jesus met the extreme demands of the law. At the same time He died an accursed death, and thus gave evidence of the fact that He became a curse for us, Deuteronomy 21:23; Galatians 3:13.

4. THE BURIAL OF THE SAVIOUR. It might seem that the death of Christ was the last stage of His humiliation, especially in view of one of the last words spoken on the cross, "It is finished." But that word in all probability refers to His active suffering, that is, the suffering in which He Himself took an active part. This was indeed finished when He died. It is clear that His burial also formed a part of His humiliation. Notice especially the following: (a) Man’s returning to the dust from which he is taken, is represented in Scripture as part of the punishment of sin, Genesis 3:19. (b) Several statements of Scripture imply that the Saviour’s abode in the grave was a humiliation, Psalms 16:10; Acts 2:27; Acts 2:31; Acts 13:34-35. It was a descent into hades in itself dismal and dreary, a place of corruption, though in it He was kept from corruption. (c) Burial is a going down, and therefore a humiliation. The burial of dead bodies was ordered by God to symbolize the humiliation of the sinner. (d) There is a certain agreement between the stages in the objective work of redemption and the order in the subjective application of the work of Christ. The Bible speaks of the sinner’s being buried with Christ. Now this belongs to the putting off of the old man, and not to the putting on of the new, cf. Romans 6:1-6. Consequently also the burial of Jesus forms a part of His humiliation. His burial, moreover, did not merely serve to prove that Jesus was really dead, but also to remove the terrors of the grave for the redeemed and to sanctify the grave for them.

5. THE SAVIOUR’S DESCENT INTO HADES. a. This doctrine in the Apostolic Confession. After the Apostolic Confession has mentioned the sufferings, death, and burial, of the Lord, it continues with the words, "He descended into hell (hades)." This statement was not in the Creed as early nor as universally as the others. It was first used in the Aquileian form of the Creed (c. 390 A.D.), " descendit in inferna. " Among the Greeks some translated "inferna" by "hades," and others by "lower parts." Some forms of the Creed in which these words were found did not mention the burial of Christ, while the Roman and Oriental forms generally mentioned the burial but not the descent into hades. Rufinus remarks that they contained the idea of the descent in the word "buried." Later on, however, the Roman form of the Creed added the statement in question after its mention of the burial. Calvin correctly argues that for those who added them after the word "buried," they must have denoted something additional.18 It should be borne in mind that these words are not found in Scripture, and are not based on such direct statements of the Bible as the rest of the articles of the Creed. b. Scriptural basis for the expression. There are especially four passages of Scripture that come into consideration here. (1) Ephesians 4:9, "Now this, He ascended, what is it but that He also descended into the lower parts of the earth?" They who seek support in this passage take the expression "lower parts of the earth" as the equivalent of "hades." But this is a doubtful interpretation. The apostle argues that the ascent of Christ presupposes a descent. Now the opposite of the ascension is the incarnation, cf. John 3:13. Hence the majority of commentators take the expression as referring simply to the earth. The expression may be derived from Psalms 139:15 and refer more particularly to the incarnation. (2) 1 Peter 3:18-19, which speaks of Christ

as "being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit, in which He also went and preached unto the spirits in prison." This passage is supposed to refer to the descent into hades and to state the purpose of it. The Spirit referred to is then understood to be the soul of Christ, and the preaching mentioned must have taken place between His death and resurrection. But the one is just as impossible as the other. The Spirit mentioned is not the soul of Christ but the quickening Spirit, and it was by that same life-giving Spirit that Christ preached. The common Protestant interpretation of this passage is that in the Spirit Christ preached through Noah to the disobedient that lived before the flood, who were spirits in prison when Peter wrote, and could therefore be designated as such. Bavinck considers this untenable and interprets the passage as referring to the ascension, which he regards as a rich, triumphant, and powerful preaching to the spirits in prison.19 (3) 1 Peter 4:4-6, particularly 1 Peter 4:6, which reads as follows: "For unto this end was the gospel preached even to the dead, that they might be judged indeed according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the spirit." In this connection the apostle warns the readers that they should not live the rest of their life in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God, even if they should give offense to their former companions and be slandered by them, since they shall have to give an account of their doing to God, who is ready to judge the living and the dead. The "dead" to whom the gospel was preached were evidently not yet dead when it was preached unto them, since the purpose of this preaching was in part "that they might be judged according to men in the flesh." This could only take place during their life on earth. In all probability the writer refers to the same spirits in prison of which he spoke in the preceding chapter. (4) Psalms 16:8-10 (comp. Acts 2:25-27; Acts 2:30-31). It is especially the 10th verse that comes into consideration here, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in Sheol; neither wilt thou suffer thy holy one to see corruption." From this passage Pearson concludes that the soul of Christ was in hell (hades) before the resurrection, for we are told that it was not left there.20 But we should note the following: (a) The word nephesh (soul) is often used in Hebrew for the personal pronoun, and sheol, for the state of death. (b) If we so understand these words here, we have a clear synonymous parallelism. The idea expressed would be that Jesus was not left to the power of death. (c) This is in perfect harmony with the interpretation of Peter in Acts 2:30-31, and of Paul in Acts 13:34-35. In both instances the psalm is quoted to prove the resurrection of Jesus. c. Different interpretations of the creedal expression. (1) The Catholic Church takes it to mean that, after His death, Christ went into the Limbus Patrum, where the Old Testament saints were awaiting the revelation and application of His redemption, preached the gospel to them, and brought them out to heaven. (2) The Lutherans regard the descent into hades as the first stage of the exaltation of Christ. Christ went into the underworld to reveal and consummate His victory over Satan and the powers of darkness, and to pronounce their sentence of condemnation. Some Lutherans place this triumphal march between the death of Christ and His resurrection; others, after the resurrection. (3) The Church of England holds that, while Christ’s body was in the grave, the soul went into hades, more particularly into paradise, the abode of the souls of the righteous, and gave them a fuller exposition of the truth. (4) Calvin interprets the phrase metaphorically,21 as referring to the penal sufferings of Christ on the cross, where He really suffered the pangs of hell. Similarly, the Heidelberg Catechism.22 According to the usual Reformed position the words refer not only to the sufferings on the cross, but also to the agonies of Gethsemane. (5) Scripture certainly does not teach a literal descent of Christ into hell. Moreover, there are serious objections to this view. He cannot have descended into hell according to the body, for this was in the grave. If

He really did descend into hell, it can only have been as to His soul, and this would mean that only half of His human nature shared in this stage of His humiliation (or exaltation). Moreover, as long as Christ had not yet risen from the dead, the time had not come for a triumphal march such as the Lutherans assume. And, finally, at the time of His death Christ commended His spirit to His Father. This seems to indicate that He would be passive rather than active from the time of His death until He arose from the grave. On the whole it seems best to combine two thoughts: (a) that Christ suffered the pangs of hell before His death, in Gethsemane and on the cross; and (b) that He entered the deepest humiliation of the state of death.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: How were state and condition related to each other in the case of Adam, when he fell? In the case of the Word becoming flesh? How are they related in the redemption of sinners? Do one's state and condition always correspond? How should the state of humiliation be defined? What does Kuyper mean, when he distinguishes between the status generis and the status modi? What stages does he distinguish in the state of humiliation? Is there any biblical proof for the virgin birth, except in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke? What are the doctrinal bearings of this doctrine? Have the theories of the mythical origin of the idea of the virgin birth been found adequate? What do we understand by Christ's subjection to the law? In what legal relation did He stand as Mediator during His humiliation? Was the human nature of Christ inherently subject to the law of death? Did eternal death in the case of Christ include all the elements that are included in the eternal death of sinners? How can the burial of the Saviour be conceived of as a proof that He really died?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref Dogm. III, pp. 455-469; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Christo II, pp. 59-108; ibid., De Vleeschwording des Woords; Hodge, Syst. Theol. II, pp. 612-625; Shedd, Dogm. Theol., pp. 330-348; McPherson, Chr. Dogm., pp. 321-326; Litton, Introd to Dogm. Theol., pp. 175-191; Pieper, Christl. Dogm. II, pp. 358-378; Schmid, Doct. Theol. of the Ev. Luth. Church, pp. 383-406; Valentine, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 88-95; Heppe, Dogm. der ev.-ref. Kirche, pp. 351-356; Ebrard, Christl. Dogm. II, pp. 189-226; Mastricht, Godgeleerdheit, II, pp. 601-795; Synopsis Purioris pp. 262-272; Turretin, Opera, Locus XIII, Q. IX-XVI; Machen, The Virgin Birth of Christ; Orr, The Virgin Birth of Christ; Sweet, The Birth and Infancy of Jesus Christ; Cooke, Did Paul Know the Virgin Birth? Knowling, The Virgin Birth; Barth, Credo, pp. 62-94; Brunner, The Mediator, pp. 303-376.

04.3.2.2. The State of Exaltation

II.The State of Exaltation A. GENERAL REMARKS ON THE STATE OF EXALTATION.

1.THE SUBJECT AND NATURE OF THE EXALTATION. As already indicated in the preceding, there is a difference of opinion between Lutheran and Reformed theology on the subject of the states of Christ. The former deny that the Logos, and assert that the human nature of Christ, is the subject of the states of humiliation and exaltation. Hence they exclude the incarnation from the humiliation of Christ, and maintain that the state of humiliation consists in this, "that Christ for a time renounced (truly and really, yet freely) the plenary exercise of the divine majesty, which His human nature had acquired in the personal union, and, as a lowly man, endured what was far beneath the divine majesty (that He might suffer and die for the love of the world)."23 They hold that the state of exaltation became manifest first of all to the lower world in the descent into hades, and further to this world in the resurrection and ascension, reaching its completion in the session at the right hand of God. The exaltation, then, consists in this that the human nature assumed the plenary exercise of the divine attributes that were communicated to it at the incarnation, but were used only occasionally or secretly. Reformed theology, on the other hand, regards the person of the Mediator, that is, the God-man, as the subject of the exaltation, but stresses the fact that it was, of course, the human nature in which the exaltation took place. The divine nature is not capable of humiliation or exaltation. In the exaltation the God-man, Jesus Christ, (a) passed from under the law in its federal and penal aspects, and consequently from under the burden of the law as the condition of the covenant of works, and from under the curse of the law; (b) exchanged the penal for the righteous relation to the law, and as Mediator entered into possession of the blessings of salvation which He merited for sinners; and (c) was crowned with a corresponding honor and glory. It had to appear also in His condition that the curse of sin was lifted. His exaltation was also His glorification.

2. THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST BOTH SCRIPTURAL AND REASONABLE. There is abundant Scriptural proof for the exaltation of Christ. The gospel story clearly shows us that the humiliation of Christ was followed by His exaltation. The classical passage to prove the latter is found in Php 2:9-11 : "Wherefore also God highly exalted Him, and gave unto Him the name which is above every name; that in the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven and things on earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." But in addition to this there are several others, such as Mark 16:19; Luke 24:26; John 7:39; Acts 2:33; Acts 5:31; Romans 8:17; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Ephesians 4:10; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 2:9; Hebrews 10:12Mark 16:19; Luke 24:26; John 7:39; Acts 2:33; Acts 5:31; Romans 8:17; Romans 8:34; Ephesians 1:20; Ephesians 4:10; 1 Timothy 3:16; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 2:9; Hebrews 10:12. There is a close connection between the two states. The state of exaltation must be regarded as the judicial result of the state of humiliation. In His capacity as Mediator Christ met the demands of the law in its federal and penal aspects, paying the penalty of sin and meriting everlasting life. Therefore His justification had to follow and He had to be put in possession of the reward. Since He was a public person and accomplished His work

publicly, justice required that the exaltation should also be a public matter. The exaltation of Christ has a threefold significance. Each one of the stages was a virtual declaration of God that Christ met the demands of the law, and was therefore entitled to His reward. The first two stages also had exemplary significance, since they symbolized what will take place in the life of believers. And, finally, all four stages were destined to be instrumental in the perfect glorification of believers.

3. THE STATE OF EXALTATION IN MODERN LIBERAL THEOLOGY. Modern liberal theology, of course, knows of no state of exaltation in the life of Christ. Not only has it discarded the legal idea of the states of Christ altogether, but it has also ruled out all the supernatural in the life of the Saviour. Rauschenbusch closes his Theology for the Social Gospel with a discussion of the death of Christ. Macintosh says that "the difficulties in the way of accepting the ordinary traditional notion of the 'resurrection' of Jesus, as a reanimation of the dead body, its miraculous transformation and final ascension to 'heaven,' are, to the scientific habit of thought, practically insuperable. . . . An undischarged burden of proof still rests upon those who maintain that it (the body of Christ) did not suffer disintegration, like the bodies of all others who have died."24 Beckwith admits that the Bible, and particularly Paul, speaks of the exaltation of Christ, but says: "If we translate the Apostle's notion of exaltation into its modern equivalent, we shall find him saying that Christ is superior to all the forces of the universe and to all known orders of rational beings, even the highest, saving only the Father."25 And George Burman Foster frankly declares: "According to orthodoxy, the Son of God laid aside his divine glory and then took it up again; he alienated from himself certain divine qualities, and then integrated them again. What is meant is at bottom good, namely, that the great and merciful God serves us, and is not too good for our daily human food. Perhaps the form of the orthodox doctrine was necessary when the doctrine was excogitated, but that terrible being, the modern man, cannot do anything with it."26 B. THE STAGES OF THE STATE OF EXALTATION.

Reformed theology distinguishes four stages in the exaltation of Christ.

1. THE RESURRECTION. a. The nature of the resurrection. The resurrection of Christ did not consist in the mere fact that He came to life again, and that body and soul were re-united. If this were all that it involved, He could not be called "the first-fruits of them that slept," 1 Corinthians 15:20, nor "the firstborn of the dead," Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5, since others were restored to life before Him. It consisted rather in this that in Him human nature, both body and soul, was restored to its pristine strength and perfection and even raised to a higher level, while body and soul were re-united in a living organism. From the analogy of the change which, according to Scripture, takes place in the body of believers in the general resurrection, we may gather something as to the transformation that must have occurred in Christ. Paul tells us in 1 Corinthians 15:42-44 that the future body of believers will be incorruptible, that is, incapable of decay; glorious, which means resplendent with heavenly brightness; powerful, that is, instinct with energy and perhaps with new faculties; and spiritual, which does not mean immaterial or ethereal, but adapted to the spirit, a perfect instrument of the spirit. From the Gospel story we learn that the body of Jesus had undergone a remarkable change, so that He was not easily recognized and could suddenly appear and disappear in a surprising manner, Luke 24:31; Luke 24:36; John 20:13; John 20:19; John 21:7; but that it was nevertheless a material and very real body, Luke 24:39. This does not conflict with 1 Corinthians 15:50, for "flesh and blood" is a description of human nature in its present material, mortal, and corruptible state. But the change that takes place in believers is not only bodily but also spiritual. Similarly, there was not only a physical but also a psychical

change in Christ. We cannot say that any religious or ethical change took place in Him; but He was endowed with new qualities perfectly adjusted to His future heavenly environment. Through the resurrection He became the life-giving Spirit, 1 Corinthians 15:45. The resurrection of Christ had a threefold significance: (1) It constituted a declaration of the Father that the last enemy had been vanquished, the penalty paid, and the condition on which life was promised, met. (2) It symbolized what was destined to happen to the members of Christ's mystical body in their justification, spiritual birth, and future blessed resurrection, Romans 6:4-5; Romans 6:9; Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 15:20-22; 2 Corinthians 4:14; 2 Corinthians 4:14; Colossians 2:12; 1 Thessalonians 4:14. (3) It is also connected instrumentally with their justification, regeneration, and final resurrection, Romans 4:25; Romans 5:10; Ephesians 1:20; Php 3:10; 1 Peter 1:3. b. The Author of the resurrection. In distinction from others who were raised from the dead, Christ arose through His own power. He spoke of Himself as the resurrection and the life, John 11:25, declared that He had the power to lay down His life, and to take it up again, John 10:18, and even predicted that He would rebuild the temple of His body, John 2:19-21. But the resurrection was not a work of Christ alone; it is frequently ascribed to the power of God in general, Acts 2:24; Acts 2:32; Acts 3:26; Acts 5:30; 1 Corinthians 6:14; Ephesians 1:20, or, more particularly, to the Father, Romans 6:4; Galatians 1:1; 1 Peter 1:3. And if the resurrection of Christ can be called a work of God, then it follows that the Holy Spirit was also operative in it, for all the opera ad extra are works of the triune God. Moreover, Romans 8:11 also implies this. c. Objection to the doctrine of the resurrection. One great objection is urged against the doctrine of a physical resurrection, namely, that after death the body disintegrates, and the various particles of which it is composed enter into the composition of other bodies, vegetable, animal, and human. Hence it is impossible to restore these particles to all the bodies of which, in the course of time, they formed a part. Macintosh asks, "What became of the atoms of carbon, oxygen, nitrogen, hydrogen and other elements which composed the earthly body of Jesus?"27 Now we admit that the resurrection defies explanation. It is a miracle. But at the same time we should bear in mind that the identity of a resurrection body with the body that descended into the grave does not require that it be composed of exactly the same particles. The composition of our bodies changes right along, and yet they retain their identity. Paul in 1 Corinthians 15:1-58 maintains the essential identity of the body that descends into the grave with that which is raised up, but also declares emphatically that the form changes. That which man sows in the earth passes through a process of death, and is then quickened; but in form the grain which he puts into the ground is not the same as that which he reaps in due time. God gives to each seed a body of its own. So it is also in the resurrection of the dead. It may be that there is some nucleus, some germ, that constitutes the essence of the body and preserves its identity. The argument of the apostle in 1 Corinthians 15:35-38 seems to imply something of the kind.28 It should be borne in mind that the real, the fundamental objection to the resurrection, is its supernatural character. It is not lack of evidence, but the fundamental tenet that miracles cannot happen, that stands in the way of its acceptance. Even liberal scholars admit that no fact is better attested than the resurrection of Christ — though others, of course, deny this. But this makes little difference to the modern scholar. Says Dr. Rashdall: "Were the testimony fifty times stronger than it is, any hypothesis would be more possible than that." Yet at the present time many eminent scientists frankly declare that they are not in a position to say that miracles cannot happen. d. Attempts to explain away the fact of the resurrection. In their denial the anti- supernaturalists always run up against the story of the resurrection in the Gospels. The story of the empty tomb

and of the appearances of Jesus after the resurrection present a challenge to them, and they accept the challenge and attempt to explain these without accepting the fact of the resurrection. The following attempts are some of the most important.

(1) The falsehood theory. This is to the effect that the disciples practiced deliberate deception by stealing the body from the grave and then declaring that the Lord had risen. The soldiers who watched the grave were instructed to circulate that story, and Celsus already urged it in explanation of the empty tomb. This theory, of course, impugns the veracity of the early witnesses, the apostles, the women, the five hundred brethren, and others. But it is extremely unlikely that the faint-hearted disciples would have had the courage to palm off such a falsehood upon a hostile world. It is impossible to believe that they would have persisted in suffering for such a bare falsehood. Moreover, only the facts of the resurrection can explain the indomitable courage and power which they reveal in witnessing to the resurrection of Christ. These considerations soon led to the abandonment of this view.

(2) The swoon theory. According to this theory, Jesus did not really die, but merely fainted, while it was thought that He had actually died. But this naturally raises several questions that are not easy to answer. How can it be explained that so many people were deceived, and that the spear thrust did not kill Jesus? How could Jesus in His exhausted condition roll away the stone from the grave and then walk from Jerusalem to Emmaus and back. How is it that the disciples did not treat Him as a sick person, but saw in Him the powerful Prince of Life? And what became of Jesus after that? With the resurrection the ascension is naturally ruled out also. Did He then return to some unknown place and live in secret the rest of His life? This theory is burdened with so many improbabilities that even Strauss ridiculed it.

(3) The vision theory. This was presented in two forms. (a) Some speak of purely subjective visions. In their excited state of mind the disciples dwelt so much on the Saviour and on the possibility of His return to them, that at last they actually thought they saw Him. The spark was applied by the nervous and excitable Mary Magdalene, and soon the flame was kindled and spread. This has been the favorable theory for a long time, but it too is freighted with difficulties. How could such visions arise, seeing that the disciples did not expect the resurrection? How could they appear while the disciples were about their ordinary business and not given to prayer or meditation? Could the rapture or ecstacy required for the creation of subjective visions have started as early as the third day? Would not the disciples in such visions have seen Jesus, either as surrounded with a halo of heavenly glory, or just as they had known Him and eager to renew fellowship with them? Do subjective visions ever present themselves to several persons simultaneously? How can we account for the visionary conversations? (b) In view of the extreme weakness of this theory some scholars presented a different version of it. They claim that the disciples saw real objective visions, miraculously sent by God, to persuade them to go on with the preaching of the gospel. This does really avoid some of the difficulties suggested, but encounters others. It admits the supernatural; and if this is necessary, why not grant the resurrection, which certainly explains all the facts? Moreover, this theory asks us to believe that these divinely sent visions were such as to mislead the apostles. Does God seek to work His ends by deception?

(4) Mythical theories. A new mythical school has come into existence, which discards, or at least dispenses with, theories of vision and apparition, and seeks to account for the resurrection legend

by the help of conceptions imported into Judaism from Babylonia and other oriental countries. This school claims not only that the mythology of the ancient oriental religions contains analogies of the resurrection story, but that this story was actually derived from pagan myths. This theory has been worked out in several forms, but is equally baseless in all its forms. It is characterized by great arbitrariness in bolstering up a connection of the gospel story with heathen myths, and has not succeeded in linking them together. Moreover, it reveals an extreme disregard of the facts as they are found in Scripture. e. The doctrinal bearing of the resurrection. The question arises, Does it make any difference, whether we believe in the physical resurrection of Christ, or merely in an ideal resurrection? For modern liberal theology the resurrection of Jesus, except in the sense of a spiritual survival, has no real importance for Christian faith. Belief in the bodily resurrection is not essential, but can very well be dropped without affecting the Christian religion. Barth and Brunner are of a different opinion. They do believe in the historical fact of the resurrection, but maintain that as such it is merely a matter of history, with which the historian may deal to the best of his ability, and not as a matter of faith. The important element is that in the resurrection the divine breaks into the course of history, that in it the incognito of Jesus is removed and God reveals Himself. The historian cannot describe it, but the believer accepts it by faith.

Belief in the resurrection certainly has doctrinal bearings. We cannot deny the physical resurrection of Christ without impugning the veracity of the writers of Scripture, since they certainly represent it as a fact. This means that it affects our belief in the trustworthiness of Scripture. Moreover the resurrection of Christ is represented as having evidential value. It was the culminating proof that Christ was a teacher sent from God (the sign of Jonah), and that He was the very Son of God, Romans 1:4. It was also the supreme attestation of the fact of immortality. What is still more important, the resurrection enters as a constitutive element into the very essence of the work of redemption, and therefore of the gospel. It is one of the great foundation stones of the Church of God. The atoning work of Christ, if it was to be effective at all, had to terminate, not in death, but in life. Furthermore, it was the Father’s seal on the completed work of Christ, the public declaration of its acceptance. In it Christ passed from under the law. Finally, it was His entrance on a new life as the risen and exalted Head of the Church and the universal Lord. This enabled Him to apply the fruits of His redemptive work.

2. THE ASCENSION. a. The ascension of Christ does not stand out as boldly on the pages of the Bible as the resurrection does. This is probably due to the fact that the latter rather than the former was the real turning point in the life of Jesus. In a certain sense the ascension may be called the necessary complement and completion of the resurrection. Christ’s transition to the higher life of glory, begun in the resurrection, was perfected in the ascension. This does not mean that the ascension was devoid of independent significance. But though the Scripture proof for the ascension is not as abundant as that for the resurrection, it is quite sufficient. Luke gives a double account of it, Luke 24:50-53, and Acts 1:6-11. Mark refers to it in 16:19, but this passage is contested. Jesus spoke of it time and again before His death, John 6:62; John 14:2; John 16:5; John 16:10; John 1:1; John 16:28; John 17:5; John 20:17. Paul refers to it repeatedly, Ephesians 1:20; Ephesians 4:8-10; 1 Timothy 3:16; and the Epistle to the Hebrews calls attention to its significance, Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 9:24. b. The nature of the ascension. The ascension may be described as the visible ascent of the person of the Mediator from earth to heaven, according to His human nature. It was a local transition, a going from place to place. This

implies, of course, that heaven is a place as well as earth. But the ascension of Jesus was not merely a transition from one place to another; it also included a further change in the human nature of Christ. That nature now passed into the fulness of heavenly glory and was perfectly adapted to the life of heaven. Some Christian scholars of recent date consider heaven to be a condition rather than a place, and therefore do not conceive of the ascension locally.29 They will admit that there was a momentary lifting up of Christ in the sight of the Eleven, but regard this only as a symbol of the lifting up of our humanity to a spiritual order far above our present life. The local conception, however, is favored by the following considerations: (1) Heaven is represented in Scripture as the dwelling place of created beings (angels, saints, the human nature of Christ). These are all in some way related to space; only God is above all spatial relations. Of course, the laws that apply in heavenly space may differ from those that apply in earthly space. (2) Heaven and earth are repeatedly placed in juxtaposition in Scripture. From this it would seem to follow that, if the one is a place, the other must be a place also. It would be absurd to put a place and a condition in juxtaposition in that way. (3) The Bible teaches us to think of heaven as a place. Several passages direct our thought upward to heaven and downward to hell, Deuteronomy 30:12; Joshua 2:11; Psalms 139:8; Romans 10:6-7. This would have no meaning if the two were not to be regarded as local in some sense of the word. (4) The Saviour’s entrance into heaven is pictured as an ascent. The disciples see Jesus ascending until a cloud intercepts Him and hides Him from their sight. The same local coloring is present to the mind of the writer of Hebrews in Hebrews 4:14. c. The Lutheran conception of the ascension. The Lutheran conception of the ascension differs from that of the Reformed. They regard it, not as a local transition, but as a change of condition, whereby the human nature of Christ passed into the full enjoyment and exercise of the divine perfections, communicated to it at the incarnation, and thus became permanently omnipresent. In connection with the idea that Christ began His session at the right hand of God at the ascension, they maintain that this right hand (which is merely a symbol of power) is everywhere. Lutherans, however, do not all think alike on the subject of the ubiquity of Christ’s human nature. Some deny it altogether, and others believe that, while the ascension resulted in the ubiquity of Christ, it also included a local movement, whereby Christ withdrew His visible presence from the earth. d. The doctrinal significance of the ascension. Barth says that the question may well be asked why the ascension should have a place among the main articles of the Christian faith, seeing that it is mentioned less frequently and emphatically than the resurrection, and where it is mentioned appears only as a natural transition from the resurrection to the session at God’s right hand. It is exactly in this transition that he finds the real significance of the ascension. Hence he does not care to stress the ascension as a visible exaltation, a "vertical elevation in space" before the eyes of the disciples, since that is evidently not the way to the session at the right hand of God, which is no place. Just as the historical facts of the virgin birth and of the resurrection are regarded by him merely as signs of a revelation of Christ, so too the ascension as a sign and wonder is merely a " pointer to the revelation, that occurred in the resurrection, of Jesus Christ as the bearer of all power in heaven and earth."30

It may be said that the ascension had a threefold significance. (1) It clearly embodied the declaration that the sacrifice of Christ was a sacrifice to God, which as such had to be presented to Him in the inner sanctuary; that the Father regarded the Mediatorial work of Christ as sufficient and therefore admitted Him to the heavenly glory; and that the Kingdom of the Mediator was not a kingdom of the Jews, but a universal kingdom. (2) It was also exemplary in that it was prophetic of

the ascension of all believers, who are already set with Christ in heavenly places, Ephesians 2:6, and are destined to be with Him forever, John 17:24; and also in that it revealed the initial restoration of the original kingship of man, Hebrews 2:7; Hebrews 2:9. (3) Finally, it was also instrumental in preparing a place for those who are in Christ. The Lord Himself points to the necessity of going to the Father, in order to prepare a place for His disciples, John 14:2-3.

3. THE SESSION AT THE RIGHT HAND OF GOD. a. Scriptural proof for the session. When Christ stood before the high priest He predicted that He would sit at the right hand of power, Matthew 26:64. Peter makes mention of it in his sermons, Acts 2:33-36; Acts 5:31. In both of these passages the dative tei dexiai may have to be taken in its more usual instrumental sense, though in the first of the two the quotation in Acts 5:34 favors the local interpretation. It is also referred to in Ephesians 1:20-22; Hebrews 10:12; 1 Peter 3:22; Revelation 22:1. Besides these passages there are several that speak of Christ's reigning as King, Romans 14:9; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; Hebrews 2:7-8. b. The significance of the session. Naturally, the expression "right hand of God" is anthropomorphic and cannot be taken literally. The expression, as used in this connection, is derived from Psalms 110:1, "Sit thou at my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool." To be seated at the right hand of the king might be merely a mark of honour, 1 Kings 2:19, but might also denote participation in government, and consequently in honour and glory. In the case of Christ it was undoubtedly an indication of the fact that the Mediator received the reigns of government over the Church and over the universe, and is made to share in the corresponding glory. This does not mean that Christ was not King of Zion up to this time, but that He is now publicly inaugurated as Godman, and as such receives the government of the Church and of heaven and earth, and enters solemnly upon the actual administration of the power committed to Him. This is entirely in agreement with what Calvin says, namely, that the statement that Christ was seated at the right hand of God is equivalent to saying "that He was installed in the government of heaven and earth, and formally admitted to possession of the administration committed to Him, and not only admitted for once, but to continue until He descend to judgment."31 It is perfectly evident that it would be a mistake to infer from the fact that the Bible speaks of Christ's "sitting" at the right hand of God, that the life to which the risen Lord ascended is a life of rest. It is and continues to be a life of constant activity. The statements of Scripture vary. Christ is not only represented as sitting at the right hand of God, but also simply as being at His right hand, Romans 8:34; 1 Peter 3:22, or as standing there, Acts 7:56, and even as walking in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks. And it would be equally wrong to conclude from the emphasis on the royal dignity and government of Christ, naturally suggested by the idea of His sitting at the right hand of God, that the work in which He is engaged during His heavenly session is exclusively governmental, and therefore neither prophetical nor priestly. c. The work of Christ during His session. It deserves emphasis that Christ, while He is seated at the right hand of God, is not merely a passive recipient of divine dominion and power, majesty and glory, but is actively engaged in the continuation of His mediatorial work. (1) Since the Bible most frequently connects the session with the kingly rule of Christ, it is natural to think first of all of His work as King. He rules and protects His Church by His Spirit, and also governs it through His appointed officers. He has all the forces of heaven under His command: the angels are His messengers, always ready to convey His blessings to the saints, and to guard them against surrounding dangers. He exercises authority over the forces of nature, and over all the powers that are hostile to the Kingdom of God; and will so continue to reign until He has subjected the last enemy.

(2) However, His work is not limited to His kingly rule. He is priest forever after the order of Melchizedek. When He cried out on the cross, "It is finished," He did not mean to say that His priestly work was at an end, but only that His active suffering had reached its termination. The Bible also connects priestly work with Christ's session at the right hand of God, Zechariah 6:13; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 7:24-25; Hebrews 8:1-6; Hebrews 9:11-15; Hebrews 9:24-26; Hebrews 10:19-22; 1 John 2:2. Christ is continually presenting His completed sacrifice to the Father as the sufficient basis for the bestowal of the pardoning grace of God. He is constantly applying His sacrificial work, and making it effective in the justification and sanctification of sinners. Moreover, He is ever making intercession for those that are His, pleading for their acceptance on the basis of His completed sacrifice, and for their safe-keeping in the world, and making their prayers and services acceptable to God. The Lutherans stress the fact that the intercession of Christ is vocalis et realis , while the Reformed emphasize the fact that it consists primarily in the presence of Christ in man's nature with the Father, and that the prayers are to be considered as the presentation of legitimate claims rather than as supplications.

(3) Christ also continues His prophetical work through the Holy Spirit. Before He parted with His disciples He promised them the Holy Spirit, to aid their memories, teach them new truths, guide them in all the truth, and enrich them out of the fulness of Christ, John 14:26; John 16:7-15. The promise was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost; and from that day on Christ, through the Spirit, was active as our great Prophet in various ways: in the inspiration of Scripture; in and through the preaching of the apostles and of the ministers of the Word; in the guidance of the Church, making it the foundation and pillar of the truth; and in making the truth effective in the hearts and lives of believers.

4. THE PHYSICAL RETURN OF CHRIST. a. The return as a stage in the exaltation. The return of Christ is sometimes omitted from the stages of His exaltation, as if the session at the right hand of God were the culminating point. But this is not correct. The highest point is not reached until He who suffered at the hands of man, returns in the capacity of Judge. He himself pointed to this as a special mediatorial prerogative, John 5:22; John 5:27, and so did the apostles, Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31. Besides the passages that speak of Christ's appointment as Judge, there are several that refer to His judicial activity, Matthew 19:28; Matthew 25:31-34; JLuke 3:17; Romans 2:16; Romans 14:9; 2 Corinthians 5:10; 2 Timothy 4:1; James 5:9. b. Scriptural terms for the return. Several terms are used to designate the future coming of Jesus Christ. The term " parousia " is the most common of these. It means in the first place simply "presence," but also serves to designate a coming preceding a presence. The latter is the common meaning of the term, when it is used in connection with the return of Jesus Christ, Matthew 24:3; Matthew 24:27; Matthew 7:1; Matthew 24:39; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:1; James 5:7-8; 2 Peter 3:4. A second term is " apocalupsis," which stresses the fact that the return will be a revealing of Jesus Christ. It points to the uncovering of something that was previously hidden from view, in this case, of the concealed glory and majesty of Jesus Christ, 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 4:13. A third term is " epiphaneia," the glorious appearing of the Lord. The implication is that what is uncovered is something glorious, 2 Thessalonians 2:8; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1-8; Titus 2:13. c. The manner of Christ's return. Some place the return of Christ in the past, claiming that the promise of His coming again was realized when He returned in the Holy Spirit. They refer to

the promise in John 14:1-31, John 15:1-27; John 16:1-33, and interpret the word " parousia " as meaning simply "presence."32 Now it may be said that, in a sense, Christ did return in the Holy Spirit, and as such is now present in the Church. But this was a spiritual return, while the Bible teaches us to look for a physical and visible return of Christ, Acts 1:11. Even after Pentecost we are taught to look forward to the coming of Christ, 1 Corinthians 1:7; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 11:26; Php 3:20; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Titus 2:13; Revelation 1:7. d. The purpose of His return. The second coming of Jesus Christ will be for the purpose of judging the world and perfecting the salvation of His people. Men and angels, the living and the dead, will appear before Him to be judged according to the record which was kept of them, Matthew 24:30-31; Matthew 25:31-32. It will be a coming with terrible judgments upon the wicked, but also with blessings of eternal glory for the saints, Matthew 25:33-36. While He will sentence the wicked to everlasting punishment, He will publicly justify His own and lead them into the perfect joy of His eternal Kingdom. This will signalize the completed victory of Jesus Christ. e. Objection to the doctrine of the return. The great objection to the doctrine of the return of Jesus Christ is of a piece with the objection to the doctrine of the physical resurrection of Christ. If there can be no physical resurrection and ascension, there can be no physical return from heaven. Both are equally impossible, and the Biblical teachings respecting them are merely crude representations of an unscientific age. Jesus evidently shared the carnal views of His day, and these colored His prophetic delineations of the future. The only return of which we can speak and for which we can hope is a return in power, in the establishment of an ethical kingdom on earth.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What historical proofs have we for the resurrection of Christ? Does 1 Corinthians 15:8 prove that the appearances were subjective visions? What myths are supposed to have entered into the shaping of the story of the resurrection? What light do the following passages shed on the post-resurrection condition of Jesus? 1 Corinthians 6:17; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; 1 Timothy 3:16; Romans 1:3-4; Hebrews 9:14; 1 Peter 3:18. What is the difference between a soma psychicon, a soma pneumatikon, and a soma tes sarkos? Are "spirit" and "spiritual" antithetical to "body" and "bodily" in the New Testament? Does science really make it impossible to think of heaven as a place? Is it true that in Scripture the words "heaven" and "heavenly" indicate a state rather than a place? Does modern theology think of heaven only as a condition to be entered upon after death? Does its position really find support in such a passage as Ephesians 2:6? Does the Old Testament contain any references to the ascension and the session at the right hand of God? What serious objections are there to the Lutheran doctrine of the ubiquity of the human nature of Christ? Does the Bible teach us to regard the return of Christ as imminent?

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Chapter 108

04.3.3.0. THE OFFICES OF CHRIST

THE OFFICES OF CHRIST I. Introduction; The Prophetic Office II. The Priestly Office III. The Cause and Necessity of the Atonement IV. The Nature of the Atonement V. Divergent Theories of the Atonement VI.The Purpose and the Extent of the Atonement VII. The Intercessory Work of Christ VIII. The Kingly Office

04.3.3.1. Introduction; The Prophetic Office

I. Introduction; The Prophetic Office A. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS ON THE OFFICES IN GENERAL.

1.THE IDEA OF THE OFFICES IN HISTORY. It has become customary to speak of three offices in connection with the work of Christ, namely the prophetic, the priestly, and the kingly office. While some of the early Church Fathers already speak of the different offices of Christ, Calvin was the first to recognize the importance of distinguishing the three offices of the Mediator and to call attention to it in a separate chapter of his Institutes.33 Among the Lutherans Gerhard was the first to develop the doctrine of the three offices, Quenstedt regarded the threefold distinction as rather unessential and called attention to the fact that some Lutheran theologians distinguished only two offices, combining the prophetical with the priestly office. Since the days of the Reformation the distinction was quite generally adopted as one of the commonplaces of theology, though there was no general agreement as to the relative importance of the offices, nor as to their interrelation. Some placed the prophetical, others the priestly, and still others the kingly, office in the foreground. There were those who applied the idea of a chronological succession to them, and thought of Christ functioning as prophet during his public ministry on earth, as priest in his final sufferings and death on the cross, and as king now that He is seated at the right hand of God. Others, however, correctly stressed the fact that He must be conceived as functioning in His threefold capacity both in His state of humiliation and in His state of exaltation. The Socinians really recognized only two offices: Christ functioned as prophet on earth, and functions as king in heaven. While they also spoke of Christ as priest, they subsumed His priestly under His kingly work, and therefore did not recognize His earthly priesthood. In the Lutheran Church considerable opposition appeared to the doctrine of the three offices of Christ. Ernesti gives a summary of the objections that were raised. According to him the division is a purely artificial one; the terms prophet, priest, and king are not used in Scripture in the sense implied in this division; it is impossible to discriminate the one function clearly from the other in the work of Christ; and the terms as used in Scripture are applied to Christ only in a tropical sense, and therefore should not have precise meanings affixed to them, designating particular parts of the work of Christ. In answer to this it may be said that there is little force in the criticism of the use of the terms, since they are used throughout the Old Testament as designations of those who in the offices of prophet, priest, and king typified Christ. The only really significant criticism is due to the fact that in Christ the three offices are united in one person. The result is that we cannot sharply discriminate between the different functions in the official work of Christ. The mediatorial work is always a work of the entire person; not a single work can be limited to any one of the offices. Of the later Lutheran theologians Reinhard, Doederlein, Storr and Bretschneider rejected the distinction. Ritschl also objected to it, and held that the term "vocation" should take the place of the misleading word "office." He further regarded the kingly function or activity of Christ as primary, and the priestly and prophetic as secondary and subordinate, the former indicating man’s relation to the world, and the latter, his relation to God. He further stressed the fact that the prophetic and priestly

kingship should be asserted equally of the state of humiliation and the state of exaltation. Haering follows Ritschl in his denial of the three offices, and in his emphasis on calling. Modern theology is averse to the whole idea, partly because it dislikes the terminology of the schools, and partly because it refuses to think of Christ as an official character. It is so much in love with Christ as the ideal Man, the loving Helper, and the Elder Brother, so truly human, that it fears to consider Him as a formal mediatorial functionary, since this would be apt to dehumanize Him.

2. IMPORTANCE OF THE DISTINCTION. The distinction of the three offices of Christ is a valuable one and ought to be retained, in spite of the fact that its consistent application to both of the states of Christ is not always easy and has not always been equally successful. The fact that Christ was anointed to a threefold office finds its explanation in the fact that man was originally intended for this threefold office and work. As created by God, he was prophet, priest, and king, and as such was endowed with knowledge and understanding, with righteousness and holiness, and with dominion over the lower creation. Sin affected the entire life of man and manifested itself not only as ignorance, blindness, error, and untruthfulness; but also as unrighteousness, guilt, and moral pollution; and in addition to that as misery, death, and destruction. Hence it was necessary that Christ, as our Mediator, should be prophet, priest, and king. As Prophet He represents God with man; as Priest He represents man in the presence of God, and as King He exercises dominion and restores the original dominion of man. Rationalism recognizes only His prophetic office; Mysticism, only His priestly office; and Chiliasm places a one-sided emphasis on His future kingly office.

B. THE PROPHETIC OFFICE.

1. THE SCRIPTURAL IDEA OF A PROPHET. a. The terms used in Scripture. The Old Testament uses three words to designate a prophet, namely, nabhi, ro'eh, and chozeh. The radical meaning of the word nabhi is uncertain, but it is evident from such passages as Exodus 7:1 and Deuteronomy 18:18 that the word designates one who comes with a message from God to the people. The words ro'eh and chozeh stress the fact that the prophet is one who receives revelations from God, particularly in the form of visions. These words are used interchangeably. Other designations are "man of God", "messenger of the Lord", and "watchman". These appellatives indicate that the prophets are in the special service of the Lord, and watch for the spiritual interests of the people. In the New Testament the word prophetes is used, which is composed of pro and phemi. The preposition is not temporal in this case. Consequently, the word prophemi does not mean "to speak beforehand", but "to speak forth". The prophet is one who speaks forth from God. From these names, taken together, we gather that a prophet is one who sees things, that is, who receives revelations, who is in the service of God, particularly as a messenger, and who speaks in His name. b. The two elements combined in the idea. The classical passages,

Exodus 7:1 and Deuteronomy 18:18 indicate that there are two elements in the prophetic function, the one passive, and the other active, the one receptive, and the other productive. The prophet receives divine revelations in dreams, visions, or verbal communications; and passes these on to the people, either orally, or visibly in prophetical actions, Numbers 12:6-8; Isaiah 6:1-13; Jeremiah 1:4-10; Ezekiel 3:1-4; Ezekiel 3:17. Of these two elements the passive is the most important, because it controls the active element. Without receiving, the prophet cannot give, and he cannot

give more than he receives. But the active is also an integral element. One who receives a revelation is not yet necessarily a prophet. Think of Abimelech, Pharaoh, and Nebuchadnezzar, who all received revelations. What constitutes one a prophet, is the divine calling, the instruction, to communicate the divine revelation to others. c. The duty of the prophets. It was the duty of the prophets to reveal the will of God to the people. This might be done in the form of instruction, admonition and exhortation, glorious promises, or stern rebukes. They were the ministerial monitors of the people, the interpreters of the law, especially in its moral and spiritual aspects. It was their duty to protest against mere formalism, to stress moral duty, to urge the necessity of spiritual service, and to promote the interests of truth and righteousness. If the people departed from the path of duty, they had to call them back to the law and to the testimony, and to announce the coming terror of the Lord upon the wicked. But their work was also intimately related to the promise, the gracious promises of God for the future. It was their privilege to picture the glorious things which God had in store for His people. It is also evident from Scripture that the true prophets of Israel typified the great coming prophet of the future, Deuteronomy 18:15, cf. Acts 3:22-24, and that He was already functioning through them in the days of the Old Testament, 1 Peter 1:11.

2. DISTINCTIONS APPLIED TO THE PROPHETICAL WORK OF CHRIST. Christ functions as prophet in various ways: a. Both before and after the incarnation. The Socinians were mistaken in limiting the prophetical work of Christ to the time of His public ministry. He was active as prophet even in the old dispensation, as in the special revelations of the angel of the Lord, in the teachings of the prophets, in whom He acted as the spirit of revelation (1 Peter 1:11), and in the spiritual illumination of believers. He appears in Proverbs 8:1-9 as wisdom personified, teaching the children of men. And after the incarnation He carries on His prophetical work in His teachings and miracles, in the preaching of the apostles and of the ministers of the Word, and also in the illumination and instruction of believers as the indwelling Spirit. He continues His prophetical activity from heaven through the operation of the Holy Spirit. His teachings are both verbal and factual, that is, He teaches not only by verbal communications, but also by the facts of revelation, such as the incarnation, His atoning death, the resurrection, and ascension; and even during the Old Testament period by types and ceremonies, by the miracles of the history of redemption, and by the providential guidance of the people of Israel. b. Both immediately and mediately. He exercised His prophetical office immediately, as the Angel of the Lord in the Old Testament period, and as the incarnate Lord by His teachings and also by His example, John 13:15; Php 2:5; 1 Peter 2:22. And He exercised it mediately through the operation of the Holy Spirit, by means of the teachings of the Old Testament prophets, and of the New Testament apostles, and exercises it even now through the indwelling Spirit in believers, and by the agency of the ministers of the gospel. This also means that He carries on His prophetical work both objectively and externally and subjectively and internally by the Spirit, which is described as the Spirit of Christ.

3. SCRIPTURE PROOF FOR THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST. Scripture testifies in more than one way to the prophetical office of Christ. He is foretold as a prophet in Deuteronomy 18:15, a passage that is applied to Christ in Acts 3:22-23. He speaks of Himself as a prophet in Luke 13:33. Moreover, He claims to bring a message from the Father, John 8:26-28; John 12:49-50; John 14:10; John 14:24; John 15:15; John 17:8; John 17:20, foretells future things, Matthew 24:3-35; Luke 19:41-44, and speaks with singular authority, Matthew 7:29. His mighty works

served to authenticate His message. In view of all this it is no wonder that the people recognized Him as a prophet, Matthew 21:11; Matthew 21:46; Luke 7:16; Luke 24:19; John 3:2; John 4:19; John 6:14; John 7:40; John 9:17.

4. MODERN EMPHASIS ON THE PROPHETIC OFFICE OF CHRIST. It is one of the main characteristics of the liberal school, both of the older liberalism, represented by Renan, Strauss, and Keim, and of the later liberalism, represented by such men as Pfleiderer, Weinel, Wernle, Wrede, Juelicher, Harnack, Bouset, and others, that it places the chief emphasis on Jesus as a teacher. His significance as such is emphasized to the exclusion of the other aspects of His person and work. There is a rather marked difference, however, between these two branches of liberalism. According to the older liberalism Jesus derives all His significance from His teachings, but according to the later liberalism it is the unique personality of Jesus that lends weight to His teachings. This is undoubtedly a welcome advance, but the gain is not as great as it may seem. In the words of La Touche: "Indeed, its recognition of the real significance of His personality rather than His teaching is little more than an exaltation of pedagogy by example over pedagogy by precept." Christ is after all only a great teacher. Present day Modernism is entirely under the sway of this liberal school. Even in Barthian theology there is an emphasis which might seem to bring it very much in line with modern theology. Walter Lowrie correctly says: "It is characteristic of the Barthian Theology that it thinks predominantly of the Mediator as Revealer."34 We are told repeatedly by Barth and Brunner that the revelation is the reconciliation, and sometimes it seems as if they regard the incarnation as in itself already the reconciliation. Then again the reconciliation is represented as the revelation. In the recent Symposium on Revelation Barth says: "Jesus Christ is the revelation, because in His existence He is the reconciliation. ... The existence of Jesus Christ is the reconciliation, and therefore the bridging of the gulf that has opened here."35 The cross is sometimes defined as the revelation of the absolute contradiction, the final conflict between this world and the other. Consequently Zerbe says that the death of Christ, according to Barth, is not exactly an atonement of the second person of the Godhead for the sin of the world, but "a message of God to man, indeed the final message; the fundamental negation; the judgment on all human possibility, especially the religious." But while it is true that in Barthian theology the Mediator is primarily the Revealer, this does not mean that it fails to do justice to His sacrificial and atoning work.36 Sydney Cave even says in hisThe Doctrine of of the Work of Christ: "For Barth the cross is central in the Christian message. 'Everything shines in the light of His death, and is illuminated by it.'"37

04.3.3.2. The Priestly Office

II. The Priestly Office A. THE SCRIPTURAL IDEA OF A PRIEST.

1. THE TERMS USED IN SCRIPTURE. The Old Testament word for priest is almost without exception kohen. The only exceptions are found in passages which refer to idolatrous priests, 2 Kings 23:5; Hosea 10:5; Zephaniah 1:4, where the word chemarim is found. The original meaning of kohen is uncertain. It is not impossible that in early times it could denote a civil as well as an ecclesiastical functionary, cf. 1 Kings 4:5; 2 Samuel 8:18; 2 Samuel 20:26. It is clear that the word always denoted someone who occupied an honorable and responsible position, and was clothed with authority over others; and that it almost without exception serves to designate an ecclesiastical officer. The New Testament word for priest is hiereus, which originally seems to have denoted "a mighty one," and later on "a sacred person," "a person dedicated to God."

2. THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN A PROPHET AND A PRIEST. The Bible makes a broad but important distinction between a prophet and a priest. Both receive their appointment from God, Deuteronomy 18:18 f; Hebrews 5:4. But the prophet was appointed to be God’s representative with the people, to be His messenger, and to interpret His will. He was primarily a religious teacher. The priest, on the other hand, was man’s representative with God. He had the special privilege of approach to God, and of speaking and acting in behalf of the people. It is true that the priests were also teachers during the old dispensation, but their teaching differed from that of the prophets. While the latter emphasized the moral and spiritual duties, responsibilities, and privileges, the former stressed the ritual observances involved in the proper approach to God.

3. THE FUNCTIONS OF THE PRIEST AS INDICATED IN SCRIPTURE. The classical passage in which the true characteristics of a priest are given and his work is partly designated, is Hebrews 5:1. The following elements are indicated here: (a) the priest is taken from among men to be their representative; (b) he is appointed by God, cf. Hebrews 5:4; (c) he is active in the interest of men in things that pertain to God, that is, in religious things; (d) his special work is to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins. But the work of the priest included even more than that. He also made intercession for the people (Hebrews 7:25), and blessed them in the name of God, Leviticus 9:22.

4. SCRIPTURAL PROOF FOR THE PRIESTLY OFFICE OF CHRIST. The Old Testament predicts and prefigures the priesthood of the coming Redeemer. There are clear references to it in Psalms 110:1 and Zechariah 6:13. Moreover, the Old Testament priesthood, and particularly the high priest, clearly pre-figured a priestly Messiah. In the New Testament there is only a single book in which He is called priest, namely, the Epistle to the Hebrews, but there the name is applied to Him repeatedly, Hebrews 3:1; Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 5:5; Hebrews 6:20; Hebrews 7:26; Hebrews 8:1. At the same time many other New Testament books refer to the priestly work of Christ, as we shall see in the discussion of this subject.

B. THE SACRIFICIAL WORK OF CHRIST. The priestly work of Christ was twofold according to Scripture. His foremost task was to offer an all-sufficient sacrifice for the sin of the world. It

belonged to the office of a priest that he should offer gifts and sacrifices for sin.

1. THE SACRIFICIAL IDEA IN SCRIPTURE. The sacrificial idea occupies a very important place in Scripture. Various theories have been suggested as to the origin and development of this idea, of which the following are the most important: a. The gift-theory which holds that sacrifices were originally presents to the deity, given with the intention of establishing good relations and of securing favors. This is based on an extremely low conception of God, one that is altogether out of harmony with the Scriptural representation of God. Moreover, it does not explain why the gift should always be brought in the form of a slain animal. The Bible does speak of offering gifts to God (Hebrews 5:1), but only as expressions of gratitude and not for the purpose of courting the favor of God. b. The sacramental-communion theory, based on the totemistic idea of reverencing an animal which was supposed to share in the divine nature. On solemn occasions such an animal would be slain to furnish a meal for man, who would thus literally eat his God and assimilate the divine qualities. There is absolutely nothing in the book of Genesis, however, to suggest such an utterly unspiritual and crassly material view. It is totally at variance with the Biblical representation as a whole. This, of course, does not mean that some pagans may not have held that view later on, but it does mean that it is entirely unwarranted to regard this as the original view. c. The homage-theory, according to which sacrifices were originally expressions of homage and dependence. Man was prompted to seek closer communion with God, not by a sense of guilt, but by a feeling of dependence and a desire to render homage to God. This theory does not do justice to the facts in the case of such early sacrifices as those of Noah and Job; nor does it explain why this homage should be rendered in the form of slaying an animal. d. The symbol-theory, which regards the offerings as symbols of restored communion with God. The killing of the animal took place only to secure the blood, which as a symbol of life was brought upon the altar, signifying communion of life with God (Keil). This theory certainly does not square with the facts in the case of the sacrifices of Noah and Job, nor with those in the case of Abraham, when he placed Isaac upon the altar. Neither does it explain why in later days so much importance was attached to the killing of the animal. e. The piacular theory, which regards sacrifices as being originally expiatory or atoning. On this theory the fundamental idea in the slaying of the animal was that of vicarious atonement for the sins of the offerer. In the light of Scripture this theory certainly deserves preference. The idea that, whatever other elements may have been present, such as an expression of gratitude to God, or of communion with Him, the piacular element was also present and was even the most prominent element, is favored by the following considerations: (a) The recorded effect of Noah’s burnt-offerings is expiatory, Genesis 8:21. (b) The occasion for the sacrifice of Job lay in the sins of his children, Job 1:5Job 1:5">. (c) This theory accounts for the fact that the sacrifices were regularly brought in the form of slain animals, and that they were bloody, involving the suffering and death of the victim. (d) It is fully in harmony with the fact that the sacrifices which prevailed among heathen nations generally, were certainly regarded as expiatory. (e) It is further in perfect agreement with the undoubted presence of several promises of the coming Redeemer in the pre-Mosaic period. This should be borne in mind by those who regard the piacular idea of sacrifices as too advanced for that time. (f) Finally, it also fits in well with the fact that, when the Mosaic sacrificial ritual was introduced, in which the expiatory element was certainly the most prominent, it was in no way represented as something entirely new.

Among those who believe that the piacular element was present even in the pre- Mosaic sacrifices, there is a difference of opinion as to the origin of this type of sacrifices. Some are of the opinion that God instituted them by a direct divine command, while others hold that they were brought in obedience to a natural impulse of man, coupled with reflection. The Bible does not record any special statement to the effect that God commanded man to serve Him with sacrifices in those early days. And it is not impossible that man expressed His gratitude and devotion in sacrifices, even before the fall, led by the inner promptings of his own nature. But it would seem that the expiatory sacrifices after the fall could originate only in a divine appointment. There is considerable force in the arguments of Dr. A. A. Hodge. Says he: "(1) It is inconceivable that either the propriety or probable utility of presenting material gifts to the invisible God, and especially of attempting to propitiate God by the slaughter of His irrational creatures, should ever have occurred to the human mind as a spontaneous suggestion. Every instinctive sentiment and every presumption of reason must, in the first instance, have appeared to exclude them. (2) On the hypothesis that God intended to save men, it is inconceivable that He should have left them without instruction upon a question so vital as that concerned in the means whereby they might approach into His presence and conciliate His favor. (3) It is characteristic of all God's self-revelations, under every dispensation, that He discovers Himself as jealous of any use by man of unauthorized methods of worship or service. He uniformly insists upon this very point of His sovereign right of dictating methods of worship and service, as well as terms of acceptance. (4) As a matter of fact, the very first recorded instance of acceptable worship in the family of Adam brings before us bleeding sacrifices, and seals them with the divine approbation. They appear in the first act of worship, Genesis 4:3-4. They are emphatically approved by God as soon as they appear."38 The Mosaic sacrifices were clearly of divine appointment.

2. THE SACRIFICIAL WORK OF CHRIST SYMBOLIZED AND TYPIFIED. The sacrificial work of Christ was symbolized and typified in the Mosaic sacrifices. In connection with these sacrifices the following points deserve attention. a. Their expiatory and vicarious nature. Various interpretations have been given of the Old Testament sacrifices: (1) that they were gifts to please God, to express gratitude to Him, or to placate His wrath; (2) that they were essentially sacrificial meals symbolizing communion of man with God; (3) that they were divinely appointed means of confessing the heinousness of sin; or (4) that, in so far as they embodied the idea of substitution, they were merely symbolic expressions of the fact that God accepts the sinner, in lieu of actual obedience, in the sacrifice which expresses his desire to obey and his longing for salvation. However, Scripture testifies to the fact that all the animal sacrifices among Israel were piacular, though this feature was not equally prominent in all of them. It was most prominent in the sin- and trespass-offerings, less prominent in the burnt-offering, and least in evidence in the peace-offerings. The presence of that element in those sacrifices appears (1) from the clear statements in Leviticus 1:4; Leviticus 4:29; Leviticus 4:35; Leviticus 5:10; Leviticus 16:7; Leviticus 17:11; (2) from the laying on of hands which, in spite of Cave's assertion to the contrary, certainly served to symbolize the transfer of sin and guilt, Leviticus 1:4; Leviticus 16:21-22; (3) from the sprinkling of the blood on the altar and on the mercy-seat as a covering for sin, Leviticus 16:27; and (4) from the repeatedly recorded effect of the sacrifices, namely the pardoning of the sins of the offerer, Leviticus 4:26; Leviticus 4:31; Leviticus 4:35. New Testament proofs could easily be added, but these will suffice. b. Their typico-prophetical nature. The Mosaic sacrifices had not only ceremonial and symbolical, but also spiritual and typical significance. They were of a prophetical

character, and represented the gospel in the law. They were designed to prefigure the vicarious sufferings of Jesus Christ and His atoning death. The connection between them and Christ is already indicated in the Old Testament. In Psalms 40:6-8 the Messiah is introduced as saying: "Sacrifice and offering thou hast no delight in: Mine eyes hast thou opened; burnt-offering and sin-offering hast thou not required. Then said I, Lo, I come; in the roll of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will O my God, yea thy law is within my heart." In these words the Messiah Himself substitutes His own great sacrifice for those of the Old Testament. The shadows pass away when the reality, which they adumbrated, arrives, Hebrews 10:5-9. In the New Testament there are numerous indications of the fact that the Mosaic sacrifices were typical of the more excellent sacrifice of Jesus Christ. There are clear indications, and even express statements, to the effect that the Old Testament sacrifices prefigured Christ and His work, Colossians 2:17, where the apostle clearly has the whole Mosaic system in mind; Hebrews 9:23-24; Hebrews 10:1; Hebrews 13:11-12. Several passages teach that Christ accomplished for sinners in a higher sense what the Old Testament sacrifices were said to effect for those who brought them, and that He accomplished it in a similar way, 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; 1 John 1:7. He is called "the Lamb of God", John 1:29, clearly in view of Isaiah 53:1-12 and of the paschal lamb, "a Lamb without blemish and without spot," 1 Peter 1:19, and even "our Passover" that was slain for us, 1 Corinthians 5:7. And because the Mosaic sacrifices were typical, they naturally shed some light on the nature of the great atoning sacrifice of Jesus Christ. A great many scholars under the influence of the Graf-Wellhausen school deny the penal and substitutionary character of the Old Testament sacrifices, though some of them are willing to admit that this character was sometimes ascribed to them during the Old Testament period, though at a comparatively late date and without sufficient warrant. c. Their purpose. In view of the preceding it may be said that the Old Testament sacrifices had a twofold purpose. As far as the theocratic, the covenant, relation was concerned, they were the appointed means whereby the offender could be restored to the outward place and privileges, enjoyed as a member of the theocracy, which he had forfeited by neglect and transgression. As such they accomplished their purpose irrespective of the temper and spirit in which they were brought. However, they were not in themselves efficacious to expiate moral transgressions. They were not the real sacrifice that could atone for moral guilt and remove moral pollution, but only shadows of the coming reality. Speaking of the tabernacle, the writer of Hebrews says: "Which is a figure for the time present; according to which are offered both gifts and sacrifices that cannot, as touching the conscience, make the worshipper perfect", Hebrews 9:9. In the following chapter he points out that they could not make the offerers perfect, Hebrews 10:1, and could not take away sins, Hebrews 10:4. From the spiritual point of view they were typical of the vicarious sufferings and death of Christ, and obtained forgiveness and acceptance with God only as they were offered in true penitence, and with faith in God’s method of salvation. They had saving significance only in so far as they fixed the attention of the Israelite on the coming Redeemer and the promised redemption.

3. SCRIPTURAL PROOF FOR THE SACRIFICIAL WORK OF CHRIST. The striking thing in the Scriptural representations of the priestly work of Christ, is that Christ appears in them as both priest and sacrifice. This is in perfect harmony with the reality as we see it in Christ. In the Old Testament the two were necessarily separate, and in so far these types were imperfect. The priestly work of Christ is most clearly represented in the Epistle to the Hebrews, where the Mediator is described as our only real, eternal, and perfect High Priest, appointed by God, who

takes our place vicariously, and by His self- sacrifice obtains a real and perfect redemption, Hebrews 5:1-10; Hebrews 7:1-28; Hebrews 9:11-15; Hebrews 9:24-28; Hebrews 10:11-14; Hebrews 10:19-22; Hebrews 12:24, and particularly the following verses, Hebrews 5:5; Hebrews 7:26; Hebrews 9:14. This Epistle is the only one in which Christ is called priest, but His priestly work is also clearly represented in the Epistles of Paul, Romans 3:24-25; Romans 5:6-8; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Corinthians 15:3; Ephesians 5:2. The same representation is found in the writings of John, John 1:29; John 3:14-15; 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10. The symbol of the brazen serpent is significant. As the brazen serpent was not itself poisonous, but yet represented the embodiment of sin, so Christ, the sinless One, was made sin for us. As the lifting up of the serpent signified the removal of the plague, so the lifting up of Christ on the cross effected the removal of sin. And as a believing look at the serpent brought healing, so faith in Christ heals to the saving of the soul. The representation of Peter, 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18, and of Christ Himself, Mark 10:45, corresponds with the preceding. The Lord plainly tells us that His sufferings were vicarious.

4. THE PRIESTLY WORK OF CHRIST IN MODERN THEOLOGY. As was said in the preceding chapter, the doctrine of the offices of Christ does not meet with great favor in present day theology. As a matter of fact it is generally conspicuous by its absence. It can hardly be denied that the Bible speaks of Christ as prophet, priest, and king, but it is commonly held that these terms, as applied to Christ, are only so many figurative descriptions of the different aspects of Christ’s work. Christ is not regarded as a real prophet, a real priest, and a real king. And if any one of the aspects of the work of Christ is made to stand out as pre-eminent, it is the prophetical rather than the priestly aspect. The modern spirit is quite averse to the official Christ, and while it may be greatly in love with the self-denying and self-sacrificing Jesus, it absolutely refuses to recognize His official priesthood. In view of this it should be emphasized at the outset that, according to Scripture, Jesus is a real priest. As over against the priests of the Old Testament, who were merely shadows and types, He may be called the only real priest. He was revealed among men as the truth, that is, the reality of all the shadows of the Old Testament, and therefore also of the Old Testament priesthood. The seventh chapter of the Epistle to the Hebrews stresses the fact that His priesthood is vastly superior to that of Aaron. Consequently it is a sad mistake to assume that He is priest only in some figurative sense, in the sense in which devotees of literature and art are sometimes called priests. This is an entirely unwarranted use of the word "priest", and one that is entirely foreign to Scripture. When Jehovah swore, "Thou art a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek," He constituted the Messiah a real priest.

04.3.3.3. The Cause and Necessity of the Atonement

III. The Cause and Necessity of the Atonement The great and central part of the priestly work of Christ lies in the atonement, but this, of course, is not complete without the intercession. His sacrificial work on earth calls for His service in the heavenly sanctuary. The two are complementary parts of the priestly task of the Saviour. This and the following three chapters will be devoted to a discussion of the doctrine of the atonement, which is often called "the heart of the gospel." THE MOVING CAUSE OF THE ATONEMENT. This lies:

1. IN THE GOOD PLEASURE OF GOD. It is sometimes represented as if the moving cause of the atonement lay in the sympathetic love of Christ for sinners. He was so good and loving that the very idea that sinners would be hopelessly lost, was abhorrent to Him. Therefore He offered Himself as a victim in their stead, paid the penalty by laying down His life for transgressors, and thus pacified an angry God. In some cases this view prompts men to laud Christ for His supreme self-sacrifice, but at the same time, to blame God for demanding and accepting such a price. In others it simply causes men to overlook God, and to sing the praises of Christ in unqualified terms. Such a representation is certainly all wrong, and often gives the opponents of the penal substitutionary doctrine of the atonement occasion to say that this doctrine presupposes a schism in the trinitarian life of God. On this view Christ apparently receives His due, but God is robbed of His honour. According to Scripture the moving cause of the atonement is found in the good pleasure of God to save sinners by a substitutionary atonement. Christ Himself is the fruit of this good pleasure of God. It was predicted that He would come into the world to carry out the good pleasure of God, . . . "and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in His hand", Isaiah 53:10. At His birth the angels sang, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased", Luke 2:14. The glorious message of John 3:16 is that "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Paul says that Christ "gave Himself for our sins, that He might deliver us out of this present evil world, according to the will of our God and Father", Galatians 1:4. And again, "For it was the good pleasure of the Father that in Him should all the fulness dwell; and through Him to reconcile all things unto Himself", Colossians 1:19-20. It would not be difficult to add other similar passages.

2. NOT IN THE ARBITRARY WILL OF GOD. The question may be raised, whether this good pleasure of God is to be regarded as an arbitrary will, or as a will that is rooted in the very nature of God and is in harmony with the divine perfections. It has been represented by Duns Scotus as if it were merely an arbitrary expression of the absolute sovereignty of God. But it is more in harmony with Scripture to say that the good pleasure of God to save sinners by a substitutionary atonement was founded in the love and justice of God. It was the love of God that provided a way of escape for lost sinners, John 3:16. And it was the justice of God which required that this way should be of such a nature as to meet the demands of the law, in order that God "might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus," Romans 3:26. In Romans 3:24-25, we find both elements combined: "Being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood, to declare His righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God." This representation guards against the idea of an arbitrary will.

3. IN LOVE AND JUSTICE COMBINED. It is necessary to avoid all one-sidedness in this respect. If we represent the atonement as founded only in the righteousness and justice of God, we fail to do justice to the love of God as a moving cause of the atonement, and afford a pretext to those enemies of the satisfaction theory of the atonement who like to represent it as implying that God is a vindictive being, who is concerned only about His own honour. If, on the other hand, we consider the atonement purely as an expression of the love of God, we fail to do justice to the righteousness and veracity of God, and we reduce the sufferings and the death of Christ to an unexplained enigma. The fact that God gave up His only begotten Son to bitter sufferings and to a shameful death cannot be explained on the principle of His love only.

B. HISTORICAL VIEWS RESPECTING THE NECESSITY OF THE ATONEMENT. On this subject there has been considerable difference of opinion. The following positions should be distinguished:

1. THAT THE ATONEMENT WAS NOT NECESSARY. The Nominalists of the Middle Ages generally regarded it as something purely arbitrary. According to Duns Scotus it was not inherently necessary, but was determined by the arbitrary will of God. He denied the infinite value of the sufferings of Christ, and regarded them as a mere equivalent for the satisfaction due, which God was pleased to accept as such. In his estimation God might have accepted any other substitute, and might even have carried on the work of redemption without demanding any satisfaction at all. Socinus also denied the necessity of the atonement. He removed the foundation pillar for such a necessity by the denial of such justice in God as required absolutely and inexorably that sin be punished. For him the justice of God meant only His moral equity and rectitude, by virtue of which there is no depravity or iniquity in any of His works. Hugo Grotius followed his denial on the basis of the consideration that the law of God was a positive enactment of His will, which He could relax and could also set aside altogether. The Arminians shared his views on this point. One and all denied that it was necessary for God to proceed in a judicial way in the manifestation of His grace, and maintained that He might have forgiven sin without demanding satisfaction. Schleiermacher and Ritschl, who had a dominating influence on modern theology, broke completely with the judicial conception of the atonement. As advocates of the mystical and moral influence theories of the atonement, they deny the fact of an objective atonement, and therefore by implication also its necessity. With them and with modern liberal theology in general atonement becomes merely at-one-ment or reconciliation effected by changing the moral condition of the sinner. Some speak of a moral necessity, but refuse to recognize any legal necessity.

2. THAT IT WAS RELATIVELY OR HYPOTHETICALLY NECESSARY. Some of the most prominent Church Fathers, such as Athanasius, Augustine, and Aquinas, denied the absolute necessity of the atonement and ascribed to it merely a hypothetical necessity. Thomas Aquinas thus differed from Anselm on the one hand, but also from Duns Scotus on the other hand. This is also the position taken by the Reformers. Principal Franks says that Luther, Zwingli, and Calvin all avoided the Anselmian doctrine of the absolute necessity of the atonement, and ascribed to it only a relative or hypothetical necessity, based on the sovereign free will of God, or in other words, on the divine decree. This opinion is shared by Seeberg, Mosley, Stevens, Mackintosh, Bavinck,

Honig, and others. Cf. also Turretin, on The Atonement of Christ, p. 14. Calvin says: "It deeply concerned us, that He who was to be our Mediator should be very God and very man. If the necessity be inquired into, it was not what is commonly called simple or absolute, but flowed from the divine decree, on which the salvation of man depended. What was best for us our Merciful Father determined."39 The atonement was necessary, therefore, because God sovereignly determined to forgive sin on no other condition. This position naturally served to exalt the sovereign free will of God in making provision for the redemption of man. Some later theologians, such as Beza, Zanchius, and Twisse, shared this opinion, but according to Voetius the first of these changed his opinion in later life.

3. THAT IT WAS ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY. In the early Church Irenaeus already taught the absolute necessity of the atonement, and this was stressed by Anselm in the Middle Ages in his Cur Deus Homo? Reformed theology in general rightly shows a decided preference for this view. Whatever may be true of Beza in later life, it is certain that such scholars as Voetius, Mastricht, Turretin, à Marck, and Owen, all maintain the absolute necessity of the atonement and ground it particularly in the justice of God, that moral perfection by which He necessarily maintains His holiness over against sin and the sinner and inflicts due punishment on transgressors. They regard it as the only way in which God could pardon sin and at the same time satisfy His justice. This is also the position of our Confessional Standards.40 This view is undoubtedly the most satisfying, and would seem to be most in harmony with the teachings of Scripture. The denial of it really involves a denial of the punitive justice of God as one of the inherent perfections of the divine Being, though the Reformers, of course, did not mean to deny this at all.

C. PROOFS FOR THE NECESSITY OF THE ATONEMENT. The proofs for the necessity of the atonement are mostly of an inferential character, but are nevertheless of considerable importance.

1. It would seem to be the clear teaching of Scripture that God, in virtue of His divine righteousness and holiness, cannot simply overlook defiance to His infinite majesty, but must needs visit sin with punishment. We are told repeatedly that He will by no means clear the guilty, Exodus 34:7; Numbers 14:18; Nahum 1:3. He hates sin with a divine hatred; His whole being reacts against it, Psalms 5:4-6; Nahum 1:2; Romans 1:18. Paul argues in Romans 3:25-26, that it was necessary that Christ should be offered as an atoning sacrifice for sin, in order that God might be just while justifying the sinner. The important thing was that the justice of God should be maintained. This clearly points to the fact that the necessity of the atonement follows from the divine nature.

2. This leads right on to the second argument. The majesty and absolute immutability of the divine law as inherent in the very nature of God made it necessary for Him to demand satisfaction of the sinner. The transgression of the law inevitably carries with it a penalty. It is inviolable exactly because it is grounded in the very nature of God and is not, as Socinus would have it, a product of His free will, Matthew 5:18. The general principle of the law is expressed in these words: "Cursed be he that confirmeth not the words of this law to do them," Deuteronomy 27:26. And if God wanted to save the sinner, in spite of the fact that the latter could not meet the demands of the law, He had to make provision for a vicarious satisfaction as a ground for the sinner’s justification.

3. The necessity of the atonement also follows from the veracity of God, who is a God of truth and cannot lie. "God is not a man, that He should lie; neither the son of man, that He should repent;

hath He said it, and shall He not do it? or hath He spoken, and shall He not make it good?" Numbers 23:19. "Let God be found true," says Paul, "but every man a liar." Romans 3:4. When He entered into the covenant of works with man, He decreed that death would be the penalty of disobedience. That principle finds expression in many other words of Scripture, such as Ezekiel 18:4; Romans 6:23. The veracity of God demanded that the penalty should be executed, and if sinners were to be saved, should be executed in the life of a substitute.

4. The same conclusion may be drawn from the nature of sin as guilt. If sin were merely a moral weakness, a remnant of a pre-human state, which is gradually brought into subjection to the higher nature of man, it would require no atonement. But according to Scripture sin is something far more heinous than that. Negatively, it is lawlessness, and positively, transgression of the law of God, and therefore guilt, 1 John 3:4; Romans 2:25; Romans 2:27, and guilt makes one a debtor to the law and requires either a personal or a vicarious atonement.

5. The amazing greatness of the sacrifice which God Himself provided also implies the necessity of the atonement. God gave His only-begotten Son, to be subjected to bitter sufferings and to a shameful death. Now it is not conceivable that God would do this unnecessarily. Dr. A. A. Hodge correctly says: "This sacrifice would be most painfully irrelevant if it were anything short of absolutely necessary in relation to the end designed to be attained—that is, unless it be indeed the only possible means to the salvation of sinful man. God surely would not have made His Son a wanton sacrifice to a bare point of will."41 It is also worthy of note that Paul argues in Galatians 3:21 that Christ would not have been sacrificed, if the law could have given life. Scripture explicitly speaks of the sufferings of Christ as necessary in Luke 24:26; Hebrews 2:10; Hebrews 8:3; Hebrews 9:22-23.

D. OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF THE ABSOLUTE NECESSITY OF THE ATONEMENT.

There are especially two objections that are often raised to the idea that God had to demand satisfaction, in order that He might be able to pardon sin, and because there was no other way, constituted His only begotten Son a sacrifice for the sin of the world.

1. THIS MAKES GOD INFERIOR TO MAN. Man can and often does freely forgive those who wrong him, but, according to the view under consideration, God cannot forgive until He has received satisfaction. This means that He is less good and less charitable than sinful men. But they who raise this objection fail to observe that God cannot simply be compared to a private individual, who can without injustice forget about his personal grievances. He is the Judge of all the earth, and in that capacity must maintain the law and exercise strict justice. A judge may be very kind-hearted, generous, and forgiving as a private individual, but in his official capacity he must see to it that the law takes its course. Moreover, this objection utterly ignores the fact that God was not under obligation to open up a way of redemption for disobedient and fallen man, but could with perfect justice have left man to his self-chosen doom. The ground of His determination to redeem a goodly number of the human race, and in them the race itself, can only be found in His good pleasure. The love to sinners revealed in it was not awakened by any consideration of satisfaction, but was entirely sovereign and free. The Mediator Himself was a gift of the Father’s love, which naturally could not be contingent on the atonement. And, finally, it should not be forgotten that God Himself wrought the atonement. He had to make a tremendous sacrifice, the sacrifice of His only begotten and beloved Son, in order to save His enemies.

2. The objection just considered often goes hand in hand with another, namely, that this view of the absolute necessity of the atonement assumes a schism in the trinitarian life of God, and this is a rather monstrous idea. Says David Smith, the author of In the Days of His Flesh: "It (the penal theory of satisfaction) places a gulf between God and Christ, representing God as the stern Judge who insisted on the execution of justice, and Christ as the pitiful Saviour who interposed and satisfied His legal demand and appeased His righteous wrath. They are not one either in their attitudes toward sinners or in the parts which they play. God is propitiated; Christ propitiates; God inflicts the punishment, Christ suffers it; God exacts the debt, Christ pays it."42 This objection is also based on a misunderstanding, a misunderstanding for which those Christians are, at least in part, to blame who speak and sing as if Christ, rather than the triune God, were exclusively the author of their salvation. The Bible teaches us that the triune God provided freely for the salvation of sinners. There was nothing to constrain Him. The Father made the sacrifice of His Son, and the Son willingly offered Himself. There was no schism but the most beautiful harmony between the Father and the Son. Cf. Psalms 40:6-8; Luke 1:47-50; Luke 1:78; Ephesians 1:3-14; Ephesians 2:4-10; 1 Peter 1:2.

04.3.3.4. The Nature of the Atonement

IV. The Nature of the Atonement The doctrine of the atonement here presented is the penal substitutionary or satisfaction doctrine, which is the doctrine clearly taught by the Word of God.

A. STATEMENT OF THE PENAL SUBSTITUTIONARY DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT. In the discussion of this view several particulars should be stressed.

1. THE ATONEMENT IS OBJECTIVE. This means that the atonement makes its primary impression on the person to whom it is made. If a man does wrong and renders satisfaction, this satisfaction is intended to influence the person wronged and not the offending party. In the case under consideration it means that the atonement was intended to propitiate God and to reconcile Him to the sinner. This is undoubtedly the primary idea, but does not imply that we can not also speak of the sinner's being reconciled to God. Scripture does this in more than one place, Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:19-20. But it should be borne in mind that this is not equivalent to saying that the sinner is atoned, which would mean that God made amends or reparation, that He rendered satisfaction to the sinner. And even when we speak of the sinner as being reconciled, this must be understood as something that is secondary. The reconciled God justifies the sinner who accepts the reconciliation, and so operates in his heart by the Holy Spirit, that the sinner also lays aside his wicked alienation from God, and thus enters into the fruits of the perfect atonement of Christ. In other words, the fact that Christ reconciles God to the sinner results in a reflex action on the sinner, in virtue of which the sinner may be said to be reconciled to God. Since the objective atonement by Christ is an accomplished fact, and it is now the duty of the ambassadors of Christ to induce sinners to accept the atonement and to terminate their hostility to God, it is no wonder that the secondary and subjective side of the reconciliation is somewhat prominent in Scripture. This statement of the objective character of the atonement is placed in the foreground, because it represents the main difference between those who accept the satisfaction doctrine of the atonement and all those who prefer some other theory.

Now the question arises, whether this conception of the atonement is supported by Scripture. It would seem to find ample support there. The following particulars should be noted: a. The fundamental character of the priesthood clearly points in that direction. While the prophets represented God among men, the priests in their sacrificial and intercessory work represented men in the presence of God, and therefore looked in a Godward direction. The writer of Hebrews expresses it thus: "For every high priest, taken from among men, is ordained for men in things pertaining to God, " Hebrews 5:1. This statement contains the following elements: (1) The priest is taken from among men, is one of the human race, so as to be able to represent men; (2) he is appointed for men, that is, to be active in the interests of men; and (3) he is appointed to represent men in things pertaining to God, that is, in things that have a Godward direction, that look to God, that terminate on God. This is a clear indication of the fact that the work of the priest looks primarily to God. It does not exclude the idea that the priestly work also has a reflex influence on men. b. The same truth is conveyed by the general idea of the sacrifices. These clearly have an

objective reference. Even among the Gentiles they are brought, not to men, but to God. They were supposed to produce an effect on God. The Scriptural idea of sacrifice does not differ from this in its objective reference. The sacrifices of the Old Testament were brought to God primarily to atone for sin, but also as expressions of devotion and gratitude. Hence the blood had to be brought into the very presence of God. The writer of Hebrews says that the "things pertaining to God" consist in offering "both gifts and sacrifices for sin." The friends of Job were urged to bring sacrifices, "lest I," says the Lord, "deal with you after your folly." Job 42:8Job 42:8">. The sacrifices were to be instrumental in stilling the anger of the Lord. c. The Hebrew word kipper (piel) expresses the idea of atonement for sin by the covering of sin or of the sinner. The blood of the sacrifice is interposed between God and the sinner, and in view of it the wrath of God is turned aside. It has the effect, therefore, of warding off the wrath of God from the sinner. In the Septuagint and in the New Testament the terms hilaskomai and hilasmos are used in a related sense. The verb means "to render propitious," and the noun, "an appeasing" or "the means of appeasing." They are terms of an objective character. In classical Greek they are often construed with the accusative of theos (God), though there is no example of this in the Bible. In the New Testament they are construed with the accusative of the thing (hamartias), Hebrews 2:17, or with peri and the genitive of the thing (hamartion), 1 John 2:2; 1 John 4:10. The first passage is best interpreted in the light of the use of the Hebrew kipper; the last can be interpreted similarly, or with theon as the object understood. There are so many passages of Scripture which speak of the wrath of God and of God as being angry with sinners, that we are perfectly justified in speaking of a propitiation of God, Romans 1:18; Galatians 3:10; Ephesians 2:3; Romans 5:9. In Romans 5:10; Romans 11:28 sinners are called "enemies of God" (echthroi) in a passive sense, indicating, not that they are hostile to God, but that they are the objects of God’s holy displeasure. In the former passage this sense is demanded by its connection with the previous verse; and in the latter by the fact that echtroi is contrasted with agapetoi, which does not mean " lovers of God," but "beloved of God." d. The words katalasso and katalage signify "to reconcile" and "reconciliation." They point to an action by which enmity is changed to friendship, and surely have, first of all, an objective signification. The offender reconciles, not himself, but the person whom he has offended. This is clearly brought out in Matthew 5:23-24 : "Therefore if thou bring thy gift before the altar, and there remember that thy brother hath aught against thee; leave thy gift there before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother (which in this connection can only mean, reconcile thy brother to thyself, which is objective), and then come and offer thy gift." The brother who had done the supposed injury is called upon to remove the grievance. He must propitiate or reconcile his brother to himself by whatsoever compensation may be required. In connection with the work of Christ the words under consideration in some instances certainly denote the effecting of a change in the judicial relation between God and the sinner by removing the judicial claim. According to 2 Corinthians 5:19 the fact that God reconciled the world to Himself is evident from this that He does not reckon unto them their sins. This does not point to any moral change in man, but to the fact that the demands of the law are met, and that God is satisfied. In Romans 5:10-11 the term "reconciliation" can only be understood in an objective sense, for (1) it is said to have been effected by the death of Christ, while subjective reconciliation is the result of the work of the Spirit; (2) it was effected while we were yet enemies, that is, were still objects of God’s wrath; and (3) it is represented in Romans 5:11 as something objective which we receive. e. The terms lutron and antilutron are also objective terms. Christ is the Goel, the liberator, Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 6:20;

1 Corinthians 7:23. He redeems sinners from the demands of God’s retributive justice. The price is paid to God by Christ as the representative of the sinner. Clearly, the Bible abundantly justifies us in ascribing an objective character to the atonement. Moreover, strictly speaking, atonement in the proper sense of the word is always objective. There is no such thing as subjective atonement. In atonement it is always the party that has done wrong that makes amends to the one who was wronged.

2. IT IS A VICARIOUS ATONEMENT. a. The meaning of the term "vicarious atonement." There is a difference between personal and vicarious atonement. We are interested particularly in the difference between the two in connection with the atonement of Christ. When man fell away from God, he as such owed God reparation. But he could atone for his sin only by suffering eternally the penalty affixed to transgression. This is what God might have required in strict justice, and would have required, if He had not been actuated by love and compassion for the sinner. As a matter of fact, however, God appointed a vicar in Jesus Christ to take man’s place, and this vicar atoned for sin and obtained an eternal redemption for man. Dr. Shedd calls attention to the following points of difference in this case: (1) Personal atonement is provided by the offending party; vicarious atonement by the offended party. (2) Personal atonement would have excluded the element of mercy; vicarious atonement represents the highest form of mercy. (3) Personal atonement would have been forever in the making and hence could not result in redemption; vicarious atonement leads to reconciliation and life everlasting. b. The possibility of vicarious atonement. All those who advocate a subjective theory of the atonement raise a formidable objection to the idea of vicarious atonement. They consider it unthinkable that a just God should transfer His wrath against moral offenders to a perfectly innocent party, and should treat the innocent judicially as if he were guilty. There is undoubtedly a real difficulty here, especially in view of the fact that this seems to be contrary to all human analogy. We cannot conclude from the possibility of the transfer of a pecuniary debt to that of the transfer of a penal debt. If some beneficent person offers to pay the pecuniary debt of another, the payment must be accepted, and the debtor is ipso facto freed from all obligation. But this is not the case when someone offers to atone vicariously for the transgression of another. To be legal, this must be expressly permitted and authorized by the lawgiver. In reference to the law this is called relaxation, and in relation to the sinner it is known as remission. The judge need not, but can permit this; yet he can permit it only under certain conditions, as (1) that the guilty party himself is not in a position to bear the penalty through to the end, so that a righteous relation results; (2) that the transfer does not encroach upon the rights and privileges of innocent third parties, nor cause them to suffer hardships and privations; (3) that the person enduring the penalty is not himself already indebted to justice, and does not owe all his services to the government; and (4) that the guilty party retains the consciousness of his guilt and of the fact that the substitute is suffering for him. In view of all this it will be understood that the transfer of penal debt is well-nigh, if not entirely, impossible among men. But in the case of Christ, which is altogether unique, because in it a situation obtained which has no parallel, all the conditions named were met. There was no injustice of any kind. c. Scriptural proof for the vicarious atonement of Christ. The Bible certainly teaches that the sufferings and death of Christ were vicarious, and vicarious in the strict sense of the word that He took the place of sinners, and that their guilt was imputed, and their punishment transferred, to Him. This is not at all what Bushnell means, when he speaks of the "vicarious sacrifice" of Christ. For him it simply means that Christ bore our sins "on His feeling, became inserted into their bad lot by His sympathy as a friend,

yielded up Himself and His life, even, to an effort of restoring mercy; in a word that He bore our sins in just the same sense as He bore our sicknesses."43 The sufferings of Christ were not just the sympathetic sufferings of a friend, but the substitutionary sufferings of the Lamb of God for the sin of the world. The Scriptural proofs for this may be classified as follows:

(1) The Old Testament teaches us to regard the sacrifices that were brought upon the altar as vicarious. When the Israelite brought a sacrifice to the Lord, he had to lay his hand on the head of the sacrifice and confess his sin. This action symbolized the transfer of sin to the offering, and rendered it fit to atone for the sin of the offerer, Leviticus 1:4. Cave and others regard this action merely as a symbol of dedication.44 But this does not explain how the laying on of hands made the sacrifice fit to make atonement for sin. Neither is it in harmony with what we are taught respecting the significance of the laying on of hands in the case of the scape-goat in Leviticus 16:20-22. After the laying on of hands death was vicariously inflicted on the sacrifice. The significance of this is clearly indicated in the classical passage that is found in Leviticus 17:11 : "For the life of the flesh is in the blood; and I have given it to you to make atonement for your souls: for it is the blood that maketh atonement by reason of the life." Says Dr. Vos, "The sacrificial animal in its death takes the place of the death due to the offerer. It is forfeit for forfeit." The sacrifices so brought were pre-figurations of the one great sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

(2) There are several passages in Scripture which speak of our sins as being "laid upon" Christ, and of His "bearing" sin or iniquity, Isaiah 53:6; Isaiah 53:12; John 1:29; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 3:13; Hebrews 9:28; 1 Peter 2:24. On the basis of Scripture we can, therefore, say that our sins are imputed to Christ. This does not mean that our sinfulness was transferred to Him — something that is in itself utterly impossible — but that the guilt of our sin was imputed to Him. Says Dr. A. A. Hodge: "Sin may be considered (1) in its formal nature as transgression of the law, 1 John 3:4; or (2) as a moral quality inherent in the agent (macula), Romans 6:11-13; or (3) in respect to its legal obligation to punishment (reatus). In this last sense alone is it ever said that the sin of one is laid upon or borne by another."45 Strictly speaking, then, the guilt of sin as liability to punishment was imputed to Christ; and this could be transferred, because it did not inhere in the person of the sinner, but was something objective.

(3) Finally, there are several passages in which the prepositions peri, huper, and anti are used in connection with the work of Christ for sinners. The substitutionary idea is expressed least by the first, and most by the last preposition. But even in the interpretation of huper and anti we shall have to depend largely on the context, for while the former really means "in behalf of," it may, and in some cases does, express the idea of substitution, and while the latter may mean "instead of," it does not always have that meaning. It is rather interesting to notice that, according to Deissmann, several instances have been found on the inscriptions of the use of huper with the meaning "as representative of."46 We find a similar use of it in Philemon 1:13. In such passages as Romans 5:6-8; Romans 8:32; Galatians 2:20; Hebrews 2:9 it probably means "instead of," though it can also be rendered "in behalf of"; but in Galatians 2:13; John 11:50, and 2 Corinthians 5:15 it certainly means "instead of." Robertson says that only violence to the text can get rid of that meaning here. The preposition anti clearly means "instead of" in Matthew 2:22; Matthew 5:38; Matthew 20:28; Mark 10:45. According to Robertson any other meaning of the term is out of the question here. The same idea is expressed in 1 Timothy 2:6. d. Objections to the idea of a vicarious atonement. Several objections are raised against the idea of vicarious atonement.

(1) Substitution in penal matters is illegal. It is generally admitted that in cases of a pecuniary debt payment by a substitute is not only permissible, but must be accepted and at once cancels all further obligation on the part of the original debtor. However, it is said that penal debt is so personal that it does not admit of any such transfer. But it is quite evident that there are other than pecuniary cases in which the law has made provision for substitution. Armour in his work on Atonement and Law mentions three kinds of such cases. The first is that of substitution in cases of work for the public benefit required by law, and the second, that of substitution in the case of military service required in behalf of one's country. Respecting the third he says "Even in the case of crime, law, as understood and administered by men in all lands, provides that the penalty may be met by a substitute, in all cases in which the penalty prescribed is such that a substitute may meet it consistently with the obligations he is already under."47 It is perfectly evident that the law does recognize the principle of substitution, though it may not be easy to cite instances in which innocent persons were permitted to act as substitutes for criminals and to bear the penalties imposed on these. This finds a sufficient explanation in the fact that it is usually impossible to find men who meet all the requirements stated under (b) above. But the fact that it is impossible to find men who meet these requirements, is no proof that Jesus Christ could not meet them. In fact, He could and did, and was therefore an acceptable substitute.

(2) The innocent is made to suffer for the wicked. It is perfectly true that, according to the penal substitutionary doctrine of the atonement Christ suffered as "the righteous for the unrighteous" (1 Peter 3:18), but this can hardly be urged as an objection to the doctrine of vicarious atonement. In the form in which it is often stated it certainly has very little force. To say that this doctrine makes the innocent suffer the consequences of the guilt of the wicked, and is therefore unacceptable, is tantamount to raising an objection against the moral government of God in general. In actual life the innocent often suffer as a result of the transgression of others. Moreover, in this form the objection would hold against all the so-called theories of the atonement, for they all represent the sufferings of Christ as being in some sense the result of the sins of mankind. Sometimes it is said that a moral agent cannot become reasonably responsible for any sin, except by doing it personally; but this is contradicted by the facts of life. One who hires another to commit a crime is held responsible; so are all accessories to a crime.

(3) God the Father is made guilty of injustice. It appears that all the objections are really variations on the same theme. The third is virtually the same as the second put in a more legal form. The doctrine of vicarious atonement, it is said, involves an injustice on the part of the Father in that He simply sacrifices the Son for the sins of mankind. This objection was already raised by Abelard, but loses sight of several pertinent facts. It was not the Father but the triune God that conceived the plan of redemption. There was a solemn agreement between the three persons in the Godhead. And in this plan the Son voluntarily undertook to bear the penalty for sin and to satisfy the demands of the divine law. And not only that, but the sacrificial work of Christ also brought immense gain and glory to Christ as Mediator. It meant for Him a numerous seed, loving worship, and a glorious kingdom. And, finally, this objection acts as a boomerang, for it returns with vengeance on the head of all those who, like Abelard, deny the necessity of an objective atonement, for they are all agreed that the Father sent the Son into the world for bitter suffering and a shameful death which, while beneficial, was yet unnecessary. This would have been cruel indeed!

4. There is no such union as would justify a vicarious atonement. It is said that, if a vicar is to remove the guilt of an offender there must be some real union between them which would justify such a procedure. It may be admitted that there must be some antecedent union between a vicar and those whom he represents, but the idea that this must be an organic union, such as the objectors really have in mind, cannot be granted. As a matter of fact the required union should be legal rather than organic, and provision was made for such a union in the plan of redemption. In the depths of eternity the Mediator of the new covenant freely undertook to be the representative of His people, that is, of those whom the Father gave unto Him. A federal relationship was established in virtue of which He became their Surety. This is the basic and the most fundamental union between Christ and His own, and on the basis of this a mystical union was formed, ideally in the counsel of peace, to be realized in the course of history in the organic union of Christ and His Church. Therefore Christ could act as the legal representative of His own, and being mystically one with them, can also convey to them the blessings of salvation.

3. IT INCLUDES CHRIST'S ACTIVE AND PASSIVE OBEDIENCE. It is customary to distinguish between the active and passive obedience of Christ. But in discriminating between the two, it should be distinctly understood that they cannot be separated. The two accompany each other at every point in the Saviour's life. There is a constant interpenetration of the two. It was part of Christ's active obedience, that He subjected Himself voluntarily to sufferings and death. He Himself says: "No man taketh my life from me, I lay it down of myself," John 10:18. On the other hand it was also part of Christ's passive obedience, that He lived in subjection to the law. His moving about in the form of a servant constituted an important element of His sufferings. Christ's active and passive obedience should be regarded as complementary parts of an organic whole. In discussing it, account should be taken of a threefold relation in which Christ stood to the law, namely, the natural, the federal, and the penal relation. Man proved a failure in each one of these. He did not keep the law in its natural and federal aspects, and is not now in a position to pay the penalty, in order to be restored in the favor of God. While Christ naturally entered the first relation by His incarnation, He vicariously entered only the second and third relations. And it is with these that we are particularly concerned in this connection. a. The active obedience of Christ. Christ as Mediator entered the federal relation in which Adam stood in the state of integrity, in order to merit eternal life for the sinner. This constitutes the active obedience of Christ, consisting in all that Christ did to observe the law in its federal aspect, as the condition for obtaining eternal life. The active obedience of Christ was necessary to make His passive obedience acceptable with God, that is, to make it an object of God's good pleasure. It is only on account of it that God's estimate of the sufferings of Christ differs from His estimate of the sufferings of the lost. Moreover, if Christ had not rendered active obedience, the human nature of Christ itself would have fallen short of the just demands of God, and He would not have been able to atone for others. And, finally, if Christ had suffered only the penalty imposed on man, those who shared in the fruits of His work would have been left exactly where Adam was before he fell. Christ merits more for sinners than the forgiveness of sins. According to Galatians 4:4-5 they are through Christ set free from the law as the condition of life, are adopted to be sons of God, and as sons are also heirs of eternal life, Galatians 4:7. All this is conditioned primarily on the active obedience of Christ. Through Christ the righteousness of faith is substituted for the righteousness of the law, Romans 10:3-4. Paul tells us that by the work of Christ "the righteousness of the law is fulfilled in us," Romans 8:3-4; and that we are made "the righteousness of God in Him," 2 Corinthians 5:21.

According to Anselm Christ's life of obedience had no redemptive significance, since He owed this to God for Himself. Only the sufferings of the Saviour constituted a claim on God and were basic to the sinner's redemption. Thinking along somewhat similar lines Piscator, the seventeenth century Arminians, Richard Watson, R. N. Davies, and other Arminian scholars deny that the active obedience of Christ has the redemptive significance which we ascribe to it. Their denial rests especially on two considerations: (1) Christ needed His active obedience for Himself as man. Being under the law, He was in duty bound to keep it for Himself. In answer to this it may be said that Christ, though possessing a human nature, was yet a divine person, and as such was not subject to the law in its federal aspect, the law as the condition of life in the covenant of works. As the last Adam, however, He took the place of the first. The first Adam was by nature under the law of God, and the keeping of it as such gave him no claim to a reward. It was only when God graciously entered into a covenant with him and promised him life in the way of obedience, that the keeping of the law was made the condition of obtaining eternal life for himself and for his descendants. And when Christ voluntarily entered the federal relationship as the last Adam, the keeping of the law naturally acquired the same significance for Him and for those whom the Father had given Him. (2) God demands, or can demand, only one of two things of the sinner: either obedience to the law, or subjection to the penalty, but not both. If the law is obeyed, the penalty cannot be inflicted; and if the penalty is borne, nothing further can be demanded. There is some confusion here, however, which results in misunderstanding. This "either . . . or" applied to the case of Adam before the fall, but ceased to apply the moment he sinned and thus entered the penal relationship of the law. God continued to demand obedience of man, but in addition to that required of him that he pay the penalty for past transgression. Meeting this double requirement was the only way of life after sin entered the world. If Christ had merely obeyed the law and had not also paid the penalty, He would not have won a title to eternal life for sinners; and if He had merely paid the penalty, without meeting the original demands of the law, He would have left man in the position of Adam before the fall, still confronted with the task of obtaining eternal life in the way of obedience. By His active obedience, however, He carried His people beyond that point and gave them a claim to everlasting life. b. The passive obedience of Christ. Christ as Mediator also entered the penal relation to the law, in order to pay the penalty in our stead. His passive obedience consisted in His paying the penalty of sin by His sufferings and death, and thus discharging the debt of all His people. The sufferings of Christ, which have already been described, did not come upon Him accidentally, nor as the result of purely natural circumstances. They were judicially laid upon Him as our representative, and were therefore really penal sufferings. The redemptive value of these sufferings results from the following facts: They were borne by a divine person who, only in virtue of His deity, could bear the penalty through to the end and thus obtain freedom from it. In view of the infinite value of the person who undertook to pay the price and to bear the curse, they satisfied the justice of God essentially and intensively. They were strictly moral sufferings, because Christ took them upon Himself voluntarily, and was perfectly innocent and holy in bearing them. The passive obedience of Christ stands out prominently in such passages as the following: Isaiah 53:6; Romans 4:25; 1 Peter 2:24; 1 Peter 3:18; 1 John 2:2, while His active obedience is taught in such passages at Matthew 3:15; Matthew 5:17-18; John 15:10; Galatians 4:4-5; Hebrews 10:7-9, in connection with the passages which teach us that Christ is our righteousness, Romans 10:4; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Php 3:9; and that He secured for us eternal life, the adoption of sons, and an eternal inheritance, Galatians 3:13-14;

Galatians 4:4-5; Ephesians 1:3-12; Ephesians 5:25-27. Arminians are willing to admit that Christ, by His passive obedience merited for us the forgiveness of sins, but refuse to grant that He also merited for us positive acceptance with God, the adoption of children, and everlasting life.

B. OBJECTIONS TO THE SATISFACTION OR PENAL SUBSTITUTIONARY DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT.

There are many circles in which this doctrine of the atonement is not popular. There always has been opposition to it, and in our day the opposition is particularly strong. The main objections are the following:

1. SUCH AN ATONEMENT WAS ENTIRELY UNNECESSARY. Some hold that such an atonement was entirely unnecessary, either because sin is not guilt and therefore does not call for an atonement, or because there can be no obstacle to the free forgiveness of sin in God, who is our heavenly Father and is essentially a God of love. If a man can, and often does, forgive the penitent without demanding and receiving satisfaction, God, our perfect exemplar, surely can and will do this. This is the common objection of all those who advocate a purely subjective theory of the atonement. It may be answered, however, that the Bible certainly teaches us to regard sin as guilt; and because it is guilt, it makes man subject to the wrath of God and renders him liable to divine punishment. Moreover, the idea of a universal Fatherhood of God, in virtue of which He loves all men with a redemptive love, is entirely foreign to Scripture. And if God is a Father, He is also a Judge; if He is a God of love, He is also a God of justice and holiness. There is no one attribute in God which dominates and determines the expression of all the other divine perfections. And, finally, it should not be forgotten that what man can do as a private individual, he is not always able to do when acting in the capacity of a judge.

2. SUCH AN ATONEMENT WOULD DEROGATE FROM THE CHARACTER OF GOD. Closely connected with the preceding objection is that which holds that such an atonement would derogate from the character of God: from His justice, because He punishes the innocent for the guilty; from His love, because He acts as a stern, severe, and relentless being, who demands blood to appease His wrath; and from His pardoning grace, since He demands payment before He can or will forgive. But Christ voluntarily took the place of sinners, so that this substitution involved no injustice on the part of God. If God had been actuated by strict justice only, and not by compassionate love and mercy as well, He would have left the sinner to perish in His sin. Moreover, it is entirely incorrect to say that, according to the satisfaction doctrine of the atonement, the love and the pardoning grace of God could not flow forth until satisfaction was rendered, because God Himself provided the ransom, and by giving His Son already gave evidence of His infinite love and pardoning grace. His love precedes even the repentance of sinners and calls this into action.

3. SUCH AN ATONEMENT ASSUMES AN IMPOSSIBLE TRANSFER OF WRATH. It is pointed out that this doctrine of the atonement holds that God transferred His wrath against the sinner to the Mediator, which is unthinkable; and that He also transferred the punishment of the sinner to Christ, which is manifestly illegal. In answer to this it may be said, however, that the wrath of God does not partake of the nature of personal vindictiveness, such as we witness among men, and which they would find it hard to transfer from the object of their hatred to a perfectly innocent person. It is God’s holy displeasure against sin, a displeasure to which the sinner is also exposed

as long as the guilt of sin is not removed. It is also quite natural that, when the guilt of sin as liability to punishment was transferred to Jesus Christ, the wrath of God against sin was similarly transferred. Moreover, it cannot be said that the transfer of the punishment to Christ was manifestly illegal, because, as a matter of fact, He identified Himself with His people. He made satisfaction as the responsible Head of a community for those who in union with Him constituted one legal corporate body. This responsible union was constituted, says Hodge, (a) by His own voluntary assumption of the legal responsibilities of His people, (b) by the recognition of His sponsorship by God, and (c) by His assumption of our nature.

4. SUCH AN ATONEMENT IS NOT TAUGHT IN THE GOSPELS. Some are of the opinion that the Bible teaches no vicarious atonement or, if the Bible does, the Gospels certainly do not. And after all, it is what Jesus taught, and not what Paul said, that counts. We need not enter upon a lengthy discussion of this matter, since we have already shown that there is abundant proof for a vicarious atonement in Scripture. It is true that it does not stand out so clearly in the teachings of the Gospels as in those of the Epistles, but this is due to the fact (to express it in the words of Crawford) "that the purpose of our Lord's personal ministry in His life and death were not so much the full preaching of the atonement, as the full accomplishment of the atonement in order to the preaching of it."48 Yet even the Gospels contain sufficient evidence for it, Matthew 20:28; John 1:29; John 3:16; John 10:11; John 15:13; Matthew 26:27; John 6:51.

5. SUCH A DOCTRINE IS IMMORAL AND INJURIOUS. It is also claimed that this view of the atonement is immoral and injurious in its practical tendency. It is said to undermine the authority of the moral law, and to weaken, if not destroy, the force of our obligations and inducements to personal holiness. This objection was already made to the doctrine of free grace in the days of Paul. The charge is not true, however, for this theory more than any other upholds the majesty of the law, and in no way minimizes the obligation of the redeemed sinner to render full obedience to the law. On the contrary, it offers several incentives to personal holiness, by emphasizing the exceeding sinfulness of sin, by displaying the unspeakable love of God and of Jesus Christ, and by the assurance of divine aid in the struggle of life, and of the acceptance of our imperfect services in Christ.

04.3.3.5. Divergent Theories of the Atonement

V. Divergent Theories of the Atonement

Since the atonement is clearly something objective, something that has a Godward direction, strictly speaking only those theories can come into consideration here that represent the work of Christ as intended primarily to ward off the wrath of God and divine punishment from sinners rather than to change the sinner's attitude to God from one of hostility to one of friendship. Theories that are entirely subjective and conceive of the work of Christ exclusively as bearing on the sinner's moral condition might, in strict logic, be left out of consideration altogether. They might conceivably be considered as theories of reconciliation, but can hardly be regarded as theories of atonement. Miley argues that there really can be no more than two theories of atonement. He points out that the atonement, as an objective ground for the forgiveness of sins, must answer to a necessity which will naturally determine its nature. This necessity must lie, either in the requirement of an absolute justice which must punish sin, or in the rectoral office of justice as an obligation to conserve the interests of moral government. In the first case one arrives at the satisfaction theory; in the second, at the governmental theory, which is preferred by Miley and finds great favor with the Methodists in general. Alfred Cave ascribes an objective character also to the theory of the early Arminians, in which the death of Christ is regarded as a substitute for the penalty imposed on sinners; and to the theory of McLeod Campbell, which finds the real significance of the work of Christ in His vicarious repentance. And it is undoubtedly true that both of these do contain an objective element. But in addition to these there are several purely subjective theories. Though these are not, strictly speaking, theories of atonement, yet they call for consideration, since they are considered as such in many circles. The following are the most important theories:

A. THEORIES OF THE EARLY CHURCH.

There were two theories in the early Church that call for brief mention.

1. THE RANSOM TO SATAN THEORY. This is based on the singular notion that the death of Christ constituted a ransom paid to Satan, in order to cancel the just claims which the latter had on man. Origen, one of the chief advocates of this theory, held that Satan was deceived in the bargain, since the outcome proved that he could not stand in the presence of the holy Christ, and was not able to retain his hold on Him. This theory found favor with several of the early Church Fathers, though they did not always state it in exactly the same form. It proved to be rather tenacious, for the echo of it was still heard in the days of Anselm. Yet it was found to be so incongruous that it gradually disappeared for lack of intelligent support. Mackintosh speaks of this theory as the exoteric theory of the early Church.

2. THE RECAPITULATION THEORY. Irenæus, who also expresses the idea that the death of Christ satisfied the justice of God and thus liberated man, nevertheless gave great prominence to the recapitulation theory, that is, to the idea, as Orr expresses it, "that Christ recapitulates in

Himself all the stages of human life, including those which belong to our state as sinners." By His incarnation and human life He reverses the course on which Adam by his sin started humanity and thus becomes a new leaven in the life of mankind. He communicates immortality to those who are united to Him by faith and effects an ethical transformation in their lives, and by His obedience compensates for the disobedience of Adam. This, according to Mackintosh, was the esoteric theory of the early Church.

B. THE SATISFACTION THEORY OF ANSELM (COMMERCIAL THEORY). The theory of Anselm is sometimes identified with that of the Reformers, which is also known as the satisfaction theory, but the two are not identical. Some seek to prejudice others against it by calling it "the commercial theory." Anselm stressed the absolute necessity of the atonement by grounding it in the very nature of God. According to him sin consists in the creature's withholding from God the honor which is His due. By the sin of man God was robbed of His honor, and it was necessary that this should be vindicated. This could be done in either of two ways: by punishment or by satisfaction. The mercy of God prompted Him to seek it in the way of satisfaction, and more particularly through the gift of His Son, which was the only way, since an infinite satisfaction was required. Christ rendered obedience to the law, but since this was nothing more than His duty as man, it did not constitute any merit on His part. In addition to that, however, He also suffered and died in the performance of His duty; and since He as a sinless being was under no obligation to suffer and to die, He thus brought infinite glory to God. This was a work of supererogation on the part of Christ, which merited, and also brought, a reward; but since Christ as the Son of God needed nothing for Himself, the reward was passed on to sinners in the form of the forgiveness of sins and of future blessedness for all those who live according to the commandments of the gospel. Anselm was the first to work out a rather complete doctrine of the atonement, and in many respects his theory points in the right direction. However, it is open to several points of criticism.

1. It is not consistent in its representation of the necessity of the atonement. It ostensibly does not ground this necessity in the justice of God which cannot brook sin, but in the honor of God which calls for amends or reparation. He really starts out with the principle of "private law" or custom, according to which an injured party may demand whatever satisfaction he sees fit; and yet argues for the necessity of the atonement in a way which only holds on the standpoint of public law.

2. This theory really has no place for the idea that Christ by suffering endured the penalty of sin, and that His suffering was strictly vicarious. The death of Christ is merely a tribute offered voluntarily to the honor of the Father. It constitutes a supererogatory merit, compensating for the demerits of others; and this is really the Roman Catholic doctrine of penance applied to the work of Christ.

3. The scheme is also one-sided and therefore insufficient in that it bases redemption exclusively on the death of Christ, conceived as a material contribution to the honor of God, and excludes the active obedience of Christ as a contributing factor to His atoning work. The whole emphasis is on the death of Christ, and no justice is done to the redemptive significance of His life.

4. In Anselm's representation there is merely an external transfer of the merits of Christ to man. It contains no indication of the way in which the work of Christ for man is communicated to man. There is no hint of the mystical union of Christ and believers, nor of faith as accepting the righteousness of Christ. Since the whole transaction appears to be rather commercial, the theory

is often called the commercial theory.

C. THE MORAL INFLUENCE THEORY. This theory was first advocated by Abelard in opposition to Anselm, and since his day found many ardent supporters. The fundamental idea is always the same, though it has assumed different forms at the hands of such men as Young, Maurice, Bushnell, Stevens, David Smith, and many others. The fundamental idea is that there is no principle of the divine nature which necessarily calls for satisfaction on the part of the sinner; and that the death of Christ should not be regarded as an expiation for sin. It was merely a manifestation of the love of God, suffering in and with His sinful creatures, and taking upon Himself their woes and griefs. This suffering did not serve to satisfy the divine justice, but to reveal the divine love, so as to soften human hearts and to lead them to repentance. It assures sinners that there is no obstacle on the part of God which would prevent Him from pardoning their sins. Not only can He do this without receiving satisfaction, but He is even eager to do it. The only requirement is that sinners come to Him with penitent hearts. The following objections may be urged against this theory:

1. This theory is contrary to the plain teachings of Scripture, which represents the atoning work of Christ as necessary, not primarily to reveal the love of God, but to satisfy His justice; regards the sufferings and death of Christ as propitiatory and penal; and teaches that the sinner is not susceptible to the moral influence of the sacrificial work of Christ until the righteousness of Christ has become his own by faith.

2. While it is undoubtedly true that the cross of Christ was the supreme manifestation of the love of God, it can be regarded as such only from the point of view of the penal substitutionary doctrine of the atonement, according to which the sufferings and death of Christ were absolutely necessary for the salvation of sinners. But according to the moral influence theory they merely served the purpose of making an impression on man, which God might have done in many other ways; and therefore were not necessary. And if they were not necessary, they were indeed a cruel manifestation of God's love, — a contradiction in terms. The sufferings and death of Christ were a manifestation of God's love only, if it was the only way to save sinners.

3. This theory robs the atonement of its objective character, and thereby ceases to be a real theory of the atonement. It is at most only a one-sided theory of reconciliation. In fact, it is not even that, for subjective reconciliation is only possible on the basis of an objective reconciliation. It really confounds God's method of saving man with man's experience of being saved, by making the atonement itself to consist in its effects in the life of the believer, in union with Christ.

4. Finally, this theory fails on its own principle. It is undoubtedly true that necessary suffering, that is, suffering for some saving purpose which could not be realized in any other way, is apt to make a deep impression. But the effect of a voluntary suffering, which is entirely unnecessary and uncalled for, is quite different. As a matter of fact, it is disapproved by the Christian conscience.

D. THE EXAMPLE THEORY. This theory was advocated by the Socinians in the sixteenth century, in opposition to the doctrine of the Reformers, that Christ vicariously atoned for the sin of mankind. Its fundamental principle is, that there is no retributive justice in God which requires absolutely and inexorably that sin be punished. His justice does not prevent Him from pardoning whom He will without demanding any satisfaction. The death of Christ did not atone for sin, neither

did it move God to pardon sin. Christ saves men by revealing to them the way of faith and obedience as the way of eternal life, by giving them an example of true obedience both in His life and in His death, and by inspiring them to lead a similar life. This view really establishes no direct connection between the death of Christ and the salvation of sinners. Yet it holds that the death of Christ may be said to expiate the sins of man in view of the fact that Christ, as a reward for His obedience unto death, received power to bestow eternal life on believers. This theory is objectionable for various reasons.

1. It is really a revival and concoction of several ancient heresies: of Pelagianism, with its denial of human depravity and its assertion of the natural ability of man to save himself; of the adoptionist doctrine, with its belief that the man Christ was adopted to be the Messianic Son of God on account of His obedience; of the Scotist doctrine of an arbitrary will in God; and of the emphasis of some of the early Church Fathers on the saving efficacy of the example of Christ. Consequently it is open to all the objections that militate against these views.

2. It is entirely un-Scriptural in its conception of Christ as a mere man of exceptional qualities; in its view of sin, in which the character of sin as guilt, so strongly emphasized by the Word of God, is entirely ignored; in its one-sided emphasis on the redemptive significance of the life of Christ; and in its representation of the death of Christ as a martyr's death, while failing to account for the unmartyrlike anguish of Christ on the cross.

3. It fails to account for the salvation of those who lived before the incarnation and of infants. If the life and sufferings of Christ merely save men by their exemplary character, the question naturally arises, how they who lived prior to the coming of Christ, and they who die in infancy can derive any benefit from them. Yet there is clear Scriptural evidence for the fact that the work of Christ was also retrospective in its efficacy, and that little children also share in the benefits of His atoning death.

4. Moreover, while it is perfectly true that Christ is also represented as an example in Scripture, He is nowhere represented as an example after which unbelieving sinners must pattern, and which will save them if they do; and yet this is the necessary assumption of the theory under consideration. The example of Christ is one which only His people can follow, and to which even they can make but a slight approach. He is our Redeemer before He can be our example.

E. THE GOVERNMENTAL THEORY. The governmental theory was intended to be a mean between the doctrine of the atonement, as taught by the Reformers, and the Socinian view. It denies that the justice of God necessarily demands that all the requirements of the law be met. The law is merely the product of God's will, and He can alter or even abrogate it, just as He pleases. While in strict justice the sinner deserved eternal death, that sentence is not strictly executed, for believers are set free. For them the penalty is set aside, and that without strict satisfaction. Christ did indeed render a certain satisfaction, but this was only a nominal equivalent of the penalty due to man; something which God was pleased to accept as such. If the question is asked, why God did not remit the penalty outright, as He might have done, the answer is that He had to reveal in some way the inviolable nature of the law and His holy displeasure against sin, in order that He, the moral Ruler of the universe, might be able to maintain His moral government. This theory, first advocated by Grotius, was adopted by Wardlaw and several New England theologians, and is also supported in such recent works as those of Dale, A. Cave, Miley,

Creighton, and others. It is open to the following objections:

1. It clearly rests upon certain false principles. According to it the law is not an expression of the essential nature of God, but only of His arbitrary will, and is therefore subject to change; and the aim of the so-called penalty is not to satisfy justice, but only to deter men from future offenses against the law.

2. While it may be said to contain a true element, namely, that the penalty inflicted on Christ is also instrumental in securing the interests of the divine government, it makes the mistake of substituting for the main purpose of the atonement one which can, in the light of Scripture, only be regarded as a subordinate purpose.

3. It gives an unworthy representation of God. He originally threatens man, in order to deter him from transgression, and does not execute the threatened sentence, but substitutes something else for it in the punishment inflicted on Christ. And now He again threatens those who do not accept Christ. But how is it possible to have any assurance that He will actually carry out His threat?

4. It is also contrary to Scripture, which certainly represents the atonement of Christ as a necessary revelation of the righteousness of God, as an execution of the penalty of the law, as a sacrifice by which God is reconciled to the sinner, and as the meritorious cause of the salvation of sinners.

5. Like the moral influence and the example theories, it also fails to explain how the Old Testament saints were saved. If the punishment inflicted on Christ was merely for the purpose of deterring men from sin, it had no retroactive significance. How then were people saved under the old dispensation; and how was the moral government of God maintained at that time?

6. Finally, this theory, too, fails on its own principle. A real execution of the penalty might make a profound impression on the sinner, and might act as a real deterrent, if man's sinning or not sinning were, even in his natural state, merely contingent on the human will, which it is not; but such an impression would hardly be made by a mere sham exhibition of justice, designed to show God's high regard for the law.

F. THE MYSTICAL THEORY. The mystical theory has this in common with the moral influence theory, that it conceives of the atonement exclusively as exercising influence on man and bringing about a change in him. At the same time it differs from the moral influence theory in that it conceives of the change wrought in man, not primarily as an ethical change in the conscious life of man, but as a deeper change in the subconscious life which is brought about in a mystical way. The basic principle of this theory is that, in the incarnation, the divine life entered into the life of humanity, in order to lift it to the plane of the divine. Christ possessed human nature with its inborn corruption and predisposition to moral evil; but through the influence of the Holy Spirit He was kept from manifesting this corruption in actual sin, gradually purified human nature, and in His death completely extirpated this original depravity and reunited that nature to God. He entered the life of mankind as a transforming leaven, and the resulting transformation constitutes His redemption. This is in effect, though with differences of detail, the theory of Schleiermacher, Edward Irving, Menken, and Stier. Even Kohlbruegge seemed inclined to accept it in a measure. It is burdened, however, with the following difficulties:

1. It takes no account of the guilt of man. According to Scripture the guilt of man must be removed, in order that he may be purified of his pollution; but the mystical theory, disregarding the guilt of sin, concerns itself only with the expulsion of the pollution of sin. It knows of no justification, and conceives of salvation as consisting in subjective sanctification.

2. It rests upon false principles, where it finds in the natural order of the universe an exhaustive expression of the will and nature of God, regards sin exclusively as a power of moral evil in the world, which involves no guilt and deserves no punishment, and looks upon punishment as a mere reaction of the law of the universe against the transgressor, and not at all as a revelation of the personal wrath of God against sin.

3. It contradicts Scripture where it makes Christ share in the pollution of sin and hereditary depravity, and deduces the necessity of His death from the sinfulness of His own nature (not all do this). By doing this, it makes it impossible to regard Him as the sinless Saviour who, just because of His sinlessness, could take the place of sinners and pay the penalty for them.

4. It has no answer to the question, how those who lived before the incarnation can share in the redemption of Jesus Christ. If Christ in some realistic way drove out the pollution of sin during the time of His sojourn on earth, and now continues to drive it out; and if the salvation of man depends on this subjective process, how then could the Old Testament saints share in this salvation?

G. THE THEORY OF VICARIOUS REPENTANCE. This theory of McLeod Cambell is also called the theory of sympathy and identification. It proceeds on the gratuitous assumption that a perfect repentance would have availed as a sufficient atonement for sin, if man had only been capable of an adequate repentance, which he was not. Now Christ offered to God, in behalf of humanity, the requisite repentance, and by so doing fulfilled the conditions of forgiveness. His work really consisted in the vicarious confession of sin in behalf of man. The question naturally arises, how the death of Christ is related to this vicarious repentance and confession. And the answer is that Christ, by His suffering and death, entered sympathetically into the Father's condemnation of sin, brought out the heinousness of sin and condemned sin; and this was viewed by the Father as a perfect confession of our sins. This condemnation of sin is also calculated to produce in man that holiness which God demands of sinful humanity. This theory labors under the following difficulties.

1. It can readily be understood that Christ as man could enter sympathetically into our afflictions and temptations, and into the feeling of our infirmities; but it is not at all clear how the incarnation enabled Him to enter into a fellow-feeling with us with respect to our sins. He was sinless, a total stranger to sin as a corrupting power in His life, and therefore could hardly identify Himself in a moral sense with sinners.

2. While it may be admitted that, according to Scripture, Christ did sympathize with the sinners whom He came to save, this sympathy is certainly not represented as being the whole or even the most important part of His redemptive work. All the emphasis is on the fact that He vicariously endured the penalties that were due to sinners and met the requirements of the law in a life of obedience. Yet this theory, while recognizing the retributive justice of God and the demerit of sin, denies the necessity and possibility of penal substitution, and asserts that the work of Christ in behalf of sinners consisted, not in His suffering for them, but in the vicarious confession of their sins.

3. The theory proceeds on erroneous principles, namely, that sin does not necessarily make men liable to punishment; that the justice and holiness of God did not, as a matter of course, call for an objective atonement; and that the only necessity for redemptive help followed from the inability of man to repent in true fashion.

4. Finally, a vicarious confession, such as this theory implies, is really a contradiction in terms. Confession is something altogether subjective, and to be valid must be personal. It is the outcome of a personal consciousness of sin, and is also personal in its effects. It is hard to see how such a vicarious repentance can release others from the obligation to repent. Moreover, this theory has no Scriptural foundation.

04.3.3.6. The Purpose and the Extent of the Atonement

VI. The Purpose and the Extent of the Atonement A. THE PURPOSE OF THE ATONEMENT. The atonement was destined to affect the relation of God to the sinner, the state and condition of Christ as the Mediatorial author of salvation, and the state and condition of the sinner.

1. ITS EFFECT WITH REFERENCE TO GOD. It should be emphasized first of all that the atonement effected no change in the inner being of God, which is unchangeable. The only change that was brought about was a change in the relation of God to the objects of His atoning love. He was reconciled to those who were the objects of His judicial wrath. This means that His wrath was warded off by the sacrificial covering of their sin. The atonement should not be represented as the moving cause of the love of God, for it was already an expression of His love. It is often represented as if, on the satisfaction theory, God could not love the sinner until His just demands were met. But then the fact is overlooked that Christ is already the gift of God’s love, John 3:16. At the same time it is perfectly true that the atonement did remove obstacles to the manifestation of God’s redeeming love in the pardoning of sinners and in their sanctification, by satisfying the justice of God and the demands of the law, both in its federal and penal aspects.

2. ITS EFFECT WITH RESPECT TO CHRIST. The atonement secured a manifold reward for Christ as Mediator. He was constituted the life-giving Spirit, the inexhaustible source of all the blessings of salvation for sinners. He received: a. All that belonged to His glorification, including His present Messianic glory. Hence He prayed, when in His high priestly prayer He by anticipation already thought of His work as completed, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was," John 17:5. b. The fulness of those gifts and graces which He imparts to His people. Thus we read in Psalms 68:18 : "Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea for the rebellious also, that the Lord might dwell among them." Paul applies this to Christ in Ephesians 4:8. c. The gift of the Holy Spirit for the formation of His mystical body and the subjective application of the fruits of His atoning work. This is evident from the words of Peter on the day of Pentecost: "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He hath shed forth this which ye now see and hear," Acts 2:33. d. The ends of the earth for His possession and the world for His dominion. This was one of the promises made unto Him: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession," Psalms 2:8. That this promise was fulfilled is quite evident from Hebrews 2:6-9.

3. ITS EFFECT AS FAR AS THE SINNER IS CONCERNED. a. The atonement not only made salvation possible for the sinner, but actually secured it. On this point Calvinists join issue with the Roman Catholics, the Lutherans, the Arminians, and all those who teach a universal atonement. These hold that the atonement of Christ merely made salvation possible, and not certain, for those for whom it was offered. But the Calvinist teaches that the atonement meritoriously secured the application of the work of redemption to those for whom it was intended and thus rendered their

complete salvation certain. b. It secured for those for whom it was made: (1) A proper judicial standing through justification. This includes the forgiveness of sin, the adoption of children, and the right to an eternal inheritance. (2) The mystical union of believers with Christ through regeneration and sanctification. This comprises the gradual mortification of the old man, and the gradual putting on of the new man created in Christ Jesus. (3) Their final bliss in communion with God through Jesus Christ, in subjective glorification, and in the enjoyment of eternal life in a new and perfect creation. All this clearly obviates the objection so often raised against the penal substitutionary doctrine of the atonement, namely, that it has no ethical bearings and offers no basis for the ethical life of the redeemed. It may even be said that it is the only doctrine of the atonement that offers a secure basis for a real ethical life, a life that is rooted in the heart through the operation of the Holy Spirit. Justification leads right on to sanctification.

B. THE EXTENT OF THE ATONEMENT.

1. THE EXACT POINT AT ISSUE. The question with which we are concerned at this point is not (a) whether the satisfaction rendered by Christ was in itself sufficient for the salvation of all men, since this is admitted by all; (b) whether the saving benefits are actually applied to every man, for the great majority of those who teach a universal atonement do not believe that all are actually saved; (c) whether the bona fide offer of salvation is made to all that hear the gospel, on the condition of repentance and faith, since the Reformed Churches do not call this in question; nor (d) whether any of the fruits of the death of Christ accrue to the benefit of the non-elect in virtue of their close association with the people of God, since this is explicitly taught by many Reformed scholars. On the other hand, the question does relate to the design of the atonement. Did the Father in sending Christ, and did Christ in coming into the world, to make atonement for sin, do this with the design or for the purpose of saving only the elect or all men? That is the question, and that only is the question.

2. STATEMENT OF THE REFORMED POSITION. The Reformed position is that Christ died for the purpose of actually and certainly saving the elect, and the elect only. This is equivalent to saying that He died for the purpose of saving only those to whom He actually applies the benefits of His redemptive work. Various attempts have been made in circles that claimed to be Reformed to modify this position. The Dutch Arminians maintained that Christ died for the purpose of making salvation possible for all men without exception, though they will not all be saved. Salvation is offered to them on lower terms than it was to Adam, namely on condition of faith and evangelical obedience, a condition which they can meet in virtue of God’s gift of common or sufficient grace to all men. The Calvinistic Universalists sought to mediate between the Reformed position and that of the Arminians. They distinguished a twofold decree of God: (a) A decree to send Christ into the world to save all men by His atoning death on condition of faith in Him. However, because God saw that this purpose would fail, since no one would accept Christ by faith, He followed up the first by a second decree. (b) A decree to give a certain elect number special grace, in order to engender faith in their hearts and to secure their salvation. This dubious and very unsatisfactory view was held by the school of Saumur (Cameron, Amyraldus, and Testardus), and also by such English scholars as Wardlaw, John Brown, and James Richards. Some New England theologians, such as Emmons, Taylor, Park, and Beman held a somewhat similar view. The Marrow-men of Scotland were perfectly orthodox in maintaining that Christ died for the purpose of saving only the elect, though some of them used expressions which also pointed to a more general reference of

the atonement. They said that Christ did not die for all men, but that He is dead, that is, available, for all. God's giving love, which is universal, led Him to make a deed of gift and grant to all men; and this is the foundation for the universal offer of salvation. His electing love, however, which is special, results in the salvation of the elect only. The most important of the Marrowmen were Hog, Boston, and the two Erskines.

3. PROOF FOR THE DOCTRINE OF A LIMITED ATONEMENT. The following proofs may be given for the doctrine of particular atonement: a. It may be laid down, first of all, as a general principle, that the designs of God are always surely efficacious and cannot be frustrated by the actions of man. This applies also to the purpose of saving men through the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. If it had been His intention to save all men, this purpose could not have been frustrated by the unbelief of man. It is admitted on all hands that only a limited number is saved. Consequently, they are the only ones whom God has determined to save. b. Scripture repeatedly qualifies those for whom Christ laid down His life in such a way as to point to a very definite limitation. Those for whom He suffered and died are variously called "His sheep," John 10:11; John 10:15, "His Church," Acts 20:28; Ephesians 5:25-27, "His people," Matthew 1:21, and "the elect," Romans 8:32-35. c. The sacrificial work of Christ and His intercessory work are simply two different aspects of His atoning work, and therefore the scope of the one can be no wider than that of the other. Now Christ very definitely limits His intercessory work, when He says: "I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me." John 17:9. Why should He limit His intercessory prayer, if He had actually paid the price for all? d. It should also be noted that the doctrine that Christ died for the purpose of saving all men, logically leads to absolute universalism, that is, to the doctrine that all men are actually saved. It is impossible that they for whom Christ paid the price, whose guilt He removed, should be lost on account of that guilt. The Arminians cannot stop at their half-way station, but must go all the way. e. If it be said, as some do say, that the atonement was universal, but that the application of it is particular; that He made salvation possible for all, but actually saves only a limited number, — it should be pointed out that there is an inseparable connection between the purchase and the actual bestowal of salvation. The Bible clearly teaches that the design and effect of the atoning work of Christ is not merely to make salvation possible, but to reconcile God and man, and to put men in actual possession of eternal salvation, a salvation which many fail to obtain, Matthew 1:1; Romans 5:10; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Galatians 1:4; Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7. f. And if the assertion be made that the design of God and of Christ was evidently conditional, contingent on the faith and obedience of man, attention should be called to the fact that the Bible clearly teaches that Christ by His death purchased faith, repentance, and all the other effects of the work of the Holy Spirit, for His people. Consequently these are no conditions of which the fulfilment is simply dependent on the will of man. The atonement also secures the fulfilment of the conditions that must be met, in order to obtain salvation, Romans 2:4; Galatians 3:13-14; Ephesians 1:3-4; Ephesians 2:8; Php 1:29; 2 Timothy 3:5-6.

4. OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF A LIMITED ATONEMENT. These may be classified as follows: a. There are passages which teach that Christ died for the world, John 1:29; John 3:16; John 6:33; John 6:51; Romans 11:12; Romans 11:15; 2 Corinthians 5:19; 1 John 2:2. The objection based on these passages proceeds on the unwarranted assumption that the word "world" as used in them means "all the individuals that constitute the human race." If this were not

so, the objection based on them would have no point. But it is perfectly evident from Scripture that the term "world" has a variety of meanings, as a mere reading of the following passages will prove conclusively, Luke 2:1; John 1:10; Acts 11:28; Acts 19:27; Acts 24:5; Romans 1:8; Colossians 1:6. It also appears that, when it is used of men, it does not always include all men, John 7:4; John 12:19; John 14:22; John 18:20; Romans 11:12; Romans 11:15; in some of these passages it cannot possibly denote all men. If it had that meaning in John 6:33; John 6:51, it would follow that Christ actually gives life to all men, that is, saves them all. This is more than the opponents themselves believe. In Romans 11:12; Romans 11:15 the word "world" cannot be all-inclusive, since the context clearly excludes Israel; and because on that supposition these passages too would prove more than is intended, namely, that the fruits of the atoning work of Christ are actually applied to all. We do find in these passages, however, an indication of the fact that the word "world" is sometimes used to indicate that the Old Testament particularism belongs to the past, and made way for New Testament universalism. The blessings of the gospel were extended to all nations, Matthew 24:14; Mark 16:16l Romans 1:5; Romans 10:18. This is probably the key to the interpretation of the word "world" in such passages as John 1:29; John 6:33; John 6:51; 2 Corinthians 5:19; 1 John 2:2. Dr. Shedd assumes that the word means "all nations" in such passages as Matthew 26:13; John 3:16; 1 Corinthians 1:21; 2 Corinthians 5:19; and 1 John 2:2; but holds that in other passages it denotes the world of believers, or the Church, John 6:33; John 6:51; Romans 4:13; Romans 11:12; Romans 11:15. Kuyper and Van Andel also assume that this is the meaning of the word in some passages. b. Closely related to the passages to which we referred in the preceding, are those in which it is said that Christ died for all men, Romans 5:18; 1 Corinthians 15:22; 2 Corinthians 5:14; 1 Timothy 2:4; 1 Timothy 2:6; Titus 2:11; Hebrews 2:9; 2 Peter 3:9. Naturally, each of these passages must be considered in the connection in which it is found. For instance, the context clearly shows that the "all" or "all men" of Romans 5:18 and 1 Corinthians 15:22 includes only those who are in Christ, as contrasted with all who are in Adam. If the word "all" in these passages is not interpreted in a limited sense, they would teach, not merely that Christ made salvation possible for all men, but that He actually saves all without exception. Thus the Arminian would again be forced into the camp of the absolute Universalist, where he does not want to be. A similar limitation must be applied in the interpretation of 2 Corinthians 5:14, and Hebrews 2:9, cf. Hebrews 2:10. Otherwise they would prove too much, and therefore prove nothing. In all these passages the "all" are simply all those who are in Christ. In the case of Titus 2:11, which speaks of the appearance of the grace of God, "bringing salvation to all men," the context clearly shows that "all men" really means all classes of men. If the "all" is not restricted, this passage too would teach universal salvation. The passages in 1 Timothy 2:4-6; Hebrews 2:9; 2 Peter 3:9 refer to the revealed will of God that both Jews and Gentiles should be saved, but imply nothing as to the universal intent of the atonement. Even Moses Stuart, who believes in universal atonement, admits that in these cases the word "all" cannot be taken in a universal sense. c. A third class of passages which seem to militate against the idea of a limited atonement consists of those which are said to imply the possibility that those for whom Christ died fail to obtain salvation. Romans 14:15 and the parallel passage in 1 Corinthians 8:11 may be mentioned first of all. Some commentators are of the opinion that these passages do not refer to eternal destruction, but it is more likely that they do. The apostle simply wants to bring the uncharitable conduct of some of the stronger brethren in the Church into strong relief. They were likely to offend the weaker brethren, to cause them to stumble, to override their conscience, and thus to enter

upon the downward path, the natural result of which, if continued, would be destruction. While Christ paid the price of His life to save such persons, they by their conduct tended to destroy them. That this destruction will not actually follow, is evident from Romans 14:4; by the grace of God they will be upheld. We have here then, as Dr. Shedd expresses it, "a supposition, for the sake of argument, of something that does not and cannot happen," just as in 1 Corinthians 13:1-3; Galatians 1:8. Another, somewhat similar, passage is found in 2 Peter 2:1, with which Hebrews 10:29 may also be classed. The most plausible explanation of these passages is that given by Smeaton, as the interpretation of Piscator and of the Dutch annotations, namely, "that these false teachers are described according to their own profession and the judgment of charity. They gave themselves out as redeemed men, and were so accounted in the judgment of the Church while they abode in her communion."49 d. Finally, there is an objection derived from the bona fide offer of salvation. We believe that God "unfeignedly," that is, sincerely or in good faith, calls all those who are living under the gospel to believe, and offers them salvation in the way of faith and repentance. Now the Arminians maintain that such an offer of salvation cannot be made by those who believe that Christ died only for the elect. This objection was already raised at the time of the Synod of Dort, but its validity was not granted. The following remarks may be made in reply: (a) The offer of salvation in the way of faith and repentance does not pretend to be a revelation of the secret counsel of God, more specifically, of His design in giving Christ as an atonement for sin. It is simply the promise of salvation to all those who accept Christ by faith. (2) This offer, in so far as it is universal, is always conditioned by faith and conversion. Moreover, it is contingent on a faith and repentance such as can only be wrought in the heart of man by the operation of the Holy Spirit. (3) The universal offer of salvation does not consist in the declaration that Christ made atonement for every man that hears the gospel, and that God really intends to save each one. It consists in (a) an exposition of the atoning work of Christ as in itself sufficient for the redemption of all men; (b) a description of the real nature of the repentance and faith that are required in coming to Christ; and (c) a declaration that each one who comes to Christ with true repentance and faith will obtain the blessings of salvation. (4) It is not the duty of the preacher to harmonize the secret counsel of God respecting the redemption of sinners with His declarative will as expressed in the universal offer of salvation. He is simply an official ambassador, whose duty it is to carry out the will of the Lord in preaching the gospel to all men indiscriminately. (5) Dr. Shedd says: "The universal offer of the benefits of Christ’s atonement springs out of God’s will of complacency, Ezekiel 33:11.... God may properly call upon the non-elect to do a thing that God delights in, simply because He does delight in it. The divine desire is not altered by the divine decree of preterition."50 He also quotes a very similar statement from Turretin. (6) The universal offer of salvation serves the purpose of disclosing the aversion and obstinacy of man in his opposition to the gospel, and of removing every vestige of excuse. If it were not made, sinners might say that they would gladly have accepted the gift of God, if it only had been offered to them.

5. THE WIDER BEARING OF THE ATONEMENT. The question may be raised, whether the atonement wrought by Christ for the salvation of the elect, and of the elect only, has any wider bearing. The question is often discussed in Scottish theology, whether Christ did not die, in some other than a saving sense, also for the non-elect. It was discussed by several of the older theologians, such as Rutherford, Brown, Durham, and Dickson, but was answered by them in the negative. "They held, indeed," says Walker, "the intrinsic sufficiency of Christ’s death to save the world, or worlds; but that was altogether irrespective of Christ’s purpose, or Christ’s

accomplishment. The phrase that Christ died sufficiently for all was not approved, because the 'for' seemed to imply some reality of actual substitution."51 Durham denied that any mercy bestowed upon the reprobate, and enjoyed by them, could be said to be the proper fruit of, or the purchase of, Christ's death; but at the same time maintained that certain consequences of Christ's death of an advantageous kind must reach wicked men, though it is doubtful whether these can be regarded as a blessing for them. This was also the position taken by Rutherford and Gillespie. The Marrow-men of Scotland, while holding that Christ died for the purpose of saving only the elect, concluded from the universal offer of salvation that the work of Christ also had a wider bearing, and that, to use their own words, "God the Father, moved by nothing but His free love to mankind lost, hath made a deed of gift and grant unto all men of His Son Jesus Christ." According to them all sinners are legatees under Christ's testament, not indeed in the essence but in the administration of the covenant of grace, but the testament becomes effectual only in the case of the elect. Their position was condemned by the Church of Scotland. Several Reformed theologians hold that, though Christ suffered and died only for the purpose of saving the elect, many benefits of the cross of Christ do actually — and that also according to the plan of God — accrue to the benefit of those who do not accept Christ by faith. They believe that the blessings of common grace also result from the atoning work of Christ.52 That the atoning work of Christ also had significance for the angelic world would seem to follow from Ephesians 1:10, and Colossians 1:20. Things on earth and things in heaven are summed up in Christ as a Head (anakephalaiosasthai), Ephesians 1:10, and are reconciled to God through the blood of the cross, Colossians 1:20. Kuyper holds that the angelic world, which lost its head when Satan fell away, is reorganized under Christ as Head. This would reconcile or bring together the angelic world and the world of humanity under a single Head. Naturally, Christ is not the Head of the angels in the organic sense in which He is the Head of the Church. Finally, the atoning work of Christ will also result in a new heaven and a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness, a fit dwellingplace for the new and glorified humanity, and in the glorious liberty in which the lower creation will also share, Romans 8:19-22.

04.3.3.7. The Intercessory Work of Christ

VII. The Intercessory Work of Christ The priestly work of Christ is not limited to the sacrificial offering of Himself on the cross. The representation is sometimes given that, while Christ was a Priest on earth, He is a King in heaven. This creates the impression that His priestly work is finished, which is by no means correct. Christ is not only an earthly but also, and especially, a heavenly High Priest. He is even while seated at the right hand of God in heavenly majesty, "a minister of the sanctuary, and of the true tabernacle, which the Lord pitched, not man." Hebrews 8:2. He only began His priestly work on earth, and is completing it in heaven. In the strict sense of the word He is not reckoned among the earthly priests, who were but shadows of a coming reality, Hebrews 8:4. He is the true, that is, the real Priest, serving at the real sanctuary, of which the tabernacle of Israel was but an imperfect shadow. At the same time He is now the Priest upon the throne, our Intercessor with the Father.

A. SCRIPTURAL PROOF FOR THE INTERCESSORY WORK OF CHRIST.

1. THE INTERCESSORY WORK OF CHRIST SYMBOLIZED. While the sacrificial work of Christ was symbolized primarily by the priestly functions at the brazen altar and the sacrifices that were brought upon it, His intercessory work was prefigured by the daily burning of incense on the golden altar in the Holy Place. The constantly rising cloud of incense was not only a symbol of the prayers of Israel, but also a type of the high priestly prayer of our great High Priest. This symbolic action of burning incense was not dissociated from, but most closely connected with, the bringing of the sacrifices at the brazen altar. It was connected with the application of the blood of the more important sin offerings, which was applied to the horns of the golden altar, also called the altar of incense, was sprinkled towards the veil, and on the great Day of Atonement was even brought within the Holy of Holies and sprinkled upon the mercy-seat. This manipulation of the blood symbolized the presentation of the sacrifice to God, who dwelt between the cherubim. The Holy of Holies was clearly a symbol and type of the city four-square, the heavenly Jerusalem. There is still another connection between the sacrificial work at the brazen altar and the symbolical intercession at the golden altar. The fact that the incense might be burned only on living coals taken from the altar of burnt-offering was an indication of the fact that the intercession was based on the sacrifice and would be effective in no other way. This clearly indicates that the intercessory work of Christ in heaven is based on His accomplished sacrificial work, and is acceptable only on that basis.

2. NEW TESTAMENT INDICATIONS OF CHRIST'S INTERCESSORY WORK. The term parakletos is applied to Christ. The word is found only in John 14:16, John 14:26; John 15:26; 1 John 2:1. It is rendered "Comforter" wherever it is found in the Gospel of John, but "Advocate" in the single passage in which it is found in the First Epistle of John. The form is a passive, and can therefore, says Westcott, "properly mean only 'one called to the side of another,' and that with the secondary notion of counseling or aiding him."53 He points out that the word has that meaning in classical Greek, in Philo, and also in the writings of the Rabbis. Many of the Greek Fathers, however, gave the word an active sense, rendered it "Comforter," and thus gave undue

prominence to what is but a secondary application of the term, though they felt that this meaning would not fit in 1 John 2:1. The word, then, denotes one who is called in for aid, an advocate, one who pleads the cause of another and also gives him wise counsel. Naturally, the work of such an advocate may bring comfort, and therefore he can also in a secondary sense be called a comforter. Christ is explicitly called our Advocate only in 1 John 2:1, but by implication also in John 14:16. The promise, "And I will pray the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that He may be with you forever," clearly implied that Christ was also a parakletos. The Gospel of John regularly applies the term to the Holy Spirit. There are therefore two Advocates, Christ and the Holy Spirit. Their work is partly identical and partly different. When Christ was on earth, He was the Advocate of the disciples, pleading their cause against the world and serving them with wise counsel, and the Holy Spirit is now continuing that work in the Church. In so far the work is identical, but there is also a difference. Christ as our Advocate pleads the believer's cause with the Father against Satan, the accuser (Zechariah 3:1; Hebrews 7:25; 1 John 2:1; Revelation 12:10), while the Holy Spirit not only pleads the cause of believers against the world (John 16:8), but also pleads the cause of Christ with believers and serves them with wise counsel, (John 14:26; John 15:26; John 16:14). Briefly, we can also say that Christ pleads our cause with God, while the Holy Spirit pleads God's cause with us. Other New Testament passages which speak of the intercessory work of Christ are found in Romans 8:24; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:24.

B. THE NATURE OF CHRIST'S INTERCESSORY WORK.

It is evident that this work of Christ may not be dissociated from His atoning sacrifice, which forms its necessary basis. It is but the continuation of the priestly work of Christ, carrying it to completion. Compared with the sacrificial work of Christ His ministry of intercession receives but little attention. Even in evangelical circles the impression is often given, though perhaps without intending it, that the work accomplished by the Saviour on earth was far more important than the services which He now renders in heaven. It seems to be little understood that in the Old Testament the daily ministration at the temple culminated in the burning of incense, which symbolized the ministry of intercession; and that the annual ritual on the great Day of Atonement reached its highest point, when the high priest passed beyond the veil with the atoning blood. Neither can it be said that the ministry of intercession is sufficiently understood. This may be the cause, but may also be the result, of the widespread failure of Christians to rivet the attention on it. The prevailing idea is that the intercession of Christ consists exclusively in the prayers which He offers for His people. Now it cannot be denied that these form an important part of the intercessory work of Christ, but they are not the whole of it. The fundamental point to remember is that the ministry of intercession should not be dissociated from the atonement, since they are but two aspects of the same redemptive work of Christ, and the two may be said to merge into one. Martin finds that the two constantly appear in juxtaposition and are so closely related in Scripture, that he feels justified in making the following statement: "The essence of the Intercession is Atonement; and the Atonement is essentially an Intercession. Or, perhaps, to put the paradox more mildly: The Atonement is real, — real sacrifice and offering, and not mere passive endurance, — because it is in its very nature an active and infallible intercession; while, on the other hand, the Intercession is real intercession, — judicial, representative, and priestly intercession, and not a mere exercise of influence, — because it is essentially an Atonement or substitutionary oblation, once perfected on Calvary, now perpetually presented and undergoing perpetual acceptance in heaven."54 Analyzing it, we find

the following elements in the intercession of Christ:

1. Just as the high priest on the great Day of Atonement entered the Holy of Holies with the completed sacrifice, to present it to God, so Christ entered the heavenly Holy Place with His completed, perfect, and all-sufficient sacrifice, and offered it to the Father. And just as the high priest, on entering the Holy Place, came into the presence of God, symbolically bearing the tribes of Israel on His breast, so Christ appeared before God as the representative of His people, and thus reinstated humanity in the presence of God. It is to this fact that the writer of Hebrews refers when he says: "For Christ entered not into a holy place made with hands, like in pattern to the true; but into heaven itself, now to appear before the face of God for us," Hebrews 9:24. Reformed theologians often directed attention to it that the perpetual presence of the completed sacrifice of Christ before God contains in itself an element of intercession as a constant reminder of the perfect atonement of Jesus Christ. It is something like the blood of the passover, of which the Lord said: "And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and when I see the blood, I will pass over you." Exodus 12:13.

2. There is also a judicial element in the intercession, just as there is in the atonement. Through the atonement Christ met all the just demands of the law, so that no legal charges can justly be brought against those for whom He paid the price. However, Satan the accuser is ever bent on bringing charges against the elect; but Christ meets them all by pointing to His completed work. He is the Paraklete, the Advocate, for His people, answering all the charges that are brought against them. We are reminded of this not only by the name "Paraklete," but also by the words of Paul in Romans 8:33-34 : "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God’s elect? It is God that justifieth; who is he that condemneth? It is Jesus Christ that died, yea rather, that was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Here the judicial element is clearly present. Cf. also Zechariah 3:1-2.

3. Not only does the intercessory work of Christ bear on our judicial state; it also relates to our moral condition, our gradual sanctification. When we address the Father in His name, He sanctifies our prayers. They need this, because they are often so imperfect, trivial, superficial, and even insincere, while they are addressed to One who is perfect in holiness and majesty. And besides rendering our prayers acceptable, He also sanctifies our services in the Kingdom of God. This is also necessary, because we are often conscious of the fact that they do not spring from the purest motives; and that even when they do, they are far from that perfection that would make them, in themselves, acceptable to a holy God. The blight of sin rests upon them all. Therefore Peter says: "Unto whom coming, a living stone, rejected indeed of men, but with God elect, precious, ye also as living stones are built up a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. " Christ’s ministry of intercession is also a ministry of loving care for His people. He helps them in their difficulties, their trials, and their temptations. "For we have not a high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but one that hath been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin: for in that He himself hath suffered, being tempted, He is able to succor them that are tempted." Hebrews 4:15; Hebrews 2:18.

4. And in and through it all there is, finally, also the element of prayer for the people of God. If the intercession is of a piece with the atoning work of Christ, it follows that the prayer of intercession

must have reference to the things pertaining to God (Hebrews 5:1), to the completion of the work of redemption. That this element is included, is quite evident from the intercessory prayer in John 17:1-26, where Christ explicitly says that He prays for the apostles and for those who through their word will believe in Him. It is a consoling thought that Christ is praying for us, even when we are negligent in our prayer life; that He is presenting to the Father those spiritual needs which were not present to our minds and which we often neglect to include in our prayers; and that He prays for our protection against the dangers of which we are not even conscious, and against the enemies which threaten us, though we do not notice it. He is praying that our faith may not cease, and that we may come out victoriously in the end.

C. THE PERSONS FOR WHOM AND THE THINGS FOR WHICH HE INTERCEDES.

1. THE PERSONS FOR WHOM HE INTERCEDES. The intercessory work is, as has been said, simply the complement of His redemptive priestly work, and is therefore equal to it in extent. Christ intercedes for all those for whom He has made atonement, and for those only. This may be inferred from the limited character of the atonement, and also from such passages as Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25; Hebrews 9:24, in every one of which the word "us" refers to believers. Moreover, in the high priestly prayer, recorded in John 17:1-26, Jesus tells us that He prays for His immediate disciples and "for them also that believe on me through their word," John 17:9; John 17:20. In John 17:9 He makes a very explicit statement respecting the limitation of His high priestly prayer: "I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for those whom thou hast given me." And from John 17:20 we can learn that He does not intercede for present believers only, but for all the elect, whether they are already believers, or will believe some time in the future. The intercessor is mindful of each one of those that are given unto Him, Luke 21:32; Revelation 3:5. Lutherans distinguish between a general intercession of Christ for all men, and a special intercession for the elect only. For proof they appeal to Luke 23:34, which contains Christ's prayer for His enemies, but that prayer need not be considered as a part of the official intercessory work of Christ. Dabney believes that it was, and that the objects of this prayer were later on converted. But it is also possible that this prayer was simply a prayer such as Christ taught all his followers to pray for their enemies, a prayer to ward off an immediate and terrible punishment for the enormous crime committed. Cf. Matthew 5:44.

2. THE THINGS FOR WHICH CHRIST INTERCEDES. Christ has a great deal to pray for in His intercessory prayer. We can only give a brief indication of some of the things for which He prays. He prays that the elect who have not yet come to Him may be brought into a state of grace; that those who have already come may receive pardon for their daily sins, that is, may experience the continued application to them of the fruits of justification; that believers may be kept from the accusations and temptations of Satan; that the saints may be progressively sanctified, John 17:17; that their intercourse with heaven may be kept up, Hebrews 4:14; Hebrews 4:16; Hebrews 10:21-22; that the services of the people of God may be accepted, 1 Peter 2:5; and that they may at last enter upon their perfect inheritance in heaven, John 17:24.

D. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF HIS INTERCESSION.

There are especially three characteristics of the intercessory work of Christ, to which attention should be directed:

1. THE CONSTANCY OF HIS INTERCESSION. We need not only a Saviour who has completed an objective work for us in the past, but also one who is daily engaged in securing for His own the subjective application of the fruits of the accomplished sacrifice, Tens of thousands of people call for His attention at once, and a moment’s intermission would prove fatal to their interests. Therefore He is always on the alert. He is alive to all their wants, and none of their prayers escape Him.

2. THE AUTHORITATIVE CHARACTER OF HIS INTERCESSION. It is not altogether correct to represent Him as a suppliant at the throne of God, begging favors of His Father for His people. His prayer is not the petition of the creature to the Creator, but the request of the Son to the Father. "The consciousness of His equal dignity, of His potent and prevailing intercession, speaks out in this, that as often as He asks, or declares that He will ask, anything of the Father, it is always eroto, eroteso an asking, that is, as upon equal terms (John 14:16; John 16:26; John 17:9; John 17:15; John 17:20), never aiteo or aiteso."55 Christ stands before the Father as an authorized intercessor, and as one who can present legal claims. He can say: "Father, I desire that they also whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am," John 17:24.

3. THE EFFICACY OF HIS INTERCESSION. The intercessory prayer of Christ is a prayer that never fails. At the grave of Lazarus the Lord expressed the assurance that the Father always hears Him, John 11:42. His intercessory prayers for His people are based on His atoning work; He has merited all that He asks, and therein lies the assurance that those prayers are effective. They will accomplish all that He desires. The people of God may derive comfort from the fact that they have such a prevailing intercessor with the Father.

04.3.3.8. The Kingly Office

VIII.The Kingly Office As the Second Person in the Holy Trinity, the eternal Son, Christ naturally shares the dominion of God over all His creatures. His throne is established in the heavens and His Kingdom ruleth over all, Psalms 103:19. This kingship differs from the mediatorial kingship of Christ, which is a conferred and economical kingship, exercised by Christ, not merely in His divine nature, but as Theanthropos (the God-man). The latter is not a kingship that was Christ's by original right, but one with which He is invested. It does not pertain to a new realm, one that was not already under His control as Son of God, for such a realm can nowhere be found. It is rather, to speak in the words of Dick, His original kingship, "invested with a new form, wearing a new aspect, administered for a new end." In general we may define the mediatorial kingship of Christ as His official power to rule all things in heaven and on earth, for the glory of God, and for the execution of God's purpose of salvation. We must distinguish, however, between a regnum gratiae and a regnum potentiae.

A. THE SPIRITUAL KINGSHIP OF CHRIST.

1. THE NATURE OF THIS KINGSHIP. The spiritual kingship of Christ is His royal rule over the regnum gratiae, that is over His people or the Church. It is a spiritual kingship, because it relates to a spiritual realm. It is the mediatorial rule as it is established in the hearts and lives of believers. Moreover, it is spiritual, because it bears directly and immediately on a spiritual end, the salvation of His people. And, finally, it is spiritual, because it is administered, not by force or external means, but by the Word and the Spirit, which is the Spirit of truth and wisdom, of justice and holiness, of grace and mercy. This kingship reveals itself in the gathering of the Church, and in its government, protection, and perfection. The Bible speaks of it in many places, such as, Psalms 2:6; Psalms 45:6-7 (cf. Hebrews 1:8-9); Psalms 132:11; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5-6; Micah 5:2; Zechariah 6:13; Luke 1:33; Luke 19:37; Luke 19:38; Luke 22:29; John 18:36-37; Acts 2:30-36, and other places. The spiritual nature of this kingship is indicated, among others, by the fact that Christ is repeatedly called the Head of the Church, Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 4:15; Ephesians 5:23; Colossians 1:18; Colossians 2:19. This term, as applied to Christ, is in some cases practically equivalent to "King" (Head in a figurative sense, one clothed with authority), as in 1 Corinthians 11:3; Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 5:23; in other cases, however, it is used in a literal and organic sense, Ephesians 4:15; Colossians 1:18; Colossians 2:19, and in part also Ephesians 1:22. The word is never used (except it be in 1 Corinthians 11:3) without the implication of this organic conception. The two ideas are most intimately connected. It is just because Christ is the Head of the Church that He can rule it as King in an organic and spiritual way. The relation between the two may be indicated as follows: (1) The headship of Christ points to the mystical union between Christ and His body, the Church, and therefore belongs to the sphere of being. His kingship, however, implies that He is clothed with authority, and belongs to the judicial sphere. (2) The headship of Christ is subservient to His kingship. The Spirit which Christ, as the Head of the Church, imparts to it, is also the means by which He exercises His royal power in and over the Church. Present day Premillenarians strongly insist that Christ is the Head of the Church, but as a

rule deny that He is its King. This is tantamount to saying that He is not the authoritative Ruler of the Church, and that the officers of the Church do not represent Him in the government of the Church. They not only refuse to admit that He is the King of the Church, but deny His present kingship altogether, except, perhaps, as a kingship de jure, a kingship which is His by right but has not yet become effective. At the same time their practice is better than their theory, for in practical life they do, rather inconsistently, recognize the authority of Jesus Christ.

2. THE KINGDOM OVER WHICH IT EXTENDS. This kingdom has the following characteristics: a. It is grounded in the work of redemption. The regnum gratiae did not originate in the creative work of God but, as the name itself indicates, in His redeeming grace. No one is a citizen of this kingdom in virtue of his humanity. Only the redeemed have that honour and privilege. Christ paid the ransom for those that are His, and by His Spirit applies to them the merits of His perfect sacrifice. Consequently, they now belong to Him and recognize Him as their Lord and King. b. It is a spiritual Kingdom. In the Old Testament dispensation this kingdom was adumbrated in the theocratic kingdom of Israel. Even in the old dispensation the reality of this kingdom was found only in the inner life of believers. The national kingdom of Israel, in which God was King, Lawgiver, and Judge, and the earthly king was only the vicegerent of Jehovah, appointed to represent the King, to carry out His will, and to execute His judgments, was only a symbol, and a shadow and type of that glorious reality, especially as it was destined to appear in the days of the New Testament. With the coming of the new dispensation all the Old Testament shadows passed away, and among them also the theocratic kingdom. Out of the womb of Israel the spiritual reality of the kingdom came forth and assumed an existence independent of the Old Testament theocracy. Hence the spiritual character of the kingdom stands forth far more clearly in the New Testament than it does in the Old. The regnum gratiae of Christ is identical with what the New Testament calls the kingdom of God or of heaven. Christ is its mediatorial King. Premillenarians mistakenly teach that the terms "kingdom of God" and "kingdom of heaven," as they are used in the Gospels, refer to two different realities, namely, to the universal kingdom of God and the future mediatorial kingdom of Christ. It is perfectly evident, as some of their own leaders feel constrained to admit, that the two terms are used interchangeably in the Gospels. This appears from the fact that, while Matthew and Luke often report the same statements of Jesus, the former represents Him as using the term "kingdom of heaven," and the latter substitutes for it the term "kingdom of God," compare Matthew 13:1-58 with Mark 4:1-41; Luke 8:1-10, and many other passages. The spiritual nature of the kingdom is brought out in several ways. Negatively, it is clearly indicated that the kingdom is not an external and natural kingdom of the Jews, Matthew 8:11-12; Matthew 21:43; Luke 17:21; John 18:36. Positively, we are taught that it can be entered only by regeneration, John 3:3; John 3:5; that it is like a seed cast into the earth, Mark 4:26-29, like a mustard seed, Mark 4:30, and like a leaven, Matthew 13:33. It is in the hearts of people, Luke 17:21, "is righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit," Romans 14:17, and is not of this world, but a kingdom of the truth, John 18:36-37. The citizens of the kingdom are described as the poor in spirit, the meek, the merciful, the peacemakers, the pure in heart, and those that hunger and thirst for righteousness. The spiritual nature of the Kingdom should be stressed over against all those who deny the present reality of the mediatorial kingdom of God and hold that it will take the form of a re-established theocracy at the return of Jesus Christ. In connection with the present day tendency to regard the kingdom of God simply as a new social condition, an ethical kingdom of ends, to be established by human endeavors, such as education, legal enactments, and social reforms, it is

well to bear in mind that the term "kingdom of God" is not always used in the same sense. Fundamentally, the term denotes an abstract rather than a concrete idea, namely, the rule of God established and acknowledged in the hearts of sinners. If this is clearly understood, the futility of all human efforts and of all mere externals is at once apparent. By no mere human endeavors can the rule of God be established in the heart of a single man, nor can any man be brought to a recognition of that rule. In the measure in which God establishes His rule in the hearts of sinners, He creates for Himself a realm in which He rules and in which He dispenses the greatest privileges and the choicest blessings. And, again, in the proportion in which man responds to the rule of God and obeys the laws of the kingdom, a new condition of things will naturally result. In fact, if all those who are now citizens of the Kingdom would actually obey its laws in every domain of life, the world would be so different that it would hardly be recognized. In view of all that has been said, it causes no surprise that the term "kingdom of God" is used in various senses in Scripture, as, for instance, to denote the kingship of God or of the Messiah, Matthew 6:10; the realm over which this rule extends and the condition of things to which it gives rise, Matthew 7:21; Matthew 19:23-24; Matthew 8:12; the totality of the blessings and privileges that flow from the reign of God or of the Messiah, Matthew 13:44-45; and the condition of things that marks the triumphant culmination of the reign of God in Christ, Matthew 22:2-14; Luke 14:16-24; Luke 13:29. c. It is a kingdom that is both present and future. It is on the one hand a present, ever developing, spiritual reality in the hearts and lives of men, and as such exercises influence in a constantly widening sphere. Jesus and the apostles clearly refer to the kingdom as already present in their time, Matthew 12:28; Luke 17:21; Colossians 1:13. This must be maintained over against the great majority of present day Premillenarians. On the other hand it is also a future hope, an eschatological reality; in fact, the eschatological aspect of the kingdom is the more prominent of the two, Matthew 7:21-22; Matthew 19:23; Matthew 22:2-14; Matthew 25:1-13Matthew 25:34; Luke 22:29-30; 1 Corinthians 6:9; 1 Corinthians 15:50; Galatians 5:21; Ephesians 5:5; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 2 Timothy 4:18; Hebrews 12:28; 2 Peter 1:11. Essentially the future kingdom will consist, like that of the present, in the rule of God established and acknowledged in the hearts of men. But at the glorious coming of Jesus Christ this establishment and acknowledgment will be perfected, the hidden forces of the kingdom will stand revealed, and the spiritual rule of Christ will find its consummation in a visible and majestic reign. It is a mistake, however, to assume that the present kingdom will develop almost imperceptibly into the kingdom of the future. The Bible clearly teaches us that the future kingdom will be ushered in by great cataclysmic changes, Matthew 24:21-44; Luke 17:22-37; Luke 21:5-33; 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3; 2 Peter 3:10-12. d. It is closely related to the Church, though not altogether identical with it. The citizenship of the kingdom is co-extensive with the membership in the invisible Church. Its field of operation, however, is wider than that of the Church, since it aims at the control of life in all its manifestations. The visible Church is the most important, and the only divinely instituted, external organization of the kingdom. At the same time it is also the God-given means par excellence for the extension of the kingdom of God on earth. It is well to note that the term "kingdom of God" is sometimes employed in a sense which makes it practically equivalent to the visible Church, Matthew 8:12; Matthew 13:24-30; Matthew 13:47-50. While the Church and the kingdom must be distinguished, the distinction should not be sought along the lines indicated by Premillennialism, which regards the kingdom as essentially a kingdom of Israel, and the Church as the body of Christ, gathered in the present dispensation out of Jews and Gentiles. Israel was the Church of the Old Testament and in its spiritual essence constitutes a unity with the Church of the

New Testament, Acts 7:38; Romans 11:11-24; Galatians 3:7-9; Galatians 3:29; Ephesians 2:11-22.

3. T HE DURATION OF THIS KINGSHIP. a. Its beginning. Opinions differ on this point. Consistent Premillenarians deny the present mediatorial kingship of Christ, and believe that He will not be seated upon the throne as Mediator until He ushers in the millennium at the time of His second advent. And the Socinians claim that Christ was neither priest nor king before His ascension. The generally accepted position of the Church is that Christ received His appointment as mediatorial King in the depths of eternity, and that He began to function as such immediately after the fall, Proverbs 8:23; Psalms 2:6. During the old dispensation He carried on His work as King partly through the judges of Israel, and partly through the typical kings. But though He was permitted to rule as Mediator even before His incarnation, He did not publicly and formally assume His throne and inaugurate His spiritual kingdom until the time of His ascension and elevation at the right hand of God, Acts 2:29-36; Php 2:5-11. b. Its termination (?). The prevailing opinion is that the spiritual kingship of Christ over His Church will, as to its essential character, continue eternally, though it will undergo important changes in its mode of operation at the consummation of the world. The eternal duration of the spiritual kingship of Christ would seem to be explicitly taught in the following passages: Psalms 45:6 (comp. Hebrews 1:8); Psalms 72:17; Psalms 89:36-37; Isaiah 9:7; Daniel 2:24; 2 Samuel 7:13; 2 Samuel 7:19; Luke 1:33; 2 Peter 1:11. The Heidelberg Catechism also speaks of Christ as "our eternal king." Similarly the Belgic Confession in article XXVII. Moreover, the kingship and the headship of Christ are inextricably bound up together. The latter is subservient to the former, and is sometimes clearly represented as including the former, Ephesians 1:21-22; Ephesians 5:22-24. But, surely, Christ will never cease to be the Head of His Church, leaving the Church as a body without a Head. Finally, the fact that Christ is a priest forever, after the order of Melchizedek, would also seem to argue in favor of the eternal duration of the spiritual kingship of Christ, since His mediatorial office is after all a unit. Dick and Kuyper, however, argue that this kingship of Christ will cease when He has accomplished the salvation of His people. The only passage of Scripture to which they appeal is 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, but this passage evidently does not refer to Christ’s spiritual kingship, but to His kingship over the universe.

B. THE KINGSHIP OF CHRIST OVER THE UNIVERSE.

1. THE NATURE OF THIS KINGSHIP. By the regnum potentiae we mean the dominion of the God-man, Jesus Christ, over the universe, His providential and judicial administration of all things in the interest of the Church. As King of the universe the Mediator so guides the destinies of individuals, of social groups, and of nations, as to promote the growth, the gradual purification, and the final perfection of the people which He has redeemed by His blood. In that capacity He also protects His own against the dangers to which they are exposed in the world, and vindicates His righteousness by the subjection and destruction of all His enemies. In this kingship of Christ we find the initial restoration of the original kingship of man. The idea that Christ now rules the destinies of individuals and nations in the interest of His blood-bought Church, is a far more comforting thought than the notion that He is now "a refugee on the throne of heaven."

2. THE RELATION OF THE REGNUM POTENTIAE TO THE REGNUM GRATIAE. The Kingship of Christ over the universe is subservient to His spiritual kingship. It is incumbent on Christ, as the

anointed King, to establish the spiritual kingdom of God, to govern it, and to protect it against all hostile forces. He must do this in a world which is under the power of sin and is bent on thwarting all spiritual endeavors. If that world were beyond His control, it might easily frustrate all His efforts. Therefore God invested Him with authority over it, so that He is able to control all powers and forces and movements in the world, and can thus secure a safe footing for His people in the world, and protect His own against all the powers of darkness. These cannot defeat His purposes, but are even constrained to serve them. Under the beneficent rule of Christ even the wrath of man is made to praise God.

3. THE DURATION OF THIS KINGSHIP. Christ was formally invested with this kingship over the universe when He was exalted at the right hand of God. It was a promised reward of His labors, Psalms 2:8-9; Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-22; Php 2:9-11. This investiture was part of the exaltation of the God-man. It did not give Him any power or authority which He did not already possess as the Son of God; neither did it increase His territory. But the God-man, the Mediator, was now made the possessor of this authority, and His human nature was made to share in the glory of this royal dominion. Moreover, the government of the world was now made subservient to the interests of the Church of Jesus Christ. And this kingship of Christ will last until the victory over the enemies is complete and even death has been abolished, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28. At the consummation of all things the God-man will give up the authority conferred on Him for a special purpose, since it will no more be needed. He will return His commission to God, that God may be all in all. The purpose is accomplished; mankind is redeemed; and thereby the original kingship of man is restored.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: In whom was Christ typified as prophet in the Old Testament? How were the true prophets distinguished from the false? How did prophets and priests differ as teachers? What was characteristic of the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek? Were the sacrifices of Cain and Abel piacular? On what grounds do Jowett, Maurice, Young, and Bushnell deny the vicarious and typico- prophetical character of the Mosaic sacrifices? What is the difference between atonement, propitiation, reconciliation, and redemption? What accounts for the widespread aversion to the objective character of the atonement? What arguments are advanced to disprove the necessity of the atonement? Why is penal substitution practically impossible among men? Does the universal offer of salvation necessarily imply a universal atonement? What becomes of the doctrine of the atonement in modern liberal theology? What two parakletoi have we according to Scripture, and how does their work differ? What is the nature of the intercessory work of Christ? Are our intercessory prayers like those of Christ? Is Christ ever called "King of the Jews"? Do Premillenarians deny only the present spiritual kingship of Christ or also His Kingship over the universe?

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04.4.0.01. Soteriology in General

I. Soteriology in General A. CONNECTION BETWEEN SOTERIOLOGY AND THE PRECEDING LOCI.

SOTERIOLOGY deals with the communication of the blessings of salvation to the sinner and his restoration to divine favor and to a life in intimate communion with God. It presupposes knowledge of God as the all-sufficient source of the life, the strength, and the happiness of mankind, and of man’s utter dependence on Him for the present and the future. Since it deals with restoration, redemption, and renewal, it can only be understood properly in the light of the original condition of man as created in the image of God, and of the subsequent disturbance of the proper relationship between man and his God by the entrance of sin into the world. Moreover, since it treats of the salvation of the sinner wholly as a work of God, known to Him from all eternity, it naturally carries our thoughts back to the eternal counsel of peace and the covenant of grace, in which provision was made for the redemption of fallen men. It proceeds on the assumption of the completed work of Christ as the Mediator of redemption. There is the closest possible connection between Christology and Soteriology. Some, as, for instance, Hodge, treat of both under the common heading "Soteriology." Christology then becomes objective, as distinguished from subjective, Soteriology. In defining the contents of Soteriology, it is better to say that it deals with the application of the work of redemption than to say that it treats of the appropriation of salvation. The matter should be studied theologically rather than anthropologically. The work of God rather than the work of man is definitely in the foreground. Pope objects to the use of the former term, since in using it "we are in danger of the predestinarian error which assumes that the finished work of Christ is applied to the individual according to the fixed purpose of an election of grace." This is the very reason why a Calvinist prefers to use that term. To do Pope justice, however, it should be added that he also objects to the other term, because it "tends to the other and Pelagian extreme, too obviously making the atoning provision of Christ a matter of individual free acceptance or rejection." He prefers to speak of " the administration of redemption," which is indeed a very good term.1 B. THE ORDO SALUTIS, (ORDER OF SALVATION). The Germans speak of "Heilsaneignung," the Dutch, of "Heilsweg" and "Orde des Heils," and the English, of the "Way of Salvation." The ordo salutis describes the process by which the work of salvation, wrought in Christ, is subjectively realized in the hearts and lives of sinners. It aims at describing in their logical order, and also in their interrelations, the various movements of the Holy Spirit in the application of the work of redemption. The emphasis is not on what man does in appropriating the grace of God, but on what God does in applying it. It is but natural that Pelagians should object to this view. The desire to simplify the ordo salutis often led to unwarranted limitations. Weizsaecker would include in it only the operations of the Holy Spirit wrought in the heart of man, and holds that neither calling nor justification can properly be included under this category.2 Kaftan, the most prominent Ritschlian dogmatician, is of the opinion that the traditional ordo salutis does not constitute an inner unity and therefore ought to be dissolved. He treats of calling under the Word as a means of grace; of regeneration, justification, and the mystical union, under the redemptive work of Christ;

and relegates conversion and sanctification to the domain of Christian ethics. The result is that only faith is left, and this constitutes the ordo salutis.3 According to him the ordo salutis should include only what is required on the part of man unto salvation, and this is faith, faith only, — a purely anthropological point of view, which probably finds its explanation in the tremendous emphasis of Lutheran theology on active faith. When we speak of an ordo salutis we do not forget that the work of applying the grace of God to the individual sinner is a unitary process, but simply stress the fact that various movements can be distinguished in the process, that the work of the application of redemption proceeds in a definite and reasonable order, and that God does not impart the fulness of His salvation to the sinner in a single act. Had He done this, the work of redemption would not have come to the consciousness of God's children in all its aspects and in all its divine fulness. Neither do we lose sight of the fact that we often use the terms employed to describe the various movements in a more limited sense than the Bible does. The question may be raised, whether the Bible ever indicates a definite ordo salutis. The answer to that question is that, while it does not explicitly furnish us with a complete order of salvation, it offers us a sufficient basis for such an order. The nearest approach found in Scripture to anything like an ordo salutis, is the statement of Paul in Romans 8:29-30. Some of the Lutheran theologians based their enumeration of the various movements in the application of redemption rather artificially on Acts 26:17-18. But while the Bible does not give us a clear-cut ordo salutis, it does do two things which enable us to construe such an order. (1) It furnishes us with a very full and rich enumeration of the operations of the Holy Spirit in applying the work of Christ to individual sinners, and of the blessings of salvation imparted to them. In doing this, it does not always use the very terms employed in Dogmatics, but frequently resorts to the use of other names and to figures of speech. Moreover, it often employs terms which have now acquired a very definite technical meaning in Dogmatics, in a far wider sense. Such words as regeneration, calling, conversion, and renewal repeatedly serve to designate the whole change that is brought about in the inner life of man. (2) It indicates in many passages and in various ways the relation in which the different movements in the work of redemption stand to each other. It teaches that we are justified by faith and not by works, Romans 3:30; Romans 5:1; Galatians 2:16-20; that, being justified, we have peace with God and access to Him, Romans 5:1-2; that we are set free from sin to become servants of righteousness, and to reap the fruit of sanctification, Romans 6:18; Romans 6:22; that when we are adopted as children, we receive the Spirit who gives us assurance, and also become co- heirs with Christ, Romans 8:15-17; Galatians 4:4-6; that faith comes by the hearing of the word of God, Romans 10:17; that death unto the law results in life unto God, Galatians 2:19-20; that when we believe, we are sealed with the Spirit of God, Ephesians 1:13-14; that it is necessary to walk worthily of the calling with which we are called, Ephesians 4:1-2; that having obtained the righteousness of God by faith, we share the sufferings of Christ, and also the power of His resurrection, Php 3:9-10; and that we are begotten again through the Word of God, 1 Peter 1:23. These and similar passages indicate the relation of the various movements of the redemptive work to one another, and thus afford a basis for the construction of an ordo salutis. In view of the fact that the Bible does not specify the exact order that applies in the application of the work of redemption, there is naturally considerable room for a difference of opinion. And as a matter of fact the Churches are not all agreed as to the ordo salutis. The doctrine of the order of salvation is a fruit of the Reformation. Hardly any semblance of it is found in the works of the Scholastics. In pre-Reformation theology scant justice is done to soteriology in general. It does not constitute a

separate locus, and its constituent parts are discussed under other rubrics, more or less as disjecta membra. Even the greatest of the Schoolmen, such as Peter the Lombard and Thomas Aquinas, pass on at once from the discussion of the incarnation to that of the Church and the sacraments. What may be called their soteriology consists of only two chapters, de Fide et de Poenitentia. The bona opera also receive considerable attention. Since Protestantism took its start from the criticism and displacement of the Roman Catholic conception of faith, repentance, and good works, it was but natural that the interest of the Reformers should center on the origin and development of the new life in Christ. Calvin was the first to group the various parts of the order of salvation in a systematic way, but even his representation, says Kuyper, is rather subjective, since it formally stresses the human activity rather than the divine.4 Later Reformed theologians corrected this defect. The following representations of the order of salvation reflect the fundamental conceptions of the way of salvation that characterize the various Churches since the Reformation.

1. THE REFORMED VIEW. Proceeding on the assumption that man's spiritual condition depends on his state, that is, on his relation to the law; and that it is only on the basis of the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ that the sinner can be delivered from the corrupting and destructive influence of sin, — Reformed Soteriology takes its starting point in the union established in the pactum salutis between Christ and those whom the Father has given Him, in virtue of which there is an eternal imputation of the righteousness of Christ to those who are His. In view of this precedence of the legal over the moral some theologians, such as Maccovius, Comrie, A. Kuyper Sr., and A. Kuyper Jr., begin the ordo salutis with justification rather than regeneration. In doing this they apply the name "justification" also to the ideal imputation of the righteousness of Christ to the elect in the eternal counsel of God. Dr. Kuyper further says that the Reformed differ from the Lutherans in that the former teach justification per justitiam Christi, while the latter represent the justification per fidem as completing the work of Christ.5 The great majority of Reformed theologians, however, while presupposing the imputation of the righteousness of Christ in the pactum salutis discuss only justification by faith in the order of salvation, and naturally take up its discussion in connection with or immediately after that of faith. They begin the ordo salutis with regeneration or with calling, and thus emphasize the fact that the application of the redemptive work of Christ is in its incipiency a work of God. This is followed by a discussion of conversion, in which the work of regeneration penetrates to the conscious life of the sinner, and he turns from self, the world, and Satan, to God. Conversion includes repentance and faith, but because of its great importance the latter is generally treated separately. The discussion of faith naturally leads to that of justification, inasmuch as this is mediated to us by faith. And because justification places man in a new relation to God, which carries with it the gift of the Spirit of adoption, and which obliges man to a new obedience and also enables him to do the will of God from the heart, the work of sanctification next comes into consideration. Finally, the order of salvation is concluded with the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints and their final glorification.

Bavinck distinguishes three groups in the blessings of salvation. He starts out by saying that sin is guilt, pollution, and misery, for it involves a breaking of the covenant of works, a loss of the image of God, and a subjection to the power of corruption. Christ delivered us from these three by His suffering, His meeting the demands of the law, and His victory over death. Consequently, the blessings of Christ consist in the following: (a) He restores the right relation of man to God and to

all creatures by justification, including the forgiveness of sins, the adoption of children, peace with God, and glorious liberty. (b) He renews man in the image of God by regeneration, internal calling, conversion, renewal, and sanctification. (c) He preserves man for his eternal inheritance, delivers him from suffering and death, and puts him in possession of eternal salvation by preservation, perseverance, and glorification. The first group of blessings is granted unto us by the illumination of the Holy Spirit, is accepted by faith, and sets our conscience free. The second is imparted to us by the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, renews us, and redeems us from the power of sin. And the third flows to us by the preserving, guiding, and sealing work of the Holy Spirit as the earnest of our complete redemption, and delivers us, body and soul, from the dominion of misery and death. The first group anoints us as prophets, the second, as priests, and the third, as kings. In connection with the first we look back to the completed work of Christ on the cross, where our sins were atoned; in connection with the second we look up to the living Lord in heaven, who as High Priest is seated at the right hand of the Father; and in connection with the third we look forward to the future coming of Jesus Christ, in which He will subject all enemies and will surrender the kingdom to the Father.

There are some things that should be borne in mind in connection with the ordo salutis, as it appears in Reformed theology. a. Some of the terms are not always used in the same sense. The term justification is generally limited to what is called justification by faith, but is sometimes made to cover an objective justification of the elect in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ to them in the pactum salutis. Again, the word regeneration, which now generally designates that act of God by which He imparts the principle of the new life to man, is also used to designate the new birth or the first manifestation of the new life, and in the theology of the seventeenth century frequently occurs as synonymous with conversion or even sanctification. Some speak of it as passive conversion in distinction from conversion proper, which is then called active conversion. b. Several other distinctions also deserve attention. We should carefully distinguish between the judicial and the recreative acts of God, the former (as justification) altering the state, and the latter (as regeneration, conversion), the condition of the sinner; — between the work of the Holy Spirit in the subconscious (regeneration), and that in the conscious life (conversion); — between that which pertains to the putting away of the old man (repentance, crucifying of the old man), and that which constitutes the putting on of the new man (regeneration and in part sanctification); — and between the beginning of the application of the work of redemption (in regeneration and conversion proper), and the continuation of it (in daily conversion and sanctification). c. In connection with the various movements in the work of application we should bear in mind that the judicial acts of God constitute the basis for His recreative acts, so that justification, though not temporally, is yet logically prior to all the rest; — that the work of God’s grace in the subconscious, precedes that in the conscious life, so that regeneration precedes conversion; — and that the judicial acts of God (justification, including the forgiveness of sins and the adoption of children) always address themselves to the consciousness, while of the recreative acts one, namely, regeneration, takes place in the subconscious life.

2. THE LUTHERAN VIEW. The Lutherans, while not denying the doctrines of election, the mystical union, and the imputation of the righteousness of Christ, do not take their starting point in any one of these. They fully recognize the fact that the subjective realization of the work of redemption in

the hearts and lives of sinners is a work of divine grace, but at the same time give a representation of the ordo salutis which places the main emphasis on what is done a parte hominis (on the part of man) rather than on what is done a parte Dei (on the part of God). They see in faith first of all a gift of God, but at the same time make faith, regarded more particularly as an active principle in man and as an activity of man, the all-determining factor in their order of salvation. Says Pieper: "So kommt denn hinsichtlich der Heilsaneignung alles darauf an, dass im Menschen der Glaube an das Evangelium entstehe."6 Attention was already called to the fact that Kaftan regards faith as the whole of the ordo salutis. This emphasis on faith as an active principle is undoubtedly due to the fact that in the Lutheran Reformation the doctrine of justification by faith — often called the material principle of the Reformation — was very much in the foreground. According to Pieper the Lutheran takes his starting point in the fact that in Christ God is reconciled to the world of humanity. God announces this fact to man in the gospel and offers to put man subjectively in possession of that forgiveness of sins or justification which was objectively wrought in Christ. This calling is always accompanied with a certain measure of illumination and of quickening, so that man receives the power to not-resist the saving operation of the Holy Spirit. It frequently results in repentance, and this may issue in regeneration, by which the Holy Spirit endows the sinner with saving grace. Now all these, namely, calling, illumination, repentance, and regeneration, are really only preparatory, and are strictly speaking not yet blessings of the covenant of grace. They are experienced apart from any living relation to Christ, and merely serve to lead the sinner to Christ. "Regeneration is conditioned by the conduct of man with regard to the influence exerted upon him," and therefore "will take place at once or gradually, as man's resistance is greater or less."7 In it man is endowed with a saving faith by which he appropriates the forgiveness or justification that is objectively given in Christ, is adopted as a child of God, is united to Christ in a mystical union, and receives the spirit of renewal and sanctification, the living principle of a life of obedience. The permanent possession of all these blessings depends on the continuance of faith, — on an active faith on the part of man. If man continues to believe, he has peace and joy, life and salvation; but if he ceases to exercise faith, all this becomes doubtful, uncertain, and amissible. There is always a possibility that the believer will lose all that he possesses.

3. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW. In Roman Catholic theology the doctrine of the Church precedes the discussion of the ordo salutis. Children are regenerated by baptism, but they who first become acquainted with the gospel in later life receive a gratia sufficiens, consisting in an illumination of the mind and a strengthening of the will. Man can resist this grace, but can also assent to it. If he assents to it, it turns into a gratia co- operans, in which man co-operates to prepare himself for justification. This preparation consists of seven parts: (a) a believing acceptance of the Word of God, (b) an insight into one's sinful condition, (c) hope in the mercy of God, (d) the beginning of love to God, (e) an abhorrence of sin, (f) a resolve to obey the commandments of God, and (g) a desire for baptism. It is quite evident that faith does not occupy a central place here, but is simply co-ordinated with the other preparations. It is merely an intellectual assent to the doctrines of the Church (fides informis) and acquires its justifying power only through the love that is imparted in the gratia infusa (fides caritate formata). It can be called justifying faith only in the sense that it is the basis and root of all justification as the first of the preparations named above. After this preparation justification itself follows in baptism. This consists in the infusion of grace, of supernatural virtues, followed by the forgiveness of sins. The measure of this forgiveness is commensurate with the degree in which sin is actually overcome. It

should be borne in mind that justification is given freely, and is not merited by the preceding preparations. The gift of justification is preserved by obeying the commandments and by doing good works. In the gratia infusa man receives the supernatural strength to do good works and thus to merit (with a merit de condigno that is, real merit) all following grace and even everlasting life. The grace of God thus serves the purpose of enabling man once more to merit salvation. But it is not certain that man will retain the forgiveness of sins. The grace of justification may be lost, not only through unbelief, but through any mortal sin. It may be regained, however, by the sacrament of penance, consisting of contrition (or, attrition) and confession, together with absolution and works of satisfaction. Both the guilt of sin and eternal punishment are removed by absolution, but temporal penalties can be canceled only by works of satisfaction.

4. THE ARMINIAN VIEW. The Arminian order of salvation, while ostensibly ascribing the work of salvation to God, really makes it contingent on the attitude and the work of man. God opens up the possibility of salvation for man, but it is up to man to improve the opportunity. The Arminian regards the atonement of Christ "as an oblation and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world" (Pope), that is, for the sins of every individual of the human race. He denies that the guilt of Adam’s sin is imputed to all his descendants, and that man is by nature totally depraved, and therefore unable to do any spiritual good; and believes that, while human nature is undoubtedly injured and deteriorated as the result of the fall, man is still able, by nature, to do that which is spiritually good and to turn to God. But because of the evil bias, the perverseness, and the sluggishness of sinful human nature, God imparts to it gracious assistance. He bestows sufficient grace upon all men to enable them, if they choose, to attain to the full possession of spiritual blessings, and ultimately to salvation. The gospel offer comes to all men indiscriminately and exerts a merely moral influence on them, while they have it in their power to resist it or to yield to it. If they yield to it, they will turn to Christ in repentance and faith. These movements of the soul are not (as in Calvinism) the results of regeneration, but are merely introductory to the state of grace properly so called. When their faith really terminates in Christ, this faith is, for the sake of the merits of Christ, imputed to them for righteousness. This does not mean that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to them as their very own, but that, in view of what Christ did for sinners, their faith, which involves the principle of obedience, honesty of heart, and good dispositions, is accepted in lieu of a perfect obedience and is reckoned to them for righteousness. On this basis, then, they are justified, which in the Arminian scheme generally simply means that their sins are pardoned, and not that they are accepted as righteous. Arminians often put it in this form: The forgiveness of sins is based on the merits of Christ, but acceptance with God rests on man’s obedience to the law or evangelical obedience. Faith not only serves to justify, but also to regenerate sinners. It insures to man the grace of evangelical obedience and this, if allowed to function through life, issues in the grace of perseverance. However, the grace of God is always resistible and amissible. The so-called Wesleyan or Evangelical Arminian does not entirely agree with the Arminianism of the seventeenth century. While his position shows greater affinity with Calvinism than the original Arminianism does, it is also more inconsistent. It admits that the guilt of Adam’s sin is imputed to all his descendants, but at the same time holds that all men are justified in Christ, and that therefore this guilt is at once removed, at birth. It also admits the entire moral depravity of man in the state of nature, but goes on to stress the fact that no man exists in that state of nature, since there is a universal application of the work of Christ through the Holy Spirit, by which the sinner is enabled to co-operate with the grace of God. It emphasizes the necessity of

a supernatural (hyper- physical) work of grace to effect the sinner's renovation and sanctification. Moreover, it teaches the doctrine of Christian perfection or entire sanctification in the present life. It may be added that, while Arminius made the bestowal on man of an ability to co- operate with God a matter of justice, Wesley regarded this as a matter of pure grace. This is the type of Arminianism with which we mostly come in contact. We meet with it, not only in the Methodist Church, but also in large sections of other Churches, and especially in the many undenominational Churches of the present day.

04.4.0.02. The Operations of the Holy Spirit in

II. The Operations of the Holy Spirit in General A. TRANSITION TO THE WORK OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. As already intimated in the preceding, in passing from Christology to Soteriology, we pass from the objective to the subjective, from the work which God accomplished for us in Christ and which is in its sacrificial aspect a finished work, to the work which He realizes as time goes on in the hearts and lives of believers, and in which they are permitted, and also expected, to co-operate. And in the construction of this doctrine, too, we should be guided by Scripture. Dr. Bavinck calls attention to a difficulty that arises here, since the Bible seems to teach on the one hand that the whole work of redemption is finished in Christ, so that nothing remains for man to do; and on the other hand, that the really decisive thing must still be accomplished in and through man. Its teaching respecting the way of redemption seems to be both autosoteric and heterosoteric. Therefore it is necessary to guard against all one-sidedness, and to avoid both the Scylla of Nomism, as it appears in Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism, and Neonomism, and the Charybdis of Antinomianism, as it reared its head, sometimes as a specific doctrine and sometimes as a mere doctrinal tendency, in some of the sects, such as the Nicolaitans, the Alexandrian Gnostics, the Brethren of the Free Spirit, the Anabaptists of the more fanatic type, the followers of Agricola, the Moravians, and some of the Plymouth brethren. Nomism denies the sovereign election of God by which He has infallibly determined, not on the basis of the foreseen attitude or works of men, but according to His good pleasure, who would and would not be saved; rejects the idea that Christ by His atoning death, not only made salvation possible, but actually secured it for all those for whom He laid down His life, so that eternal life is in the most absolute sense of the word a free gift of God, and in its bestowal human merits are not taken into consideration; and maintains, either that man can save himself without the aid of renewing grace (Pelagianism), or can accomplish this with the assistance of divine grace (Semi-Pelagianism and Arminianism). On the other hand Antinomianism, which is sometimes said to be favored by hyper-Calvinism, holds that the imputation of our sins to Christ made Him personally a sinner, and that the application of His righteousness to us makes us personally righteous, so that God sees no sin in us any more; that the union of believers with Christ is a "union of identity" and makes them in all respects one with Him; that the work of the Holy Spirit is quite superfluous, since the sinner’s redemption was completed on the cross, or — even more extreme — that the work of Christ was also unnecessary, since the whole matter was settled in the eternal decree of God; that the sinner is justified in the resurrection of Christ or even in the counsel of redemption, and therefore does not need justification by faith or receives in this merely a declaration of a previously accomplished justification; and that believers are free from the law, not only as a condition of the covenant of works, but also as a rule of life. It virtually denies the personality and work of the Holy Spirit, and in some cases even the objective atonement through Christ. Both atonement and justification are from eternity. The penitent sinner wrongly proceeds on the assumption that God is angry with him and merely needs information on that point. Moreover, he should realize that whatever sins he may commit cannot affect his standing with God.

Scripture teaches us to recognize a certain economy in the work of creation and redemption and warrants our speaking of the Father and our creation, of the Son and our redemption, and of the Holy Spirit and our sanctification. The Holy Spirit has not only a personality of His own, but also a distinctive method of working; and therefore we should distinguish between the work of Christ in meriting salvation and the work of the Holy Spirit in applying it. Christ met the demands of divine justice and merited all the blessings of salvation. But His work is not yet finished. He continues it in heaven, in order to put those for whom He laid down His life in possession of all that He has merited for them. Even the work of application is a work of Christ, but a work which He accomplishes through the agency of the Holy Spirit. Though this work stands out in the economy of redemption as the work of the Holy Spirit, it cannot for a moment be separated from the work of Christ. It is rooted in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ and carries this to completion, and that not without the co-operation of the subjects of redemption. Christ Himself points out the close connection when He says: "Howbeit when He, the Spirit of truth, is come, He shall guide you into all the truth: for He shall not speak from Himself; but what things soever He shall hear, these shall He speak: and He shall declare unto you the things that are to come. He shall glorify me, for He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you." John 16:13-14.

B. GENERAL AND SPECIAL OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Scripture clearly shows that not all the operations of the Holy Spirit are part and parcel of the saving work of Jesus Christ. Just as the Son of God is not only the Mediator of redemption, but also the Mediator of creation, so the Holy Spirit, as represented in Scripture, is operative, not only in the work of redemption, but also in the work of creation. Naturally, Soteriology is concerned with His redemptive work only, but for its proper understanding it is highly desirable to take some account of His more general operations.

1. THE GENERAL OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. It is a well known fact that the trinitarian distinctions are not as clearly revealed in the Old Testament as in the New. The term "Spirit of God," as it is employed in the Old Testament, does not always denote a person, and even in cases in which the personal idea is clearly present, does not always specifically point to the third person of the Holy Trinity. It is sometimes used figuratively to denote the breath of God, Job 32:8; Psalms 33:6, and in some instances is simply a synonym for "God," Psalms 139:7-8; Isaiah 40:13. It serves very commonly to designate the power of life, the principle that causes the creatures to live, and that is in a unique way peculiar to God. The spirit dwelling in the creatures, and on which their very existence depends, is from God and binds them to God, Job 32:8; Job 33:4; Job 34:14-15; Psalms 104:1-35; Psalms 29:1-11; Isaiah 42:5. God is called the "God (or, "Father") of the spirits of all flesh," Numbers 16:22; Numbers 27:16; Hebrews 12:9. In some of these cases it is quite evident that the Spirit of God is not a mere power but a person. The very first passage in which the Spirit is mentioned, Genesis 1:2, already calls attention to this life-giving function, and this is particularized in connection with the creation of man, Genesis 2:7. The Spirit of God generates life and carries the creative work of God to completion, Job 33:4; Job 34:14-15; Psalms 104:29-30; Isaiah 42:5. It is evident from the Old Testament that the origin of life, its maintenance, and its development depend on the operation of the Holy Spirit. The withdrawal of the Spirit means death.

Extraordinary exhibitions of power, feats of strength and daring, are also referred to the Spirit of God. The judges whom God raised up for the deliverance of Israel were evidently men of

considerable ability and of unusual daring and strength, but the real secret of their accomplishments lay not in themselves, but in a supernatural power that came upon them. It is said repeatedly that "the spirit of Jehovah came (mightily) upon them," Judges 3:10; Judges 6:34; Judges 11:29; Judges 13:25; Judges 14:6; Judges 15:14. It was the Spirit of God that enabled them to work deliverance for the people. There is also a clear recognition of the operation of the Holy Spirit in the intellectual sphere. Elihu speaks of this when he says: "But there is a spirit in man, and the breath of the Almighty giveth them understanding." Job 32:8Job 32:8">. Intellectual insight, or the ability to understand the problems of life, is ascribed to an illuminating influence of the Holy Spirit. The heightening of artistic skill is also ascribed to the Spirit of the Lord, Exodus 28:3; Exodus 31:3; Exodus 35:30 ff. Certain men, characterized by special endowments, were qualified for the finer work that was to be done in connection with the construction of the tabernacle and the adornment of the priestly garments, cf. also Nehemiah 9:20. Again, the Spirit of the Lord is represented as qualifying men for various offices. The Spirit was put, and rested, upon the seventy who were appointed to assist Moses in ruling and judging the people of Israel, Numbers 11:17; Numbers 11:25-26. These also received the spirit of prophecy temporarily, to attest their calling. Joshua was chosen as the successor of Moses, because he had the Spirit of the Lord, Numbers 27:18. When Saul and David were anointed as kings, the Spirit of the Lord came upon them, to qualify them for their important task, 1 Samuel 10:6; 1 Samuel 10:10; 1 Samuel 16:13-14. Finally, the Spirit of God also clearly operated in the prophets as the Spirit of revelation. David says, "The Spirit of Jehovah spake by me, and His word was upon my tongue," 2 Samuel 23:2. Nehemiah testifies in Nehemiah 9:30 : "Yet many years didst thou bear with them, and testifiedst against them by thy Spirit through the prophets: yet they would not give ear." Ezekiel speaks of a vision by the Spirit of Jehovah,Ezekiel 11:24, and in Zechariah 7:12 we read: "Yea, they made their heart as an adamant stone, lest they should hear the law, and the words which Jehovah of hosts had sent in His Spirit by the former prophets." Cf. also 1 Kings 22:24; 1 Peter 1:11; 2 Peter 1:21.

2. THE RELATION BETWEEN THE GENERAL AND THE SPECIAL OPERATIONS OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. There is a certain similarity between the general and the special operations of the Holy Spirit. By His general operations He originates, maintains, strengthens, and guides all life, organic, intellectual, and moral. He does this in different ways and in harmony with the objects concerned. Something similar may be said of His special operation. In the redemptive sphere He also originates the new life, fructifies it, guides it in its development, and leads it to its destiny. But in spite of this similarity, there is nevertheless an essential difference between the operations of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of creation and those in the sphere of redemption or re-creation. In the former He originates, maintains, develops and guides the life of the natural creation, restrains for the present the deteriorating and devastating influence of sin in the lives of men and of society, and enables men to maintain a certain order and decorum in their communal life, to do what is outwardly good and right in their relations to each other, and to develop the talents with which they were endowed at creation. In the latter, on the other hand, He originates, maintains, develops, and guides the new life that is born from above, is nourished from above, and will be perfected above, — a life that is heavenly in principle, though lived on earth. By His special operation the Holy Spirit overcomes and destroys the power of sin, renews man in the image of God, and enables him to render spiritual obedience to God, to be the salt of the earth, the light of the world, and a spiritual leaven in every sphere of life. While the work of the Holy Spirit in creation in general undoubtedly

has a certain independent significance, yet it is made subordinate to the work of redemption. The entire life of the elect, also that preceding their new birth, is determined and governed by God with a view to their final destiny. Their natural life is so regulated that, when it is renewed, it will answer to the purpose of God.

C. THE HOLY SPIRIT AS THE DISPENSER OF DIVINE GRACE. As the covenant in which God made provision for the salvation of sinners is called the covenant of grace, and as the Mediator of the covenant is said to have appeared "full of grace," so that we can receive out of His fulness "grace for grace," John 1:16-17, so the Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of grace," since He takes the "grace of Christ" and confers it on us.

1. THE BIBLICAL USE OF THE TERM "GRACE". The word "grace" is not always used in the same sense in Scripture, but has a variety of meanings. In the Old Testament we have the word chen (adj. chanun), from the root chanan. The noun may denote gracefulness or beauty, Proverbs 22:11; Proverbs 31:30, but most generally means favour or good-will. The Old Testament repeatedly speaks of finding favour in the eyes of God or of man. The favour so found carries with it the bestowal of favours or blessings. This means that grace is not an abstract quality, but is an active, working principle, manifesting itself in beneficent acts, Genesis 6:8; Genesis 19:19; Genesis 33:15; Exodus 33:12; Exodus 34:9; 1 Samuel 1:18; 1 Samuel 27:5; Esther 2:7. The fundamental idea is, that the blessings graciously bestowed are freely given, and not in consideration of any claim or merit. The New Testament word charis, from chairein, "to rejoice," denotes first of all a pleasant external appearance, "loveliness," "agreeableness-," "acceptableness," and has some such meaning in Luke 4:22; Colossians 4:6. A more prominent meaning of the word, however, is favour or good-will, Luke 1:30; Luke 2:40; Luke 2:52; Acts 2:47; Acts 7:46; Acts 24:27; Acts 25:9. It may denote the kindness or beneficence of our Lord, 2 Corinthians 8:9, or the favour manifested or bestowed by God, 2 Corinthians 9:8 (referring to material blessings); 1 Peter 5:10. Furthermore, the word is expressive of the emotion awakened in the heart of the recipient of such favour, and thus acquires the meaning "gratitude" or "thankfulness," Luke 4:22; 1 Corinthians 10:30; 1 Corinthians 15:57; 2 Corinthians 2:14; 2 Corinthians 8:16; 1 Timothy 1:12. In most of the passages, however, in which the word charis is used in the New Testament, it signifies the unmerited operation of God in the heart of man, effected through the agency of the Holy Spirit. While we sometimes speak of grace as an inherent quality, it is in reality the active communication of divine blessings by the inworking of the Holy Spirit, out of the fulness of Him who is "full of grace and truth," Romans 3:24; Romans 5:2; Romans 5:15; Romans 5:17; Romans 5:20; Romans 6:1; 1 Corinthians 1:4; 2 Corinthians 6:1; 2 Corinthians 8:9; Ephesians 1:7; Ephesians 2:5; Ephesians 2:8; Ephesians 3:7; 1 Peter 3:7; 1 Peter 5:12.

2. THE GRACE OF GOD IN THE WORK OF REDEMPTION. A discussion of the grace of God in connection with the work of redemption again calls for several distinctions, which should be borne in mind. a. In the first place grace is an attribute of God, one of the divine perfections. It is God’s free, sovereign, undeserved favour or love to man, in his state of sin and guilt, which manifests itself in the forgiveness of sin and deliverance from its penalty. It is connected with the mercy of God as distinguished from His justice. This is redemptive grace in the most fundamental sense of the word. It is the ultimate cause of God’s elective purpose, of the sinner’s justification, and of his spiritual renewal; and the prolific source of all spiritual and eternal blessings. b. In the second

place the term "grace" is used as a designation of the objective provision which God made in Christ for the salvation of man. Christ as the Mediator is the living embodiment of the grace of God. "The Word became flesh, and dwelt among us ... full of grace and truth," John 1:14. Paul has the appearance of Christ in mind, when he says: "For the grace of God hath appeared, bringing salvation to all men," Titus 2:11. But the term is applied not only to what Christ is but also to what He merited for sinners. When the apostle speaks repeatedly in the closing salutations of his Epistles of "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," he has in mind the grace of which Christ is the meritorious cause. John says: "The law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ," John 1:17. Cf. also Ephesians 2:7. c. In the third place the word "grace" is used to designate the favour of God as it is manifested in the application of the work of redemption by the Holy Spirit. It is applied to the pardon which we receive in justification, a pardon freely given by God, Romans 3:24; Romans 5:2; Romans 5:21; Titus 3:15. But in addition to that it is also a comprehensive name for all the gifts of the grace of God, the blessings of salvation, and the spiritual graces which are wrought in the hearts and lives of believers through the operation of the Holy Spirit, Acts 11:23; Acts 18:27; Romans 5:17; 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 9:14; Ephesians 4:7; James 4:5-6; 1 Peter 3:7. Moreover, there are clear indications of the fact that it is not a mere passive quality, but also an active force, a power, something that labours, 1 Corinthians 15:10; 2 Corinthians 12:9; 2 Timothy 2:1. In this sense of the word it is something like a synonym for the Holy Spirit, so that there is little difference between "full of the Holy Spirit" and "full of grace and power" in Acts 6:5; Acts 6:8. The Holy Spirit is called "the Spirit of grace" in Hebrews 10:29. It is especially in connection with the teachings of Scripture respecting the application of the grace of God to the sinner by the Holy Spirit, that the doctrine of grace was developed in the Church.

3. THE DOCTRINE OF GRACE IN THE CHURCH. The teachings of Scripture respecting the grace of God stress the fact that God distributes His blessings to men in a free and sovereign manner, and not in consideration of any inherent merit of men; that men owe all the blessings of life to a beneficent, forbearing, and longsuffering God; and especially that all the blessings of the work of salvation are freely given of God, and are in no way determined by supposed merits of men. This is clearly expressed by Paul in the following words: "For by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, that no man should glory," Ephesians 2:8-9. He strongly emphasizes the fact that salvation is not by works, Romans 3:20-28; Romans 4:16; Galatians 2:16. This doctrine did not go entirely unchallenged. In some of the early Church Fathers, particularly of the Eastern Church, we already meet with a strain of moralism that is not in harmony with the Pauline emphasis. The tendency that became apparent in that section of the Church, finally culminated in Pelagianism. Pelagius' conception of grace was rather unusual. According to Wiggers he comprehended under grace: (a) "The power of doing good (possibilitas boni), and therefore especially free will itself." (b) "The revelation, the law, and the example of Christ, by which the practice of virtue is made easier for man." (c) "Our being so made as to be able, by our own will, to abstain from sin, and in God's giving us the help of His law and His commands, and in His pardoning the previous sins of those who return to Him. " (d) "Supernatural influences on the Christian, by which his understanding is enlightened and the practice of virtue is rendered easy to him."8 He recognized no direct operation of the Spirit of God on the will of man, but only an indirect operation on the will through the enlightened conscience. In his view the operation of the grace of God was primarily, though not exclusively, external and

natural. In opposition to the Pelagian view, that of Augustine is often designated as "the theology of grace." While Augustine admitted that the word "grace" could be used in a wider sense (natural grace), and that even in the state of integrity it was the grace of God that made it possible for Adam to retain his uprightness, his main emphasis is always on grace as the gift of God to fallen man, which manifests itself in the forgiveness of sin and in the renewal and sanctification of human nature. In view of the total depravity of man he regards this grace as absolutely necessary unto salvation. It is wrought in man by the operation of the Holy Spirit, who dwells and works in the elect and is the principle of all the blessings of salvation. He distinguished between operating or prevenient, and co-operating or subsequent grace. The former enables the will to choose the good, and the latter co-operates with the already enabled will, to do the good. In his struggle with Semi-Pelagianism Augustine emphasized the entirely gratuitous and irresistible character of the grace of God. In the subsequent struggles the Augustinian doctrine of grace was only partly victorious. Seeberg expresses himself as follows: "Thus the doctrine of 'grace alone' came off victorious; but the Augustinian doctrine of predestination was abandoned. The irresistible grace of predestination was driven from the field by the sacramental grace of baptism."9 During the Middle Ages the Scholastics paid considerable attention to the subject of grace, but did not always agree as to the details of the doctrine. Some approached the Augustinian, and others the Semi-Pelagian conception of grace. In general it may be said that they conceived of grace as mediated through the sacraments, and that they sought to combine with the doctrine of grace a doctrine of merit which seriously compromised the former. The emphasis was not on grace as the favor of God shown to sinners, but on grace as a quality of the soul, which might be regarded as both uncreated (i.e., as the Holy Spirit), or as increated, or wrought in the hearts of men by the Holy Spirit. This infused grace is basic to the development of the Christian virtues, and enables man to acquire merit with God, to merit further grace, though he cannot merit the grace of perseverance. This can only be obtained as a free gift of God. The Scholastics did not, like Augustine, maintain the logical connection between the doctrine of grace and the doctrine of predestination. The Reformers went back to the Augustinian conception of grace, but avoided his sacramentarianism. They placed the emphasis once more on grace as the unmerited favour of God shown to sinners, and represented it in a manner which excluded all merit on the part of the sinner. Says Smeaton: "The term grace, which in Augustine's acceptation intimated the inward exercise of love, awakened by the operations of the Holy Spirit (Romans 5:5), and which in the scholastic theology had come to denote a quality of the soul, or the inner endowments, and infused habits of faith, love, and hope, was now taken in the more scriptural and wider sense for the free, the efficacious favour which is in the divine mind."10 While the Reformers used the term grace in connection with justification, in other connections they often used the phrase, "the work of the Holy Spirit," instead of the term grace. While they all emphasized grace in the sense of the internal and saving operation of the Holy Spirit, Calvin especially developed the idea of common grace, that is, a grace which, while it is the expression of the favour of God, does not have a saving effect. According to the splendid dogma- historical study of Dr. H. Kuiper on Calvin on Common Grace,11 he even distinguished three kinds of common grace, namely, universal common grace, general common grace, and covenant common grace. The Arminians departed from the doctrine of the Reformation on this point. According to them God gives sufficient (common) grace to all men, and thereby enables them to repent and believe. If the human will concurs or co-operates with the Holy Spirit and man actually repents and believes, God confers on man the further grace of evangelical obedience and

the grace of perseverance. Thus the work of the grace of God is made to depend on the consent of the will of man. There is no such thing as irresistible grace. Says Smeaton in the work already quoted: "It was held that every one could obey or resist; that the cause of conversion was not the Holy Spirit so much as the human will concurring or co-operating; and that this was the immediate cause of conversion."12 Amyraldus of the School of Saumur did not really improve on the Arminian position by his assumption, in connection with the general decree of God, that the sinner, while devoid of the moral ability, yet has the natural ability to believe, an unfortunate distinction, which was also carried over into New England by Edwards, Bellamy and Fuller. Pajon, a disciple of Amyraldus, denied the necessity of the work of the Holy Spirit in the internal illumination of sinners, in order to their saving conversion. The only thing which he regarded as necessary was that the understanding, which has in itself a sufficiency of clear ideas, should be struck by the light of external revelation. Bishop Warburton in his work on The Doctrine of Grace, or the Office and Operations of the Holy Spirit knows of no saving grace in the accepted sense of the word, but limits the word "grace" to the extraordinary operations of the Spirit in the apostolic age. And Junckheim in his important work denied the supernatural character of God’s work in the conversion of the sinner, and affirmed that the moral power of the word effected all. The Methodist Revival in England and the Great Awakening in our own country brought with them a restoration of the doctrine of saving grace, though in some cases tinged more or less with Arminianism. For Schleiermacher the problem of the guilt of sin was practically non-existent, since he denied the objective existence of guilt. And consequently he knows little or nothing of the saving grace of God. Says Mackintosh: "This central Biblical truth (of divine mercy to sinners) Schleiermacher for the most part passes by in silence, or mentions only in a perfunctory fashion that shows how little he understands it."13 The doctrine of divine grace is also necessarily obscured in the theology of Albrecht Ritschl. And it may be said to be characteristic of the whole of modern liberal theology, with its emphasis on the goodness of man, that it has lost sight of the necessity of the saving grace of God. The word "grace" has gradually disappeared from the written and spoken word of many theologians, and many of the common people in our day attach no other meaning to the term than that of gracefulness or graciousness. Even Otto calls attention to it in his work on The Idea of the Holy that people fail to sense the deeper meaning of the word.14 The Theology of Crisis deserves credit for stressing anew the need of divine grace, with the result that the word is once more coming into use.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: On which elements of the ordo salutis did the emphasis fall in the first three centuries? In how far did these centuries reveal a drift towards moralism and ceremonialism? How was the doctrine of justification understood? How did Augustine conceive of it? What was his conception of faith? How many kinds of grace did he distinguish? Did grace exclude all merit in his system? Did he conceive of saving grace as amissible? What factors favored the development of the doctrine of good works? How did the Scholastics represent the doctrine of justification? How did the ordo salutis fare in the hands of the Antinomians? How did the rationalistic and pietistic neonomians conceive of it? What other than saving operations are ascribed to the Holy Spirit in Scripture? Which are the different meanings of the word ’grace’ in Scripture? What does it designate in connection with the work of redemption? What is the relation between the doctrines of free will and grace in history?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. III, pp. 551-690; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Salute, pp. 15-20; McPherson, Chr. Dogm., pp. 367-371; Kaftan, Dogmatik, pp. 525-532, 651-661; -Warfield, The Plan of Salvation; Seeberg, Heilsordnung (Art. in Hauck's; Realencyclopaedie); Pieper, Christl. Dogm. II, pp.. 473-498; H. Schmid, Doct. Theol., pp. 413-416; K. Dijk, Heilsorde (Art. in Chr. Enc.); Pope, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 348-367; Neil, Grace (Art. in A Protestant Dictionary); Easton, Grace (Art. in the Intern. Standard Bible Ec.); Smeaton, The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit, pp. 1-99, 291-414; Buchanan, The Doctrine of Justification, pp. 339-364; Moffatt, Grace in the New Testament; Bryan, W. S., An Inquiry into the Need of the Grace of God.

04.4.0.03. Common Grace

III. Common Grace In connection with the general operations of the Holy Spirit the subject of common grace also calls for attention. It should be understood, however, that Reformed theology does not, like Arminian theology, regard the doctrine of common grace as a part of Soteriology. At the same time it does recognize a close connection between the operations of the Holy Spirit in the sphere of creation and in that of redemption, and therefore feels that they should not be entirely dissociated.

A. ORIGIN OF THE DOCTRINE OF COMMON GRACE.

1. THE PROBLEM WITH WHICH IT DEALS. The origin of the doctrine of common grace was occasioned by the fact that there is in the world, alongside of the course of the Christian life with all its blessings, a natural course of life, which is not redemptive and yet exhibits many traces of the true, the good, and the beautiful. The question arose, How can we explain the comparatively orderly life in the world, seeing that the whole world lies under the curse of sin? How is it that the earth yields precious fruit in rich abundance and does not simply bring forth thorns and thistles? How can we account for it that sinful man still "retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the difference between good and evil, and shows some regard for virtue and for good outward behavior"? What explanation can be given of the special gifts and talents with which the natural man is endowed, and of the development of science and art by those who are entirely devoid of the new life that is in Christ Jesus? How can we explain the religious aspirations of men everywhere, even of those who did not come in touch with the Christian religion? How can the unregenerate still speak the truth, do good to others, and lead outwardly virtuous lives? These are some of the questions to which the doctrine of common grace seeks to supply the answer.

2. AUGUSTINE’S ATTITUDE TOTHIS PROBLEM. Augustine did not teach the doctrine of common grace, though he did not use the word "grace" exclusively as a designation of saving grace. He spoke of a grace which Adam enjoyed before the fall, and even admitted that man’s existing as a living, sentient, and rational being might be termed grace. But over against Pelagius, who stressed the natural ability of man and recognized no other grace than that consisting in the natural endowments of man, the law and the gospel, the example of Christ, and the illumination of the understanding by a gracious influence of God, — he emphasized the total inability of man and his absolute dependence on the grace of God as an inner renewing power, which not only illumines the mind but also acts directly on the will of man, either as operating or as co-operating grace. He employs the word "grace" almost exclusively in this sense, and regards this grace as the necessary condition to the performance of each good act. When the Pelagians pointed to the virtues of the heathen, who "merely through the power of innate freedom" were often merciful, discreet, chaste, and temperate, he answered that these so-called virtues were sins, because they did not spring from faith. He admits that the heathen can perform certain acts which are in themselves good and from a lower point of view even praiseworthy, but yet considers these deeds, as the deeds of unregenerate persons, to be sin, because they do not spring from the motive of

love to God or of faith, and do not answer to the right purpose, the glory of God.15 He denies that such deeds are the fruit of any natural goodness in man.

3. THE VIEW THAT DEVELOPED DURING THE MIDDLE AGES. During the Middle Ages the Augustinian antithesis of sin and grace gave way to that of nature and grace. This was based on another antithesis which played an important part in Roman Catholic theology, namely, that of the natural and the supernatural. In the state of integrity man was endowed with the supernatural gift of original righteousness, which served as a bridle to hold the lower nature in check. As the result of the fall, man lost this supernatural gift, but his real nature remained or was but slightly affected. A sinful bias developed, but this did not prohibit man from producing much that was true, and good, and beautiful. However, without the infusion of the grace of God, all this did not suffice to give one a claim to life eternal. In connection with the antithesis of the natural and the supernatural, the Roman Catholic Church developed the distinction between the moral virtues of humility, obedience, meekness, liberality, temperance, chastity, and diligence in what is good, which men can gain for themselves by their own labors, and with the timely aid of divine grace; and the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, which are infused into man by sanctifying grace. Anabaptism and Socinianism suffer from the same antithesis, but with the distinction that the former exalts grace at the expense of nature, while the latter exalts nature at the expense of grace.

4. THE POSITION OF THE REFORMERS AND OF REFORMED THEOLOGY. On this, as on some other points of doctrine, Luther did not entirely escape the leaven of Roman Catholicism. While he did return to the Augustinian antithesis of sin and grace, he drew a sharp distinction between the lower earthly sphere and the higher spiritual sphere, and maintained that fallen man is by nature capable of doing much that is good and praiseworthy in the lower or earthly sphere, though he is utterly incapable of doing any spiritual good. With an appeal to Augustine the Augsburg Confession teaches "that man’s will hath some liberty to work a civil righteousness, and to choose such things as reason can reach unto; but that it hath no power to work the righteousness of God."16 The Article contains a quotation from Augustine, in which many of the good works pertaining to the present life, which the natural man can do, are named. Zwingli conceived of sin as pollution rather than as guilt, and consequently regarded the grace of God as sanctifying, rather than as pardoning, grace. This sanctifying influence, which penetrated in a measure even into the Gentile world, accounts for the true, the good, and the beautiful that is in the world. Calvin did not agree with the position of Luther, nor with that of Zwingli. He firmly maintained that the natural man can of himself do no good work whatsoever and strongly insisted on the particular nature of saving grace. He developed alongside of the doctrine of particular grace the doctrine of common grace. This is a grace which is communal, does not pardon nor purify human nature, and does not effect the salvation of sinners. It curbs the destructive power of sin, maintains in a measure the moral order of the universe, thus making an orderly life possible, distributes in varying degrees gifts and talents among men, promotes the development of science and art, and showers untold blessings upon the children of men. Since the days of Calvin the doctrine of common grace was generally recognized in Reformed theology, though it also met with occasional opposition. For a long time, however, little was done to develop the doctrine. This was in all probability due to the fact that the rise and prevalence of Rationalism made it necessary to place all emphasis on special grace. Up to the present Kuyper and Bavinck did more than any one

else for the development of the doctrine of common grace.

B. NAME AND CONCEPT OF COMMON GRACE.

1. NAME. The name "common grace" as a designation of the grace now under discussion cannot be said to owe its origin to Calvin. Dr. H. Kuiper in his work on Calvin on Common Grace says that he found only four passages in Calvin's works in which the adjective "common" is used with the noun "grace," and in two of these the Reformer is speaking of saving grace.17 In later Reformed theology, however, the name gratia communis came into general use to express the idea that this grace extends to all men, in contrast with the gratia particularis which is limited to a part of mankind, namely, to the elect. In course of time it became evident that the term "communis" admitted of various interpretations. In Dutch theology it is often regarded as equivalent to "general," and as a result it became customary to speak of "general grace" (algemeene genade) in the Netherlands. Strictly speaking, however, the term communis, as applied to grace, while implying that it is general in some sense of the word, stresses the fact that this grace is communal, that is, possessed in common by all creatures, or by all men, or by those who live under the administration of the gospel. Thus Dr. H. Kuiper classifies the common grace of which Calvin speaks under three heads, namely: (1) Universal Common Grace, a grace that extends to all creatures; (2) General Common Grace, that is a grace which applies to mankind in general and to every member of the human race; and (3) Covenant Common Grace, a grace that is common to all those who live in the sphere of the covenant, whether they belong to the elect or not. It is quite evident that Reformed theologians also subsumed under the term "common grace" a grace that is not general, namely, the external privileges of those who are living under the administration of the gospel, including the external universal calling. At the same time they point out that this grace, in distinction from general common grace, belongs to the economy of redemption.18 Finally, it should be noted that the term gratia communis is susceptible of, and has actually received, not only a quantitative, but also a qualitative interpretation. It may denote a grace that is common in the sense of ordinary. The ordinary, in distinction from the special, operations of the Holy Spirit are called common. His natural or usual operations are contrasted with those which are unusual and supernatural. This is the meaning of the term "common" in the Westminister Confession X. 4; and the Westminster Larger Catechism, Q. 60. W. L. Alexander declares of the common grace enjoyed by those who live under the gospel: "The grace thus bestowed is common, not in the sense of being given to all men in common, but in the sense of producing effects which are ordinary, and may fall short of a real saving efficacy."19 So understood, the grace of God may be common without being general or universal.

2. CONCEPT. The distinction between common and special grace is not one that applies to grace as an attribute in God. There are no two kinds of grace in God, but only one. It is that perfection of God in virtue of which he shows unmerited and even forfeited favour to man. This one grace of God manifests itself, however, in different gifts and operations. The richest manifestation of it is seen in those gracious operations of God which aim at, and result in, the removal of the guilt, the pollution, and the punishment of sin, and the ultimate salvation of sinners. But while this is the crowning work of the grace of God, it is not its only manifestation. It appears also in the natural blessings which God showers upon man in the present life, in spite of the fact that man has forfeited them and lies under the sentence of death. It is seen in all that God does to restrain the devastating influence and development of sin in the world, and to maintain and enrich and develop

the natural life of mankind in general and of those individuals who constitute the human race. It should be emphasized that these natural blessings are manifestations of the grace of God to man in general. Some prefer to say that they are expressions of His goodness, kindness, benevolence, mercy, or longsuffering, but seem to forget that He could not be good, kind, or benevolent to the sinner unless He were first of all gracious. It should be borne in mind, however, that the term gratia communis, though generally designating a grace that is common to the whole of mankind, is also used to denote a grace that is common to the elect and the non-elect that are living under the gospel, such as the external gospel call that comes to both alike, and that inner illumination and those gifts of the Spirit of which we read in Hebrews 6:4-6. It is understood, however, that these privileges can be called common grace only in the sense that they are enjoyed by the elect and the reprobate indiscriminately, and that they do not constitute special, in the sense of saving, grace. In distinction from the more general manifestations of common grace they, while they do not constitute a part of the grace of God that necessarily leads to salvation, are nevertheless related to the soteriological process. They are sometimes called "special" grace, but then "special" is not equivalent to "saving." In general it may be said that, when we speak of "common grace," we have in mind, either (a) those general operations of the Holy Spirit whereby He, without renewing the heart, exercises such a moral influence on man through His general or special revelation, that sin is restrained, order is maintained in social life, and civil righteousness is promoted; or, (b)those general blessings, such as rain and sunshine, food and drink, clothing and shelter, which God imparts to all men indiscriminately where and in what measure it seems good to Him. The following points of distinction between special (in the sense of saving) and common grace should be noted: a. The extent of special grace is determined by the decree of election. This grace is limited to the elect, while common grace is not so limited, but is granted to all men indiscriminately. The decree of election and reprobation has no determining influence on it. It cannot even be said that the elect receive a greater measure of common grace than the non-elect. It is a matter of common knowledge, and has frequently been observed, that the wicked often possess a greater measure of common grace and have a greater share in the natural blessings of life than the pious. b. Special grace removes the guilt and penalty of sin, changes the inner life of man, and gradually cleanses him from the pollution of sin by the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit. Its work invariably issues in the salvation of the sinner. Common grace, on the other hand, never removes the guilt of sin, does not renew human nature, but only has a restraining effect on the corrupting influence of sin and in a measure mitigates its results. It does not effect the salvation of the sinner, though in some of its forms (external calling and moral illumination) it may be closely connected with the economy of redemption and have a soteriological aspect. c. Special grace is irresistible. This does not mean that it is a deterministic force which compels man to believe against his will, but that by changing the heart it makes man perfectly willing to accept Jesus Christ unto salvation and to yield obedience to the will of God. Common grace is resistible, and as a matter of fact is always more or less resisted. Paul shows in Romans 1:1-32, Romans 2:1-29 that neither the Gentiles nor the Jews were living up to the light which they had. Says Shedd: "In common grace the call to believe and repent is invariably ineffectual, because man is averse to faith and repentance and in bondage to sin."20 It is ineffectual unto salvation because it leaves the heart unchanged. d. Special grace works in a spiritual and re-creative way, renewing the whole nature of man, and thus making man able and willing to accept the offer of salvation in Jesus Christ, and to produce spiritual fruits. Common grace, to the contrary, operates only in a rational and moral way

by making man in a general way receptive for the truth, by presenting motives to the will, and by appealing to the natural desires of man. This is equivalent to saying that special (saving) grace is immediate and supernatural, since it is wrought directly in the soul by the immediate energy of the Holy Spirit, while common grace is mediate, since it is the product of the mediate operation of the Holy Spirit through the truth of general or special revelation and by moral persuasion. This conception of common grace should be carefully distinguished from that of the Arminians, who regard common grace as a link in the ordo salutis and ascribe to it saving significance. They hold that, in virtue of the common grace of God, the unregenerate man is perfectly able to perform a certain measure of spiritual good, to turn to God in faith and repentance, and thus to accept Jesus unto salvation. They go even farther than that, and maintain that common grace by the illumination of the mind and the persuasive influence of the truth incites the sinner to accept Jesus Christ and to turn to God in faith and repentance, and will certainly achieve this end, unless the sinner obstinately resists the operation of the Holy Spirit. The Canons of Dort have this in mind where they reject the error of those who teach "that the corrupt and natural man can so well use the common grace (by which they understand the light of nature), or the gifts still left him after the fall, that he can gradually gain by their good use a greater, that is, the evangelical or saving grace, and salvation itself."21 C. COMMON GRACE AND THE ATONING WORK OF CHRIST. The question naturally arises, whether the manifestation of common grace is in any way connected with the atoning work of Christ. As far as we know, Dr. Kuyper does not posit such a connection. According to him Christ as the Mediator of creation, the light that lighteth every man coming into the world, is the source of common grace. This means that the blessings of common grace flow from the work of creation. But this hardly suffices to answer the question, how it is to be explained that a holy and just God extends grace to, and bestows favors upon, sinners who have forfeited everything, even when they have no share in the righteousness of Christ and prove finally impenitent. The question is exactly, How can God continue to bestow those blessings of creation on men who are under the sentence of death and condemnation? As far as the elect are concerned this question is answered by the cross of Christ, but how about the reprobate? Perhaps it can be said that it is not necessary to assume a specific judicial basis for the bestowal of common grace on man in view of the fact (a) that it does not remove the guilt of sin and therefore does not carry pardon with it; and (b) that it does not lift the sentence of condemnation, but only postpones the execution. Perhaps the divine good pleasure to stay the revelation of His wrath and to endure "with much longsuffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction," offers a sufficient explanation for the blessings of common grace.

Reformed theologians generally hesitate to say that Christ by His atoning blood merited these blessings for the impenitent and reprobate. At the same time they do believe that important natural benefits accrue to the whole human race from the death of Christ, and that in these benefits the unbelieving, the impenitent, and the reprobate also share. In every covenant transaction recorded in Scripture it appears that the covenant of grace carries with it not only spiritual but also material blessings, and those material blessings are generally of such a kind that they are naturally shared also by unbelievers. Says Cunningham: "Many blessings flow to mankind at large from the death of Christ, collaterally and incidentally, in consequence of the relation in which men, viewed collectively, stand to each other."22 And it is but natural that this should be so. If Christ was to save an elect race, gradually called out of the world of humanity in the course of centuries, it became necessary for God to exercise forbearance, to check the course of evil, to promote the development of the natural powers of man, to keep alive within the hearts of men a desire for civil

righteousness, for external morality and good order in society, and to shower untold blessings upon mankind in general. Dr. Hodge expresses it thus: "It is very plain that any plan designed to secure the salvation of an elect portion of a race propagated by generation and living in association, as is the case with mankind, cannot secure its end without greatly affecting, for better or for worse, the character and destiny of all the rest of the race not elected." He quotes Dr. Candlish to the effect that "the entire history of the human race, from the apostasy to the final judgment, is a dispensation of forbearance in respect to the reprobate, in which many blessings, physical and moral, affecting their characters and destinies forever, accrue even to the heathen, and many more to the educated and refined citizens of Christian communities. These come to them through the mediation of Christ, and coming to them now, must have been designed for them from the beginning."23 These general blessings of mankind, indirectly resulting from the atoning work of Christ, were not only foreseen by God, but designed by Him as blessings for all concerned. It is perfectly true, of course, that the design of God in the work of Christ pertained primarily and directly, not to the temporal well-being of men in general, but to the redemption of the elect; but secondarily and indirectly it also included the natural blessings bestowed on mankind indiscriminately. All that the natural man receives other than curse and death is an indirect result of the redemptive work of Christ.24 D. THE RELATION BETWEEN SPECIAL AND COMMON GRACE.

Several questions may be raised respecting this relation, of which the following are some of the most important.

1. DO SPECIAL AND COMMON GRACE DIFFER ESSENTIALLY OR ONLY IN DEGREE? Arminians recognize alongside of sufficient (common) grace the grace of evangelical obedience, but aver that these two differ only in degree and not in essence. They are both soteriological in the sense that they form part of the saving work of God. The former makes it possible for man to repent and believe, while the latter, in co-operation with the will, causes man to repent and believe. Both can be resisted, so that even the latter is not necessarily effectual unto salvation. Reformed theology, however, insists on the essential difference between common and special grace. Special grace is supernatural and spiritual: it removes the guilt and pollution of sin and lifts the sentence of condemnation. Common grace, on the other hand, is natural; and while some of its forms may be closely connected with saving grace, it does not remove sin nor set man free, but merely restrains the outward manifestations of sin and promotes outward morality and decency, good order in society and civic righteousness, the development of science and art, and so on. It works only in the natural, and not in the spiritual sphere. It should be maintained therefore that, while the two are closely connected in the present life, they are yet essentially different, and do not differ merely in degree. No amount of common grace can ever introduce the sinner into the new life that is in Christ Jesus. However, common grace does sometimes reveal itself in forms that can hardly be distinguished by man from the manifestations of special grace as, for instance, in the case of temporal faith. Dr. Shedd does not seem to bear the essential difference between the two in mind especially when he says: "The non-elect receives common grace, and common grace would incline the human will if it were not defeated by the human will. If the sinner should make no hostile opposition, common grace would be equivalent to saving grace." In a note he adds: "To say that common grace, if not resisted by the sinner, would be equivalent to regenerating grace, is not the same as to say that common grace, if assisted by the sinner, would be equivalent to regenerating

grace. In the first instance, God would be the sole author of regeneration; in the second He would not be."26 This reminds one of Lutheran theology, but the author's meaning is not entirely clear, for elsewhere he also ascribes the non-resistance of the sinner to the operation of the Holy Spirit.26

2. WHICH ONE OF THE TWO IS PRIMARY, COMMON OR SPECIAL GRACE? To this question it must be answered that in a temporal sense neither one of them can be said to be prior to the other. The third chapter of Genesis clearly reveals that both of them go into operation at once after the fall. Logical priority should be ascribed to special grace, however, because common grace is made subservient to this in its operation in the world.

3. DOES COMMON GRACE SERVE AN INDEPENDENT PURPOSE OR NOT? It cannot be doubted that common grace finds its purpose in part in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ; it is subservient to the execution of the plan of God in the life of the elect and in the development of the Church. But in addition to that it also serves an independent purpose, namely, to bring to light and to harness for the service of man the hidden forces of nature, and to develop the powers and talents that are latent in the human race, in order that man may ever-increasingly exercise dominion over the lower creation, to the glory of God the Creator.27

4. DO SPECIAL AND COMMON GRACE EACH HAVE A PECULIAR SPHERE ENTIRELY DISTINCT FROM THAT OF THE OTHER? It may be said that in a certain sense special grace has its own peculiar sphere in the organized Church, though it is not necessarily limited to this, and common grace is also operative in the Church for it is granted to all men. Both operate in the world, but while common grace in the more usual sense of the term pertains to the things of the natural world and this present life, special grace bears on the things of the new creation. They cannot but influence each other. Common grace enriches the Church with its blessings; and the Church raises the fruits of common grace to a higher level by bringing them under the influence of the regenerate life.

E. THE MEANS BY WHICH COMMON GRACE OPERATES.

Several means can be distinguished by which common grace effects its work. Calvin suggests some of these when he, in speaking of the restraining influence of common grace says: "Hence, how much soever men may disguise their impurity, some are restrained only by shame, others by fear of the laws, from breaking out into many kinds of wickedness. Some aspire to an honest life, as deeming it most conducive to their interest, while others are raised above the vulgar lot, that, by the dignity of their station, they may keep inferiors to their duty. Thus God by his providence, curbs the perverseness of nature, preventing it from breaking forth into action, yet without rendering it inwardly pure."28 The following are some of the most important means through which common grace effects its work.

1. THE LIGHT OF GOD'S REVELATION. This is fundamental for without it all other means would be impossible, and even if possible, would fail to function properly. We have in mind here primarily the light of God's revelation that shines in nature and lightens every man coming into the world. It is itself the fruit of common grace, but in turn becomes a means for the further manifestation of it, since it serves to guide the conscience of the natural man. Paul speaks of the Gentiles who do by nature the things of the law, "in that they show the word of the law written in their hearts, their

conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them." Romans 2:14-15. Calvin in commenting on this passage says that such Gentiles "prove that there is imprinted on their hearts a discrimination and judgment by which they distinguish between what is just and unjust, between what is honest and dishonest."29 In addition to this, however, it may be said that common grace in a more restricted sense also operates in the light of God's special revelation, which is not itself the fruit of common, but of special, grace.

2. GOVERNMENTS. Of these too it may be said that they are at once the fruit and the means of common grace. According to Romans 13:1-14 governments are ordained of God, to maintain good order in society. To resist them is to resist the ordinance of God. The ruler, says Paul, "is a minister of God to thee for good." Romans 13:4. He finds support in the conscience of man (Romans 13:5) and for the rest "beareth not the sword in vain." On this point the Belgic Confession says: "We believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, hath appointed kings, princes, and magistrates, willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained, and all things carried on among them with good order and decency."30

3. PUBLIC OPINION. The natural light that shines in the hearts of men, especially when re-enforced by the influence of God's special revelation, results in the forming of a public opinion that is in external conformity with the law of God; and this has a tremendous influence on the conduct of men who are very sensitive to the judgment of public opinion. Naturally public opinion will be a means of common grace only when it is formed under the influence of God's revelation. If it is not controlled by conscience, acting in harmony with the light of nature, or by the Word of God, it becomes a mighty influence for evil.

4. DIVINE PUNISHMENTS AND REWARDS. The providential arrangements of God, whereby He visits the iniquity of men upon them in this life, and rewards deeds that are in outward conformity with the divine law, serve an important purpose in curbing the evil that is in the world. punishments have a deterring effect, and the rewards serve as incentives. By these means, whatever there is of moral goodness in the world is greatly encouraged. Many shun evil and seek that which is good, not because they fear the Lord, but because they feel that good brings its own reward and best serves their interests.

F. THE FRUITS OF COMMON GRACE. In the preceding it was already intimated that what is left to us of the light of nature, is still operative only in virtue of the common grace of God. It is one of the most important fruits of common grace, without which some of the others would not be conceivable. The following fruits may be mentioned here:

1. THEEXECUTION OF THE SENTENCE IS STAYED. God pronounced the sentence of death on the sinner. Speaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, He said. "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Man did eat of it, and the sentence went into execution to a certain extent, but clearly was not fully executed at once. It is due to common grace that God did not at once fully execute the sentence of death on the sinner, and does not do so now, but maintains and prolongs the natural life of man and gives him time for repentance. He does not at once cut short the life of the sinner, but affords him an opportunity to repent, thereby removing all excuse and justifying the coming manifestation of His wrath upon those who persist in sin unto the end. That God acts on this principle is abundantly evident from such passages as Isaiah 48:9;

Jeremiah 7:23-25; Luke 13:6-9; Romans 2:4; Romans 9:22; 2 Peter 3:9.

2. THE RESTRAINT OF SIN. Through the operation of common grace sin is restrained in the lives of individuals and in society. The element of corruption that entered the life of the human race is not permitted, for the present, to accomplish its disintegrating work. Calvin says: "But we ought to consider that, notwithstanding the corruption of our nature, there is some room for divine grace, such grace as, without purifying it, may lay it under internal restraint. For, did the Lord let every mind loose to wanton in its lusts, doubtless there is not a man who would not show that his nature is capable of all the crimes with which Paul charges it, (Romans 3:1-31 compared with Psalms 14:3 ff)."31 This restraint may be external or internal or both, but does not change the heart. There are passages of Scripture which speak of a striving of the Spirit of God with men which does not lead to repentance, Genesis 6:3; Isaiah 63:10; Acts 7:51; of operations of the Spirit that are finally withdrawn, 1 Samuel 16:14; Hebrews 6:4-6; and of the fact that in some cases God finally gives up men to the lusts of their own hearts, Psalms 81:12; Romans 1:24; Romans 1:26; Romans 1:28. In addition to the preceding passages there are some which are clearly indicative of the fact that God restrains sin in various ways, such as Genesis 20:6; Genesis 31:7; Job 1:12; Job 2:6; 2 Kings 19:27-28; Romans 13:1-4.

3. THE PRESERVATION OF SOME SENSE OF TRUTH, MORALITY AND RELIGION. It is due to common grace that man still retains some sense of the true, the good, and the beautiful, often appreciates these to a rather surprising degree, and reveals a desire for truth, for external morality, and even for certain forms of religion. Paul speaks of Gentiles who "show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them," Romans 2:15, and even says of those who gave free vent to their wicked lives that they knew the truth of God, though they hindered the truth in unrighteousness and exchanged it for a lie, Romans 1:18-25. To the Athenians, who were devoid of the fear of God, he said, "Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious," Acts 17:22. The Canons of Dort express themselves as follows on this point: "There remain, however, in man since the fall, the glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the difference between good and evil, and shows some regard for virtue and for good outward behavior. But so far is this light of nature from being sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God and true conversion that he is incapable of using it aright even in things natural and civil. Nay, further, this light, such as it is, man in various ways renders wholly polluted, and hinders in unrighteousness, by doing which he becomes inexcusable before God." III-IV. 4.

4. THE PERFORMANCE OF OUTWARD GOOD AND CIVIL RIGHTEOUSNESS. Common grace enables man to perform what is generally called justitia civilis, that is, that which is right in civil or natural affairs, in distinction from that which is right in religious matters, natural good works especially in social relations, works that are outwardly and objectively in harmony with the law of God, though entirely destitute of any spiritual quality. This is in harmony with our Reformed Confession. Art. XIV of the Belgic Confession speaks in its title of man’s incapacity to perform what is truly good, says that man retained only small remains of his excellent gifts, so as to render him without excuse, and rejects only the Pelagian error that man can of himself perform spiritual or saving good. The Canons of Dort III-IV, Art. 3, speak in a similar vein: "Therefore all men are conceived in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, incapable of saving good" etc. It may be

objected that the Heidelberg Catechism speaks in absolute terms when it says in Question 8 that we are incapable of doing any good unless we are regenerated. But it is quite evident from the Commentary of Ursinus himself that he would not deny that man can do civil good, but only that he can perform good works such as are defined in Question 91 of the Catechism. Reformed theologians generally maintain that the unregenerate can perform natural good, civil good, and outwardly religious good.32 They call attention to the fact, however, that, while such works of the unregenerate are good from a material point of view, as works which God commanded, they cannot be called good from a formal point of view, since they do not spring from the right motive and do not aim at the right purpose. The Bible repeatedly speaks of works of the unregenerate as good and right, 2 Kings 10:29-30; 2 Kings 12:2 (comp. 2 Chronicles 24:17-25; 2 Chronicles 14:3, 2 Chronicles 14:14-16, 2 Chronicles 17:17-25;) (comp. 2 Chronicles 25:2; Luke 6:33; Romans 2:14-15.

5. MANY NATURAL BLESSINGS. To common grace man further owes all the natural blessings which he receives in the present life. Though he has forfeited all the blessings of God, he receives abundant tokens of the goodness of God from day to day. There are several passages of Scripture from which it appears abundantly that God showers many of His good gifts on all men indiscriminately, that is, upon the good and the bad, the elect and the reprobate, such as: Genesis 17:20 (comp. Genesis 17:18); Genesis 39:5; Psalms 145:9; Psalms 145:15-16; Matthew 5:44-45; Luke 6:35-36l Acts 14:1-17; 1 Timothy 4:10. And these gifts are intended as blessings, not only for the good but also for the evil. In the light of Scripture the position is untenable that God never blesses the reprobate, though He does give them many gifts which are good in themselves. In Genesis 39:5 we read that "Jehovah blessed the Egyptian’s house for Joseph’s sake; and the blessing of Jehovah was upon all that he had in the house and in the field." And in Matthew 5:44-45 Jesus exhorts His disciples in these words, "Bless those that curse you . . . that ye may be children of your Father who is in heaven." This can only mean one thing, namely, that God also blesses those who curse Him. Cf. also Luke 6:35-36; Romans 2:4.

G. OBJECTIONS TO THE REFORMED DOCTRINE OF COMMON GRACE.

Several objections have been and are even now raised by some against the doctrine of common grace as it is presented in the preceding. The following are some of the most important of these:

1. Arminians are not satisfied with it, because it does not go far enough. They regard common grace as an integral part of the saving process. It is that sufficient grace that enables man to repent and believe in Jesus Christ unto salvation, and which in the purpose of God is intended to lead men to faith and repentance, though it may be frustrated by men. A grace that is not so intended and does not actually minister to the salvation of men is a contradiction in terms. Hence Pope, a Wesleyan Arminian, speaks of common grace in the Calvinistic system as "being universal and not particular; being necessarily, or at least actually, inoperative for salvation in the purpose of God," and calls this a "wasted influence." He further says: "Grace is no more grace, if it does not include the saving intention of the Giver."33 But, surely, the Bible does not so limit the use of the term "grace." Such passages as Genesis 6:8; Genesis 19:19; Exodus 33:12; Exodus 34:16; Numbers 32:5; Luke 2:40, and many others do not refer to what we call "saving grace," nor to what the Arminian calls "sufficient grace."

2. It is sometimes argued that the Reformed doctrine of common grace involves the doctrine of universal atonement, and therefore leads into the Arminian camp. But there is no good ground for this assertion. It neither says nor implies that it is the purpose of God to save all men through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. The objection is based particularly on the universal proclamation of the gospel, which is considered possible only on the basis of a universal atonement. It was already suggested by the Arminians themselves at the time of the Synod of Dort, when they asserted that the Reformed with their doctrine of particular atonement could not preach the gospel to all men indiscriminately. But the Synod of Dort did not recognize the implied contradiction. The Canons teach particular atonement,34 and also require the universal proclamation of the gospel.35 And this is in perfect harmony with Scripture, which teaches on the one hand, that Christ atoned only for the elect, John 10:15; Acts 20:28; Romans 8:32-33; cf. also John 17:9; and on the other hand, that the gospel call must be extended to all men indiscriminately, Matthew 22:2-14; Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15-1. If it be objected that we cannot fully harmonize the indiscriminate and sincere offer of salvation on condition of faith and repentance with the doctrine of particular atonement, this may be admitted but with the distinct understanding that the truth of a doctrine does not depend on our ability to harmonize it with every other doctrine of Scripture.

3. Another objection to the doctrine of common grace is that it presupposes a certain favorable disposition in God even to reprobate sinners, while we have no right to assume such a disposition in God. This stricture takes its starting point in the eternal counsel of God, in His election and reprobation. Along the line of His election God reveals His love, grace, mercy, and longsuffering, leading to salvation; and in the historical realization of His reprobation He gives expression only to His aversion, disfavor, hatred, and wrath, leading to destruction. But this looks like a rationalistic over-simplification of the inner life of God, which does not take sufficient account of His self-revelation. In speaking on this subject we ought to be very careful and allow ourselves to be guided by the explicit statements of Scripture rather than by our bold inferences from the secret counsel of God. There is far more in God than we can reduce to our logical categories. Are the elect in this life the objects of God’s love only, and never in any sense the objects of His wrath? Is Moses thinking of the reprobate when he says: "For we are consumed in thine anger, and in thy wrath are we troubled"? Psalms 90:7. Does not the statement of Jesus that the wrath of God abideth on them that obey not the Son imply that it is removed from the others when, and not until, they submit to the beneficent rule of Christ? John 3:36. And does not Paul say to the Ephesians that they "were by nature children of wrath even as the rest"? Ephesians 2:3. Evidently the elect can not be regarded as always and exclusively the objects of God’s love. And if they who are the objects of God’s redeeming love can also in some sense of the word be regarded as the objects of His wrath, why should it be impossible that they who are the objects of His wrath should also in some sense share His divine favor? A father who is also a judge may loathe the son that is brought before him as a criminal, and feel constrained to visit his judicial wrath upon him, but may yet pity him and show him acts of kindness while he is under condemnation. Why should this be impossible in God? General Washington hated the traitor that was brought before him and condemned him to death, but at the same time showed him compassion by serving him with the dainties from his own table. Cannot God have compassion even on the condemned sinner, and bestow favors upon him? The answer need not be uncertain, since the Bible clearly teaches that He showers untold blessings upon all men and also clearly indicates that these are the expression of a favorable disposition in God, which falls short, however, of the positive volition to pardon their

sin, to lift their sentence, and to grant them salvation. The following passages clearly point to such a favorable disposition: Proverbs 1:24; Isaiah 1:18; Ezekiel 18:23; Ezekiel 18:32; Ezekiel 33:11; Matthew 5:43-45; Matthew 23:37; Mark 10:21; Proverbs 1:24; Isaiah 1:18; Ezekiel 18:23; Ezekiel 18:32; Ezekiel 33:11; Matthew 5:43-45; Matthew 23:37; Mark 10:21 (1 Corinthians 15:23) But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming.

Mark 10:21; Luke 6:35; Romans 2:4; 1 Timothy 2:4. If such passages do not testify to a faJmrk vorable disposition in God, it would seem that language has lost its meaning, and that God's revelation is not dependable on this subject.

4. Anabaptists object to the doctrine of common grace, because it involves the recognition of good elements in the natural order of things, and this is contrary to their fundamental position. They regard the natural creation with contempt, stress the fact that Adam was of the earth earthy, and see only impurity in the natural order as such. Christ established a new supernatural order of things, and to that order the regenerate man, who is not merely a renewed, but an entirely new man, also belongs. He has nothing in common with the world round about him and should therefore take no part in its life: never swear an oath, take no part in war, recognize no civil authority, avoid worldly clothing, and so on. On this position there is no other grace than saving grace. This view was shared by Labadism, Pietism, the Moravian brethren, and several other sects. Barth's denial of common grace seems to be following along these same lines. This is no wonder, since for him too creaturliness and sinfulness are practically identical. Brunner gives the following summary of Barth's view: "It follows from the acknowledgment of Christ as the only saving grace of God that there exists no creative and sustaining grace which has been operative ever since the creation of the world and which manifests itself to us in God's maintenance of the world, since in that case we should have to recognize two or even three kinds of grace, and that would stand in contradistinction with the singleness of the grace of Christ. . . . Similarly, the new creation is in no wise a fulfilment but exclusively a replacement accomplished by a complete annihilation of what went before, a substitution of the new man for the old. The proposition, gratia non tollit naturam sed perficit, is not true in any sense but is altogether an arch-heresy."36 Brunner rejects this view and is more in line with the Reformed thought on this point.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Do the Hebrew and Greek words for 'grace' always denote saving grace? Are they ever used as a designation of what we call 'common grace'? Does the doctrine of common grace presuppose the doctrine of universal atonement? Does it imply a denial of the fact that man is by nature subject to the wrath of God? Does it involve a denial of man's total depravity, and of his inability to do spiritual good? Is the good which the natural man can do good only in the sight of man or also in the sight of God? Does the doctrine of common grace destroy the antithesis between the world and the kingdom of God? If not, how do you explain this?

LITERATURE: Calvin, Institutes II. 2 and 3; Kuyper, De Gemeene Gratie; Bavinck, De Algemeene Genade; ibid., Calvin and Common Grace (in, Calvin and the Reformation); Shedd, Calvinism Pure and Mixed, pp. 96-106; ibid., Dogm. Theol. I, pp. 432, 435; II, pp. 483 ff.; Hodge, Syst. Theol. II, pp. 654-675; Vos, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 11-17; Alexander, Syst. of Bib. Theol. II. pp. 343-361; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., pp. 583-588; ibid., Discussions, pp. 282-313 (God's Indiscriminate Proposals of Mercy); H. Kuiper,;. Calvin on Common Grace; Berkhof, De Drie Punten in Alle Deelen Gereformeerd; Hepp, Art. Gemeene Gratie in the Christelijke

Encyclopaedie.

04.4.0.04. The Mystical Union

V. The Mystical Union

Calvin repeatedly expresses the idea that the sinner cannot share in the saving benefits of Christ's redemptive work, unless he be in union with Him, and thus emphasizes a very important truth. As Adam was the representative head of the old humanity, so Christ is the representative head of the new humanity. All the blessings of the covenant of grace flow from Him who is the Mediator of the covenant. Even the very first blessing of the saving grace of God which we receive already presupposes a union with the Person of the Mediator. It is exactly at this point that we find one of the most characteristic differences between the operations and blessings of special and those of common grace. The former can be received and enjoyed only by those who are in union with Christ, while the latter can be and are enjoyed also by those who are not reckoned in Christ, and therefore are not one with Him. Every spiritual blessing which believers receive flows to them out of Christ. Hence Jesus in speaking of the coming Paraklete could say unto His disciples: "He shall glorify me; for He shall take of mine, and shall declare it unto you," John 16:14. Subjectively, the union between Christ and believers is effected by the Holy Spirit in a mysterious and supernatural way, and for that reason is generally designated as the unio mystica or mystical union.

A. NATURE OF THE MYSTICAL UNION.

Lutherans generally treat the doctrine of the mystical union anthropologically, and therefore conceive of it as established by faith. Hence they naturally take it up at a later point in their soteriology. But this method fails to do full justice to the idea of our union with Christ, since it loses sight of the eternal basis of the union and of its objective realization in Christ, and deals exclusively with the subjective realization of it in our lives, and even so only with our personal conscious entrance into this union. Reformed theology, on the other hand, deals with the union of believers with Christ theologically, and as such does far greater justice to this important subject. In doing so it employs the term "mystical union" in a broad sense as a designation not only of the subjective union of Christ and believers, but also of the union that lies back of it, that is basic to it, and of which it is only the culminating expression, namely, the federal union of Christ and those who are His in the counsel of redemption, the mystical union ideally established in that eternal counsel, and the union as it is objectively effected in the incarnation and the redemptive work of Christ.

1. THE FEDERAL UNION OF CHRIST WITH THOSE WHOM THE FATHER HAS GIVEN HIM, IN THE COUNSEL OF REDEMPTION. In the counsel of peace Christ voluntarily took upon Himself to be the Head and Surety of the elect, destined to constitute the new humanity, and as such to establish their righteousness before God by paying the penalty for their sin and by rendering perfect obedience to the law and thus securing their title to everlasting life. In that eternal covenant the sin of His people was imputed to Christ, and His righteousness was imputed to them. This imputation of the righteousness of Christ to His people in the counsel of redemption is sometimes represented as a justification from eternity. It is certainly the eternal basis of our justification by

faith, and is the ground on which we receive all spiritual blessings and the gift of life eternal. And this being so, it is basic to the whole of soteriology, and even to the first stages in the application of the work of redemption, such as regeneration and internal calling.

2. THE UNION OF LIFE IDEALLY ESTABLISHED IN THE COUNSEL OF REDEMPTION. In the case of the first Adam there was not only a federal, but also a natural and organic union between him and his descendants. There was the tie of a common life between him and all his progeny, and this made it possible that the blessings of the covenant of works, if these had eventuated, could have been passed on to the whole organism of mankind in an organic way. A somewhat similar situation obtained in the case of the last Adam as the representative Head of the covenant of redemption. Like the first Adam, He did not represent a conglomeration of disjointed individuals, but a body of men and women who were to derive their life from Him, to be united by spiritual ties, and thus to form a spiritual organism. Ideally this body, which is the Church, was already formed in the covenant of redemption, and formed in union with Christ, and this union made it possible that all the blessings merited by Christ could be passed on to those whom He represented in an organic way. They were conceived of as a glorious body, a new humanity, sharing the life of Jesus Christ. It was in virtue of that union, as it was realized in the course of history, that Christ could say: "Behold, I and the children whom God hath given me," Hebrews 2:13.

3. THE UNION OF LIFE OBJECTIVELY REALIZED IN CHRIST. In virtue of the legal or representative union established in the covenant of redemption Christ became incarnate as the substitute for His people, to merit all the blessings of salvation for them. Since His children were sharers in flesh and blood, "He also in like manner partook of the same; that through death He might bring to nought him that had the power of death, that is the devil; and might deliver all them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage," Hebrews 2:14-15. He could merit salvation for them just because He already stood in relation to them as their Surety and Mediator, their Head and Substitute. The whole Church was included in Him as her Head. In an objective sense she was crucified with Christ, she died with Him, she arose in Him from the dead, and was made to sit with Him in the heavenly places. All the blessings of saving grace lie ready for the Church in Christ; man can add nothing to them; and they now only await their subjective application by the operation of the Holy Spirit, which is also merited by Christ and is sure of progressive realization in the course of history.

4. THE UNION OF LIFE SUBJECTIVELY REALIZED BY THE OPERATION OF THE HOLY SPIRIT. The work of Christ was not finished when He had merited salvation for His people and had obtained actual possession of the blessings of salvation. In the counsel of redemption He took it upon Himself to put all His people in possession of all these blessings, and He does this through the operation of the Holy Spirit, who takes all things out of Christ, and gives them unto us. We should not conceive of the subjective realization of the mystical union in the Church atomistically, as if it were effected by bringing now this and then that individual sinner to Christ. It should be seen from the point of view of Christ. Objectively, the whole Church is in Him, and is born out of Him as the Head. It is not a mechanism, in which the parts precede the whole, but an organism, in which the whole is prior to the parts. The parts come forth out of Christ through the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, and then continue in living relationship with Him. Jesus calls attention to this organic relationship when He says: "I am the vine, ye are the branches: he that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit: for apart from me ye can do nothing," John 15:5. In view

of what was said, it is quite evident that it is not correct to say that the mystical union is the fruit of man's believing acceptance of Christ, as if faith were not one of the blessings of the covenant which flow unto us from the fulness of Christ, but a condition which man must meet partly or wholly in his own strength, in order to enter into living relationship with Jesus Christ. Faith is first of all a gift of God, and as such a part of the treasures that are hidden in Christ. It enables us to appropriate on our part what is given unto us in Christ, and to enter ever-increasingly into conscious enjoyment of the blessed union with Christ, which is the source of all our spiritual riches. This union may be defined as that intimate, vital, and spiritual union between Christ and His people, in virtue of which He is the source of their life and strength, of their blessedness and salvation. That it is a very intimate union appears abundantly from the figures that are used in Scripture to describe it. It is a union as of the vine and the branches, John 15:5, as of a foundation and the building that is reared on it, 1 Peter 2:4-5, as of husband and wife, Ephesians 5:23-32, and as of the head and the members of the body, Ephesians 4:15-16. And even these figures fail to give full expression to the reality. It is a union that passes understanding. Says Dr. Hodge: "The technical designation of this union in theological language is 'mystical,' because it so far transcends all the analogies of earthly relationships, in the intimacy of its connection, in the transforming power of its influence, and in the excellence of its consequences."37 If the discussion of this aspect of the mystical union is taken up first of all in the ordo salutis, it should be borne in mind (a) that it would seem to be desirable to consider it in connection with what precedes it, ideally in the counsel of redemption, and objectively in the work of Christ; and (b) that the order is logical rather than chronological. Since the believer is "a new creature" (2 Corinthians 5:17), or is "justified" (Acts 13:39) only in Christ, union with Him logically precedes both regeneration and justification by faith, while yet, chronologically, the moment when we are united with Christ is also the moment of our regeneration and justification.

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MYSTICAL UNION. From the preceding it appears that the term "mystical union" can be, and often is, used in a broad sense, including the various aspects (legal, objective, subjective) of the union between Christ and believers. Most generally, however, it denotes only the crowning aspect of that union, namely, its subjective realization by the operation of the Holy Spirit, and it is this aspect of it that is naturally in the foreground in soteriology. All that is said in the rest of this chapter bears on this subjective union. The following are the main characteristics of this union:

1. IT IS AN ORGANIC UNION. Christ and the believers form one body. The organic character of this union is clearly taught in such passages as John 15:5; 1 Corinthians 15:1-19; Ephesians 1:22-23; Ephesians 4:15-16; Ephesians 5:29-30. In this organic union Christ ministers to the believers, and the believers minister to Christ. Every part of the body serves and is served by every other part, and together they are subservient to the whole in a union that is indissoluble.

2. IT IS A VITAL UNION. In this union Christ is the vitalizing and dominating principle of the whole body of believers. It is none other than the life of Christ that indwells and animates believers, so that, to speak with Paul, "Christ is formed" in them, Galatians 4:19. By it Christ becomes the formative principle of their life, and leads it in a Godward direction, Romans 8:10; 2 Corinthians 13:5; Galatians 4:19-20.

3. IT IS A UNION MEDIATED BY THE HOLY SPIRIT. The Holy Spirit was in a special capacity a part of the Mediator's reward, and as such was poured out on the day of Pentecost for the formation of the spiritual body of Jesus Christ. Through the Holy Spirit Christ now dwells in believers, unites them to Himself, and knits them together in a holy unity, 1 Corinthians 6:17; 1 Corinthians 12:13; 2 Corinthians 3:17-18; Galatians 3:2-3.

4. IT IS A UNION THAT IMPLIES RECIPROCAL ACTION. The initial act is that of Christ, who unites believers to himself by regenerating them and thus producing faith in them. On the other hand, the believer also unites himself to Christ by a conscious act of faith, and continues the union, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, by the constant exercise of faith, John 14:23; John 15:4-5; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:17.

5. IT IS A PERSONAL UNION. Every believer is personally united directly to Christ. The representation that the life which is in the Church through Christ flows from the Church into the individual believer is decidedly unScriptural, not only in its sacramentarian but also in its pantheistic form (Rome, Schleiermacher, and many modern theologians). Every sinner who is regenerated is directly connected with Christ and receives his life from Him. Consequently the Bible always emphasizes the bond with Christ, John 14:20; John 15:1-7; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20; Ephesians 3:17-18.

6. IT IS A TRANSFORMING UNION. By this union believers are changed into the image of Christ according to his human nature. What Christ effects in His people is in a sense a replica or reproduction of what took place with Him. Nor only objectively, but also in a subjective sense they suffer, bear the cross, are crucified, die, and are raised in newness of life, with Christ. They share in a measure the experiences of their Lord, Matthew 16:24; Romans 6:5; Galatians 2:20; Colossians 1:24; Colossians 2:12; Colossians 3:1; 1 Peter 4:13.

C. ERRONEOUS CONCEPTIONS OF THE MYSTICAL UNION.

There are several erroneous conceptions of the mystical union, against which we should be on our guard. Errors on this point should not be regarded as inconsequential and therefore unimportant, for they are fraught with danger for a true understanding of the Christian life.

1. RATIONALISTIC ERROR. We must avoid the error of the Rationalist who would identify the mystical union with the union of Christ as the Logos with the whole creation or with the immanence of God in all human spirits. This is found in the following statement, which A. H. Strong quotes from Campbell, The indwelling Christ: "In the immanence of Christ in nature we find the ground of his immanence in human nature. . . . A man may be out of Christ, but Christ is never out of him. Those who banish him he does not abandon." In this view the mystical union is robbed of its soteriological significance.

2. MYSTICAL ERROR. Another dangerous error is that of the Mystics who understand the mystical union as an identification of the believer with Christ. According to this view there is in it a union of essence, in which the personality of the one is simply merged into that of the other, so that Christ and the believer do not remain two distinct persons. Even some of the Lutherans went to that extreme. One extremist did not hesitate to say, "I am Christ Jesus, the living Word of God; I have redeemed thee by my sinless sufferings."

3. SOCINIAN AND ARMINIAN ERROR. Quite another extreme is found in the teachings of Socinians and Arminians, who represent the mystical union as a mere moral union, or a union of love and sympathy, like that existing between a teacher and his pupils or between friend and friend. Such a union does not involve any interpenetration of the life of Christ and that of believers. It would involve no more than loving adherence to Christ, friendly service freely rendered to him, and ready acceptance of the message of the Kingdom of God. It is a union that does not call for a Christ within us.

4. SACRAMENTARIAN ERROR. Another error to be avoided is that of the sacramentarians, represented by the Roman Catholic Church and by some Lutherans and High Church Episcopalians. Strong speaks of this as "perhaps the most pernicious misinterpretation of the nature of this union." It makes the grace of God something substantial, of which the Church is the depositary, and which can be passed on in the sacraments; and completely loses sight of the fact that the sacraments cannot effect this union, because they already presuppose it.

D. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE MYSTICAL UNION.

1. The mystical union in the sense in which we are now speaking of it is not the judicial ground, on the basis of which we become partakers of the riches that are in Christ. It is sometimes said that the merits of Christ cannot be imputed to us as long as we are not in Christ, since it is only on the basis of our oneness with Him that such an imputation could be reasonable. But this view fails to distinguish between our legal unity with Christ and our spiritual oneness with Him, and is a falsification of the fundamental element in the doctrine of redemption, namely, of the doctrine of justification. Justification is always a declaration of God, not on the basis of an existing condition, but on that of a gracious imputation, — a declaration which is not in harmony with the existing condition of the sinner. The judicial ground for all the special grace which we receive lies in the fact that the righteousness of Christ is freely imputed to us.

2. But this state of affairs, namely, that the sinner has nothing in himself and receives everything freely from Christ, must be reflected in the consciousness of the sinner. And this takes place through the mediation of the mystical union. While the union is effected when the sinner is renewed by the operation of the Holy Spirit, he does not become cognizant of it and does not actively cultivate it until the conscious operation of faith begins. Then he becomes aware of the fact that he has no righteousness of his own, and that the righteousness by which he appears just in the sight of God is imputed to him. But even so something additional is required. The sinner must feel his dependence on Christ in the very depths of his being, — in the sub-conscious life. Hence he is incorporated in Christ, and as a result experiences that all the grace which he receives flows from Christ. The constant feeling of dependence thus engendered, is an antidote against all self-righteousness.

3. The mystical union with Christ also secures for the believer the continuously transforming power of the life of Christ, not only in the soul but also in the body. The soul is gradually renewed in the image of Christ, as Paul expresses it, "from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord." 2 Corinthians 3:18. And the body is consecrated in the present to be a fit instrument of the renewed soul, and will at last be raised up in the likeness of Christ’s glorified body, Php 3:21. Being in Christ, believers share in all the blessings which He merited for his people. He is for them a perennial fountain springing into everlasting life.

4. In virtue of this union believers have fellowship with Christ. Just as Christ shared the labours, the sufferings, and the temptations of His people, they are now made to share His experiences. His sufferings are, in a measure, reproduced and completed in the lives of His followers. They are crucified with Him, and also arise with Him in newness of life The final triumph of Christ also becomes their triumph. Romans 6:5; Romans 6:8; Romans 6:8; Romans 8:17; 2 Corinthians 1:7; Php 3:10; 1 Peter 4:13.

5. Finally, the union of believers with Christ furnishes the basis for the spiritual unity of all believers, and consequently for the communion of the saints. They are animated by the same spirit, are filled with the same love, stand in the same faith, are engaged in the same warfare, and are bound for the same goal. Together they are interested in the things of Christ and His Church, of God and His Kingdom. John 17:20-21; Acts 2:42; Romans 12:15; Ephesians 4:2-3; Colossians 3:16; 1 Thessalonians 4:18; 1 Thessalonians 5:11; Hebrews 3:13; Hebrews 10:24-25; James 5:16; 1 John 1:3; 1 John 1:7.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What is the meaning of the term 'mystical' as applied to the union with Christ? What is the relation between grace in the legal, and that in the moral sphere? How should we answer the contention that the sinner cannot become a participant in the blessings of God's special grace until he is subjectively incorporated in Christ? What can be said in reply to the assertion that faith precedes regeneration, because it effects the union with Christ, while regeneration is the fruit of this union? Does the mystical union suppress or does it preserve the personality of man? Cf. Ephesians 4:13. Do all believers derive equal benefits from this union? If this union is indissoluble, how must John 15:1-7 be understood? What is Schleiermacher's conception of the believer's union with Christ?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. III, pp. 594 f.; IV, pp. 114, 226 f., 268 f.; Kuyper, Het Werk van den Heiligen Geest II, pp. 163-182; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., pp. 612-617; Strong, Syst. Theol., pp. 795-808; Dick, Theol., pp. 36-365; Hodge, Outlines, pp. 482-486; ibid., The Atonement, pp. 198-211; McPherson, Chr. Theol., pp. 402-404; Valentine, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 275-277; Schmid, Doct. Theol., pp. 485-491; Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 321-322.

04.4.0.05. Calling in General and External Calling

V. Calling in General and External Calling A. REASONS FOR DISCUSSING CALLING FIRST. The question of the relative order of calling and regeneration has frequently been discussed, and the discussion has often suffered from a lack of discrimination and a resulting misunderstanding. The terms "calling" and "regeneration" were not always used in the same sense. Consequently, it was possible to maintain, without inconsistency, on the one hand that calling precedes regeneration, and on the other, that regeneration is prior to calling. We shall briefly consider (1) the representations found in Scripture and in our confessional standards; (2) the order generally followed by Reformed theologians; and (3) the reasons that may be advanced in favor of a separate discussion of the external calling through the Word, as preceding both regeneration and internal calling.

1. THE BIBLICAL REPRESENTATION. The Biblical order is chiefly indicated in a few well known passages. There is first of all the vision of the dry bones in Ezekiel 37:1-14. While Ezekiel prophesied over the dry bones of the house of Israel, the breath of life came into them. This passage refers to the civil restoration and the spiritual revival of the house of Israel, and probably also contains a hint respecting the resurrection of its dead. It represents the prophetic word as preceding the origin of the new life of the people of Israel. Naturally, this does not yet mean that the former was causally related to the latter. . . . A very instructive passage is found in Acts 16:14, which speaks of the conversion of Lydia. During the preaching of Paul the Lord opened the heart of Lydia to give heed to the things that were spoken by the apostle. It is clearly intimated that the opening of the heart is preceded by the external, and is followed by the internal calling. The unity of the twofold calling is clearly seen. . . . The statement of Paul in Romans 4:17 is also frequently quoted in this connection, but can hardly be considered relevant, because it does not refer to either the external or the internal calling by the preaching of the Word of God, but either to the creative fiat of God, by which things are called into being, or to His command issued to things that are not, as though they were, and reaching even the dead. . . . Another passage is found in James 1:18, "Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." It can hardly be doubted that the word of truth mentioned here is the word of preaching, and the assumption is that this word precedes the new birth and is in some sense instrumental to it. . . . And, finally, there is a well known passage in 1 Peter 1:23, in which the apostle speaks of believers as "having been begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the word of God, which liveth and abideth." In view of 1 Peter 1:25 the word here referred to can hardly be anything else than the word of the gospel preached among the readers. This word of Peter too implies that the word of preaching precedes regeneration and is instrumentally connected with it. In view of these passages the conclusion is perfectly warranted that in the case of adults external calling by the preaching of the word generally precedes regeneration. Whether they also warrant the assertion that internal calling is prior to the implanting of the new life, is a question that need not be considered at this point.

2. THE VIEW REPRESENTED IN OUR CONFESSIONAL STANDARDS. Our confessional standards also imply that in the case of adults the preaching of the word precedes regeneration, but it should be borne in mind that they do not use the word "regeneration" in the limited sense in which it is employed to-day. The Belgic Confession says in Art. XXIV: "We believe that this true faith, being wrought in man by the hearing of the Word of God and the operation of the Holy Ghost, doth regenerate and make him a new man, causing him to live a new life, and freeing him from the bondage of sin." Faith is wrought in man by the hearing of the Word and, in turn, works regeneration, that is, the renewal of man in conversion and sanctification. The Canons of Dort contain a somewhat more detailed description in III and IV, Articles 11 and 12: "But when God accomplishes His good pleasure in the elect, or works in them true conversion, He not only causes the gospel to be externally preached to them, and powerfully illumines their minds by His Holy Spirit, that they may rightly understand and discern the things of the Spirit of God, but by the efficacy of the same regenerating Spirit He pervades the innermost recesses of the man; . . . And this is the regeneration so highly celebrated in Scripture and denominated a new creation: a resurrection from the dead; a making alive, which God works in us without our aid. But this is nowise effected merely by the external preaching of the gospel, by moral suasion, or such a mode of operation that, after God has performed His part, it still remains in the power of man to be regenerated or not, to be converted or to continue unconverted," etc. In these articles the words "regeneration" and "conversion" are used interchangeably. It is quite evident, however, that they denote the fundamental change in the governing disposition of the soul as well as the resulting change in the outward manifestations of life. And this change is brought about not merely, but at least in part, by the preaching of the gospel. Consequently this precedes.

3. THE ORDER GENERALLY FOLLOWED BY REFORMED THEOLOGIANS. Among the Reformed it has been quite customary to place calling before regeneration, though a few have reversed the order. Even Maccovius, Voetius, and Comrie, all Supralapsarians, follow the usual order. Several considerations prompted Reformed theologians in general to place calling before regeneration. a. Their doctrine of the covenant of grace. They considered the covenant of grace as the great and all-comprehensive good which God in infinite mercy grants unto sinners, a good including all the blessings of salvation, and therefore also regeneration. But this covenant is inseparably connected with the gospel. It is announced and made known in the gospel, of which Christ is the living center, and therefore does not exist without it. Where the gospel is not known the covenant is not realized, but where it is preached God establishes His covenant and glorifies His grace. Both the preaching of the gospel and the administration of the covenant precede the saving operations of the Holy Spirit, and the believer’s participation in the salvation wrought by Christ. b. Their conception of the relation between the work of Christ and that of the Holy Spirit. The Anabaptists failed to do justice to this relation. Christ and His redemptive work are presented to us in the gospel. And it is from Christ, as the Mediator of God and man and as the meritorious cause of our salvation, that the Holy Spirit derives everything which He communicates to sinners. Consequently, He joins His work to the preaching of the gospel and operates in a saving way only where the divine message of redemption is brought. The Holy Spirit does not work apart from the Christ presented in the gospel. c. Their reaction against the mysticism of the Anabaptists. The Anabaptists proceeded on the assumption that regeneration effected not merely a renewal of human nature, but an entirely new creation. And this being so, they regarded it as impossible that anything belonging to this natural creation as, for instance, the human language in which the Word

of God is brought to man, could in any way be instrumental in communicating the new life to sinners. As they saw it, regeneration eo ipso excluded the use of the Word as a means, since this was after all only a dead letter. This mystical tendency was strongly opposed by Reformed theologians. d. Their experience in connection with the spiritual renewal of adults. While it was a settled opinion that covenant children who die in infancy are reborn and therefore saved, there was no unanimous opinion as to the time when those who grew up became partakers of the grace of regeneration. Some shared the opinion of Voetius that all elect children are regenerated before baptism, and that the new life can, even in adults, remain concealed for many years. The great majority, however, were loath to take that position, and held that the new life, if present, would reveal itself in some way. Experience taught them that many gave no evidences of the new life until after they had heard the gospel for many years.

4. REASONS FOR A SEPARATE DISCUSSION OF EXTERNAL CALLING AS PRECEDING REGENERATION. a. Clearness of presentation. External and internal calling are essentially one; yet they can and should be carefully distinguished. A dispute may arise respecting the one that does not directly concern the other. It may be doubted, whether internal calling logically precedes regeneration in the case of adults, while there is no uncertainty whatsoever in this respect concerning the external calling through the gospel. Hence it may be considered desirable to treat of the external calling first, and then to take up the discussion of internal calling in connection with that of regeneration. b. The preparatory nature of external calling.. If we proceed on the assumption that the ordo salutis deals with the effective application of the redemption wrought by Christ, we feel at once that the external calling by the Word of God can, strictly speaking, hardly be called one of its stages. As long as this calling does not, through the accompanying operation of the Holy Spirit, turn into an internal and effectual calling, it has only a preliminary and preparatory significance. Several Reformed theologians speak of it as a kind of common grace, since it does not flow from the eternal election and the saving grace of God, but rather from His common goodness; and since, while it sometimes produces a certain illumination of the mind, it does not enrich the heart with the saving grace of God.38 c. The general nature of external calling. While all the other movements of the Holy Spirit in the ordo salutis terminate on the elect only, the external calling by the gospel has a wider bearing. Wherever the gospel is preached, the call comes to the elect and the reprobate alike. It serves the purpose, not merely of bringing the elect to faith and conversion, but also of revealing the great love of God to sinners in general. By means of it God maintains His claim on the obedience of all His rational creatures, restrains the manifestation of sin, and promotes civic righteousness, external morality, and even outward religious exercises.39
B. CALLING IN GENERAL.

Since external calling is but an aspect of calling in general, we shall have to consider this briefly before entering upon a discussion of external calling.

1. THE AUTHOR OF OUR CALLING. Our calling is a work of the triune God. It is first of all a work of the Father, 1 Corinthians 1:9; 1 Thessalonians 2:12; 1 Peter 5:10. But the Father works all things through the Son; and so this calling is also ascribed to the Son, Matthew 11:28; Luke 5:32; John 7:37; Romans 1:6(?). And Christ, in turn, calls through His Word and Spirit, Matthew 10:20; John 15:26; Acts 5:31-32.

2. VOCATIO REALIS AND VERBALIS. Reformed theologians generally speak of a vocatio realis, as distinguished from the vocatio verbalis. By this they mean the external call that comes to men through God's general revelation, a revelation of the law and not of the gospel, to acknowledge, fear, and honour God as their Creator. It comes to them in things (res) rather than in words: in nature and history, in the environment in which they live, and in the experiences and vicissitudes of their lives, Psalms 19:1-4; Acts 16:16-17; Acts 17:27; Romans 1:19-21; Romans 2:14-15. This call knows nothing of Christ, and therefore cannot lead to salvation. At the same time it is of the greatest importance in connection with the restraint of sin, the development of the natural life, and the maintenance of good order in society. This is not the calling with which we are concerned at present. In soteriology only the vocatio verbalis comes into consideration; and this may be defined as that gracious act of God whereby He invites sinners to accept the salvation that is offered in Christ Jesus.

3. DIFFERENT CONCEPTIONS OF THE VOCATIO VERBALIS. The vocatio verbalis is, as the term itself suggests, the divine call that comes to man through the preaching of the Word of God. According to Roman Catholics it can also come to man through the administration of baptism. In fact, they regard the sacrament as the most important means in bringing man to Christ, and ascribe a decidedly subordinate significance to the preaching of the gospel. Not the pulpit, but the altar is central with Rome. In course of time considerable difference of opinion became apparent on the question, why the gospel call proves efficacious in some cases and not in others. Pelagius sought the explanation for this in the arbitrary will of man. Man has by nature a perfectly free will, so that he can accept or reject the gospel, as he sees fit, and thus either obtain or fail to obtain the blessings of salvation. Augustine, on the other hand, ascribed the difference to the operation of the grace of God. Said he: "The hearing of the divine call, is produced by divine grace itself, in him who before resisted; and then the love of virtue is kindled in him when he no longer resists." Semi-Pelagianism sought to mediate between the two and to avoid both the Augustinian denial of free will and the Pelagian depreciation of divine grace. It assumed the presence of the seeds of virtue in man, which of themselves tended to bear good fruit, but held that these needed the fructifying influence of divine grace for their development. The grace necessary for this is given to all men gratuitously, so that they are with the aid of it able to accept the gospel call unto salvation. The call will therefore be effective provided man, aided by divine grace, accepts it. This became the prevailing doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church. Some later Roman Catholics, of whom Bellarmin was one of the most important, brought in the doctrine of congruism, in which the acceptance of the gospel call is made dependent on the circumstances in which it comes to man. If these are congruous, that is, fit or favorable, he will accept it, but if not, he will reject it. The character of the circumstances will, of course, largely depend on the operation of prevenient grace. Luther developed the idea that, while the law worked repentance, the gospel call carried with it the gift of the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is in the Word, and therefore the call is in itself always sufficient and in its intention always efficacious. The reason why this call does not always effect the desired and intended result lies in the fact that men in many cases place a stumbling block in the way, so that, after all, the result is determined by the negative attitude of man. While some Lutherans still speak of external and internal calling, they insist on it that the former never comes to man apart from the latter. The call is essentially always efficacious, so that there is really no room for the distinction. Luther's strong insistence on the efficacious character of the gospel call was due to the Anabaptist depreciation of it. The Anabaptists virtually set aside the Word of

God as a means of grace, and stressed what they called the internal word, the "inner light," and the illumination of the Holy Spirit. To them the external word was but the letter that killeth, while the internal word was spirit and life. External calling meant little or nothing in their scheme. The distinction between external and internal calling is already found in Augustine, was borrowed from him by Calvin, and thus made prominent in Reformed theology. According to Calvin the gospel call is not in itself effective, but is made efficacious by the operation of the Holy Spirit, when He savingly applies the Word to the heart of man; and it is so applied only in the hearts and lives of the elect. Thus the salvation of man remains the work of God from the very beginning. God by His saving grace, not only enables, but causes man to heed the gospel call unto salvation. The Arminians were not satisfied with this position, but virtually turned back to the Semi-Pelagianism of the Roman Catholic Church. According to them the universal proclamation of the gospel is accompanied by a universal sufficient grace, — "gracious assistance actually and universally bestowed, sufficient to enable all men, if they choose, to attain to the full possession of spiritual blessings, and ultimately to salvation."40 The work of salvation is once more made dependent on man. This marked the beginning of a rationalistic return to the Pelagian position, which entirely denies the necessity of an internal operation of the Holy Spirit unto salvation.

C. EXTERNAL CALLING. The Bible does not use the term "external," but clearly speaks of a calling that is not efficacious. It is presupposed in the great commission, as it is found in Mark 16:15-16, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." The parable of the marriage feast in Matthew 22:2-14 clearly teaches that some who were invited did not come, and concludes with the well-known words: "For many are called, but few chosen." The same lesson is taught in the parable of the great supper, Luke 14:16-24. Other passages speak explicitly of a rejection of the gospel, John 3:36; Acts 13:46; 2 Thessalonians 1:8. Still others speak of the terrible sin of unbelief in a way which clearly shows that it was committed by some, Matthew 10:15; Matthew 11:21-24; John 5:40; John 16:8-9; 1 John 5:10. The external call consists in the presentation and offering of salvation in Christ to sinners, together with an earnest exhortation to accept Christ by faith, in order to obtain the forgiveness of sins and life eternal.

1. THE ELEMENTS COMPRISED IN IT. a. A presentation of the gospel facts and of the doctrine of redemption. The way of redemption revealed in Christ must be set forth clearly in all its relations. God’s plan of redemption, the saving work of Christ, and the renewing and transforming operations of the Holy Spirit, should all be interpreted in their mutual relations. It should be borne in mind, however, that a mere presentation of the truths of redemption, no matter how well done, does not yet constitute the gospel call. It is not only fundamental to it, but even constitutes a very important part of it. At the same time it is by no means the whole of that call. According to our Reformed conception the following elements also belong to it. b. An invitation to accept Christ in repentance and faith. The representation of the way of salvation must be supplemented by an earnest invitation (2 Corinthians 5:11; 2 Corinthians 5:20) and even a solemn command (John 6:28-29; Acts 19:4) to repent and believe, that is to accept Christ by faith. But, in order that this coming to Christ may not be understood in a superficial sense, as it is often represented by revivalists, the true nature of the repentance and the faith required should be clearly set forth. It must be made perfectly clear that the sinner cannot of himself truly repent and believe, but that it is God who worketh in him "both to will and to work, for His good pleasure." c. A promise of

forgiveness and salvation. The external call also contains a promise of acceptance for all those who comply with the conditions, not in their own strength, but by the power of the grace of God wrought in their hearts by the Holy Spirit. They who by grace repent of their sins and accept Christ by faith receive the assurance of the forgiveness of sins and of eternal salvation. This promise, it should be noticed, is never absolute, but always conditional. No one can expect its fulfilment, except in the way of a faith and repentance that is truly wrought by God. From the fact that these elements are included in external calling, it may readily be inferred that they who reject the gospel not merely refuse to believe certain facts and ideas, but resist the general operation of the Holy Spirit, which is connected with this calling, and are guilty of the sin of obstinate disobedience. By their refusal to accept the gospel, they increase their responsibility, and treasure up wrath for themselves in the day of judgment, Romans 2:4-5. That the above elements are actually included in the external calling, is quite evident from the following passages of Scripture: (a) According to Acts 20:27 Paul considers the declaration of the whole counsel of God as a part of the call; and in Ephesians 3:7-11 he recounts some of the details which he had declared unto the readers. (b) Examples of the call to repent and believe are found in such passages as Ezekiel 33:11; Mark 1:15; John 6:29; 2 Corinthians 5:20. (c) And the promise is contained in the following passages, John 3:16-18, John 3:36; John 5:24, John 5:40. 41 2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF EXTERNAL CALLING. a. It is general or universal. This is not to be understood in the sense in which it was maintained by some of the old Lutheran theologians, namely, that that call actually came to all the living more than once in the past, as, for instance, in the time of Adam, in that of Noah, and in the days of the apostles. McPherson correctly says: "A universal call of this kind is not a fact, but a mere theory invented for a purpose."42 In this representation the terms "general" or "universal" are not used in the sense in which they are intended, when it is said that the gospel call is general or universal. Moreover, the representation is at least in part contrary to fact. External calling is general only in the sense that it comes to all men to whom the gospel is preached, indiscriminately. It is not confined to any age or nation or class of men. It comes to both the just and the unjust, the elect and the reprobate. The following passages testify to the general nature of this call: Isaiah 55:1, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; some ye, buy and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price," cf. also Isaiah 55:6-7. In connection with this passage one might conceivably say that only spiritually qualified sinners are called; but this certainly cannot be said of Isaiah 45:22, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." Some also interpret the familiar invitation of Jesus in Matthew 11:28, "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest," as limited to such as are truly concerned about their sins and really repentant; but there is no warrant for such a limitation. The last book of the Bible concludes with a beautiful general invitation: "And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And he that heareth, let him say, Come. And he that is athirst, let him come: he that will, let him take of the water of life freely," Revelation 22:17. That the gospel invitation is not limited to the elect, as some hold, is quite evident from such passages as Psalms 81:11-13; Proverbs 1:24-26; Ezekiel 3:19; Matthew 22:2-8; Matthew 22:14; Luke 14:16-24. The general character of this calling is also taught in the Canons of Dort.43 Yet this doctrine repeatedly met with opposition by individuals and groups in the Reformed Churches. In the Scottish Church of the seventeenth century some denied the indiscriminate invitation and offer of salvation altogether, while others wanted to limit it to the confines of the visible Church. Over against these the Marrow men, such as Boston and the Erskines, defended it.

In the Netherlands this point was disputed especially in the eighteenth century. They who maintained the universal offer were called preachers of the new light while they who defended the particular offer, the offer to those who already gave evidence of a measure of special grace and could therefore be reckoned as among the elect, were known as the preachers of the old light. Even in the present day we occasionally meet with opposition on this point. It is said that such a general invitation and offer is inconsistent with the doctrine of predestination and of particular atonement, doctrines in which, it is thought, the preacher should take his starting point. But the Bible does not teach that the preacher of the gospel should take his starting point in these doctrines, however important they may be. His starting point and warrant lie in the commission of his King: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." Mark 16:15-16. Moreover, it is an utter impossibility that anyone, in preaching the gospel, should limit himself to the elect, as some would have us do, since he does not know who they are. Jesus did know them, but He did not so limit the offer of salvation, Matthew 22:3-8; Matthew 22:14; Luke 14:16-21; John 5:38-40. There would be a real contradiction between the Reformed doctrines of predestination and particular atonement on the one hand, and the universal offer of salvation on the other hand, if this offer included the declaration that God purposed to save every individual hearer of the gospel, and that Christ really atoned for the sins of each one of them. But the gospel invitation involves no such declaration. It is a gracious calling to accept Christ by faith, and a conditional promise of salvation. The condition is fulfilled only in the elect, and therefore they only obtain eternal life. b. It is a bona fide calling. The external calling is a calling in good faith, a calling that is seriously meant. It is not an invitation coupled with the hope that it will not be accepted. When God calls the sinner to accept Christ by faith, He earnestly desires this; and when He promises those who repent and believe eternal life, His promise is dependable. This follows from the very nature, from the veracity, of God. It is blasphemous to think that God would be guilty of equivocation and deception, that He would say one thing and mean another, that He would earnestly plead with the sinner to repent and believe unto salvation, and at the same time not desire it in any sense of the word. The bona fide character of the external call is proved by the following passages of Scripture: Numbers 23:19; Psalms 81:13-16; Proverbs 1:24; Isaiah 1:18-20; Ezekiel 18:23; Ezekiel 18:32; Ezekiel 33:11; Matthew 21:37; 2 Timothy 2:13. The Canons of Dort also assert it explicitly in III and IV, 8. Several objections have been offered to the idea of such a bona fide offer of salvation. (1) One objection is derived from the veracity of God. It is said that, according to this doctrine, He offers the forgiveness of sins and eternal life to those for whom He has not intended these gifts. It need not be denied that there is a real difficulty at this point, but this is the difficulty with which we are always confronted, when we seek to harmonize the decretive and the preceptive will of God, a difficulty which even the objectors cannot solve and often simply ignore. Yet we may not assume that the two are really contradictory. The decretive will of God determines what will most certainly come to pass (without necessarily implying that God really takes delight in all of it, as, for instance, in all kinds of sin), while the preceptive will is man’s rule of life, informing him as to what is well pleasing in the sight of God. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that God does not offer sinners the forgiveness of sins and eternal life unconditionally, but only in the way of faith and conversion; and that the righteousness of Christ, though not intended for all, is yet sufficient for all. (2) A second objection is derived from the spiritual inability of man. Man, as he is by nature, cannot believe and repent, and therefore it looks like mockery to ask this of him. But in connection with

this objection we should remember that in the last analysis man's inability in spiritual things is rooted in his unwillingness to serve God. The actual condition of things is not such that many would like to repent and believe in Christ, if they only could. All those who do not believe are not willing to believe, John 5:40. Moreover, it is no more unreasonable to require repentance and faith in Christ of men than it is to demand of them that they keep the law. Very inconsistently some of those who oppose the general offer of salvation on the basis of man's spiritual inability, do not hesitate to place the sinner before the demands of the law and even insist on doing this.

3. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF EXTERNAL CALLING. The question may be asked, why God comes to all men indiscriminately, including even the reprobate, with the offer of salvation. This external calling answers more than one purpose. a. In it God maintains His claim on the sinner. As the sovereign Ruler of the universe He is entitled — and this is a matter of absolute right — to the service of man. And though man tore away from God in sin and is now incapable of rendering spiritual obedience to his rightful Sovereign, his wilful transgression did not abrogate the claim of God on the service of His rational creatures. The right of God to demand absolute obedience remains, and He asserts this right in both the law and the gospel. His claim on man also finds expression in the call to faith and repentance. And if man does not heed this call, he disregards and slights the just claim of God and thereby increases his guilt. b. It is the divinely appointed means of bringing sinners to conversion. In other words, it is the means by which God gathers the elect out of the nations of the earth. As such it must necessarily be general or universal, since no man can point out the elect. The final result is, of course, that the elect, and they only, accept Christ by faith. This does not mean that missionaries can go out and give their hearers the assurance that Christ died for each one of them and that God intends to save each one; but it does mean that they can bring the joyful tidings that Christ died for sinners, that He invites them to come unto Him, and that He offers salvation to all those who truly repent of their sins and accept him with a living faith. c. It is also a revelation of God's holiness, goodness, and compassion. In virtue of His holiness God dissuades sinners everywhere from sin, and in virtue of His goodness and mercy He warns them against self-destruction, postpones the execution of the sentence of death, and blesses them with the offer of salvation. There is no doubt about it that this gracious offer is in itself a blessing and not, as some would have it, a curse for sinners. It clearly reveals the divine compassion for them, and is so represented in the Word of God, Psalms 81:13; Proverbs 1:24; Ezekiel 18:23; Ezekiel 18:32; Ezekiel 33:11; Amos 8:11; Matthew 11:24-24; Matthew 23:37. At the same time it is true that man by his opposition to it may turn even this blessing into a curse. It naturally heightens the responsibility of the sinner, and, if not accepted and improved, will increase his judgment. d. Finally, it clearly accentuates the righteousness of God. If even the revelation of God in nature serves the purpose of forestalling any excuse which sinners might be inclined to make, Romans 1:20, this is all the more true of the special revelation of the way of salvation. When sinners despise the forbearance of God and reject His gracious offer of salvation, the greatness of their corruption and guilt, and the justice of God in their condemnation, stands out in the clearest light.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: In what cases do the Reformed assume that regeneration precedes even external calling? How do they connect external calling up with the doctrine of the covenant? On what grounds did the Arminians at the time of the Synod of Dort assert that the Reformed churches could not consistently teach that God seriously calls sinners indiscriminately

to salvation? How do Roman Catholics conceive of the calling by the Word? What is the Lutheran conception of calling? Is it correct to say (with Alexander, Syst. Theol. II, pp. 357 ff.) that the Word by itself is adequate to effect a spiritual change, and that the Holy Spirit merely removes the obstruction to its reception?

LITERATURE: Bavinck,; Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 1-15; ibid., Roeping en Wedergeboorte Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Salute, pp. 84-92; Mastricht, Godgeleerdheit III, pp. 192-214 à Marck, Godgeleerdheid, pp. 649-651; Witsius, De Verbonden III, c. 5; Hodge, Syst. Theol II. pp. 639-653; Dabney, Theology., pp. 553-559; Schmid, Doct. Theol., pp. 448-456; Valentine Chr. Theol. II, pp. 194-204; Pope, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 335-347; W. L. Alexander, Syst. of Bibl. Theol. II, pp. 357-361.

04.4.0.06. Regeneration and Efectual Calling

VI. Regeneration and Efectual Calling A. THE SCRIPTURAL TERMS FOR REGENERATION AND THEIR IMPLICATIONS.

1. THE TERMS THAT COME INTO CONSIDERATION. The Greek word for "regeneration" (palingenesia) is found only in Matthew 19:28 and Titus 3:5; and only in the last named passage does it refer to the beginning of the new life in the individual Christian. The idea of this beginning is more commonly expressed by the verb gennao (with anothen in John 3:3), or its compositum anagennao. These words mean either to beget, to beget again, or to bear or give birth, John 1:13; John 3:3-8; 1 Peter 1:23; 1 John 2:29; 1 John 3:9; 1 John 4:7; 1 John 5:4; 1 John 5:18. In one passage, namely, James 1:18, the word apokueo, to bear or bring forth, is employed. Furthermore, the thought of the production of a new life is expressed by the word ktizo, to create, Ephesians 2:10, and the product of this creation is called a kaine ktisis (a new creature), 2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 6:15, or a kainos anthropos (a new man), Ephesians 4:24. Finally, the term suzoopoieo, to make alive with, to quicken with, is also used in a couple of passages, Ephesians 5:5; Colossians 2:13.

2. THE IMPLICATIONS OF THESE TERMS. These terms carry with them several important implications, to which attention should be directed. (a) Regeneration is a creative work of God, and is therefore a work in which man is purely passive, and in which there is no place for human co-operation. This is a very important point, since it stresses the fact that salvation is wholly of God. (b) The creative work of God produces a new life, in virtue of which man, made alive with Christ, shares the resurrection life, and can be called a new creature, "created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them," Ephesians 2:10. (c) Two elements must be distinguished in regeneration, namely, generation or the begetting of the new life, and bearing or bringing forth, by which the new life is brought forth out of its hidden depths. Generation implants the principle of the new life in the soul, and the new birth causes this principle to begin to assert itself in action. This distinction is of great importance for a proper understanding of regeneration.

B. THE USE OF THE TERM "REGENERATION" IN THEOLOGY.

1. IN THE EARLY CHURCH AND IN ROMAN CATHOLIC THEOLOGY. In the mind of the early Church the term "regeneration" did not stand for a sharply defined concept. It was used to denote a change closely connected with the washing away of sins, and no clear distinction was made between regeneration and justification. As identified with baptismal grace, the former was understood especially as a designation of the remission of sin, though the idea of a certain moral renovation was not excluded. Even Augustine did not draw a sharp line here, but did distinguish between regeneration and conversion. To him regeneration included, in addition to the remission of sin, only an initial change of the heart, followed by conversion later on. He conceived of it as a strictly monergistic work of God, in which the human subject cannot cooperate, and which man cannot resist. For Pelagius, of course, "regeneration" did not mean the birth of a new nature, but

the forgiveness of sins in baptism, the illumination of the mind by the truth, and the stimulation of the will by divine promises. The confusion of regeneration and justification, already apparent in Augustine, became even more pronounced in Scholasticism. In fact, justification became the more prominent concept of the two, was thought of as including regeneration, and was conceived of as an act in which God and man co-operate. Justification, according to the common representation, included the infusion of grace, that is, the birth of a new creature or regeneration, and the forgiveness of sin and the removal of the guilt attaching to it. There was a difference of opinion, however, as to which of these two elements is the logical prius. According to Thomas Aquinas the infusion of grace is first, and the forgiveness of sins is, at least in a certain sense, based on this; but according to Duns Scotus the forgiveness of sin is first, and is basic to the infusion of grace. Both elements are effected by baptism ex opere operato. The opinion of Thomas Aquinas gained the upper hand in the Church. Up to the present time there is a certain confusion of regeneration and justification in the Roman Catholic Church, which is, no doubt, largely due to the fact that justification is not conceived as a forensic act, but as an act or process of renewal. In it man is not declared but made just. Says Wilmers in his Handbook of the Christian Religion: "As justification is a spiritual renewal and regeneration, it follows that sin is really destroyed by it, and not, as the Reformers maintained, merely covered, or no longer imputed."

2. BY THE REFORMERS AND IN THE PROTESTANT CHURCHES. Luther did not entirely escape the confusion of regeneration with justification. Moreover, he spoke of regeneration or the new birth in a rather broad sense. Calvin also used the term in a very comprehensive sense as a designation of the whole process by which man is renewed, including, besides the divine act which originates the new life, also conversion (repentance and faith) and sanctification.44 Several seventeenth century authors fail to distinguish between regeneration and conversion, and use the two terms interchangeably, treating of what we now call regeneration under vocation or effectual calling. The Canons of Dort also use the two words synonymously,45 and the Belgic Confession seems to speak of regeneration in an even wider sense.46 This comprehensive use of the term "regeneration" often led to confusion and to the disregard of very necessary distinctions. For instance, while regeneration and conversion were identified, regeneration was yet declared to be monergistic, in spite of the fact that in conversion man certainly co-operates. The distinction between regeneration and justification had already become clearer, but it gradually became necessary and customary also to employ the term "regeneration" in a more restricted sense. Turretin defines two kinds of conversion: first, a "habitual" or passive conversion, the production of a disposition or habit of the soul, which, he remarks, might better be called "regeneration"; and, secondly, an "actual" or "active" conversion, in which this implanted habit or disposition becomes active in faith and repentance. In present day Reformed theology the word "regeneration" is generally used in a more restricted sense, as a designation of that divine act by which the sinner is endowed with new spiritual life, and by which the principle of that new life is first called into action. So conceived, it includes both the "begetting again" and the "new birth," in which the new life becomes manifest. In strict harmony, however, with the literal meaning of the word "regeneration" the term is sometimes employed in an even more limited sense, to denote simply the implanting of the new life in the soul, apart from the first manifestations of this life. In modern liberal theology the term "regeneration’ acquired a different meaning. Schleiermacher distinguished two aspects of regeneration, namely, conversion and justification, and held that in regeneration "a new religious consciousness is produced in the believer by the common Christian spirit of the community, and

new life, or 'sanctification,' is prepared for." (Pfleiderer.) That "Christian spirit of the community" is the result of an influx of the divine life, through Christ, into the Church, and is called "the Holy Spirit" by Schleiermacher. The Modern view is well stated in these words of Youtz: "Modern interpretation inclines to return to the symbolical use of the conception of Regeneration. Our ethical realities deal with transformed characters. Regeneration expresses thus a radical, vital, ethical change, rather than an absolutely new metaphysical beginning. Regeneration is a vital step in the natural development of the spiritual life, a radical readjustment to the moral processes of life."47 Students of the Psychology of Religion generally fail to distinguish between regeneration and conversion. They regard it as a process in which man's attitude to life changes from the autocentric to the heterocentric. It finds its explanation primarily in the sub-conscious life, and does not necessarily involve anything supernatural. James says: "To be converted, to be regenerated, to receive grace, to experience religion, to gain an assurance, are so many phrases which denote the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong, inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities."48 According to Clark, "Students have agreed in discerning three distinct steps in conversion: (1) A period of 'storm and stress,' or sense of sin, or feeling of inward disharmony, known to theology as 'conviction of sin' and designated by James as 'soul sickness.' (2) An emotional crisis which marks a turning point. (3) A succeeding relaxation attended by a sense of peace, rest, inner harmony, acceptance with God, and not infrequently motor and sensory reflexes of various sorts."49 C. THE ESSENTIAL NATURE OF REGENERATION.

Relative to the nature of regeneration there are several misconceptions which should be avoided. It may be well to mention these first, before stating the positive qualifications of this re-creative work of God.

1. MISCONCEPTIONS. (a) Regeneration is not a change in the substance of human nature, as was taught by the Manichæans and in the days of the Reformation by Flacius Illyricus, who conceived of original sin as a substance, to be replaced by another substance in regeneration. No new physical seed or germ is implanted in man; neither is there any addition to, or subtraction from, the faculties of the soul. (b) Neither is it simply a change in one or more of the faculties of the soul, as, for instance, of the emotional life (feeling or heart), by removing the aversion to divine things, as some evangelicals conceive of it; or of the intellect, by illuminating the mind that is darkened by sin, as the Rationalists regard it. It affects the heart, understood in the Scriptural sense of the word, that is, as the central and all-controlling organ of the soul, out of which are the issues of life. This means that it affects human nature as a whole. (c) Nor is it a complete or perfect change of the whole nature of man, or of any part of it, so that it is no more capable of sin, as was taught by the extreme Anabaptists and by some other fanatical sects. This does not mean that it does not in principle affect the entire nature of man, but only that it does not constitute the whole change that is wrought in man by the operation of the Holy Spirit. It does not comprise conversion and sanctification.

2. POSITIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF REGENERATION. The following positive assertions may be made respecting regeneration: a. Regeneration consists in the implanting of the principle of the new spiritual life in man, in a radical change of the governing disposition of the soul, which, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, gives birth to a life that moves in a Godward direction. In principle

this change affects the whole man: the intellect, 1 Corinthians 2:14-15; 2 Corinthians 4:6; Ephesians 1:18; Colossians 3:10; the will, Psalms 110:3; Php 2:13; 2 Thessalonians 3:5; Hebrews 13:21; and the feelings or emotions, Psalms 42:1-2; Matthew 5:4; 1 Peter 1:8. b. It is an instantaneous change of man's nature, affecting at once the whole man, intellectually, emotionally, and morally. The assertion that regeneration is an instantaneous change implies two things: (1) that it is not a work that is gradually prepared in the soul, as the Roman Catholics and all Semi-Pelagians teach; there is no intermediate stage between life and death; one either lives or is dead; and (2) that it is not a gradual process like sanctification. It is true that some Reformed authors have occasionally used the term "regeneration" as including even sanctification, but that was in the days when the ordo salutis was not as fully developed as it is to-day. c. It is in its most limited sense a change that occurs in the sub-conscious life. It is a secret and inscrutable work of God that is never directly perceived by man. The change may take place without man's being conscious of it momentarily, though this is not the case when regeneration and conversion coincide; and even later on he can perceive it only in its effects. This explains the fact that a Christian may, on the one hand, struggle for a long time with doubts and uncertainties, and can yet, on the other hand, gradually overcome these and rise to the heights of assurance.

3. DEFINITION OF REGENERATION. From what was said in the preceding respecting the present use of the word "regeneration," it follows that regeneration may be defined in two ways. In the strictest sense of the word we may say: Regeneration is that act of God by which the principle of the new life is implanted in man, and the governing disposition of the soul is made holy. But in order to include the idea of the new birth as well as that of the "begetting again," it will be necessary to complement the definition with the following words: . . . " and the first holy exercise of this new disposition is secured. "

D. EFFECTUAL CALLING IN RELATION TO EXTERNAL CALLING AND REGENERATION.

1. ITS INSEPARABLE CONNECTION WITH EXTERNAL CALLING. The calling of God may be said to be one, and the distinction between an external and an internal or effectual calling merely calls attention to the fact that this one calling has two aspects. This does not mean that these two aspects are always united and always go together. We do not aver with the Lutherans that "the inner call is always concurrent with the hearing of the word."50 It does mean, however, that where the inner call comes to adults, it is mediated by the preaching of the Word. It is the same Word that is heard in the external call, and that is made effective in the heart in the internal calling. Through the powerful application of the Holy Spirit the external call passes right into the internal.51 But while this calling is closely connected with the external call and forms a unit with it, there are certain points of difference: (a) It is a calling by the Word, savingly applied by the operation of the Holy Spirit, 1 Corinthians 1:23-24; 1 Peter 2:9; (b) it is a powerful calling, that is, a calling that is effectual unto salvation, Acts 13:48; 1 Corinthians 1:23-24; and (c) it is without repentance, that is, it is a call that is not subject to change and that is never withdrawn, Romans 11:29.

2. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERNAL CALL. The following characteristics should be noted: a. It works by moral suasion plus the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit. The question arises, whether in this calling (as distinguished from regeneration) the Word of God works in a creative way, or by moral suasion. Now there is no doubt about it that the Word of God is sometimes said to work in a creative manner, Genesis 1:3; Psalms 33:6; Psalms 33:9; Psalms 147:15; Romans

4:17 (though this may be interpreted differently). But these passages refer to the word of God's power, to His authoritative command, and not to the word of preaching with which we are concerned here. The Spirit of God operates through the preaching of the Word only in a morally persuasive way, making its persuasions effective, so that man listens to the voice of his God. This follows from the very nature of the Word, which addresses itself to the understanding and the will.52 It should be borne in mind, however, that this moral suasion does not yet constitute the whole of the internal call; there must be in addition to this a powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, applying the Word to the heart. b. It operates in the conscious life of man. This point is most intimately connected with the preceding. If the word of preaching does not operate creatively, but only in a moral and persuasive way, it follows that it can work only in the conscious life of man. It addresses the understanding, which the Spirit endows with spiritual insight into the truth, and through the understanding influences the will effectively, so that the sinner turns to God. The internal calling necessarily issues in conversion, that is, in a conscious turning away from sin in the direction of holiness. c. It is teleological. Internal calling is of a teleological character, that is, it calls man to a certain end: to the great goal to which the Holy Spirit is leading the elect, and, consequently also to the intermediate stages on the way to this final destiny. It is a calling to the fellowship of Jesus Christ, 1 Corinthians 1:9; to inherit blessing, 1 Peter 3:9; to liberty, Galatians 5:13; to peace, 1 Corinthians 7:15; to holiness, 1 Thessalonians 4:7; to one hope, Ephesians 4:4; to eternal life, 1 Timothy 6:12; and to God's kingdom and glory, 1 Thessalonians 2:12.

3. THE RELATION OF EFFECTUAL CALLING TO REGENERATION. a. The identification of the two in seventeenth century theology. It is a well known fact that in seventeenth century theology effectual calling and regeneration are often identified, or if not entirely identified, then at least in so far that regeneration is regarded as included in calling. Several of the older theologians have a separate chapter on calling, but none on regeneration. According to the Westminster Confession, X. 2, effectual calling includes regeneration. This view finds some justification in the fact that Paul, who uses the term "regeneration" but once, evidently conceives of it as included in calling in Romans 8:30. Moreover, there is a sense in which calling and regeneration are related as cause and effect. It should be borne in mind, however, that in speaking of calling as including, or as being causally related to, regeneration, we do not have in mind merely what is technically termed internal or effectual calling, but calling in general, including even a creative calling. The extensive use in Post-Reformation times of the term "calling" rather than "regeneration," to designate the beginning of the work of grace in the life of sinners, was due to a desire to stress the close connection between the Word of God and the operation of His grace. And the prevalence of the term "calling" in the apostolic age finds its explanation and justification in the fact that, in the case of those who were in that missionary period gathered into the Church, regeneration and effectual calling were generally simultaneous, while the change was reflected in their conscious life as a powerful calling from God. In a systematic presentation of the truth, however, we should carefully discriminate between calling and regeneration. b. Points of difference between regeneration and effectual calling. Regeneration in the strictest sense of the word, that is, as the begetting again, takes place in the sub-conscious life of man, and is quite independent of any attitude which he may assume with reference to it. Calling, on the other hand, addresses itself to the consciousness, and implies a certain disposition of the conscious life. This follows from the fact that regeneration works from within, while calling comes from without. In the case of children we speak of regeneration rather than calling. Furthermore, regeneration is a creative, a hyper-physical operation of the Holy Spirit,

by which man is brought from one condition into another, from a condition of spiritual death into a condition of spiritual life. Effectual calling, on the other hand, is teleological, draws out the new life and points it in a God-ward direction. It secures the exercises of the new disposition and brings the new life into action. c. The relative order of calling and regeneration. This is perhaps best understood, if we note the following stages: (1) Logically, the external call in the preaching of the Word (except in the case of children) generally precedes or coincides with the operation of the Holy Spirit, by which the new life is produced in the soul of man. (2) Then by a creative word God generates the new life, changing the inner disposition of the soul, illuminating the mind, rousing the feelings, and renewing the will. In this act of God the ear is implanted that enables man to hear the call of God to the salvation of his soul. This is regeneration in the most restricted sense of the word. In it man is entirely passive. (3) Having received the spiritual ear, the call of God in the gospel is now heard by the sinner, and is brought home effectively to the heart. The desire to resist has been changed to a desire to obey, and the sinner yields to the persuasive influence of the Word through the operation of the Holy Spirit. This is the effectual calling through the instrumentality of the word of preaching, effectively applied by the Spirit of God. (4) This effectual calling, finally, secures, through the truth as a means, the first holy exercises of the new disposition that is born in the soul. The new life begins to manifest itself; the implanted life issues in the new birth. This is the completion of the work of regeneration in the broader sense of the word, and the point at which it turns into conversion.

Now we should not make the mistake of regarding this logical order as a temporal order that will apply in all cases. The new life is often implanted in the hearts of children long before they are able to hear the call of the gospel; yet they are endowed with this life only where the gospel is preached. There is, of course, always a creative call of God by which the new life is produced. In the case of those who live under the administration of the gospel the possibility exists that they receive the seed of regeneration long before they come to years of discretion and therefore also long before the effectual calling penetrates to their consciousness. It is very unlikely, however, that, being regenerated, they will live in sin for years, even after they have come to maturity, and give no evidences at all of the new life that is in them. On the other hand, in the case of those who do not live under the administration of the covenant, there is no reason to assume an interval between the time of their regeneration and that of their effectual calling. In the effectual call they at once become conscious of their renewal, and immediately find the seed of regeneration germinating into the new life. This means that regeneration, effective calling, and conversion all coincide.

E. THE NECESSITY OF REGENERATION.

1. THIS NECESSITY IS DENIED BY MODERN LIBERAL THEOLOGY. The necessity of regeneration, as this is understood by the Christian Church, is naturally denied in modern liberal theology. It is not in accord with the teaching of Rousseau, that man is by nature good. Any radical change or complete turnabout in the life of a man who is essentially good, would be a change for the worse. Liberals speak of salvation by character, and the only regeneration of which they know is a regeneration conceived as "a vital step in the natural development of the spiritual life, a radical readjustment to the moral processes of life." (Youtz.) Many teach a series of ethical renewals. Emerton says: "The character thus gained and proven and held fast is redemption. There is no other worthy definition of the word. It is the redemption of man’s lower self by the domination of his

higher self. It is the spiritual redeeming the material, the divine that is in every man redeeming the animal."53

2. IT FOLLOWS FROM WHAT SCRIPTURE TEACHES CONCERNING THE NATURAL CONDITION OF MAN. Holiness or conformity to the divine law is the indispensable condition of securing divine favor, attaining peace of conscience, and enjoying fellowship with God. Hebrews 12:14. Now the condition of man by nature is, according to Scripture, both in disposition and act, exactly the opposite of that holiness which is so indispensable. Man is described as dead through trespasses and sins, Ephesians 2:1, and this condition calls for nothing less than a restoration to life. A radical internal change is necessary, a change by which the whole disposition of the soul is altered.

3. IT IS ALSO EXPRESSLY ASSERTED BY SCRIPTURE. Scripture does not leave us in doubt about the necessity of regeneration, but asserts this in the clearest terms. Jesus says: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," John 3:3. 54 This statement of the Saviour is absolute and leaves no room for exceptions. The same truth is clearly brought out in some of the statements of Paul, as, for instance, in 1 Corinthians 2:14 : "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned"; Galatians 6:15 : "For in Christ Jesus neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." Cf. also Jeremiah 13:23; Romans 3:11; Ephesians 2:3-4.

F. THE EFFICIENT CAUSE OF REGENERATION.

There are only three fundamentally different views that come into consideration here, and all the others are modifications of these.

1. THE HUMAN WILL. According to the Pelagian conception regeneration is solely an act of the human will, and is practically identical with self-reformation. With some slight differences this is the view of modern liberal theology. A modification of this view is that of the Semi-Pelagian and Arminian, who regard it as, at least in part, an act of man, co-operating with divine influences applied through the truth. This is the synergistic theory of regeneration. Both of these views involve a denial of the total depravity of man, so plainly taught in the Word of God, John 5:42; Romans 3:9-18; Romans 7:18; Romans 7:23; Romans 8:7; 2 Timothy 3:4, and of the Scripture truth that it is God who inclines the will, Romans 9:16; Php 2:13.

2. THE TRUTH. According to this view the truth as a system of motives, presented to the human will by the Holy Spirit, is the immediate cause of the change from unholiness to holiness. This was the view of Lyman Beecher and of Charles G. Finney. It assumes that the work of the Holy Spirit differs from that of the preacher only in degree. Both work by persuasion only. But this theory is quite unsatisfactory. The truth can be a motive to holiness only if it is loved, while the natural man does not love the truth, but hates it, Romans 1:18; Romans 1:25. Consequently the truth, presented externally, cannot be the efficient cause of regeneration.

3. THE HOLY SPIRIT. The only adequate view is that of the Church of all ages, that the Holy Spirit is the efficient cause of regeneration. This means that the Holy Spirit works directly on the heart of man and changes its spiritual condition. There is no co-operation of the sinner in this work whatsoever. It is the work of the Holy Spirit directly and exclusively, Ezekiel 11:19; John 1:13; Acts

16:14; Romans 9:16; Php 2:13. Regeneration, then, is to be conceived monergistically. God alone works, and the sinner has no part in it whatsoever. This, of course, does not mean, that man does not co-operate in later stages of the work of redemption. It is quite evident from Scripture that he does.

G. THE USE OF THE WORD OF GOD AS AN INSTRUMENT IN REGENERATION. The question arises, whether the Word of God is used as a means in regeneration or not; or, as it is frequently put, whether regeneration is mediate or immediate.

1. THE PROPER IMPORT OF THE QUESTION. Careful discrimination is required, in order to avoid misunderstanding. a. When the older Reformed theologians insisted on the immediate character of regeneration, they often gave the term "immediate" a connotation which it does not have to-day. Some of the representatives of the school of Saumur, as Cameron and Pajon, taught that in regeneration the Holy Spirit supernaturally illumines and convinces the mind or the intellect in such a powerful manner that the will cannot fail to follow the prevalent dictate of the practical judgment. He works immediately only on the intellect, and through this mediately on the will. According to them there is no immediate operation of the Holy Spirit on the will of man. In opposition to these men, Reformed theologians generally stressed the fact that in regeneration the Holy Spirit also operates directly on the will of man, and not merely through the mediation of the intellect. Today the question of mediate or immediate regeneration is a slightly different, though related, one. It is the question of the use of the Word of God as a means in the work of regeneration. b. The exact form of the question ought to be carefully noted. The question is not, whether God works regeneration by means of a creative word. It is generally admitted that He does. Neither is it, whether He employs the word of truth, the word of preaching in the new birth as distinguished from the divine begetting of the new man, that is, in securing the first holy exercises of the new life. The real question is, whether God, in implanting or generating the new life, employs the word of Scripture or the word of preaching as an instrument or means. The discussion of this matter often suffered in the past from the lack of proper discrimination.

2. CONSIDERATIONS THAT FAVOR A NEGATIVE ANSWER. Dr. Shedd says: "The influence of the Holy Spirit is distinguishable from that of the truth; from that of man upon man; and from that of any instrument or means whatever. His energy acts directly upon the human soul itself. It is the influence of spirit upon spirit; of one of the trinitarian persons upon a human person. Neither the truth, nor a fellow-man, can thus operate directly upon the essence of the soul itself."55 The following considerations favor this view: a. Regeneration is a creative act, by which the spiritually dead sinner is restored to life. But the truth of the gospel can only work in a moral and persuasive way. Such an instrument has no effect on the dead. To assert its use would seem to imply a denial of the spiritual death of man; which, of course, is not intended by those who take this position. b. Regeneration takes place in the sphere of the sub-conscious, that is, outside of the sphere of conscious attention, while the truth addresses itself to the consciousness of man. It can exercise its persuasive influence only when man’s attention is fixed on it. c. The Bible distinguishes the influence of the Holy Spirit from that of the Word of God, and declares that such an influence is necessary for the proper reception of the truth, John 6:64-65; Acts 16:14; 1 Corinthians 2:12-15; Ephesians 1:17-20. Notice particularly the case of Lydia, of whom Luke says: "She heard us (ekouen, impf.), whose heart the Lord opened (dienoixen, aor., single act), that she attended (prosechein inf. of result or purpose) unto the things which were spoken of Paul."

3. SCRIPTURE PASSAGES THAT SEEM TO PROVE THE CONTRARY. a. In James 1:18 we read: "Of his own will he brought us forth by the word of truth, that we should be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures." This passage does not prove that the new generation is mediated by the Word of God, for the term here used is apokuesen, which does not refer to begetting, but to giving birth. They who believe in immediate regeneration do not deny that the new birth, in which the new life first becomes manifest, is secured by the Word. b. Peter exhorts believers to love one another fervently in view of the fact that they have been "begotten again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, through the Word of God, which liveth and abideth." 1 Peter 1:23. It is not correct to say, as some have done, that "the Word" in this verse is the creative word, or the second person in the Trinity, for Peter himself informs us that he has in mind the word that was preached unto the readers, 1 Peter 1:25. But it is perfectly in order to point out that even gennao (the word here used) does not always refer to the masculine begetting, but may also denote the feminine giving birth to children. This is perfectly evident from such passages as Luke 1:13; Luke 1:57; Luke 23:29; John 16:21; Galatians 4:24. Consequently, there is no warrant for the assertion that Peter in this passage refers to the initial act in regeneration, namely, the begetting. And if it refers to regeneration in a broader sense, then the passage offers no difficulty whatsoever in connection with the matter under consideration. The idea that it refers to the new birth here, is favored by the fact that the readers are represented as having been born again out of a seed that was evidently already implanted in the soul, cf. John 1:13. It is not necessary to identify the seed with the Word. c. The Parable of the Sower is sometimes urged in favor of the idea that regeneration takes place through the Word. The seed in this parable is the word of the kingdom. The argument is that the life is in the seed and comes forth out of the seed. Consequently, the new life comes forth out of the seed of the Word of God. But, in the first place, this is over-shooting the mark, for it will hardly do to say that the Spirit or the principle of the new life is shut up in the Word, just as the living germ is shut up in the seed. This reminds one somewhat of the Lutheran conception of calling, according to which the Spirit is in the Word so that the call would always be effective, if man did not put a stumbling-block in the way. And, in the second place, this is pressing a point which is not at all in the tertium comparationis. The Saviour wants to explain in this parable how it comes about that the seed of the Word bears fruit in some cases, and not in others. It bears fruit only in those cases in which it falls in good ground, in hearts so prepared that they understand the truth.

4. THE RELEVANT TEACHINGS OF OUR CONFESSIONAL STANDARDS. The following passages come into consideration here: Conf. Belg., Articles XXIV and XXXV; Heid. Cat., Q. 54; Canons of Dort, III and IV, Articles 11,12,17; and, finally, the Conclusions of Utrecht, adopted by our Church in 1908. From these passages it is perfectly evident that our confessional writings speak of regeneration in a broad sense, as including both the origin of the new life and its manifestation in conversion. We are even told that faith regenerates the sinner.56 There are passages which seem to say that the Word of God is instrumental in the work of regeneration.57 Yet they are couched in such language that it still remains doubtful, whether they actually teach that the principle of the new life is implanted in the soul by the instrumentality of the Word. They fail to discriminate carefully between the various elements which we distinguish in regeneration. In the Conclusions of Utrecht we read: "As far as the third point, that of immediate regeneration, is concerned, Synod declares that this expression can be used in a good sense, in so far as our churches have always confessed, over against the Lutheran and the Roman Catholic Church, that regeneration is not effected through the Word or the Sacraments as such, but by the almighty

regenerating work of the Holy Spirit; that this regenerating work of the Holy Spirit, however, may not in that sense be divorced from the preaching of the Word, as if both were separated from each other; for, although our Confession teaches that we need not be in doubt respecting the salvation of our children which die in infancy, though they have not heard the preaching of the gospel, and our confessional standards nowhere express themselves as to the manner in which regeneration is effected in the case of these and other children, — yet it is, on the other hand, certain that the gospel is a power of God unto salvation for every one who believes, and that in the case of adults the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit accompanies the preaching of the gospel."58 H. DIVERGENT VIEWS OF REGENERATION.

1. THE PELAGIAN VIEW. According to the Pelagians man's freedom and personal responsibility implies that he is at all times just as able to desist from sin as to commit sin. Only acts of conscious volition are regarded as sin. Consequently, regeneration simply consists in moral reformation. It means that the man who formerly chose to transgress the law, now chooses to live in obedience to it.

2. BAPTISMAL REGENERATION. This is not always represented in the same way. a. In the Church of Rome. According to the Roman Catholic Church regeneration includes not only spiritual renewal, but also justification or the forgiveness of sins, and is effected by means of baptism. In the case of children the work of regeneration is always effective; not so in the case of adults. These can gratefully accept and utilize the grace of regeneration, but can also resist it and make it ineffective. Moreover, it is always possible that they who have appropriated it will lose it again. b. In the Anglican Church. The Church of England is not unanimous on this point, but represents two different tendencies. The so-called Puseyites are in essential agreement with the Church of Rome. But there is also an influential party in the Church which distinguishes two kinds of regeneration: the one consisting merely in a change of one's relation to the Church and the means of grace; and the other, in a fundamental change of human nature. According to this party only the former is effected by baptism. This regeneration includes no spiritual renewal. By means of it man merely enters into a new relation to the Church, and becomes a child of God in the same sense in which the Jews became children of God through the covenant of which circumcision was a seal. c. In the Lutheran Church. Luther and his followers did not succeed in purging their Church from the leaven of Rome on this point. On the whole the Lutherans maintain, in opposition to Rome, the monergistic character of regeneration. They regard man as entirely passive in regeneration and incapable of contributing anything to it, though adults can resist it for a long time. At the same time some teach that baptism, working ex opere operato, is the usual means by which God effects regeneration. It is the usual, but not the only means, for the preaching of the Word may also produce it. They speak of two kinds of regeneration, namely, regeneratio prima by which the new life is begotten, and the regeneratio secunda orrenovatio, by which the new life is led in a God-ward direction. While children receive the regeneratio prima by means of baptism, adults, who receive the first regeneration by means of the Word, become partakers of the regeneratio secunda through baptism. According to the Lutherans regeneration is amissible. But through the grace of God it can be restored in the heart of the penitent sinner, and that without re-baptism. Baptism is a pledge of God's continued readiness to renew the baptized and to pardon his sins. Moreover, regeneration is not always accomplished at once, but is often a gradual process in the life of adults.

3. THE ARMINIAN VIEW. According to the Arminians regeneration is not exclusively a work of God, nor exclusively a work of man. It is the fruit of man's choice to co-operate with the divine influences exerted by means of the truth. Strictly speaking, the work of man is prior to that of God. They do not assume that there is a preceding work of God by which the will is inclined to the good. Naturally, they also believe that the grace of regeneration can be lost. The Wesleyan Arminians altered this view in so far that they stress the fact that regeneration is the work of the Holy Spirit, be it in co-operation with the human will. They do assume a prior operation of the Holy Spirit to enlighten, awaken, and draw man. However, they also believe that man can resist this work of the Holy Spirit, and that, as long as he does this, he remains in his unregenerate condition.

4. THE VIEW OF THE MEDIATING THEOLOGIANS. This is cast in a pantheistic mold. After the incarnation there are no two separate natures in Christ, but only a divine-human nature, a fusion of divine and human life. In regeneration a part of that divine-human life passes over into the sinner. This does not require a separate operation of the Holy Spirit whenever a sinner is regenerated. The new life has been communicated to the Church once for all, is now the permanent possession of the Church, and passes from the Church into the individual. Communion with the Church also insures participation of the new life. This view ignores the legal aspect of the work of Christ entirely. Moreover, it makes it impossible to hold that any one could be regenerated before the divine-human life of Christ came into existence. The Old Testament saints cannot have been regenerated. Schleiermacher is the father of this view.

5. THE TRICHOTOMIC VIEW. Some theologians constructed a peculiar theory of regeneration on the basis of the trichotomic view of human nature. This view proceeds on the assumption that man consists of three parts, — body, soul, and spirit. It is generally assumed, though there are variations on this point, that sin has its seat only in the soul, and not in the spirit (pneuma). If it had penetrated to the spirit, man would have been irretrievably lost, just as the devils, who are pure spiritual beings. The spirit is the higher, divine life in man, destined to control the lower life. By the entrance of sin into the world the influence of the spirit on the lower life is weakened very much; but by regeneration it is strengthened again and harmony is restored in the life of man. This is, of course, a purely rationalistic theory.59

6. THE VIEW OF MODERN LIBERALISM. The liberal theologians of the present day do not all have the same view of regeneration. Some of them speak in terms that remind one of Schleiermacher. More generally, however, they sponsor a purely naturalistic view. They are averse to the idea that regeneration is a supernatural and recreative work of God. In virtue of the immanent God every man has a divine principle within him and thus possesses potentially all that is necessary unto salvation. The one thing that is necessary, is that man become conscious of his potential divinity, and that he consciously yield to the guidance of the higher principle within him. Regeneration is simply an ethical change of character.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What other terms and expressions does the Bible use to designate the work of regeneration? Does the Bible sharply distinguish between calling, regeneration, conversion, and sanctification? How do you account for it that the Roman Catholic Church includes even justification in regeneration? How do regeneration and conversion differ? Is there such a thing as prevenient grace, preceding and preparing for regeneration? What is active, as distinguished from passive, regeneration? Does man's passivity in regeneration last for any

length of time? Does not the view that the Word of God is not instrumental in effecting regeneration, make the preaching of the Word seem futile and quite unnecessary? Does it not lead to the verge of mysticism?

LITERATURE: Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Salute, pp. 70-83; ibid., Het Werk van den Heiligen Geest, II, pp. 140-162; Bavinck, Geref. Dogm IV, pp. 11-82; ibid., Roeping en Wedergeboorte; Mastricht, Godgeleerdheit, VI, 3; Dick, Theology, Lect. LXVI; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. II, pp. 490-528; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., Lect. XLVII; Vos, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 32-65; Hodge, Syst. Theol. III, pp. 1-40; McPherson, Chr. Dogma, pp. 397-401; Alexander, Syst. of Bib. Theol. II, pp. 370-384; Litton, I ntrod. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 313-321; Schmid, Doct. Theol. of the Ev. Luth. Church, pp. 463-470; Valentine, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 242-271; Raymond, Syst. Theol. II, pp. 344-359; Pope, Chr. Theol. III, pp. 5-13; Strong, Syst. Theol., pp. 809-828; Boyce, Abstract of Syst. Theol., pp. 328-334; Wilmers, Handbook of the Chr. Rel., pp. 314-322; Anderson, Regeneration.

04.4.0.07. Conversion

VII. Conversion From the discussion of regeneration and effectual calling there is a natural transition to that of conversion. By a special operation of the Holy Spirit the former issues in the latter. Conversion may be a sharply marked crisis in the life of the individual, but may also come in the form of a gradual process. In the psychology of religion the two are generally identified. All this points to the close relation between the two.

A. THE SCRIPTURAL TERMS FOR CONVERSION.

1. THE OLD TESTAMENT WORDS. The Old Testament employs especially two words for conversion, namely: a. Nacham which serves to express a deep feeling, either of sorrow (niphal) or of relief (piel). In niphal it means to repent, and this repentance is often accompanied with a change of plan and of action, while in piel it signifies to comfort or to comfort one's self. As a designation of repentance—and this is the meaning with which we are concerned here —it is used not only of man but also of God, Genesis 6:6-7; Exodus 32:14; Judges 2:18; 1 Samuel 15:11. b. Shubh which is the most common word for conversion, means to turn, to turn about, and to return. It is often used in a literal sense of both God and man, but soon acquired a religious and ethical signification. This meaning is most prominent in the prophets, where it refers to Israel's return to the Lord, after it has departed from Him. The word clearly shows that, what the Old Testament calls conversion, is a return to Him from whom sin has separated man. This is a very important element in conversion. It finds expression in the words of the prodigal son, "I will return, and go to my father."

2. THE NEW TESTAMENT WORDS. There are especially three words that come into consideration here: a. Metanoia (verbal form, metanoeo). This is the most common word for conversion in the New Testament, and is also the most fundamental of the terms employed. The word is composed of meta and nous, which is again connected with the verb ginosko (Lat. noscere; Eng., to know), all of which refers to the conscious life of man. In the English Bible the word is translated " repentance " but this rendering hardly does justice to the original, since it gives undue prominence to the emotional element. Trench points out that in the classics the word means: (1) to know after, after-knowledge; (2) to change the mind as the result of this after-knowledge; (3) in consequence of this change of mind, to regret the course pursued; and (4) a change of conduct for the future, springing from all the preceding. It might indicate a change for the worse as well as for the better, however, and did not necessarily include a resipiscentia — a becoming wise again. In the New Testament, however, its meaning is deepened, and it denotes primarily a change of mind, taking a wiser view of the past, including regret for the ill then done, and leading to a change of life for the better. Here the element of resipiscentia is present. Walden in his work on The Great Meaning of Metanoia comes to the conclusion that it conveys the idea of "a general change of mind, which becomes in its fullest development an intellectual and moral regeneration."60 While maintaining that the word denotes primarily a change of mind, we should not lose sight of the fact that its meaning is not limited to the intellectual, theoretical

consciousness, but also includes the moral consciousness, the conscience. Both the mind and the conscience are defiled, Titus 1:15, and when a person's nous is changed, he not only receives new knowledge, but the direction of his conscious life, its moral quality, is also changed. To become more particular, the change indicated by his word has reference, (1) to the intellectual life, 2 Timothy 2:25, to a better knowledge of God and His truth, and a saving acceptance of it (identical with the action of faith); (2) to the conscious volitional life, Acts 8:22, to a turning from self to God (thus again including an action of faith); and (3) to the emotional life, in so far as this change is accompanied with godly sorrow, 2 Corinthians 7:10, and opens new fields of enjoyment for the sinner. In all these respects metanoia includes a conscious opposition to the former condition. This is an essential element in it, and therefore deserves careful attention. To be converted, is not merely to pass from one conscious direction to another, but to do it with a clearly perceived aversion to the former direction. In other words metanoia has not only a positive but also a negative side; it looks backward as well as forward. The converted person becomes conscious of his ignorance and error, his wilfulness and folly. His conversion includes both faith and repentance. Sad to say, the Church gradually lost sight of the original meaning of metanoia. In Latin theology Lactantius rendered it " resipiscentia," a becoming-wise-again, as if the word were derived from meta and anoia, and denoted a return from madness or folly. The majority of Latin writers, however, preferred to render it " poenitentia " a word that denotes the sorrow and regret which follows when one has made a mistake or has committed an error of any kind. This word passed into the Vulgate as the rendering of metanoia, and, under the influence of the Vulgate, the English translators rendered the Greek word by "repentance," thus stressing the emotional element and making metanoia equivalent to metameleia. In some cases the deterioration went even farther. The Roman Catholic Church externalized the idea of repentance in its sacrament of penance so that the metanoeite of the Greek Testament (Matthew 3:2) became poenitentiam agite, — "do penance," in the Latin Version. b. Epistrophe (verbal form, epistrepho). This word is next in importance to metanoia. While in the Septuagint metanoia is one of the renderings of nacham, the words epistrophe and epistrepho serve to render the Hebrew words teshubhah and shubh. They are constantly used in the sense of turning again or turning back. The Greek words must be read in the light of the Hebrew, in order to bring out the important point that the turning indicated is in reality a re-turning. In the New Testament the noun epistrophe is used but once, Acts 15:3, while the verb occurs several times. It has a somewhat wider signification than metanoeo and really indicates the final act of conversion. It denotes not merely a change of the nous or mind, but stresses the fact that a new relation is established, that the active life is made to move in another direction. This must be borne in mind in the interpretation of Acts 3:19, where the two are used alongside of each other. Sometimes metanoeo contains the idea of repentance only, while epistrepho always includes the element of faith. Metanoeo and pisteuein can be used alongside of each other; not so epistrepho and pisteuein. c. Metameleia (verbal form, metamelomai). Only the verbal form is used in the New Testament, and literally means to become a care to one afterwards. It is one of the renderings of the Hebrew nicham in the Septuagint. In the New Testament it is found only five times, namely, in Matthew 21:29; Matthew 21:32; Matthew 27:3; 2 Corinthians 7:10; Hebrews 7:21. It is evident from these passages that the word stresses the element of repentance, though this is not necessarily true repentance. In it the negative, retrospective and emotional element is uppermost, while metanoeo also includes a volitional element and denotes an energetic turn-about of the will. While metanoeo is sometimes used in the

imperative, this is never the case with metamelomai. The feelings do not permit themselves to be commanded. This word corresponds more nearly to the Latin poenitentia than does metanoeo.

B. THE BIBLICAL IDEA OF C.ONVERSION. DEFINITION. The doctrine of conversion is, of course, like all other doctrines, based on Scripture and should be accepted on that ground. Since conversion is a conscious experience in the lives of many, the testimony of experience can be added to that of the Word of God, but this testimony, however valuable it may be, does not add to the certainty of the doctrine taught in the Word of God. We may be grateful that in recent years the Psychology of Religion paid considerable attention to the fact of conversion, but should always bear in mind that, while it has brought some interesting facts to our attention, it did little or nothing to explain conversion as a religious phenomenon. The Scriptural doctrine of conversion is based not merely on the passages containing one or more of the terms mentioned in the preceding, but also on many others in which the phenomenon of conversion is described or represented concretely in living examples. The Bible does not always speak of conversion in the same sense. We may distinguish the following:

1. NATIONAL CONVERSIONS. In the days of Moses, Joshua, and the Judges, the people of Israel repeatedly turned their backs upon Jehovah, and after experiencing the displeasure of God, repented of their sin and returned unto the Lord; there was a national conversion in the kingdom of Judah in the days of Hezekiah and again in the days of Josiah. Upon the preaching of Jonah the Ninevites repented of their sins and were spared by the Lord, Jonah 3:10. These national conversions were merely of the nature of moral reformations. They may have been accompanied with some real religious conversions of individuals, but fell far short of the true conversion of all those that belonged to the nation. As a rule they were very superficial. They made their appearance under the leadership of pious rulers, and when these were succceeded by wicked men, the people at once fell back into their old habits.

2. TEMPORARY CONVERSIONS. The Bible also refers to conversions of individuals that represent no change of the heart, and are therefore of only passing significance. In the parable of the sower Jesus speaks of such as hear the word and at once receive it with joy, but have no root in themselves, and therefore endure but for a while. When tribulations and trials and persecutions come, they are speedily offended and fall away. Matthew 13:20-21. Paul makes mention of Hymenaeus and Alexander, who "made shipwreck concerning the faith," 1 Timothy 1:19-20. Cf. also 2 Thessalonians 2:17-18. And in 2 Timothy 4:10 he refers to Demas who left him, because the love of the present world gained the upper hand. And the writer of Hebrews speaks of some as falling away "who were once enlightened and tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Spirit, and tasted the good word of God, and the powers of the age to come," Hebrews 6:4-6. Finally, John says of some who had turned their backs upon the faithful: "They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us," 1 John 2:19. Such temporary conversions may for a time have the appearance of true conversions.

3. TRUE CONVERSION (CONVERSIS ACTUALIS PRIMA). True conversion is born of godly sorrow, and issues in a life of devotion to God, 2 Corinthians 7:10. It is a change that is rooted in the work of regeneration, and that is effected in the conscious life of the sinner by the Spirit of God; a change of thoughts and opinions, of desires and volitions, which involves the conviction that the former direction of life was unwise and wrong and alters the entire course of life. There are two

sides to this conversion, the one active and the other passive; the former being the act of God, by which He changes the conscious course of man's life, and the latter, the result of this action as seen in man's changing his course of life and turning to God. Consequently, a twofold definition must be given of conversion: (a) Active conversion is that act of God whereby He causes the regenerated sinner, in His conscious life, to turn to Him in repentance and faith. (b) Passive conversion is the resulting conscious act of the regenerated sinner whereby he, through the grace of God, turns to God in repentance and faith. This true conversion is the conversion with which we are primarily concerned in theology. The Word of God contains several striking examples of it, as, for instance, the conversions of Naaman, 2 Kings 5:15; Manasseh, 2 Chronicles 33:12-13; Zaccheus, Luke 19:8-9; the man born blind, John 9:38; the Samaritan woman, John 4:29; John 4:39; the eunuch, Acts 8:30 ff.; Cornelius, Acts 10:44 ff.; Paul, Acts 9:5 ff.; Lydia, Acts 16:14. and others.

4. REPEATED CONVERSION. The Bible also speaks of a repeated conversion, in which a converted person, after a temporary lapse into the ways of sin, turns back to God. Strong prefers not to use the word "conversion" for this change, but to employ such words and phrases as "breaking off, forsaking, returning from, neglects or transgressions," and "coming back to Christ, trusting Him anew." But Scripture itself uses the word "conversion" for such cases, Luke 22:32; Revelation 2:5; Revelation 2:16; Revelation 2:21-22; Revelation 3:3; Revelation 3:19. It should be understood, however, that conversion in the strictly soteriological sense of the word is never repeated. They who have experienced a true conversion may temporarily fall under the spell of evil and fall into sin; they may at times even wander far from home; but the new life is bound to re-assert itself and will eventually cause them to return to God with penitent hearts.

C. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF CONVERSION.

Conversion is simply one part of the saving process. But because it is a part of an organic process, it is naturally closely connected with every other part. Sometimes a tendency becomes apparent, especially in our country, to identify it with some of the other parts of the process or to glorify it as if it were by far the most important part of the process. It is a well known fact that some, in speaking of their redemption, never get beyond the story of their conversion and forget to tell about their spiritual growth in later years. This is undoubtedly due to the fact that in their experience conversion stands out as a sharply marked crisis, and a crisis which called for action on their part. In view of the present day tendency to lose sight of the lines of demarcation in the saving process, it is well to remind ourselves of the truth of the old Latin adage, " Qui bene distinguet, bene docet. " We should note the following characteristics of conversion:

1. Conversion belongs to the re-creative rather than to the judicial acts of God. It does not alter the state but the condition of man. At the same time it is closely connected with the divine operations in the judicial sphere. In conversion man becomes conscious of the fact that he is worthy of condemnation and is also brought to a recognition of that fact. While this already presupposes faith, it also leads to a greater manifestation of faith in Jesus Christ, a confident trusting in Him for salvation. And this faith, in turn, by appropriating the righteousness of Jesus Christ, is instrumental in the sinner's justification. In conversion man awakens to the joyous assurance that all his sins are pardoned on the basis of the merits of Jesus Christ.

2. As the word metanoia clearly indicates, conversion takes place, not in the subconscious, but in the conscious life of the sinner. This does not mean that it is not rooted in the subconscious life. Being a direct effect of regeneration, it naturally includes a transition in the operations of the new life from the subconscious to the conscious life. In view of this it may be said that conversion begins below consciousness, but that, as a completed act, it certainly falls within the range of the conscious life. This brings out the close connection between regeneration and conversion. A conversion that is not rooted in regeneration is no true conversion.

3. Conversion marks the conscious beginning, not only of the putting away of the old man, a fleeing from sin, but also of the putting on of the new man, a striving for holiness of life. In regeneration the sinful principle of the old life is already replaced by the holy principle of the new life. But it is only in conversion that this transition penetrates into the conscious life, turning it into a new and Godward direction. The sinner consciously forsakes the old sinful life and turns to a life in communion with and devoted to God. This does not mean, however, that the struggle between the old and the new is at once ended; it will continue as long as man lives.

4. If we take the word "conversion" in its most specific sense, it denotes a momentary change and not a process like sanctification. It is a change that takes place once and that cannot be repeated, though, as stated above, the Bible also speaks of the Christian’s return to God, after he has fallen into sin, as conversion. It is the believer’s turning to God and holiness again, after he has temporarily lost sight of these. In connection with regeneration we cannot possibly speak of repetition; but in the conscious life of the Christian there are ups and downs, seasons of close communion with God and seasons of estrangement from Him.

5. Over against those who think of conversion only as a definite crisis in life, it should be noted that, while conversion may be such a sharply marked crisis, it may also be a very gradual change. Older theology has always distinguished between sudden and gradual conversions (as in the cases of Jeremiah, John the Baptist, and Timothy); and in our day the psychology of conversion stresses the same distinction. Crisis conversions are most frequent in days of religious declension, and in the lives of those who have not enjoyed the privileges of a real religious education, and who have wandered far from the path of truth, of righteousness, and of holiness.

6. Finally, in our day, in which many psychologists show an inclination to reduce conversion to a general and natural phenomenon of the adolescent period of life, it becomes necessary to point out that, when we speak of conversion, we have in mind a supernatural work of God, resulting in a religious change. The psychologists sometimes intimate that conversion is but a natural phenomenon by calling attention to the fact that sudden changes also occur in the intellectual and moral life of man. Some of them hold that the emergence of the idea of sex plays an important part in conversion. Over against this rationalistic and naturalistic tendency the specific character of religious conversion must be maintained.

D. THE DIFFERENT ELEMENTS IN CONVERSION.

It already appears from the preceding that conversion comprises two elements, namely, repentance and faith. Of these the former is retrospective, and the latter prospective. Repentance is directly connected with sanctification, while faith is closely, though not exclusively, related to justification. In view of the fact that faith will be discussed in a separate chapter, we limit ourselves

to repentance here, and define it as that change wrought in the conscious life of the sinner, by which he turns away from sin.

1. THE ELEMENTS OF REPENTANCE. We distinguish three elements in repentance: a.An intellectual element. There is a change of view, a recognition of sin as involving personal guilt, defilement, and helplessness. It is designated in Scripture as epignosis hamartias (knowledge of sin), Romans 3:20; cf. Romans 1:32. If this is not accompanied by the following elements, it may manifest itself as fear of punishment, while there is as yet no hatred of sin. b. An emotional element. There is a change of feeling, manifesting itself in sorrow for sin committed against a holy and just God, Psalms 51:2; Psalms 51:10; Psalms 51:14. This element of repentance is indicated by the word metamelomai. If it is accompanied by the following element, it is a lupe kata theou (godly sorrow), but if it is not so accompanied, it is a lupe tou kosmou (sorrow of the world), manifesting itself in remorse and despair, 2 Corinthians 7:9-10; Matthew 27:3; Luke 18:23. c. A volitional element. There is also a volitional element, consisting in a change of purpose, an inward turning away from sin, and a disposition to seek pardon and cleansing, Psalms 51:5; Psalms 51:7; Psalms 51:10; Jeremiah 25:5. This includes the two other elements, and is therefore the most important aspect of repentance. It is indicated in Scripture by the word metanoia, Acts 2:38; Romans 2:4.

2. THE SACRAMENT OF PENANCE IN THE CHURCH OF ROME. The Church of Rome has externalized the idea of repentance entirely. The most important elements in its sacrament of penance are contrition, confession, satisfaction, and absolution. Of these four contrition is the only one that properly belongs to repentance, and even from this the Romanist excludes all sorrow for inborn sin, and retains only that for personal transgressions. And because only few experience real contrition, he is also satisfied with attrition. This is "the mental conviction that sin deserves punishment, but does not include trust in God and a purpose to turn away from sin. It is the fear of hell."60 Confession in the Roman Catholic Church is confession to the priest, who absolves, not declaratively, but judicially. Moreover, satisfaction consists in the sinner’s doing penance, that is, enduring something painful, or performing some difficult or distasteful task. The central thought is that such outward performances really constitute a satisfaction for sin.

3. THE SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF REPENTANCE. Over against this external view of repentance the Scriptural idea should be maintained. According to Scripture repentance is wholly an inward act, and should not be confounded with the change of life that proceeds from it. Confession of sin and reparation of wrongs are fruits of repentance. Repentance is only a negative condition, and not a positive means of salvation. While it is the sinner’s present duty, it does not offset the claims of the law on account of past transgressions. Moreover, true repentance never exists except in conjunction with faith, while, on the other hand, wherever there is true faith, there is also real repentance. The two are but different aspects of the same turning, — a turning away from sin in the direction of God. Luther sometimes spoke of a repentance preceding faith, but seems nevertheless to have agreed with Calvin in regarding true repentance as one of the fruits of faith. Lutherans are wont to stress the fact that repentance is wrought by the law and faith by the gospel. It should be borne in mind, however, that the two cannot be separated; they are simply complementary parts of the same process.

E. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CONVERSION.

During recent years psychologists have made a special study of the phenomena of conversion.

1. THE NATURE OF THIS STUDY. The nature of this study can best be learned from such works as those of Coe, The Spiritual Life; Starbuck, The Psychology of Religion; James, Varieties of Religious Experience; Ames, The Psychology of Religious Experience; Pratt,; The Religious Consciousness; Clark, The Psychology of Religious Awakening; Hughes,; The New Psychology and Religious Experience; and Horton, The Psychological Approach to Theology. For a long time Psychology neglected the facts of the religious life altogether, but for more than a quarter of a century now it has taken notice of them. At first the attention was focussed primarily — not to say exclusively — on what must have appeared to be the great central fact of religious experience, the fact of conversion. Psychologists have studied many cases of conversion inductively and have attempted to classify the various forces at work in conversion, to distinguish the different types of religious experience, to determine the period of life in which conversion is most apt to occur, and to discover the laws that control the phenomena of conversion. While they presented their study as a purely inductive investigation into the phenomena of religion as shown in individual experience, and in some cases expressed the laudable desire and intention to keep their own philosophical and religious convictions in the background, they nevertheless in several instances clearly revealed a tendency to look upon conversion as a purely natural process, just as amenable to the ordinary laws of psychology as any other psychical fact; and to overlook, if not to deny explicitly, its supernatural aspect. The more careful scholars among them ignore, but do not deny, the supernatural in conversion. They explain their silence respecting the deeper aspects of this central fact in religious experience by calling attention to their limitations as psychologists. They can only deal with observed facts and the psychical laws which evidently control them, but have no right to probe into the possible or probable spiritual background, in which these facts find their explanation. They have pointed out that conversion is not a specifically Christian phenomenon, but is also found in other religions; and that it is not necessarily a religious phenomenon, but also occurs in non-religious spheres. In fact, it is but one of the many changes that occur in the period of adolescence, "a sudden readjustment to a larger spiritual environment," a surrender of the old self to a truer one. "At its best," says Starbuck, "it is the individual will coming into harmony with what it feels to be the divine will."62 As Pratt understands it, "the essential thing about conversion is just the unification of character, the achievement of a new self."63 As to the question, whether there is anything supernatural about conversion, there is a difference of opinion among the psychologists. Coe puts the question: "Shall we therefore conclude that conversion is practically an automatic performance?" And he answers: "Not unless we first define conversion so as to ignore its profound relation to God and to the principle of a good life.... The substance of religious experiences as far transcends their emotional forms as a man transcends the clothes he wears."64 James feels that an orthodox Christian might ask him, whether his reference of the phenomena of conversion to the subliminal self does not exclude the notion of the direct presence of the Deity in it altogether; and he replies in these words: "I have to say frankly that as a psychologist I do not see why it necessarily should."65 He finds that, "if there are higher powers able to impress us, they may gain access only through the subliminal door."66 The representatives of the New Psychology, that is, of the Behaviourist School and of the School of Psychoanalysis, frankly take the position that conversion may come about in a perfectly natural way, without any supernatural influence. James and others hold that the real secret of the sudden change in conversion lies in some activity of the subliminal self, which may or may not be subject to some

divine influence. Students of Psychology are rather generally agreed that there are three distinct steps in conversion, which Ames describes as follows: "First, a sense of perplexity and uneasiness; second, a climax and turning point; and third, a relaxation marked by rest and joy."67 It is quite generally agreed that there are at least two outstanding types of conversion, which are designated in various ways. Speaking of these two kinds of conversion, Starbuck says that the one is accompanied with a violent sense of sin, and the other, with a feeling of incompleteness, a struggle after a larger life, and a desire for spiritual illumination. A distinction is made between childhood and adult conversion, between gradual and sudden (violent) conversions, and between intellectual and emotional conversions. These are but different names for the two recognized types of conversion. While conversion in general may be regarded as a rather normal experience, it is sometimes found to take on an abnormal aspect, especially during revivals, and then becomes a pathological phenomenon. As far as the time of conversion is concerned, it is pointed out that conversion does not occur with the same frequency at all periods of life, but belongs almost exclusively to the years between 10 and 25, and is extremely rare after 30. This means that it is peculiarly characteristic of the period of adolescence. Environment, education, and religious training, all affect the nature and the frequency of its occurrence.

2. EVALUATION OF THESE STUDIES. The value of these psychological studies of conversion need not be denied. It would be folly to brush them aside as of little or no significance, or to ignore them just because they do not take due account of the supernatural in conversion. They shed a welcome light on some of the laws that apply in the psychical life of man, on some of the phenomena that accompany the spiritual crisis in the conscious life of man, and on the various types of conversion and the factors that determine these. They deepen our insight into the different types of conversion, which have always been recognized in Reformed theology, confirm our conviction respecting the three elements that are found in conversion, and are quite in agreement with the theological conviction that conversion is rooted in the subconscious life; though they do not explicitly affirm, and in some cases even deny that it finds its explanation in a divine work of the Holy Spirit below the threshold of consciousness, — the work of regeneration. At the same time we should not overrate these studies. Some of them, as, for instance, the work of James is decidedly one-sided, since it is based entirely on the study of extraordinary conversions, which he found most interesting. Moreover, they have not escaped the danger of carrying the idea of the operation of psychical law in conversion too far, and of overlooking the divine and supernatural side of the important process of conversion. James deals with it all as a moral change and defines it in a general way as "the process, gradual or sudden, by which a self hitherto divided, and consciously wrong, inferior and unhappy, becomes unified and consciously right, superior, and happy, in consequence of its firmer hold upon religious realities."68 Others reduce it to a purely natural phenomenon, and even explain it materialistically, as controlled by physical laws. They do not, and even from the nature of the case cannot, go down to the root of the matter, do not and cannot penetrate to the hidden depths from which conversion springs. There is an obvious tendency to challenge the old, orthodox idea of conversion, regarding it as unscientific to teach that the religious nature of man is miraculously implanted. They do not accept the light of the Word of God, and therefore have no standard by which to judge the deeper things of life. Snowden says: "As some psychologists have tried to work out a psychology of the soul without any soul, so some of them have endeavored to construct a psychology of religion without religion. Under their treatment of it religion has evaporated into a mere subjective feeling or delusion without any

objective reality, and such a psychology of religion is baseless and worthless both as psychology and as religion."69 F. THE AUTHOR OF CONVERSION.

1. GOD THE AUTHOR OF CONVERSION. God only can be called the author of conversion. This is the clear teaching of Scripture. In Psalms 85:4 the poet prays, "Turn us, O God of our salvation," and in Jeremiah 31:18 Ephraim prays, "Turn thou me, and I shall be turned." A similar prayer is found in Lamentations 5:21. In Acts 11:18 Peter calls attention to the fact that God has granted unto the Gentiles repentance unto life. A similar statement is found in 2 Timothy 2:25. There is a twofold operation of God in the conversion of sinners, the one moral and the other hyper-physical. In general it may be said that He works repentance by means of the law, Psalms 19:7; Romans 3:20, and faith by means of the gospel, Romans 10:17. Yet we cannot separate these two, for the law also contains a presentation of the gospel, and the gospel confirms the law and threatens with its terrors, 2 Corinthians 5:11. But God also works in an immediate, hyperphysical manner in conversion. The new principle of life that is implanted in the regenerate man, does not issue into conscious action by its own inherent power, but only through the illuminating and fructifying influence of the Holy Spirit. Cf. John 6:44; Php 2:13. To teach otherwise would be Lutheran and Arminian.

2. MAN CO-OPERATES IN CONVERSION. But though God only is the author of conversion, it is of great importance to stress the fact, over against a false passivity, that there is also a certain co-operation of man in conversion. Dr. Kuyper calls attention to the fact that in the Old Testament shubh is used 74 times of conversion as a deed of man, and only 15 times, of conversion as a gracious act of God; and that the New Testament represents conversion as a deed of man 26 times, and speaks of it only 2 or 3 times as an act of God.70 It should be borne in mind, however, that this activity of man always results from a previous work of God in man, Lamentations 5:21; Php 2:13. That man is active in conversion is quite evident from such passages as Isaiah 55:7; Jeremiah 18:11; Ezekiel 18:23; Ezekiel 33:11; Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30, and others.

G. THE NECESSITY OF CONVERSION. The Bible speaks in absolute terms of the necessity of regeneration; not so of the necessity of conversion. It tells us plainly that, "Except a man be born again (anew, or, from above), he cannot see the kingdom of God," John 3:3, but does not speak of the need of conversion in the same general way, which allows of no exceptions. Naturally, they who identify the two cannot admit this distinction. Undoubtedly there are passages of Scripture which contain a call to conversion, in order to enjoy the blessings of God, such as Ezekiel 33:11; Isaiah 55:7, and these imply the necessity of conversion in the case of those addressed or mentioned there. The passage that comes nearest to an absolute declaration is found in Matthew 18:3, "Verily, I say unto you, Except ye turn and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven." But even in this case one might insist that this refers only to the persons addressed. The expressed or implied exhortations to turn about, found in Scripture, come only to those to whom they are addressed and do not necessarily mean that every one must pass through a conscious conversion, in order to be saved. The question as to the necessity of conversion should be answered with discrimination. Those who die in infancy must be regenerated, in order to be saved, but cannot very well experience conversion, a conscious turning from sin unto God. In the case of adults, however, conversion is absolutely essential, but it need not appear in each one’s life as a strongly marked crisis. Such a definite crisis can, as a rule, be expected only in the lives of those who, after a life of sin and shame, are arrested in their evil

course by the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit and by the effectual call to conversion. In them the life of conscious enmity is at once transformed into a life of friendship with God. It can hardly be looked for, however, in the lives of those who, like John the Baptist and Timothy, served the Lord from early youth. At the same time, conversion is necessary in the case of all adults in the sense that its elements, namely, repentance and faith must be present in their lives. This means that they must in some form experience the essence of conversion.

H. RELATION OF CONVERSION TO OTHER STAGES OF THE SAVING PROCESS.

1. TO REGENERATION. This has already been indicated to some extent. The two words "regeneration" and "conversion" are used synonymously by some. Yet in present day theology they generally refer to different, though closely related matters. The principle of the new life implanted in regeneration comes into active expression in the conscious life of the sinner when he is converted. The change that is effected in the subconscious life in regeneration passes into the conscious life in conversion. Logically, conversion follows regeneration. In the case of those who are regenerated in infancy, there is necessarily a temporal separation of the two, but in the case of those who are regenerated after they have come to years of discretion, the two generally coincide. In regeneration the sinner is entirely passive, but in conversion he is both passive and active. The former can never be repeated, but the latter can to a certain extent, though the conversio actualis prima occurs but once.

2. TO EFFECTUAL CALLING. Conversion is the direct result of internal calling. As an effect in man, internal calling and the beginning of conversion really coincide. The situation is not such that God calls the sinner, and that then the sinner in his own strength turns to God. It is exactly in the internal calling that man becomes conscious of the fact that God is working conversion in him. The truly converted man will feel all along that his conversion is the work of God. This distinguishes him from the man who aims at superficial moral improvement. The latter works in his own strength.

3. TO FAITH. As already indicated, conversion consists in repentance and faith, so that faith is really a part of conversion. Yet we should distinguish here. There are two kinds of true faith, each having a distinct object, namely, (a) a recognition of the truth of God’s revelation of redemption, not merely in a detached, historical sense, but in such a way that it is recognized as a reality that cannot be ignored with impunity, because it affects life in a vital way; and (b) a recognition and acceptance of the salvation offered in Jesus Christ, which is saving faith in the proper sense of the word. Now there is no doubt that faith in the former sense is present at once in conversion. The Holy Spirit causes the sinner to see the truth as it applies to his own life, so that he comes under "conviction," and thus becomes conscious of his sin. But he may remain in this stage for some time, so that it is hard to say in how far saving faith, that is, trust in Christ unto salvation, is at once included in conversion. There is no doubt that, logically, repentance and the knowledge of sin precedes the faith that yields to Christ in trusting love.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY:

Why did Beza prefer to call conversion resipiscentia rather than poenitentia? Why is the term ’repentance’ inadequate to express the idea of conversion? How did Luther’s conception of repentance differ from that of Calvin? Is conversion always preceded by ’conviction of sin’? Can we speak of prevenient grace relative to conversion? Is conversion an instantaneous act or is it a

process? What is meant by the term 'daily conversion'? What is the proper view of the necessity of conversion? Does covenant preaching have a tendency to silence the call to conversion? What is the Methodist conception of conversion? Are the methods of the revival meetings commendable? What about the lasting character of the conversions of which they boast? Do the statistics of the Psychology of conversion give us any information on this point?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 127-181; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Salute, pp. 93-97; ibid., Het Werk van den Heiligen Geest II, pp. 197-203; A. A. Hodge, Outlines of Theology, pp. 487-495; Strong, Syst. Theol., pp. 829-849; McPherson, Chr. Dogm., pp. 393-397; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. II, pp. 529-537; Alexander, Syst. of Bib. Theol. II, pp. 38-384; Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 249-258; Vos, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 66-81; Pope, Chr. Dogm. II, pp. 367-376; Schmid, Doct. Theol. of the Ev. Luth. Church, pp. 465, 466, 470-484; Drummond, Studies in Chr. Doct., pp. 488-491; Macintosh, Theol. as an Empirical Science, pp. 134-136; Mastricht, Godgeleerdheit, IV, 4; Walden, The Great Meaning of Metanoia; Jackson, The Fact of Conversion; Coe, The Spiritual Life; Starbuck, The Psychology of Religion; James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, pp. 189-258; Ames, The Psychology of Religious Experience, pp. 257-276; Clark, The Psychology of Religious Awakening; Pratt, The Religious Consciousness, pp. 122-164; Steven, The Psychology of the Christian Soul, pp. 142-298; Hughes, The New Psychology and Religious Experience, pp. 213-241; Snowden, The Psychology of Religion, pp. 143-199.

04.4.0.08. Faith

VIII. Faith The preceding chapter dealt with conversion in general, and also gave a brief description of the negative element of conversion, namely, repentance. The present chapter will be devoted to a discussion of the positive element, which is faith. This is of such central significance in soteriology that it calls for separate treatment. It is best taken up at this point, not only because faith is a part of conversion, but also because it is instrumentally related to justification. Its discussion forms a natural transition to the doctrine of justification by faith.

A. SCRIPTURAL TERMS FOR FAITH

1. THE OLD TESTAMENT TERMS AND THEIR MEANING. The Old Testament contains no noun for faith, unless emunah be so considered in Habakkuk 2:4. This word ordinarily means "faithfulness," Deuteronomy 32:4; Psalms 36:5; Psalms 37:3; Psalms 40:11, but the way in which the statement of Habakkuk is applied in the New Testament, Romans 1:17; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38, would seem to indicate that the prophet used the term in the sense of faith. The most common Old Testament word for "to believe" is he'emin, the hiphil form of ' aman. In qal it means "to nurse" or "to nourish"; in; niphal, "to be firm" or "established," "steadfast"; and in hiphil, "to consider established," "to regard as true," or "to believe." The word is construed with the prepositions beth and lamedh. Construed with the former, it evidently refers to a confident resting on a person or thing or testimony; while, with the latter, it signifies the assent given to a testimony, which is accepted as true. — The word next in importance is batach, which is construed with beth and means "to confide in," "to lean upon," or "to trust." It does not emphasize the element of intellectual assent, but rather that of confident reliance. In distinction from he'emin, which is generally rendered by pisteuo in the Septuagint, this word is usually translated by elpizo or peithomai. The man who trusts in God is one who fixes all his hope for the present and for the future on Him. — There is still another word, namely, chasah, which is used less frequently, and means "to hide one's self," or "to flee for refuge." In this, too, the element of trust is clearly in the foreground.

2. THE NEW TESTAMENT TERMS AND THEIR MEANING. Two words are used throughout the New Testament, namely, pistis and the cognate verb pisteuein. These do not always have exactly the same connotation. a. The different meanings of pistis. (1) In classical Greek. The word pistis has two meanings in classical Greek. It denotes: (a) a conviction based on confidence in a person and in his testimony, which as such is distinguished from knowledge resting on personal investigation; and (b) the confidence itself on which such a conviction rests. This is more than a mere intellectual conviction that a person is reliable; it presupposes a personal relation to the object of confidence, a going out of one's self, to rest in another. The Greeks did not ordinarily use the word in this sense, to express their relation to the gods, since they regarded these as hostile to men, and therefore as objects of fear rather than of trust.—(2) In the Septuagint. The transition from the use of the word pistis in classical Greek to the New Testament usage, in which the meaning "confidence" or "trust" is all-important, is found in the Septuagint use of the verb pisteuein

rather than in that of the noun pistis which occurs in it but once with anything like its New Testament meaning. The verb pisteuein generally serves as a rendering of the word he'emin, and thus expresses the idea of faith both in the sense of assent to the Word of God and of confident trusting in Him. — (3) In the New Testament. There are a few instances in which the word has a passive meaning, namely, that of "fidelity" or "faithfulness," which is its usual meaning in the Old Testament, Romans 3:3; Galatians 5:22; Titus 2:10. It is generally used in an active sense. The following special meanings should be distinguished: (a) an intellectual belief or conviction, resting on the testimony of another, and therefore based on trust in this other rather than on personal investigation, Php 1:27; 2 Corinthians 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:13, and especially in the writings of John; and (b) a confiding trust or confidence in God or, more particularly, in Christ with a view to redemption from sin and to future blessedness. So especially in the Epistles of Paul, Romans 3:22; Romans 3:25; Romans 5:1-2; Romans 9:30; Romans 9:32; Galatians 2:16; Ephesians 2:8; Ephesians 3:12, and many other passages. This trust must be distinguished from that on which the intellectual trust mentioned under (a) above, rests. The order in the successive stages of faith is as follows: (a) general confidence in God and Christ; (b) acceptance of their testimony on the basis of that trust; and (c) yielding to Christ and trusting in Him for the salvation of the soul. The last is specifically called saving faith. b. The different constructions of pisteuein and their meaning. We have the following constructions: (1) Pisteuein with the dative. This generally denotes believing assent. If the object is a person, it is ordinarily employed in a somewhat pregnant sense, including the deeply religious idea of a devoted, believing trust. When the object is a thing, it is usually the Word of God, and when it is a person, it is generally either God or Christ, John 4:50; John 5:47; Acts 16:34; Romans 4:3; 2 Timothy 1:12. — (2) Pisteuein followed by hoti. In this construction the conjunction generally serves to introduce what is believed. On the whole this construction is weaker than the preceding. Of the twenty passages in which it is found, fourteen occur in the writings of John. In a couple of cases the matter believed hardly rises into the religious sphere, John 9:18; Acts 9:26, while in some of the others it is decidedly of soteriological import, Matthew 9:28; Romans 10:9; 1 Thessalonians 4:14. — (3) Pisteuein with prepositions. Here the deeper meaning of the word, that of firm trustful reliance, comes to its full rights. The following constructions come into consideration: (a) Construction with en. This is the most frequent construction in the Septuagint, though it is all but absent from the New Testament. The only certain case is Mark 1:15, where the object is the gospel. Other possible instances are John 3:15; Ephesians 1:13, where the object would be Christ. The implication of this construction seems to be that of a firmly fixed confidence in its object. (b) Construction with epi and the dative. It is found only in the quotation from Isaiah 28:16, which appears in three passages, namely, Romans 9:33; Romans 10:11; 1 Peter 2:6, and in Luke 24:25; 1 Timothy 1:16. It expresses the idea of a steady and restful repose, a reliance on its object. (c) Construction with epi and the accusative. This is used seven times in the New Testament. In a couple of cases the object is God, as He operates in the saving of the soul in Christ; in all the others it is Christ. This construction includes the idea of moral motion, of mental direction towards the object. The main idea is that of turning with confident trust to Jesus Christ. (d) Construction with eis. This is the most characteristic construction of the New Testament. It occurs forty-nine times. About fourteen of these instances are Johannine, and the remainder Pauline. Except in one case, the object is always a person, rarely God, and most commonly Christ. This construction has a very pregnant meaning, expressing, as it does, "an absolute transference of trust from ourselves to another, a complete self-surrender to God." Cf.

John 2:11; John 3:16; John 3:18; John 3:36; John 4:39; John 14:1; Romans 10:14; Galatians 2:16; Php 1:29.

B. FIGURATIVE EXPRESSIONS USED TO DESCRIBE THE ACTIVITY OF FAITH

There are several figurative expressions of the activity of faith in Scripture. The following are some of the most important.

1. It is spoken of as a looking to Jesus, John 3:14-15 (comp. Numbers 21:9). This is a very appropriate figure, because it comprises the various elements of faith, especially when it refers to a steadfast looking to anyone, as in the passage indicated. There is in it an act of perception (intellectual element), a deliberate fixing of the eye on the object (volitional element), and a certain satisfaction to which this concentration testifies (emotional element).

2. It is also represented as a hungering and thirsting, an eating and drinking, Matthew 5:6; John 6:50-58; John 4:14. When men really hunger and thirst spiritually, they feel that something is wanting, are conscious of the indispensable character of that which is lacking, and endeavor to obtain it. All this is characteristic of the activity of faith. In eating and drinking we not only have the conviction that the necessary food and drink is present, but also the confident expectation that it will satisfy us, just as in appropriating Christ by faith we have a certain measure of confidence that He will save us.

3. Finally, there are also the figures of coming to Christ and receiving Him, John 5:40; John 7:37 (cf. John 7:38); John 6:44, John 6:65; John 1:12. The figure of coming to Christ pictures faith as an action in which man looks away from himself and his own merits, to be clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ; and that of receiving Christ stresses the fact that faith is an appropriating organ.

C. THE DOCTRINE OF FAITH IN HISTORY.

1. BEFORE THE REFORMATION. From the very earliest times of the Christian Church faith stood out in the minds of the leaders as the one great condition of salvation. Alongside of it repentance also soon became rather prominent. At the same time there was little reflection at first on the nature of faith and but little understanding of the relation of faith to the other parts of the ordo salutis. There was no current definition of faith. While there was a tendency to use the word "faith" to denote the acceptance of the truth on testimony, it was also in some cases employed in a deeper sense, so as to include the idea of self-surrender to the truth intellectually received. The Alexandrians contrasted pistis and gnosis, and regarded the former primarily as initial and imperfect knowledge. Tertullian stressed the fact that faith accepts a thing on authority, and not because it is warranted by human reason. He also used the term in an objective sense, as a designation of that which must be believed, — the regula fidei. Even up to the time of Augustine little attention was devoted to the nature of faith, though it was always acknowledged to be the pre-eminent means in the appropriation of salvation. Augustine, however, gave the matter a greater measure of consideration. He spoke of faith in more than one sense. Sometimes he regarded it as nothing more than intellectual assent to the truth. But he conceived of evangelical or justifying faith as including also the elements of self-surrender and love. This faith is perfected in love and thus becomes the principle of good works. He did not have a proper conception, however, of the relation between faith and justification. This is partly due to the fact that he did not

carefully distinguish between justification and sanctification. The deeper conception of faith that is found in Augustine was not shared by the Church in general. There was a tendency to confound faith with orthodoxy, that is, with the holding of an orthodox faith. The Scholastics distinguished between a fides informis, that is, a mere intellectual assent to the truth taught by the Church, and a fides formata (charitate), that is, a faith informed (given a characteristic form) by love, and regarded the latter as the only faith that justifies, since it involves an infusion of grace. It is only as fides formata that faith becomes active for good and becomes the first of the theological virtues by which man is placed in the right relation to God. Strictly speaking it is the love by which faith is perfected that justifies. Thus in faith itself a foundation was laid for human merit. Man is justified, not exclusively by the imputation of the merits of Christ, but also by inherent grace. Thomas Aquinas defines the virtue of faith as a "habit of the mind, by reason of which eternal life has its inception in us, inasmuch as it causes the intellect to give its assent to things that are not seen."

2. AFTER THE REFORMATION. While the Roman Catholics stressed the fact that justifying faith is merely assent and has its seat in the understanding, the Reformers generally regarded it as fiducia (trust), having its seat in the will. On the relative importance of the elements in faith there have been differences, however, even among Protestants. Some regard the definition of Calvin as superior to that of the Heidelberg Catechism. Says Calvin: "We shall now have a full definition of faith if we say that it is a firm and sure knowledge of the divine favour toward us, founded on the truth of a free promise in Christ, and revealed to our minds, and sealed in our hearts, by the Holy Spirit."71 The Heidelberg Catechism, on the other hand, also brings in the element of confidence when it answers the question, "What is true faith?" as follows: "True faith is not only a sure knowledge whereby I hold for truth all that God has revealed to us in His Word, but also a firm confidence which the Holy Spirit works in my heart by the gospel, that not only to others, but to me also, remission of sins, everlasting righteousness and salvation are freely given by God, merely of grace, only for the sake of Christ's merits."72 But it is quite evident from the connection that Calvin means to include the element of confidence in the "firm and sure knowledge" of which he speaks. Speaking of the boldness with which we may approach God in prayer, he even says: "Such boldness springs only from confidence in the divine favour and salvation. So true is this, that the term faith is often used as equivalent to confidence. "73 He absolutely rejects the fiction of the Schoolmen who insist "that faith is an assent with which any despiser of God may receive what is delivered in Scripture."74 But there is an even more important point of difference between the Reformers' conception of faith and that of the Scholastics. The latter recognized in faith itself some real and even meritorious efficacy (meritum ex congruo) in disposing to, and in procuring or obtaining justification. The Reformers, on the other hand, were unanimous and explicit in teaching that justifying faith does not justify by any meritorious or inherent efficacy of its own, but only as the instrument for receiving or laying hold on what God has provided in the merits of Christ. They regarded this faith primarily as a gift of God and only secondarily as an activity of man in dependence on God. The Arminians revealed a Romanizing tendency, when they conceived of faith as a meritorious work of man, on the basis of which he is accepted in favor by God. Schleiermacher, the father of modern theology, hardly mentions saving faith and knows absolutely nothing of faith as childlike trust in God. He says that faith "is nothing but the incipient experience of the satisfaction of our spiritual need by Christ." It is a new psychological experience, a new consciousness, rooted in a feeling, not of Christ, nor of any doctrine, but of the harmony of the Infinite, of the Whole of things, in which the soul finds God. Ritschl agreed with Schleiermacher in

holding that faith springs up as the result of contact with the divine reality, but finds its object, not in any idea or doctrine, nor in the whole of things, but in the Person of Christ, as the supreme revelation of God. It is not a passive assent, but an active principle. In it man makes God's self-end, that is, the kingdom of God, his own, begins to work for the kingdom, and in doing this finds salvation. The views of Schleiermacher and Ritschl characterize a great deal of modern liberal theology. Faith, in this theology, is not a heaven-wrought experience, but a human achievement; not the mere receiving of a gift, but a meritorious action; not the acceptance of a doctrine, but a "making Christ Master" in an attempt to pattern one's life after the example of Christ. This view met with strong opposition, however, in the theology of crisis, which stresses the fact that saving faith is never a merely natural psychological experience, is strictly speaking an act of God rather than of man, never constitutes a permanent possession of man, and is in itself merely a hohlraum (empty space), quite incapable of effecting salvation. Barth and Brunner regard faith simply as the divine response, wrought in man by God, to the Word of God in Christ, that is, not so much to any doctrine, as to the divine command or the divine act in the work of redemption. It is the affirmative answer, the "yes" to the call of God, a "yes" that is elicited by God Himself.

D. THE IDEA OF FAITH IN SCRIPTURE.

1. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. Evidently the New Testament writers, in stressing faith as the fundamental principle of the religious life, were not conscious of shifting ground and of departing from the Old Testament representation. They regard Abraham as the type of all true believers (Romans 4:1-25; Galatians 3:1-29; Hebrews 11:1-40; James 2:1-26), and those who are of faith as the true sons of Abraham (Romans 2:28-29; Romans 4:12; Romans 4:16; Galatians 3:9). Faith is never treated as a novelty of the new covenant, nor is any distinction drawn between the faith of the two covenants. There is a sense of continuity, and the proclamation of faith is regarded as the same in both dispensations, John 5:46; John 12:38-39; Habakkuk 2:4; Romans 1:17; Romans 10:16; Galatians 3:11; Hebrews 10:38. In both Testaments faith is the same radical self-commitment to God, not merely as the highest good of the soul, but as the gracious Saviour of the sinner. The only difference that is apparent, is due to the progressive work of redemption, and this is more or less evident even within the confines of the Old Testament itself. a. In the patriarchal period. In the earlier portions of the Old Testament there is but little in the line of abstract statement respecting the way of salvation. The essence of the religion of the patriarchs is exhibited to us in action. The promise of God is in the foreground, and the case of Abraham is designed to set forth the idea that the proper response to it is that of faith. The whole life of Noah was determined by trust in God and in His promises, but it is especially Abraham that is set before us as the typical believer, who commits himself to God with unwavering trust in His promises and is justified by faith. b. In the period of the law. The giving of the law did not effect a fundamental change in the religion of Israel, but merely introduced a change in its external form. The law was not substituted for the promise; neither was faith supplanted by works. Many of the Israelites, indeed, looked upon the law in a purely legalistic spirit and sought to base their claim to salvation on a scrupulous fulfilment of it as a body of external precepts. But in the case of those who understood its real nature, who felt the inwardness and spirituality of the law, it served to deepen the sense of sin and to sharpen the conviction that salvation could be expected only from the grace of God. The essence of real piety was ever-increasingly seen to consist in a confident trust in the God of salvation. While the Old Testament clearly stresses the fear of the Lord, a large

number of expressions, such as hoping, trusting, seeking refuge in God, looking to Him, relying on Him, fixing the heart on Him, and cleaving to Him — make it abundantly evident that this fear is not a craven but a child-like, reverent fear, and emphasize the necessity of that loving self-commitment to God which is the essence of saving faith. Even in the period of the law faith is distinctly soteriological, looking to the Messianic salvation. It is a trusting in the God of salvation, and a firm reliance on His promises for the future.

2. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. When the Messiah came in fulfilment of the prophecies, bringing the hoped-for salvation, it became necessary for the vehicles of God's revelation to direct God's people to the person of their Redeemer. This was all the more necessary in view of the fact that the fulfilment came in a form which many did not expect, and which apparently did not correspond with the promise. a. In the Gospels. The demand for faith in Jesus as the Redeemer, promised and hoped for, appeared as something characteristic of the new age. "To believe" meant to become a Christian. This demand seemed to create a gulf between the old dispensation and the new. The beginning of the latter is even called "the coming of faith," Galatians 3:23; Galatians 3:25. It is the characteristic thing of the Gospels that in them Jesus is constantly offering Himself as the object of faith, and that in connection with the highest concerns of the soul. The Gospel of John stresses the higher aspects of this faith more than the Synoptics. b. In the Acts. In the Acts of the Apostles faith is required in the same general sense. By the preaching of the apostles men are brought to the obedience of faith in Christ; and this faith becomes the formative principle of the new community. Different tendencies developed in the Church and gave rise to the different modes of dealing with faith that became apparent in the writings of the New Testament. c. In the Epistle of James. James had to rebuke the Jewish tendency to conceive of the faith that was well pleasing to God as a mere intellectual assent to the truth, a faith that did not yield appropriate fruit. His idea of the faith that justifies does not differ from that of Paul, but he stresses the fact that this faith must manifest itself in good works. If it does not, it is a dead faith, and is, in fact, non-existent. d. In the Epistles of Paul. Paul had to contend particularly with the ingrained legalism of Jewish thought. The Jew boasted of the righteousness of the law. Consequently, the apostle had to vindicate the place of faith as the only instrument of salvation. In doing this, he naturally dwelt a great deal on Christ as the object of faith, since it is from this object only that faith derives its efficacy. Faith justifies and saves only because it lays hold on Jesus Christ. e. In the Epistle to the Hebrews. The writer of Hebrews also regards Christ as the proper object of saving faith, and teaches that there is no right-eousness except through faith, Hebrews 10:38; Hebrews 11:7. But the danger against which the writer of this letter had to guard was not that of falling from faith into works, but rather that of falling from faith into despair. He speaks of faith as "the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen," Hebrews 11:1. He exhorts the readers to an attitude of faith, which will enable them to rise from the seen to the unseen, from the present to the future, from the temporal to the eternal, and which will enable them to be patient in the midst of sufferings. f. In the Epistles of Peter. Peter also writes to readers that were in danger of becoming discouraged, though not of falling back into Judaism. The circumstances in which they found themselves prompted him to lay special emphasis on the relation of faith to the consummated salvation, in order to quicken within their hearts the hope that would sustain them in their present trials, the hope of an unseen and eternal glory. The Second Epistle stresses the importance of the knowledge of faith as a safeguard against prevailing errors. g. In the Writings of John. John had to contend with an incipient Gnosticism, which falsely emphasized knowledge (gnosis) and despised

simple faith. The former was supposed to carry with it a far greater degree of blessedness than the latter. Hence John makes it a point to magnify the blessings of faith. He insists, not so much on the certainty and glory of the future inheritance which faith secures, as on the fulness of the present enjoyment of salvation which it brings. Faith embraces knowledge as a firm conviction and makes believers at once possessors of the new life and of eternal salvation. Meanwhile John does not neglect the fact that it also reaches out into the future.

E. FAITH IN GENERAL. The word "faith" is not exclusively a religious and theological term. It is often used in a general and non-religious sense, and even so has more than one connotation. The following uses of the term deserve particular attention. It may denote:

1. FAITH AS LITTLE MORE THAN MERE OPINION. The word "faith" is sometimes used in a rather loose and popular sense, to denote a persuasion of the truth which is stronger than mere opinion, and yet weaker than knowledge. Even Locke defined faith as "the assent of the mind to propositions which are probably, but not certainly, true." In popular language we often say of that of which we are not absolutely sure, but which we at the same time feel constrained to recognize as true: "I believe that, but I am not sure of it." Consequently some philosophers have found the distinguishing characteristic of faith in the lesser degree of certainty which it yields—Locke, Hume, Kant, and others.

2. FAITH AS IMMEDIATE CERTAINTY. In connection with science faith is often spoken of as immediate certainty. There is a certainty which man obtains by means of perception, experience, and logical deduction, but there is also an intuitive certainty. In every science there are axioms that cannot be demonstrated and intuitive convictions that are not acquired by perception or logical deduction. Dr. Bavinck says "Het gebied der onmiddelijke zekerheid is veel grooter dan dat der demonstratieve, en deze laatste is altijd weer op de eerste gebouwd, en staat en valt met deze. Ook is deze intuitieve zekerheid niet minder maar grooter dan die, welke langs den weg van waarneming en logische demonstratie verkregen wordt." The sphere of immediate certainty is greater than that of demonstrative certainty. In both cases now mentioned faith is regarded exclusively as an activity of the intellect.

3. FAITH AS A CONVICTION BASED ON TESTIMONY AND INCLUDING TRUST. In common parlance the word "faith" is often used to denote the conviction that the testimony of another is true, and that what he promises will be done; a conviction based only on his recognized veracity and fidelity. It is really a believing acceptance of what another says on the basis of the confidence which he inspires. And this faith, this conviction based on confidence, often leads to a further confidence: trust in a friend in time of need, in the ability of a doctor to give aid in times of sickness, and in that of a pilot to guide the vessel into the harbor, and so on. In this case faith is more than a mere matter of the intellect. The will is brought into play, and the element of trust comes to the foreground.

F. FAITH IN THE RELIGIOUS SENSE AND PARTICULARLY SAVING FAITH. The distinguishing characteristics of faith in the theological sense have not always been stated in the same way. This will become evident, when we consider the concept, the elements, the object, and the ground of faith.

1. THE CONCEPT OF FAITH: FOUR KINDS OF FAITH DISTINGUISHED. As a psychological phenomenon faith in the religious sense does not differ from faith in general. If faith in general is a persuasion of the truth founded on the testimony of one in whom we have confidence and on whom we rely, and therefore rests on authority, Christian faith in the most comprehensive sense is man's persuasion of the truth of Scripture on the basis of the authority of God. The Bible does not always speak of religious faith in the same sense, and this gave rise to the following distinctions in theology. a. Historical faith. This is a purely intellectual apprehension of the truth, devoid of any moral or spiritual purpose. The name does not imply that it embraces only historical facts and events to the exclusion of moral and spiritual truths; nor that it is based on the testimony of history, for it may have reference to contemporaneous facts or events, John 3:2. It is rather expressive of the idea that this faith accepts the truths of Scripture as one might accept a history in which one is not personally interested. This faith may be the result of tradition, of education, of public opinion, of an insight into the moral grandeur of Scripture, and so on, accompanied with the general operations of the Holy Spirit. It may be very orthodox and Scriptural, but is not rooted in the heart, Matthew 7:26; Acts 26:27-28; James 2:19. It is a fides humana and not a fides divina. b. Miraculous faith. The so-called miraculous faith is a persuasion wrought in the mind of a person that a miracle will be performed by him or in his behalf. God can give a person a work to do that transcends his natural powers and enable him to do it. Every attempt to perform a work of that kind requires faith. This is very clear in cases in which man appears merely as the instrument of God or as the one who announces that God will work a miracle, for such a man must have full confidence that God will not put him to shame. In the last analysis God only works miracles, though He may do it through human instrumentality. This is faith of miracles in the active sense, Matthew 17:20; Mark 16:17-18. It is not necessarily, but may be, accompanied with saving faith. The faith of miracles may also be passive, namely, the persuasion that God will work a miracle in one's behalf. It, too, may or may not be accompanied with saving faith, Matthew 8:10-13; John 11:22 (comp. John 11:25-27); John 11:40; Acts 14:9. The question is often raised, whether such a faith has a legitimate place in the life of man to-day. Roman Catholics answer this question affirmatively, while Protestants are inclined to give a negative answer. They point out that there is no Scriptural basis for such a faith, but do not deny that miracles may still occur. God is entirely sovereign also in this respect, and the Word of God leads us to expect another cycle of miracles in the future. c. Temporal faith. This is a persuasion of the truths of religion which is accompanied with some promptings of the conscience and a stirring of the affections, but is not rooted in a regenerate heart. The name is derived from Matthew 13:20-21. It is called a temporary faith, because it is not permanent and fails to maintain itself in days of trial and persecution. This does not mean that it may not last as long as life lasts. It is quite possible that it will perish only at death, but then it surely ceases. This faith is sometimes called a hypocritical faith, but that is not entirely correct, for it does not necessarily involve conscious hypocrisy. They who possess this faith usually believe that they have the true faith. It might better be called an imaginary faith, seemingly genuine, but evanescent in character. It differs from historical faith in the personal interest it shows in the truth and in the reaction of the feelings upon it. Great difficulty may be experienced in attempting to distinguish it from true saving faith. Christ says of the one who so believes: "He hath no root in himself," Matthew 13:21. It is a faith that does not spring from the root implanted in regeneration, and therefore is not an expression of the new life that is embedded in the depths of the soul. In general it may be said that temporal faith is grounded in the emotional life and seeks personal

enjoyment rather than the glory of God. d. True Saving faith. True saving faith is a faith that has its seat in the heart and is rooted in the regenerate life. A distinction is often made between the habitus and the actus of faith. Back of both of these, however, lies the semen fidei. This faith is not first of all an activity of man, but a potentiality wrought by God in the heart of the sinner. The seed of faith is implanted in man in regeneration. Some theologians speak of this as the habitus of faith, but others more correctly call it the semen fidei. It is only after God has implanted the seed of faith in the heart that man can exercise faith. This is apparently what Barth has in mind also, when he, in his desire to stress the fact that salvation is exclusively a work of God, says that God rather than man is the subject of faith. The conscious exercise of faith gradually forms a habitus, and this acquires a fundamental and determining significance for the further exercise of faith. When the Bible speaks of faith, it generally refers to faith as an activity of man, though born of the work of the Holy Spirit. Saving faith may be defined as a certain conviction, wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, as to the truth of the gospel, and a hearty reliance (trust) on the promises of God in Christ. In the last analysis, it is true, Christ is the object of saving faith, but He is offered to us only in the gospel.

2. THE ELEMENTS OF FAITH. In speaking of the different elements of faith we should not lose sight of the fact that faith is an activity of man as a whole, and not of any part of man. Moreover, the soul functions in faith through its ordinary faculties, and not through any special faculty. It is an exercise of the soul which has this in common with all similar exercises, that it appears simple, and yet on closer scrutiny is found to be complex and intricate. And therefore, in order to obtain a proper conception of faith, it is necessary to distinguish between the various elements which it comprises. a. An intellectual element (notitia). There is an element of knowledge in faith, in connection with which the following points should be considered:

(1) The character of this knowledge. The knowledge of faith consists in a positive recognition of the truth, in which man accepts as true whatsoever God says in His Word, and especially what He says respecting the deep depravity of man and the redemption which is in Christ Jesus. Over against Rome the position must be maintained that this sure knowledge belongs to the essence of faith; and in opposition to such theologians as Sandeman, Wardlaw, Alexander, Chalmers, and others, that a mere intellectual acceptance of the truth is not the whole of faith. On the one hand it would be an over-estimation of the knowledge of faith, if it were regarded as a complete comprehension of the objects of faith. But on the other hand it would also be an under- estimation of it, if it were considered as a mere taking notice of the things believed, without the conviction that they are true. Some modern liberals take this view and consequently like to speak of faith as a venture. It is a spiritual insight into the truths of the Christian religion that find response in the heart of the sinner.

(2) The certainty of this knowledge. The knowledge of faith should not be regarded as less certain than other knowledge. Our Heidelberg Catechism assures us that true faith is among other things also "a certain (sure, incontestable) knowledge."75 This is in harmony with Hebrews 11:1, which speaks of it as "the assurance of things hoped for, a conviction of things not seen" It makes future and unseen things subjectively real and certain for the believer. The knowledge of faith is mediated for, and imparted to, us by the testimony of God in His Word, and is accepted by us as certain and reliable on the basis of the veracity of God. The certainty of this knowledge has its warrant in God Himself, and consequently nothing can be more certain. And it is quite essential

that this should be so, for faith is concerned with spiritual and eternal things, in which certainty is needed, if anywhere. There must be certainty as to the reality of the object of faith; if there is not, faith is in vain. Machen deplores the fact that many lose sight of this fact in the present day. Says he: "The whole trouble is that faith is being considered as a beneficent quality of the soul without respect to the reality or unreality of its object; and the moment faith comes to be considered in that way, in that moment it is destroyed."76

(3) The measure of this knowledge. It is impossible to determine with precision just how much knowledge is absolutely required in saving faith. If saving faith is the acceptance of Christ as He is offered in the gospel, the question naturally arises, How much of the gospel must a man know, in order to be saved? Or, to put it in the words of Dr. Machen: "What, to put it baldly, are the minimum doctrinal requirements, in order that a man may be a Christian?"77 In general it may be said that it must be sufficient to give the believer some idea of the object of faith. All true saving faith must contain at least a minimum of knowledge, not so much of the divine revelation in general as of the Mediator and His gracious operations. The more real knowledge one has of the truths of redemption, the richer and fuller one's faith will be, if all other things are equal. Naturally one who accepts Christ by a true faith, will also be ready and willing to accept God's testimony as a whole. It is of the utmost importance, especially in our day, that the churches should see to it that their members have a fairly good, and not merely a hazy, understanding of the truth. Particularly in this undogmatic age, they should be far more diligent than they are in the indoctrination of their youth. b. An emotional element (assensus). Barth calls attention to the fact that the time when man accepts Christ by faith is the existential moment of his life, in which he ceases to consider the object of faith in a detached and disinterested way, and begins to feel a lively interest in it. It is not necessary to adopt Barth's peculiar construction of the doctrine of faith, to admit the truth of what he says on this point. When one embraces Christ by faith, he has a deep conviction of the truth and reality of the object of faith, feels that it meets an important need in his life, and is conscious of an absorbing interest in it, — and this is assent. It is very difficult to distinguish this assent from the knowledge of faith just described, because, as we have seen, it is exactly the distinguishing characteristic of the knowledge of saving faith, that it carries with it a conviction of the truth and reality of its object. Hence some theologians have shown an inclination to limit the knowledge of faith to a mere taking cognizance of the object of faith; but (1) this is contrary to experience, for in true faith there is no knowledge that does not include a hearty conviction of the truth and reality of its object and an interest in it; and (2) this would make the knowledge in saving faith identical with that which is found in a purely historical faith, while the difference between historical and saving faith lies in part exactly at this point. Because it is so difficult to make a clear distinction, some theologians prefer to speak of only two elements in saving faith, namely, knowledge and personal trust. These are the two elements mentioned in the Heidelberg Catechism when it says that true faith "is not only a certain knowledge whereby I hold for true all that God has revealed to us in His Word, but also a hearty trust which the Holy Ghost works in me by the gospel."78 It probably deserves preference to regard knowledge and assent simply as two aspects of the same element in faith. Knowledge may then be regarded as its more passive and receptive side, and assent as its more active and transitive side. c. A volitional element (fiducia). This is the crowning element of faith. Faith is not merely a matter of the intellect, nor of the intellect and the emotions combined; it is also a matter of the will, determining the direction of the soul, an act of the soul going out towards its object and appropriating this. Without this activity the object of faith, which the sinner

recognizes as true and real and entirely applicable to his present needs, remains outside of him. And in saving faith it is a matter of life and death that the object be appropriated. This third element consists in a personal trust in Christ as Saviour and Lord, including a surrender of the soul as guilty and defiled to Christ, and a reception and appropriation of Christ as the source of pardon and of spiritual life. Taking all these elements in consideration, it is quite evident that the seat of faith cannot be placed in the intellect, nor in the feelings, nor in the will exclusively, but only in the heart, the central organ of man's spiritual being, out of which are the issues of life. In answer to the question whether this fiducia (trust) necessarily includes an element of personal assurance, it may be said, in opposition to the Roman Catholics and Arminians, that this is undoubtedly the case. It naturally carries with it a certain feeling of safety and security, of gratitude and joy. Faith, which is in itself certainty, tends to awaken a sense of security and a feeling of assurance in the soul. In the majority of cases this is at first more implicit and hardly penetrates into the sphere of conscious thought; it is something vaguely felt rather than clearly perceived. But in the measure in which faith grows and the activities of faith increase, the consciousness of the security and safety which it brings also becomes greater. Even what theologians generally call "refuge- seeking trust" (toevluchtnemend vertrouwen) conveys to the soul a certain measure of security. This is quite different from the position of Barth, who stresses the fact that faith is a constantly repeated act, is ever anew a leap of despair and a leap in the dark, and never becomes a continuous possession of man; and who therefore rules out the possibility of any subjective assurance of faith.

3. THE OBJECT OF FAITH. In giving an answer to the question as to what is the object of true saving faith, we shall have to speak with discrimination, since it is possible to speak of this faith in a general and in a special sense. There is: a. A fides generalis. By this is meant saving faith in the more general sense of the word. Its object is the whole divine revelation as contained in the Word of God. Everything that is explicitly taught in Scripture or can be deduced from it by good and necessary inference, belongs to the object of faith in this general sense. According to the Church of Rome it is incumbent on its members to believe whatsoever the ecclesia docens declares to be a part of God's revelation, and this includes the so-called apostolic tradition. It is true that the "teaching church" does not claim the right to make new articles of faith, but it does claim the right to determine authoritatively what the Bible teaches and what, according to tradition, belongs to the teachings of Christ and His apostles. And this affords a great deal of latitude. b. A fides specialis. This is saving faith in the more limited sense of the word. While true faith in the Bible as the Word of God is absolutely necessary, that is not yet the specific act of faith which justifies and therefore saves directly. It must and as a matter of fact does lead on to a more special faith. There are certain doctrines concerning Christ and His work, and certain promises made in Him to sinful men, which the sinner must receive and which must lead him to put his trust in Christ. The object of special faith, then, is Jesus Christ and the promise of salvation through Him. The special act of faith consists in receiving Christ and resting on Him as He is presented in the gospel, John 3:15-16; John 3:18; John 6:40. Strictly speaking, it is not the act of faith as such, but rather that which is received by faith, which justifies and therefore saves the sinner.

4. THE GROUND OF FAITH. The ultimate ground on which faith rests, lies in the veracity and faithfulness of God, in connection with the promises of the gospel. But because we have no knowledge of this apart from the Word of God, this can also be, and frequently is, called the ultimate ground of faith. In distinction from the former, however, it might be called the proximate

ground. The means by which we recognize the revelation embodied in Scripture as the very Word of God is, in the last analysis, the testimony of the Holy Spirit, 1 John 5:7 (Am. Rev. Version): "And it is the Spirit which beareth witness because the Spirit is the truth." Cf. also Romans 4:20-21; Romans 8:16; Ephesians 1:13; 1 John 4:13; 1 John 5:10. Roman Catholics find the ultimate ground of faith in the Church; Rationalists acknowledge only reason as such; Schleiermacher seeks it in Christian experience; and Kant, Ritschl, and many modern liberals place it in the moral needs of human nature.

G. FAITH AND ASSURANCE. A very important question arises here, namely, whether assurance belongs to the essence of faith, or is something additional that is not included in faith. Because the expression "assurance of faith" is not always used in the same sense, it is necessary to discriminate carefully. There is a twofold assurance, namely, (1) The objective assurance of faith, which is "the certain and undoubting conviction that Christ is all He professes to be, and will do all He promises." It is generally agreed that this assurance is of the essence of faith. (2) The subjective assurance of faith, or the assurance of grace and salvation, which consists in a sense of security and safety, rising in many instances to the height of an "assured conviction that the individual believer has had his sins pardoned and his soul saved." As to the relation of this assurance to the essence of faith opinions differ.

1. The Roman Catholic Church denies, not only that personal assurance belongs to the essence of faith, but even that this is an actus reflexus or fruit of faith. It teaches that believers cannot be sure of their salvation, except in those rare cases in which assurance is given by special revelation. This is a natural result of the Semi-Pelagianism and of the confessional system of Rome. The early Arminians, who shared the Semi-Pelagian position of Rome, took a very similar stand. Their view was condemned by the Synod of Dort.

2. The Reformers reacted against the unsound and pernicious position of the Church of Rome. In their protest they occasionally stressed assurance one-sidedly as the most important element of faith. They sometimes spoke as if one who lacks the assurance of salvation, the positive conviction that his sins are forgiven, did not possess true faith. The fiducia of faith was sometimes represented by them as the assured trust of the sinner that all his sins are pardoned for the sake of Christ. Yet it is quite evident from their writings, (a) that they did not mean to teach that this fiducia did not include other elements; and (b) that they did not intend to deny that true children of God must frequently struggle with all kinds of doubts and uncertainties.79

3. The Reformed confessional standards vary somewhat. The Heidelberg Catechism teaches, also in reaction to Rome, that the fiducia of faith consists in the assurance of the forgiveness of sins. It places itself entirely on the standpoint of the Reformers, and conceives of the assurance of salvation as belonging to the essence of faith. The Canons of Dort take the position that this assurance in the elect is not the fruit of a special revelation, but springs from faith in God’s promises, from the testimony of the Holy Spirit, and from the exercise of a good conscience and the doing of good works, and is enjoyed according to the measure of faith. This certainly implies that it belongs in some measure to the essence of faith. It is explicitly stated, however, that believers frequently have to struggle with carnal doubts, so that they are not always sensible of the assurance of faith. The Westminster Confession, speaking of the full assurance of faith, asserts that this does not so belong to the essence of faith that a true believer may not have to wait for it a

long time. This has given some Presbyterian theologians occasion to deny that personal assurance belongs to the essence of faith. Yet the Confession does not say this, and there are reasons to think that it did not intend to teach this. The Marrowmen in Scotland certainly gave a different interpretation of its position.80 4. After the confessional period there were several departures from this position. a. Antinomians considered this assurance to be the whole of the essence of faith. They ignored all other activities of faith, and regarded faith simply as an intellectual acceptance of the proposition: Thy sins are forgiven thee. De Labadie (Dutch theologian) recognized no one as a member of the Church who was not fully assured.81 b. On the other hand a pietistic Nomism asserted that assurance does not belong to the very being, but only to the well-being of faith; and that it can be secured, except by special revelation, only by continuous and conscientious introspection. All kinds of "marks of the spiritual life," derived not from Scripture but from the lives of approved Christians, became the standard of self-examination. The outcome proved, however, that this method was not calculated to produce assurance, but rather tended to lead to ever-increasing doubt, confusion, and uncertainty. c. The Methodists aim at a methodical conversion that carries immediate certainty with it. They place men before the law, cause them to see their utter sinfulness and terrible guilt, and frighten them with the terrors of the Lord. And after they have thus brought them under the terrifying influence of the law, they at once introduce them to the full and free gospel of redemption, which merely calls for a willing acceptance of Christ as their Saviour. In a single moment sinners are transported on waves of emotion from the deepest sorrow into the most exalted joy. And this sudden change carries with it an immediate assurance of redemption. He who believes, is also sure that he is redeemed. This does not mean, however, that he is also certain of ultimate salvation. This is a certainty to which the consistent Methodist cannot attain since he believes in a falling away of the saints. d. Among Reformed theologians there is a difference of opinion. Many Presbyterians deny that faith itself includes assurance; and in Reformed circles some share this denial. Kuyper, Bavinck, and Vos, however, correctly hold that true faith, as including trust, carries with it a sense of security, which may vary in degree. There is also an assurance of faith, however, that is the fruit of reflection. It is possible to make faith itself an object of reflection, and thus to arrive at a subjective assurance that does not belong to the essence of faith. In that case we conclude from what we experience in our own life to the presence of the work of the Holy Spirit within us, cf. 1 John 2:9-11; 1 John 3:9-10; 1 John 3:18-19; 1 John 4:7; 1 John 4:20. 82 H. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CONCEPTION OF FAITH.

Three points deserve our attention here:

1. The Church of Rome obliterates the distinction between historical and saving faith by teaching that faith consists in a mere assent to the doctrines of the Church. This faith is one of the seven preparations for justification in baptism, and therefore necessarily precedes this; but as a purely intellectual activity it naturally does not lead to salvation. A man may have true, that is, Biblical faith, and yet be lost. In so far the Church of Rome applies her principle of externalization also to faith.

2. It has also virtually removed the element of knowledge from faith. One may be considered a true believer, if one is but ready to believe what the Church teaches, without really knowing what this is. Such a faith is called a fides implicita in distinction from the fides explicita, which includes knowledge. By teaching that it is sufficient to believe what the ecclesia docens teaches, the Roman Catholic Church applies the principle of clericalism.

3. There is still another point which characterizes the Roman Catholic doctrine of faith, namely, the distinction between a fides informis and a fides formata. The former is the mere assent to the doctrine of the Church, while the other is a faith which includes love as a formative principle and is perfected in love. This is the faith that really justifies.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What was the conception of faith in the early Church? Did Augustine's view differ from that of the earlier fathers? How did the distinction between a fides informis and a fides formata arise? How did Luther and Calvin differ as to the order of faith and repentance? Do the Lutherans and the Reformed agree as to the order of faith and regeneration? Why is it important to maintain the proper order? How did the distinction between the actus and the habitus of faith arise, and why is it important? Can the proposition, "I am saved," ever be the object of saving faith? What conception of faith is found in Schleiermacher and Ritschl? Why is it very appropriate that salvation should be contingent on faith? How does the excessive activism of Barth affect his doctrine of faith? What does he mean when he says that man is never a believer or a Christian, but always a sinner? How do you account for his denial that faith includes assurance?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 83-127; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Salute, pp. 98-131; ibid., Het Werk van den Heiligen Geest II, pp. 233-297; Vos, Geref. Dogm. IV., pp. 82-154; Hodge, Syst. Theol. III, pp. 41-113; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. II, pp. 531-534; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., pp. 600-612; McPherson, Chr. Dogm., pp. 388-393; Schmid, Doct. Theol. of the Ev. Luth. Ch., pp. 416-430; Valentine, Chr. Theol. II. pp. 232-241; Kaftan, Dogm., pp. 656-681: Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 282-296: Pope, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 376-385; Pictet, Theol., pp. 298-309; Inge, Faith and Its Psychology; Machen, What is Faith?; O'Brian, The Nature and Effects of Faith; Moehler, Symbolism or Doctrinal Differences; Bavinck, De Zekerheid des Geloofs; Berkhof, The Assurance of Faith; Wernecke, " Faith" in the New Testament; Warfield, The Biblical Doctrine of Faith (in Biblical Doctrines VIII).

04.4.0.09. Justification

IX. Justification A. THE SCRIPTURAL TERMS FOR JUSTIFICATION AND THEIR MEANING.

1. THE OLD TESTAMENT TERM. The Hebrew term for "to justify" is hitsdik, which in the great majority of cases means "to declare judicially that one’s state is in harmony with the demands of the law, Exodus 23:7; Deuteronomy 25:1; Proverbs 17:15; Isaiah 5:23. The piel tsiddek occasionally has the same meaning, Jeremiah 3:11; Ezekiel 16:50-51. The meaning of these words is therefore strictly forensic or legal. Since Roman Catholics, such representatives of the moral influence theory of the atonement as John Young of Edinburgh and Horace Bushnell, and also the Unitarians and modern liberal theologians, deny the legal meaning of the term "to justify," and ascribe to it the moral sense of "to make just or righteous," it becomes important to take careful notice of the considerations that may be urged in favor of the legal meaning. That this is the proper denotation of the word appears (a) from the terms placed in contrast with it, as, for instance "condemnation," Deuteronomy 25:1; Proverbs 17:15; Isaiah 5:23; (b) from the correlative terms placed in juxtaposition with it and which often imply a process of judgment, Genesis 18:25; Psalms 143:2; (c) from the equivalent expressions that are sometimes used, passage like Proverbs 17:15 would yield an impossible sense, if the word meant "to make just." The meaning would then be: He who morally improves the life of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord. There are a couple of passages, however, in which the word means more than simply "to declare righteous," namely, Isaiah 53:11; Daniel 12:3. But even in these cases the sense is not "to make good or holy," but rather "to alter the condition so that man can be considered righteous."

2. THE NEW TESTAMENT TERMS AND THEIR USE. Here we have: a. The verb dikaio-o. This verb means in general "to declare a person to be just. Occasionally it refers to a personal declaration that one’s moral character is in conformity with the law, Matthew 12:37; Luke 7:29; Romans 3:4. In the Epistles of Paul the soteriological meaning of the term is clearly in the foreground. It is "to declare forensically that the demands of the law as a condition of life are fully satisfied with regard to a person, Acts 13:39; Romans 5:1; Romans 5:9; Romans 8:30-33; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Galatians 2:16; Galatians 3:11. In the case of this word, just as in that of hitsdik the forensic meaning of the term is proved by the following facts: (a) in many instances it can bear no other sense, Romans 3:20-28; Romans 4:5-7; Romans 5:1; Galatians 2:16; Galatians 3:11; Galatians 5:4; (b) it is placed in antithetic relation to "condemnation" in Romans 8:33-34; (c) equivalent and interchangeable expressions convey a judicial or legal idea, John 3:18; John 5:24; Romans 4:6-7; 2 Corinthians 5:19; and (d) if it does not bear this meaning, there is no distinction between justification and sanctification. b. The word dikaios. This word, connected with the verb just discussed, is peculiar in that it never expresses what a thing is in itself, but always what it is in relation to something else, to some standard outside of it, to which it ought to correspond. In that respect it differs from agathos. In classical Greek, for instance, dikaios is applied to a wagon, a horse, or something else to indicate that it is fit for its intended use. Agathos expresses the idea that a thing in itself answers to the ideal. In Scripture a man is called dikaios when, in the judgment of God, his relation to the law is what it ought to be, or when his life is such as is required by his

judicial relation to God. This may include the idea that he is good, but only from a certain point of view, namely, that of his judicial relation to God. c. The noun dikaiosis, justification. This is found in only two places in the New Testament, namely, Romans 4:25; Romans 5:18. It denotes the act of God’s declaring men free from guilt and acceptable to Him. The resulting state is denoted by the word dikaiosune.

3. The resulting idea of justification. Our word justification (from the Latin justificare composed of justus and facere, and therefore meaning "to make righteous"), just as the Holland rechtvaardigmaking, is apt to give the impression that justification denotes a change that is brought about in man, which is not the case. In the use of the English word the danger is not so great, because the people in general do not understand its derivation, and in the Holland language the danger may be averted by employing the related words rechtvaardigen and rechtvaardiging. "To justify" in the Scriptural sense of the word, is to effect an objective relation, the state of righteousness, by a judicial sentence. This can be done in a twofold way: (a) by bringing into account the actual subjective condition of a person (to justify the just or the righteous), James 2:21; or (b) by imputing to a person the righteousness of another, that is, by accounting him righteous though he is inwardly unrighteous. The latter is the usual sense of justification in the New Testament.

B. THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION INHISTORY. The doctrine of justification by faith was not always clearly understood. In fact, it did not find its classical expression until the days of the Reformation. We shall briefly consider:

1. THE DOCTRINE BEFORE THE REFORMATION. Some of the earliest Church Fathers already speak of justification by faith, but it is quite evident that they had no clear understanding of it and of its relation to faith. Moreover, they did not sharply distinguish between regeneration and justification. A rather common representation was that regeneration takes place in baptism and includes the forgiveness of sins. Even Augustine does not seem to have had an accurate understanding of justification as a legal act, as distinguished from the moral process of sanctification, though it is quite evident from the whole tenor of his teachings and also from separate statements, that he regarded the grace of God in the redemption of sinners as free, sovereign, and efficacious, and in no way dependent on any merits of men. The confounding of justification and sanctification continued into the Middle Ages and gradually acquired a more positive and doctrinal aspect. According to the prevailing teachings of the Scholastics, justification includes two elements: man’s sins are forgiven, and he is made just or righteous. There was a difference of opinion as to the logical order of these two elements, some reversing the order just indicated. This was also done by Thomas Aquinas, and his view became the prevalent one in the Roman Catholic Church. Grace is infused in man. whereby he is made just, and partly on the basis of this infused grace, his sins are pardoned. This was already an approach to the evil doctrine of merit, which was gradually developed in the Middle Ages in connection with the doctrine of justification. The idea found favor ever-increasingly that man is justified in part on the basis of his own good works. The confounding of justification and sanctification also led to divergent opinions on another point. Some of the Scholastics speak of justification as an instantaneous act of God, while others describe it as a process. In the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent we find the following in Chap. XVI, Canon IX: "If any one saith, that by faith alone the impious is justified in such wise as to mean, that nothing else is required to co-operate in order to the obtaining of the

grace of justification, and that it is not in any way necessary, that he be prepared and disposed by the movement of his own will: let him be anathema." And Canon XXIV speaks of an increase in justification and therefore conceives of it as a process: "If any one saith, that the justice received is not preserved and also increased before God through good works; but that the said works are merely the fruits and signs of justification obtained, but not a cause of the increase thereof: let him be anathema."

2. THE DOCTRINE AFTER THE REFORMATION. The doctrine of justification was the great material principle of the Reformation. With respect to the nature of justification the Reformers corrected the error of confounding justification with sanctification by stressing its legal character and representing it as an act of God's free grace, whereby He pardons our sins and accepts us as righteous in His sight, but does not change us inwardly. As far as the ground of justification is concerned, they rejected the idea of Rome that this lies, at least in part, in the inherent righteousness of the regenerate and in good works, and substituted for it the doctrine that it is found only in the imputed righteousness of the Redeemer. And in connection with the means of justification they emphasized the fact that man is justified freely by that faith which receives and rests in Christ only for salvation. Moreover, they rejected the doctrine of a progressive justification, and held that it was instantaneous and complete, and did not depend for its completion on some further satisfaction for sin. They were opposed by the Socinians, who held that sinners obtain pardon and acceptance with God, through His mercy, on the ground of their own repentance and reformation. The Arminians do not all agree on the subject, but in general it may be said that they limit the scope of justification, so as to include only the forgiveness of sins on the basis of the passive obedience of Christ, and to exclude the adoption of the sinner in favor by God or the basis of the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ. The sinner is accounted righteous only on the basis of his faith or his life of obedience. The Neonomians in England were in general agreement with them on this point. For Schleiermacher and Ritschl justification meant little more than the sinner's becoming conscious of his mistake in thinking that God was angry with him. And in modern liberal theology we again meet with the idea that God justifies the sinner by the moral improvement of his life. This conception of it is found, for instance, in Bushnell's; Vicarious Sacrifice and in Macintosh's Theology as an Empirical Science.

C. THE NATURE AND CHARACTERISTICS OF JUSTIFICATION

Justification is a judicial act of God, in which He declares, on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, that all the claims of the law are satisfied with respect to the sinner. It is unique in the application of the work of redemption in that it is a judicial act of God, a declaration respecting the sinner, and not an act or process of renewal, such as regeneration, conversion, and sanctification. While it has respect to the sinner, it does not change his inner life. It does not affect his condition, but his state, and in that respect differs from all the other principal parts of the order of salvation. It involves the forgiveness of sins, and restoration to divine favor. The Arminian holds that it includes only the former, and not the latter; but the Bible clearly teaches that the fruit of justification is much more than pardon. They who are justified have "peace with God," "assurance of salvation," Romans 5:1-10, and an "inheritance among them that are sanctified," Acts 26:18. The following points of difference between justification and sanctification should be carefully noted:

1. Justification removes the guilt of sin and restores the sinner to all the filial rights involved in his state as a child of God, including an eternal inheritance. Sanctification removes the pollution of sin and renews the sinner ever-increasingly in conformity with the image of God.

2. Justification takes place outside of the sinner in the tribunal of God, and does not change his inner life, though the sentence is brought home to him subjectively. Sanctification, on the other hand, takes place in the inner life of man and gradually affects his whole being.

3. Justification takes place once for all. It is not repeated, neither is it a process; it is complete at once and for all time. There is no more or less in justification; man is either fully justified, or he is not justified at all. In distinction from it sanctification is a continuous process, which is never completed in this life.

4. While the meritorious cause of both lies in the merits of Christ, there is a difference in the efficient cause. Speaking economically, God the Father declares the sinner righteous, and God the Holy Spirit sanctifies him.

D. THE ELEMENTS OF JUSTIFICATION.

We distinguish two elements in justification, the one negative, and the other positive.

1. The negative element. There is first of all a negative element in justification, namely, the remission of sins on the ground of the atoning work of Jesus Christ. This element is based more particularly, though not exclusively, on the passive obedience of the Saviour. Calvin and some of the older Reformed theologians occasionally speak as if this were the whole of justification. This is partly due to the Old Testament representation, in which this side of justification is decidedly in the foreground, Psalms 32:1; Isaiah 43:25; Isaiah 44:22; Jeremiah 31:34, and partly to their reaction against Rome, which did not do justice to the element of grace and free pardon. In opposition to Arminianism, however, Reformed theology has always maintained that justification is more than pardon. That the forgiveness of sins is an important element in justification is evident, not only from the Old, but also from the New Testament, as appears from such passages as Romans 4:5-8; Romans 5:18-19;

Galatians 2:17. The pardon granted in justification applies to all sins, past, present, and future, and thus involves the removal of all guilt and of every penalty. This follows from the fact that justification does not admit of repetition, and from such passages as Romans 5:21; Romans 8:1; Romans 8:32-34; Hebrews 10:14; Psalms 103:12; Isaiah 44:22, which assure us that no one can lay anything to the charge of the justified man, that he is exempt from condemnation, and that he is constituted an heir of eternal life. It is also implied in the answer to the 60th question of our Heidelberg Catechism. This conception of justification, though eminently Scriptural, is not devoid of difficulty. Believers continue to sin after they are justified, James 3:2; 1 John 1:8, and, as Scripture examples clearly show, frequently fall into grievous sins. Hence it is no wonder that Barth likes to stress the fact that the justified man remains a sinner, though a justified sinner. Christ taught His disciples to pray daily for the forgiveness of sins, Matthew 6:12, and the Bible saints are often pleading for pardon and obtaining it, Psalms 32:5; Psalms 51:1-4; Psalms 130:3-4. Consequently it is not surprising that some felt constrained to speak of a repeated justification. The Church of Rome infers from the data to which we called attention that believers must in some way atone for sins committed after baptism, and therefore also believes in an increasing justification.

Antinomians, on the other hand, desiring to honour the unlimited pardoning grace of God, maintain that the sins of believers are not accounted as such to the new man but only to the old, and that it is quite unnecessary for them to pray for the forgiveness of sins. For fear of this Antinomian position even some Reformed theologians had scruples about teaching that the future sins of believers are also pardoned in justification, and spoke of a repeated and even daily justification.83 The usual position of Reformed theology, however, is that in justification God indeed removes the guilt, but not the culpability of sin, that is, He removes the sinner's just amenability to punishment, but not the inherent guiltiness of whatever sins he may continue to perform. The latter remains and therefore always produces in believers a feeling of guilt, of separation from God, of sorrow, of repentance, and so on. Hence they feel the need of confessing their sins, even the sins of their youth, Psalms 25:7; Psalms 51:5-9. The believer who is really conscious of his sin feels within him an urge to confess it and to seek the comforting assurance of forgiveness. Moreover, such confession and prayer is not only a subjectively felt need, but also an objective necessity. Justification is essentially an objective declaration respecting the sinner in the tribunal of God, but it is not merely that; it is also an actus transiens, passing into the consciousness of the believer. The divine sentence of acquittal is brought home to the sinner and awakens the joyous consciousness of the forgiveness of sins and of favor with God. Now this consciousness of pardon and of a renewed filial relationship is often disturbed and obscured by sin, and is again quickened and strengthened by confession and prayer, and by a renewed exercise of faith.

2. THE POSITIVE ELEMENT. There is also a positive element in justification which is based more particularly on the active obedience of Christ. Naturally they who, like Piscator and the Arminians, deny the imputation of the active obedience of Christ to the sinner, thereby also deny the positive element in justification. According to them justification leaves man without any claim on life eternal, simply places him in the position of Adam before the fall, though according to the Arminians under a different law, the law of evangelical obedience, and leaves it to man to merit acceptance with God and eternal life by faith and obedience. But it is quite evident from Scripture that justification is more than mere pardon. Unto Joshua, the high priest, who stood, as the representative of Israel, with filthy garments before the Lord, Jehovah said: "Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee (negative element), and I will clothe thee with rich apparel" (positive element), Zechariah 3:4. According to Acts 26:18 we obtain by faith "remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified." Romans 5:1-2 teaches us that justification by faith brings not only peace with God, but also access to God and joy in the hope of glory. And according to Galatians 4:5 Christ was born under the law also " that we might receive the adoption of sons." In this positive element two parts may be distinguished: a. The adoption of children. Believers are first of all children of God by adoption. This implies, of course, that they are not children of God by nature, as modern liberals would have us believe, for one cannot well adopt his own children. This adoption is a legal act, whereby God places the sinner in the status of a child, but does not change him inwardly any more than parents by the mere act of adoption change the inner life of an adopted child. The change that is effected concerns the relation in which man stands to God. By virtue of their adoption believers are as it were initiated into the very family of God, come under the law of filial obedience, and at the same time become entitled to all the privileges of sonship. The sonship by adoption should be carefully distinguished from the moral sonship of believers, their sonship by regeneration and sanctification. They are not only adopted to be children of God, but are also born of God. Naturally these two cannot be separated. They are mentioned together in John 1:12;

Romans 8:15-16; Galatians 3:26-27; Galatians 4:5-6. In Romans 8:15 the term huiothesia (from huios and tithenai) is used, which literally means "placing as a son," and in classical Greek is always employed to denote an objective placing in the status of a child. The following verse contains the word tekna (from tikto, "to beget"), which designates believers as those who are begotten of God. In John 1:12 the idea of adoption is expressed by the words, "But as many as received Him, to them gave He the right (exousian edoken) to become children of God." The Greek expression here used means "to give legal right." Immediately thereafter, in John 1:13, the writer speaks of ethical sonship by regeneration. The connection between the two is clearly brought out in Galatians 4:5-6 . . . "that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons (by adoption), God sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, Abba, Father." That Spirit regenerates and sanctifies us and prompts us to address God full of confidence as Father. b. The right to eternal life. This element is virtually included in the preceding one. When sinners are adopted to be children of God, they are invested with all the legal filial rights, and become heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ, Romans 8:17. This means first of all that they become heirs of all the blessings of salvation in the present life, the most fundamental of which is described in the words, "the promise of the Spirit," that is, the promised blessing in the form of the Spirit, Galatians 3:14; and in the slightly different phrase, "the Spirit of His Son," Galatians 4:6. And in and with the Spirit they receive all the gifts of Christ. But this is not all; their inheritance also includes the eternal blessings of the future life. The glory of which Paul speaks in Romans 8:17 follows after the sufferings of the present time. According to Romans 8:23 the redemption of the body, which is there called "the adoption," also belongs to the future inheritance. And in the ordo salutis of Romans 8:29-30 glorification connects up immediately with justification. Being justified by faith, believers are heirs of life eternal.

E. THE SPHERE IN WHICH JUSTIFICATION OCCURS. The question as to the sphere in which justification occurs, must be answered with discrimination. It is customary to distinguish between an active and a passive, also called an objective and a subjective , justification, each having its own sphere.

1. ACTIVE OR OBJECTIVE JUSTIFICATION. This is justification in the most fundamental sense of the word. It is basic to what is called subjective justification, and consists in a declaration which God makes respecting the sinner, and this declaration is made in the tribunal of God. This declaration is not a declaration in which God simply acquits the sinner, without taking any account of the claims of justice, but is rather a divine declaration that, in the case of the sinner under consideration, the demands of the law are met. The sinner is declared righteous in view of the fact that the righteousness of Christ is imputed to him. In this transaction God appears, not as an absolute Sovereign who simply sets the law aside, but as a righteous Judge, who acknowledges the infinite merits of Christ as a sufficient basis for justification, and as a gracious Father, who freely forgives and accepts the sinner. This active justification logically precedes faith and passive justification. We believe the forgiveness of sins.

2. PASSIVE OR SUBJECTIVE JUSTIFICATION. Passive or subjective justification takes place in the heart or conscience of the sinner. A purely objective justification that is not brought home to the sinner would not answer the purpose. The granting of a pardon would mean nothing to a prisoner, unless the glad tidings were communicated to him and the doors of the prison were opened. Moreover, it is exactly at this point that the sinner learns to understand better than

anywhere else that salvation is of free grace. When the Bible speaks of justification, it usually refers to what is known as passive justification. It should be borne in mind, however, that the two cannot be separated. The one is based on the other. The distinction is simply made to facilitate the proper understanding of the act of justification. Logically, passive justification follows faith; we are justified by faith.

F. THE TIME OF JUSTIFICATION.

Some theologians separate active and passive justification temporally. The active justification is then said to have taken place in eternity or in the resurrection of Christ, while passive justification takes place by faith and therefore, it is said, follows the other in a temporal sense. We shall consider successively justification from eternity, justification in the resurrection of Christ, and justification by faith.

1. JUSTIFICATION FROM ETERNITY. The Antinomians held that the justification of the sinner took place in eternity, or in the resurrection of Christ. They either confounded it with the eternal decree of election, or with the objective justification of Christ when He was raised from the dead. They did not properly distinguish between the divine purpose in eternity and its execution in time, nor between the work of Christ in procuring, and that of the Holy Spirit in applying the blessings of redemption. According to this position we are justified even before we believe, though we are unconscious of it, and faith simply conveys to us the declaration of this fact. Moreover, the fact that our sins were imputed to Christ made Him personally a sinner, and the imputation of His righteousness to us makes us personally righteous, so that God can see no sin in believers at all. Some Reformed theologians also speak of justification from eternity, but at the same time refuse to subscribe to the Antinomian construction of this doctrine. The grounds on which they believe in justification from eternity deserve brief consideration. a. Grounds for the doctrine of justification from eternity.

(1) Scripture speaks of a grace or mercy of God which is from ever-lasting, Psalms 25:6; Psalms 103:17. Now all grace or mercy that is from eternity must have as its judicial or legal basis a justification that is from eternity. But in answer to this it may be said that there are eternal mercies and lovingkindnesses of God which are not based on any justification of the sinner, as, for instance, His plan of redemption, the gift of His Son, and the willing suretyship of Christ in the pactum salutis.

(2) In the pactum salutis the guilt of the sins of the elect was transferred to Christ, and the righteousness of Christ was imputed to them. This means that the burden of sin was lifted from their shoulders and that they were justified. Now there is no doubt about it that there was a certain imputation of the righteousness of Christ to the sinner in the counsel of redemption, but not all imputation can be called justification in the Scriptural sense of the term. We must distinguish between what was merely ideal in the counsel of God and what is realized in the course of history.

(3) The sinner receives the initial grace of regeneration on the basis of the imputed righteousness of Christ. Consequently, the merits of Christ must have been imputed to him before his regeneration. But while this consideration leads to the conclusion that justification logically precedes regeneration, it does not prove the priority of justification in a temporal sense. The sinner can receive the grace of regeneration on the basis of a justification, ideally existing in the counsel

of God and certain to be realized in the life of the sinner.

(4) Children also need justification, in order to be saved, and yet it is quite impossible that they should experience justification by faith. But though it is perfectly true that children, who have not yet come to maturity, cannot experience passive justification, they can be actively justified in the tribunal of God and thus be in possession of that which is absolutely essential.

(5) Justification is an immanent act of God, and as such must be from eternity. It is hardly correct, however, to speak of justification as an actus immanens in God; it is rather an actus transiens, just as creation, incarnation, and so on. The advocates of justification from eternity feel the weight of this consideration, and therefore hasten to give us the assurance that they do not mean to teach that the elect are justified from eternity actualiter, but only in the intention of God, in the divine decree. This leads us back to the usual distinction between the counsel of God and its execution. If this justification in the intention of God warrants our speaking of a justification from eternity, then there is absolutely no reason why we should not speak of a creation from eternity as well.

.b. Objections against the doctrine of justification from eternity.

(1) The Bible teaches uniformly that justification takes place by faith or out of faith. This, of course, applies to passive or subjective justification, which, however, cannot be separated temporally from active or objective justification except in the case of children. But if justification takes place by faith, it certainly does not precede faith in a temporal sense. Now it is true that the advocates of a justification from eternity also speak of a justification by faith. But in their representation this can only mean that man by faith becomes conscious of what God has done in eternity.

(2) In Romans 8:29-30, where we find some of the scalae of the ordo salutis, justification stands between two acts of God in time, namely, calling and glorification, which begins in time but is completed in a future eternity. And these three together are the result of two others which are explicitly indicated as eternal. Dr. Kuyper is not warranted in saying that Romans 8:30 refers to what took place with the regenerated before they were born, as even Dr. De Moor, who also believes in a justification from eternity, is quite willing to admit.84

(3) In teaching justification from eternity, the decree of God respecting the justification of the sinner, which is an actus immanens , is identified with justification itself, which is an actus transiens. This only leads to confusion. What took place in the pactum salutis cannot be identified with what results from it. All imputation is not yet justification. Justification is one of the fruits of Christ’s redemptive work, applied to believers by the Holy Spirit. But the Spirit did not and could not apply this or any other fruit of the work of Christ from eternity.

2. JUSTIFICATION IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST. The idea that sinners are in some sense of the word justified in the resurrection of Christ was stressed by some Antinomians, is taught by those Reformed theologians who believe in a justification from eternity, and is also held by some other Reformed scholars. This view is based on the following grounds: a. By His atoning work Christ satisfied all the demands of the law for His people. In the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead the Father publicly declared that all the requirements of the law were met for all the elect and thereby justified them. But here too careful distinction is required. Even though it be true that there was an objective justification of Christ and of the whole body of Christ in His resurrection, this should not be confounded with the justification of the sinner of which Scripture

speaks. It is not true that, when Christ rendered full satisfaction to the Father for all His people, their guilt naturally terminated. A penal debt is not like a pecuniary debt in this respect. Even after the payment of a ransom, the removal of guilt may depend on certain conditions, and does not follow as a matter of course. The elect are not personally justified in the Scriptural sense until they accept Christ by faith and thus appropriate His merits. b. In Romans 4:25 we read that Christ was "raised up for (dia, causal, on account of) our justification," that is, to effect our justification. Now it is undoubtedly true that dia with the accusative is causal here. At the same time it need not be retrospective, but can also be prospective and therefore mean "with a view to our justification," which is equivalent to saying, "in order that we may be justified." The retrospective interpretation would be in conflict with the immediately following context, which clearly shows (1) that Paul is not thinking of the objective justification of the whole body of Christ, but of the personal justification of sinners; and (2) that he conceives of this as taking place through faith. c. In 2 Corinthians 5:19 we read: "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not reckoning unto them their trespasses." From this passage the inference is drawn that the objective reconciliation of the world in Christ involves the non-imputation of sin to the sinner. But this interpretation is not correct. The evident meaning of the apostle is: God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, as appears from the fact that He does not impute to men their sins, and that He has entrusted to His servants the word of reconciliation. Notice that me logizomenos (present tense) refers to what is constantly going on. This cannot be conceived as a part of the objective reconciliation, for then the following clause, "and having committed to us the word of reconciliation," would also have to be so interpreted, and this is quite impossible. In connection with this matter it may be said that we can speak of a justification of the body of Christ as a whole in His resurrection, but this is purely objective and should not be confounded with the personal justification of the sinner.

3. JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH. a. The relation of faith to justification. Scripture says that we are justified dia pisteos, ek pisteos, or pistei (dative), Romans 3:25; Romans 3:28; Romans 3:30; Romans 5:1; Galatians 2:16; Php 3:9. The preposition dia stresses the fact that faith is the instrument by which we appropriate Christ and His righteousness. The preposition ek indicates that faith logically precedes our personal justification, so that this, as it were, originates in faith. The dative is used in an instrumental sense. Scripture never says that we are justified dia ten pistin, on account of faith. This means that faith is never represented as the ground of our justification. If this were the case, faith would have to be regarded as a meritorious work of man. And this would be the introduction of the doctrine of justification by works, which the apostle opposes consistently, Romans 3:21; Romans 3:27-28; Romans 4:3-4; Galatians 2:16; Galatians 2:21; Galatians 3:11. We are told indeed that Abraham’s faith was reckoned unto him for righteousness, Romans 4:3; Romans 4:9; Romans 4:22; Galatians 3:6, but in view of the whole argument this surely cannot mean that in his case faith itself as a work took the place of the righteousness of God in Christ. The apostle does not leave it doubtful that, strictly speaking, only the righteousness of Christ imputed to us, is the ground of our justification. But faith is so thoroughly receptive in the appropriation of the merits of Christ, that it can be put figuratively for the merits of Christ which it receives. "Faith" then is equivalent to the contents of faith, that is, to the merits or the righteousness of Christ.

It is often said, however, that the teachings of James conflict with those of Paul on this point, and clearly support the doctrine of justification by works in James 2:14-26. Various attempts have been

made to harmonize the two. Some proceed on the assumption that both Paul and James speak of the justification of the sinner, but that James stresses the fact that a faith which does not manifest itself in good works is no true faith, and therefore is not a faith that justifies. This is undoubtedly true. The difference between the representations of Paul and James is unquestionably due partly to the nature of the adversaries with which they had to deal. Paul had to contend with legalists who sought to base their justification, at least in part, on the works of the law. James, on the other hand, joined issue with Antinomians, who claimed to have faith, but whose faith was merely an intellectual assent to the truth (James 2:19), and who denied the necessity of good works. Therefore he stresses the fact that faith without works is a dead faith, and consequently not at all a faith that justifies. The faith that justifies is a faith that is fruitful in good works. But it may be objected that this does not explain the whole difficulty, since James explicitly says in James 2:24 that a man is justified by works and not only by faith, and illustrates this by the example of Abraham, who was "justified by works in that he offered up Isaac" (James 2:21). "Thou seest," says he in James 2:24, "that faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect." It is quite evident, however, that in this case the writer is not speaking of the justification of the sinner, for Abraham the sinner was justified long before he offered up Isaac (cf. Genesis 15:1-21), but of a further justification of the believing Abraham. True faith will manifest itself in good works, and these works will testify before men of the righteousness (that is, the righteousness of life) of him that possesses such a faith. The justification of the just by works confirms the justification by faith. If James actually meant to say in this section of his letter that Abraham and Rahab were justified with the justificatio peccatoris, on the basis of their good works, he would not only be in conflict with Paul, but would also be self-contradictory, for he explicitly says that Abraham was justified by faith. b. Theological terms to express the relation of faith to justification. There are especially three terms that come into consideration here.

(1) Instrumental cause. This name was very generally used at first, but afterwards met with considerable opposition. The question was raised, whether it was God’s instrument or man’s. And it was said: It cannot be God’s, since the faith referred to is not God’s faith; neither can it be man’s, for justification is not a deed of man, but of God. We should bear in mind, however, (a) that according to the plain teaching of the Bible we are justified by faith, dia pisteos and that this dia can only be understood in an instrumental sense, Romans 3:28; Galatians 3:8; (b) that the Bible explicitly says that God justifies the sinner by faith, and therefore represents faith as God’s instrument, Romans 3:30; and (c) that faith is also represented as the instrument of man, as the means by which he receives justification, Galatians 2:16. Faith can be regarded as the instrument of God in a twofold sense. It is a gift of God wrought in the sinner unto justification. Moreover, by working faith in the sinner, God carries the declaration of pardon into his heart or conscience. But faith is also an instrument of man by which he appropriates Christ and all His precious gifts, Romans 4:5; Galatians 2:16. This is also the representation of the matter which we find in the Belgic Confession,85 and in the Heidelberg Catechism.86 By faith we embrace Christ and remain in contact with Him who is our righteousness. The name "instrumental cause" is regularly used in Protestant Confessions. Yet some Reformed theologians prefer to avoid it, in order to guard themselves against the danger of giving the impression that justification is in any way dependent on faith as a work of man.

(2) Appropriating organ. This name expresses the idea that by faith the sinner appropriates the righteousness of Christ and establishes a conscious union between himself and Christ. The merits of Christ constitute the dikaioma, the legal basis on which the formal declaration of God in justification rests. By faith the sinner appropriates the righteousness of the Mediator already imputed to him ideally in the pactum salutis; and on the basis of this he is now formally justified before God. Faith justifies in so far as it takes possession of Christ. The name "appropriating organ" includes the instrumental idea, and is therefore perfectly in harmony with the statements found in our confessional standards. It has an advantage over the more common name in that it excludes the idea that faith is in any sense the basis for justification. It can be called an appropriating organ in a twofold sense: (a) It is the organ by which we lay hold on and appropriate the merits of Christ, and accept these as the meritorious ground of our justification. As such it logically precedes justification. (b) It is also the organ by which we consciously apprehend our justification and obtain possession of subjective justification. In this sense it logically follows justification. On the whole this name deserves preference, though it should be borne in mind that, strictly speaking, faith is the organ by which we appropriate the righteousness of Christ as the ground of our justification, rather than the organ by which we appropriate justification itself.

(3) Conditio sine qua non. This name, suggested by some Reformed theologians, did not meet with great favor. It expresses the idea, which is perfectly true in itself, that man is not justified apart from faith, and that faith is an indispensable condition of justification. The name expresses nothing positive, and is, moreover, liable to misunderstanding.

G. THE GROUND OF JUSTIFICATION.

One of the most important points of controversy between the Church of Rome and the Reformers, and between Reformed theology and the Arminians, concerned the ground of justification. With respect to this the Reformers taught:

1. Negatively, that this cannot be found in any virtue of man, nor in his good works. This position must also be maintained at present over against Rome and the Pelagianizing tendencies of various Churches. Rome teaches that the sinner is justified on the basis of the inherent righteousness that has been infused into his heart, and which, in turn, is the fruit of the co-operation of the human will with prevenient grace. This applies to what is called the first justification; in all following justification the good works of man come into consideration as the formal cause or ground of justification. It is impossible, however, that the inherent righteousness of the regenerate man and his good works should constitute the ground of his justification, for (a) this righteousness is and remains during this life a very imperfect righteousness; (b) it is itself already the fruit of the righteousness of Christ and of the grace of God; and (c) even the best works of believers are polluted by sin. Moreover, Scripture teaches us very clearly that man is justified freely by the grace of God, Romans 3:24, and that he cannot possibly be justified by the works of the law, Romans 3:28; Galatians 2:16; Galatians 3:11.

2. Positively, that the ground of justification can be found only in the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to the sinner in justification. This is plainly taught in several passages of Scripture, such as Romans 3:24; Romans 5:9; Romans 5:19; Romans 8:1; Romans 10:4; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Corinthians 6:11; 2 Corinthians 5:21; Php 3:9. In the passive obedience of Christ, who became a curse for us (Galatians 3:13) we find the ground for the forgiveness of

sins; and in His active obedience, by which He merited all the gifts of grace, including eternal life, the ground for the adoption of children, by which sinners are constituted heirs of life eternal. The Arminian goes contrary to Scripture when he maintains that we are accepted in favor by God only on the ground of our faith or evangelical obedience.

H. OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF JUSTIFICATION.

Modern liberal theology, with its rationalizing tendencies, raises several objections to the doctrine of justification as such, which deserve brief consideration.

1. Some, who still believe in salvation by grace, ostensibly object to justification in the interest of the recognition of the grace of God. Justification, it is said, is a legal transaction and as such excludes grace, while the Bible clearly teaches that the sinner is saved by grace. But it can easily be shown that justification with all its antecedents and consequents is a gracious work of God. The substitute allowed for guilty sinners, the vicarious sufferings and obedience of Christ, the imputation of His righteousness to unworthy transgressors, and God's dealing with believers as righteous, — it is all free grace from start to finish.

2. Justification is sometimes called an impious procedure, because it declares sinners to be righteous contrary to fact. But this objection does not hold, because the divine declaration is not to the effect that these sinners are righteous in themselves, but that they are clothed with the perfect righteousness of Jesus Christ. This righteousness wrought by Christ, is freely imputed to them. It is not the personal subjective righteousness of Christ, but His vicarious covenant righteousness, that is imputed to those who are in themselves unrighteous, and all to the glory of God.

3. It is often said this doctrine is ethically subversive, because it leads to licentiousness. But there is no truth in this whatsoever, as even the lives of the justified clearly show. In justification the sure foundation is laid for that vital spiritual union with Christ which secures our sanctification. It really leads right on to the only conditions under which we can be truly holy in principle. The man who is justified also receives the spirit of sanctification, and is the only one who can abound in good works which will glorify God.

I. DIVERGENT VIEWS OF JUSTIFICATION.

1. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW. The Roman Catholic view confounds justification and sanctification. It includes the following elements in justification (a) the expulsion of indwelling sin; (b) the positive infusion of divine grace; and (c) the forgiveness of sins. The sinner is prepared for justification by prevenient grace, without any merits on his part. This prevenient grace leads the sinner to a fides informis, to conviction of sin, to repentance, to a confident reliance on the grace of God in Christ, to the beginnings of a new life, and to a desire for baptism. Justification really consists in the infusion of new virtues after the pollution of sin has been removed in baptism. After the expulsion of indwelling sin, the forgiveness of sin or the removal of the guilt of sin necessarily follows. And after that the Christian advances from virtue to virtue, is able to perform meritorious works, and receives as a reward a greater measure of grace and a more perfect justification. The grace of justification can be lost, but can also be restored by the sacrament of penance.

2. THE VIEW OF PISCATOR. Piscator taught that only the passive obedience of Christ is imputed to the sinner in justification, unto the forgiveness of sins; and that His active obedience could not

possibly be imputed to him, unto the adoption of children and an eternal inheritance, because the man Christ Jesus owed this to God for Himself. Moreover, if Christ had fulfilled the law for us, we could no more be held responsible for the keeping of the law. Piscator regarded the bearing of the penalty of sin and the keeping of the law as alternatives, of which the one excludes the other. He left the door open for regarding the sinner's own personal obedience as the only ground of his future hope. This view is very much like that of the Arminians, and is quite in line with the doctrine of Anselm in the Middle Ages.

3. THE VIEW OF OSIANDER. Osiander revealed a tendency to revive in the Lutheran Church the essentials of the Roman Catholic conception of justification, though with a characteristic difference. He asserted that justification does not consist in the imputation of the vicarious righteousness of Christ to the sinner, but in the implanting of a new principle of life. According to him the righteousness by which we are justified is the eternal righteousness of God the Father, which is imparted to or infused into us by His Son Jesus Christ.

4. THE ARMINIAN VIEW. The Arminians hold that Christ did not render strict satisfaction to the justice of God, but yet offered a real propitiation for sin, which was graciously accepted and acted on as satisfactory by God in pardoning sin and thus justifying the sinner. While this only squares past accounts, God also makes provision for the future. He just as graciously imputes the believer's faith to him for righteousness, that faith, namely, as including the entire religious life of the believer, — his evangelical obedience. On this view faith is no more the mere instrument of the positive element of justification, but the graciously admitted ground on which it rests. Justification, then, is not a judicial but a sovereign act of God.

5. THE BARTHIAN VIEW. While Barth does speak of justification as a momentary act, yet he does not regard it as an act accomplished once for all, and which is then followed by sanctification. According to him justification and sanctification go hand in hand all along the line. Pauck says that according to Barth justification is not a growth or an ethical development; it occurs ever anew, whenever man has reached the point of complete despair as to the beliefs and values upon which he has built his life. Thurneysen also rejects the view that justification takes place once for all, calls it the view of Pietism, and claims that it is fatal to the doctrine of the Reformation.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What does the verb dikaio-o mean in classical Greek? Is justification a creative or a declarative act? Is it possible to think of justification with respect to past sins in any other sense than that of a judicial acquittal? Should justification be thought of exclusively as something objective and external to man? What is meant in theology by the formal cause of justification? How do the Romanists and Protestants differ on this point? Is the justification of the Roman Catholics by the fides formata really a justification by faith, or a justification by love under the guise of faith? What is the Antinomian doctrine of justification from eternity? Is the distinction made by Buchanan and Cunningham between active and passive justification as being actual and declarative justification correct or not? Can we say that in declarative justification (passive justification) God simply declares the sinner to be what he is? What becomes of the doctrine of justification in Schleiermacher, Ritchl, and modern liberal theology?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm., IV, pp. 182-245; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Salute, pp. 45-69; ibid., Het Werk van den Heiligen Geest II, pp. 204-232; Comrie, Brief over de

Rechtvaardigmaking; Hodge, Syst. Theol. III, pp. 114-212; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. II, pp. 538-552; Dick, Theology, Lectures LXXI-LXXIII; Dabney, Syst and Polem. Theol. pp. 618-650; Mastricht, Godgeleerdheit VI. 6 and 7; Buchanan, The Doctrine of Justification; Owen, On Justification; Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 259-313; Girardeau, Calvinism and Evangelical Arminianism, pp. 413-566; Pieper, Christl. Dogm. II, pp. 606-672; Vos, Geref. Dogm. IV., pp. 154-210; Schmid, Doct. Theol. of the Ev. Luth. Church, pp. 430-448; Valentine, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 214-241; Strong, Syst. Theol., pp. 849-868; Dorner, Syst. of Chr. Doct. IV, pp. 194-238; Watson, Theological Institutes, II, pp. 406-475; De Moor, Rechtvaardigmaking van Eeuwigheid.

04.4.0.10. Sanctification

X. Sanctification A. THE SCRIPTURAL TERMS FOR SANCTIFICATION AND HOLINESS.

1. THE OLD TESTAMENT TERMS. The Old Testament word for ’to sanctify’ is qadash, a verb that is used in the niphal, piel, hiphil, and hithpa’el species. The corresponding noun is qodesh, while the adjective is qadosh. The verbal forms are derived from the nominal and adjectival forms. The original meaning of these words is uncertain. Some are of the opinion that the word qadash is related to chadash, meaning ’to shine.’ This would be in harmony with the qualitative aspect of the Biblical idea of holiness, namely, that of purity. Others, with a greater degree of probability, derive the word from the root qad, meaning ’to cut.’ This would make the idea of separation the original idea. The word would then point to aloofness, separateness, or majesty. Though this meaning of the words ’sanctification’ and ’holiness’ may seem unusual to us, it is in all probability the fundamental idea expressed by them. Says Girdlestone: "The terms ’sanctification’ and ’holiness’ are now used so frequently to represent moral and spiritual qualities, that they hardly convey to the reader the idea of position or relationship as existing between God and some person or thing consecrated to Him; yet this appears to be the real meaning of the word."87 Similarly, Cremer-Koegel calls attention to the fact that the idea of separation is fundamental to that of holiness. "Heiligkeit ist ein verhaeltnisbegriff." At the same time it is admitted that the two ideas of holiness and separation do not merge, are not absorbed in each other, but that the former in a measure serves to qualify the latter.88 2. THE NEW TESTAMENT TERMS. a. The verb hagiazo and its various meanings. The verb hagiazo is a derivative of hagios, which like the Hebrew qadosh expresses primarily the idea of separation. It is used in several different senses, however, in the New Testament. We may distinguish the following: (1) It is used in a mental sense of persons or things, Matthew 6:9; Luke 11:2; 1 Peter 3:15. In such cases it means "to regard an object as holy," "to ascribe holiness to it," or "to acknowledge its holiness by word or deed." (2) It is also employed occasionally in a ritual sense, that is, in the sense of "separating from ordinary for sacred purposes," or of "setting aside for a certain office," Matthew 23:17; Matthew 23:19; John 10:36; 2 Timothy 2:21. (3) Again it is used to denote that operation of God by which He, especially through His Spirit, works in man the subjective quality of holiness, John 17:17; Acts 20:32; Acts 26:18; 1 Corinthians 1:2; 1 Thessalonians 5:23. (4) Finally, in the Epistle to the Hebrews it seems to be used in an expiatory sense, and also in the related sense of the Pauline dikaio-o, Hebrews 9:13; Hebrews 10:10, Hebrews 10:29; Hebrews 13:12.89 b.The adjectives expressive of the idea of holiness. (1) Hieros. The word that is used least and that is also the least expressive, is the word hieros. It is found only in 1 Corinthians 9:13; 2 Timothy 3:15, and then not of persons but of things. It does not express moral excellence, but is expressive of the inviolable character of the thing referred to, which springs from the relation in which it stands to God. It is best translated by the English word "sacred." (2) Hosios. The word hosios is of more frequent occurrence. It is found in Acts 2:27; Acts 13:34-35; 1 Timothy 2:8; Titus 1:8; Hebrews 7:26; Revelation 15:4; Revelation 16:5, and is applied not only to things, but also to God and to Christ. It describes a person or thing as free from defilement or wickedness, or more actively (of persons) as religiously fulfilling every

moral obligation. (3) Hagnos. The word hagnos occurs in 2 Corinthians 7:11; 2 Corinthians 11:2; Php 4:8; 1 Timothy 5:22; James 3:17; 1 Peter 3:2; 1 John 3:3. The fundamental idea of the word seems to be that of freedom from impurity and defilement in an ethical sense. (4) Hagios. The really characteristic word of the New Testament, however, is hagios. Its primary meaning is that of separation in consecration and devotion to the service of God. With this is connected the idea that what is set aside from the world for God, should also separate itself from the world's defilement and share in God's purity. This explains the fact that hagios speedily acquired an ethical signification. The word does not always have the same meaning in the New Testament. (a) It is used to designate an external official relation, a being set aside from ordinary purposes for the service of God, as for instance, when we read of "holy prophets," Luke 1:70, "holy apostles," Ephesians 3:5, and "holy men of God" 2 Peter 1:21. (b) More often, however, it is employed in an ethical sense to describe the quality that is necessary to stand in close relation to God and to serve Him acceptably, Ephesians 1:4; Ephesians 5:27; Colossians 1:22; 1 Peter 1:15-16. It should be borne in mind that in treating of sanctification we use the word primarily in the latter sense. When we speak of holiness in connection with sanctification, we have in mind both an external relation and an inner subjective quality. c. The nouns denoting sanctification and holiness. The New Testament word for sanctification is hagiasmos. It occurs ten times, namely, in Romans 6:19; Romans 6:22; 1 Corinthians 1:30; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-4; 1 Thessalonians 4:7; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; 1 Timothy 2:15; Hebrews 12:14; 1 Peter 1:2. While it denotes ethical purification, it includes the idea of separation, namely, "the separation of the spirit from all that is impure and polluting, and a renunciation of the sins towards which the desires of the flesh and of the mind lead us." While hagiasmos denotes the work of sanctification, there are two other words that describe the result of the process, namely, hagiotes and hagiosune. The former is found in 1 Corinthians 1:30 and Hebrews 12:10; and the latter in Romans 1:4; 2 Corinthians 7:2, and 1 Thessalonians 3:13. These passages show that the quality of holiness or freedom from pollution and impurity is essential to God, was exhibited by Jesus Christ, and is imparted to the Christian.

B. THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION IN HISTORY.

1. BEFORE THE REFORMATION. In the historical unfolding of the doctrine of sanctification, the Church concerned itself primarily with three problems: (a) the relation of the grace of God in sanctification to faith; (b) the relation of sanctification to justification; and (c) the degree of sanctification in this present life. The writings of the early Church Fathers contain very little respecting the doctrine of sanctification. A strain of moralism is quite apparent in that man was taught to depend for salvation on faith and good works. Sins committed before baptism were washed away in baptism, but for those after baptism man must provide by penance and good works. He must lead a life of virtue and thus merit the approval of the Lord. "Such dualism," says Scott in his The Nicene Theology,90 "left the domain of sanctification only indirectly related to the redemption of Christ; and this was the field in which grew up, naturally, defective conceptions of sin, legalism, Sacramentarianism, priestcraft, and all the excesses of monkish devotion." Asceticism came to be regarded as of the greatest importance. There was also a tendency to confound justification and sanctification. Augustine was the first one to develop rather definite ideas of sanctification, and his views had a determining influence on the Church of the Middle Ages. He did not clearly distinguish between justification and sanctification, but conceived of the latter as included in the former. Since he believed in the total corruption of human nature by the

fall, he thought of sanctification as a new supernatural impartation of divine life, a new infused energy, operating exclusively within the confines of the Church and through the sacraments. While he did not lose sight of the importance of personal love to Christ as a constituent element in sanctification, he manifested a tendency to take a metaphysical view of the grace of God in sanctification, — to regard it as a deposit of God in man. He did not sufficiently stress the necessity of a constant preoccupation of faith with the redeeming Christ, as the most important factor in the transformation of the Christian's life. The tendencies apparent in the teachings of Augustine came to fruitage in the theology of the Middle Ages, which is found in its most developed form in the writings of Thomas Aquinas. Justification and sanctification are not clearly distinguished, but the former is made to include the infusion of divine grace, as something substantial, into the human soul. This grace is a sort of donum superadditum, by which the soul is lifted to a new level or a higher order of being, and is enabled to achieve its heavenly destiny of knowing, possessing, and enjoying God. The grace is derived from the inexhaustible treasury of the merits of Christ and is imparted to believers by the sacraments. Looked at from the divine point of view, this sanctifying grace within the soul secures the remission of original sin, imparts a permanent habit of inherent righteousness, and carries within itself the potency of further development, and even of perfection. Out of it the new life develops with all its virtues. Its good work can be neutralized or destroyed by mortal sins; but the guilt contracted after baptism can be removed by the eucharist in the case of venial sins, and by the sacrament of penance in the case of mortal sins. Considered from the human point of view, the supernatural works of faith working through love have merit before God, and secure an increase of grace. Such works are impossible, however, without the continuous operation of the grace of God. The result of the whole process was known as justification rather than as sanctification; it consisted in making man just before God. These ideas are embodied in the Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent.

2. AFTER THE REFORMATION. The Reformers in speaking of sanctification emphasized the antithesis of sin and redemption rather than that of nature and supernature. They made a clear distinction between justification and sanctification, regarding the former as a legal act of divine grace, affecting the judicial status of man, and the latter, as a moral or re-creative work, changing the inner nature of man. But while they made a careful distinction between the two, they also stressed their inseparable connection. While deeply convinced that man is justified by faith alone, they also understood that the faith which justifies is not alone. Justification is at once followed by sanctification, since God sends out the Spirit of His Son into the hearts of His own as soon as they are justified, and that Spirit is the Spirit of sanctification. They did not regard the grace of sanctification as a supernatural essence infused in man through the sacraments, but as a supernatural and gracious work of the Holy Spirit, primarily through the Word and secondarily through the sacraments, by which He delivers us more and more from the power of sin and enables us to do good works. Though in no way confounding justification and sanctification, they felt the necessity of preserving the closest possible connection between the former, in which the free and forgiving grace of God is strongly emphasized, and the latter, which calls for the co-operation of man, in order to avoid the danger of work-righteousness. In Pietism and Methodism great emphasis was placed on constant fellowship with Christ as the great means of sanctification. By exalting sanctification at the expense of justification, they did not always avoid the danger of self-righteousness. Wesley did not merely distinguish justification and sanctification, but virtually separated them, and spoke of entire sanctification as a second gift of grace, following

the first, of justification by faith, after a shorter or longer period. While he also spoke of sanctification as a process, he yet held that the believer should pray and look for full sanctification at once by a separate act of God. Under the influence of Rationalism and of the moralism of Kant sanctification ceased to be regarded as a supernatural work of the Holy Spirit in the renewal of sinners, and was brought down to the level of a mere moral improvement by the natural powers of man. For Schleiermacher it was merely the progressive domination of the God-consciousness within us over the merely sentient and ever morally defective world-consciousness. And for Ritschl it was the moral perfection of the Christian life to which we attain by fulfilling our vocation as members of the Kingdom of God. In a great deal of modern liberal theology sanctification consists only in the ever-increasing redemption of man's lower self by the domination of his higher self. Redemption by character is one of the slogans of the present day, and the term "sanctification" has come to stand for mere moral improvement.

C. THE BIBLICAL IDEA OF HOLINESS AND SANCTIFICATION.

1. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. In Scripture the quality of holiness applies first of all to God, and as applied to Him its fundamental idea is that of unapproachableness. And this unapproachableness is based on the fact that God is divine and therefore absolutely distinct from the creature. Holiness in this sense is not merely an attribute to be co- ordinated with others in God. It is rather something that is predicable of everything that is found in God. He is holy in His grace as well as in His righteousness, in His love as well as in His wrath. Strictly speaking, holiness becomes an attribute only in the later ethical sense of the word. The ethical meaning of the term developed out of the majesty- meaning. This development starts with the idea that a sinful being is more keenly conscious of the majesty of God than a sinless being. The sinner becomes aware of his impurity as over against the majestic purity of God, cf. Isaiah 6:1-13. Otto speaks of holiness in the original sense as the numenous, and proposes to call the characteristic reaction to it "creature-feeling, or creature-consciousness," a disvaluation of self into nothingness, while he speaks of the reaction to holiness in the derived ethical sense as a "feeling of absolute profaneness." Thus the idea of holiness as majestic purity or ethical sublimity was developed. This purity is an active principle in God, that must vindicate itself and uphold its honor. This accounts for the fact that holiness is represented in Scripture also as the light of the divine glory turned into a devouring fire. Isaiah 5:24; Isaiah 10:17; Isaiah 33:14-15. Over against the holiness of God man feels himself to be, not merely insignificant, but positively impure and sinful, and as such an object of God's wrath. God revealed His holiness in the Old Testament in various ways. He did it in terrible judgments upon the enemies of Israel, Exodus 15:11-12. He did it also by separating unto Himself a people, which He took out of the world, Exodus 19:4-6; Ezekiel 20:39-44. By taking this people out of the impure and ungodly world, He protested against that world and its sin. Moreover, He did it repeatedly in sparing His unfaithful people, because He did not want the unholy world to rejoice at what it might consider the failure of His work, Hosea 11:9. In a derivative sense the idea of holiness is also applied to things and persons that are placed in a special relation to God. The land of Canaan, the city of Jerusalem, the temple-mount, the tabernacle and temple, the sabbaths and the solemn feasts of Israel, — they are all called holy, since they are consecrated to God and are placed within the radiance of His majestic holiness. Similarly, the prophets, the Levites, and the priests are called holy as persons that were set aside for the special service of the Lord. Israel had its sacred places, its sacred seasons, its sacred rites, and its sacred persons. This is not yet the

ethical idea of holiness, however. One might be a sacred person, and yet be entirely devoid of the grace of God in his heart. In the old dispensation, as well as in the new, ethical holiness results from the renewing and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. It should be remembered, however, that even where the conception of holiness is thoroughly spiritualized, it is always expressive of a relation. The idea of holiness is never that of moral goodness, considered in itself, but always that of ethical goodness seen in relation to God.

2. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. In passing from the Old Testament to the New we become aware of a striking difference. While in the Old Testament there is not a single attribute of God that stands out with anything like the same prominence as His holiness, in the New Testament holiness is seldom ascribed to God. Except in a few Old Testament quotations, it is done only in the writings of John, John 17:11; 1 John 2:20; Revelation 6:10. In all probability the explanation for this lies in the fact that in the New Testament holiness stands forth as the special characteristic of the Spirit of God, by whom believers are sanctified, are qualified for service, and are led to their eternal destiny, 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Titus 3:5. The word hagios is used in connection with the Spirit of God well nigh a hundred times. The conception of holiness and sanctification, however, is no other in the New Testament than it is in the Old. In the former as well as in the latter holiness is ascribed in a derived sense to man. In the one as well as in the other ethical holiness is not mere moral rectitude, and sanctification is never mere moral improvement. These two are often confused in the present day, when people speak of salvation by character. A man may boast of great moral improvement, and yet be an utter stranger to sanctification. The Bible does not urge moral improvement pure and simple, but moral improvement in relation to God, for God's sake, and with a view to the service of God. It insists on sanctification. At this very point much ethical preaching of the present day is utterly misleading; and the corrective for it lies in the presentation of the true doctrine of sanctification. Sanctification may be defined as that gracious and continuous operation of the Holy Spirit, by which He delivers the justified sinner from the pollution of sin, renews his whole nature in the image of God, and enables him to perform good works.

D. THE NATURE OF SANCTIFICATION.

1. IT IS A SUPERNATURAL WORK OF GOD. Some have the mistaken notion that sanctification consists merely in the drawing out of the new life, implanted in the soul by regeneration, in a persuasive way by presenting motives to the will. But this is not true. It consists fundamentally and primarily in a divine operation in the soul, whereby the holy disposition born in regeneration is strengthened and its holy exercises are increased. It is essentially a work of God, though in so far as He employs means, man can and is expected to co-operate by the proper use of these means. Scripture clearly exhibits the supernatural character of sanctification in several ways. It describes it as a work of God, 1 Thessalonians 5:23; Hebrews 13:20-21, as a fruit of the union of life with Jesus Christ, John 15:3; Galatians 2:20; Galatians 4:19, as a work that is wrought in man from within and which for that very reason cannot be a work of man, Ephesians 3:16; Colossians 1:11, and speaks of its manifestation in Christian virtues as the work of the Spirit, Galatians 5:22. It should never be represented as a merely natural process in the spiritual development of man, nor brought down to the level of a mere human achievement, as is done in a great deal of modern liberal theology.

2. IT CONSISTS OF TWO PARTS. The two parts of sanctification are represented in Scripture as: a. The mortification of the old man, the body of sin. This Scriptural term denotes that act of God whereby the pollution and corruption of human nature that results from sin is gradually removed. It is often represented in the Bible as the crucifying of the old man, and is thus connected with the death of Christ on the cross. The old man is human nature in so far as it is controlled by sin, Romans 6:6; Galatians 5:24. In the context of the passage of Galatians Paul contrasts the works of the flesh and the works of the Spirit, and then says: "And they who are of Christ Jesus have crucified the flesh with the passions and the lusts thereof." This means that in their case the Spirit has gained predominance. b. The quickening of the new man, created in Christ Jesus unto good works. While the former part of sanctification is negative in character, this is positive. It is that act of God whereby the holy disposition of the soul is strengthened, holy exercises are increased, and thus a new course of life engendered and promoted. The old structure of sin is gradually torn down, and a new structure of God is reared in its stead. These two parts of sanctification are not successive but contemporaneous. Thank God, the gradual erection of the new building need not wait until the old one is completely demolished. If it had to wait for that, it could never begin in this life. With the gradual dissolution of the old the new makes its appearance. It is like the airing of a house filled with pestiferous odors. As the old air is drawn out, the new rushes in. This positive side of sanctification is often called "a being raised together with Christ," Romans 6:4-5; Colossians 2:12; Colossians 3:1-2. The new life to which it leads is called "a life unto God," Romans 6:11; Galatians 2:19.

3. IT AFFECTS THE WHOLE MAN: BODY AND SOUL; INTELLECT, AFFECTIONS AND WILL. This follows from the nature of the case, because sanctification takes place in the inner life of man, in the heart, and this cannot be changed without changing the whole organism of man. If the inner man is changed, there is bound to be change also in the periphery of life. Moreover, Scripture clearly and explicitly teaches that it affects both body and soul, 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Romans 6:12; 1 Corinthians 6:15; 1 Corinthians 6:20. The body comes into consideration here as the organ or instrument of the sinful soul, through which the sinful inclinations and habits and passions express themselves. The sanctification of the body takes place especially in the crisis of death and in the resurrection of the dead. Finally, it also appears from Scripture that sanctification affects all the powers or faculties of the soul: the understanding, Jeremiah 31:34; John 6:45; — the will, Ezekiel 36:25-27; Php 2:13; — the passions, Galatians 5:24; — and the conscience, Titus 1:15; Hebrews 9:14.

4. IT IS A WORK OF GOD IN WHICH BELIEVERS CO-OPERATE. When it is said that man takes part in the work of sanctification, this does not mean that man is an independent agent in the work, so as to make it partly the work of God and partly the work of man; but merely, that God effects the work in part through the instrumentality of man as a rational being, by requiring of him prayerful and intelligent co-operation with the Spirit. That man must co-operate with the Spirit of God follows: (a) from the repeated warnings against evils and temptations, which clearly imply that man must be active in avoiding the pitfalls of life, Romans 12:9; Romans 12:16-17; 1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Galatians 5:16-23; and (b) from the constant exhortations to holy living. These imply that the believer must be diligent in the employment of the means at his command for the moral and spiritual improvement of his life, Micah 6:8; John 15:2; John 15:16; Romans 8:12-13; Romans 12:1-2; Romans 12:17; Galatians 6:7-8; Galatians 6:15.

E. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF SANCTIFICATION.

1. As appears from the immediately preceding, sanctification is a work of which God and not man is the author. Only the advocates of the so-called free will can claim that it is a work of man. Nevertheless, it differs from regeneration in that man can, and is in duty bound to, strive for ever-increasing sanctification by using the means which God has placed at his disposal. This is clearly taught in Scripture, 2 Corinthians 7:1; Colossians 3:5-14; 1 Peter 1:22. Consistent Antinomians lose sight of this important truth, and feel no need of carefully avoiding sin, since this affects only the old man which is condemned to death, and not the new man which is holy with the holiness of Christ.

2. Sanctification takes place partly in the subconscious life, and as such is an immediate operation of the Holy Spirit; but also partly in the conscious life, and then depends on the use of certain means, such as the constant exercise of faith, the study of God’s Word, prayer, and association with other believers.

3. Sanctification is usually a lengthy process and never reaches perfection in this life. At the same time there may be cases in which it is completed in a very short time or even in a moment, as, for instance, in cases in which regeneration and conversion are immediately followed by temporal death. If we may proceed on the assumption that the believer’s sanctification is perfect immediately after death — and Scripture seems to teach this as far as the soul is concerned —, then in such cases the sanctification of the soul must be completed almost at once.

4. The sanctification of the believer must, it would seem, be completed either at the very moment of death, or immediately after death, as far as the soul is concerned, and at the resurrection in so far as it pertains to the body. This would seem to follow from that fact that, on the one hand, the Bible teaches that in the present life no one can claim freedom from sin, 1 Kings 8:46; Proverbs 20:9; Romans 3:10; Romans 3:12; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8; and that, on the other hand, those who have gone before are entirely sanctified. It speaks of them as "the spirits of just men made perfect," Hebrews 12:23, and as "without blemish," Revelation 14:5. Moreover, we are told that in the heavenly city of God there shall in no wise enter "anything unclean or he that maketh an abomination and a lie," Revelation 21:27; and that Christ at His coming will "fashion anew the body of our humiliation, that it may be conformed to the body of His glory," Php 3:21.

F. THE AUTHOR AND MEANS OF SANCTIFICATION.

Sanctification is a work of the triune God, but is ascribed more particularly to the Holy Spirit in Scripture, Romans 8:11; Romans 15:16; 1 Peter 1:2. It is particularly important in our day, with its emphasis on the necessity of approaching the study of theology anthropologically and its one-sided call to service in the kingdom of God, to stress the fact that God, and not man, is the author of sanctification. Especially in view of the Activism that is such a characteristic feature of American religious life, and which glorifies the work of man rather than the grace of God, it is necessary to stress the fact over and over again that sanctification is the fruit of justification, that the former is simply impossible without the latter, and that both are the fruits of the grace of God in the redemption of sinners. Though man is privileged to co-operate with the Spirit of God, he can do this only in virtue of the strength which the Spirit imparts to him from day to day. The spiritual development of man is not a human achievement, but a work of divine grace. Man deserves no

credit whatsoever for that which he contributes to it instrumentally. In so far as sanctification takes place in the subconscious life, it is effected by the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit. But as a work in the conscious life of believers it is wrought by several means, which the Holy Spirit employs.

1. THE WORD OF GOD. In opposition to the Church of Rome it should be maintained that the principal means used by the Holy Spirit is the Word of God. The truth in itself certainly has no adequate efficiency to sanctify the believer, yet it is naturally adapted to be the means of sanctification as employed by the Holy Spirit. Scripture presents all the objective conditions for holy exercises and acts. It serves to excite spiritual activity by presenting motives and inducements, and gives direction to it by prohibitions, exhortations, and examples, 1 Peter 1:22; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 1:4.

2. THE SACRAMENTS. These are the means par excellence according to the Church of Rome. Protestants regard them as subordinate to the Word of God, and sometimes even speak of them as the "visible Word." They symbolize and seal to us the same truths that are verbally expressed in the Word of God, and may be regarded as an acted word, containing a lively representation of the truth, which the Holy Spirit makes the occasion for holy exercises. They are not only subordinate to the Word of God, but cannot exist without it, and are therefore always accompanied by it, Romans 6:3; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:21.

3. PROVIDENTIAL GUIDANCE. God’s providences, both favorable and adverse, are often powerful means of sanctification. In connection with the operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word, they work on our natural affections and thus frequently deepen the impression of religious truth and force it home. It should be borne in mind that the light of God’s revelation is necessary for the interpretation of His providential guidances, Psalms 119:71; Romans 2:4; Hebrews 12:10.

G. RELATION OF SANCTIFICATION TO OTHER STAGES IN THE ORDO SALUTIS.

It is of considerable importance to have a correct conception of the relation between sanctification and some of the other stages in the work of redemption.

1. TO REGENERATION. There is both difference and similarity here. Regeneration is completed at once, for a man cannot be more or less regenerated; he is either dead or alive spiritually. Sanctification is a process, bringing about gradual changes, so that different grades may be distinguished in the resulting holiness. Hence we are admonished to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord, 2 Corinthians 7:1. The Heidelberg Catechism also presupposes that there are degrees of holiness, when it says that even "the holiest men, when in this life, have only a small beginning of this obedience."91 At the same time regeneration is the beginning of sanctification. The work of renewal, begun in the former, is continued in the latter, Php 1:6. Strong says: "It (sanctification) is distinguished from regeneration as growth from birth, or as the strengthening of a holy disposition from the original impartation of it."92

2. TO JUSTIFICATION. Justification precedes and is basic to sanctification in the covenant of grace. In the covenant of works the order of righteousness and holiness was just the reverse. Adam was created with a holy disposition and inclination to serve God, but on the basis of this holiness he had to work out the righteousness that would entitle him to eternal life. Justification is the judicial basis for sanctification. God has the right to demand of us holiness of life, but because

we cannot work out this holiness for ourselves, He freely works it within us through the Holy Spirit on the basis of the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is imputed to us in justification. The very fact that it is based on justification, in which the free grace of God stands out with the greatest prominence, excludes the idea that we can ever merit anything in sanctification. The Roman Catholic idea that justification enables man to perform meritorious works is contrary to Scripture. Justification as such does not effect a change in our inner being and therefore needs sanctification as its complement. It is not sufficient that the sinner stands righteous before God; he must also be holy in his inmost life. Barth has a rather unusual representation of the relation between justification and sanctification. In order to ward off all self-righteousness, he insists on it that the two always be considered jointly. They go together and should not be considered quantitatively, as if the one followed the other. Justification is not a station which one passes, an accomplished fact on the basis of which one next proceeds to the highway of sanctification. It is not a completed fact to which one can look back with definite assurance, but occurs ever anew whenever man has reached the point of complete despair, and then goes hand in hand with sanctification. And just as man remains a sinner even after justification, so he also remains a sinner in sanctification, even his best deeds continue to be sins. Sanctification does not engender a holy disposition, and does not gradually purify man. It does not put him in possession of any personal holiness, does not make him a saint, but leaves him a sinner. It really becomes a declarative act like justification. McConnachie, who is a very sympathetic interpreter of Barth, says: "Justification and sanctification are, therefore, to Barth, two sides of one act of God upon men. Justification is the pardon of the sinner (justificatio impii), by which God declares the sinner righteous. Sanctification is the sanctification of the sinner (sanctificatio impii), by which God declares the sinner 'holy'." However laudable the desire of Barth to destroy every vestige of work-righteousness, he certainly goes to an unwarranted extreme, in which he virtually confuses justification and sanctification, negatives the Christian life, and rules out the possibility of confident assurance.

3. TO FAITH. Faith is the mediate or instrumental cause of sanctification as well as of justification. It does not merit sanctification any more than it does justification, but it unites us to Christ and keeps us in touch with Him as the Head of the new humanity, who is the source of the new life within us, and also of our progressive sanctification, through the operation of the Holy Spirit. The consciousness of the fact that sanctification is based on justification, and is impossible on any other basis, and that the constant exercise of faith is necessary, in order to advance in the way of holiness, will guard us against all self-righteousness in our striving to advance in godliness and holiness of life. It deserves particular attention that, while even the weakest faith mediates a perfect justification, the degree of sanctification is commensurate with the strength of the Christian's faith and the persistence with which he apprehends Christ.

H. THE IMPERFECT CHARACTER OF SANCTIFICATION IN THIS LIFE.

1. SANCTIFICATION IMPERFECT IN DEGREE. When we speak of sanctification as being imperfect in this life, we do not mean to say that it is imperfect in parts, as if only a part of the holy man that originates in regeneration were affected. It is the whole, but yet undeveloped new man, that must grow into full stature. A new-born child is, barring exceptions, perfect in parts, but not vet in the degree of development for which it is intended. Just so the new man is perfect in parts, but remains in the present life imperfect in the degree of spiritual development. Believers must contend with sin as long as they live, 1 Kings 8:46; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; James 3:2; 1

John 1:8.

2. DENIAL OF THIS IMPERFECTION BY THE PERFECTIONISTS. a. The doctrine of perfectionism. Speaking generally, this doctrine is to the effect that religious perfection is attainable in the present life. It is taught in various forms by Pelagians, Roman Catholics or Semi-Pelagians, Arminians, Wesleyans, such mystical sects as the Labadists, the Quietists, the Quakers, and others, some of the Oberlin theologians, such as Mahan and Finney, and Ritschl. These all agree in maintaining that it is possible for believers in this life to attain to a state in which they comply with the requirements of the law under which they now live, or under that law as it was adjusted to their present ability and needs, and, consequently, to be free from sin. They differ, however: (1) In their view of sin, the Pelagians, in distinction from all the rest, denying the inherent corruption of man. They all agree, however, in externalizing sin. (2) In their conception of the law which believers are now obliged to fulfill, the Arminians, including the Wesleyans, differing from all the rest in holding that this is not the original moral law, but the gospel requirements or the new law of faith and evangelical obedience. The Roman Catholics and the Oberlin theologians maintain that it is the original law, but admit that the demands of this law are adjusted to man's deteriorated powers and to his present ability. And Ritschl discards the whole idea that man is subject to an externally imposed law. He defends the autonomy of moral conduct, and holds that we are under no law but such as is evolved out of our own moral disposition in the course of activities for the fulfilment of our vocation. (3) In their idea of the sinner's dependence on the renewing grace of God for the ability to fulfill the law. All, except the Pelagians, admit that he is in some sense dependent on divine grace, in order to the attainment of perfection.

It is very significant that all the leading perfectionist theories (with the sole exception of the Pelagian, which denies the inherent corruption of man) deem it necessary to lower the standard of perfection and do not hold man responsible for a great deal that is undoubtedly demanded by the original moral law. And it is equally significant that they feel the necessity of externalizing the idea of sin, when they claim that only conscious wrong-doing can be so considered, and refuse to recognize as sin a great deal that is represented as such in Scripture. b. Scriptural proofs adduced for the doctrine of perfectionism.

(1) The Bible commands believers to be holy and even to be perfect, 1 Peter 1:16; Matthew 5:48; James 1:4, and urges them to follow the example of Christ who did no sin, 1 Peter 2:21 f. Such commands would be unreasonable, if it were not possible to reach sinless perfection. But the Scriptural demand to be holy and perfect holds for the unregenerate as well as for the regenerate, since the law of God demands holiness from the start and has never been revoked. If the command implies that they to whom it comes can live up to the requirement, this must be true of every man. However, only those who teach perfectionism in the Pelagian sense can hold that view. The measure of our ability cannot be inferred from the Scriptural commandments. (2) Holiness and perfection are often ascribed to believers in Scripture, Song of Solomon 4:7; 1 Corinthians 2:5; 2 Corinthians 5:17; Ephesians 5:27; Hebrews 5:14; Php 4:13; Colossians 2:10. When the Bible speaks of believers as holy and perfect, however, this does not necessarily mean that they are without sin, since both words are often used in a different sense, not only in common parlance, but also in the Bible. Persons set aside for the special service of God are called holy in the Bible, irrespective of their moral condition and life. Believers can be and are called holy, because they are objectively holy in Christ, or because they are in principle subjectively sanctified

by the Spirit of God. Paul in his Epistles invariably addresses his readers as saints, that is "holy ones," and then proceeds in several cases to take them to task for their sins. And when believers are described as perfect, this means in some cases merely that they are full-grown, 1 Corinthians 2:6; Hebrews 5:14, and in others that they are fully equipped for their task, 2 Timothy 3:17. All this certainly does not give countenance to the theory of sin less perfection.

(3) There are, it is said, Biblical examples of saints who led perfect lives, such as Noah, Job, and Asa, Genesis 6:9; Job 1:1; 1 Kings 15:14. But, surely, such examples as these do not prove the point for the simple reason that they are no examples of sinless perfection. Even the most notable saints of the Bible are pictured as men who had their failings and who sinned, in some cases very grievously. This is true of Noah, Moses, Job, Abraham, and all the others. It is true that this does not necessarily prove that their lives remained sinful as long as they lived on earth, but it is a striking fact that we are not introduced to a single one who was without sin. The question of Solomon is still pertinent: "Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?" Proverbs 20:9. Moreover, John says: "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us," 1 John 1:8.

(4) The apostle John declares explicitly that they who are born of God do not sin, 1 John 3:6; John 3:8-9; 1 John 5:18. But when John says that they who are born of God do not sin, he is contrasting the two states, represented by the old and the new man, as to their essential nature and principle. One of the essential characteristics of the new man is that he does not sin. In view of the fact that John invariably uses the present to express the idea that the one born of God does not sin, it is possible that he desires to express the idea that the child of God does not go on sinning habitually, as the devil does, 1 John 3:8.93 He certainly does not mean to assert that the believer never commits an act of sin, cf. 1 John 1:8-10. Moreover, the Perfectionist cannot very well use these passages to prove his point, since they would prove too much for his purpose. He does not make bold to say that all believers are actually sinless, but only that they can reach a state of sinless perfection. The Johannine passages, however, would prove, on his interpretation, that all believers are without sin. And more than that, they would also prove that believers never fall from the state of grace (for this is sinning); and yet the Perfectionists are the very people who believe that even perfect Christians may fall away. c. Objections to the theory of Perfectionism.

(1) In the light of Scripture the doctrine of Perfectionism is absolutely untenable. The Bible gives us the explicit and very definite assurance that there is no one on earth who does not sin, 1 Kings 8:46; Proverbs 20:9; Ecclesiastes 7:20; Romans 3:10; James 3:2; 1 John 1:8. In view of these clear statements of Scripture it is hard to see how any who claim to believe the Bible as the infallible Word of God can hold that it is possible for believers to lead sinless lives, and that some actually succeed in avoiding all sin.

(2) According to Scripture there is a constant warfare between the flesh and the Spirit in the lives of God’s children, and even the best of them are still striving for perfection. Paul gives a very striking description of this struggle in Romans 7:7-25, a passage which certainly refers to him in his regenerate state. In Galatians 5:16-24 he speaks of that very same struggle as a struggle that characterizes all the children of God. And in Php 3:10-14 he speaks of himself, practically at the end of his career, as one who has not yet reached perfection, but is pressing on toward the goal.

(3) Confession of sin and prayer for forgiveness are continually required. Jesus taught all His disciples without any exception to pray forthe forgiveness of sins and for deliverance from temptation and from the evil one, Matthew 6:12-13. And John says: "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," 1 John 1:9. Moreover, Bible saints are constantly represented as confessing their sins, Job 9:3; Job 9:20; Psalms 32:5; Psalms 103:3; Psalms 143:2; Proverbs 20:9; Isaiah 64:6; Daniel 9:16; Romans 7:14.

(4) The Perfectionists themselves deem it necessary to lower the standard of the law and to externalize the idea of sin, in order to maintain their theory. Moreover, some of them have repeatedly modified the ideal to which, in their estimation, believers can attain. At first the ideal was "freedom from all sin"; then, "freedom from all conscious sin," next, "entire consecration to God," and, finally, "Christian assurance." This is in itself a sufficient condemnation of their theory. We naturally do not deny that the Christian can attain to the assurance of faith.

I. SANCTIFICATION AND GOOD WORKS.

Sanctification and good works are most intimately related. Just as the old life expresses itself in works of evil, so the new life, that originates in regeneration and is promoted and strengthened in sanctification, naturally manifests itself in good works. These may be called the fruits of sanctification, and as such come into consideration here.

1. THE NATURE OF GOOD WORKS. a. Good works in the specifically theological sense. When we speak of good works in connection with sanctification, we do not refer to works that are perfect, that answer perfectly to the requirements of the divine moral law, and that are of such inherent worth as to entitle one to the reward of eternal life under the conditions of the covenant of works. We do mean, however, works that are essentially different in moral quality from the actions of the unregenerate, and that are the expressions of a new and holy nature, as the principle from which they spring. These are works which God not only approves, but in a certain sense also rewards. The following are the characteristics of works that are spiritually good: (1) They are the fruits of a regenerate heart, since without this no one can have the disposition (to obey God) and the motive (to glorify God) that is required, Matthew 12:33; Matthew 7:17-18. (2) They are not only in external conformity with the law of God, but are also done in conscious obedience to the revealed will of God, that is, because they are required by God. They spring from the principle of love to God and from the desire to do His will, Deuteronomy 6:2; 1 Samuel 15:22; Isaiah 1:12; Isaiah 29:13; Matthew 15:9. (3) Whatever their proximate aim may be, their final aim is not the welfare of man, but the glory of God, which is the highest conceivable aim of man’s life, 1 Corinthians 10:31; Romans 12:1; Colossians 3:17; Colossians 3:23. b. Good works in a more general sense. Though the term "good works" is generally used in theology in the strict sense just indicated, it remains true that the unregenerate can also perform works that may be called good in a superficial sense of the word. They often perform works that are in outward conformity with the law of God and may be called objectively good, in distinction from flagrant transgressions of the law. Such works answer to a proximate aim that meets with the approval of God. Moreover, in virtue of the remains of the image of God in the natural man and of the light of nature, man may be guided in his relation to other men by motives which are laudable and in so far bear the stamp of God’s approval. Those good works, however, cannot be regarded as fruits of the corrupt heart of man. They find their explanation only in the common grace of God. Furthermore, we should bear in mind that, though

these works can be called good in a certain sense and are so called in the Bible, Luke 6:33, they are yet essentially defective. The deeds of the unregenerate are divorced from the spiritual root of love to God. They represent no inner obedience to the law of God and no subjection to the will of the sovereign Ruler of heaven and earth. They have no spiritual aim, since they are not performed for the purpose of glorifying God, but only bear on the relations of the natural life. The real quality of the act is, of course, determined by the quality of its final aim. The ability of the unregenerate to perform good works in some sense of the word has often been denied. Barth goes one step further when he goes to the extreme of denying that believers can do good works, and asserts that all their works are sins.

2. THE MERITORIOUS CHARACTER OF GOOD WORKS. Even from the earliest ages of the Christian Church there was a tendency to ascribe a certain merit to good works, but the doctrine of merit was really developed in the Middle Ages. At the time of the Reformation it was very prominent in Roman Catholic theology and was pushed to ridiculous extremes in practical life. The Reformers at once joined issue with the Church of Rome on this point. a. The position of Rome on the point in question. The Roman Catholic Church distinguishes between a meritum de condigno which represents inherent dignity and worth, and a meritum de congruo, which is a sort of quasi-merit, something fit to be rewarded. The former attaches only to works done after regeneration by the aid of divine grace, and is a merit which intrinsically deserves the reward it receives from the hand of God. The latter attaches to those dispositions or works which a man may develop or do before regeneration, in virtue of a mere prevenient grace, and is a merit which makes it congruous or fitting for God to reward the agent by infusing grace into his heart. Since the decisions of the Council of Trent are rather dubious on this point, there is some uncertainty, however, as to the exact position of the Church. The general idea seems to be that the ability to perform good works in the strict sense of the word springs from grace infused into the sinner's heart for the sake of Christ; and that afterwards these good works merit, that is, give man a just claim to, salvation and glory. The Church goes even farther than that, and teaches that believers can perform works of supererogation, can do more than is necessary for their own salvation and can thus lay by a store of good works, which may accrue to the benefit of others. b. The Scriptural position on this point. Scripture clearly teaches that the good works of believers are not meritorious in the proper sense of the word. We should bear in mind, however, that the word "merit" is employed in a twofold sense, the one strict and proper, and the other loose. Strictly speaking, a meritorious work is one to which, on account of its intrinsic value and dignity, the reward is justly due from commutative justice. Loosely speaking, however, a work that is deserving of approval and to which a reward is somehow attached (by promise, agreement, or otherwise) is also sometimes called meritorious. Such works are praiseworthy and are rewarded by God. But, however this may be, they are surely not meritorious in the strict sense of the word. They do not, by their own intrinsic moral value, make God a debtor to him who performs them. In strict justice the good works of believers merit nothing. Some of the most conclusive passages of Scripture to prove the point under consideration are the following: Luke 17:9-10; Romans 5:15-18; Romans 6:23; Ephesians 2:8-10; 2 Timothy 1:9; Titus 3:5. These passages clearly show that believers do not receive the inheritance of salvation because it is due to them in virtue of their good works, but only as a free gift of God. It stands to reason also that such works cannot be meritorious, for: (1) Believers owe their whole life to God and therefore cannot merit anything by giving God simply what is His due, Luke 17:9-10. (2) They cannot perform good works in their own strength, but only

in the strength which God imparts to them from day to day; and in view of that fact they cannot expect the credit for these works, 1 Corinthians 15:10; Php 2:13. (3) Even the best works of believers remain imperfect in this life, and all good works together represent only a partial obedience, while the law demands perfect obedience and can be satisfied with nothing less, Isaiah 64:6; James 3:2. (4) Moreover, the good works of believers are out of all proportion to the eternal reward of glory. A temporal and imperfect obedience can never merit an eternal and perfect reward.

3. THE NECESSITY OF GOOD WORKS. There can be no doubt about the necessity of good works properly understood. They cannot be regarded as necessary to merit salvation, nor as a means to retain a hold on salvation, nor even as the only way along which to proceed to eternal glory, for children enter salvation without having done any good works. The Bible does not teach that no one can be saved apart from good works. At the same time good works necessarily follow from the union of believers with Christ. "He that abideth in me and I in him, the same beareth much fruit," John 15:5. They are also necessary as required by God, Romans 7:4; Romans 8:12-13; Galatians 6:2, as the fruits of faith, James 2:14; James 2:17; James 2:20-22, as expressions of gratitude, 1 Corinthians 6:20, unto the assurance of faith, 2 Peter 1:5-10, and to the glory of God, John 15:8; 1 Corinthians 10:31. The necessity of good works must be maintained over against the Antinomians, who claim that, since Christ not only bore the penalty of sin, but also met the positive demands of the law, the believer is free from the obligation to observe it, an error that is still with us to-day in some of the forms of dispensationalism. This is a thoroughly false position, for it is only the law as a system of penalty and as a method of salvation that is abolished in the death of Christ. The law as the standard of our moral life is a transcript of the holiness of God and is therefore of permanent validity also for the believer, though his attitude to the law has undergone a radical change. He has received the Spirit of God, which is the Spirit of obedience, so that, without any constraint, he willingly obeys the law. Strong sums it up well, when he says: Christ frees us "(1) from the law as a system of curse and penalty; this He does by bearing the curse and penalty Himself . . . ; (2) from the law with its claims as a method of salvation; this He does by making His obedience and merits ours . . . ; (3) from the law as an outward and foreign compulsion; this He does by giving us the spirit of obedience and sonship, by which the law is progressively realized within."94

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: How was theocratic, related to ethical, holiness among Israel? How were the ritual purifications related to sanctification? Who is the subject of sanctification, the old man or the new, or neither of the two? Does sanctification in this life affect all parts of man equally? Where does the process of sanctification begin? Do all Christians experience a steady progress in sanctification? What is the difference between sanctification and moral improvement? Does the fact that sanctification is never complete in this life necessarily lead to the doctrine of purgatory, or to that of the continuation of sanctification after death? How did Wesley conceive of "entire sanctification"? Does Barth also ascribe holiness as an ethical quality to the believer? What Scripture proof is there that the Christian is not free from the law as a rule of life? Do Protestants in general teach that good works are not necessary? How do Roman Catholics and Protestants differ as to the necessity of good works? Is it wise to say without any qualification that good works are necessary unto salvation? If all Christians inherit eternal life, in what sense will their good works be the standard of their reward?

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04.4.0.11. Perseverance of the Saints

XI. Perseverance of the Saints A. THE DOCTRINE OF THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS IN HISTORY. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is to the effect that they whom God has regenerated and effectually called to a state of grace, can neither totally nor finally fall away from that state, but shall certainly persevere therein to the end and be eternally saved. This doctrine was first explicitly taught by Augustine, though he was not as consistent on this point as might have been expected of him as a strict predestinarian. With him the doctrine did not assume the form just stated. He held that the elect could not so fall away as to be finally lost, but at the same time considered it possible that some who were endowed with new life and true faith could fall from grace completely and at last suffer eternal damnation. The Church of Rome with its Semi-Pelagianism, including the doctrine of free will, denied the doctrine of the perseverance of the saints and made their perseverance dependent on the uncertain obedience of man. The Reformers restored this doctrine to its rightful place. The Lutheran Church, however, makes it uncertain again by making it contingent on man’s continued activity of faith, and by assuming that true believers can fall completely from grace. It is only in the Calvinistic Churches that the doctrine is maintained in a form in which it affords absolute assurance. The Canons of Dort, after calling attention to the many weaknesses and failures of the children of God, declare: "But God, who is rich in mercy, according to His unchangeable purpose of election, does not wholly withdraw the Holy Spirit from His own people even in their grievous falls; nor suffers them to proceed so far as to lose the grace of adoption and forfeit the state of justification, or to commit the sin unto death or against the Holy Spirit; nor does He permit them to be totally deserted, and to plunge themselves into everlasting destruction."95 The Arminians rejected this view and made the perseverance of believers dependent on their will to believe and on their good works. Arminius himself avoided that extreme, but his followers did did not hesitate to maintain their synergistic position with all its consequences. The Wesleyan Arminians followed suit as did several of the sects. The Reformed or Calvinistic Churches stand practically alone in giving a negative answer to the question, whether a Christian can completely fall from the state of grace and be finally lost.

B. STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE OF PERSEVERANCE. The doctrine of perseverance requires careful statement, especially in view of the fact that the term "perseverance of the saints" is liable to misunderstanding. It should be noted first of all that the doctrine is not merely to the effect that the elect will certainly be saved in the end, though Augustine has given it that form, but teaches very specifically that they who have once been regenerated and effectually called by God to a state of grace, can never completely fall from that state and thus fail to attain to eternal salvation, though they may sometimes be overcome by evil and fall in sin. It is maintained that the life of regeneration and the habits that develop out of it in the way of sanctification can never entirely disappear. Moreover, we should guard against the possible misunderstanding that this perseverance is regarded as an inherent property of the believer or as a continuous activity of man, by means of which he perseveres in the way of salvation. When Strong speaks of it as "the voluntary continuance, on the part of the Christian, in faith and well-doing," and as "the human

side or aspect of that spiritual process which, as viewed from the divine side, we call sanctification," — this is certainly liable to create the impression that perseverance depends on man. The Reformed, however, do not consider the perseverance of the saints as being, first of all, a disposition or activity of the believer, though they certainly believe that man co- operates in it just as he does in sanctification. They even stress the fact that the believer would fall away, if he were left to himself. It is, strictly speaking, not man but God who perseveres. Perseverance may be defined as that continuous operation of the Holy Spirit in the believer, by which the work of divine grace that is begun in the heart, is continued and brought to completion. It is because God never forsakes His work that believers continue to stand to the very end.

C. PROOF FOR THE DOCTRINE OF PERSEVERANCE. The doctrine of perseverance may be proved by certain statements of Scripture and by inference from other doctrines.

1. DIRECT STATEMENTS OF SCRIPTURE. There are some important passages of Scripture that come into consideration here. In John 10:27-29 we read: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, and no one shall snatch them out my hand. My Father, who hath given them unto me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of the Father's hand." Paul says in Romans 11:29 : "For the gifts and the calling of God are not repented of." This means that the grace of God revealed in His calling is never withdrawn, as though He repented of it. This is a general statement, though in the connection in which it is found it refers to the calling of Israel. The apostle comforts the believing Philippians with the words: "Being confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will perfect it unto the day of Jesus Christ," Php 1:6. In 2 Thessalonians 3:3 he says: "But the Lord is faithful, who shall establish you, and guard you from the evil one." In 2 Timothy 1:12 he sounds a note of rejoicing: "For I know Him whom I have believed, and I am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day." And in 4:18 of the same Epistle he glories in the fact that the Lord will deliver him from every evil work and will save him unto His heavenly kingdom.

2. INFERENTIAL PROOFS. The doctrine of perseverance may also be proved in an inferential way. a. From the doctrine of election. Election does not merely mean that some will be favored with certain external privileges and may be saved, if they do their duty, but that they who belong to the number of the elect shall finally be saved and can never fall short of perfect salvation. It is an election unto an end, that is, unto salvation. In working it out God endows believers with such influences of the Holy Spirit as to lead them, not only to accept Christ, but to persevere unto the end and to be saved unto the uttermost. b. From the doctrine of the covenant of redemption. In the covenant of redemption God gave His people to His Son as the reward for the latter's obedience and suffering. This reward was fixed from eternity and was not left contingent on any uncertain faithfulness of man. God does not go back on His promise, and therefore it is impossible that they who are reckoned as being in Christ, and as forming a part of His reward, can be separated from Him (Romans 8:38-39), and that they who have entered the covenant as a communion of life should fall out. c. From the efficacy of the merits and intercession of Christ. In His atoning work Christ paid the price to purchase the sinner's pardon and acceptance. His righteousness constitutes the perfect ground for the justification of the sinner, and it is impossible that one who is justified by the payment of such a perfect and efficacious price should again fall under condemnation. Moreover, Christ makes constant intercession for those who are given Him of the

Father, and His intercessory prayer for His people is always efficacious, John 11:42; Hebrews 7:25. d. From the mystical union with Christ. They who are united to Christ by faith become partakers of His Spirit, and thus become one body with Him, pulsating with the life of the Spirit. They share in the life of Christ, and because He lives they live also. It is impossible that they should again be removed from the body, thus frustrating the divine ideal. The union is permanent, since it originates in a permanent and unchangeable cause, the free and eternal love of God. e. From the work of the Holy Spirit in the heart. Dabney correctly says: "It is a low and unworthy estimate of the wisdom of the Holy Spirit and of His work in the heart, to suppose that He will begin the work now, and presently desert it; that the vital spark of heavenly birth is an ignis fatuus burning for a short season, and then expiring in utter darkness; that the spiritual life communicated in the new birth, is a sort of spasmodic or galvanic vitality, giving the outward appearance of life in the dead soul, and then dying."96 According to Scripture the believer is already in this life in possession of salvation and eternal life, John 3:36; John 5:24; John 6:54. Can we proceed on the assumption that eternal life will not be everlasting? f. From the assurance of salvation. It is quite evident from Scripture that believers can in this life attain to the assurance of salvation, Hebrews 3:14; Hebrews 6:11; Hebrews 10:22; 2 Peter 1:10. This would seem to be entirely out of the question, if it were possible for believers to fall from grace at any moment. It can be enjoyed only by those who stand in the firm conviction that God will perfect the work which He has begun.

D. OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF PERSEVERANCE.

1. IT IS INCONSISTENT WITH HUMAN FREEDOM. It is said that the doctrine of perseverance is inconsistent with human freedom. But this objection proceeds on the false assumption that real freedom consists in the liberty of indifference, or the power of contrary choice in moral and spiritual matters. This is erroneous, however. True liberty consists exactly in self-determination in the direction of holiness. Man is never more free than when he moves consciously in the direction of God. And the Christian stands in that liberty through the grace of God.

2. IT LEADS TO INDOLENCE AND IMMORALITY. It is confidently asserted that the doctrine of perseverance leads to indolence, license, and even immorality. A false security is said to result from it. This is a mistaken notion, however, for, although the Bible tells us that we are kept by the grace of God, it does not encourage the idea that God keeps us without constant watchfulness, diligence, and prayer on our part. It is hard to see how a doctrine which assures the believer of a perseverance in holiness can be an incentive for sin. It would seem that the certainty of success in the active striving for sanctification would be the best possible stimulus to ever greater exertion.

3. IT IS CONTRARY TO SCRIPTURE. The doctrine is frequently declared to be contrary to Scripture. The passages adduced to prove this contention can be reduced to three classes. a. There are warnings against apostasy which would seem to be quite uncalled for, if the believer could not fall away, Matthew 24:12; Colossians 1:23; Hebrews 2:1; Hebrews 3:14; Hebrews 6:11; 1 John 2:6. But these warnings regard the whole matter from the side of man and are seriously meant. They prompt self-examination, and are instrumental in keeping believers in the way of perseverance. They do not prove that any of those addressed will apostatize, but simply that the use of means is necessary to prevent them from committing this sin. Compare Acts 27:22-25 with Acts 27:31 for an illustration of this principle. b. There are also exhortations, urging believers to continue in the way of sanctification, which would appear to be unnecessary if there is no doubt

about it that they will continue to the end. But these are usually found in connection with such warnings as those referred to under (a), and serve exactly the same purpose. They do not prove that any of the believers exhorted will not persevere, but only that God uses moral means for the accomplishment of moral ends. c. Again, it is said that Scripture records several cases of actual apostasy, 1 Timothy 1:19-20; 2 Timothy 2:17-18; 2 Timothy 4:10; 2 Peter 2:1-2; cf. also Hebrews 6:4-6. But these instances do not prove the contention that real believers, in possession of true saving faith, can fall from grace, unless it be shown first that the persons indicated in these passages had true faith in Christ, and not a mere temporal faith, which is not rooted in regeneration. The Bible teaches us that there are persons who profess the true faith, and yet are not of the faith, Romans 9:6; 1 John 2:19; Revelation 3:1. John says of some of them, "They went out from us," and adds by way of explanation, "but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have remained with us," 1 John 2:19.

E. THE DENIAL OF THIS DOCTRINE MAKES SALVATION DEPENDENT ON MAN'S WILL. The denial of the doctrine of perseverance virtually makes the salvation of man dependent on the human will rather than on the grace of God. This consideration will, of course, have no effect on those who share the Pelagian conception of salvation as autosoteric — and their numbers are great — but certainly ought to cause those to pause who glory in being saved by grace. The idea is that, after man is brought to a state of grace by the operation of the Holy Spirit alone, or by the joint operation of the Holy Spirit and the will of man, it rests solely with man to continue in faith or to forsake the faith, just as he sees fit. This renders the cause of man very precarious and makes it impossible for him to attain to the blessed assurance of faith. Consequently, it is of the utmost importance to maintain the doctrine of perseverence. In the words of Hovey, "It may be a source of great comfort and power, — an incentive to gratitude, a motive to self-sacrifice, and a pillar of fire in the hour of danger."

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What is the real question concerning perseverance: is it whether the elect or whether the regenerate persevere? Do Augustine and the Lutherans also teach that the elect may finally be lost? How does the analogy of the natural life favor the doctrine of perseverance? Do not such passages as Hebrews 6:4-6; Hebrews 10:29; 2 Peter 2:1 prove the possibility of falling away? How about John 15:1-6? Is the grace of perseverance something innate, necessarily given with the new nature, or is it the fruit of a special, gracious, and preserving activity of God? Does the doctrine imply that one may be living in habitual and intentional sin, and yet be in a justified state? Does it preclude the idea of lapses into sin?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 289-294; Vos, Geref. Dogm. IV., pp. 248-260; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., pp. 687-698; Dick, Theology, Lect. LXXIX; Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 338-343; Finney, Syst. Theol., pp. 544-619; Hovey, Manual of Theology and Ethics, pp. 295-299; Pieper, Christ. Dogm. III, pp. 107-120; Pope Chr. Theol. III, pp. 131-147; Meijering, De Dordtsche Leerregels, pp. 256-354; Bos, De Dordtsche Leerregelen, pp. 199-255.

04.5.1.0. Introduction

Introduction The doctrine of the application of the merits of Christ naturally leads on to the doctrine of the Church, for the Church consists of those who are partakers of Christ and of the blessings of salvation that are in Him. The Reformed conception is that Christ, by the operation of the Holy Spirit, unites men with Himself, endows them with true faith, and thus constitutes the Church as His body, the communio fidelium or sanctorum. In Roman Catholic theology, however, the discussion of the Church takes precedence over everything else, preceding even the discussion of the doctrine of God and of divine revelation. The Church, it is said, has been instrumental in producing the Bible and therefore takes precedence over it; it is moreover the dispenser of all supernatural graces. It is not Christ that leads us to the Church, but the Church that leads us to Christ. All the emphasis falls, not on the invisible Church as the communio fidelium, but on the visible Church as the mater fidelium. The Reformation broke with this Roman Catholic view of the Church and centered attention once more on the Church as a spiritual organism. It emphasized the fact that there is no Church apart from the redemptive work of Christ and from the renewing operations of the Holy Spirit; and that, therefore, the discussion of these logically precedes the consideration of the doctrine of the Church.

It seems rather peculiar that practically all the outstanding Presbyterian dogmaticians of our country, such as the two Hodges, H. B. Smith, Shedd, and Dabney, have no separate locus on the Church in their dogmatical works and, in fact, devote very little attention to it. Only the works of Thornwell and Breckenridge form an exception to the rule. This might create the impression that, in their opinion, the doctrine of the Church should not have a place in dogmatics. But this is extremely unlikely, since none of them raise a single objection to its inclusion. Moreover, Turretin and their Scottish forbears, on whose foundation they are building, devote a great deal of attention to the Church. Walker says: "There is perhaps no country in the world in which all kinds of Church questions have been so largely discussed as in our own."1 And, finally, Dr. A. A. Hodge informs us that his father lectured to his various classes on the subjects of Ecclesiology, practically covered the entire ground, and intended to complete his Systematic Theology by the publication of a fourth volume on the Church; but was prevented by the infirmities incident to his advanced age.2 Dabney says that he omitted the doctrine of the Church, because this was ably treated in another department of the Seminary in which he labored.3 Shedd in giving his scheme asserts that the Church comes into consideration in connection with the means of grace.4 However, he devotes very little attention to the means of grace and does not discuss the doctrine of the Church. And the editor of Smith’s System of Christian Theology incorporated into this work the author’s views on the Church, as expressed in other works.5

04.5.1.1. Scriptural Names of the Church

I. Scriptural Names of the Church and the Doctrine of the Church in History A. SCRIPTURAL NAMES FOR THE CHURCH.

I. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. The Old Testament employs two words to designate the Church, namely qahal (or kahal), derived from an obsolete root qal (or kal), meaning "to call"; and ’edhah, from ya’adh, "to appoint" or "to meet or come together at an appointed place." These two words are sometimes used indiscriminately, but were not, at first, strictly syn of Israel or their representative heads, whether assembled or not assembled.Qahal, on the other hand, properly denotes the actual meeting together of the people. Consequently we find occasionally the expression qehal ’edhah, that is, "the assembly of the congregation" Exodus 12:6; Numbers 14:5; Jeremiah 26:17. It seems that the actual meeting was sometimes a meeting of the representatives of the people, Deuteronomy 4:10; Deuteronomy 18:16, comp. Deuteronomy 5:22-23; 1 Kings 8:1-3; 1 Kings 8:5; 2 Chronicles 5:2-6. ’Edhah is by far the more common word in Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Joshua, but is wholly absent from Deuteronomy, and is found but rarely in the later books. Qahal, abounds in Chronicles, Ezra, and Nehemiah. Sunagoge is the usual, almost universal, rendering of the former in the Septuagint, and is also the usual rendering of the latter in the Pentateuch. In the later books of the Bible, however, qahal is generally rendered by ekklesia. Schuerer claims that later Judaism already pointed to the distinction between sunagoge as a designation of the congregation of Israel as an empirical reality, and ekklesia as the name of that same congregation ideally considered. He is followed in this by Dr. Bavinck. Cremer-Koegel, however, takes exception to this. Hort says that after the exile the word qahal seems to have combined the shades of meaning belonging to both it and ’ edhah; and that consequently " ekklesia, as the primary Greek representative of qahal would naturally, for Greek-speaking Jews, mean the congregation of Israel quite as much as an assembly of the congregation."6

2. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. The New Testament also has two words, derived from the Septuagint, namely, ekklesia, from ek and kaleo, "to call out," and sunagoge, from sun and ago, meaning "to come or to bring together." The latter is used exclusively to denote either the religious gatherings of the Jews or the buildings in which they assembled for public worship, Matthew 4:23; Acts 13:43; Revelation 2:9; Revelation 3:9. The term ekklesia, however, generally designates the Church of the New Testament, though in a few places it denotes common civil assemblies. Acts 19:32; Acts 19:39; Acts 19:41. The preposition ek in ekklesia (ekkaleo) is often interpreted to mean "out from among the common mass of the people," and to indicate in connection with the Scriptural use of ekklesia, that the Church consists of the elect, called out of the world of humanity. This interpretation is rather doubtful, however, for the preposition originally simply denoted that the Greek citizens were called out of their houses. Now it would not have been unnatural if that entirely Scriptural idea had been put into the word in God’s revelation. But, as a matter of fact, we have no proof that this was actually done. The compound verb ekkaleo is never so used, and the word ekklesia never occurs in a context which suggests the presence of that particular thought in the mind of the writer. Deissmann would simply render ekklesia as "the (convened) assembly,"

regarding God as the convener. Because the idea of the Church is a many- sided concept, it is quite natural that the word ekklesia, as applied to it, does not always have exactly the same connotation. Jesus was the first one to use the word in the New Testament, and He applied it to the company that gathered about Him, Matthew 16:18, recognized Him publicly as their Lord, and accepted the principles of the Kingdom of God. It was the ekklesia of the Messiah, the true Israel. Later on, as a result of the extension of the Church, the word acquired various significations. Local churches were established everywhere, and were also called ekklesiai, since they were manifestations of the one universal Church of Christ. The following are the most important uses of the word: a. Most frequently the word ekklesia designates a circle of believers in some definite locality, a local church, irrespective of the question whether these believers are or are not assembled for worship. Some passages contain the added idea that they are assembled, Acts 5:11; Acts 11:26; 1 Corinthians 11:18; 1 Corinthians 14:19; 1 Corinthians 14:28; 1 Corinthians 14:35, while others do not, Romans 16:4; 1 Corinthians 16:1; Galatians 1:2; 2 Thessalonians 2:14, etc. b. In some cases the word denotes what may be called a domestic ekklesia, the church in the house of some individual. It seems that in apostolic times wealthy or otherwise important persons often set aside a large room in their homes for divine worship. Instances of this use of the word are found in Romans 16:23; 1 Corinthians 16:19; Colossians 4:15; Philemon 1:2. c. If the reading of Tisschendorf is correct (as is now generally taken for granted), then the word is found at least once in the singular to denote a group of churches, namely, the churches of Judea, Galilee, and Samaria. The passage in which it is so used is Acts 9:31. Naturally, this does not yet mean that they together constituted an organization such as we now call a denomination. It is not impossible that the church of Jerusalem and the church of Antioch in Syria also comprised several groups that were accustomed to meet in different places. d. In a more general sense the word serves to denote the whole body, throughout the world, of those who outwardly profess Christ and organize for purposes of worship, under the guidance of appointed officers. This meaning of the word is somewhat in the foreground in the First Epistle to the Corinthians, 1 Corinthians 10:32; 1 Corinthians 11:22; 1 Corinthians 12:28, but was, it would seem, present also in the mind of Paul, when he wrote the letter to the Ephesians, though in that letter the emphasis is on the Church as a spiritual organism, cf. especially Ephesians 4:11-16. e. Finally, the word in its most comprehensive meaning signifies the whole body of the faithful, whether in heaven or on earth, who have been or shall be spiritually united to Christ as their Saviour. This use of the word is found primarily in the Epistles of Paul to the Ephesians and the Colossians, most frequently in the former, Ephesians 1:22; Ephesians 3:10; Ephesians 3:21; Ephesians 5:23-25; Ephesians 5:27; Ephesians 5:32; Colossians 1:18; Colossians 1:24.

We should bear in mind that the names "Church," "Kerk" and "Kirche" are not derived from the word ekklesia but from the word kuriake, which means "belonging to the Lord." They stress the fact that the Church is the property of God. The name to kuriakon or he kuriake first of all designated the place where the Church assembled. This place was conceived of as belonging to the Lord, and was therefore called to kuriakon. But the place itself was empty and did not really become manifest as to kuriakon until the Church gathered for worship. Consequently, the word was transferred to the Church itself, the spiritual building of God.

3. OTHER BIBLICAL DESIGNATIONS OF THE CHURCH. The New Testament contains several figurative designations of the Church, each one of which stresses some particular aspect of the

Church. It is called: a. The body of Christ. Some in our day seem to regard this appellation as a complete definition of the New Testament Church, but it is not so intended. The name is applied not only to the Church universal, as in Ephesians 1:23; Colossians 1:18, but also to a single congregation, 1 Corinthians 12:27. It stresses the unity of the Church, whether local or universal, and particularly the fact that this unity is organic, and that the organism of the Church stands in vital relationship to Jesus Christ as her glorious head. b. The temple of the Holy Spirit or of God. The church of Corinth is called "a temple of God," in which the Holy Spirit dwelleth, 1 Corinthians 3:16. In Ephesians 2:21-22 Paul speaks of believers as growing into "a holy temple in the Lord," and as being built together for "a habitation of God in the Spirit." There the name is applied to the ideal Church of the future, which is the church universal. And Peter says that believers as living stones are built up "a spiritual house," 1 Peter 2:5. The connection clearly shows that he is thinking of a temple. This figure emphasizes the fact that the Church is holy and inviolable. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit imparts to her an exalted character. c. The Jerusalem that is above, or the new Jerusalem, or the heavenly Jerusalem. All three of these forms are found in the Bible, Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:2; Revelation 21:2, cf. the Revelation 21:9-10. In the Old Testament Jerusalem is represented as the place where God dwelt between the cherubim and where He symbolically established contact with His people. The New Testament evidently regards the Church as the spiritual counterpart of the Old Testament Jerusalem, and therefore applies to it the same name. According to this representation the Church is the dwelling place of God, in which the people of God are brought into communion with Him; and this dwelling place, while still in part on earth, belongs to the heavenly sphere. d. Pillar and ground of the truth. There is just one place in which that name is applied to the Church, namely, 1 Timothy 3:15. It clearly refers to the Church in general, and therefore also applies to every part of it. The figure is expressive of the fact that the Church is the guardian of the truth, the citadel of the truth, and the defender of the truth over against all the enemies of the Kingdom of God.

B. THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH IN HISTORY.

1. THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH BEFORE THE REFORMATION. a. In the patristic period. By the Apostolic Fathers and by the Apologetes the Church is generally represented as the communio sanctorum the people of God which He has chosen for a possession. The necessity for making distinctions was not at once apparent. But as early as the latter part of the second century there was a perceptible change. The rise of heresies made it imperative to name some characteristics by which the true catholic Church could be known. This tended to fix the attention on the outward manifestation of the Church. The Church began to be conceived as an external institution, ruled by a bishop as a direct successor of the apostles, and in possession of the true tradition. The catholicity of the Church was rather strongly emphasized. Local churches were not regarded as so many separate units, but simply as parts of the one universal Church. The increasing worldliness and corruption of the Church gradually led to reaction and gave rise to the tendency of various sects, such as Montanism in the middle of the second, Novatianism in the middle of the third, and Donatism at the beginning of the fourth century, to make the holiness of its members the mark of the true Church. The early Church Fathers, in combating these sectaries, emphasized ever increasingly the episcopal institution of the Church. Cyprian has the distinction of being the first to develop fully the doctrine of the episcopal Church. He regarded the bishops as the real successors of the apostles and ascribed to them a priestly character in virtue of their

sacrificial work. They together formed a college, called the episcopate, which as such constituted the unity of the Church. The unity of the Church was thus based on the unity of the bishops. They who do not subject themselves to the bishop forfeit the fellowship of the Church and also their salvation, since there is no salvation outside of the Church. Augustine was not altogether consistent in his conception of the Church. It was his struggle with the Donatists that compelled him to reflect more deeply on the nature of the Church. On the one hand he shows himself to be the predestinarian, who conceives of the Church as the company of the elect, the communio sanctorum, who have the Spirit of God and are therefore characterized by true love. The important thing is to be a living member of the Church so conceived, and not to belong to it in a merely external sense. But on the other hand he is the Church-man, who adheres to the Cyprianic idea of the Church at least in its general aspects. The true Church is the catholic Church, in which the apostolic authority is continued by episcopal succession. It is the depositary of divine grace, which it distributes through the sacraments. For the present this Church is a mixed body, in which good and evil members have a place. In his debate with the Donatists he admitted, however, that the two were not in the Church in the same sense. He also prepared the way for the Roman Catholic identification of the Church and the Kingdom of God. b. In the Middle Ages. The Scholastics have very little to say about the Church. The system of doctrine developed by Cyprian and Augustine was fairly complete and needed but a few finishing touches to bring it to its final development. Says Otten (Roman Catholic historian): "This system was taken over by the Scholastics of the Middle Ages, and then was handed down by them, practically in the same condition in which they had received it, to their successors who came after the Council of Trent."7 Incidentally a few points were somewhat further developed. But if there was very little development in the doctrine of the Church, the Church itself actually developed more and more into a close-knit, compactly organized, and absolute hierarchy. The seeds of this development were already present in the Cyprianic idea of the Church and in one aspect of the Church as represented by Augustine. The other and more fundamental idea of that great Church Father, that of the Church as the communio sanctorum, was generally disregarded and thus remained dormant. This is not saying that the Scholastics denied the spiritual element altogether, but merely that they did not give it due prominence. The emphasis was very definitely on the Church as an external organization or institution. Hugo of St. Victor speaks of the Church and the State as the two powers instituted by God for the government of the people. Both are monarchical in constitution, but the Church is the higher power, because she ministers to the salvation of men, while the State only provides for their temporal welfare. The king or emperor is the head of the state, but the Pope is the head of the Church. There are two classes of people in the Church with well defined rights and duties: the clerics, dedicated to the service of God, who constitute a unit; and the laics consisting of people from every domain of life, who constitute a separate class altogether. Step by step the doctrine of the papacy came to development, until at last the Pope became virtually an absolute monarch. The growth of this doctrine was in no small measure aided by the development of the idea that the Catholic Church was the Kingdom of God on earth, and that therefore the Roman bishopric was an earthly kingdom. This identification of the visible and organized Church with the Kingdom of God had far-reaching consequences: (1) It required that everything be brought under the control of the Church: the home and the school, science and art, commerce and industry, and so on. (2) It involved the idea that all the blessings of salvation come to man only through the ordinances of the Church, particularly through the sacraments. (3) It led to the gradual secularization of the Church,

since the Church began to pay more attention to politics than to the salvation of sinners, and the Popes finally claimed dominion also over secular rulers.

2. THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH DURING AND AFTER THE REFORMATION. a. During the period of the Reformation. The Reformers broke with the Roman Catholic conception of the Church, but differed among themselves in some particulars. The idea of an infallible and hierarchical Church, and of a special priesthood, which dispenses salvation through the sacraments, found no favor with Luther. He regarded the Church as the spiritual communion of those who believe in Christ, and restored the Scriptural idea of the priesthood of all believers. He maintained the unity of the Church, but distinguished two aspects of it, the one visible and the other invisible. He was careful to point out that these are not two churches, but simply two aspects of the same Church. The invisible Church becomes visible, not by the rule of bishops and cardinals, nor in the headship of the Pope, but by the pure administration of the Word and of the sacraments. He admitted that the visible Church will always contain a mixture of pious and wicked members. However, in his reaction against the Roman Catholic idea of the domination of the Church over the State, he went to another extreme, and virtually made the Church subject to the State in everything except the preaching of the Word. The Anabaptists were not satisfied with his position, and insisted on a Church of believers only. They, in many instances, even scorned the visible Church and the means of grace. Moreover, they demanded the complete separation of Church and State. Calvin and Reformed theologians were at one with Luther in the confession that the Church is essentially a communio sanctorum a communion of saints. However, they did not, like the Lutherans, seek the unity and the holiness of the Church primarily in the objective ordinances of the Church, such as the offices, the Word, and the sacraments, but most of all in the subjective communion of believers. They, too, distinguished between a visible and an invisible aspect of the Church, though in a slightly different way. Moreover, they found the true marks of the Church, not only in the true administration of the Word and of the sacraments, but also in the faithful administration of Church discipline. But even Calvin and the Reformed theologians of the seventeenth century in a measure fostered the idea of the subjection of the Church to the state. However, they established a form of government in the Church which made for a greater degree of ecclesiastical independence and power than was known in the Lutheran Church. But while both Lutheran and Reformed theologians sought to maintain the proper connection between the visible and the invisible Church, others lost sight of this. The Socinians and the Arminians of the seventeenth century, though indeed speaking of an invisible Church, forgot all about it in actual life. The former conceived of the Christian religion simply as an acceptable doctrine, and the latter made the Church primarily a visible society and followed the Lutheran Church by yielding the right of discipline to the State and retaining for the Church only the right to preach the gospel and to admonish the members of the Church. The Labadists and Pietists, on the other hand, manifested a tendency to disregard the visible Church, seeking a Church of believers only, showing themselves indifferent to the institutional Church with its mixture of good and evil, and seeking edification in conventicles. b. During and after the eighteenth century. During the eighteenth century Rationalism made its influence felt also in the doctrine of the Church. It was indifferent in matters of faith and lacked enthusiasm for the Church, which it placed on a par with other human societies. It even denied that Christ intended to found a church in the received sense of the word. There was a pietistic reaction to Rationalism in Methodism, but Methodism did not contribute anything to the development of the doctrine of the Church. In some cases it sought strength in

casting reflection on the existing Churches, and in others it adapted itself to the life of these Churches. For Schleiermacher the Church was essentially the Christian community, the body of believers who are animated by the same spirit. He had little use for the distinction between the visible and the invisible Church, and found the essence of the Church in the spirit of Christian fellowship. The more the Spirit of God penetrates the mass of Christian believers, the fewer divisions there will be, and the more they will lose their importance. Ritschl substituted for the distinction between the invisible and the visible Church that between the Kingdom and the Church. He regarded the Kingdom as the community of God's people acting from the motive of love, and the Church as that same community met for worship. The name "Church" is therefore restricted to an external organization in the one function of worship; and this function merely enables believers to become better acquainted with one another. This is certainly far from the teaching of the New Testament. It leads right on to the modern liberal conception of the Church as a mere social center, a human institution rather than a planting of God.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Does the history of the Church begin at or before the day of Pentecost? If it existed before, how did the Church preceding that day differ from the Church following it? To what Church does Jesus refer in Matthew 18:17? Did Augustine identify the Church as a spiritual organism, or the Church as an external institution, with the Kingdom of God? How do you account for the Roman Catholic emphasis on the Church as an external organization? Why did not the Reformers insist on entire freedom of the Church from the State? How did Luther and Calvin differ in this respect? What controversies respecting the Church arose in Scotland? What accounts for the different conceptions of the Church in England and in Scotland? How did Rationalism affect the doctrine of the Church? What great dangers are threatening the Church at the present time?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 302-319; Innes, Church and State; Cunningham, Historical Theology, two volumes, cf. the Index; Hauck, Real-Encyclopaedie, Art. Kirche by Koestlin; Histories of Dogma, especially those of Harnack, Seeberg, Sheldon, and Otten, cf. the Indices.

04.5.1.2. Nature of the Church

II. Nature of the Church A. THE ESSENCE OF THE CHURCH.

1. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC CONCEPTION. The early Christians spoke of the Church as the communio sanctorum, and thus already, though without having thought the matter through, gave expression to the essence of the Church. But even as early as the end of the second century, as the result of the rise of heresies, the question as to the true Church forced itself upon them and caused them to fix their attention upon certain characteristics of the Church as an external institution. From the days of Cyprian down to the Reformation the essence of the Church was sought ever increasingly in its external visible organization. The Church Fathers conceived of the catholic Church as comprehending all true branches of the Church of Christ, and as bound together in an external and visible unity, which had its unifying bond in the college of bishops. The conception of the Church as an external organization became more prominent as time went on. There was an ever growing emphasis on the hierarchical organization of it, and the capstone was added with the institution of the Papacy. Roman Catholics now define the Church as: " The congregation of all the Faithful, who, being baptized, profess the same faith, partake of the same sacraments, and are governed by their lawful pastors, under one visible head on earth." They make a distinction between the ecclesia docens and the ecclesia audiens, that is, between "the Church consisting of those who rule, teach, and edify" and "the Church which is taught, governed, and receives the sacraments." In the strictest sense of the word it is not the ecclesia audiens but the ecclesia docens that constitutes the Church. The latter shares directly in the glorious attributes of the Church, but the former is adorned with them only indirectly. Catholics are willing to admit that there is an invisible side to the Church, but prefer to reserve the name "Church" for the visible communion of believers. They frequently speak of the "soul of the Church," but do not seem to be altogether agreed as to the exact connotation of the term. Devine defines the soul of the Church as "the society of those who are called to faith in Christ, and who are united to Christ by supernatural gifts and graces."8 Wilmers, however, finds it in "all those spiritual, supernatural graces which constitute the Church of Christ, and enable its members to attain their last end." Says he: "What we call soul in general is that pervading principle which gives life to a body and enables its members to perform their peculiar functions. To the soul of the Church belong faith, the common aspiration of all to the same end, the invisible authority of superiors, the inward grace of sanctification, the supernatural virtues, and other gifts of grace."9 The former writer finds the soul of the Church in certain qualified persons, while the latter regards it as an all-pervading principle, something like the soul in man. But whatever Roman Catholics may be ready to grant, they will not admit that what may be called "the invisible Church" logically precedes the visible. Moehler says: "The Catholics teach: the visible Church is first,— then comes the invisible: the former gives birth to the latter." This means that the Church is a mater fidelium (mother of believers) before she is a communio fidelium (community of believers). Moehler grants, however, that there is one sense in which "the internal Church" is prior to "the exterior one," namely in the sense that we are not living members of the latter until we belong to the former. He discusses the whole subject of the relation

of those two to each other in his Symbolism or Doctrinal Differences.10 He stresses the identity of the visible Church with Christ: "Thus, the visible Church, from the point of view here taken, is the Son of God, everlastingly manifesting himself among men in a human form, perpetually renovated, and eternally young — the permanent incarnation of the same, as in Holy Writ, even the faithful are called 'the body of Christ.'"11

2. THE GREEK ORTHODOX CONCEPTION. The Greek Orthodox conception of the Church is closely related to that of the Roman Catholics, and yet differs from it in some important points. That Church does not recognize the Roman Catholic Church as the true Church, but claims that honor for itself. There is but one true Church, and that Church is the Greek Orthodox. While it acknowledges with greater frankness than the Roman Catholics the two different aspects of the Church, the visible and the invisible, it nevertheless places the emphasis on the Church as an external organization. It does not find the essence of the Church in her as the community of the saints, but in the Episcopal hierarchy, which it has retained, while rejecting the Papacy. The infallibility of the Church is maintained, but this infallibility resides in the bishops, and therefore in the ecclesiastical councils and synods. "As invisible," says Gavin, "she (the Church) is the bearer of divine gifts and powers, and is engaged in transforming mankind into the Kingdom of God. As visible, she is constituted of men professing a common faith, observing common customs, and using visible means of grace." At the same time the idea is rejected of "an invisible and ideal Church, of which the various bodies of Christians formed into distinct organizations and calling themselves 'Churches,' are partial and incomplete embodiments." The Church is "an actual, tangible, visible entity, not an unrealized and unrealizable ideal."12

3. THE PROTESTANT CONCEPTION. The Reformationwas a reaction against the externalism of Rome in general, and in particular, also against its external conception of the Church. It brought the truth to the foreground once more that the essence of the Church is not found in the external organization of the Church, but in the Church as the communio sanctorum. For both Luther and Calvin the Church was simply the community of the saints, that is, the community of those who believe and are sanctified in Christ, and who are joined to Him as their Head. This is also the position taken in the Reformed confessional standards. Thus the Belgic Confession says: "We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, which is a holy congregation of true Christian believers, all expecting their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by His blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit."13 The Second Helvetic Confession expresses the same truth by saying that the Church is "a company of the faithful, called and gathered out of the world; a communion of all saints, that is, of them who truly know and rightly worship and serve the true God, in Jesus Christ the Saviour, by the word of the Holy Spirit, and who by faith are partakers of all those good graces which are freely offered through Christ."14 And the Westminster Confession, defining the Church from the point of view of election, says: "The catholic or universal Church, which is invisible, consists of the whole number of the elect, that have been, are, or shall be gathered into one, under Christ the head thereof; and is the spouse, the body, the fulness of Him that filleth all in all."15 The Church universal, that is, the Church as it exists in the plan of God, and as it is realized only in the course of the ages, was conceived as consisting of the whole body of the elect, who are in course of time called unto life eternal. But the Church as it actually exists on earth was regarded as the community of the saints. And it was not only the invisible Church that was so regarded, but the visible Church as well. These are not two Churches but one, and

therefore have but a single essence. The one as well as the other is essentially the communio sanctorum, but the invisible Church is the Church as God sees it, a Church which contains only believers, while the visible Church is the Church as man sees it, consisting of those who profess Jesus Christ with their children and therefore adjudged to be the community of the saints. This may and always does contain some who are not yet regenerated — there may be chaff among the wheat —, but may not tolerate public unbelievers and wicked persons. Paul addresses his Epistles to empirical churches, and does not hesitate to address them as "saints," but also insists on the necessity of putting away the wicked and those who give offense from among them, 1 Corinthians 5:1-13; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:14; Titus 3:10. The Church forms a spiritual unity of which Christ is the divine Head. It is animated by one Spirit, the Spirit of Christ; it professes one faith, shares one hope, and serves one King. It is the citadel of the truth and God’s agency in communicating to believers all spiritual blessings. As the body of Christ it is destined to reflect the glory of God as manifested in the work of redemption. The Church in its ideal sense, the Church as God intends it to be and as it will once become, is an object of faith rather than of knowledge. Hence the confession: "I believe one holy catholic Church."

B. THE MANY-SIDED CHARACTER OF THE CHURCH. In speaking of the Church several distinctions come into consideration.

1. THAT OF A MILITANT AND A TRIUMPHANT CHURCH. The Church in the present dispensation is a militant Church, that is, she is called unto, and is actually engaged in, a holy warfare. This, of course, does not mean that she must spend her strength in self- destroying internecine struggles, but that she is duty bound to carry on an incessant warfare against the hostile world in every form in which it reveals itself, whether in the Church or outside of it, and against all the spiritual forces of darkness. The Church may not spend all her time in prayer and meditation, however necessary and important these may be, nor may she rest on her oars in the peaceful enjoyment of her spiritual heritage. She must be engaged with all her might in the battles of her Lord, fighting in a war that is both offensive and defensive. If the Church on earth is the militant Church, the Church in heaven is the triumphant Church. There the sword is exchanged for the palm of victory, the battle-cries are turned into songs of triumph, and the cross is replaced by the crown. The strife is over, the battle is won, and the saints reign with Christ forever and ever. In these two stages of her existence the Church reflects the humiliation and exaltation of her heavenly Lord. Roman Catholics speak, not only of a militant and triumphant, but also of a suffering Church. This Church, according to them, includes all those believers who are no more on earth, but have not yet entered the joys of heaven, and are now being purified in purgatory of their remaining sins.

2. THAT BETWEEN A VISIBLE AND AN INVISIBLE CHURCH. This means that the Church of God is on the one hand visible, and on the other invisible. It is said that Luther was the first to make this distinction, but the other Reformers recognized and also applied it to the Church. This distinction has not always been properly understood. The opponents of the Reformers often accused them of teaching that there are two separate Churches. Luther perhaps gave some occasion for this charge by speaking of an invisible ecclesiola within the visible ecclesia. But both he and Calvin stress the fact that, when they speak of a visible and an invisible Church, they do not refer to two different Churches, but to two aspects of the one Church of Jesus Christ. The term "invisible" has been variously interpreted as applying (a) to the triumphant Church; (b) to the ideal

and completed Church as it will be at the end of the ages; (c) to the Church of all lands and all places, which man cannot possibly see; and (d) to the Church as it goes in hiding in the days of persecution, and is deprived of the Word and the sacraments. Now it is undoubtedly true that the triumphant Church is invisible to those who are on earth, and that Calvin in his Institutes also conceives of this as included in the invisible Church, but the distinction was undoubtedly primarily intended to apply to the militant Church. As a rule it is so applied in Reformed theology. It stresses the fact that the Church as it exists on earth is both visible and invisible. This Church is said to be invisible, because she is essentially spiritual and in her spiritual essence cannot be discerned by the physical eye; and because it is impossible to determine infallibly who do and who do not belong to her. The union of believers with Christ is a mystical union; the Spirit that unites them constitutes an invisible tie; and the blessings of salvation, such as regeneration, genuine conversion, true faith, and spiritual communion with Christ, are all invisible to the natural eye; — and yet these things constitute the real forma (ideal character) of the Church. That the term "invisible" should be understood in this sense, is evident from the historical origin of the distinction between the visible and the invisible Church in the days of the Reformation. The Bible ascribes certain glorious attributes to the Church and represents her as a medium of saving and eternal blessings. Rome applied this to the Church as an external institution, more particularly to the ecclesia representativa or the hierarchy as the distributor of the blessings of salvation, and thus ignored and virtually denied the immediate and direct communion of God with His children, by placing a human mediatorial priesthood between them. This is the error which the Reformers sought to eradicate by stressing the fact that the Church of which the Bible says such glorious things is not the Church as an external institution, but the Church as the spiritual body of Jesus Christ, which is essentially invisible at present, though it has a relative and imperfect embodiment in the visible Church and is destined to have a perfect visible embodiment at the end of the ages. The invisible Church naturally assumes a visible form. Just as the human soul is adapted to a body and expresses itself through the body, so the invisible Church, consisting, not of mere souls but of human beings having souls and bodies, necessarily assumes a visible form in an external organization through which it expresses itself. The Church becomes visible in Christian profession and conduct, in the ministry of the Word and of the sacraments, and in external organization and government. By making this distinction between the invisible and the visible Church, McPherson says, "Protestantism sought to find the proper mean between the magical and supernatural externalism of the Romish idea and the extravagant depreciation of all outward rites, characteristic of fanatical and sectarian spiritualism."16 It is very important to bear in mind that, though both the invisible and the visible Church can be considered as universal, the two are not in every respect commensurate. It is possible that some who belong to the invisible Church never become members of the visible organization, as missionary subjects who are converted on their deathbeds, and that others are temporarily excluded from it, as erring believers who are for a time shut out from the communion of the visible Church. On the other hand there may be unregenerated children and adults who, while professing Christ, have no true faith in Him, in the Church as an external institution; and these, as long as they are in that condition, do not belong to the invisible Church. Good definitions of the visible and invisible Church may be found in the Westminster Confession.

3. THAT BETWEEN THE CHURCH AS AN ORGANISM AND THE CHURCH AS AN INSTITUTION. This distinction should not be identified with the preceding one, as is sometimes

done. It is a distinction that applies to the visible Church and that directs attention to two different aspects of the Church considered as a visible body.17 It is a mistake to think that the Church becomes visible only in the offices, in the administration of the Word and the sacraments, and in a certain form of Church government. Even if all these things were absent, the Church would still be visible in the communal life and profession of the believers, and in their joint opposition to the world. But while emphasizing the fact that the distinction under consideration is a distinction within the visible Church, we should not forget that both the Church as an organism and the Church as an institution (also called apparitio and institutio) have their spiritual background in the invisible Church. However, though it is true that these are two different aspects of the one visible Church, they do represent important differences. The Church as an organism is the coetus fidelium the communion of believers, who are united in the bond of the Spirit, while the Church as an institution is the mater fidelium, the mother of believers, a Heilsanstalt a means of salvation, an agency for the conversion of sinners and the perfecting of the saints. The Church as an organism exists charismatic: in it all kinds of gifts and talents become manifest and are utilized in the work of the Lord. The Church as an institution, on the other hand, exists in an institutional form and functions through the offices and means which God has instituted. The two are co-ordinate in a sense, and yet there is also a certain subordination of the one to the other. The Church as an institution or organization (mater fidelium) is a means to an end, and this is found in the Church as an organism, the community of believers (coetus fidelium).

C. VARIOUS DEFINITIONS OF THE CHURCH. The Church being a many-sided entity has naturally also been defined from more than one point of view.

1. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF ELECTION. According to some theologians the Church is the community of the elect, the coetus electorum. This definition is apt to be somewhat misleading, however. It applies only to the Church ideally considered, the Church as it exists in the idea of God and as it will be completed at the end of the ages, and not to the Church as a present empirical reality. Election includes all those who belong to the body of Christ, irrespective of their present actual relation to it. But the elect who are yet unborn, or who are still strangers to Christ and outside of the pale of the Church, cannot be said to belong to the Church realiter.

2. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF EFFECTUAL CALLING. To escape the objection raised to the preceding definition, it gradually became customary to define the Church from the point of view of some subjective spiritual characteristic of those who belong to it, especially effectual calling or faith, either by naming such a characteristic in addition to election, or by substituting it for election. Thus the Church was defined as the company of the elect who are called by the Spirit of God (coetus electorum vocatorum), as the body of those who are effectually called (coetus vocatorum), or, even more commonly, as the community of the faithful or believers (coetus fidelium). The first two of these definitions serve the purpose of designating the Church as to its invisible essence, but give no indication whatsoever of the fact that it also has a visible side. This is done, however, in the last named definition, for faith reveals itself in confession and conduct.

3. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF BAPTISM AND PROFESSION. From the point of view of baptism and profession the Church has been defined as the community of those who are baptized and profess the true faith; or as the community of those who profess the true religion together with their children. It will readily be seen that this is a definition of the Church according to its external

manifestation. Calvin defines the visible Church as "the multitude of men diffused through the world, who profess to worship one God in Christ; are initiated into this faith by baptism; testify their unity in doctrine and charity by participating in the Supper; have consent in the Word of God, and for the preaching of that Word maintain the ministry ordained of Christ."18 D. THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD.

1. THE IDEA OF THE KINGDOM OF GOD. The Kingdom of God is primarily an eschatological concept. The fundamental idea of the Kingdom in Scripture is not that of a restored theocratic kingdom of God in Christ — which is essentially a kingdom of Israel—, as the Premillenarians claim; neither is it a new social condition, pervaded by the Spirit of Christ, and realized by man through such external means as good laws, civilization, education, social reforms, and so on, as the Modernists would have us believe. The primary idea of the Kingdom of God in Scripture is that of the rule of God established and acknowledged in the hearts of sinners by the powerful regenerating influence of the Holy Spirit, insuring them of the inestimable blessings of salvation, — a rule that is realized in principle on earth, but will not reach its culmination until the visible and glorious return of Jesus Christ. The present realization of it is spiritual and invisible. Jesus took hold of this eschatological concept and made it prominent in His teachings. He clearly taught the present spiritual realization and the universal character of the Kingdom. Moreover, He Himself effected that realization in a measure formerly unknown and greatly increased the present blessings of the Kingdom. At the same time He held out the blessed hope of the future appearance of that Kingdom in external glory and with the perfect blessings of salvation.

2. HISTORICAL CONCEPTIONS OF THE KINGDOM. In the early Church Fathers the Kingdom of God, the greatest good, is primarily regarded as a future entity, the goal of the present development of the Church. Some of them regarded it as the coming millennial rule of the Messiah, though history does not bear out the exaggerated claims of some Premillenarian writers as to their number. Augustine viewed the kingdom as a present reality and identified it with the Church. For him it was primarily identical with the pious and holy, that is, with the Church as a community of believers; but he used some expressions which seem to indicate that he also saw it embodied in the episcopally organized Church. The Roman Catholic Church frankly identified the Kingdom of God with their hierarchical institution, but the Reformers returned to the view that it is in this dispensation identical with the invisible Church. Under the influence of Kant and especially of Ritschl it was robbed of its religious character and came to be regarded as an ethical kingdom of ends. It is often defined at present as a new principle introduced into society and destined to transform it in all its relations, or as the moral organization of mankind through action from the motive of love, the final end of creation.

3. THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE INVISIBLE CHURCH. While the Kingdom of God and the invisible Church are in a measure identical, they should nevertheless be carefully distinguished. Citizenship in the one and membership in the other are equally determined by regeneration. It is impossible to be in the Kingdom of God without being in the Church as the mystical body of Jesus Christ. At the same time it is possible to make a distinction between the point of view from which believers are called the Kingdom and that from which they are called the Church. They constitute a Kingdom in their relation to God in Christ as their Ruler, and a Church in their separateness from the world in devotion to God, and in their organic union with one another. As a Church they are called to be God’s instrument in preparing the way for, and in introducing, the ideal order of things;

and as a Kingdom they represent the initial realization of the ideal order among themselves.

4. THE KINGDOM OF GOD AND THE VISIBLE CHURCH. Since the Roman Catholics insist indiscriminately on the identification of the Kingdom of God and the Church, their Church claims power and jurisdiction over every domain of life, such as science and art, commerce and industry, as well as social and political organizations. This is an altogether mistaken conception. It is also a mistake to maintain, as some Reformed Christians do, in virtue of an erroneous conception of the Church as an organism, that Christian school societies, voluntary organizations of younger or older people for the study of Christian principles and their application in life, Christian labor unions, and Christian political organizations, are manifestations of the Church as an organism, for this again brings them under the domain of the visible Church and under the direct control of its officers. Naturally, this does not mean that the Church has no responsibility with respect to such organizations. It does mean, however, that they are manifestations of the Kingdom of God, in which groups of Christians seek to apply the principles of the Kingdom to every domain of life. The visible Church and the Kingdom, too, may be identified to a certain extent. The visible Church may certainly be said to belong to the Kingdom, to be a part of the Kingdom, and even to be the most important visible embodiment of the forces of the Kingdom. It partakes of the character of the invisible Church (the two being one) as a means for the realization of the Kingdom of God. Like the visible Church, the Kingdom also shares in the imperfections to which a sinful world exposes it. This is quite evident from the parable of the wheat and the tares, and that of the fishnet. In so far as the visible Church is instrumental in the establishment and extension of the Kingdom, it is, of course, subordinate to this as a means to an end. The Kingdom may be said to be a broader concept than the Church, because it aims at nothing less than the complete control of all the manifestations of life. It represents the dominion of God in every sphere of human endeavor.

E. THE CHURCH IN THE DIFFERENT DISPENSATIONS.

1. IN THE PATRIARCHAL PERIOD. In the patriarchial period the families of believers constituted the religious congregations; the Church was best represented in the pious households, where the fathers served as priests. There was no regular cultus, though Genesis 4:26 seems to imply a public calling upon the name of the Lord. There was a distinction between the children of God and the children of men, the latter gradually gaining the upper hand. At the time of the flood the Church was saved in the family of Noah, and continued particularly in the line of Shem. And when true religion was again on the point of dying out, God made a covenant with Abraham, gave unto him the sign of circumcision, and separated him and his descendants from the world, to be His own peculiar people. Up to the time of Moses the families of the patriarchs were the real repositories of the true faith, in which the fear of Jehovah and the service of the Lord was kept alive.

2. IN THE MOSAIC PERIOD. After the exodus the people of Israel were not only organized into a nation, but were also constituted the Church of God. They were enriched with institutions in which not only family devotion or tribal faith but the religion of the nation could find expression. The Church did not yet obtain an independent organization, but had its institutional existence in the national life of Israel. The particular form which it assumed was that of a Church-State. We cannot say that the two coalesced altogether. There were separate civil and religious functionaries and institutions within the bounds of the nation. But at the same time the whole nation constituted the Church; and the Church was limited to the one nation of Israel, though foreigners could enter it by

being incorporated into the nation. In this period there was a marked development of doctrine, an increase in the quantity of the religious truth known, and greater clearness in the apprehension of the truth. The worship of God was regulated down to the minutest details, was largely ritual and ceremonial, and was centered in one central sanctuary.

3. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. The New Testament Church is essentially one with the Church of the old dispensation. As far as their essential nature is concerned, they both consist of true believers, and of true believers only. And in their external organization both represent a mixture of good and evil. Yet several important changes resulted from the accomplished work of Jesus Christ. The Church was divorced from the national life of Israel and obtained an independent organization. In connection with this the national boundaries of the Church were swept away. What had up to this time been a national Church now assumed a universal character. And in order to realize the ideal of world- wide extension, it had to become a missionary Church, carrying the gospel of salvation to all the nations of the world. Moreover, the ritual worship of the past made place for a more spiritual worship in harmony with the greater privileges of the New Testament. The representation given in the preceding proceeds on the assumption that the Church existed in the old dispensation as well as in the new, and was essentially the same in both, in spite of acknowledged institutional and administrative differences. This is in harmony with the teachings of our confessional standards. The Belgic Confession says in Art. XXVII: "This Church has been from the beginning of the world, and will be to the end thereof; which is evident from the fact that Christ is an eternal King, which without subjects He cannot be." In full agreement with this the Heidelberg Catechism says in Lord's Day XXI: "That the Son of God, out of the whole human race, from the beginning to the end of the world, gathers, defends, and preserves for Himself, by His Spirit and Word, in the unity of the true faith, a Church chosen to everlasting life." The Church is essentially, as was pointed out in the preceding, the community of believers, and this community existed from the beginning of the old dispensation right down to the present time and will continue to exist on earth until the end of the world. On this point we cannot agree with those Premillenarians who, under the influence of a divisive dispensationalism, claim that the Church is exclusively a New Testament institution, which did not come into existence until the outpouring of the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and will be removed from the earth before the beginning of the millennium. They like to define the Church as "the body of Christ," which is a characteristically New Testament name, and seem to forget that it is also called "the temple of God" and "Jerusalem," which are very decidedly names with an Old Testament flavor, cf. 1 Corinthians 3:16-17; 2 Corinthians 6:16; Ephesians 2:21; Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22. We should not close our eyes to the patent fact that the name "Church" (Heb.qahal rendered ekklesia in the Septuagint) is applied to Israel in the Old Testament repeatedly, Joshua 8:35; Ezra 2:65; Joel 2:16. The fact that in our translations of the Bible the Old Testament rendering of the original is "gathering," "assembly," or "congregation," while the New Testament rendering of it is "Church," may have given rise to misunderstanding on this point; but the fact remains that in the Old Testament as well as in the New the original word denotes a congregation or an assembly of the people of God, and as such serves to designate the essence of the Church. Jesus on the one hand said that He would found the Church in the future, Matthew 16:18, but also recognized it as an already existing institution, Matthew 18:17. Stephen speaks of "the Church in the wilderness," Acts 7:38. And Paul clearly testifies to the spiritual unity of Israel and the Church in Romans 11:17-21, and in Ephesians 2:11-16. In essence Israel constituted the Church of God in the Old Testament, though its external institution differed vastly

from that of the Church in the New Testament.

F. THE ATTRIBUTES OF THE CHURCH.

According to Protestants the attributes of the Church are ascribed primarily to the Church as an invisible organism, and only secondarily to the Church as an external institution. Roman Catholics, however, ascribe them to their hierarchical organization. The former speak of three attributes, but to these three the latter add a fourth.

1. THE UNITY OF THE CHURCH. a. The Roman Catholic conception. Roman Catholics ordinarily recognize only the hierarchically organized ecclesia as the Church. The unity of this Church manifests itself in its imposing world-wide organization, which aims at including the Church of all nations. Its real center is not found in the believers, but in the hierarchy with its concentric circles. There is first of all the broad circle of the lower clergy, the priests and other inferior functionaries; then the smaller circle of the bishops; next the still narrower one of the archbishops; and, finally, the most restricted circle of the cardinals; — the entire pyramid being capped by the Pope, the visible head of the whole organization, who has absolute control of all those that are under him. Thus the Roman Catholic Church presents to the eye a very imposing structure. b. The Protestant conception. Protestants assert that the unity of the Church is not primarily of an external, but of an internal and spiritual character. It is the unity of the mystical body of Jesus Christ, of which all believers are members. This body is controlled by one Head, Jesus Christ, who is also the King of the Church, and is animated by one Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. This unity implies that all those who belong to the Church share in the same faith, are cemented together by the common bond of love, and have the same glorious outlook upon the future. This inner unity seeks and also acquires, relatively speaking, outward expression in the profession and Christian conduct of believers, in their public worship of the same God in Christ, and in their participation in the same sacraments. There can be no doubt about the fact that the Bible asserts the unity, not only of the invisible, but also of the visible Church. The figure of the body, as it is found in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31, implies this unity. Moreover, in Ephesians 4:4-16, where Paul stresses the unity of the Church, he evidently also has the visible Church in mind, for he speaks of the appointment of office-bearers in the Church and of their labors in behalf of the ideal unity of the Church. Because of the unity of the Church one local church was admonished to supply the needs of another, and the council of Jerusalem undertook to settle a question that arose in Antioch. The Church of Rome strongly emphasized the unity of the visible Church and expressed it in its hierarchical organization. And when the Reformers broke with Rome, they did not deny the unity of the visible Church but maintained it. However, they did not find the bond of union in the ecclesiastical organization of the Church, but in the true preaching of the Word and the right administration of the sacraments. This is also the case in the Belgic Confession.19 We quote only the following statements from it: "We believe and profess one catholic or universal Church, which is a holy congregation of true believers, all expecting their salvation in Jesus Christ, being washed by His blood, sanctified and sealed by the Holy Spirit."20 The marks by which the true Church is known are these: "If the pure doctrine of the Gospel is preached therein; if it maintains the pure administration of the sacraments as instituted by Christ; if Church discipline is exercised in punishing sin; in short, if all things are managed according to the pure Word of God; all things contrary thereto rejected, and Jesus Christ acknowledged as the only Head of the Church. Hereby the true Church may certainly be known, from which no man has a right to separate himself."21 The unity of the visible Church was also

taught by Reformed theologians of the post-Reformation period, and was always very strongly emphasized in Scottish theology. Walker even says: "True Churches of Christ, side by side with one another, forming separate organizations, with separate governments, seemed to them (Scottish theologians) utterly inadmissible, unless it might be in a very limited way, and for some reason of temporary expediency."22 In the Netherlands this doctrine was eclipsed in recent years in the measure in which the multi- or pluriformity of the Churches was emphasized in deference to the facts of history and the existing condition. At present it is again stressed in some of the current discussions. In view of the present divisions of the Church, it is quite natural that the question should arise, whether these do not militate against the doctrine of the unity of the visible Church. In answer to this it may be said that some divisions, such as those caused by differences of locality or of language, are perfectly compatible with the unity of the Church; but that others, such as those which originate in doctrinal perversions or sacramental abuses, do really impair that unity. The former result from the providential guidance of God, but the latter are due to the influence of sin: to the darkening of the understanding, the power of error, or the stubbornness of man; and therefore the Church will have to strive for the ideal of overcoming these. The question may still arise, whether the one invisible Church ought not to find expression in a single organization. It can hardly be said that the Word of God explicitly requires this, and history has shown this to be infeasible and also of questionable worth. The only attempt that was made so far to unite the whole Church in one great external organization, did not prove productive of good results, but led to externalism, ritualism, and legalism. Moreover, the multiformity of Churches, so characteristic of Protestantism, in so far as it resulted from the providential guidance of God and in a legitimate way, arose in the most natural manner, and is quite in harmony with the law of differentiation, according to which an organism in its development evolves from the homogeneous to the heterogeneous. It is quite possible that the inherent riches of the organism of the Church find better and fuller expression in the present variety of Churches than they would in a single external organization. This does not mean, of course, that the Church should not strive for a greater measure of external unity. The ideal should always be to give the most adequate expression to the unity of the Church. At the present time there is a rather strong Church union movement, but this movement, as it has developed up to this time, though undoubtedly springing from laudable motives on the part of some, is still of rather doubtful value. Whatever external union is effected must be the natural expression of an existing inner unity, but the present movement partly seeks to fabricate an external union where no inner unity is found, forgetting that "no artificial aggregation that seeks to unify natural disparities can afford a guarantee against the strife of parties within the aggregation." It is un-Scriptural in so far as it has been seeking unity at the expense of the truth and has been riding the wave of subjectivism in religion. Unless it changes colour and strives for greater unity in the truth, it will not be productive of real unity but only of uniformity, and while it may make the Church more efficient from a business point of view, it will not add to the true spiritual efficiency of the Church. Barth sounds the right note when he says: "The quest for the unity of the Church must in fact be identical with the quest for Jesus Christ as the concrete Head and Lord of the Church. The blessing of unity cannot be separated from Him who blesses, in Him it has its source and reality, through His Word and Spirit it is revealed to us, and only in faith can it become a reality among us."23 2. THE HOLINESS OF THE CHURCH. a. The Roman Catholic conception. The Roman Catholic conception of the holiness of the Church is also primarily of an external character. It is not the inner holiness of the members of the Church through the sanctifying work of the Holy

Spirit, but the outer ceremonial holiness that is placed in the foreground. According to Father Devine the Church is holy first of all "in her dogmas, in her moral precepts, in her worship, in her discipline," in which "all is pure and irreproachable, all is of such a nature as is calculated to remove evil and wickedness, and to promote the most exalted virtue."24 Only secondarily is the holiness of the Church conceived of as moral. Father Deharbe says that the Church is also holy, "because there were in her at all times saints whose holiness God has also confirmed by miracles and extraordinary graces."25 b. Protestant conception. Protestants, however, have quite a different conception of the holiness of the Church. They maintain that the Church is absolutely holy in an objective sense, that is, as she is considered in Jesus Christ. In virtue of the mediatorial righteousness of Christ, the Church is accounted holy before God. In a relative sense they also regard the Church as being subjectively holy, that is, as actually holy in the inner principle of her life and destined for perfect holiness. Hence she can truly be called a community of saints. This holiness is first of all a holiness of the inner man, but a holiness which also finds expression in the outer life. Consequently, holiness is also attributed, secondarily, to the visible Church. That Church is holy in the sense that it is separated from the world in consecration to God, and also in the ethical sense of aiming at, and achieving in principle, a holy conversation in Christ. Since visible local churches consist of believers and their seed, they are supposed to exclude all open unbelievers and wicked persons. Paul does not hesitate to address them as churches of the saints.

3. THE CATHOLICITY OF THE CHURCH. a. Roman Catholic conception. The attribute of catholicity is appropriated by the Roman Catholic Church, as if it only has the right to be called catholic. Like the other attributes of the Church, it is applied by her to the visible organization. She claims the right to be considered as the one really catholic Church, because she is spread over the whole earth and adapts herself to all countries and to all forms of government; because she has existed from the beginning and has always had subjects and faithful children, while sects come and go; because she is in possession of the fulness of truth and grace, destined to be distributed among men; and because she surpasses in number of members all dissenting sects taken together. b. Protestant conception. Protestants, again, apply this attribute primarily to the invisible Church, which can be called catholic in a far truer sense than any one of the existing organizations, not even the Church of Rome excepted. They justly resent the arrogance of the Roman Catholics in appropriating this attribute for their hierarchical organization, to the exclusion of all other Churches. Protestants insist that the invisible Church is primarily the real catholic Church, because she includes all believers on earth at any particular time, no one excepted; because, consequently, she also has her members among all the nations of the world that were evangelized; and because she exercises a controlling influence on the entire life of man in all its phases. Secondarily, they also ascribe the attribute of catholicity to the visible Church. In our discussion of the unity of the visible Church, it already became apparent that the Reformers and the Reformed Confessions expressed their belief in a catholic visible Church, and this opinion has been reiterated by Dutch, Scottish, and American Reformed theologians right up to the present time, though in recent years some in the Netherlands expressed doubt about this doctrine. It must be admitted that this doctrine presents many difficult problems, which still call for solution. It is not easy to point out with precision just where this one catholic visible Church is. Furthermore, such questions as these arise: (1) Does this doctrine carry with it a wholesale condemnation of denominationalism, as Dr. Henry Van Dyke seems to think? (2) Does it mean that some one

denomination is the true Church, while all others are false or is it better to distinguish between Churches of more or less pure formation? (3) At what point does a local church or a denomination cease to be an integral part of the one visible Church? (4) Is a single external institution or organization essential to the unity of the visible Church, or not? These are some of the problems that still call for further study.

G. THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH.

1. THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH IN GENERAL. a. The need of such marks. Little need was felt for such marks as long as the Church was clearly one. But when heresies arose, it became necessary to point to certain marks by which the true Church could be recognized. The consciousness of this need was already present in the early Church, was naturally less apparent in the Middle Ages, but became very strong at the time of the Reformation. At that time the one existing Church was not only divided into two great sections, but Protestantism itself was divided into several Churches and sects. As a result it was felt ever increasingly that it was necessary to point out some marks by which the true Church could be distinguished from the false. The very fact of the Reformation proves that the Reformers, without denying that God maintains His Church, were yet deeply conscious of the fact that an empirical embodiment of the Church may become subject to error, may depart from the truth, and may totally degenerate. They assumed the existence of a standard of truth to which the Church must correspond, and recognized as such the Word of God. b. The marks of the Church in Reformed theology. Reformed theologians differed as to the number of the marks of the Church. Some spoke of but one, the preaching of the pure doctrine of the Gospel (Beza, Alsted, Amesius, Heidanus, Maresius); others, of two, the pure preaching of the word and the right administration of the sacraments (Calvin, Bullinger, Zanchius, Junius, Gomarus, Mastricht, à Marck) and still others added to these a third, the faithful exercise of discipline (Hyperius, Martyr, Ursinus, Trelcatius, Heidegger, Wendelinus). These three are also named in our Confession;26 but after making mention of them, the Confession combines them all into one by saying: "in short, if all things are managed according to the pure Word of God." In course of time a distinction was made, especially in Scotland, between those features which are absolutely necessary to the being of a Church, and those which are only necessary to its well-being. Some began to feel that, however necessary discipline might be to the health of the Church, it would be wrong to say that a church without discipline was no Church at all. Some even felt the same way about the right administration of the sacraments, since they did not feel free to unchurch either the Baptists or the Quakers. The effect of this is seen in the Westminster Confession, which mentions as the only thing that is indispensable to the being of the Church "the profession of the true religion," and speaks of other things, such as purity of doctrine or worship, and of discipline as excellent qualities of particular churches, by which the degree of their purity may be measured.27 Dr. Kuyper recognizes only the praedicatio verbi and the administratio sacramenti as real marks of the Church, since they only: (1) are specific, that is, are characteristics of the Church and of no other body; (2) are instruments through which Christ works with His grace and Spirit in the Church; and (3) are formative elements that go into the constitution of the Church. Discipline is also found elsewhere and cannot be co-ordinated with these two. Bearing this in mind, he has no objection, however, to regard the faithful exercise of discipline as one of the marks of the Church. Now it is undoubtedly true that the three marks usually named are not really co- ordinate. Strictly speaking, it may be said that the true preaching of the Word and its

recognition as the standard of doctrine and life, is the one mark of the Church. Without it there is no Church, and it determines the right administration of the sacraments and the faithful exercise of Church discipline. Nevertheless, the right administration of the sacraments is also a real mark of the Church. And though the exercise of discipline may not be peculiar to the Church, that is, is not found in it exclusively, yet it is absolutely essential to the purity of the Church.

2. THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH IN PARTICULAR. a. The true preaching of the Word. This is the most important mark of the Church. While it is independent of the sacraments, these are not independent of it. The true preaching of the Word is the great means for maintaining the Church and for enabling her to be the mother of the faithful. That this is one of the characteristics of the true Church, is evident from such passages as John 8:31-32; John 8:47; John 14:23; 1 John 4:1-3; 2 John 1:9. Ascribing this mark to the Church does not mean that the preaching of the Word in a Church must be perfect before it can be regarded as a true Church. Such an ideal is unattainable on earth; only relative purity of doctrine can be ascribed to any Church. A church may be comparatively impure in its presentation of the truth without ceasing to be a true church. But there is a limit beyond which a Church cannot go in the misrepresentation or denial of the truth, without losing her true character and becoming a false Church. This is what happens when fundamental articles of faith are publicly denied, and doctrine and life are no more under the control of the Word of God. b. The right administration of the sacraments. The sacraments should never be divorced from the Word, for they have no content of their own, but derive their content from the Word of God; they are in fact a visible preaching of the Word. As such they must also be administered by lawful ministers of the Word, in accordance with the divine institution, and only to properly qualified subjects, the believers and their seed. A denial of the central truths of the gospel will naturally affect the proper administration of the sacraments; and the Church of Rome certainly departs from the right mode, when it divorces the sacraments from the Word, ascribing to them a sort of magical efficacy; and when it allows midwives to administer baptism in time of need. That the right administration of the sacraments is a characteristic of the true Church, follows from its inseparable connection with the preaching of the Word and from such passages as Matthew 28:19; Matthew 16:15-16; Acts 2:42; 1 Corinthians 11:23-30. c. The faithful exercise of discipline. This is quite essential for maintaining the purity of doctrine and for guarding the holiness of the sacraments. Churches that are lax in discipline are bound to discover sooner or later within their circle an eclipse of the light of the truth and an abuse of that which is holy. Hence a Church that would remain true to her ideal in the measure in which this is possible on earth, must be diligent and conscientious in the exercise of Christian discipline. The Word of God insists on proper discipline in the Church of Christ, Matthew 18:18; 1 Corinthians 5:1-5; 1 Corinthians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 14:33; 1 Corinthians 14:40; Revelation 2:14-15; Revelation 2:20.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What is the meaning of the word ekklesia in Matthew 16:18; Matthew 18:17? When and how did the term kuriake come into use for the Church? How do the Dutch words ’kerk’ and ’gemeente’ differ, and how are they related to the Greek term? Are there passages in Scripture in which the word ekklesia is undoubtedly used to denote as a unity the whole body of those throughout the world who outwardly profess Christ? Is the word ever used as the designation of a group of churches under a common government, such as we call a denomination? Does the visibility of the Church consist merely in the visibility of its members? If not, in what does it become visible? Does the visible Church stand in any other than a mere

outward relation to Christ, and does it enjoy any other than mere outward promises and privileges? Does the essence of the visible Church differ from that of the invisible Church? What objections have been raised to the distinction between the Church as an institution and the Church as an organism? What is the fundamental difference between the Roman Catholic and the Reformed conception of the Church?

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04.5.1.3. The Government of the Church

III. The Government of the Church A. DIFFERENT THEORIES RESPECTING THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHURCH.

1. THE VIEW OF QUAKERS AND DARBYITES. It is a matter of principle with the Quakers and Darbyites to reject all Church Government. According to them every external Church formation necessarily degenerates and leads to results that are contrary to the spirit of Christianity. It exalts the human element at the expense of the divine. It neglects the divinely given charisms and substitutes for them offices instituted by man, and consequently offers the Church the husk of human knowledge rather than the vital communications of the Holy Spirit. Therefore they regard it as not only unnecessary but decidedly sinful to organize the visible Church. Thus the offices fall by the way, and in public worship each simply follows the promptings of the Spirit. The tendency that becomes apparent in these sects, which gives clear evidence of the leaven of Mysticism, must be regarded as a reaction against the hierarchical organization and the formalism of the Established Church of England. In our country some of the Quakers have regularly ordained ministers and conduct their worship very much as other Churches do.

2. THE ERASTIAN SYSTEM, NAMED AFTER ERASTUS, 1524-1583. Erastians regard the Church as a society which owes its existence and form to regulations enacted by the State. The officers of the Church are merely instructors or preachers of the Word, without any right or power to rule, except that which they derive from the civil magistrates. It is the function of the State to govern the Church, to exercise discipline and to excommunicate. Church censures are civil punishments, though their application may be entrusted to the legal officers of the Church. This system has been variously applied in England, Scotland, and Germany (Lutheran Churches). It conflicts with the fundamental principle of the Headship of Jesus Christ, and does not recognize the fact that Church and State are distinct and independent in their origin, in their primary objects, in the power they exercise, and in the administration of that power.

3. THE EPISCOPALIAN SYSTEM. The Episcopalians hold that Christ, as the Head of the Church, has entrusted the government of the Church directly and exclusively to an order of prelates or bishops, as the successors of the apostles; and that He has constituted these bishops a separate, independent, and self-perpetuating order. In this system the coetus fidelium or community of believers has absolutely no share in the government of the Church. In the early centuries this was the system of the Roman Catholic Church. In England it is combined with the Erastian system. But the Bible does not warrant the existence of such a separate class of superior officers, who have the inherent right of ordination and jurisdiction, and therefore do not represent the people nor, in any sense of the word, derive their office from them. Scripture clearly shows that the apostolic office was not of a permanent nature. The apostles did form a clearly distinct and independent class, but it was not their special task to rule and administer the affairs of the churches. It was their duty to carry the gospel to unevangelized districts, to found churches, and then to appoint others from among the people for the task of ruling these churches. Before the end of the first century the

Apostolate had disappeared entirely.

4. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC SYSTEM. This is the Episcopal system carried to its logical conclusion. The Roman Catholic system pretends to comprise, not only successors of the apostles, but also a successor to Peter, who is said to have had the primacy among the apostles, and whose successor is now recognized as the special representative of Christ. The Church of Rome is of the nature of an absolute monarchy, under the control of an infallible Pope, who has the right to determine and regulate the doctrine, worship, and government, of the Church. Under him there are inferior classes and orders, to whom special grace is given, and whose duty it is to govern the Church in strict accountability to their superiors and to the supreme Pontiff. The people have absolutely no voice in the government of the Church. This system also conflicts with Scripture, which recognizes no such primacy of Peter as that on which the system is built, and distinctly recognizes the voice of the people in ecclesiastical affairs. Moreover, the claim of the Roman Catholic Church, that there has been an unbroken line of succession from the time of Peter down to the present day, is contradicted by history. The papal system is, both exegetically and historically, untenable.

5. THE CONGREGATIONAL SYSTEM. This is also called the system of independency. According to it each church or congregation is a complete church, independent of every other. In such a church the governing power rests exclusively with the members of the church, who are entitled to regulate their own affairs. Officers are simply functionaries of the local church, appointed to teach and to administer the affairs of the church, and have no governing power beyond that which they possess as members of the church. If it is considered expedient that the various churches should exercise communion with one another, as is sometimes the case, this fellowship finds expression in ecclesiastical councils and in local or provincial conferences, for the consideration of their common interests. But the actions of such associated bodies are held to be strictly advisory or declarative, and are not binding on any particular church. This theory of popular government, making the office of the ministry altogether dependent on the action of the people, is certainly not in harmony with what we learn from the Word of God. Moreover, the theory that each church is independent of every other church, fails to express the unity of the Church of Christ, has a disintegrating effect, and opens the door for all kinds of arbitrariness in church government. There is no appeal from any of the decisions of the local church.

6. THE NATIONAL-CHURCH SYSTEM. This system, also called the Collegial system (which supplanted the Territorial system) was developed in Germany especially by C. M. Pfaff (1686-1780), and was later on introduced into the Netherlands. It proceeds on the assumption that the Church is a voluntary association, equal to the State. The separate churches or congregations are merely sub-divisions of the one national Church. The original power resides in a national organization, and this organization has jurisdiction over the local churches. This is just the reverse of the Presbyterian system, according to which the original power has its seat in the consistory. The Territorial system recognized the inherent right of the State to reform public worship, to decide disputes respecting doctrine and conduct, and to convene synods, while the Collegial system ascribes to the State only the right of supervision as an inherent right, and regards all other rights, which the State might exercise in Church matters, as rights which the Church by a tacit understanding or by a formal pact conferred upon the State. This system disregards altogether the autonomy of the local churches, ignores the principles of self-government and of direct

responsibility to Christ, engenders formalism, and binds a professedly spiritual Church by formal and geographical lines. Such a system as this, which is akin to the Erastian system, naturally fits in best with the present-day idea of the totalitarian State.

B. THE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES OF THE REFORMED OR PRESBYTERIAN SYSTEM.

Reformed Churches do not claim that their system of Church government is determined in every detail by the Word of God, but do assert that its fundamental principles are directly derived from Scripture. They do not claim a jus divinum for the details, but only for the general fundamental principles of the system, and are quite ready to admit that many of its particulars are determined by expediency and human wisdom. From this it follows that, while the general structure must be rigidly maintained, some of the details may be changed in the proper ecclesiastical manner for prudential reasons, such as the general profit of the churches. The following are its most fundamental principles.

1. CHRIST IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH AND THE SOURCE OF ALL ITS AUTHORITY. The Church of Rome considers it of the greatest importance to maintain the headship of the Pope over the Church. The Reformers maintained and defended the position, in opposition to the claims of the Papacy, that Christ is the only Head of the Church. They did not entirely avoid the danger, however, of recognizing, the one more and the other less, the supremacy of the State over the Church. Consequently the Presbyterian and Reformed Churches had to fight another battle later on, the battle for the Headship of Jesus Christ in opposition to the unwarranted encroachments of the State. This battle was fought first of all in Scotland, and later on also in The Netherlands. The very fact that it was fought against such external powers as the Papacy and the State or the King, both of whom claimed to be the head of the visible Church, clearly implies that they who were engaged in this battle were particularly interested in establishing and maintaining the position that Christ is the only lawful Head of the visible Church, and is therefore the only supreme Lawgiver and King of the Church. Naturally, they also recognized Christ as the organic Head of the invisible Church. They realized that the two could not be separated, but, since the Pope and the King could hardly claim to be the organic head of the invisible Church, this was not really the point in question. Respecting the Scottish teachers Walker says: "They meant that Christ is the real King and Head of the Church, as a visible organisation, ruling it by His statutes, and ordinances, and officers, and forces, as truly and literally as David or Solomon ruled the covenant people of old."28 The Bible teaches us that Christ is Head over all things: He is the Lord of the universe, not merely as the second person of the Trinity, but in His mediatorial capacity, Matthew 28:18; Ephesians 1:20-22; Php 2:10-11; Revelation 17:14; Revelation 19:16. In a very special sense, however, He is the Head of the Church, which is His body. He stands in a vital and organic relation to it, fills it with His life, and controls it spiritually, John 15:1-8; Ephesians 1:10; Ephesians 2:20-22; Ephesians 5:30; Colossians 1:18; Colossians 1:18; Colossians 2:19; Colossians 3:11. Premillenarians claim that this is the only sense in which Christ is the Head of the Church, for they deny the very point for which our Reformed Fathers contended, namely, that Christ is the King of the Church, and therefore the only supreme authority to be recognized in it. Scripture plainly teaches, however, that Christ is the Head of the Church, not only in virtue of His vital relationship to it, but also as its Legislator and King. In the organic and vital sense He is the Head primarily, though not exclusively, of the invisible Church, which constitutes His spiritual body. But He is also the Head of the visible Church, not only in the organic sense, but also in the sense that He has authority and

rule over it, Matthew 16:18-19; Matthew 23:8; Matthew 23:10; John 13:13; 1 Corinthians 12:5; Ephesians 1:20-23; Ephesians 4:4-5; Ephesians 4:11-12; Ephesians 5:23-24. This Headship of Christ over the visible Church is the principal part of the dominion bestowed upon Him as the result of His sufferings. His authority is manifested in the following points: (a) He instituted the Church of the New Testament, Matthew 16:18, so that it is not, as many regard it in our day, a mere voluntary society, which has its only warrant in the consent of its members. (b) He instituted the means of grace which the Church must administer, namely, the Word and the sacraments, Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16; Luke 22:17-20; 1 Corinthians 11:23-29. In these matters no one else has the right to legislate. (c) He gave to the Church its constitution and officers, and clothed them with divine authority, so that they can speak and act in His name, Matthew 10:1; Matthew 16:19; John 20:21-23; Ephesians 4:11-12. (d) He is ever present in the Church when it meets for worship, and speaks and acts through its officers. It is Christ as King that warrants them in speaking and acting with authority, Matthew 10:40; 2 Corinthians 13:3.

2. CHRIST EXERCISES HIS AUTHORITY BY MEANS OF HIS ROYAL WORD. The reign of Christ is not in all respects similar to that of earthly kings. He does not rule the Church by force, but subjectively by His Spirit, which is operative in the Church, and objectively by the Word of God as the standard of authority. All believers are unconditionally bound to obey the word of the King. As Christ is the only sovereign Ruler of the Church, His word is the only word that is law in the absolute sense. Consequently, all despotic power is contraband in the Church. There is no ruling power independent of Christ. The Pope of Rome stands condemned in that he, while professing to be Christ's vicar on earth, virtually supplants Christ and supersedes His word by human innovations. He not only places tradition on an equal footing with Scripture, but also claims to be the infallible interpreter of both when speaking ex cathedra in matters of faith and morals. Scripture and tradition may be the mediate or remote rules of faith, the immediate rule is the teaching of the Church, which has its guarantee in papal infallibility.29The word of the Pope is the word of God. But while it is true that Christ exercises His authority in the Church through the officers, this is not to be understood in the sense that He transfers His authority to His servants. He Himself rules the Church through all the ages, but in doing this, He uses the officers of the Church as His organs. They have no absolute or independent, but only a derived and ministerial power.

3. CHRIST AS KING HAS ENDOWED THE CHURCH WITH POWER. A rather delicate question arises at this point, namely, Who are the first and proper subjects of Church power? To whom has Christ committed this power in the first instance? Roman Catholics and Episcopalians answer: to the officers as a separate class, in contradistinction from the ordinary members of the Church. This view has also been held by some eminent Presbyterian divines, such as Rutherford and Baillie. Diametrically opposed to this is the theory of the Independents, that this power is vested in the Church at large, and that the officers are merely the organs of the body as a whole. The great Puritan divine, Owen, adopts this view with some modifications. In recent years some Reformed theologians apparently favored this view, though without subscribing to the separatism of the Independents. There is another view, however, representing a mean between these two extremes, which would seem to deserve preference. According to it ecclesiastical power is committed by Christ to the Church as a whole, that is to the ordinary members and the officers alike; but in addition to that the officers receive such an additional measure of power as is required for the performance of their respective duties in the Church of Christ. They share in the original power

bestowed upon the Church, and receive their authority and power as officers directly from Christ. They are representatives, but not mere deputies or delegates of the people. Older theologians often say: "All Church power, in actu primo, or fundamentally, is in the Church itself; in actu secundo, or its exercise, in them that are specially called thereto." This is substantially the view held by Voetius, Gillespie (in his work on Ceremonies), Bannerman, Porteous, Bavinck, and Vos.

4. CHRIST PROVIDED FOR THE SPECIFIC EXERCISE OF THIS POWER BY REPRESENTATIVE ORGANS. While Christ committed power to the Church as a whole, He also provided for it that this power should be exercised ordinarily and specifically by representative organs, set aside for the maintenance of doctrine, worship, and discipline. The officers of the Church are the representatives of the people chosen by popular vote. This does not mean, however, that they receive their authority from the people, for the call of the people is but the confirmation of the inner call by the Lord Himself; and it is from Him that they receive their authority and to Him that they are responsible. When they are called representatives, this is merely an indication of the fact that they were chosen to their office by the people, and does not imply that they derive their authority from them. Hence they are no deputies or tools that merely serve to carry out the wishes of the people, but rulers whose duty it is to apprehend and apply intelligently the laws of Christ. At the same time they are in duty bound to recognize the power vested in the Church as a whole by seeking its assent or consent in important matters.

5. THE POWER OF THE CHURCH RESIDES PRIMARILY IN THE GOVERNING BODY OF THE LOCAL CHURCH. It is one of the fundamental principles of Reformed or Presbyterian government, that the power or authority of the Church does not reside first of all in the most general assembly of any Church, and is only secondarily and by derivation from this assembly, vested in the governing body of the local Church; but that it has its original seat in the consistory or session of the local Church, and is by this transferred to the major assemblies, such as classes (presbyteries) and synods or general assemblies. Thus the Reformed system honors the autonomy of the local church, though it always regards this as subject to the limitations that may be put upon it as the result of its association with other churches in one denomination, and assures it the fullest right to govern its own internal affairs by means of its officers. At the same time it also maintains the right and duty of the local church to unite with other similar churches on a common confessional basis, and form a wider organization for doctrinal, judicial, and administrative purposes, with proper stipulations of mutual obligations and rights. Such a wider organization undoubtedly imposes certain limitations on the autonomy of the local churches, but also promotes the growth and welfare of the churches, guarantees the rights of the members of the Church, and serves to give fuller expression to the unity of the Church.

C. THE OFFICERS OF THE CHURCH.

Different kinds of officers may be distinguished in the Church. A very general distinction is that between extraordinary and ordinary officers.

1. EXTRAORDINARY OFFICERS. a. Apostles. Strictly speaking, this name is applicable only to the Twelve chosen by Jesus and to Paul; but it is also applied to certain apostolic men, who assisted Paul in his work, and who were endowed with apostolic gifts and graces, Acts 14:4; Acts 14:14; 1 Corinthians 9:5-6; 2 Corinthians 8:23; Galatians 1:19 (?). The apostles had the special task of laying the foundation for the Church of all ages. It is only through their word that believers

of all following ages have communion with Jesus Christ. Hence they are the apostles of the Church in the present day as well as they were the apostles of the primitive Church. They had certain special qualifications. They (a) received their commission directly from God or from Jesus Christ, Mark 3:14; Luke 6:13; Galatians 1:1; (b) were witnesses of the life of Christ and especially of His resurrection, John 15:27; Acts 1:21-22; 1 Corinthians 9:1; (c) were conscious of being inspired by the Spirit of God in all their teaching, both oral and written, Acts 15:28; 1 Corinthians 2:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:8; 1 John 5:9-12; (d) had the power to perform miracles and used this on several occasions to ratify their message, 2 Corinthians 12:12; Hebrews 2:4; and (e) were richly blessed in their work as a sign of the divine approval of their labors, 1 Corinthians 9:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:2-3; Galatians 2:8. b. Prophets. The New Testament also speaks of prophets, Acts 11:28; Acts 13:1-2; Acts 15:32; 1 Corinthians 12:10; 1 Corinthians 13:2; 1 Corinthians 14:3; Ephesians 2:20; Ephesians 3:5; Ephesians 4:11; 1 Timothy 1:18; 1 Timothy 4:14;

Revelation 11:6. Evidently the gift of speaking for the edification of the Church was highly developed in these prophets, and they were occasionally instrumental in revealing mysteries and predicting future events. The first part of this gift is permanent in the Christian Church, and was distinctly recognized by the Reformed Churches (prophesyings), but the last part of it was of a charismatic and temporary character. They differed from ordinary ministers in that they spoke under special inspiration. c. Evangelists. In addition to apostles and prophets, evangelists are mentioned in the Bible, Acts 21:8; Ephesians 4:11; 2 Timothy 4:5. Philip, Mark, Timothy, and Titus belonged to this class. Little is known about these evangelists. They accompanied and assisted the apostles, and were sometimes sent out by these on special missions. Their work was to preach and baptize, but also to ordain elders, Titus 1:5; 1 Timothy 5:22, and to exercise discipline, Titus 3:10. Their authority seems to have been more general and somewhat superior to that of the regular ministers.

2. ORDINARY OFFICERS. a. Elders. Among the common officers of the Church the presbuteroi or episkopoi are first in order of importance. The former name simply means "elders," that is, older ones, and the latter, "overseers." The term presbuteroi is used in Scripture to denote old men, and to designate a class of officers somewhat similar to those who functioned in the synagogue. As a designation of office the name was gradually eclipsed and even superseded by the name episkopoi. The two terms are often used interchangeably, Acts 20:17; Acts 20:28; 1 Timothy 3:1; 1 Timothy 4:14; 1 Timothy 5:17; 1 Timothy 5:19; Titus 1:5; Titus 1:7; 1 Peter 5:1-2. Presbuteroi are first mentioned in Acts 11:30, but the office was evidently well known already when Paul and Barnabas went to Jerusalem, and may have been in existence even before the institution of the diaconate. At least the term hoi neoteroi in Acts 5:1-42 seems to point to a distinction between these and the presbuteroi. Frequent mention is made of them in the book of Acts, Acts 14:23; Acts 15:6, Acts 15:22; Acts 16:4; Acts 20:17, Acts 20:28; Acts 21:18. Probably the presbyterial or episcopal office was first instituted in the churches of the Jews, James 5:14; Hebrews 13:7; Hebrews 13:17, and then, shortly after, also in those of the Gentiles. Several other names are applied to these officers, namely, proistamenoi, Romans 12:8; 1 Thessalonians 5:12; kuberneseis 1 Corinthians 12:28; hegoumenoi, Hebrews 13:7; Hebrews 13:17; Hebrews 13:24; and poimenes, Ephesians 4:11. These officers clearly had the oversight of the flock that was entrusted to their care. They had to provide for it, govern it, and protect it, as the very household of God. b. Teachers. It is clear that the elders were not originally teachers. There was no need of separate

teachers at first, since there were apostles, prophets, and evangelists. Gradually, however, the didaskalia was connected more closely with the episcopal office; but even then the teachers did not at once constitute a separate class of officers. Paul’s statement in Ephesians 4:11, that the ascended Christ also gave "pastors and teachers," mentioned as a single class, to the Church, clearly shows that these two did not constitute two different classes of officers, but one class having two related functions. 1 Timothy 5:17 speaks of elders who labor in the Word and in teaching, and according to Hebrews 13:7 the hegoumenoi were also teachers. Moreover, in 2 Timothy 2:2 Paul urges upon Timothy the necessity of appointing to office faithful men who shall also be able to teach others. In course of time two circumstances led to a distinction between the elders or overseers that were entrusted only with the government of the Church, and those that were also called upon to teach: (1) when the apostles died and heresies arose and increased, the task of those who were called upon to teach became more exacting and demanded special preparation, 2 Timothy 2:2; Titus 2:2; and (2) in view of the fact that the laborer is worthy of his hire, those who were engaged in the ministry of the Word, a comprehensive task requiring all their time, were set free from other work, in order that they might devote themselves more exclusively to the work of teaching. In all probability the aggeloi who were addressed in the letters to the seven churches of Asia Minor, were the teachers or ministers of those churches, Revelation 3:1; Revelation 3:7; Revelation 3:14. In Reformed circles the ministers now rule the churches together with the elders, but in addition to that administer the Word and the sacraments. Together they make the necessary regulations for the government of the Church. c. Deacons. Besides the presbuteroi the diakonoi are mentioned in the New Testament, Php 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8; 1 Timothy 3:10; 1 Timothy 3:12. According to the prevailing opinion Acts 6:1-6 contains the record of the institution of the diaconate. Some modern scholars doubt this, however, and regard the office mentioned in Acts 6:1-15, either as a general office in which the functions of elders and deacons were combined, or as a merely temporal office serving a special purpose. They call attention to the fact that some of the seven chosen, as Philip and Stephen, evidently engaged in teaching; and that the money collected at Antioch for the poor in Judea was delivered into the hands of the elders. No mention is made of deacons whatsoever in Acts 11:30, though these, if they had existed as a separate class, would have been the natural recipients of that money. And yet in all probability Acts 6:1-15 does refer to the institution of the diaconate, for: (1) The name diakonoi, which was, previous to the event narrated in Acts 6:1-15, always used in the general sense of servant, subsequently began to be employed, and in course of time served exclusively, to designate those who were engaged in works of mercy and charity. The only reason that can be assigned for this is found in Acts 6:1-15. (2) The seven men mentioned there were charged with the task of distributing properly the that were brought for the agapae, a ministry that is elsewhere more particularly described by the word diakonia, Acts 11:29; Romans 12:7; 2 Corinthians 8:4; 2 Corinthians 9:1; 2 Corinthians 9:12-13; Revelation 2:19. (3) The requirements for the office, as mentioned in Acts 6:1-15, are rather exacting, and in that respect agree with the demands mentioned in 1 Timothy 3:8-10; 1 Timothy 3:12. (4) Very little can be said in favor of the pet idea of some critics that the diaconate was not developed until later, about the time when the episcopal office made its appearance.

3. THE CALLING OF THE OFFICERS AND THEIR INDUCTION INTO OFFICE. A distinction should be made between the calling of the extraordinary officers, such as apostles, and that of the ordinary officers. The former were called in an extraordinary way with an immediate calling from

God, and the latter, in the ordinary manner and through the agency of the Church. We are concerned more particularly with the calling of the ordinary officers. a. The calling of the ordinary officers. This is twofold:

(1) Internal calling. It is sometimes thought that the internal calling to an office in the Church consists in some extraordinary indication of God to the effect that one is called, — a sort of special revelation. But this is not correct. It consists rather in certain ordinary providential indications given by God, and includes especially three things: (a) the consciousness of being impelled to some special task in the Kingdom of God, by love to God and His cause; (b) the conviction that one is at least in a measure intellectually and spiritually qualified for the office sought; and (c) the experience that God is clearly paving the way to the goal.

(2) External calling. This is the call that comes to one through the instrumentality of the Church. It is not issued by the Pope (Roman Catholic), nor by a bishop or a college of bishops (Episcopalian), but by the local church. Both the officers and the ordinary members of the church have a part in it. That the officers have a guiding hand in it, but not to the exclusion of the people, is evident from such passages as ; Acts 1:15-26; Acts 6:2-6; Acts 14:23. The people were recognized even in the choice of an apostle, according to Acts 1:15-26. It would seem that in the apostolic age the officers guided the choice of the people by calling attention to the necessary qualifications that were required for the office, but allowed the people to take part in the choosing, Acts 1:15-26; Acts 6:1-6; 1 Timothy 3:2-13. Of course, in the case of Matthias God Himself made the final choice. b. The officers' induction into office. There are especially two rites connected with this:

(1) Ordination. This presupposes the calling and examination of the candidate for office. It is an act of the classis or the presbytery (1 Timothy 4:14). Says Dr. Hodge: "Ordination is the solemn expression of the judgment of the Church, by those appointed to deliver such judgment, that the candidate is truly called of God to take part in this ministry, thereby authenticating to the people the divine call."30 This authentication is, under all ordinary circumstances, the necessary condition for the exercise of the ministerial office. It may briefly be called a public acknowledgement and confirmation of the candidate's calling to this office.

(2) Laying on of hands. Ordination is accompanied with the laying on of hands. Clearly, the two went hand in hand in apostolic times, Acts 6:6; Acts 13:3; 1 Timothy 4:14; 1 Timothy 5:22. In those early days the laying on of hands evidently implied two things: it signified that a person was set aside for a certain office, and that some special spiritual gift was conferred upon him. The Church of Rome is of the opinion that these two elements are still included in the laying on of hands, that it actually confers some spiritual grace upon the recipient, and therefore ascribes to it sacramental significance. Protestants maintain, however, that it is merely a symbolical indication of the fact that one is set aside for the ministerial office in the Church. While they regard it as a Scriptural rite and as one that is entirely appropriate, they do not regard it as absolutely essential. The Presbyterian Church makes it optional.

D. THE ECCLESIASTICAL ASSEMBLIES.

1. THE GOVERNING BODIES (CHURCH COURTS) IN THE REFORMED SYSTEM. Reformed Church government is characterized by a system of ecclesiastical assemblies in an ascending or a

descending scale, according to the point of view from which they are considered. These are the consistory (session), the classis (presbytery), the synod(s), and (in some cases) the general assembly. The consistory consists of the minister (or, ministers) and the elders of the local church. The classis is composed of one minister and one elder of each local church within a certain district. This is somewhat different in the Presbyterian Church, however, where the presbytery includes all the ministers within its boundaries, and one elder from each of its congregations. The synod, again, consists of an equal number of ministers and elders from each classis or presbytery. And, finally, the general assembly is (in the case of the Presbyterians) composed of an equal delegation of ministers and elders from each of the presbyteries, and not, as might be expected, from each of the particular synods.

2. THE REPRESENTATIVE GOVERNMENT OF THE LOCAL CHURCH AND ITS RELATIVE AUTONOMY. a. The representative government of the local church. Reformed churches differ, on the one hand, from all those churches in which the government is in the hands of a single prelate or presiding elder, and on the other hand, from those in which it rests with the people in general. They do not believe in any one man rule, be he an elder, a pastor, or a bishop; neither do they believe in popular government. They choose ruling elders as their representatives, and these, together with the minister(s), form a council or consistory for the government of the local church. Very likely the apostles were guided by the venerated custom of having elders in the synagogue rather than by any direct commandment, when they ordained elders in the various churches founded by them. The Jerusalem church had elders, Acts 11:30. Paul and Barnabas ordained them in the churches which they organized on the first missionary journey, Acts 14:23. Elders were evidently functioning at Ephesus, Acts 20:17, and at Philippi, Php 1:1. The Pastoral Epistles repeatedly make mention of them, 1 Timothy 3:1-2; Titus 1:5; Titus 1:7. It deserves attention that they are always spoken of in the plural, 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Timothy 5:17; Hebrews 13:7; Hebrews 13:17; Hebrews 13:24; 1 Peter 5:1. The elders are chosen by the people as men who are specially qualified to rule the Church. Scripture evidently intends that the people shall have a voice in the matter of their selection, though this was not the case in the Jewish synagogue, Acts 1:21-26; Acts 6:1-6; Acts 14:23. In the last passage, however, the word cheirotoneo may have lost its original meaning of appointing by stretching out the hand, and may simply mean to appoint. At the same time it is perfectly evident that the Lord Himself places these rulers over the people and clothes them with the necessary authority, Matthew 16:19; John 20:22-23; Acts 1:24; Acts 1:26; Acts 20:28; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-12; Hebrews 13:17. The election by the people is merely an external confirmation of the inner calling by the Lord Himself. Moreover, the elders, though representatives of the people, do not derive their authority from the people, but from the Lord of the Church. They exercise rule over the house of God in the name of the King, and are responsible only to Him. b. The relative autonomy of the local church. Reformed Church government recognizes the autonomy of the local church. This means:

(1) That every local church is a complete church of Christ, fully equipped with everything that is required for its government. It has absolutely no need of it that any government should be imposed upon it from without. And not only that, but such an imposition would be absolutely contrary to its nature.

(2) That, though there can be a proper affiliation or consolidation of contiguous churches, there may be no union which destroys the autonomy of the local church. Hence it is better not to speak

of classes and synods as higher, but to describe them as major or more general assemblies. They do not represent a higher, but the very same, power that inheres in the consistory, though exercising this on a broader scale. McGill speaks of them as higher and remoter tribunals.31

(3) That the authority and prerogatives of the major assemblies are not unlimited, but have their limitation in the rights of the sessions or consistories. They are not permitted to lord it over a local church or its members, irrespective of the constitutional rights of the consistory; nor to meddle with the internal affairs of a local church under any and all circumstances. When churches affiliate, their mutual rights and duties are circumscribed in a Church Order or Form of Government. This stipulates the rights and duties of the major assemblies, but also guarantees the rights of the local church. The idea that a classis (presbytery) or synod can simply impose whatever it pleases on a particular church is essentially Roman Catholic.

(4) That the autonomy of the local church has its limitations in the relation in which it stands to the churches with which it is affiliated, and in the general interests of the affiliated churches. The Church Order is a sort of Constitution, solemnly subscribed to by every local church, as represented by its consistory. This on the one hand guards the rights and interests of the local church, but on the other hand also, the collective rights and interests of the affiliated churches. And no single church has the right to disregard matters of mutual agreement and of common interest. The local group may be even called upon occasionally to deny itself for the far greater good of the Church in general.

3. THE MAJOR ASSEMBLIES. a. Scripture warrant for major assemblies. Scripture does not contain an explicit command to the effect that the local churches of a district must form an organic union. Neither does it furnish us with an example of such a union. In fact, it represents the local churches as individual entities without any external bond of union. At the same time the essential nature of the Church, as described in Scripture, would seem to call for such a union. The Church is described as a spiritual organism, in which all the constituent parts are vitally related to one another. It is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ, of which He is the exalted Head. And it is but natural that this inner unity should express itself in some visible manner, and should even, as much as possible in this imperfect and sinful world, seek expression in some corresponding external organization. The Bible speaks of the Church not only as a spiritual body, but also as a tangible body, as a temple of the Holy Spirit, as a priesthood, and as a holy nation. Every one of these terms points to a visible unity. Congregationalists or Independents and Undenominationalists lose sight of this important fact. The existing divisions in the visible Church at the present time should not cause us to lose sight of the fact that there are certain passages of Scripture which seem to indicate rather clearly that, not only the invisible Church, but also the visible Church is a unity. The word ekklesia is used in the singular as an indication of the visible church in a wider sense than that of the purely local church, Acts 9:31 (according to the now accepted reading), 1 Corinthians 12:28, and probably also 1 Corinthians 10:32. In the descriptions of the Church in 1 Corinthians 12:12-31 and Ephesians 4:4-16 the apostle also has its visible unity in mind. Moreover, there are reasons for thinking that the Church at Jerusalem and at Antioch consisted of several separate groups, which together formed a sort of unity. And, finally, Acts 15:1-41 acquaints us with the example of the council of Jerusalem. This council was composed of apostles and elders, and therefore did not constitute a proper example and pattern of a classis or synod in the modern sense of the word. At the same time it was an example of a major assembly,

and of one that spoke with authority and not merely in an advisory capacity. b. The representative character of the major assemblies. In the abstract it may be said that the major assemblies might have been composed of all the representatives of all the local churches under their jurisdiction; but, on account of the number of the churches represented, such a body would in most cases prove unwieldy and inefficient. In order to keep the number of representatives down to reasonable proportions, the principle of representation is carried through also in connection with the major assemblies. Not the local churches, but the classes or presbyteries, send their representatives to Synods. This affords the gradual contraction that is necessary for a well-compacted system. The immediate representatives of the people who form the consistories or sessions, are themselves represented in classes or presbyteries; and these in turn are represented in synods or general assemblies. The more general the assembly, the more remote it is from the people; yet none of them is too remote for the expression of the unity of the Church, for the maintenance of good order, and for the general effectiveness of its work. c. The matters that fall under their jurisdiction. The ecclesiastical character of these assemblies should always be borne in mind. It is because they are Church assemblies, that purely scientific, social, industrial, or political matters do not, as such, fall under their jurisdiction. Only ecclesiastical matters belong to their province, such as matters of doctrine or morals, of church government and discipline, and whatever pertains to the preservation of unity and good order in the Church of Jesus Christ. More particularly, they deal with (1) matters which, as to their nature, belong to the province of a minor assembly, but for some reason or other cannot be settled there; and (b) matters which, as to their nature, belong to the province of a major assembly, since they pertain to the churches in general, such as matters touching the Confession, the Church Order, or the liturgy of the Church. d. The power and authority of these assemblies. The major assemblies do not represent a higher kind of power than is vested in the consistory or session. The Reformed churches know of no higher kind of ecclesiastical power than that which resides in the consistory. At the same time their authority is greater in degree and wider in extent than that of the consistory. Church power is represented in greater measure in the major assemblies than in the consistory, just as apostolic power was represented in greater measure in twelve than in a single apostle. Ten churches certainly have more authority than a single church; there is an accumulation of power. Moreover, the authority of the major assemblies does not apply to a single church only, but extends to all the affiliated churches. Consequently, the decisions of a major assembly carry great weight and can never be set aside at will. The assertion sometimes made that they are only of an advisory character and therefore need not be carried out, is a manifestation of the leaven of Independency. These decisions are authoritative, except in cases where they are explicitly declared to be merely advisory. They are binding on the churches as the sound interpretation and application of the law, — the law of Christ, the King of the Church. They cease to be binding only when they are shown to be contrary to the Word of God.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What is the difference between the New Testament meaning of the word episkopos and its later connotation? Why are regular offices necessary in the Church? Does Scripture favor the idea that the people should have some part in the government of the Church? What is the chief characteristic of Prelatism? What is the Roman Catholic distinction between a hierarchy of order and a hierarchy of jurisdiction? How did the Territorial and the Collegial systems originate, and how do they differ? What system did the Arminians adopt, and how did this affect their position? What is the present form of Church government in the Lutheran

Church? How does the idea that Christ is the Head of the Church only in an organic sense affect the offices and the authority of the Church? What important practical bearing does the Headship of Christ (including His kingship) have on the life, the position, and the government of the Church? Can any Church be considered autonomous in the absolute sense of the word? How do Reformed major assemblies differ from Congregational conferences and general councils?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 354-424; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Ecclesia, pp. 268-293; id., Tractaat van de Reformatie der Kerken, pp. 41-82; Vos, Geref. Dogm. V, pp. 31-39, 49-70; Hodge, Church Polity, cf. Index; Bannerman, The Church II, pp. 201-331; McGill, Church Government, pp. 143-522; McPherson, Presbyterianism; Heyns, Handbook for Elders and Deacons, pp. 13-70; Bouwman, Geref. Kerkrecht, cf. Index; Rieker, Grundsaetze reformierter Kirchenverfassung; Hoffmann, Kirchenverfassungsrecht; Lechler, Geschichte der Presbyterial— und Synodalverfassung seit der Reformation; Morris, Ecclesiology, pp. 80-151; Hatch, The Organisation of the Early Christian Churches; Sillevis Smitt, De Organisatie van de Christelijke Kerk; Lindsay, The Church and the Ministry in the Early Centuries; J. Cunningham, The Growth of the Church, pp. 1-77; Van Dyke, The Church, Her Ministry and Sacraments, pp. 115-161; Pieper, Christl. Dogm. III, pp. 501-534; Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 376-410; Wilson, Free Church Principles, pp. 1-65; Wilmers, Handbook of the Chr. Rel., pp. 77-101; Devine, The Creed Explained, pp. 302-340; Boynton, The Congregational Way; W. A. Visser ’t Hooft and J. H. Oldham, The Church and its Function in Society.

04.5.1.4. The Power of the Church

IV. The Power of the Church A. THE SOURCE OF CHURCH POWER.

Jesus Christ not only founded the Church, but also endowed it with the necessary power or authority. He is the Head of the Church, not only in an organic, but also in an administrative sense, that is, He is not only the Head of the body, but also the King of the spiritual commonwealth. It is in His capacity as King of the Church that He has clothed her with power or authority. He Himself spoke of the Church as founded so firmly upon a rock that the gates of hell cannot prevail against her, Matthew 16:18; and on the same occasion — the very first on which He made mention of the Church — He also promised to endow her with power, when He said unto Peter: "I will give unto thee the keys of the Kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven," Matthew 16:19. It is quite evident that the terms ’Church’ and ’Kingdom of Heaven’ are used interchangeably here. Keys are an emblem of power (cf. Isaiah 22:15-22), and in the keys of the Kingdom of Heaven Peter receives power to bind and to loose, which in this connection would seem to mean, to determine what is forbidden and what is permitted in the sphere of the Church.32 And the judgment he passes — in this case not on persons, but on actions — will be sanctioned in heaven. Peter receives this power as the representative of the apostles, and these are the nucleus and foundation of the Church in their capacity as teachers of the Church. The Church of all ages is bound by their word, John 17:20; 1 John 1:3. That Christ endowed not only Peter but all the apostles with power and with the right to judge, and that not merely actions but also persons, is quite evident from John 20:23 : "Whose soever sins ye forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." Christ gave this power first of all and in the fullest degree to the apostles, but He also extends it, though in a lesser degree, to the Church in general. The Church has the right to excommunicate an unrepentant sinner. But it can do this only because Jesus Christ Himself dwells in the Church and through the agency of the apostles has supplied the Church with a proper standard of judgment. That Christ has given power to the Church as a whole, is quite evident from several passages of the New Testament, Acts 15:23-29; Acts 16:4; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Corinthians 5:13; 1 Corinthians 6:2-4; 1 Corinthians 12:28; Ephesians 4:11-16. The officers in the Church receive their authority from Christ and not from men, even though the congregation is instrumental in putting them into office. This means on the one hand that they do not obtain it at the hands of any civil authority, which has no power in ecclesiastical matters, and therefore cannot bestow any; but on the other hand also, that they do not derive it from the people in general, though they are representatives of the people. Porteous correctly remarks: "That the presbyter is termed the people’s representative shows that he is their chosen ruler. The way in which the office is acquired, but not the source of its power, is designated by the title of representative."33 B. THE NATURE OF THIS POWER.

1. A SPIRITUAL POWER. When the power of the Church is called a spiritual power, this does not mean that it is altogether internal and invisible, since Christ rules both body and soul, His Word and sacraments address the whole man, and the ministry of the diaconate even has special

references to physical needs. It is a spiritual power, because it is given by the Spirit of God, Acts 20:28, can only be exercised in the name of Christ and by the power of the Holy Spirit, John 20:22-23; 1 Corinthians 5:4, pertains exclusively to believers, 1 Corinthians 5:12, and can only be exercised in a moral and spiritual way, 2 Corinthians 10:4. 34 The State represents the government of God over the outward and temporal estate of man, while the Church represents His government of man's inward and spiritual estate. The former aims at assuring its subjects of the possession and enjoyment of their external and civil rights, and is often constrained to exercise coercive power over against human violence. The latter is founded in opposition to an evil spirit and for the purpose of delivering men from spiritual bondage by imparting to them the knowledge of the truth, by cultivating in them spiritual graces, and by leading them to a life of obedience to the divine precepts. Since the power of the Church is exclusively spiritual, it does not resort to force. Christ intimated on more than one occasion that the administration of His Kingdom on earth involved a spiritual and not a civil power, Luke 12:13 ff.; Matthew 20:25-28; John 18:36-37. The Church of Rome loses sight of this great fact, when it insists on the possession of temporal power and is bent on bringing the entire life of the people under its sway.

2. A MINISTERIAL POWER. It is abundantly evident from Scripture that the power of the Church is no independent and sovereign power, Matthew 20:25-26; Matthew 23:8; Matthew 23:10; 2 Corinthians 10:4-5; 1 Peter 5:3, but a diakonia leitourgia, a ministerial power, Acts 4:29-30; Acts 20:24; Romans 1:1, derived from Christ and subordinate to His sovereign authority over the Church, Matthew 28:18. It must be exercised in harmony with the Word of God and under the direction of the Holy Spirit, through both of which Christ governs His Church, and in the name of Christ Himself as the King of the Church, Romans 10:14-15; Ephesians 5:23; 1 Corinthians 5:4. Yet it is a very real and comprehensive power, consisting in the administration of the Word and the sacraments, Matthew 28:19, the determination of what is and what is not permitted in the Kingdom of God, Matthew 16:19, the forgiving and retaining of sin, John 20:23, and the exercise of discipline in the Church, Matthew 16:18; Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:4; Titus 3:10; Hebrews 12:15-17.

C. DIFFERENT KINDS OF CHURCH POWER. In connection with the three offices of Christ there is also a threefold power in the Church, namely, the potestas dogmatica or docendi, the potestas gubernans or ordinans of which the potestas iudicans or disciplinae is a subdivision, and the potestas or ministerium misericordiae.

1. THE POTESTAS DOGMATICA OR DOCENDI. The Church has a divine task in connection with the truth. It is her duty to be a witness to the truth to those who are without, and both a witness and a teacher to those that are within. The Church must exercise this power: a. In the preservation of the Word of God. By giving His Word to the Church, God constituted the Church the keeper of the precious deposit of the truth. While hostile forces are pitted against it and the power of error is everywhere apparent, the Church must see to it that the truth does not perish from the earth, that the inspired volume in which it is embodied be kept pure and unmutilated, in order that its purpose may not be defeated, and that it be handed on faithfully from generation to generation. It has the great and responsible task of maintaining and defending the truth against all the forces of unbelief and error, 1 Timothy 1:3-4; 2 Timothy 1:13; Titus 1:9-11. The Church has not always been mindful of this sacred duty. During the last century too many of the leaders of the Church have even welcomed the assaults of a hostile criticism upon the Bible, and have rejoiced in the fact that it was

brought down to the level of a purely human production, a mixture of truth and error. They have shown little of the determination which caused Luther to cry out: "Das Wort sollen Sie stehen lassen." b. In the administration of the Word and of the sacraments. It is not only the duty of the Church to preserve the Word of God, but also to preach it in the world and in the assembly of the people of God, for the conversion of sinners and for the edification of the saints. The Church has an evangelistic or missionary task in the world. The King, clothed with all authority in heaven and on earth, gave her the great commission: "Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe whatsoever I commanded you." Through the ministry of the Church the Son is ceaselessly gathering out of the whole human race a Church chosen to everlasting life. The empirical Church of any particular time must be actively engaged in the enlargement and expansion of the Church through missionary endeavors, must be instrumental in bringing in the elect out of all the nations of the world, adding living stones to the spiritual temple that is in process of construction, and must in that manner promote the completion of the number who will ultimately constitute the ideal Church of the future, the perfect bride of Christ, the new Jerusalem of Revelation 21:1-27. If the Church of Jesus Christ should be derelict in the performance of this great task, she would prove unfaithful to her Lord. That work must be continued and must be completed before the glorious return of the Saviour, Matthew 24:14. And the great means at the disposal of the Church for the accomplishment of this work is, not education, civilization, human culture, or social reforms, though all these may have subsidiary significance, but the gospel of the Kingdom, which is none other, in spite of what Premillenarians may say, than the gospel of free grace, of redemption through the blood of the Lamb. But the Church may not rest satisfied with bringing sinners to Christ through the instrumentality of the gospel; she must also engage in preaching the word in the assemblies of those who have already come to Christ. And in the performance of this task it is not her main task to call sinners unto Christ, though the invitation to come to Christ may not be wanting even in organized churches, but to edify the saints, to strengthen their faith, to lead them on in the way of sanctification, and thus to solidify the spiritual temple of the Lord. Paul has this in mind when he says that Christ gave the teaching officers to the Church "for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ: till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a full-grown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." Ephesians 4:12-13. The Church may not rest satisfied with teaching the first principles of faith, but must press on to higher ground, in order that those who are babes in Christ may become full-grown men and women in Christ, Hebrews 5:11-14, Hebrews 6:1-3. Only a Church that is really strong, that has a firm grasp of the truth, can in turn become a powerful missionary agency and make mighty conquests for the Lord. Thus the task of the Church is a comprehensive task. She must point out the way of salvation, must warn the wicked of their coming doom, must cheer the saints with the promises of salvation, must strengthen the weak, encourage the faint-hearted and comfort the sorrowing. And in order that all this work may be done in every land and among all nations, she must see to it that the Word of God is translated into all languages. The ministry of the sacraments must, of course, go hand in hand with the ministry of the Word. It is merely the symbolical presentation of the gospel, addressed to the eye rather than to the ear. The duty of the Church to preach the Word is plainly taught in many passages of Scripture, such as Isaiah 3:10-11; 2 Corinthians 5:20; 1 Timothy 4:13; 2 Timothy 2:15; 2 Timothy 4:2; Titus 2:1-10. In view of the clear

instructions of her King she may never allow any totalitarian government to dictate to her what she must preach; neither may she accommodate herself, as far as the contents of her message is concerned, to the demands of a naturalistic science, or to the requirements of a culture that reflects the spirit of the world. Modernists have done just that during the past decades by the suicidal efforts to adapt themselves in their preaching to the demands of a rationalistic higher criticism, of biology and psychology, of sociology and economics, until at last they completely lost the message of the King. Many of them are now coming to the discovery that the message recommended in Rethinking Missions and in Vernon White's A New Theology for Missions is quite different from the original message and contains little that is peculiar to the pulpit; and that, as things now stand in their circles, the Church has no message of its own. Frantic attempts are made by Modernists to discover for themselves some message which they might bring to the churches, while they should seek to recover the original message and humbly take their place at the feet of Jesus. c. In the framing of symbols and confessions. Every Church must strive for self-consciousness in the confession of the truth. In order to accomplish this, it will not only have to reflect deeply on the truth, but also to formulate its expression of what it believes. By doing this it will engender in its members a clear conception of their faith, and convey to outsiders a definite understanding of its doctrines. The necessity of doing this was greatly enhanced by the historical perversions of the truth. The rise of heresies invariably called for the construction of symbols and confessions, for clearly formulated statements of the faith of the Church. Even the apostles sometimes found it necessary to restate with greater precision certain truths because of errors that had crept in. John restates the central truth of Christ's manifestation in the world in view of an incipient Gnosticism (cf. his Gospel and his First Epistle); Paul restates the doctrine of the resurrection, which was denied by some (1 Corinthians 15:1-58; 1 Timothy 1:20; 2 Timothy 2:17-18), and also that of the second coming of Christ, which was misunderstood (2 Thessalonians 2:1-17); and the council of Jerusalem found it necessary to re-assert the doctrine of Christian liberty (Acts 15:1-41). Naturally, the Bible contains no example of a creed. Creeds are not given by revelation, but are the fruit of the Church's reflection on revealed truth. In our day many are averse to symbols and confessions, and sing the glories of a creedless Church. But the objections raised against them are not at all insuperable. Creeds are not, as some insinuate, regarded as equal in authority to the Bible, and much less as superior to it. They do not, either by express statements or by implication add to the truth of Scripture. They do not militate against the freedom of the conscience, nor do they retard the progress of scientific theological study. Neither can they be regarded as the cause of the divisions in the Church, though they may be expressive of these. The divisions were there first and gave rise to the various creeds. As a matter of fact, they serve to a great extent to promote a measure of unity in the visible Church. Moreover, if a Church does not want to be silent, it is bound to develop a creed, be it written or unwritten. All this does not mean, however, that creeds cannot be abused. d. In the cultivation of the study of theology. The Church may not rest on its oars and be satisfied with the knowledge of the divine truth to which it has attained and which it has formulated in its confessions. It must seek to dig ever deeper into the mine of Scripture, in order to bring to light its hidden treasures. Through scientific study it must seek an ever deeper knowledge, an ever better understanding, of the words of life. It owes this to the truth itself as a revelation of God, but also to the training of its future ministers. The Church is in duty bound to provide for, or at least to supervise, the training of the successive generations of its teachers and pastors. This would seem to be implied in the words of Paul to

Timothy: "And the things which thou hast heard from me among many witnesses commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." 2 Timothy 2:2.

2. THE POTESTAS GUBERNANS. This is divided into the potestas ordinans and the potestas iudicans. a. The potestas ordinans. "God is not a God of confusion, but of peace," 1 Corinthians 14:33. Hence He desires that in His Church "all things be done decently and in order," 1 Corinthians 14:40. This is evident from the fact that He has made provision for the proper regulation of the affairs of the Church. The regulative authority which He has given to the Church includes the power:

(1) To enforce the laws of Christ. This means that the Church has the right to carry into effect the laws which Christ has promulgated for the Church. There is an important difference on this point between the Roman Catholic Church and the Protestant Churches. The former virtually claims authority to enact laws that are binding on the conscience, and the trangression of which carries with it the same penalty that is annexed to any breach of the divine law. The latter, however, disclaim any such authority, but maintain the right to enforce the law of Christ, the King of the Church. And even so they claim no other than a ministerial or declarative power, regard the law as binding only because it is backed by the authority of Christ, and apply no other censures than those which He has sanctioned. Moreover, they feel that compulsion would conflict with the nature of their power and could never result in real spiritual benefit. All the members of the Church possess this power in a measure, Romans 15:14; 1 Thessalonians 5:11, but it is vested in a special measure in the officers, John 21:15-17; Acts 20:28; 1 Peter 5:2. The ministerial character of this power is brought out in 2 Corinthians 1:24; 1 Peter 5:2-3.

(2) To draw up canons or church orders. Numberless occasions arise on which the Church is prompted to make enactments or regulations, often called canons or church orders. Such enactments are not to be regarded as new laws, but merely as regulations for the proper application of the law. They are necessary to give the outward polity of the Church a definite form, to stipulate on what terms persons are permitted to bear office in the Church, to regulate public worship, to determine the proper form of discipline, and so on. General principles for the worship of God are laid down in Scripture, John 14:23; 1 Corinthians 11:17-33; 1 Corinthians 14:10; 1 Corinthians 16:2; Colossians 3:16(?); 1 Timothy 3:1-13; but in the regulation of the details of divine worship the churches are allowed great latitude. They may adapt themselves to circumstances, always bearing in mind, however, that they should worship God publicly in the manner best adapted to the purpose of edification. In no case may the regulations of the Church go contrary to the laws of Christ. b. The potestas iudicans. The potestas iudicans is the power that is exercised to guard the holiness of the Church, by admitting those who are approved after examination, and by excluding those who depart from the truth or lead dishonorable lives. It is exercised especially in matters of discipline.

(1) Scriptural teachings respecting discipline. Among Israel unintentional sins could be atoned for by a sacrifice, but sins committed "with a high hand" (intentional) were punished with extermination. The cherem (the ban or that which is devoted) was not only an ecclesiastical, but also a civil punishment. The uncircumcized, the lepers, and the impure, were not permitted to enter the sanctuary, Leviticus 5:1-19 f.; Ezekiel 44:9. It was only after Israel lost its national independence, and its character as a religious assembly became more prominent, that the ban,

consisting in exclusion from the assembly, became a measure of ecclesiastical discipline, Ezra 10:8; Luke 6:22; John 9:22; John 12:42; John 16:2. Jesus instituted discipline in His Church, when He gave the apostles and, in connection with their word, also the Church in general, the power to bind and to loose, to declare what is forbidden and what is permitted, and to forgive and to retain sins declaratively, Matthew 16:19; Matthew 18:18; John 20:23. And it is only because Christ has given this power to the Church, that she can exercise it. Several passages of the New Testament refer to the exercise of this power, 1 Corinthians 5:2; 1 Corinthians 5:7; 1 Corinthians 5:13; 2 Corinthians 2:5-7; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; 1 Timothy 1:20; Titus 3:10. Such passages as 1 Corinthians 5:5 and 1 Timothy 1:20 do not refer to regular discipline, but to a special measure permitted only to the apostles and consisting in giving the sinner over to Satan for temporary physical punishment, in order to save the soul.

(2) The twofold purpose of discipline. The purpose of discipline in the Church is twofold. In the first place it seeks to carry into effect the law of Christ concerning the admission and exclusion of members; and in the second place it aims at promoting the spiritual edification of the members of the Church by securing their obedience to the laws of Christ. Both of these aims are subservient to a higher end, namely, the maintenance of the holiness of the Church of Jesus Christ. With reference to diseased members of the Church, discipline is first of all medical in that it seeks to effect a cure, but it may become chirurgical, when the well-being of the Church requires the excision of the diseased member. It is impossible to tell when a process of discipline begins, whether a cure will be effected, or whether the diseased member will finally have to be removed. Probably the Church will succeed in bringing the sinner to repentance —and this is, of course, the more desirable end—; but it is also possible that it will have to resort to the extreme measure of excommunicating him. In all cases of discipline the Church will have to figure with both possibilities. Even in the most extreme measure it should still have the saving of the sinner in mind, 1 Corinthians 5:5. At the same time it should always remember that the primary consideration is the maintenance of the holiness of the Church.

(3) The exercise of discipline by the officers. Though the ordinary members of the Church are frequently called upon to take part in the application of discipline, it is generally applied by the officers of the Church and can be applied only by them when discipline becomes censure. There are two different ways in which it may become the duty of a consistory to deal with a matter of discipline. (a) Private sins can become a cause of discipline in the more technical sense of the word in the manner indicated in Matthew 18:15-17. If one sins against a brother, the latter must admonish the sinner; if this does not have the desired effect, he must admonish him again in the presence of one or two witnesses; and if even this fails, then he must notify the Church, and it becomes the duty of the officers to deal with the matter. It should be remembered, however, that this method is prescribed for private sins only. The offence given by public sins cannot be removed privately, but only by a public transaction. (b) Public sins make the sinner subject to disciplinary action by the consistory at once, without the formality of any preceding private admonitions, even if there is no formal accusation. By public sins are meant, not merely sins that are committed in public, but sins that give public and rather general offence. The consistory should not even wait until someone calls attention to such sins, but should take the initiative. It was no honor for the Corinthians that Paul had to call their attention to the scandal in their midst before they took action. 1 Corinthians 5:1 ff.; nor was it an honor for the churches of Pergamus and Thyatira that they did

not rebuke and exclude the heretical teachers from their midst, Revelation 2:14-15; Revelation 2:20. In the case of public sins the consistory has no right to wait until someone brings formal charges; neither has it the right to demand of anyone who finally feels constrained to call attention to such sins that he admonish the sinner privately first. The matter of public sins can not be settled in private. The disciplinary action of the consistory passes through three stages: (a) The excommunicatio minor, restraining the sinner from partaking of the Lord's Supper. This is not public, and is followed by repeated admonitions by the consistory, in order to bring the sinner to repentance. (b) If the preceding measure does not avail, it is followed by three public announcements and admonitions. In the first of these the sin is mentioned, but the sinner is not named. In the second the name is made known in accordance with the advice of classis, which must first be obtained. And in the third the imminent final excommunication is announced, in order that this may have the consent of the congregation. During all this time the consistory, of course, continues its admonitions. (c) Finally, this is followed by the excommunicatio major, by which one is cut off from the fellowship of the Church, Matthew 18:17; 1 Corinthians 5:13; Titus 3:10-11. It is always possible to reinstate the sinner, if he shows due repentance and confesses his sins, 2 Corinthians 2:5-10.

(4) The necessity of proper discipline. The necessity of proper discipline is stressed in Scripture, Matthew 18:15-18; Romans 16:17; 1 Corinthians 5:2; 1 Corinthians 5:9-13; 2 Corinthians 2:5-10; 2 Thessalonians 3:6; 2 Thessalonians 3:14-15; Titus 3:10-11. The church of Ephesus is praised because it did not bear with evil men, Revelation 2:2, and those of Pergamus and Thyatira are reproved for harboring heretical teachers and heathen abominations, Revelation 2:14; Revelation 2:20; Revelation 2:24. On the whole the Reformed churches have excelled in the exercise of Church discipline. They strongly stressed the fact that the Church of Christ must have an independent government and discipline. The Lutheran Churches did not emphasize this. They were Erastian in Church government, and were content to leave the exercise of Church discipline in the strict sense of the word in the hands of the government. The Church retained the right to exercise discipline only by means of the ministry of the Word, that is, by admonitions and exhortations addressed to the church as a whole. This was entrusted to the pastor and did not include the right to exclude anyone from the communion of the Church. At present there is in the Churches round about us a noticeable tendency to be lax in discipline, to place a one- sided emphasis on the reformation of the sinner through the ministry of the Word and —in some instances—through personal contacts with the sinner, and to steer clear of any such measures as excluding one from the communion of the Church. There is a very evident tendency to stress the fact that the Church is a great missionary agency, and to forget that it is first of all the assembly of the saints, in which those who publicly live in sin cannot be tolerated. It is said that sinners must be gathered into the church, and not excluded from it. But it should be remembered that they must be gathered in as saints and have no legitimate place in the Church as long as they do not confess their sin and strive for holiness of life.

3. THE POTESTAS OR MINISTERIUM MISERICORDIAE. a. The charismatic gift of healing. When Christ sent His apostles and the seventy disciples out, He not only instructed them to preach, but also gave them power to cast out devils and to cure all manner of diseases, Matthew 10:1; Matthew 10:8; Mark 3:15; Luke 9:1-2; Luke 10:9; Luke 10:17. Among the early Christians there were some who had the gift of healing and who could perform miracles, 1 Corinthians

12:9-10; 1 Corinthians 12:28; 1 Corinthians 12:30; Mark 16:17-18. This extraordinary condition, however, soon made way for the usual one, in which the Church carries on its work by the ordinary means. There is no Scriptural ground for the idea that the charism of healing was intended to be continued in the Church of all ages. Evidently, the miracles and miraculous signs recorded in Scripture were intended as a mark or credential of divine revelation, themselves formed a part of this revelation, and served to attest and confirm the message of the early preachers of the gospel. As such they naturally ceased when the period of special revelation came to an end. It is true that the Church of Rome and several sects claim the power of miraculous healing, but the claim is not borne out by the evidence. There are many marvelous stories in circulation of miraculous cures, but before they are given credence it must be proved: (1) that they do not pertain to cases of imaginary sickness, but to cases of real diseases or physical defects; (2) that they do not refer to imaginary or pretended, but to real, cures; and (3) that the cures are actually wrought in a supernatural way, and are not the result of the use of natural means, either material or mental.35 b. The ordinary ministry of benevolence in the Church. The Lord clearly intended that the Church should make provision for her poor. He hinted at this duty when He said to His disciples: "For ye have the poor always with you," Matthew 26:11; Mark 14:7. By means of a communion of goods the early Church saw to it that no one wanted the necessaries of life, Acts 4:34. It is not impossible that the neoteroi of Acts 5:6; Acts 5:10 were the precursors of the later deacons. And when the widows of the Greeks were being neglected in the daily ministration, the apostles saw to it that seven well qualified men were put in charge of this necessary business, Acts 6:1-6. They were to "serve the tables," which seems to mean in this connection, to superintend the service at the tables of the poor, or to provide for an equitable division of the provisions that were placed on the tables. Deacons and deaconesses are mentioned repeatedly in the Bible, Romans 16:1; Php 1:1; 1 Timothy 3:8-12. Moreover, the New Testament contains many passages urging the necessity of giving or collecting for the poor, Acts 20:35; 1 Corinthians 16:1-2; 2 Corinthians 9:1; 2 Corinthians 9:6-7; 2 Corinthians 9:12-14; Galatians 2:10; Galatians 6:10; Ephesians 4:28; 1 Timothy 5:10; 1 Timothy 5:16; James 1:27; James 2:15-16; 1 John 3:17. There can be no doubt about the duty of the Church in this respect. And the deacons are the officers who are charged with the responsible and delicate task of performing the work of Christian benevolence with reference to all the needy of the Church. They must devise ways and means for collecting the necessary funds, have charge of the money collected, and provide for its prudential distribution. However, their task is not limited to this offering of material help. They must also instruct and comfort the needy. In all their work they should consider it their duty to apply spiritual principles in the performance of their duty. It is to be feared that this function of the Church is sadly neglected in many of the churches to-day. There is a tendency to proceed on the assumption that it can safely be left to the State to provide even for the poor of the Church. But in acting on that assumption, the Church is neglecting a sacred duty, is impoverishing her own spiritual life, is robbing herself of the joy experienced in ministering to the needs of those who suffer want, and is depriving those who are suffering hardships, who are borne down by the cares of life, and who are often utterly discouraged, of the comfort, the joy, and the sunshine of the spiritual ministrations of Christian love, which are as a rule entirely foreign to the work of charity administered by the State.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: How do the Reformed and the Lutheran conceptions of Christ as the Head of the Church differ? Does the Old Testament contain any indication that Christ is King of the Church? What systems of Church government deny, or detract from, the Head—or

Kingship of Christ? How does the Headship of Christ affect the relation of the Church to the State, religious liberty, and liberty of conscience? Is the doctrine that the power of the Church is exclusively spiritual consistent with Romanism and Erastianism? How is the power of the Church overrated by High Church men, and underrated by Low Church men, of various descriptions? How do the Independents view the power of the officers? How is Church power limited? What is the end contemplated in the exercise of Church power? What is meant by the Church in Matthew 18:17? Does the key of discipline shut out only from outward privileges in the Church, or also from a spiritual interest in Christ? By whom and how is discipline exercised in the Roman Catholic, the Anglican, the Methodist, and the Congregational, Church? Can a Church safely discard discipline?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 425-482; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., de Ecclesia, pp. 268-293; id., Tractaat van de Reformatie der Kerken, pp. 41-69; Bannerman, The Church, I, pp. 187-480; II, pp. 186-200; Hodge, Church Polity, cf. Index; Morris, Ecclesiology, pp. 143-151; Wilson, Free Church Principles; McPherson, The Doctrine of the Church in Scottish Theology, pp. 129-224; Gillespie, Aaron's Rod Blossoming; ibid., On Ceremonies; Bouwman, De Kerkelijke Tucht; Jansen, De Kerkelijke Tucht; Biesterveld, Van Lonkhuizen, en Rudolph, Het Diaconaat; Bouwman, Het Ambt der Diakenen; Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 394-419; Schmid, Doct. Theol. of the Ev. Luth. Church, pp. 607-621; Wilmers, Handbook of the Chr. Rel., pp. 77-101; Cunningham, Discussions of Church Principles; ibid., Historical Theology II, pp. 514-587; McPherson, Presbyterianism.

04.5.2.0. Means of Grace

Means of Grace

04.5.2.1. The Means of Grace in General

I. The Means of Grace in General A. THE IDEA OF THE MEANS OF GRACE.

Fallen man receives all the blessings of salvation out of the eternal fountain of the grace of God, in virtue of the merits of Jesus Christ and through the operation of the Holy Spirit. While the Spirit can and does in some respects operate immediately on the soul of the sinner, He has seen fit to bind Himself largely to the use of certain means in the communication of divine grace. The term "means of grace" is not found in the Bible, but is nevertheless a proper designation of the means that are indicated in the Bible. At the same time the term is not very definite and may have a far more comprehensive meaning than it ordinarily has in theology. The Church may be represented as the great means of grace which Christ, working through the Holy Spirit, uses for the gathering of the elect, the edification of the saints, and the building up of His spiritual body. He qualifies her for this great task by endowing her with all kinds of spiritual gifts, and by the institution of the offices for the administration of the Word and the sacraments, which are all means to lead the elect to their eternal destiny. But the term may have an even wider scope. The whole providential guidance of the saints, through prosperity and adversity, often becomes a means by which the Holy Spirit leads the elect to Christ or to an ever closer communion with Him. It is even possible to include in the means of grace all that is required of men for the reception and the continued enjoyment of the blessings of the covenant, such as faith, conversion, spiritual warfare, and prayer. It is neither customary nor desirable, however, to include all this under the term "means of grace." The Church is not a means of grace alongside of the Word and the sacraments, because her power in promoting the work of the grace of God consists only in the administration of these. She is not instrumental in communicating grace, except by means of the Word and of the sacraments. Moreover, faith, conversion, and prayer, are first of all fruits of the grace of God, though they may in turn become instrumental in strengthening the spiritual life. They are not objective ordinances, but subjective conditions for the possession and enjoyment of the blessings of the covenant. Consequently, it is better not to follow Hodge when he includes prayer, nor McPherson when he adds to the Word and the sacraments both the Church and prayer. Strictly speaking, only the Word and the sacraments can be regarded as means of grace, that is, as objective channels which Christ has instituted in the Church, and to which He ordinarily binds Himself in the communication of His grace. Of course these may never be dissociated from Christ, nor from the powerful operation of the Holy Spirit, nor from the Church which is the appointed organ for the distribution of the blessings of divine grace. They are in themselves quite ineffective and are productive of spiritual results only through the efficacious operation of the Holy Spirit.

B. CHARACTERISTICS OF THE WORD AND THE SACRAMENTS AS MEANS OF GRACE. The fact that one can speak of means of grace in a rather general sense makes it imperative to point to the distinctive characteristics of the means of grace in the technical or restricted sense of the word.

1. They are instruments, not of common but of, special grace, the grace that removes sin and renews the sinner in conformity with the image of God. It is true that the Word of God may and in

some respects actually does enrich those who live under the gospel with some of the choicest blessings of common grace in the restricted sense of the word; but it, as well as the sacraments, comes into consideration here only as a means of grace in the technical sense of the word. And the means of grace in this sense are always connected with the beginning and the progressive operation of the special grace of God, that is redemptive grace, in the hearts of sinners.

2. They are in themselves and not in virtue of their connection with things not included in them, means of grace. Striking experiences may, and undoubtedly sometimes do, serve to strengthen the work of God in the hearts of believers, but this does not constitute them means of grace in the technical sense, since they accomplish this only in so far as these experiences are interpreted in the light of God's Word, through which the Holy Spirit operates. The Word and the sacraments are in themselves means of grace; their spiritual efficacy is dependent only on the operation of the Holy Spirit.

3. They are continuous instruments of God's grace, and not in any sense of the word exceptional. This means that they are not associated with the operation of God's grace merely occasionally or in a more or less accidental way, but are the regularly ordained means for the communication of the saving grace of God and are as such of perpetual value. The Heidelberg Catechism asks in Question 65, "Since, then, we are made partakers of Christ and all His benefits by faith only, whence comes this faith?" And the answer is, "From the Holy Spirit, who works it in our hearts by the preaching of the holy gospel, and confirms it by the use of the holy sacraments."

4. They are the official means of the Church of Jesus Christ. The preaching of the Word (or, the Word preached) and the administration of the sacraments (or, the sacraments administered) are the means officially instituted in the Church, by which the Holy Spirit works and confirms faith in the hearts of men. Some Reformed theologians limit the idea of the means of grace still more by saying that they are administered only within the visible Church, and that they presuppose the existence of the principle of the new life in the soul. Shedd and Dabney both speak of them, without any qualification, as "means of sanctification." Says the former: "When the world of unregenerate men are said to have the means of grace, the means of conviction under common grace, not of sanctification under special grace, are intended."36 Honig also distinguishes between the Word of God as a means of grace and the Word as it contains the call to conversion and serves to call Gentiles to the service of the living God.37 Dr. Kuyper, too, thinks of the means of grace merely as means for the strengthening of the new life when he says: "The media gratiae are means instituted by God that He makes use of to unfold, both personally and socially, for and through our consciousness, the re-creation that He immediately established in our nature."38 There is, of course, a truth in this representation. The principle of the new life is wrought in the soul immediately, that is, without the mediation of the Word that is preached. But in so far as the origination of the new life also includes the new birth and internal calling, it may also be said that the Holy Spirit works the beginning of the new life or of faith, as the Heidelberg Catechism says, "by the preaching of the holy gospel."

C. HISTORICAL VIEWS RESPECTING THE MEANS OF GRACE.

There has been considerable difference of opinion respecting the means of grace in the Church of Jesus Christ. The early Church does not furnish us with anything very definite on this point. There was far more emphasis on the sacraments than on the Word of God. Baptism was rather generally

regarded as the means by which sinners were regenerated, while the eucharist stood out as the sacrament of sanctification. In course of time, however, certain definite views were developed.

1. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC VIEW. While the Roman Catholics regarded even relics and images as means of grace, they singled out in particular the Word and the sacraments. At the same time they failed to give due prominence to the Word, and ascribed to it only preparatory significance in the work of grace. As compared with the Word, the sacraments were considered to be the real means of grace. In the system that was gradually developed the Church of Rome recognizes a means that is even superior to the sacraments. The Church itself is regarded as the primary means of grace. In it Christ continues His divine-human life on earth, performs His prophetic, priestly, and kingly work, and through it He communicates the fulness of His grace and truth. This grace serves especially to raise man from the natural to the supernatural order. It is a gratia elevans, a supernatural physical power, infused into the natural man through the sacraments working ex opere operato. In the sacraments the visible signs and the invisible grace are inseparably connected. In fact, the grace of God is contained in the means as a sort of substance, is conveyed through the channel of the means, and is therefore absolutely bound to the means. Baptism regenerates man ex opere operato, and the even more important eucharist raises his spiritual life to a higher level. Apart from Christ, from the Church, and from the sacrament, there is no salvation.

2. THE LUTHERAN VIEW. With the Reformation the emphasis was shifted from the sacraments to the Word of God. Luther gave great prominence to the Word of God as the primary means of grace. He pointed out that the sacraments have no significance apart from the Word and are in fact merely the visible Word. He did not entirely succeed in correcting the Roman Catholic error as to the inseparable connection between the outward means and the inward grace communicated through them. He, too, conceived of the grace of God as a sort of substance contained in the means and not to be obtained apart from the means. The Word of God is in itself always efficacious and will effect a spiritual change in man, unless he puts a stumblingblock in the way. And the body and blood of Christ is "in, with, and under" the elements of bread and wine, so that they who eat and drink the latter also receive the former, though this will be to their advantage only if they receive them in the proper manner. It was especially his opposition to the subjectivity of the Anabaptists that caused Luther to stress the objective character of the sacraments and to make their effectiveness dependent on their divine institution rather than on the faith of the recipients. The Lutherans did not always steer clear of the idea that the sacraments function ex opere operato.

3. THE VIEW OF THE MYSTICS. Luther had to contend a great deal with the mystical Anabaptists, and it was especially his reaction to their views that determined his final view of the means of grace. The Anabaptists, and other mystical sects of the age of the Reformation and of later times, virtually deny that God avails Himself of means in the distribution of His grace. They stress the fact that God is absolutely free in communicating His grace, and therefore can hardly be conceived of as bound to such external means. Such means after all belong to the natural world, and have nothing in common with the spiritual world. God, or Christ, or the Holy Spirit, or the inner light, work directly in the heart, and both the Word and the sacraments can only serve to indicate or to symbolize this internal grace. This whole conception is determined by a dualistic view of nature and grace.

4. THE RATIONALISTIC VIEW. The Socinians of the days of the Reformation, on the other hand, moved too far in the opposite direction. Socinus himself did not even regard baptism as a rite destined to be permanent in the Church of Jesus Christ, but his followers did not go to that extreme. They recognized both baptism and the Lord's Supper as rites of permanent validity, but ascribed to them only a moral efficacy. This means that they thought of the means of grace as working only through moral persuasion, and did not associate them at all with any mystical operation of the Holy Spirit. In fact, they placed the emphasis more on what man did in the means of grace than on what God accomplished through them, when they spoke of them as mere external badges of profession and (of the sacraments) as memorials. The Arminians of the seventeenth century and the Rationalists of the eighteenth century shared this view.

5. THE REFORMED VIEW. While reaction to the Anabaptists caused the Lutherans to move in the direction of Rome and to bind the grace of God to the means in the most absolute sense — a position also taken by High Church Anglicans —, the Reformed Churches continued the original view of the Reformation. They deny that the means of grace can of themselves confer grace, as if they were endued with a magical power to produce holiness. God and God only is the efficient cause of salvation. And in the distribution and communication of His grace He is not absolutely bound to the divinely appointed means through which He ordinarily works, but uses them to serve His gracious purposes according to His own free will. But while they do not regard the means of grace as absolutely necessary and indispensable, they strongly oppose the idea that these means may be treated as purely accidental and indifferent and can be neglected with impunity. God has appointed them as the ordinary means through which He works His grace in the hearts of sinners, and their wilful neglect can only result in spiritual loss.

D. CHARACTERISTIC ELEMENTS IN THE REFORMED DOCTRINE OF THE MEANS OF GRACE. For a proper understanding of the Reformed doctrine of the means of grace the following points deserve special emphasis.

1. The special grace of God operates only in the sphere in which the means of grace function. This truth must be maintained over against the Mystics, who deny the necessity of the means of grace. God is a God of order, who in the operation of His grace ordinarily employs the means which He Himself has ordained. This, of course, does not mean that He has Himself become subservient to the appointed means and could not possibly work without them in the communication of His grace, but only that it has pleased Him to bind Himself, except in the case of infants, to the use of these means.

2. On a single point, namely, in the implanting of the new life, the grace of God works immediately, that is, without the use of these means as instruments. But even so it works only in the sphere of the means of grace, since these are absolutely required in drawing out and nourishing the new life. This is a direct negation of the position of Rationalism, which represents regeneration as the result of moral suasion.

3. While the grace of God generally operates mediately, it is not inherent in the means as a divine deposit, but accompanies the use of these. This must be maintained in opposition to the Roman Catholics, the High Church Anglicans, and the Lutherans, who proceed on the assumption that the means of grace always operate in virtue of an inherent power, though their operation may be made ineffective by the condition or attitude of the recipient.

4. The Word of God may never be separated from the sacraments, but must always accompany them, since they are virtually only a visible representation of the truth that is conveyed to us by the Word. In the Church of Rome the Word retires into the background as having only preparatory significance, while the sacraments, considered apart from the Word, are regarded as the real means of grace.

5. All the knowledge which is obtained by the recipient of divine grace, is wrought in him by means of the Word and is derived from the Word. This position must be maintained in opposition to all kinds of Mystics, who lay claim to special revelations and to a spiritual knowledge that is not mediated by the Word, and who thereby lead us into a sea of boundless subjectivity.

04.5.2.2. The Word as a Means of Grace

II. The Word as a Means of Grace A. MEANING OF THE TERM "WORD OF GOD" IN THIS CONNECTION.

Roman Catholics can hardly be said to regard the Word of God as a means of grace. In their estimation the Church is the great and all-sufficient channel of grace for sinners, and all other means are subordinate to it. And the two most powerful means which God has placed at the disposal of the Church are prayer and the sacraments. The Churches of the Reformation, however, both the Lutheran and the Reformed, do honor the Word of God as such and even regard it as superior to the sacraments. It is true that the older Reformed theologians, such as the professors of Leyden (Synopsis), Mastricht, à Marck, Turretin, and others, and even some of a more recent date, such as Dabney and Kuyper, do not treat of it separately as a means of grace, but this is largely due to the fact that they have already discussed the Word in other connections. They freely speak of it as a means of grace. And when they consider the Word of God as a means of grace, they are not thinking of the Logos, the personal Word, John 1:1-14. Neither do they have in mind any word of power proceeding out of the mouth of Jehovah, Psalms 33:6; Isaiah 55:11; Romans 4:17, or any word of direct revelation, such as the prophets received, Jeremiah 1:4; Jeremiah 2:1; Ezekiel 6:1; Hosea 1:1. It is the inspired Word of God, the Word of Scripture, which they regard as a means of grace. And even when speaking of this as a means of grace, they contemplate it from a special point of view. The inspired Scriptures constitute the principium cognoscendi, the fountain head, of all our theological knowledge, but it is not that aspect which we have in mind when we speak of the Word of God as a means of grace. The Bible is not only the principium cognoscendi of theology, but it is also the means which the Holy Spirit employs for the extension of the Church and for the edification and nourishment of the saints. It is pre-eminently the word of God’s grace, and therefore also the most important means of grace. Strictly speaking, it is the Word as it is preached in the name of God and in virtue of a divine commission, that is considered as a means of grace in the technical sense of the word, alongside of the sacraments which are administered in the name of God. Naturally, the Word of God can also be considered as a means of grace in a more general sense. It may be a real blessing as it is brought to man in many additional ways: as it is read in the home, is taught in the school, or is circulated in tracts. As the official means of grace, placed at the disposal of the Church, both the Word and the sacraments can only be administered by the lawful and properly qualified officers of the Church. But in distinction from the sacraments the Word can also be carried out into the world by all believers and operate in many different ways.

B. THE RELATION OF THE WORD TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

There has developed in the course of history quite a difference of opinion respecting the efficacy of the Word, and consequently, as to the connection between the effectual operation of the Word, and the work of the Holy Spirit.

1. Nomism in its various forms, such as Judaism, Pelagianism, Semi-Pelagianism Arminianism, Neonomianism, and Rationalism, deems the intellectual, moral, and æsthetic influence of the Word as the only influence that can be ascribed to it. It does not believe in a supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit through the Word. The truth revealed in the Word of God works only by moral persuasion. In some of its forms, such as Pelagianism and Rationalisem, Nomism does not even feel the need of a special operation of the Holy Spirit in the work of redemption, but in its more moderate forms, such as Semi-Pelagianism, Arminianism, and Neonomianism, it considers the moral influence of the Word insufficient, so that it must be supplemented by the work of the Holy Spirit.

2. Antinomianism, on the other hand, does not regard the external Word as necessary at all, and displays a Mysticism which expects everything from the inner word or the inner light, or from the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit. Its slogan is, "The letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life." The external word belongs to the natural world, is unworthy of the really spiritual man, and can produce no spiritual results. While Antinomians of all descriptions reveal a tendency to slight, if not to ignore altogether, the means of grace, this tendency received its clearest expression at the hands of some of the Anabaptists.

3. In opposition to these two views, the Reformers maintained that the Word alone is not sufficient to work faith and conversion; that the Holy Spirit can, but does not ordinarily, work without the Word; and that therefore in the work of redemption the Word and the Spirit work together. Though there was little difference on this point at first between the Lutherans and the Reformed, the former from the beginning stressed the fact that the Holy Spirit works through the Word as His instrument (per verbum), while the latter preferred to say that the operation of the Holy Spirit accompanies the Word (cum verbo). Later on Lutheran theologians developed the real Lutheran doctrine, that the Word of God contains the converting power of the Holy Spirit as a divine deposit, which is now so inseparably connected with it that it is present even when the Word is not used, or is not used legitimately. But in order to explain the different results of the preaching of the Word in the case of different persons, they had to resort, even though it be in a mild form, to the doctrine of the free will of man. The Reformed indeed regarded the Word of God as always powerful, either as a savour of life unto life or as a savour of death unto death, but maintained that it becomes efficacious in leading to faith and conversion only by an accompanying operation of the Holy Spirit in the hearts of sinners. They refused to consider this efficaciousness as an impersonal power resident in the Word.

C. THE TWO PARTS OF THE WORD OF GOD CONSIDERED AS A MEANS OF GRACE.

1. THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL IN THE WORD OF GOD. The Churches of the Reformation from the very beginning distinguished between the law and the gospel as the two parts of the Word of God as a means of grace. This distinction was not understood to be identical with that between the Old and the New Testament, but was regarded as a distinction that applies to both Testaments. There is law and gospel in the Old Testament, and there is law and gospel in the New. The law comprises everything in Scripture which is a revelation of God’s will in the form of command or prohibition, while the gospel embraces everything, whether it be in the Old Testament or in the New, that pertains to the work of reconciliation and that proclaims the seeking and redeeming love of God in Christ Jesus. And each one of these two parts has its own proper function in the

economy of grace. The law seeks to awaken in the heart of man contrition on account of sin, while the gospel aims at the awakening of saving faith in Jesus Christ. The work of the law is in a sense preparatory to that of the gospel. It deepens the consciousness of sin and thus makes the sinner aware of the need of redemption. Both are subservient to the same end, and both are indispensable parts of the means of grace. This truth has not always been sufficiently recognized. The condemning aspect of the law has sometimes been stressed at the expense of its character as a part of the means of grace. Ever since the days of Marcion there have always been some who saw only contrast between the law and the gospel and proceeded on the assumption that the one excluded the other. They based their opinion in part on the rebuke which Paul administered to Peter (Galatians 2:11-14), and partly on the fact that Paul occasionally draws a sharp distinction between the law and the gospel and evidently regards them as contrasts, 2 Corinthians 3:6-11; Galatians 3:2-3; Galatians 3:10-14; cf. also John 1:17. They lost sight of the fact that Paul also says that the law served as a tutor to lead men to Christ, Galatians 3:24, and that the Epistle to the Hebrews represents the law, not as standing in antithetical relation to the gospel, but rather as the gospel in its preliminary and imperfect state.

Some of the older Reformed theologians represented the law and the gospel as absolute opposites. They thought of the law as embodying all the demands and commandments of Scripture, and of the gospel, as containing no demands whatsoever, but only unconditional promises; and thus excluded from it all requirements. This was partly due to the way in which the two are sometimes contrasted in Scripture, but was also partly the result of a controversy in which they were engaged with the Arminians. The Arminian view, making salvation dependent on faith and evangelical obedience as works of man, caused them to go to the extreme of saying that the covenant of grace does not require anything on the part of man, does not prescribe any duties, does not demand or command anything, not even faith, trust, and hope in the Lord, and so on. but merely conveys to man the promises of what God will do for him. Others, however, correctly maintained that even the law of Moses is not devoid of promises, and that the gospel also contains certain demands. They clearly saw that man is not merely passive, when he is introduced into the covenant of grace, but is called upon to accept the covenant actively with all its privileges, though it is God who works in him the ability to meet the requirements. The promises which man appropriates certainly impose upon him certain duties, and among them the duty to obey the law of God as a rule of life, but also carry with them the assurance that God will work in him "both to will and to do." The consistent Dispensationalists of our day again represent the law and the gospel as absolute opposites. Israel was under the law in the previous dispensation, but the Church of the present dispensation is under the gospel, and as such is free from the law. This means that the gospel is now the only means of salvation, and that the law does not now serve as such. Members of the Church need not concern themselves about its demands, since Christ has met all its requirements. They seem to forget that, while Christ bore the curse of the law, and met its demands as a condition of the covenant of works, He did not fulfil the law for them as a rule of life, to which man is subject in virtue of his creation, apart from any covenant arrangement.

2. NECESSARY DISTINCTIONS RESPECTING THE LAW AND THE GOSPEL. a. As was already said in the preceding, the distinction between the law and the gospel is not the same as that between the Old and the New Testament. Neither is it the same as that which present day Dispensationalists make between the dispensation of the law and the dispensation of the gospel. It

is contrary to the plain facts of Scripture to say that there is no gospel in the Old Testament, or at least not in that part of the Old Testament that covers the dispensation of the law. There is gospel in the maternal promise, gospel in the ceremonial law, and gospel in many of the Prophets, as Isaiah 53:1-12, Isaiah 54:1-17; Isaiah 55:1-3; Isaiah 6:7; Jeremiah 31:33-34; Ezekiel 36:25-28. In fact, there is a gospel current running through the whole of the Old Testament, which reaches its highest point in the Messianic prophecies. And it is equally contrary to Scripture to say that there is no law in the New Testament, or that the law does not apply in the New Testament dispensation. Jesus taught the permanent validity of the law, Matthew 5:17-19. Paul says that God provided for it that the requirements of the law should be fulfilled in our lives, Romans 8:4, and holds his readers responsible for keeping the law, Romans 13:9. James assures his readers that he who transgresses a single commandment of the law (and he mentions some of these), is a transgressor of the law, James 2:8-11. And John defines sin as "lawlessness," and says that this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments, 1 John 3:4; 1 John 5:3. b. It is possible to say that in some respects the Christian is free from the law of God. The Bible does not always speak of the law in the same sense. Sometimes it contemplates this as the immutable expression of the nature and will of God, which applies at all times and under all conditions. But it also refers to it as it functions in the covenant of works, in which the gift of eternal life was conditioned on its fulfilment. Man failed to meet the condition, thereby also losing the ability to meet it, and is now by nature under a sentence of condemnation. When Paul draws a contrast between the law and the gospel, he is thinking of this aspect of the law, the broken law of the covenant of works, which can no more justify, but can only condemn the sinner. From the law in this particular sense, both as a means for obtaining eternal life and as a condemning power, believers are set free in Christ, since He became a curse for them and also met the demands of the covenant of works in their behalf. The law in that particular sense and the gospel of free grace are mutually exclusive. c. There is another sense, however, in which the Christian is not free from the law. The situation is quite different when we think of the law as the expression of man’s natural obligations to his God, the law as it is applied to man even apart from the covenant of works. It is impossible to imagine any condition in which man might be able to claim freedom from the law in that sense. It is pure Antinomianism to maintain that Christ kept the law as a rule of life for His people, so that they need not worry about this any more. The law lays claim, and justly so, on the entire life of man in all its aspects, including his relation to the gospel of Jesus Christ. When God offers man the gospel, the law demands that the latter shall accept this. Some would speak of this as the law in the gospel, but this is hardly correct. The gospel itself consists of promises and is no law; yet there is a demand of the law in connection with the gospel. The law not only demands that we accept the gospel and believe in Jesus Christ, but also that we lead a life of gratitude in harmony with its requirements.

D. THE THREEFOLD USE OF THE LAW.

It is customary in theology to distinguish a three-fold use of the law.

1. THE THREE DEFINED. We distinguish: a. A usus politicus or civilis. The law serves the purpose of restraining in and promoting righteousness. Considered from this point of view, the law presupposes sin and is necessary on account of sin. It serves the purpose of God’s common grace in the world at large. This means that from this point of view it cannot be regarded a means of grace in the technical sense of the word. b. A usus elenchticus or pedagogicus. In this capacity

the law serves the purpose of bringing man under conviction of sin, and of making him conscious of his inability to meet the demands of the law. In that way the law becomes his tutor to lead him unto Christ, and thus becomes subservient to God's gracious purpose of redemption. c. A usus didacticus or normativus. This is the so-called tertius usus legis, the third use of the law. The law is a rule of life for believers, reminding them of their duties and leading them in the way of life and salvation. This third use of the law is denied by the Antinomians.

2. THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE LUTHERAN AND THE REFORMED ON THIS POINT. There is some difference between the Lutherans and the Reformed with respect to this threefold use of the law. Both accept this threefold distinction, but the Lutherans stress the second use of the law. In their estimation the law is primarily the appointed means for bringing men under conviction of sin and thus indirectly pointing the way to Jesus Christ as the Saviour of sinners. While they also admit the third use of the law, they do it with a certain reserve, since they hold that believers are no more under the law. According to them the third use of the law is necessary only because, and in so far as, believers are still sinners; they must be held in check by the law, and should become ever-increasingly conscious of their sins. It is not surprising therefore that this third use of the law occupies no important place in their system. As a rule they treat of the law only in connection with the doctrine of human misery. The Reformed do full justice to the second use of the law, teaching that "through the law cometh the knowledge of sin," and that the law awakens the consciousness of the need of redemption; but they devote even more attention to the law in connection with the doctrine of sanctification. They stand strong in the conviction that believers are still under the law as a rule of life and of gratitude. Hence the Heidelberg Catechism devotes not less than eleven Lord's Days to the discussion of the law, and that in its third part, which deals with gratitude.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Why do the Roman Catholics regard the Church as the outstanding means of grace? What accounts for their neglect of the Word as a means of grace? Why are the means of grace in disrespect among the Mystics? What distinguishes the Word and the sacraments as means of grace from all other means? Is it correct to say that they are administered only in the Church and serve, not to originate the new life, but to strengthen it? Is the Word of God exclusively used as a means of grace? How do the law and the gospel differ as different aspects of the Word?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 483-505; Hodge, Syst. Theol. III, pp. 466-485; Shedd, Dogm. Theol. II, pp. 561-563; Vos, Geref. Dogm. V. De Genademiddelen, pp. 1-11; McPherson, Chr. Dogm., pp. 422-427; Dick, Lect. on Theology, pp. 447-458; Pieper, Christl. Dogm. III, pp. 121-296; Valentine, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 282-292; Mueller, Chr. Dogm., pp. 441-484; Raymond, Syst. Theol. III, pp. 243-255; Drummond, Studies in Chr. Doct., pp. 399-403.

04.5.2.3. The Sacraments in General

III. The Sacraments in General A. RELATION BETWEEN THE WORD AND THE SACRAMENTS. In distinction from the Roman Catholic Church, the Churches of the Reformation emphasize the priority of the Word of God. While the former proceeds on the assumption that the sacraments contain all that is necessary for the salvation of sinners, need no interpretation, and therefore render the Word quite superfluous as a means of grace, the latter regard the Word as absolutely essential, and merely raise the question, why the sacraments should be added to it. Some of the Lutherans claim that a specific grace, differing from that which is wrought by the Word, is conveyed by the sacraments. This is all but universally denied by the Reformed, a few Scottish theologians and Dr. Kuyper forming exceptions to the rule. They point to the fact that God has so created man that he obtains knowledge particularly through the avenues of the senses of sight and hearing. The Word is adapted to the ear, and the sacraments to the eye. And since the eye is more sensuous than the ear, it may be said that God, by adding the sacraments to the Word, comes to the aid of sinful man. The truth addressed to the ear in the Word, is symbolically represented to the eye in the sacraments. It should be borne in mind, however, that, while the Word can exist and is also complete without the sacraments, the sacraments are never complete without the Word. There are points of similarity and points of difference between the Word and the sacraments.

1. POINTS OF SIMILARITY. They agree: (a) in author, since God instituted both as means of grace; (b) in contents, for Christ is the central content of the one as well as of the other; and (c) in the manner in which the contents are appropriated, namely, by faith. This is the only way in which the sinner can become a participant of the grace that is offered in the Word and in the sacraments.

2. POINTS OF DIFFERENCE. They differ: (a) in their necessity, the Word being indispensable, while the sacraments are not; (b) in their purpose, since the Word is intended to engender and to strengthen faith, while the sacraments serve only to strengthen it; and (c) in their extension, since the Word goes out into all the world, while the sacraments are administered only to those who are in the Church.

B. ORIGIN AND MEANING OF THE WORD "SACRAMENT". The word "sacrament" is not found in Scripture. It is derived from the Latin sacramentum, which originally denoted a sum of money deposited by two parties in litigation. After the decision of the court the winner’s money was returned, while that of the loser was forfeited. This seems to have been called a sacramentum, because it was intended to be a sort of propitiatory offering to the gods. The transition to the Christian use of the term is probably to be sought: (a) in the military use of the term, in which it denoted the oath by which a soldier solemnly pledged obedience to his commander, since in baptism the Christian pledges obedience to his Lord; and (b) in the specifically religious sense which it acquired when the Vulgate employed it as a rendering of the Greek musterion. It is possible that this Greek term was applied to the sacraments, because they have a faint resemblance to some of the mysteries of the Greek religions. In the early Church the word

"sacrament" was first used to denote all kinds of doctrines and ordinances. For this very reason some objected to the name, and preferred to speak of "signs," "seals," or "mysteries." Even during and immediately after the Reformation many disliked the name "sacrament." Melanchton used "signi," and both Luther and Calvin deemed it necessary to call attention to the fact that the word "sacrament" is not employed in its original sense in theology. But the fact that the word is not found in Scripture and is not used in its original sense when it is applied to the ordinances instituted by Jesus, need not deter us, for usage often determines the meaning of a word. The following definition may be given of a sacrament: A sacrament is a holy ordinance instituted by Christ, in which by sensible signs the grace of God in Christ, and the benefits of the covenant of grace, are represented, sealed, and applied to believers, and these, in turn, give expression to their faith and allegiance to God.

C. THE COMPONENT PARTS OF THE SACRAMENTS.

Three parts must be distinguished in the sacraments.

1. THE OUTWARD OR VISIBLE SIGN. Each one of the sacraments contains a material element that is palpable to the senses. In a rather loose sense this is sometimes called the sacrament. In the strict sense of the word, however, the term is more inclusive and denotes both the sign and that which is signified. To avoid misunderstanding, this different usage should be borne in mind. It explains how an unbeliever may be said to receive, and yet not to receive, the sacrament. He does not receive it in the full sense of the word. The external matter of the sacrament includes not only the elements that are used, namely, water, bread, and wine, but also the sacred rite, that which is done with these elements. From this external point of view the Bible calls the sacraments signs and -seals, Genesis 9:12-13; Genesis 17:11; Romans 4:11.

2. THE INWARD SPIRITUAL GRACE SIGNIFIED AND SEALED. Signs and seals presuppose something that is signified and sealed and which is usually called the materia interna of the sacrament. This is variously indicated in Scripture as the covenant of grace, Genesis 9:12-13; Genesis 17:11, the righteousness of faith, Romans 4:11, the forgiveness of sins, Mark 1:4; Matthew 26:28, faith and conversion, Mark 1:4; Mark 16:16, communion with Christ in His death and resurrection, Romans 6:3, and so on. Briefly stated, it may be said to consist in Christ and all His spiritual riches. The Roman Catholics find in it the sanctifying grace which is added to human nature, enabling man to do good works and to rise to the height of the visio Dei (the vision of God). The sacraments signify, not merely a general truth, but a promise given unto us and accepted by us, and serve to strengthen our faith with respect to the realization of that promise, Genesis 17:1-14; Exodus 12:13; Romans 4:11-13. They visibly represent, and deepen our consciousness of, the spiritual blessings of the covenant, of the washing away of our sins, and of our participation of the life that is in Christ, Matthew 3:11; Mark 1:4-5; 1 Corinthians 10:2-3; 1 Corinthians 1:16-17; Romans 2:28-29; Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:27. As signs and seals they are means of grace, that is, means of strengthening the inward grace that is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit.

3. THE SACRAMENTAL UNION BETWEEN THE SIGN AND THAT WHICH IS SIGNIFIED. This is usually called the forma sacramenti (forma here meaning essence), because it is exactly the relation between the sign and the thing signified that constitutes the essence of the sacrament. According to the Reformed view this is: (a) not physical, as the Roman Catholics claim, as if the thing signified were inherent in the sign, and the reception of the materia externa necessarily

carried with it a participation in the materia interna; (b) nor local, as the Lutherans represent it, as if the sign and the thing signified were present in the same space, so that both believers and unbelievers receive the full sacrament when they receive the sign; (c) but spiritual, or as Turretin expresses it, relative and moral, so that, where the sacrament is received in faith, the grace of God accompanies it. According to this view the external sign becomes a means employed by the Holy Spirit in the communication of divine grace. The close connection between the sign and the thing signified explains the use of what is generally called "sacramental language," in which the sign is put for the thing signified or vice versa, Genesis 17:10; Acts 22:16; Acts 22:16; 1 Corinthians 5:7.

D. THE NECESSITY OF THE SACRAMENTS.

Roman Catholics hold that baptism is absolutely necessary for all unto salvation, and that the sacrament of penance is equally necessary for those who have committed mortal sins after baptism; but that confirmation, the eucharist, and extreme unction are necessary only in the sense that they have been commanded and are eminently helpful. Protestants, on the other hand, teach that the sacraments are not absolutely necessary unto salvation, but are obligatory in view of the divine precept. Wilful neglect of their use results in spiritual impoverishment and has a destructive tendency, just as all wilful and persistent disobedience to God has. That they are not absolutely necessary unto salvation, follows: (1) from the free spiritual character of the gospel dispensation, in which God does not bind His grace to the use of certain external forms, John 4:21; John 4:23; Luke 18:14; (2) from the fact that Scripture mentions only faith as the instrumental condition of salvation, John 5:24; John 6:29; John 3:36; Acts 16:31; (3) from the fact that the sacraments do not originate faith but presuppose it, and are administered where faith is assumed, Acts 2:41; Acts 16:14-15; Acts 16:30; Acts 16:33; 1 Corinthians 11:23-32; and (4) from the fact that many were actually saved without the use of the sacraments. Think of the believers before the time of Abraham and of the penitent thief on the cross E. THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT SACRAMENTS COMPARED.

1. THEIR ESSENTIAL UNITY. Rome claims that there is an essential difference between the sacraments of the Old, and those of the New Testament. It holds that, like the entire ritual of the old covenant, its sacraments also were merely typical. The sanctification wrought by them was not internal, but merely legal, and prefigured the grace which was to be conferred on man in the future, in virtue of the passion of Christ. This does not mean that no internal grace accompanied their use at all, but merely that this was not effected by the sacraments as such, as it is in the new dispensation. They had no objective efficacy, did not sanctify the recipient ex opere operato, but only ex opere operantis, that is, because of the faith and charity with which he received them. Because the full realization of the grace typified by those sacraments depended on the coming of Christ. the Old Testament saints were shut up in the Limbus Patrum until Christ led them out. As a matter of fact, however, there is no essential difference between the sacraments of the Old, and those of the New Testament. This is proved by the following considerations: (a) in 1 Corinthians 10:1-4 Paul ascribes to the Old Testament Church that which is essential in the New Testament sacraments; (b) in Romans 4:11 he speaks of the circumcision of Abraham as a seal of the righteousness of faith; and (c) in view of the fact that they represent the same spiritual realities, the names of the sacraments of both dispensations are used interchangeably; circumcision and passover are ascribed to the New Testament Church. 1 Corinthians 5:7; Colossians 2:11, and baptism and the Lord’s Supper to the Church of the Old Testament, 1 Corinthians 10:1-4.

2. THEIR FORMAL DIFFERENCES. Notwithstanding the essential unity of the Sacraments of both dispensations, there are certain points of difference. (a) Among Israel the sacraments had a national aspect in addition to their spiritual significance as signs and seals of the covenant of grace. (b) Alongside of the sacraments Israel had many other symbolical rites, such as offerings and purifications, which in the main agreed with their sacraments, while the New Testament sacraments stand absolutely alone. (c) The Old Testament sacraments pointed forward to Christ and were the seals of a grace that still had to be merited while those of the New Testament point back to Christ and His completed sacrifice of redemption. (d) In harmony with the whole Old Testament dispensation, a smaller measure of divine grace accompanied the use of the Old Testament sacraments than is now obtained through the faithful reception of those of the New Testament.

F. THE NUMBER OF THE SACRAMENTS.

1. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. During the old dispensation there were two sacraments, namely, circumcision and passover. Some Reformed theologians were of the opinion that circumcision originated among Israel, and was derived from this ancient covenant people by other nations. But it is now quite clear that this is an untenable position. From the earliest times the Egyptian priests were circumcised. Moreover, circumcision is found among many peoples in Asia, Africa, and even Australia, and it is very unlikely that they all derived it from Israel. Only among Israel, however, did it become a sacrament of the covenant of grace. As belonging to the Old Testament dispensation, it was a bloody sacrifice, symbolizing the excision of the guilt and pollution of sin, and obliging the people to let the principle of the grace of God penetrate their entire life. The passover was also a bloody sacrament. The Israelites escaped the doom of the Egyptians by substituting a sacrifice, which was a type of Christ, John 1:29; John 1:36; 1 Corinthians 5:7. The saved family ate the lamb that was slain, symbolizing the appropriating act of faith, very much as the eating of the bread in the Lord’s Supper.

2. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. The Church of the New Testament also has two sacraments, namely, baptism and the Lord’s Supper. In harmony with the new dispensation as a whole, they are unbloody sacraments. However, they symbolize the same spiritual blessings that were symbolized by circumcision and passover in the old dispensation. The Church of Rome has enlarged the number of the sacraments to seven in a wholly unwarranted manner. To the two that were instituted by Christ it added confirmation, penance, orders, matrimony, and extreme unction. It seeks the Scriptural ground for confirmation in Acts 8:17; Acts 14:22; Acts 9:6; Hebrews 6:2; for penance in James 5:16; for orders in 1 Timothy 4:14; 2 Timothy 1:6; for matrimony in Ephesians 5:32; and for extreme unction in Mark 6:13; James 5:14. Each of these sacraments is supposed to convey, in addition to the general grace of sanctification, a special sacramental grace, which is different in each sacrament. This multiplication of the sacraments created a difficulty for the Church of Rome. It is generally admitted that sacraments, in order to be valid, must have been instituted by Christ; but Christ instituted only two. Consequently, the others are not sacraments, or the right to institute them must also be ascribed to the apostles. Before the Council of Trent many, indeed, asserted that the additional five were not instituted by Christ directly, but through the apostles. The Council, however, boldly declared that all the seven sacraments were instituted by Christ Himself, and thus imposed an impossible task on the theology of its Church. It is a point that must be accepted by Roman Catholics on the testimony of the Church, but that cannot be proved.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Has the term musterion the same meaning in the New Testament as it has in the mystery religions? Are the New Testament teachings respecting the sacraments borrowed from the mystery religions, as a recent school of New Testament criticism claims? Is the assertion of this school correct, that Paul represents the sacraments as effective ex opere operato? Why do the Lutherans prefer to speak of the sacraments as rites and actions rather than as signs? What do they understand by the materia coelestis of the sacraments? What is meant by the Roman Catholic doctrine of intention in connection with the administration of the sacraments? What negative requirement does Rome consider necessary in the recipient of the sacrament? Is it correct to describe the relation between the sign and the thing signified as an unio sacramentalis? What constitutes the gratia sacramentalis in each of the seven sacraments of the Roman Catholic Church?

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04.5.2.4. Christian Baptism

IV. Christian Baptism A. ANALOGIES OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

1. IN THE GENTILE WORLD. Baptism was not something absolutely new in the days of Jesus. The Egyptians, the Persians, and the Hindus, all had their religious purifications. These were even more prominent in the Greek and Roman religions. Sometimes they took the form of a bath in the sea, and sometimes they were effected by sprinkling. Tertullian says that in some cases the idea of a new birth was connected with these lustrations. Many present day scholars hold that Christian baptism, especially as it was taught by Paul, owes its origin to similar rites in the mystery religions, but such a derivation does not even have appearance in its favor. While the initiatory rite in the mystery religions does involve a recognition of the deity in question, there is no trace of a baptism into the name of some god. Nor is there any evidence that the influence of the divine pneuma, rather prominent in the mystery religions, was ever connected with the rite of lustration. Moreover, the ideas of death and resurrection, which Paul associated with baptism, do not fit in with the mystery ritual at all. And, finally, the form of the taurobolium, which is supposed to be the most striking analogy that can be cited, is so foreign to the New Testament rite as to make the idea of the derivation of the latter from the former seem utterly ridiculous. These heathen purifications have very little in common, even in their external form, with our Christian baptism. Moreover, it is a well established fact that the mystery religions did not make their appearance in the Roman Empire before the days of Paul.

2. AMONG THE JEWS. The Jews had many ceremonial purifications and washings, but these had no sacramental character, and therefore were no signs and seals of the covenant. The so-called baptism of proselytes bore a greater resemblance to Christian baptism. When Gentiles were incorporated in Israel, they were circumcized and, at least in later times, also baptized. It has long been a debatable question, whether this custom was in vogue before the destruction of Jerusalem, but Schuerer has shown conclusively by quotations from the Mishna that it was. According to the Jewish authorities quoted by Wall in his History of Infant Baptism, this baptism had to be administered in the presence of two or three witnesses. Children of parents who received this baptism, if born before the rite was administered, were also baptized, at the request of the father as long as they were not of age (the boys thirteen and the girls twelve), but if they were of age, only at their own request. Children who were born after the baptism of the parent or parents, were accounted as clean and therefore did not need baptism. It seems, however, that this baptism was also merely a sort of ceremonial washing, somewhat in line with the other purifications. It is sometimes said that the baptism of John was derived from this baptism of proselytes, but it is quite clear that this was not the case. Whatever historical relation there may have existed between the two, it is quite evident that the baptism of John was pregnant with new and more spiritual meanings. Lambert is quite correct when he, in speaking of the Jewish lustrations, says: "Their purpose was, by removing a ceremonial defilement, to restore a man to his normal position within the ranks of the Jewish community; John’s baptism, on the other hand, aimed at transferring those who submitted to it into an altogether new sphere — the sphere of definite preparation for the

approaching Kingdom of God. But above all, the difference lay in this, that John's baptism could never be regarded as a mere ceremony; it was always vibrant through and through with ethical meaning. A cleansing of the heart from sin was not only its preliminary condition, but its constant aim and purpose. And by the searching and incisive preaching with which he accompanied it, John kept it from sinking, as it would otherwise have tended to do, to the level of a mere opus operatum."39

Another question that calls for consideration, is that of the relation of the baptism of John to that of Jesus. The Roman Catholic Church in the Canons of Trent 40 curses those who say that the baptism of John equalled that of Jesus in efficacy, and regards it, along with the Old Testament sacraments, as purely typical. It claims that those who were baptized by John did not receive real baptismal grace in this baptism, and were at a later time re-baptized, or, more correctly expressed, baptized for the first time in the Christian manner. The older Lutheran theologians maintained that the two were identical as far as purpose and efficacy were concerned, while some of the later ones rejected what they considered to be a complete and essential identity of the two. Something similar may be said of Reformed theologians. The older theologians generally identified the two baptisms, while those of a more recent date direct attention to certain differences. John himself would seem to call attention to a point of difference in Matthew 3:11. Some also find a proof for the essential difference of the two in Acts 19:1-6, which, according to them, records a case in which some, who were baptized by John, were re-baptized. But this interpretation is subject to doubt. It would seem to be correct to say that the two are essentially identical, though differing in some points. The baptism of John, like the Christian baptism, (a) was instituted by God Himself, Matthew 21:25; John 1:33; (b) was connected with a radical change of life, Luke 1:1-17; John 1:20-30; (c) stood in sacramental relation to the forgiveness of sins, Matthew 3:7-8; Mark 1:4'; Luke 3:3 (comp. Acts 2:28) and (d) employed the same material element, namely, water. At the same time there were several points of difference: (a) the baptism of John still belonged to the old dispensation, and as such pointed forward to Christ; (b) in harmony with the dispensation of the law in general, it stressed the necessity of repentance, though not entirely to the exclusion of faith; (c) it was intended for the Jews only, and therefore represented the Old Testament particularism rather than the New Testament universalism; and (d) since the Holy Spirit had not yet been poured out in pentecostal fulness, it was not yet accompanied with as great a measure of spiritual gifts as the later Christian baptism.

B. THE INSTITUTION OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM.

1. IT WAS INSTITUTED WITH DIVINE AUTHORITY. Baptism was instituted by Christ after He had finished the work of reconciliation and this had received the approval of the Father in the resurrection. It is worthy of notice that He prefaced the great commission with the words, "All authority hath been given unto me in heaven and on earth." Clothed with the fulness of that mediatorial authority, He instituted Christian baptism and thus made it binding for all following generations. The great commission is couched in the following words: "Go ye therefore (that is, because all nations are made subject to Me), and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit: teaching them to observe whatsoever I have commanded you." Matthew 28:19-20. The complementary form in Mark 16:15-16 reads as follows: "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to the whole creation. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned." Thus the following

elements are clearly indicated in this authoritative command: (a) The disciples were to go out into the whole world and to preach the gospel to all nations, in order to bring people to repentance and to the acknowledgment of Jesus as the promised Saviour. (b) They who accepted Christ by faith were to be baptized in the name of the triune God, as a sign and seal of the fact that they had entered into a new relation to God and as such were obliged to live according to the laws of the Kingdom of God. (c) They were to be brought under the ministry of the Word, not merely as a proclamation of the good news, but as an exposition of the mysteries, the privileges, and the duties, of the new covenant. For the encouragement of the disciples Jesus adds the words, "And lo, I (who am clothed with the authority to give this commandment) am with you always, even unto the end of the world."

2. THE BAPTISMAL FORMULA. The apostles were specifically instructed to baptize eis to onoma tou patros kai tou huiou kai tou hagiou pneumatos (into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit). The Vulgate rendered the first words " eis to onoma " by the Latin "in nomine" (in the name), a rendering followed by Luther's "im namen." The words are thus made to mean "on the authority of the triune God." Robertson gives this as their meaning in his Grammar of the Greek New Testament, p. 649, but fails to give any proof for it. The fact is that this interpretation is exegetically untenable. The idea of "on the authority of" is expressed by the phrase en toi onomati or the shorter one en onomati, Matthew 21:9; Mark 16:17; Luke 10:17; John 14:26; Acts 3:6; Acts 9:27, etc. The preposition eis (into) is indicative rather of an end, and may therefore be interpreted to mean "in relation to," or "into the profession of faith in one and sincere obedience to one." It is quite in harmony with this when Allen says in his commentary on Matthew: "The person baptized was symbolically introduced 'into the name of Christ,' that is, became His disciple, that is, entered into a state of allegiance to Him and fellowship with Him." This is the meaning given by Thayer, Robinson, and, substantially, also by Cremer- Koegel and Baljon, in their Lexicons. It is also that adopted by the commentators, such as Meyer, Alford, Allen, Bruce, Grosheide, and Van Leeuwen. This meaning of the term is fully borne out by such parallel expressions as eis ton Mousen, 1 Corinthians 10:2; eis to onoma Paulou, 1 Corinthians 1:13; eis hen soma, 1 Corinthians 12:13; and eis Christon Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27. Dr. Kuyper's argument touching this point is found in Uit het Woord, Eerste Serie, Eerste Bundel.41 It would seem that we should translate the preposition eis by "into" or "to" (that is, "in relation to'") the name. The word onoma (name) is used in the sense of the Hebrew shem as indicative of all the qualities by which God makes Himself known, and which constitute the sum total of all that He is for His worshippers. Deissman in his Bible Studies42 refers to interesting examples of this particular use of the word onoma in the papyri. Interpreted in this light, the baptismal formula indicates that by baptism (that is, by that which is signified in baptism) the recipient is placed in a special relationship to the divine self-revelation, or to God as He has revealed Himself and revealed what He will be for His people, and at the same time becomes duty bound to live up to the light of that revelation.

It is not necessary to assume that, when Jesus employed these words, He intended them as a formula to be used ever after. He merely used them as descriptive of the character of the baptism which He instituted, just as similar expressions serve to characterize other baptisms, Acts 19:3; 1 Corinthians 1:13; 1 Corinthians 10:2; 1 Corinthians 12:13. It is sometimes said with an appeal to such passages as Acts 2:4-8; Acts 8:16; Acts 10:48; Acts 19:5, and also Romans 6:3, and Galatians 3:27, that the apostles evidently did not use the trinitarian formula; but this is not

necessarily implied, though it is entirely possible since they did not understand the words of Jesus in the great commission as prescribing a definite formula. It is also possible, however, that the expressions used in the passages indicated served to stress certain particulars respecting the baptism of the apostles. It should be noted that the prepositions differ. Acts 2:38 speaks of a baptism epi toi onomati Jesou Christou, which probably refers to a baptism on the confession of Jesus as the Messiah. According to Acts 10:48 those who were present in the house of Cornelius were baptized en onomati Jesou Christou, to indicate that they were baptized on the authority of Jesus. All the remaining passages mention a baptism eis to onoma Jesou Christou (or tou kuriou Jesou), or simply a baptism eis Christon. These expressions may simply serve to stress the fact that the recipients were brought into special relationship to Jesus Christ, whom the apostles were preaching, and were thereby made subject to Him as their Lord. But whatever may have been the practice in the apostolic age, it is quite evident that when the Church later on felt the need of a formula, it could find no better than that contained in the words of the institution. This formula was already in use when the Didache (The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles) was written (c. 100 A.D.).43 C. THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISM IN HISTORY.

1. BEFORE THE REFORMATION. The early Fathers regarded baptism as the rite of initiation into the Church, and usually considered it as closely connected with the forgiveness of sins and the communication of the new life. Some of their expressions would seem to indicate that they believed in baptismal regeneration. At the same time it should be noted that in the case of adults they did not regard baptism as efficacious apart from the right disposition of the soul, and they did not consider baptism as absolutely essential to the initiation of the new life, but rather looked upon it as the completing element in the process of renewal. Infant baptism was already current in the days of Origen and Tertullian, though the latter discouraged it on the grounds of expediency. The general opinion was that baptism should never be repeated, but there was no unanimity as to the validity of baptism administered by heretics. In course of time, however, it became a fixed principle not to re-baptize those who were baptized into the name of the triune God. The mode of baptism was not in dispute. From the second century on the idea gradually gained ground that baptism works more or less magically. Even Augustine seems to have considered baptism as effective ex opere operato in the case of children. He regarded baptism as absolutely necessary and held that unbaptized children are lost. According to him baptism cancels original guilt, but does not wholly remove the corruption of nature. The Scholastics at first shared Augustine’s view, that in the case of adults baptism presupposes faith, but gradually another idea gained the upper hand, namely, that baptism is always effective ex opere operato. The importance of subjective conditions was minimized. Thus the characteristic Roman Catholic conception of the sacrament, according to which baptism is the sacrament of regeneration and of initiation into the Church, gradually gained the upper hand. It contains the grace which it signifies and confers this on all those who put no obstacle in the way. This grace was regarded as very important, since (a) it sets an indelible mark on the recipient as a member of the Church; (b) delivers from the guilt of original sin and of all actual sins committed up to the time of baptism, removes the pollution of sin, though concupiscence remains, and sets man free from eternal punishment and from all positive temporal punishments; (c) works spiritual renewal by the infusion of sanctifying grace and of the supernatural virtues of faith, hope, and love; and (d) incorporates the recipient into the communion of the saints and into the visible Church.

2. SINCE THE REFORMATION. The Lutheran Reformation did not entirely rid itself of the Roman Catholic conception of the sacraments. Luther did not regard the water in baptism as common water, but as a water which had become, through the Word with its inherent divine power, a gracious water of life, a washing of regeneration. Through this divine efficacy of the Word the sacrament effects regeneration. In the case of adults Luther made the effect of baptism dependent on faith in the recipient. Realizing that he could not consider it so in the case of children, who cannot exercise faith, he at one time held that God by His prevenient grace works faith in the unconscious child, but later on professed ignorance on this point. Later Lutheran theologians retained the idea of an infant-faith as a precondition for baptism, while others conceived of baptism as producing such a faith immediately. This in some cases led on to the idea that the sacrament works ex opere operato. Anabaptists cut the Gordian knot of Luther by denying the legitimacy of infant baptism. They insisted on baptizing all applicants for admission to their circle, who had received the sacrament in infancy, and did not regard this as a re-baptism, but as the first true baptism. With them children had no standing in the Church. Calvin and Reformed theology proceeded on the assumption that baptism is instituted for believers, and does not work but strengthens the new life. They were naturally confronted with the question as to how infants could be regarded as believers, and how they could be strengthened spiritually, seeing that they could not yet exercise faith. Some simply pointed out that infants born of believing parents are children of the covenant, and as such heirs of the promises of God, including also the promise of regeneration; and that the spiritual efficacy of baptism is not limited to the time of its administration, but continues through life. The Belgic Confession also expresses that idea in these words: "Neither does this baptism avail us only at the time when water is poured upon us, and received by us, but also through the whole course of our life."44 Others went beyond this position and maintained that the children of the covenant were to be regarded as presumptively regenerated. This is not equivalent to saying that they are all regenerated, when they are presented for baptism, but that they are assumed to be regenerated until the contrary appears from their lives. There were also a few who regarded baptism as nothing more than the sign of an external covenant. Under the influence of Socinians, Arminians, Anabaptists, and Rationalists, it has become quite customary in many circles to deny that baptism is a seal of divine grace, and to regard it as a mere act of profession on the part of man. In our day many professing Christians have completely lost the consciousness of the spiritual significance of baptism. It has become a mere formality.

D. THE PROPER MODE OF BAPTISM.

Baptists are at variance with the rest of the Christian world in their position that dipping or immersion, followed by emersion, is the only proper mode of baptism; and that this mode is absolutely essential to baptism, because this rite is intended to symbolize the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and the consequent death and resurrection of the subject of baptism with Him. Two questions arise, therefore, and it is best to consider them in the following order: (1) What is the essential thing in the symbolism of baptism? and (2) Is immersion the only proper mode of baptism? This order is preferable, because the former question is the more important of the two, and because the answer to the second will depend in part on that given to the first.

1. WHAT IS THE ESSENTIAL THING IN THE SYMBOLISM OF BAPTISM? According to the Baptists immersion, followed by emersion, is the essential thing in the symbolism of baptism. A

surrender of this would be equivalent to giving up baptism itself. The real baptismal idea, they say, is expressed in the going down into, and the coming up out of, the water. That such an immersion naturally involves a certain washing or purification, is something purely accidental. Baptism would be baptism even if one were immersed in something that has no cleansing properties. They base their opinion on Mark 10:38-39; Luke 12:50; Romans 6:3-4; Colossians 2:12. But the first two passages merely express the idea that Christ would be overwhelmed by His coming sufferings, and do not speak of the sacrament of baptism at all. The last two are the only ones that really have any bearing on the matter, and even these are not to the point, for they do not speak directly of any baptism with water at all, but of the spiritual baptism thereby represented. They represent regeneration under the figure of a dying and a rising again. It is certainly perfectly obvious that they do not make mention of baptism as an emblem of Christ's death and resurrection. If baptism were represented here at all as an emblem, it would be as an emblem of the believer's dying and rising again. And since this is only a figurative way of representing his regeneration, it would make baptism a figure of a figure.

Reformed theology has an entirely different conception of the essential thing in the symbolism of baptism. It finds this in the idea of purification. The Heidelberg Catechism asks in Question 69: "How is it signified and sealed unto you in holy baptism that you have a part in the one sacrifice of Christ on the cross?" And it answers: "Thus, that Christ has appointed the outward washing with water and added the promise that I am washed with His blood and Spirit from the pollution of my soul, that is, from all my sins, as certainly as I am washed outwardly with water, by which the filthiness of the body is commonly washed away." This idea of purification was the pertinent thing in all the washings of the Old Testament, and also in the baptism of John, Psalms 51:7; Ezekiel 36:25; John 3:25-26. And we may assume that in this respect the baptism of Jesus was entirely in line with previous baptisms. If He had intended the baptism which He instituted as a symbol of something entirely different, He would have indicated this very clearly, in order to obviate all possible misunderstanding. Moreover, Scripture makes it abundantly clear that baptism symbolizes spiritual cleansing or purification, Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; Romans 6:4 f.; 1 Corinthians 6:11; Titus 3:5; Hebrews 10:22; 1 Peter 3:21; Revelation 1:5. This is exactly the point on which the Bible places all emphasis, while it never represents the going down and coming up as something essential.

2. IS IMMERSION THE ONLY PROPER MODE OF BAPTISM? The generally prevailing opinion outside of Baptist circles is that, as long as the fundamental idea, namely, that of purification, finds expression in the rite, the mode of baptism is quite immaterial. It may be administered by immersion, by pouring or effusion, or by sprinkling. The Bible simply uses a generic word to denote an action designed to produce a certain effect, namely, cleansing or purification, but nowhere determines the specific mode in which the effect is to be produced. Jesus did not prescribe a certain mode of baptism. He evidently did not attach as much importance to it as the Baptists do. Neither do the Biblical examples of baptism stress any particular mode. There is not a single case in which we are explicitly told just how baptism was administered. The Baptists assert, however, that the Lord did command baptism by immersion, and that all those who administer it in a different way are acting in open disobedience to His authority. To prove their assertion, they appeal to the words bapto and baptizo, which are used in Scripture for "to baptize." The second word seems to be an intensive or frequentative form of the first, though in general usage the distinction does not

always hold. Bapto is frequently used in the Old Testament, but occurs in the New Testament only four times, namely, in Luke 16:24; John 13:26; Revelation 19:13, and in these cases does not refer to Christian baptism. Baptists were very confident at one time that this verb means only "to dip"; but many of them have changed their mind since Carson, one of their greatest authorities, came to the conclusion that it also has a secondary meaning, namely, "to dye," so that it came to mean "to dye by dipping," and even, "to dye in any manner," in which case it ceased to be expressive of mode.45 The question further arose, whether baptizo, which is used 76 times, and which is the word employed by the Lord in the words of the institution, was derived from bapto in its primary or in its secondary meaning. And Dr. Carson answers that it is derived from bapto in the sense of "to dip." Says he: " Bapto, the root, I have shown to possess two meanings, and two only, 'to dip' and 'to dye.' Baptizo, I have asserted, has but one signification. It has been founded on the primary meaning of the root, and has never admitted the secondary.... My position is, that it always signifies to dip; never expressing anything but mode."46 The Baptists must maintain this, if they want to prove that the Lord commanded baptism by immersion. But the facts, as they appear in both classical and New Testament Greek, do not warrant this position. Even Dr. Gale, who was perhaps the most learned author who sought to maintain it, felt constrained by the facts to modify it. Wilson in his splendid work on Infant Baptism, which is partly a reply to the work of Dr. Carson, quotes Gale as saying: "The word baptizo perhaps does not so necessarily express the action of putting under water, as in general a thing's being in that condition, no matter how it comes to be so, whether it is put into the water, or the water comes over it; though, indeed, to put into the water is the most natural way and the most common, and is, therefore, usually and pretty constantly, but it may be not necessarily, implied."47 Wilson shows conclusively that, according to Greek usage, baptism is effected in various ways. Says he: "Let the baptizing element encompass its object, and in the case of liquids, whether this relative state has been produced by immersion, effusion, overwhelming, or in any other mode, Greek usage recognizes it as a valid baptism." He further goes on to show in detail that it is impossible to maintain the position that the word baptizo always signifies immersion in the New Testament.48

It is quite evident that both words, bapto and baptizo, had other meanings, such as "to wash," "to bathe," and to "purify by washing." The idea of washing or purification gradually became the prominent idea, while that of the manner in which this took place retired more and more into the background. That this purification was sometimes effected by sprinkling, is evident from Numbers 8:7; Numbers 19:13; Numbers 19:18-20; Psalms 51:7; Ezekiel 36:25; Hebrews 9:10. In Jdt 12:7 and Mark 7:3-4 we cannot possibly think of dipping. Neither is this possible in connection with the following passages of the New Testament: Matthew 3:11; Luke 11:37-38; Luke 12:50; Romans 6:3; 1 Corinthians 12:13; Hebrews 9:10 (cf. Hebrews 9:13-14, Hebrews 9:9, Hebrews 9:21); 1 Corinthians 10:1-2. Since the word baptizo does not necessarily mean "to immerse," and because the New Testament does not in any case explicitly assert that baptism took place by immersion, the burden of proof would seem to rest on the Baptists. Was John the Baptist capable of the enormous task of immersing the multitudes that flocked unto him at the river Jordan, or did he simply pour water on them as some of the early inscriptions would seem to indicate? Did the apostles find enough water in Jerusalem, and did they have the necessary facilities, to baptize three thousand in a single day by immersion? Where is the evidence to prove that they followed any other method than the Old Testament mode of baptisms? Does Acts 9:18 indicate in any way that Paul left the place where Ananias found him, to be immersed in some pool or river? Does not

the account of the baptism of Cornelius create the impression that water was to be brought and that those present were baptized right in the house? Acts 10:47-48. Is there any evidence that the jailor at Philippi was not baptized in or near the prison, but led his prisoners out to the river, in order that he might be immersed? Would he have dared to take them outside of the city, when he was commanded to keep them safely? Acts 16:22-33. Even the account of the baptism of the eunuch, Acts 8:36; Acts 8:38, which is often regarded as the strongest Scriptural proof for baptism by immersion, cannot be regarded as conclusive evidence. A careful study of Luke's use of the preposition eis shows that he used it not only in the sense of into but also in the sense of to so that it is entirely possible to read the relevant statement in verse 38 as follows: "and they both went down to the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him." And even if the words were intended to convey the idea that they went down into the water, this does not yet prove the point, for according to pictorial representations of the early centuries they who were baptized by effusion often stood in the water. It is entirely possible, of course, that in the apostolic age some were baptized by immersion, but the fact that the New Testament nowhere insists on this proves that it was not essential. Immersion is a proper mode of baptism, but so is baptism by effusion or by sprinkling, since they all symbolize purification. The passages referred to in the preceding prove that many Old Testament washings (baptizings) took place by sprinkling. In a prophecy respecting the spiritual renewal of the New Testament day the Lord says: "And I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean," Ezekiel 36:25. The matter signified in baptism, namely, the purifying Spirit, was poured out upon the Church, Joel 2:28-29; Acts 2:4; Acts 2:33. And the writer of Hebrews speaks of his readers as having their hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, Hebrews 10:22.

E. THE LAWFUL ADMINISTRATORS OF BAPTISM.

Roman Catholics consider baptism absolutely essential to salvation; and because they regard it as cruel to make the salvation of anyone dependent on the accidental presence or absence of a priest, they also in cases of emergency permit baptism by others, particularly by midwives. In spite of the contrary view of Cyprian, they recognize the baptism of heretics, unless their heresy involves a denial of the Trinity. The Reformed Churches always acted on the principle that the administration of the Word and of the sacraments belong together, and that therefore the teaching elder or the minister is the only lawful administrator of baptism. The Word and the sacrament are joined together in the words of the institution. And because baptism is not a private matter, but an ordinance of the Church, they also hold that it should be administered in the public assembly of believers. They have generally recognized the baptism of other Churches, not excluding the Roman Catholics, and also of the various sects, except in the case of Churches and sects which denied the Trinity. Thus they refused to honour the baptism of the Socinians and of the Unitarians. In general, they considered a baptism as valid which was administered by a duly accredited minister and in the name of the triune God.

F. THE PROPER SUBJECTS OF BAPTISM.

Baptism is intended only for properly qualified rational beings, namely, for believers and their children. Rome loses sight of this in so far as it applies the sacrament also to clocks, buildings, and so on. There are two classes to which it should be applied, namely, adults and infants.

1. ADULT BAPTISM. In the case of adults baptism must be preceded by a profession of faith, Mark 16:16; Acts 2:41; Acts 8:37 (not found in some MSS.); Acts 16:31-33. Therefore the Church insists on such a profession before baptizing adults. And when such a profession is made, this is accepted by the Church at its face value, unless she has good objective reasons for doubting its veracity. It does not belong to her province to pry into the secrets of the heart and thus to pass on the genuineness of such a profession. The responsibility rests on the person who makes it. The method of prying into the inner condition of the heart, in order to determine the genuineness of one's profession, is Labadistic and not in harmony with the practice of the Reformed Churches. Since baptism is not merely a sign and seal, but also a means of grace, the question arises as to the nature of the grace wrought by it. This question is raised here only with respect to adult baptism. In view of the fact that according to our Reformed conception, this baptism presupposes regeneration, faith, conversion, and justification, these surely are not to be conceived as wrought by it. In this respect we differ from the Church of Rome. Even the Lutherans, who ascribe greater power to baptism as a means of grace than the Reformed do, agree with the latter on this point. Neither does baptism work a special sacramental grace, consisting in this that the recipient is implanted into the body of Jesus Christ. The believer's incorporation into mystical union with Christ is also presupposed. Word and sacrament work exactly the same kind of grace, except that the Word, in distinction from the sacrament, is also instrumental in the origination of faith. The sacrament of baptism strengthens faith, and because faith plays an important part in all the other operations of divine grace, these are also greatly benefited by it. Baptism represents primarily an act of the grace of God, but because the professing Christian must voluntarily submit to it, it can also be considered from the side of man. There is in it an offer and gift of God, but also an acceptance on the part of man. Consequently, baptism also signifies that man accepts the covenant and assumes its obligations. It is a seal, not merely of an offered, but of an offered and accepted, that is, of a concluded covenant.

2. INFANT BAPTISM. It is on the point of infant baptism that the most important difference is found between us and the Baptists. The latter hold, as Dr. Hovey, a Baptist author, expresses it, "that only believers in Christ are entitled to baptism, and that only those who give credible evidence of faith in Him should be baptized." This means that children are excluded from the sacrament. In all other denominations, however, they receive it. Several points call for consideration in connection with this subject. a. The Scriptural basis for infant baptism. It may be said at the outset that there is no explicit command in the Bible to baptize children, and that there is not a single instance in which we are plainly told that children were baptized. But this does not necessarily make infant baptism un-Biblical. The Scriptural ground for it is found in the following data:

(1) The covenant made with Abraham was primarily a spiritual covenant, though it also had a national aspect, and of this spiritual covenant circumcision was a sign and seal. It is an unwarranted procedure of the Baptists to split this covenant up into two of three different covenants. The Bible refers to the covenant with Abraham several times, but always in the singular, Exodus 2:24; Leviticus 26:42; 2 Kings 13:23; 1 Chronicles 16:16; Psalms 105:9. There is not a single exception to this rule. The spiritual nature of this covenant is proved by the manner in which its promises are interpreted in the New Testament, Romans 4:16-18; 2 Corinthians 6:16-18; Galatians 3:8-9; Galatians 3:14; Galatians 3:16; Hebrews 8:10; Hebrews 11:9-10; Hebrews 11:13. It also follows from the fact that circumcision was clearly a rite that had spiritual significance,

Deuteronomy 10:16; Deuteronomy 30:6; Jeremiah 4:4; Jeremiah 9:25-26; Acts 15:1; Romans 2:26-29; Romans 4:11; Php 3:2; and from the fact that the promise of the covenant is even called "the gospel," Galatians 3:8.

(2) This covenant is still in force and is essentially identical with the "new covenant" of the present dispensation. The unity and continuity of the covenant in both dispensations follows from the fact that the Mediator is the same, Acts 4:12; Acts 10:43; Acts 15:10-11; Galatians 3:16; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 Peter 1:9-12; the condition is the same, namely, faith, Genesis 1:1-6; (Romans 4:3); Psalms 32:10; Hebrews 2:4; Acts 10:43; Hebrews 11:1-40; and the blessings are the same, namely, justification, Psalms 32:1-2; Psalms 32:5; Isaiah 1:18; Romans 4:9; Galatians 3:6, regeneration, Deuteronomy 30:6; Psalms 51:10, spiritual gifts, Joel 2:28; Joel 2:32; Acts 2:17-21; Isaiah 40:31, and eternal life, Hebrews 11:10. Peter gave those who were under conviction on the day of Pentecost the assurance that the promise was unto them and to their children, Acts 2:39. Paul argues in Romans 4:13-18; Galatians 3:13-18 that the giving of the law did not make the promise of none effect, so that it still holds in the new dispensation. And the writer of Hebrews points out that the promise to Abraham was confirmed with an oath, so that New Testament believers may derive comfort from its immutability, Hebrews 6:13-18.

(3) By the appointment of God infants shared in the benefits of the covenant, and therefore received circumcision as a sign and seal. According to the Bible the covenant is clearly an organic concept, and its realization moves along organic and historical lines. There is a people or nation of God, an organic whole such as could only be constituted by families. This national idea is naturally very prominent in the Old Testament, but the striking thing is that it did not disappear when the nation of Israel had served its purpose. It was spiritualized and thus carried over into the New Testament, so that the New Testament people of God are also represented as a nation, Matthew 21:43; Romans 9:25-26 (comp. Hosea 2:23); 2 Corinthians 6:16; Titus 2:14; 1 Peter 2:9. Infants were considered during the old dispensation as an integral part of Israel as the people of God. They were present when the covenant was renewed, Deuteronomy 29:10, Deuteronomy 29:13; Joshua 8:35; 2 Chronicles 20:13, had a standing in the congregation of Israel, and were therefore present in their religious assemblies, 2 Chronicles 20:13; Joel 2:16. In view of such rich promises as those in Isaiah 54:13; Jeremiah 31:34; Joel 2:28 we would hardly expect the privileges of such children to be reduced in the new dispensation, and certainly would not look for their exclusion from any standing in the Church. Jesus and the apostles did not exclude them, Matthew 19:14; Acts 2:39; 1 Corinthians 7:14. Such an exclusion would seem to require a very explicit statement to that effect.

(4) In the new dispensation baptism is by divine authority substituted for circumcision as the initiatory sign and seal of the covenant of grace. Scripture strongly insists on it that circumcision can no more serve as such, Acts 15:1-2; Acts 21:21; Galatians 2:3-5; Galatians 5:2-6; Galatians 6:12-13; Galatians 6:15. If baptism did not take its place, then the New Testament has no initiatory rite. But Christ clearly substituted it as such, Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16. It corresponds with circumcision in spiritual meaning. As circumcision referred to the cutting away of sin and to a change of heart, Deuteronomy 10:16; Deuteronomy 32:6; Jeremiah 4:4; Jeremiah 9:25-26; Ezekiel 44:7; Ezekiel 44:9, so baptism refers to the washing away of sin, Acts 2:38; 1 Peter 3:21; Titus 3:5, and to spiritual renewal, Romans 6:4; Colossians 2:11-12. The last passage clearly links up circumcision with baptism, and teaches that the Christ-circumcision, that is, circumcision of the

heart, signified by circumcision in the flesh, was accomplished by baptism, that is, by that which baptism signifies. Cf. also Galatians 3:27; Galatians 3:29. But if children received the sign and seal of the covenant in the old dispensation, the presumption is that they surely have a right to receive it in the new, to which the pious of the Old Testament were taught to look forward as a much fuller and richer dispensation. Their exclusion from it would require a clear and unequivocal statement to that effect, but quite the contrary is found, Matthew 19:14; Acts 2:39; 1 Corinthians 7:14.

(5) As was pointed out in the preceding, the New Testament contains no direct evidence for the practice of infant baptism in the days of the apostles. Lambert, after considering and weighing all the available evidence, expresses his conclusion in the following words: "The New Testament evidence, then, seems to point to the conclusion that infant baptism, to say the least, was not the general custom of the apostolic age."49 But it need not surprise anyone that there is no direct mention of the baptism of infants, for in a missionary period like the apostolic age the emphasis would naturally fall on the baptism of adults. Moreover, conditions were not always favorable to infant baptism. Converts would not at once have a proper conception of their covenant duties and responsibilities. Sometimes only one of the parents was converted, and it is quite conceivable that the other would oppose the baptism of the children. Frequently there was no reasonable assurance that the parents would educate their children piously and religiously, and yet such assurance was necessary. At the same time the language of the New Testament is perfectly consistent with a continuation of the organic administration of the covenant, which required the circumcision of children, Matthew 19:14; Mark 10:13-16; Acts 2:39; 1 Corinthians 7:14. Moreover, the New Testament repeatedly speaks of the baptism of households, and gives no indication that this is regarded as something out of the ordinary, but rather refers to it as a matter of course, Acts 16:15; Acts 16:33; 1 Corinthians 1:16. It is entirely possible, of course, but not very probable, that none of these households contained children. And if there were infants, it is morally certain that they were baptized along with the parents. The New Testament certainly contains no evidence that persons born and reared in Christian families may not be baptized until they have come to years of discretion and have professed their faith in Christ. There is not the slightest allusion to any such practice.

(6) Wall in the introduction to his History of Infant Baptism points out that in the baptism of proselytes children of proselytes were often baptized along with their parents; but Edersheim says that there was a difference of opinion on this point.50 Naturally, even if this did happen, it would prove nothing so far as Christian baptism is concerned, but it would go to show that there was nothing strange in such a procedure. The earliest historical reference to infant baptism is found in writings of the last half of the second century. The Didache speaks of adult, but not of infant baptism; and while Justin makes mention of women who became disciples of Christ from childhood (ek paidon), this passage does not mention baptism, and ek paidon does not necessarily mean infancy. Irenæus, speaking of Christ, says: "He came to save through means of Himself all who through Him are born again unto God, infants, and little children, and boys, and youths, and old men."51 This passage, though it does not explicitly mention baptism, is generally regarded as the earliest reference to infant baptism, since the early Fathers so closely associated baptism with regeneration that they used the term "regeneration" for "baptism." That infant baptism was quite generally practiced in the latter part of the second century, is evident from the writings of Tertullian, though he himself considered it safer and more profitable to delay baptism.52 Origen

speaks of it as a tradition of the apostles. Says he: "For this also it was, that the Church had from the apostles a tradition (or, order) to give baptism even to infants."53 The Council of Carthage (A.D. 253) takes infant baptism for granted and discusses simply the question, whether they may be baptized before the eighth day. From the second century on, infant baptism is regularly recognized, though it was sometimes neglected in practice. Augustine inferred from the fact that it was generally practiced by the Church throughout the world in spite of the fact that it was not instituted in Councils, that it was in all probability settled by the authority of the apostles. Its legitimacy was not denied until the days of the Reformation, when the Anabaptists opposed it. b. Objections to infant baptism. A few of the more important objections to infant baptism call for brief consideration.

(1) Circumcision was merely a carnal and typical ordinance, and as such was destined to pass away. To put baptism in the place of circumcision, is simply to continue the carnal ordinance. Such carnal ordinances have no legitimate place in the New Testament Church. In our day this objection is raised by some dispensationalists, such as Bullinger and O'Hair, who claim that the baptism instituted by Jesus is connected with the Kingdom, and that only the baptism of the Spirit has a proper place in the Church. The book of Acts marks the transition from water-baptism to Spirit-baptism. Naturally, this argument would prove all baptism, adult as well as infant, illegitimate. In this representation of the matter the Jewish and Christian dispensations are placed over against each other as carnal and spiritual, and circumcision is said to belong to the former. But this argument is fallacious. There is no warrant for placing circumcision altogether on a level with the carnal ordinances of the Mosaic law. Says Bannerman: "Circumcision was independent either of the introduction or abolition of the law of Moses; and would have continued the standing ordinance for admission into the Church of God as the seal of the covenant of grace, had not baptism been expressly appointed as a substitute for it."54 It may be admitted that circumcision did acquire a certain typical significance in the Mosaic period, but it was primarily a sign and seal of the covenant already made with Abraham. In so far as it was a type it naturally ceased with the appearance of the antitype, and even as a seal of the covenant it made way for an unbloody sacrament expressly instituted by Christ for the Church, and recognized as such by the apostles, since Christ had put an end once for all to the shedding of blood in connection with the work of redemption. In the light of Scripture the position is entirely untenable, that baptism is connected with the Kingdom rather than with the Church, and is therefore Jewish rather than Christian. The words of the institution themselves condemn this view, and so does the fact that on the birthday of the New Testament Church Peter required of those who were added to it that they should be baptized. And if it be said that Peter, being a Jew, still followed the example of John the Baptist, it may be pointed out that Paul, the apostle of the Gentiles, also required that his converts be baptized, Acts 18:8; 1 Corinthians 1:16.

There is no explicit command that children must be baptized. This is perfectly true, but does not disprove the validity of infant baptism. It should be observed that this objection is based on a canon of interpretation to which the Baptists themselves are not true when they hold that Christians are in duty bound to celebrate the first day of the week as their Sabbath, and that women must also partake of the Lord's Supper; for these are things not explicitly commanded. May not the silence of Scripture be construed for, rather than against, infant baptism? For twenty centuries children had been formally initiated into the Church, and the New Testament does not

say that this must now cease, though it does teach that circumcision can no more serve for this purpose. The Lord Himself instituted another rite, and on the day of Pentecost Peter says to those who joined the Church that the promise is unto them and to their children, and further to as many as the Lord Himself shall call. This statement of Peter at least proves that he still had the organic conception of the covenant in mind. Moreover, the question may be raised how the Baptist himself can prove the correctness of his own position by an express command of Scripture. Does the Bible anywhere command the exclusion of children from baptism? Does it command that all those who are born and reared in Christian families must profess their faith before they are baptized? Clearly, there are no such commands.

(3) A closely related objection is, that there is no example of infant baptism in the New Testament. It is perfectly true that the Bible does not explicitly say that children were baptized, though it does apprise us of the fact that the rite was administered to whole households. The absence of all definite references to infant baptism finds its explanation, at least to a large extent, in the fact that Scripture gives us a historical record of the missionary work of the apostles, but no such record of the work that was carried on in the organized churches. And here, too, the tables may be easily turned on the Baptist. Will he show us an example of the baptism of an adult who had been born and reared in a Christian home? There is no danger that he ever will.

(4) The most important objection to infant baptism raised by the Baptists, is that, according to Scripture, baptism is conditioned on an active faith revealing itself in a creditable profession. Now it is perfectly true that the Bible points to faith as a prerequisite for baptism, Mark 16:16; Acts 10:44-48; Acts 16:14-15; Acts 16:31; Acts 16:34. If this means that the recipient of baptism must in all cases give manifestations of an active faith before baptism, then children are naturally excluded. But though the Bible clearly indicates that only those adults who believed were baptized, it nowhere lays down the rule that an active faith is absolutely essential for the reception of baptism. Baptists refer us to the great commission, as it is found in Mark 16:15-16. In view of the fact that this is a missionary command, we may proceed on the assumption that the Lord had in mind an active faith in those words. And though it is not explicitly stated, it is altogether likely that He regarded this faith as a prerequisite for the baptism of the persons intended. But who are they? Evidently, the adults of the nations that were to be evangelized, and therefore the Baptist is not warranted in construing it as an argument against infant baptism. If he insists on doing this nevertheless, it should be pointed out that on his construction these words prove too much even for him, and therefore prove nothing. The words of our Saviour imply that faith is a prerequisite for the baptism of those who through the missionary efforts of the Church would be brought to Christ, and do not imply that it is also a prerequisite for the baptism of children. The Baptist generalizes this statement of the Saviour by teaching that it makes all baptism contingent on the active faith of the recipient. He argues as follows: Active faith is the prerequisite of baptism. Infants cannot exercise faith. Therefore infants may not be baptized. But in that way these words might also be construed into an argument against infant salvation, since they not only imply but explicitly state that faith (active faith) is the condition for salvation. To be consistent the Baptist would thus find himself burdened with the following syllogism: Faith is the conditio sine qua non of salvation. Children cannot yet exercise faith. Therefore children cannot be saved. But this is a conclusion from which the Baptist himself would shrink back. c. The ground for infant baptism.

(1) The position of our confessional standards. The Belgic Confession declares in Art. XXXIV that infants of believing parents "ought to be baptized and sealed with the sign of the covenant, as the children of Israel formerly were circumcized upon the same promises which are made to our children." The Heidelberg Catechism answers the question, "Are infants also to be baptized?" as follows: "Yes, for since they, as well as adults, are included in the covenant and Church of God, and since both redemption from sin and the Holy Spirit, the Author of faith, are through the blood of Christ promised to them no less than to adults, they must also by baptism, as a sign of the covenant, be ingrafted into the Christian Church, and distinguished from the children of unbelievers, as was done in the old covenant or testament by circumcision, instead of which baptism was instituted in the new covenant."55 And the Canons of Dort contain the following statement in I, Art. 17: "Since we are to judge of the will of God from His Word, which testifies that the children of believers are holy, not by nature, but in virtue of the covenant of grace, in which they together with their parents are comprehended, godly parents ought not to doubt the election and salvation of their children whom it pleases God to call out of this life in their infancy (Genesis 17:7; Acts 2:39; 1 Corinthians 7:14)." These statements of our confessional standards are entirely in line with the position of Calvin, that infants of believing parents, or those who have only one believing parent, are baptized on the basis of their covenant relationship.56 The same note is struck in our Form for the Baptism of Infants: "Since, then, baptism has come in the place of circumcision, the children should be baptized as heirs of the Kingdom of God and of His covenant." It will be observed that all these statements are based on the commandment of God to circumcize the children of the covenant, for in the last analysis that commandment is the ground of infant baptism. On the basis of our confessional standards it may be said that infants of believing parents are baptized on the ground that they are children of the covenant, and are as such heirs of the all-comprehensive covenant-promises of God, which include also the promise of the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit unto regeneration and sanctification. In the covenant God makes over to them a certain grant or donation in a formal and objective way, requires of them that they will in due time accept this by faith, and promises to make it a living reality in their lives by the operation of the Holy Spirit. And in view of this fact the Church must regard them as prospective heirs of salvation, must regard them as under obligation to walk in the way of the covenant, has the right to expect that, under a faithful covenant administration, they, speaking generally, will live in the covenant, and is in duty bound to regard them as covenant breakers, if they do not meet its requirements. It is only in this way that it does full justice to the promises of God, which must in all their fulness be appropriated in faith by those who come to maturity. Thus the covenant, including the covenant promises, constitutes the objective and legal ground for the baptism of children. Baptism is a sign and seal of all that is comprehended in the promises.

(2) Differences of opinion among Reformed theologians. Reformed theologians did not all agree in the past, and are not even now all unanimous, in their representation of the ground of infant baptism. Many theologians of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries took the position described in the preceding, namely, that infants of believers are baptized, because they are in the covenant and are as such heirs of the rich promises of God including a title, not only to regeneration, but also to all the blessings of justification and of the renewing and sanctifying influence of the Holy Spirit. Others, however, while recognizing the truth of this representation, were not wholly satisfied with it. They stressed the fact that baptism is something more than the seal of a promise, or even

of all the covenant promises; and that it is not merely the seal of a future good, but also of present spiritual possessions. The view became rather prevalent that baptism is administered to infants on the ground of presumptive regeneration. But even those who accepted this view did not all agree. Some combined this view with the other while others substituted it for the other. Some would proceed on the assumption that all the children presented for baptism are regenerated, while others would assume this only in connection with the elect children. The difference of opinion between those who believe that children of believers are baptized on the ground of their covenant relationship and of the covenant promise, and those who find this ground in presumptive regeneration persisted up to the present time and was the source of a lively controversy, especially in the Netherlands during the last period of the nineteenth, and the beginning of the twentieth, century. Dr. Kuyper at first spoke of presumptive regeneration as the ground of infant baptism, and many readily accepted this view. G. Kramer wrote his splendid thesis on Het Verband van Doop en Wedergeboorte especially in defense of this position. Later on Dr. Kuyper did not use this expression any more, and some of his followers felt the need of more careful discrimination and spoke of the covenant relationship as the legal, and presumptive regeneration as the spiritual ground of infant baptism. But even this is not a satisfactory position. Dr. Honig, who is also a disciple and admirer of Kuyper, is on the right track when he says in his recent Handboek van de Gereformeerde Dogmatiek57 "We do not baptize the children of believers on the ground of an assumption, but on the ground of a command and an act of God. Children must be baptized in virtue of the covenant of God" (translation mine). Presumptive regeneration naturally cannot be regarded as the legal ground of infant baptism; this can be found only in the covenant promise of God. Moreover, it cannot be the ground in any sense of the word, since the ground of baptism must be something objective, as the advocates of the view in question themselves are constrained to admit. If they are asked, why they assume the regeneration of children presented for baptism, they can only answer, Because they are born of believing parents, that is, because they are born in the covenant. Naturally, to deny that presumptive regeneration is the ground of infant baptism, is not equivalent to saying that it is entirely unwarranted to assume that infant children of believers are regenerated. This is a question that must be considered on its own merits.

It may be well to quote in this connection the first half of the fourth point of the Conclusions of Utrecht, which were adopted by our Church in 1908. We translate this as follows: "And, finally, as far as the fourth point, that of presumptive regeneration, is concerned, Synod declares that, according to the confession of our Churches, the seed of the covenant must, in virtue of the promise of God, be presumed to be regenerated and sanctified in Christ, until, as they grow up, the contrary appears from their life or doctrine; that it is, however, less correct to say that baptism is administered to the children of believers on the ground of their presumptive regeneration, since the ground of baptism is the command and the promise of God; and that further the judgment of charity, with which the Church presumes the seed of the covenant to be regenerated, by no means intends to say that therefore each child is really regenerated, since the Word of God teaches that they are not all Israel that are of Israel, and it is said of Isaac: in him shall thy seed be called (Romans 9:6-7), so that in preaching it is always necessary to insist on serious self-examination, since only those who shall have believed and have been baptized will be saved."58

(3) Objection to the view that children are baptized on the ground of their covenant relationship. It has been said that, if children are baptized on the ground that they are born in the covenant and

are therefore heirs of the promise, they are baptized on another ground than adults, since these are baptized on the ground of their faith or their profession of faith. But this is hardly correct, as Calvin already pointed out in his day. The great Reformer answered this objection effectively. The following is a translation of what Kramer says respecting Calvin's position on this point: "Calvin finds occasion here in connection with infant baptism, now that he has taken the standpoint of the covenant, to draw the line farther. Up to this point he has not called attention to the fact that adults too are baptized according to the rule of the covenant. And therefore it might seem that there was a difference between the baptism of adults and that of children. The adults to be baptized on the ground of their faith, infants, on the ground of the covenant of God. No, the Reformer declares, the only rule according to which, and the legal ground on which, the Church may administer baptism, is the covenant. This is true in the case of adults as well as in the case of children. That the former must first make a confession of faith and conversion, is due to the fact that they are outside of the covenant. In order to be admitted into the communion of the covenant, they must first learn the requirements of the covenant, and then faith and conversion open the way to the covenant."59 The very same opinion is expressed by Bavinck.60 This means that, after adults find entrance into the covenant by faith and conversion, they receive the sacrament of baptism on the ground of this covenant relationship. Baptism is also for them a sign and seal of the covenant. d. Infant baptism as a means of grace. Baptism is a sign and seal of the covenant of grace. It does not signify one thing and seal another, but sets the seal of God on that which it signifies. According to our confessional standards and our Form for the administration of baptism, it signifies the washing away of our sins, and this is but a brief expression for the removal of the guilt of sin in justification, and for the removal of the pollution of sin in sanctification, which is, however, imperfect in this life. And if this is what is signified, then it is also that which is sealed. And if it be said, as it is sometimes in our Reformed literature, that baptism seals the promise(s) of God, this does not merely mean that it vouches for the truth of the promise, but that it assures the recipients that they are the appointed heirs of the promised blessings. This does not necessarily mean that they are already in principle in possession of the promised good, though this is possible and may even be probable, but certainly means that they are appointed heirs and will receive the heritage, unless they show themselves unworthy of it and refuse it. Dabney calls attention to the fact that seals are often appended to promissory covenants, in which the bestowment of the promised good is conditional. But baptism is more than a sign and seal; it is as such also a means of grace. According to Reformed theology it is not, as the Roman Catholics claim, the means of initiating the work of grace in the heart, but it is a means for the strengthening of it or, as it is often expressed, for the increase of grace. This gives rise to a rather difficult question in connection with infant baptism. It can readily be seen how baptism can strengthen the work of faith in the adult recipient, but it is not so apparent how it can operate as a means of grace in the case of children who are entirely unconscious of the significance of baptism and cannot yet exercise faith. The difficulty, with which we are confronted here, naturally does not exist for the small number of Reformed scholars who deny that baptism merely strengthens an antecedent condition of grace, and claim that it "is a means for the impartation of grace in a specific form, and for the specific end of our regeneration and ingrafting in Christ."61 All the others must, of course, face the problem. Luther also wrestled with that problem. He made the efficacy of baptism dependent on the faith of the recipient; but when he reflected on the fact that infants cannot exercise faith, he was inclined to believe that God by His prevenient grace wrought an incipient faith in them through baptism; and,

finally, he referred the problem to the doctors of the Church. Reformed theologians solve the problem by calling attention to three things, which may be regarded as alternatives, but may also be combined. (1) It is possible to proceed on the assumption (not the certain knowledge) that the children offered for baptism are regenerated and are therefore in possession of the semen fidei (the seed of faith); and to hold that God through baptism in some mystical way, which we do not understand, strengthens this seed of faith in the child. (2) Attention may also be called to the fact that the operation of baptism as a means of grace is not necessarily limited to the moment of its administration any more than that of the Lord's Supper is limited to the time of its celebration. It may in that very moment serve in some mysterious way to increase the grace of God in the heart, if present, but may also be instrumental in augmenting faith later on, when the significance of baptism is clearly understood. This is clearly taught in both the Belgic and the Westminster Confession. (3) Again, it may be pointed out, as has been done by some theologians (e.g. Dabney and Vos) that infant baptism is also a means of grace for the parents who present their child for baptism. It serves to strengthen their faith in the promises of God, to work in them the assurance that the child for whom they stand sponsors has a right of property in the covenant of grace, and to strengthen in them the sense of responsibility for the Christian education of their child. e. The extension of baptism to children of unbelievers. Naturally, only children of believers are the proper subjects of infant baptism. In several ways, however, the circle has been enlarged. (1) Roman Catholics and Ritualists of the Anglican Church proceed on the assumption that baptism is absolutely essential to salvation, since it conveys a grace that can be obtained in no other way. Hence they consider it their duty to baptize all children that come within their reach, without inquiring as to the spiritual condition of their parents. (2) Some call attention to the fact that the promise applies to parents and children and children's children, even to the thousandth generation, Psalms 105:7-10; Isaiah 59:21; Acts 2:39. In view of these promises they maintain that children whose parents have left the Church have not thereby forfeited their privileges as children of the covenant. (3) There are those who externalize the covenant by making it co- extensive with the State in a State-Church. An English child, has, as such, just as much right to baptism as it has to State protection, irrespective of the question, whether the parents are believers or not. (4) Some have taken the position that the fact that parents are baptized, also assures their children of a title to baptism. They regard the personal relation of the parents to the covenant as quite immaterial. Churches have occasionally acted on that principle, and finally harbored a class of members who did not themselves assume the responsibility of the covenant, and yet sought the seal of the covenant for their children. In New England this was known as the half-way covenant. (5) Finally, the principle of adoption has been applied, in order to obtain baptism for children who were not entitled to it otherwise. If the parents were unfit or unwilling to vouch for the Christian education of their children, others could step in to guarantee this. The main ground for this was sought in Genesis 17:12.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What are the different meanings of the words bapto, baptizo, and louesthai? Did John the Baptist baptize by immersion? Was the eunuch (Acts 8:38-39) baptized in that manner? Does the New Testament anywhere emphasize the necessity of one particular mode of baptism? Is the doctrine of infant baptism Biblical? Was its right ever called in question before the Reformation? What accounts for the rise of the Anabaptist denial at the time of the Reformation? What is the Baptist conception of the covenant with Abraham? How do they explain Romans 4:11 What do our confessional standards say as to the ground on which children

are baptized? What is Calvin's position as to the ground on which both children and adults are baptized? What practical dangers are connected with the doctrine of presumptive regeneration? How about Dabney's position that baptism is a sacrament to the parent as well as to the child?

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04.5.2.5. The Lord's Supper

V. The Lord’s Supper A. ANALOGIES OF THE LORD’S SUPPER AMONG ISRAEL.

Just as there were analogies to Christian baptism among Israel, there were also analogies of the Lord’s Supper. Not only among the Gentiles, but also among Israel, the sacrifices that were brought were often accompanied with sacrificial meals. This was particularly a characteristic feature of the peace-offerings. Of these sacrifices only the fat adhering to the inwards was consumed on the altar; the wave-breast was given to the priesthood, and the heave-shoulder to the officiating priest, Leviticus 7:28-34, while the rest constituted a sacrificial meal for the offerer and his friends, provided they were levitically clean, Leviticus 7:19-21; Deuteronomy 12:7; Deuteronomy 12:12. These meals taught in a symbolic way that "being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." They were expressive of the fact that, on the basis of the offered and accepted sacrifice, God receives His people as guests in His house and unites with them in joyful communion, the communal life of the covenant. Israel was forbidden to take part in the sacrificial meals of the Gentiles exactly because it would express their allegiance to other gods, Exodus 34:15; Numbers 25:3; Numbers 25:5; Psalms 106:28. The sacrificial meals, which testified to the union of Jehovah with His people, were seasons of joy and gladness, and as such were sometimes abused and gave occasion for revelry and drunkenness, 1 Samuel 1:13; Proverbs 7:14; Isaiah 28:8. The sacrifice of the Passover was also accompanied with such a sacrificial meal. Over against the Roman Catholics, Protestants sometimes sought to defend the position that this meal constituted the whole of the Passover, but this is an untenable position. The Passover was first of all a sacrifice of atonement, Exodus 12:27; Exodus 34:25. Not only is it called a sacrifice, but in the Mosaic period it was also connected with the sanctuary, Deuteronomy 16:2. The lamb was slain by the Levites, and the blood was manipulated by the priests, 2 Chronicles 30:16; 2 Chronicles 35:11; Ezra 6:19. But though it is first of all a sacrifice, that is not all; it is also a meal, in which the roasted lamb is eaten with unleavened bread and bitter herbs, Exodus 12:8-10. The sacrifice passed right into a meal, which in later times became far more elaborate than it originally was. The New Testament ascribes to the Passover a typical significance, 1 Corinthians 5:7, and thus saw in it not only a reminder of the deliverance from Egypt, but also a sign and seal of the deliverance from the bondage of sin and of communion with God in the promised Messiah. It was in connection with the paschal meal that Jesus instituted the Lord’s Supper. By using the elements present in the former He effected a very natural transition to the latter. Of late some critics sought to cast doubt on the institution of the Lord’s Supper by Jesus, but there is no good reason to doubt the testimony of the Gospels, nor the independent testimony of the apostle Paul in 1 Corinthians 11:23-26.

B. THE DOCTRINE OF THE LORD’S SUPPER IN HISTORY.

1. BEFORE THE REFORMATION. Even in the apostolic age the celebration of the Lord’s Supper was accompanied with agapae or love-feasts, for which the people brought the necessary ingredients, and which sometimes led to sad abuses, 1 Corinthians 11:20-22. In course of time the

gifts so brought were called oblations and sacrifices, and were blessed by the priest with a prayer of thanksgiving. Gradually these names were applied to the elements in the Lord’s Supper, so that these assumed the character of a sacrifice brought by the priest, and thanksgiving came to be regarded as a consecration of those elements. While some of the early Church Fathers (Origen, Basil, Gregory of Nazianze) retained the symbolical or spiritual conception of the sacrament, others (Cyril, Gregory of Nyssa, Chrysostom) held that the flesh and blood of Christ were in some way combined with the bread and wine in the sacrament. Augustine retarded the realistic development of the doctrine of the Lord’s Supper for a long time. While he did speak of the bread and wine as the body and blood of Christ, he distinguished between the sign and the thing signified, and did not believe in a change of substance. He denied that the wicked, though receiving the elements, also received the body, and stressed the commemorative aspect of the Lord’s Supper. During the Middle Ages the Augustinian view was gradually transplanted by the doctrine of transubstantiation. As early as 818 A.D. Paschasius Radbertus already formally proposed this doctrine, but met with strong opposition on the part of Rabanus Maurus and Ratramnus. In the eleventh century a furious controversy again broke out on the subject between Berenger of Tours and Lanfranc. The latter made the crass statement that "the very body of Christ was truly held in the priest’s hand, broken and chewed by the teeth of the faithful." This view was finally defined by Hildebert of Tours (1134), and designated as the doctrine of transubstantiation. It was formally adopted by the fourth Lateran Council in 1215. Many questions connected with this doctrine were debated by the Scholastics, such as those respecting the duration of the change of bread and wine into the body and blood of Jesus Christ, the manner of Christ’s presence in both elements, the relation of substance and accidents, the adoration of the host, and so on. The final formulation of the doctrine was given by the Council of Trent, and is recorded in Sessio XIII of its Decrees and Canons. Eight Chapters and eleven Canons are devoted to it. We can only mention the most essential points here. Jesus Christ is truly, really, and substantially present in the holy sacrament. The fact that He is seated at the right hand of God does not exclude the possibility of His substantial and sacramental presence in several places simultaneously. By the words of consecration the substance of bread and wine is changed into the body and blood of Christ. The entire Christ is present under each species and under each particle of either species. Each one who receives a particle of the host receives the whole Christ. He is present in the elements even before the communicant receives them. In view of this presence, the adoration of the host is but natural. The sacrament effects an "increase of sanctifying grace, special actual graces, remission of venial sins, preservation from grievous (mortal) sin, and the confident hope of eternal salvation."

2. DURING AND AFTER THE REFORMATION. The Reformers, one and all, rejected the sacrificial theory of the Lord’s Supper, and the mediaeval doctrine of transubstantiation. They differed, however, in their positive construction of the Scriptural doctrine of the Lord’s Supper. In opposition to Zwingli, Luther insisted on the literal interpretation of the words of the institution and on the bodily presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper. However, he substituted for the doctrine of transubstantiation that of consubstantiation, which has been defended at length by Occam in his De Sacramento Altaris, and according to which Christ is "in, with, and under" the elements. Zwingli denied absolutely the bodily presence of Christ in the Lord’s Supper, and gave a figurative interpretation to the words of the institution. He saw in the sacrament primarily an act of commemoration, though he did not deny that in it Christ is spiritually present to the faith of believers. Calvin maintained an intermediate position. Like Zwingli, he denied the bodily presence

of the Lord in the sacrament, but in distinction from the former, he insisted on the real, though spiritual, presence of the Lord in the Supper, the presence of Him as a fountain of spiritual virtue and efficacy. Moreover, instead of stressing the Lord's Supper as an act of man (either of commemoration or of profession), he emphasized the fact that it is the expression first of all of a gracious gift of God to man, and only secondarily a commemorative meal and an act of profession. For him, as well as for Luther, it was primarily a divinely appointed means for the strengthening of faith. The Socinians, Arminians, and Mennonites saw in the Lord's Supper only a memorial, an act of profession, and a means for moral improvement. Under the influence of Rationalism this became the popular view. Schleiermacher stressed the fact that the Lord's Supper is the means by which the communion of life with Christ is preserved in a particularly energetic manner in the bosom of the Church. Many of the Mediating theologians, while belonging to the Lutheran Church, rejected the doctrine of consubstantiation, and approached the Calvinistic view of the spiritual presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper.

C. SCRIPTURAL NAMES FOR THE LORD'S SUPPER.

While there is but a single name for the initiatory sacrament of the New Testament, there are several for the sacrament now under consideration, all of which are derived from Scripture. They are the following: (1) Deipnon kuriakon, the Lord's Supper, which is derived from 1 Corinthians 11:20. This is the most common name in Protestant circles. It seems that in the passage indicated the apostle wants to make a pointed distinction between the sacrament and the agapae which the Corinthians connected with it and which they abused, thus making the two virtually incongruous. The special emphasis is on the fact that this Supper is the Lord's. It is not a supper in which the rich invite the poor as their guests and then treat them niggardly, but a feast in which the Lord provides for all in rich abundance. (2) Trapeza kuriou the table of the Lord, a name that is found in 1 Corinthians 10:21. Corinthian Gentiles offered to idols and after their sacrifices sat down to sacrificial meals; and it seems that some of the Corinthian church thought it was permissible to join them, seeing that all flesh is alike. But Paul points out that sacrificing to idols is sacrificing to devils, and that joining in such sacrificial meals is equivalent to exercising communion with devils. This would be absolutely in conflict with sitting at the table of the Lord, confessing allegiance to Him and exercising communion with Him. (3)Klasis tou artou, the breaking of bread, a term that is used in Acts 2:42; cf. also Acts 20:7. While this is a term which, in all probability, does not refer exclusively to the Lord's Supper, but also to the love-feasts, it certainly also includes the Lord's Supper. The name may even find its explanation in the breaking of the bread as this was ordained by Jesus. (4) Eucharistia thanksgiving, and eulogia, blessing, terms which are derived from 1 Corinthians 10:16; 1 Corinthians 11:24. In Matthew 26:26-27 we read that the Lord took the bread and blessed it, and took the cup and gave thanks. In all probability the two words were used interchangeably and refer to a blessing and thanksgiving combined. The cup of thanksgiving and blessing is the consecrated cup.

D. INSTITUTION OF THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1. DIFFERENT ACCOUNTS OF THE INSTITUTION. There are four different accounts of the institution of the Lord's Supper, one in each of the Synoptics, and one in 1 Corinthians 11:1-34. John speaks of the eating of the passover, but does not mention the institution of a new sacrament. These accounts are independent of, and serve to complement, one another. Evidently,

the Lord did not finish the passover meal before He instituted the Lord’s Supper. The new sacrament was linked up with the central element in the paschal meal. The bread that was eaten with the lamb was consecrated to a new use. This is evident from the fact that the third cup, generally called "the cup of blessing" was used for the second element in the new sacrament. Thus the sacrament of the Old Testament passed into that of the New in a most natural way.

2. THE SUBSTITUTION OF BREAD FOR THE LAMB. The paschal lamb had symbolical significance. Like all the bloody sacrifices of the Old Testament, it taught the people that the shedding of blood was necessary unto the remission of sins. In addition to that it had a typical meaning, pointing forward to the great sacrifice which would be brought in the fulness of time to take away the sin of the world. And, finally, it also had national significance as a memorial of Israel’s deliverance. It was but natural that, when the real Lamb of God made His appearance and was on the point of being slain, the symbol and type should disappear. The all-sufficient sacrifice of Jesus Christ rendered all further shedding of blood unnecessary; and therefore it was entirely fitting that the bloody element should make way for an unbloody one which, like it, had nourishing properties. Moreover, through the death of Christ the middle wall of partition was broken down, and the blessings of salvation were extended to all the world. And in view of this it was quite natural that the passover, a symbol with a national flavor, should be replaced by one that carried with it no implications of nationalism.

3. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DIFFERENT ACTIONS AND TERMS. a. Symbolic actions. All the accounts of the institution of the Lord’s Supper make mention of the breaking of the bread, and Jesus clearly indicates that this was intended to symbolize the breaking of His body for the redemption of sinners. Because Jesus broke the bread in the presence of His disciples, Protestant theology generally insists on it that this action should always take place in the sight of the people. This important transaction was intended to be a sign, and a sign must be visible. After distributing the bread, Jesus took the cup, blessed it, and gave it to His disciples. It does not appear that He poured the wine in their presence, and therefore this is not regarded as essential to the celebration of the Lord’s Supper. Dr. Wielinga infers, however, from the fact that the bread must be broken, that the wine must also be poured, in the sight of the communicants.62 Jesus naturally used unleavened bread, since it was the only kind at hand, and the ordinary wine which was largely used as a beverage in Palestine. But neither the one nor the other is stressed, and therefore it does not follow that it would not be permissible to use leavened bread and some other kind of wine. The disciples undoubtedly received the elements in a reclining position, but this does not mean that believers may not partake of them in a sitting, kneeling, or standing, position. b. Words of command. Jesus accompanied His action with words of command. When He gave the bread to His disciples, He said, "Take, eat." And in issuing this command He undoubtedly had in mind, not merely a physical eating, but a spiritual appropriation of the body of Christ by faith. It is a command which, though it came first of all to the apostles, was intended for the Church of all ages. According to Luke 22:19 (comp. 1 Corinthians 11:24) the Lord added the words: "This do in remembrance of me." Some infer from these words that the Supper instituted by Jesus was nothing more than a memorial meal. It is quite evident, however, especially from John 6:32-33; John 6:50-51; 1 Corinthians 11:26-30, that it was intended to be far more than that; and in so far as it had memorial significance, it was intended as a memorial of the sacrificial work of Christ rather than of His person. There was another word of command in connection with the cup. After

distributing the bread the Lord also took the cup, gave thanks, and said, "Drink ye all of it," or (according to Luke), "Take this and divide it among yourselves." It is quite clear that the cup here stands for what it contains, for the cup could not be divided. From these words it is perfectly evident that the Lord intended the Sacrament to be used in both kinds (sub utraque specie), and that Rome is wrong in withholding the cup from the laity. The use of both elements enabled Christ to give a vivid representation of the idea that His body was broken, that flesh and blood were separated, and that the sacrament both nourishes and quickens the soul. c. Words of explanation. The word of command in connection with the bread is immediately followed by a word of explanation, which has given rise to sharp disputes, namely, "This is my body." These words have been interpreted in various ways.

(1) The Church of Rome makes the copula "is" emphatic. Jesus meant to say that what He held in His hand was really His body, though it looked and tasted like bread. But this is a thoroughly untenable position. In all probability Jesus spoke Aramaic and used no copula at all. And while He stood before the disciples in the body, He could not very well say to His disciples in all seriousness that He held His body in His hand. Moreover, even on the Roman Catholic view, He could not truthfully say, "This is my body," but could only say, "This is now becoming my body."

(2) Carlstadt held the novel view that Jesus, when He spoke these words, pointed to His body. He argued that the neuter touto could not refer to artos, which is masculine. But bread can very well be conceived of as a thing and thus referred to as neuter. Moreover, such a statement would have been rather inane under the circumstances.

(3) Luther and the Lutherans also stress the word "is," though they admit that Jesus was speaking figuratively. According to them the figure was not a metaphor, but a synecdoche. The Lord simply meant to say to His disciples: Where you have the bread, you have my body in, under, and along with it, though the substance of both remains distinct. This view is burdened with the impossible doctrine of the omnipresence of the Lord’s physical body.

(4) Calvin and the Reformed Churches understand the words of Jesus metaphorically: "This is (that is, signifies) my body." Such a statement would be just as intelligible to the disciples as other similar statements, such as, "I am the bread of life," John 6:35, and, "I am the true vine," John 15:1. At the same time they reject the view, generally ascribed to Zwingli, that the bread merely signifies the body of Christ, and stress the fact that it also serves to seal the covenant mercies of God and to convey spiritual nourishment. To these words Jesus adds the further statement, "which is given for you." These words in all probability express the idea that the body of Jesus is given for the benefit, or in the interest, of the disciples. It is given by the Lord to secure their redemption. Naturally, it is a sacrifice not only for the immediate disciples of the Lord, but also for all those who believe.

There is also a word of explanation in connection with the cup. The Lord makes the significant statement: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you." Luke 22:20. These words convey an implied contrast between the blood of the Saviour, as the blood of the new covenant, and the blood of the old covenant mentioned in Exodus 24:8. The latter was only a shadowy representation of the New Testament reality. The words "for you" have no wider application than they do in the statement made in connection with the bread, "which is given for you." They are not to be understood in the unrestricted sense of "for all men indiscriminately," but

rather in the limited sense of "for you and for all who are really my disciples." The concluding words in 1 Corinthians 11:26, "For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till He come," point to the perennial significance of the Lord's Supper as a memorial of the sacrificial death of Christ; and clearly intimate that it should be celebrated regularly until the Lord's return.

E. THE THINGS SIGNIFIED AND SEALED IN THE LORD'S SUPPER.

1. THE THINGS SIGNIFIED IN THE SACRAMENT. It is one of the characteristics of a sacrament that it represents one or more spiritual truths by means of sensible and outward signs. The outward sign in the case of the Lord's Supper includes not only the visible elements employed, but also the breaking of the bread and the pouring of the wine, the appropriation of bread and wine by eating and drinking, and the partaking of them in communion with others. The following points should be mentioned here: a. It is a symbolical representation of the Lord's death, 1 Corinthians 11:26. The central fact of redemption, prefigured in the sacrifices of the Old Testament, is clearly set forth by means of the significant symbols of the New Testament sacrament. The words of the institution, "broken for you" and "shed for many", point to the fact that the death of Christ is a sacrificial one, for the benefit, and even in the place, of His people. b. It also symbolizes the believer's participation in the crucified Christ. In the celebration of the Lord's Supper the participants not merely look at the symbols, but receive them and feed upon them. Figuratively speaking, they "eat the flesh of the Son of Man, and drink His blood," John 6:53, that is, they symbolically appropriate the benefits secured by the sacrificial death of Christ. c. It represents, not only the death of Christ as the object of faith, and the act of faith which unites the believer to Christ, but also the effect of this act as giving life, strength, and joy, to the soul. This is implied in the emblems used. Just as bread and wine nourish and invigorate the bodily life of man, so Christ sustains and quickens the life of the soul. Believers are regularly represented in Scripture as having their life, and strength, and happiness, in Christ. d. Finally, the sacrament also symbolizes the union of believers with one another. As members of the mystical body of Jesus Christ, constituting a spiritual unity, they eat of the same bread and drink of the same wine, 1 Corinthians 10:17; 1 Corinthians 12:13. Receiving the elements, the one from the other, they exercise intimate communion with one another.

2. THE THINGS SEALED IN THE LORD'S SUPPER. The Lord's Supper is not only a sign but also a seal. This is lost sight of by a good many in our day, who have a very superficial view of this sacrament, and regard it merely as a memorial of Christ and as a badge of Christian profession. These two aspects of the sacrament, namely, as a sign and as a seal, are not independent of each other. The sacrament as a sign, or — to put it differently — the sacrament with all that it signifies, constitutes a seal. The seal is attached to the things signified, and is a pledge of the covenanted grace of God revealed in the sacrament. The Heidelberg Catechism says that Christ intends "by these visible signs and pledges to assure us that we are as really partakers of His true body and blood, through the working of the Holy Spirit, as we receive by the mouth of the body these holy tokens in remembrance of Him; and that all His sufferings and obedience are as certainly ours as if we ourselves had in our own persons suffered and made satisfaction to God for our sins."63 The following points come into consideration here: a. It seals to the participant the great love of Christ, revealed in the fact that He surrendered Himself to a shameful and bitter death for them. This does not merely mean that it testifies to the reality of that sacrificial self-surrender, but that it assures the

believing participant of the Lord's Supper that he personally was the object of that incomparable love. b. Moreover, it pledges the believing partaker of the sacrament, not only the love and grace of Christ in now offering Himself to them as their Redeemer in all the fulness of His redemptive work; but gives him the personal assurance that all the promises of the covenant and all the riches of the gospel offer are his by a divine donation, so that he has a personal claim on them. c. Again, it not only ratifies to the believing participant the rich promises of the gospel, but it assures him that the blessings of salvation are his in actual possession. As surely as the body is nourished and refreshed by bread and wine, so surely is the soul that receives Christ's body and blood through faith even now in possession of eternal life, and so surely will he receive it ever more abundantly. d. Finally, the Lord's Supper is a reciprocal seal. It is a badge of profession on the part of those who partake of the sacrament. Whenever they eat the bread and drink the wine, they profess their faith in Christ as their Saviour and their allegiance to Him as their King, and they solemnly pledge a life of obedience to His divine commandments.

F. THE SACRAMENTAL UNION OR THE QUESTION OF THE REAL PRESENCE OF CHRIST IN THE LORD'S SUPPER. With this question we are entering upon what has long been, and still is, the occasion for considerable difference of opinion in the Church of Jesus Christ. There is by no means a unanimous opinion as to the relation of the sign to the thing signified, that is to say, as to the nature of the presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper. There are especially four views that come into consideration here.

1. THE VIEW OF ROME. The Church of Rome conceives of the sacramental union in a physical sense. It is hardly justified, however, in speaking of any sacramental union at all, for according to its representation there is no union in the proper sense of the word. The sign is not joined to the thing signified, but makes way for it, since the former passes into the latter. When the priest utters the formula, " hoc est corpus meum ", bread and wine change into the body and blood of Christ. It is admitted that even after the change the elements look and taste like bread and wine. While the substance of both is changed, their properties remain the same. In the form of bread and wine the physical body and blood of Christ are present. The supposed Scriptural ground for this is found in the words of the institution, "this is my body", and in John 6:50 ff. But the former passage is clearly tropical, like those in John 14:6; John 15:1; John 10:9, and others; and the latter, literally understood, would teach more than the Roman Catholic himself would be ready to grant, namely, that every one who eats the Lord's Supper goes to heaven, while no one who fails to eat it will obtain eternal life (cf. John 6:53-54). Moreover, John 6:63 clearly points to a spiritual interpretation. Furthermore, it is quite impossible to conceive of the bread which Jesus broke as being the body which was handling it; and it should be noted that Scripture calls it bread even after it is supposed to have been trans- substantiated, 1 Corinthians 10:17; 1 Corinthians 11:26-28. This view of Rome also violates the human senses, where it asks us to believe that what tastes and looks like bread and wine, is really flesh and blood; and human reason, where it requires belief in the separation of a substance and its properties and in the presence of a material body in several places at the same time, both of which are contrary to reason. Consequently, the elevation and adoration of the host is also without any proper foundation.

2. THE LUTHERAN VIEW. Luther rejected the doctrine of transubstantiation and substituted for it the related doctrine of consubstantiation. According to him bread and wine remain what they are, but there is in the Lord's Supper nevertheless a mysterious and miraculous real presence of the

whole person of Christ, body and blood, in, under, and along with, the elements. He and his followers maintain the local presence of the physical body and blood of Christ in the sacrament. Lutherans sometimes deny that they teach the local presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, but then they ascribe to the word 'local' a meaning not intended by those who ascribe this teaching to them. When it is said that they teach the local presence of the physical nature of Christ, this does not imply that all other bodies are excluded from the same portion of space, nor that the human nature of Christ is nowhere else, as, for instance, in heaven; but it does mean that the physical nature of Christ is locally present in the Lord's Supper, as magnetism is locally present in the magnet, and as the soul is locally present in the body. Consequently, they also teach the so-called manducatio oralis, which means that those who partake of the elements in the Lord's Supper eat and drink the Lord's body and blood "with the bodily mouth", and not merely that they appropriate these by faith. Unworthy communicants also receive them, but to their condemnation. This view is no great improvement on the Roman Catholic conception, though it does not involve the oft-repeated miracle of a change of substance minus a change of attributes. It really makes the words of Jesus mean, 'this accompanies my body', an interpretation that is more unlikely than either of the others. Moreover, it is burdened with the impossible doctrine of the ubiquity of the Lord's glorified human nature, which several Lutherans would gladly discard.

3. THE ZWINGLIAN VIEW. There is a very general impression, not altogether without foundation, that Zwingli's view of the Lord's Supper was very defective. He is usually alleged to have taught that it is a bare sign or symbol, figuratively representing or signifying spiritual truths or blessings; and that its reception is a mere commemoration of what Christ did for sinners, and above all a badge of the Christian's profession. This hardly does justice to the Swiss Reformer, however. Some of his statements undoubtedly convey the idea that to him the sacrament was merely a commemorative rite and a sign and symbol of what the believer pledges in it. But his writings also contain statements that point to a deeper significance of the Lord's Supper and contemplate it as a seal or pledge of what God is doing for the believer in the sacrament. In fact, he seems to have changed his view somewhat in the course of time. It is very hard to determine exactly what he did believe in this matter. He evidently wanted to exclude from the doctrine of the Lord's Supper all unintelligible mysticism, and showed an excessive leaning to the side of plainness and simplicity in its exposition. He occasionally expresses himself to the intent that it is a mere sign or symbol, a commemoration of the Lord's death. And though he speaks of it in passing also as a seal or pledge, he certainly does not do justice to this idea. Moreover, for him the emphasis falls on what the believer, rather than on what God, pledges in the sacrament. He identified the eating of the body of Christ with faith in Him and a trustful reliance on His death. He denied the bodily presence of Christ in the Lord's Supper, but did not deny that Christ is present there in a spiritual manner to the faith of the believer. Christ is present only in His divine nature and in the apprehension of the believing communicant.

4. THE REFORMED VIEW. Calvin objects to Zwingli's doctrine of the Lord's Supper, (a) that it allows the idea of what the believer does in the sacrament to eclipse the gift of God in it; and (b) that it sees in the eating of the body of Christ nothing more nor higher than faith in His name and reliance on His death. According to him the sacrament is connected not merely with the past work of Christ, with the Christ who died (as Zwingli seems to think), but also with the present spiritual work of Christ, with the Christ that is alive in glory. He believes that Christ, though not bodily and

locally present in the Supper, is yet present and enjoyed in His entire person, both body and blood. He emphasizes the mystical communion of believers with the entire person of the Redeemer. His representation is not entirely clear, but he seems to mean that the body and blood of Christ, though absent and locally present only in heaven, communicate a life-giving influence to the believer when he is in the act of receiving the elements. That influence, though real, is not physical but spiritual and mystical, is mediated by the Holy Spirit, and is conditioned on the act of faith by which the communicant symbolically receives the body and blood of Christ. As to the way in which this communion with Christ is effected, there is a twofold representation. Sometimes it is represented as if by faith the communicant lifts his heart to heaven, where Christ is; sometimes, as if the Holy Spirit brings the influence of the body and blood of Christ down to the communicant. Dabney positively rejects the representation of Calvin as if the communicant partakes of the very body and blood of Christ in the sacrament. This is undoubtedly an obscure point in Calvin's representation. Sometimes he seems to place too much emphasis on the literal flesh and blood. Perhaps, however, his words are to be understood sacramentally. that is, in a figurative sense. This view of Calvin is that found in our confessional standards.64 A very common interpretation of the dubious point in Calvin's doctrine, is that the body and blood of Christ are present only virtually, that is, in the words of Dr. Hodge, that "the virtues and effects of the sacrifice of the body of the Redeemer on the cross are made present and are actually conveyed in the sacrament to the worthy receiver by the power of the Holy Ghost, who uses the sacrament as His instrument according to His sovereign will."65 G. THE LORD'S SUPPER AS A MEANS OF GRACE, OR ITS EFFICACY. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper, instituted by the Lord Himself as a sign and seal, is as such also a means of grace. Christ instituted it for the benefit of His disciples and of all believers. It was clearly the intention of the Saviour that His followers should profit by participation in it. This follows from the very fact that He instituted it as a sign and seal of the covenant of grace. It can also readily be inferred from the symbolical eating and drinking, which point to nourishment and quickening, and from such passages as John 6:48-58 (irrespective of the question, whether this refers directly to the Lord's Supper or not), and 1 Corinthians 11:17.

1. THE GRACE RECEIVED IN THE LORD'S SUPPER. The Lord's Supper is intended for believers and for believers only, and therefore is not instrumental in originating the work of grace in the heart of the sinner. The presence of the grace of God is presupposed in the hearts of the participants. Jesus administered it to His professed followers only; according to Acts 2:42; Acts 2:46 they who believed continued steadfastly in the breaking of bread; and in 1 Corinthians 11:28-29 the necessity of self-examination before partaking of the Lord's Supper is stressed. The grace received in the sacrament does not differ in kind from that which believers receive through the instrumentality of the Word. The sacrament merely adds to the effectiveness of the Word, and therefore to the measure of the grace received. It is the grace of an ever closer fellowship with Christ, of spiritual nourishment and quickening, and of an ever increasing assurance of salvation. The Roman Catholic Church names specifically sanctifying grace, special actual graces, the remission of venial sins, preservation from mortal sin, and the assurance of salvation.

2. THE MANNER IN WHICH THIS GRACE IS WROUGHT. How does the sacrament function in this respect? Is the Lord's Supper in any way a meritorious cause of the grace conferred? Does it confer grace irrespective of the spiritual condition of the recipient, or does it not? a. The Roman Catholic view. For the Roman Catholics the Lord's Supper is not merely a sacrament, but also a

sacrifice; it is even first of all a sacrifice. It is "the unbloody renewal of the sacrifice of the cross." This does not mean that in the Lord's Supper Christ actually dies anew, but that He undergoes an external change, which is in some way equivalent to death. Did not the Lord speak of the bread as His body that was broken for the disciples, and of the wine as His blood that was poured out for them? Roman Catholic controversialists sometimes give the impression that this sacrifice has only a representative or commemorative character, but this is not the real doctrine of the Church. The sacrifice of Christ in the Lord's Supper is considered to be a real sacrifice, and is supposed to have propitiatory value. When the question is raised, what this sacrifice merits for the sinner, Roman Catholic authorities begin to hedge and to speak inconsistent language. The statement of Wilmers in his Handbook of the Christian Religion, which is used as a textbook in many Roman Catholic schools, may be given as an example. Says he on page 348: "By the fruits of the sacrifice of the Mass we understand the effects which it produces for us, inasmuch as it is a sacrifice of atonement and impetration: (a) not only supernatural graces, but also natural favors; (b) remission of sins, and of the punishment due to them. What Christ merited for us by His death on the cross is applied to us in the sacrament of the Mass." After the sacrifice of the Mass is called a sacrifice of atonement, the last sentence seems to say that it is after all only a sacrifice in which that which Christ merited on the cross is applied to the participants. As far as the Lord's Supper as a sacrament is concerned, the Roman Catholic Church teaches that it works ex opere operato which means, "in virtue of the sacramental act itself, and not in virtue of the acts or disposition of the recipient, or of the worthiness of the minister (ex opere operantis)." This means that every one who receives the elements, be he wicked or pious, also receives the grace signified, which is conceived of as a substance contained in the elements. The sacramental rite itself conveys grace unto the recipient. At the same time it also teaches, rather inconsistently, it would seem, that the effects of the sacrament may be completely or partially frustrated by the existence of some obstacle, by the absence of that disposition that makes the soul capable of receiving grace, or by the priest's want of intention to do what the Church does. b. The prevailing Protestant view. The prevailing view in the Protestant Churches is, that the sacrament does not work ex opere operato. It is not itself a cause of grace, but merely an instrument in the hand of God. Its effective operation is dependent, not only on the presence, but on the activity, of faith in the recipient. Unbelievers may receive the external elements, but do not receive the thing signified thereby. Some Lutherans and the High Church Episcopalians, however, in their desire to maintain the objective character of the sacrament, clearly manifest a leaning toward the position of the Church of Rome. "We believe, teach, and confess", says the Formula of Concord, "that not only true believers in Christ, and such as worthily approach the Supper of the Lord, but also the unworthy and unbelieving receive the true body and blood of Christ; in such wise, nevertheless, that they derive thence neither consolation nor life, but rather so as that receiving turns to their judgment and condemnation, unless they be converted and repent (1 Corinthians 11:27; 1 Corinthians 11:29).66 H. THE PERSONS FOR WHOM THE LORD'S SUPPER IS INSTITUTED.

1. THE PROPER PARTICIPANTS OF THE SACRAMENT. In answer to the question, "For whom is the Lord's Supper instituted?" the Heidelberg Catechism says: "For those who are truly displeased with themselves for their sins and yet trust that these are forgiven them for the sake of Christ, and that their remaining infirmity is covered by His passion and death; who also desire more and more to strengthen their faith and amend their life." From these words it appears that the Lord's Supper was not instituted for all men indiscriminately, nor even for all those who have a

place in the visible Church of Christ, but only for those who earnestly repent of their sins, trust that these have been covered by the atoning blood of Jesus Christ, and are desirous to increase their faith, and to grow in true holiness of life. The participants of the Lord's Supper must be repentant sinners, who are ready to admit that they are lost in themselves. They must have a living faith in Jesus Christ, so that they trust for their redemption in the atoning blood of the Saviour. Furthermore, they must have a proper understanding and appreciation of the Lord's Supper, must discern the difference between it and a common meal, and must be impressed with the fact that the bread and wine are the tokens of the body and blood of Christ. And, finally, they must have a holy desire for spiritual growth and for ever-increasing conformity to the image of Christ.

2. THOSE WHO MUST BE EXCLUDED FROM THE LORD'S SUPPER. Since the Lord's Supper is a sacrament of and for the Church, it follows that they who are outside of the Church cannot partake of it. But it is necessary to make still further limitations. Not even every one that has a place in the Church can be admitted to the table of the Lord. The following exceptions should be noted: a. Children, though they were allowed to eat the passover in the days of the Old Testament, cannot be permitted to partake of the table of the Lord, since they cannot meet the requirements for worthy participation. Paul insists on the necessity of self- examination previous to the celebration, when he says: "But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup", 1 Corinthians 11:28, and children are not able to examine themselves. Moreover, he points out that, in order to partake of the Supper in a worthy manner, it is necessary to discern the body, 1 Corinthians 11:29, that is, to distinguish properly between the elements used in the Lord's Supper and ordinary bread and wine, by recognizing those elements as symbols of the body and blood of Christ. And this, too, is beyond the capacity of children. It is only after they have come to years of discretion, that they can be permitted to join in the celebration of the Lord's Supper. b. Such unbelievers as may possibly be within the confines of the visible Church have no right to partake of the table of the Lord. The Church must require of all those who desire to celebrate the Lord's Supper a credible profession of faith. Naturally, she cannot look into the heart and can only base her judgment respecting an applicant for admission on his confession of faith in Jesus Christ. It is possible that she occasionally admits hypocrites to the privileges of full communion, but such persons in partaking of the Lord's Supper will only eat and drink judgment to themselves. And if their unbelief and ungodliness becomes evident, the Church will have to exclude them by the proper administration of Church discipline. The holiness of the Church and of the sacrament must be safeguarded. c. Even true believers may not partake of the Lord's Supper under all conditions and in every frame of mind. The condition of their spiritual life, their conscious relation to God, and their attitude to their fellow-Christians may be such as to disqualify them to engage in such a spiritual exercise as the celebration of the Lord's Supper. This is clearly implied in what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 11:28-32. There were practices among the Corinthians which really made their participation in the Lord's Supper a mockery. When a person is conscious of being estranged from the Lord or from his brethren, he has no proper place at a table which speaks of communion. It should be stated explicitly, however, that lack of the assurance of salvation need not deter anyone from coming to the table of the Lord, since the Lord's Supper was instituted for the very purpose of strengthening faith.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Can it be proved that the Lord's Supper took the place of the Old Testament passover? How? Is it permissible to cut the bread in squares before the

administration of the Lord’s Supper, and to use the individual cup? What does the term "real presence" mean in connection with this sacrament? Does the Bible teach such a real presence? If it does, does it favor the idea that the human nature of Christ is present in the state of humiliation, or in that of glorification? What is meant by the Reformed doctrine of the spiritual presence? Does the discourse of Jesus in John 6:1-71 really refer to the Lord’s Supper? How does Rome defend the celebration of the Lord’s Supper under one species? How did the conception of the Lord’s Supper as a sacrifice arise? What objections are there to this notion? Does "eating the body" simply amount to believing in Christ? Is open communion defensible?

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04.6.0.1. Introductory Chapter

Introductory Chapter A. ESCHATOLOGY IN PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION.

1. THE QUESTION OF ESCHATOLOGY A NATURAL ONE. A doctrine of the last things is not something that is peculiar to the Christian religion. Wherever people have seriously reflected on human life, whether in the individual or in the race, they have not merely asked, whence did it spring, and how did it come to be what it is, but also, whither is it bound? They raised the question, What is the end or final destiny of the individual; and what is the goal towards which the human race is moving? Does man perish at death, or does he enter upon another state of existence, either of bliss or of woe? Will the generations of men come and go in endless succession and finally sink into oblivion, or is the race of the children of men and the whole creation moving on to some divine telos, an end designed for it by God. And if the human race is moving on to some final, some ideal, condition perhaps, will the generations that have come and gone participate in this in any way, and if so, how; or did they merely serve as a thoroughfare leading up to the grand climax? Naturally, only those who believe that, as the history of the world had a beginning, it will also have an end, can speak of a consummation and have a doctrine of eschatology.

2. THE QUESTION OF ESCHATOLOGY IN PHILOSOPHY. The question of the final destiny of the individual and of the race occupied an important place even in the speculations of the philosophers. Plato taught the immortality of the soul, that is, its continued existence after death, and this doctrine remained an important tenet in philosophy up to the present time. Spinoza had no place for it in his pantheistic system, but Wolff and Leibnitz defended it with all kinds of arguments. Kant stressed the untenableness of these arguments, but nevertheless retained the doctrine of immortality as a postulate of practical reason. The idealistic philosophy of the nineteenth century ruled it out. In fact, as Haering says, "Pantheism of all sorts is limited to a definite mode of contemplation, and does not lead to any ’ultimate’." Not only did the philosophers reflect on the future of the individual; they also thought deeply on the future of the world. The Stoics spoke of successive world-cycles, and the Buddhists, of world-ages, in each of which a new world appears and again disappears. Even Kant speculated on the birth and death of worlds.

3. THE QUESTION OF ESCHATOLOGY IN RELIGION. It is especially in religion, however, that we meet with eschatological conceptions. Even false religions, the more primitive as well as the more advanced, have their eschatology. Buddhism has its Nirvana, Mohammedanism, its sensual paradise, and the Indians, their happy hunting-grounds. Belief in the continued existence of the soul appears everywhere and in various forms. Says J. T. Addison: "The belief that the soul of man survives his death is so nearly universal that we have no reliable record of a tribe or nation or religion in which it does not prevail."1 It may manifest itself in the conviction that the dead are still hovering around and near at hand, in ancestor worship, in seeking intercourse with the dead, in the conception of an underworld peopled with the dead, or in the idea of the transmigration of souls; but it is always present in some form or other. But in these religions all is vague and uncertain. It is only in the Christian religion that the doctrine of the last things receives greater

precision and carries with it an assurance that is divine. Naturally, they who are not content to rest their faith exclusively on the Word of God, but make it contingent on experience and on the deliverances of the Christian consciousness, are at a great disadvantage here. While they may experience spiritual awakening, divine illumination, repentance and conversion, and may observe the fruits of the operations of divine grace in their lives, they cannot experience nor see the realities of the future world. They shall have to accept the testimony of God respecting these, or continue to grope about in the dark. If they do not wish to build the house of their hope on vague and indeterminate longings, they shall have to turn to the firm ground of the Word of God.

B. ESCHATOLOGY IN THE HISTORY OF THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

Speaking generally, it may be said that Christianity never forgot the glorious predictions respecting its future and the future of the individual Christian. Neither the individual Christian nor the Church could avoid thinking about these and finding comfort in them. Sometimes, however, the Church, borne down with the cares of life, or entangled in its pleasures, thought little of the future. Moreover, it happened repeatedly that at one time it would think more of this, and at another time, more of that particular element of its future hope. In days of defection the Christian hope sometimes grew dim and uncertain, but it never died out altogether. At the same time it must be said that there has never been a period in the history of the Christian Church, in which eschatology was the center of Christian thought. The other loci of Dogmatics have each had their time of special development, but this cannot be said of eschatology. Three periods can be distinguished in the history of eschatological thought.

1. FROM THE APOSTOLIC AGE TO THE BEGINNING OF THE FIFTH CENTURY. In the very first period the Church was perfectly conscious of the separate elements of the Christian hope, as, for instance, that physical death is not yet eternal death, that the souls of the dead live on, that Christ is coming again, that there will be a blessed resurrection of the people of God, that this will be followed by a general judgment, in which eternal doom will be pronounced upon the wicked but the pious will be rewarded with the everlasting glories of heaven. But these elements were simply seen as so many separate parts of the future hope, and were not yet dogmatically construed. Though the various elements were quite well understood, their interrelation was not yet clearly seen. At first it seemed as if eschatology was in a fair way to become the center of the construction of Christian doctrine, for in the first two centuries Chiliasm was rather prominent, though not as prominent as some would have us believe. As it turned out, however, eschatology was not developed in this period.

2. FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE FIFTH CENTURY TO THE REFORMATION. Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit the attention of the Church was directed from the future to the present, and Chiliasm was gradually forgotten. Especially under the influence of Origen and Augustine, anti-chiliastic views became dominant in the Church. But though these were regarded as orthodox, they were not thought through and systematically developed. There was a general belief in a life after death, in the return of the Lord, in the resurrection of the dead, in the final judgment, and in a kingdom of glory, but very little reflection on the manner of these. The thought of a material and temporal kingdom made way for that of eternal life and the future salvation. In course of time the Church was placed in the center of attention, and the hierarchical Church was identified with the Kingdom of God. The idea gained ground that outside of this Church there was no salvation, and

that the Church determined the proper pedagogical training for the future. A great deal of attention was paid to the intermediate state, and particularly to the doctrine of purgatory. In connection with this the mediation of the Church was brought to the foreground, the doctrine of the mass, of prayers for the dead, and of indulgences. As a protest against this ecclesiasticism, Chiliasm again made its appearance in several sects This was in part a reaction of a pietistic nature against the externalism and worldliness of the Church.

3. FROM THE REFORMATION UP TO THE PRESENT DAY. The thought of the Reformation centered primarily about the idea of the application and appropriation of salvation, and sought to develop eschatology mainly from this point of view. Many of the old Reformed theologians treat it merely as an adjunct to soteriology, dealing with the glorification of believers. Consequently, only a part of eschatology was studied and brought to further development. The Reformation adopted what the early Church taught respecting the return of Christ, the resurrection, the final judgment, and eternal life, and brushed aside the crass form of Chiliasm which appeared in the Anabaptist sects. In its opposition to Rome, it also reflected a good deal on the intermediate state and rejected the various tenets developed by the Roman Catholic Church. It can hardly be said that the Churches of the Reformation did much for the development of eschatology. In Pietism Chiliasm again made its appearance. The Rationalism of the eighteenth century retained of eschatology merely the bare idea of a colourless immortality, of the mere survival of the soul after death. Under the influence of the philosophy of evolution with its idea of an endless progress, it became, if not obsolete, at least obsolescent. Liberal theology entirely ignored the eschatological teachings of Jesus and placed all the emphasis on His ethical precepts. As a result it has no eschatology worthy of the name. Other - worldliness made way for this - worldliness; the blessed hope of eternal life was replaced by the social hope of a kingdom of God exclusively of this world; and the former assurance respecting the resurrection of the dead and future glory was supplanted by the vague trust that God may have even better things in store for man than the blessings which he now enjoys. Says Gerald Birney Smith: "In no realm are the changes of thinking more marked than in the portion of theology which deals with the future life. Where theologians used to speak to us in detail concerning 'last things,' they now set forth in somewhat general terms the reasonable basis for optimistic confidence in the continuance of life beyond physical death."2 At the present time, however, there are some signs of a change for the better. A new wave of Premillennialism appeared, which is not limited to the sects, but has also found entrance in some of the Churches of our day, and its advocates suggest a Christian philosophy of history, based particularly on the study of Daniel and Revelation, and help to fix the attention once more on the end of the ages. Weiss and Schweitzer called attention to the fact that the eschatological teachings of Jesus were far more important in His scheme of thought than His ethical precepts, which after all represent only an "Interimsethik." And Karl Barth also stresses the eschatological element in divine revelation.

C. THE RELATION OF ESCHATOLOGY TO THE REST OF DOGMATICS.

1. WRONG CONCEPTIONS WHICH OBSCURE THIS RELATION. When Kliefoth wrote his Eschatologie, he complained about the fact that there had never yet appeared a comprehensive and adequate treatise on eschatology as a whole; and further calls attention to the fact that in dogmatical works it often appears, not as a main division uniform with the others, but merely as a fragmentary and neglected appendix, while some of its questions are discussed in other loci.

There were good reasons for his complaints. In general it may be said that eschatology is even now the least developed of all the loci of dogmatics. Moreover, it was often given a very subordinate place in the systematic treatment of theology. It was a mistake of Coccejus that he arranged the whole of dogmatics according to the scheme of the covenants, and thus treated it as a historical study rather than a systematic presentation of all the truths of the Christian religion. In such a scheme eschatology could only appear as the finale of history, and not at all as one of the constitutive elements of a system of truth. A historical discussion of the last things may form a part of the historia revelationis, but cannot as such be introduced as an integral part of dogmatics. Dogmatics is not a descriptive, but a normative science, in which we aim at absolute rather than at mere historical, truth. Reformed theologians on the whole saw this point very clearly, and therefore discussed the last things in a systematic way. However, they did not always do justice to it as one of the main divisions of dogmatics, but gave it a subordinate place in one of the other loci. Several of them conceived of it merely as dealing with the glorification of the saints or the consummation of the rule of Christ, and introduced it at the conclusion of their discussion of objective and subjective soteriology. The result was that some parts of eschatology received due emphasis, while other parts were all but neglected. In some cases the subject-matter of eschatology was divided among different loci. Another mistake, sometimes made, was to lose sight of the theological character of eschatology. We cannot subscribe to the following statement of Pohle (Roman Catholic) in his work on Eschatology, or the Catholic Doctrine of the Last Things: "Eschatology is anthropological and cosmological rather than theological; for, though it deals with God as the Consummator and Universal Judge, strictly speaking, its subject is the created universe, i.e. man and the cosmos."3 If eschatology is not theology it has no proper place in dogmatics.

2. THE PROPER CONCEPTION OF THIS RELATION. Strange to say, the same Catholic author says: "Eschatology is the crown and capstone of dogmatic theology," which is perfectly correct. It is the one locus of theology, in which all the other loci must come to a head, to a final conclusion. Dr. Kuyper correctly points out that every other locus left some question unanswered, to which eschatology should supply the answer. In theology it is the question, how God is finally perfectly glorified in the work of His hands, and how the counsel of God is fully realized; in anthropology, the question, how the disrupting influence of sin is completely overcome; in christology, the question, how the work of Christ is crowned with perfect victory; in soteriology, the question, how the work of the Holy Spirit at last issues in the complete redemption and glorification of the people of God; and in ecclesiology, the question of the final apotheosis of the Church. All these questions must find their answer in the last locus of dogmatics, making it the real capstone of dogmatic theology. Haering testifies to the same fact when he says: "As a matter of fact it (eschatology) does shed a clear light upon every single section of doctrine. Is the universality of God’s saving plan, is personal communion with a personal God asserted without reserve, is the permanent significance of the Redeemer upheld, is forgiveness of sin conceived as one with victory over the power of sin — on these points the eschatology must remove all doubt, even when indefinite statements which have been made in the preceding parts could not at once be recognized as such. Nor is it difficult to discover the reason of this. In the doctrine of the last things, the communion between God and man is set forth as completed, and therefore the idea of our religion, the Christian principle, is presented in its purity; not, however, as a mere idea in the sense of an ideal which is never completely realized, but as perfect reality — and it is clear what difficulties are implied in that. It must therefore appear at last, in the presentment of eschatology, if not sooner, whether the reality

of this communion with God has received its unrestricted due."4 D. THE NAME "ESCHATOLOGY."

Various names have been applied to the last locus of dogmatics, of which de Novissimis or Eschatology is the most common. Kuyper uses the term Consummatione Saeculi. The name "eschatology" is based on those passages of Scripture that speak of "the last days (eschatai hemerai), Isaiah 2:2; Micah 4:1, "the last time " (eschatos ton chronon), 1 Peter 1:20, and "the last hour," (eschate hora), 1 John 2:18. It is true that these expressions sometimes refer to the whole New Testament dispensation, but even so they embody an eschatological idea. Old Testament prophecy distinguishes only two periods, namely, "this age" (olam hazzeh Gr.; aion houtos), and "the coming age" (ollam habba', Gr.; aion mellon). Since the prophets represent the coming of the Messiah and the end of the world as coinciding, the "last days" are the days immediately preceding both the coming of the Messiah and the end of the world. They nowhere draw a clear line of distinction between a first and a second coming of the Messiah. In the New Testament, however, it becomes perfectly evident, that the coming of the Messiah is twofold, and that the Messianic age includes two stages, the present Messianic age and the future consummation. Consequently, the New Testament dispensation may be regarded under two different aspects. If the attention is fixed on the future coming of the Lord, and all that precedes it is considered as belonging to "this age," then New Testament believers are regarded as living on the eve of that important event, the Lord's return in glory and the final consummation. If, on the other hand, the attention is centered on the first coming of Christ, it is natural to consider the believers of this dispensation as already, though only in principle, living in the future age. This representation of their condition is not uncommon in the New Testament. The Kingdom of God is already present, eternal life is realized in principle, the Spirit is the earnest of the heavenly inheritance, and believers are already seated with Christ in heavenly places. But while some of the eschatological realities are thus projected into the present, they are not fully realized until the time of the future consummation. And when we speak of "eschatology," we have in mind more particularly the facts and events that are connected with the second coming of Christ, and that will mark the end of the present dispensation and will usher in the eternal glories of the future.

E. THE CONTENTS OF ESCHATOLOGY: GENERAL AND INDIVIDUAL ESCHATOLOGY.

1. GENERAL ESCHATOLOGY. The name "eschatology" calls attention to the fact that the history of the world and of the human race will finally reach its consummation. It is not an indefinite and endless process, but a real history moving on to a divinely appointed end. According to Scripture that end will come as a mighty crisis, and the facts and events associated with this crisis form the contents of eschatology. Strictly speaking, they also determine its limits. But because other elements may be included under the general head, it is customary to speak of the series of events that is connected with the return of Jesus Christ and the end of the world as constituting general eschatology, — an eschatology in which all men are concerned. The subjects that call for consideration in this division, are the return of Christ, the general resurrection, the last judgment, the consummation of the Kingdom, and the final condition of both the pious and the wicked.

2. INDIVIDUAL ESCHATOLOGY. Besides this general, there is also an individual, eschatology that must be taken into consideration. The events named may constitute the whole of eschatology in the strict sense of the word, yet we cannot do justice to this without showing how the

generations who have died will participate in the final events. For the individual the end of the present existence comes with death, which transfers him completely from the present into the future age. In so far as he is removed from the present age with its historical development, he is introduced into the future age, which is eternity. In the same measure in which there is a change in locality, there is also a change of æon. The things touching the condition of the individual between his death and the general resurrection, belong to personal or individual eschatology. Physical death, the immortality of the soul, and the intermediate condition call for discussion here. The study of these subjects will serve the purpose of connecting up the condition of those who die before the parousia with the final consummation.

04.6.1.1. Physical Death

I. Physical Death The Scriptural idea of death includes physical, spiritual, and eternal death. Physical and spiritual death are naturally discussed in connection with the doctrine of sin, and eternal death is considered more particularly in general eschatology. For that reason a discussion of death in any sense of the word might seem to be out of place in individual eschatology. Yet it can hardly be left out of consideration altogether in an attempt to link up past generations with the final consummation.

A. THE NATURE OF PHYSICAL DEATH. The Bible contains some instructive indications as to the nature of physical death. It speaks of this in various ways. In Matthew 10:28; Luke 12:4, it is spoken of as the death of the body, as distinguished from that of the soul (psuche). Here the body is considered as a living organism, and the psuche is evidently the pneuma of man, the spiritual element which is the principle of his natural life. This view of natural death also underlies the language of Peter in 1 Peter 3:14-18. In other passages it is described as the termination of the psuche, that is, of animal life or living, or as the loss of this, Matthew 2:20; Mark 3:4; Luke 6:9; Luke 14:26; John 12:25; John 13:37-38; Acts 15:26; Acts 20:24, and other passages.5 And, finally, it is also represented as a separation of body and soul, Ecclesiastes 12:7 (comp. Genesis 2:7); James 2:26, an idea that is also basic to such passages as John 19:30; Acts 7:59; Php 1:23. Cf. also the use of exodus in Luke 9:31; 2 Peter 1:15-16. In view of all this it may be said that, according to Scripture, physical death is a termination of physical life by the separation of body and soul. It is never an annihilation, though some sects represent the death of the wicked as such. God does not annihilate anything in His creation. Death is not a cessation of existence, but a severance of the natural relations of life. Life and death are not opposed to each other as existence and non-existence, but are opposites only as different modes of existence. It is quite impossible to say exactly what death is. We speak of it as the cessation of physical life, but then the question immediately arises, Just what is life? And we have no answer. We do not know what life is in its essential being, but know it only in its relations and actions. And experience teaches us that, where these are severed and cease, death enters. Death means a break in the natural relations of life. It may be said that sin is per se death, because it represents a break in the vital relation in which man, as created in the image of God, stands to his Maker. It means the loss of that image, and consequently disturbs all the relations of life. This break is also carried through in that separation of body and soul which is called physical death.

B. THE CONNECTION OF SIN AND DEATH.

Pelagians and Socinians teach that man was created mortal, not merely in the sense that he could fall a prey to death, but in the sense that he was, in virtue of his creation, under the law of death, and in course of time was bound to die. This means that Adam was not only susceptible to death, but was actually subject to it before he fell. The advocates of this view were prompted primarily by the desire to evade the proof for original sin derived from the suffering and death of infants. Present day science seems to support this position by stressing the fact that death is the law of

organized matter, since it carries within it the seed of decay and dissolution. Some of the early Church Fathers and some later theologians, such as Warburton and Laidlaw, take the position that Adam was indeed created mortal, that is, subject to the law of dissolution, but that the law was effective in his case only because he sinned. If he had proved himself to be obedient, he would have been exalted to a state of immortality. His sin brought about no change in his constitutional being in this respect, but under the sentence of God left him subject to the law of death, and robbed him of the boon of immortality, which he might have had without experiencing death. On this view the actual entrance of death, of course, remains penal. It is a view which might be made to fit in very well with the supralapsarian position, but is not demanded by this. In reality this theory merely seeks to square the facts, as they are revealed in the Word of God, with the dicta of science, but even these do not make it imperative. Suppose that science had proved conclusively that death reigned in the vegetable and animal world before the entrance of sin, then it would not yet necessarily follow that it also prevailed in the world of rational and moral beings. And even if it were established beyond the shadow of a doubt that all physical organisms, the human included, now carry within them the seeds of dissolution, this would not yet prove that man was not an exception to the rule before the fall. Shall we say that the almighty power of God, by which the universe was created, was not sufficient to continue man in life indefinitely? Moreover we ought to bear in mind the following Scriptural data: (1) Man was created in the image of God and this, in view of the perfect condition in which the image of God existed originally, would seem to exclude the possibility of his carrying within him the seeds of dissolution and mortality. (2) Physical death is not represented in Scripture as the natural result of the continuation of the original condition of man, due to his failure to rise to the height of immortality by the path of obedience; but as the result of his spiritual death, Romans 6:23; Romans 5:21; 1 Corinthians 15:56; James 1:15. (3) Scriptural expressions certainly point to death as something introduced into the world of humanity by sin, and as a positive punishment for sin, Genesis 2:17; Genesis 3:19; Romans 5:12; Romans 5:17; 1 Corinthians 15:21; James 1:15. (4) Death is not represented as something natural in the life of man, a mere falling short of an ideal, but very decidedly as something foreign and hostile to human life: it is an expression of divine anger, Psalms 90:7; Psalms 90:11, a judgment, Romans 1:32, a condemnation, Romans 5:16, and a curse, Galatians 3:13, and fills the hearts of the children of men with dread and fear, just because it is felt to be something unnatural. All this does not mean, however, that there may not have been death in some sense of the word in the lower creation apart from sin, but even there the entrance of sin evidently brought a bondage of corruption that was foreign to the creature, Romans 8:20-22. In strict justice God might have imposed death on man in the fullest sense of the word immediately after his transgression, Genesis 2:17. But by His common grace He restrained the operation of sin and death, and by His special grace in Christ Jesus He conquered these hostile forces, Romans 5:17; 1 Corinthians 15:45; 2 Timothy 1:10; Hebrews 2:14; Revelation 1:18 ; Revelation 20:14. Death now accomplishes its work fully only in the lives of those who refuse the deliverance from it that is offered in Jesus Christ. Those who believe in Christ are freed from the power of death, are restored to communion with God, and are endowed with an endless life, John 3:36; John 6:40; Romans 5:17-21; Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 15:26; 1 Corinthians 15:51-57; Revelation 20:14; Revelation 21:3-4.

C. THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THE DEATH OF BELIEVERS. The Bible speaks of physical death as a punishment, as "the wages of sin." Since believers are justified, however, and are no more under

obligation to render any penal satisfaction, the question naturally arises, Why must they die? It is quite evident that for them the penal element is removed from death. They are no more under the law, either as a requirement of the covenant of works or as a condemning power, since they have obtained a complete pardon for all their sins. Christ became a curse for them, and thus removed the penalty of sin. But if this is so, why does God still deem it necessary to lead them through the harrowing experience of death? Why does He not simply transfer them to heaven at once? It cannot be said that the destruction of the body is absolutely essential to a perfect sanctification, since that is contradicted by the examples of Enoch and Elijah. Neither does it satisfy to say that death sets the believer free from the ills and sufferings of the present life, and from the trammels of the dust, by liberating the spirit from the present coarse and sensual body. God might effect this deliverance also by a sudden transformation, such as living saints will experience at the time of the parousia. It is quite evident that the death of believers must be regarded as the culmination of the chastisements which God has ordained for the sanctification of His people. While death in itself remains a real natural evil for the children of God, something unnatural, which is dreaded by them as such, it is made subservient in the economy of grace to their spiritual advancement and to the best interests of the Kingdom of God. The very thought of death, bereavements through death, the feeling that sicknesses and sufferings are harbingers of death, and the consciousness of the approach of death, — all have a very beneficial effect on the people of God. They serve to humble the proud, to mortify carnality, to check worldliness and to foster spiritual-mindedness. In the mystical union with their Lord believers are made to share the experiences of Christ. Just as He entered upon His glory by the pathway of sufferings and death, they too can enter upon their eternal reward only through sanctification. Death is often the supreme test of the strength of the faith that is in them, and frequently calls forth striking manifestations of the consciousness of victory in the very hour of seeming defeat, 1 Peter 4:12-13. It completes the sanctification of the souls of believers, so that they become at once "the spirits of just men made perfect," Hebrews 12:23; Revelation 21:27. Death is not the end for believers, but the beginning of a perfect life. They enter death with the assurance that its sting has been removed, 1 Corinthians 15:55, and that it is for them the gateway of heaven. They fall asleep in Jesus, 2 Thessalonians 1:7, and know that even their bodies will at last be snatched out of the power of death, to be forever with the Lord, Romans 8:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:16-17. Jesus said, "He that believeth on me, though he die, yet shall he live." And Paul had the blessed consciousness that for him to live was Christ, and to die was gain. Hence he could also speak in jubilant notes at the end of his career: "I have fought the good fight, I have finished the course, I have kept the faith: henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give to me at that day; and not to me only, but also to all them that have loved His appearing," 2 Timothy 4:7-8.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What is the fundamental idea of the Biblical conception of death? Is death merely the natural result of sin, or is it a positive punishment for sin? If it is the latter, how can this be proved from Scripture? In what sense was man, as he was created by God, mortal; and in what sense, immortal? How can you disprove the position of the Pelagians? In what sense has death really ceased to be death for believers? What purpose does death serve in their lives? When is the power of death completely terminated for them?

LITERATURE: Dick, Lect. on Theol, pp. 426-433; Dabney, Syst. and Polemic Theol., pp. 817-821; Litton; Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 536-540; Pieper, Christl. Dogm. III, pp. 569-573; Schmid,

Dogm. Theol. of the Ev. Luth. Church, pp. 626-631; Pope, Chr. Theol. III, pp. 371-376; Valentine, Chr. Theol., II, pp. 389-391; Hovey, Eschatology, pp. 13-22; Dahle, Life After Death, pp. 24-58; Kenneday, St. Paul's Conception of the Last Things, pp. 103-157; Strong, Syst. Theol. pp. 982 f.; Pohle-Preuss, Eschatology, pp. 5-17.

04.6.1.2. The Immortality of the Soul

II. The Immortality of the Soul In the preceding it was pointed out that physical death is the separation of body and soul and marks the end of our present physical existence. It necessarily involves and results in the decomposition of the body. It marks the end of our present life and the end of the "natural body." But now the question arises, What becomes of the soul: does physical death bring its life to a close, or does it continue to exist and live on after death? It has always been the firm conviction of the Church of Jesus Christ that the soul continues to live even after its separation from the body. This doctrine of the immortality of the soul calls for brief consideration at this point.

DIFFERENT CONNOTATIONS OF THE TERM "IMMORTALITY." In a discussion of the doctrine of immortality it should be borne in mind that the term "immortality" is not always used in the same sense. There are certain distinctions that are quite essential, in order to prevent confusion.

1. In the most absolute sense of the word immortality is ascribed only to God. Paul speaks of Him in 1 Timothy 6:15-16 as "the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, who only hath immortality." This does not mean that none of His creatures are immortal in any sense of the word. Understood in that unrestricted sense, this word of Paul would also teach that the angels are not immortal, and this is certainly not the intention of the apostle. The evident meaning of his statement is that God is the only being who possesses immortality "as an original, eternal, and necessary endowment." Whatever immortality may be ascribed to some of His creatures, is contingent on the divine will, is conferred upon them, and therefore had a beginning. God, on the other hand, is necessarily free from all temporal limitations.

2. Immortality in the sense of continuous or endless existence is also ascribed to all spirits, including the human soul. It is one of the doctrines of natural religion or philosophy that, when the body is dissolved, the soul does not share in its dissolution, but retains its identity as an individual being. This idea of the immortality of the soul is in perfect harmony with what the Bible teaches about man, but the Bible, religion, and theology, are not primarily interested in this purely quantitative and colourless immortality, — the bare continued existence of the soul.

3. Again, the term "immortality" is used in theological language to designate that state of man in which he is entirely free from the seeds of decay and death. In this sense of the word man was immortal before the fall. This state clearly did not exclude the possibility of man’s becoming subject to death. Though man in the state of rectitude was not subject to death, yet he was liable to it. It was entirely possible that through sin he would become subject to the law of death; and as a matter of fact he did fall a victim to it.

4. Finally, the word "immortality" designates, especially in eschatological language, that state of man in which he is impervious to death and cannot possibly become its prey. Man was not immortal in this highest sense of the word in virtue of his creation, even though he was created in the image of God. This immortality would have resulted if Adam had complied with the condition of

the covenant of works, but can now only result from the work of redemption as it is completed in the consummation.

B. TESTIMONY OF GENERAL REVELATION TO THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL. The question of Job, "If a man die, shall he live again?" (

Job 14:14Job 14:14">) is one of perennial interest. And with it the question constantly recurs, whether the dead still live. The answer to this question has practically always been an affirmative one. Though evolutionists cannot admit that faith in the immortality of the soul is an original endowment of man, yet it cannot be denied that this faith is all but universal, and is found even in the lowest forms of religion. Under the influence of materialism many have been inclined to doubt and even to deny the future life of man. Yet this negative attitude is not the prevailing one. In a recent Symposium on "Immortality," containing the views of about a hundred representative men, the opinions are practically unanimous in favour of a future life. The historical and philosophical arguments for the immortality of the soul are not absolutely conclusive, but certainly are important testimonies to the continued personal and conscious existence of man. They are the following.

1. THE HISTORICAL ARGUMENT. The consensus gentium is just as strong in connection with the immortality of the soul, as it is with reference to the existence of God. There always have been unbelieving scholars who denied the continued existence of man, but in general it may be said that belief in the immortality of the soul is found among all races and nations, no matter what their stage of civilization may be. And it would seem that a notion so common can only be regarded as a natural instinct or as something involved in the very constitution of human nature.

2. THE METAPHYSICAL ARGUMENT. This argument is based on the simplicity of the human soul, and infers from this its indissolubility. In death matter is dissolved into its parts. But the soul as a spiritual entity is not composed of various parts, and is therefore incapable of division or dissolution. Consequently, the decomposition of the body does not carry with it the destruction of the soul. Even when the former perishes, the latter remains intact. This argument is very old and was already used by Plato.

3. THE TELEOLOGICAL ARGUMENT. Human beings seem to be endowed with almost infinite capabilities, which are never fully developed in this life. It seems as if most men only just begin to accomplish some of the great things to which they aspire. There are ideals that fall far short of realization, appetites and desires that are not satisfied in this life, yearnings and aspirations that are disappointed. Now it is argued that God would not have conferred upon men such abilities and talents, only to make them fail in their achievements, would not have filled the heart with such desires and aspirations, only to disappoint them. He must have provided a future existence, in which human life will come to fruition.

4. THE MORAL ARGUMENT. The human conscience testifies to the existence of a moral Ruler of the universe who will exercise justice. Yet the demands of justice are not met in this present life. There is a very unequal and seemingly unjust distribution of good and evil. The wicked often prosper, increase in riches, and have an abundant share of the joys of life, while the pious frequently live in poverty, meet with painful and humiliating reverses, and suffer many afflictions. Hence there must be a future state of existence, in which justice will reign supreme, and the inequalities of the present will be adjusted.

C. TESTIMONY OF SPECIAL REVELATION TO THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL. The historical and philosophical proofs for the survival of the soul are not absolutely demonstrative, and therefore do not compel belief. For greater assurance in this matter, it is necessary to direct the eye of faith to Scripture. Here, too, we must rely on the voice of authority. Now the position of Scripture with respect to this matter may at first seem somewhat dubious. It speaks of God as the only one who hath immortality (1 Timothy 6:15), and never predicates this of man. There is no explicit mention of the immortality of the soul, and much less any attempt to prove it in a formal way. Hence the Russellites or Millennial Dawnists often challenge theologians to point to a single passage in which the Bible teaches that the soul of man is immortal. But even if the Bible does not explicitly state that the soul of man is immortal, and does not seek to prove this in a formal way, any more than it seeks to present formal proof for the existence of God, this does not mean that Scripture denies or contradicts or even ignores it. It clearly assumes in many passages that man continues his conscious existence after death. In fact, it treats the truth of the immortality of man very much as it does that of the existence of God, that is, it assumes this as an undisputed postulate.

1. THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. The assertion has been made repeatedly that the Old Testament, and particularly the Pentateuch, does not teach in any way the immortality of the soul. Now it is perfectly true that this great truth is revealed less clearly in the Old than in the New Testament; but the facts in the case do not warrant the assertion that it is absent from the Old Testament altogether. It is a well-known and generally recognized fact that God's revelation in Scripture is progressive and gradually increases in clearness; and it stands to reason that the doctrine of immortality in the sense of a blessed eternal life, could only be revealed in all its bearings after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who "brought life and immortality to light," 2 Timothy 1:10. But while all this is true, it cannot be denied that the Old Testament implies the continued conscious existence of man, either in the sense of a bare immortality or survival of the soul, or of a blessed future life, in several ways. This is implied: a. In its doctrine of God and man. The very root of Israel's hope of immortality was found in its belief in God as its Creator and Redeemer, its covenant God, who would never fail them. He was to them the living, the eternal, the faithful God, in whose fellowship they found joy, life, peace, and perfect satisfaction. Would they have panted after Him as they did, have entrusted themselves to Him completely in life and death, and have sung of Him as their portion forever, if they felt that all He offered them was but for a brief span of time? How could they derive real comfort from the promised redemption of God, if they regarded death as the end of their existence? Moreover, the Old Testament represents man as created in the image of God, created for life and not for mortality. In distinction from the brute, he possesses a life that transcends time and already contains within itself a pledge of immortality. He is made for communion with God, is but little lower than the angels, and God has set eternity in his heart, Ecclesiastes 3:11. b. In its doctrine of sheol. We are taught in the Old Testament that the dead descend into sheol. The discussion of this doctrine belongs to the following chapter. But whatever may be the proper interpretation of the Old Testament sheol, and whatever may be said of the condition of those who have descended into it, this is certainly represented as a state of more or less conscious existence, though not one of bliss. Man enters upon the state of perfect bliss only by a deliverance from sheol. In this deliverance we reach the real core of the Old Testament hope of a blessed immortality. This is clearly taught in several passages, such as Psalms 16:10; Psalms 49:14-15. c. In its frequent warnings against consulting the dead or "familiar

spirits " that is, persons who were able to summon the spirits of the dead and to convey their messages to the inquirers, Leviticus 19:31; Leviticus 20:27; Deuteronomy 18:11; Isaiah 8:19; Isaiah 29:4. Scripture does not say that it is impossible to consult the dead, but rather seems to presuppose the possibility while it condemns the practice. d. In its teachings respecting the resurrection of the dead. This doctrine is not explicitly taught in the earlier books of the Old Testament. Christ points out, however, that it was taught by implication in the statement, "I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob," Matthew 22:32, cf. Exodus 3:6, and chides the Jews for not understanding the Scriptures on this point. Moreover, the doctrine of the resurrection is explicitly taught in such passages as Job 19:23-27; Psalms 16:9-11; Psalms 17:15; Psalms 49:15; Psalms 73:24; Isaiah 26:19; Daniel 12:2. e. In certain striking Old Testament passages which speak of the believer's enjoyment in communion with God after death. These are in the main identical with the passages referred to in the preceding, namely, Job 19:25-27; Psalms 16:9-11; Psalms 17:15; Psalms 73:23-24; Psalms 73:26. They breathe the confident expectation of pleasures in the presence of Jehovah.

2. THE DOCTRINE OF IMMORTALITY IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. In the New Testament, after Christ has brought life and immortality to light, the proofs naturally multiply. The passages that contain these may again be divided into various classes, as referring: a. To the survival of the soul. A continued existence of both the righteous and the wicked is clearly taught. That the souls of believers survive, appears from such passages as Matthew 10:28; Luke 23:43; John 11:25 f; John 14:3; 2 Corinthians 5:1; and several other passages make it quite evident that the same can be said of the souls of the wicked, Matthew 11:21-24; Matthew 1:1; Romans 2:5-11; 2 Corinthians 5:10. b. To the resurrection by which the body is also made to share in the future existence. For believers the resurrection means the redemption of the body and entrance into the perfect life in communion with God, the full blessedness of immortality. This resurrection is taught in Luke 20:35-36; John 5:25-29; 1 Corinthians 15:1-581Th_4:16; Php 3:21, and other passages. For the wicked the resurrection will also mean a renewed and continued existence of the body, but this can hardly be called life. Scripture calls it eternal death. The resurrection of the wicked is mentioned in John 5:29; Acts 24:15; Revelation 20:12-15. c. To the blessed life of believers i; n communion with God. There are numerous passages in the New Testament which stress the fact that the immortality of believers is not a bare endless existence, but a rapturous life of bliss in communion with God and with Jesus Christ, the full fruition of the life that is implanted in the soul while still on earth. This is clearly emphasized in such passages as Matthew 13:43; Matthew 25:34; Romans 2:7; Romans 2:10; 1 Corinthians 15:49; Php 3:21; 2 Timothy 4:8; Revelation 21:4; Revelation 22:3-4.

D. OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE OF PERSONAL IMMORTALITY AND MODERN SUBSTITUTES FOR IT.

1. THE MAIN OBJECTION TO IT. Belief in the immortality of the soul for a time suffered a decline under the influence of a materialistic philosophy. The main argument against it was forged in the workshop of physiological psychology, and runs somewhat as follows: The mind or the soul has no independent substantial existence, but is simply a product or function of brain activity. The brain of man is the producing cause of mental phenomena, just as the liver is the producing cause of bile. The function cannot persist when the organ decays. When the brain ceases to operate, the stream of mental life comes to a stop.

2. SUBSTITUTES FOR THE DOCTRINE OF PERSONAL IMMORTALITY. The desire for immortality is so deeply implanted in the human soul that even those who accept the dicta of a materialistic science, seek some sort of substitute for the discarded notion of the personal immortality of the soul. Their hope for the future assumes one of the following forms: a. Racial immortality. There are those who comfort themselves with the idea that the individual will continue to live on this earth in his posterity, in his children and grandchildren, to endless generations. The individual seeks compensation for his lack of hope in a personal immortality in the notion that he contributes his share to the life of the race and will continue to live on in that. But the idea that a man lives on in his progeny, whatever modicum of truth it may contain, can hardly serve as a substitute for the doctrine of personal immortality. It certainly does not do justice to the data of Scripture, and does not satisfy the deepest longings of the human heart. b. Immortality of commemoration. According to Positivism this is the only immortality we should desire and look for. Everyone should aim at doing something to establish a name for himself, which will go down in the annals of history. If he does this, he will continue to live in the hearts and minds of a grateful posterity. This also falls far short of the personal immortality which Scripture leads us to expect. Moreover, it is an immortality in which only a few will share. The names of most men are not recorded on the pages of history, and many of those who are so recorded are soon forgotten. And to a great extent it may be said that the best and the worst share it alike. c. Immortality of in fl uence. This is very closely related to the preceding. If a man makes his mark in life, and accomplishes something that is of enduring value, his influence will continue long after he is gone. Jesus and Paul, Augustine and Thomas Aquinas, Luther and Calvin, — they are all very much alive in the influence which they exercise up to the present time. While this is perfectly true, this immortality of influence is but a poor substitute for personal immortality. All the objections that were raised against the immortality of commemoration, also apply in this case.

3. THE RECOVERY OF FAITH IN IMMORTALITY. At the present time the materialistic interpretation of the universe is making way for a more spiritual interpretation; and as a result faith in personal immortality is once more gaining favor. Dr. William James, while subscribing to the formula, "Thought is a function of the brain," denies that this logically compels us to disbelieve the doctrine of immortality. He maintains that this conclusion of the scientists is based on the mistaken notion that the function of which the formula speaks is necessarily a productive function, and points out that it may also be a permissive or transmissive function. The brain may merely transmit, and in the transmission colour, thought, just as a coloured glass, a prism, or a refracting lens, may transmit light and at the same time determine its colour and direction. The light exists independent of the glass or lens; so thought also exists independent of the brain. He comes to the conclusion that one can, in strict logic, believe in immortality. Some evolutionists now base the doctrine of conditional immortality on the struggle for existence. And such scientists as William James, Sir Oliver Lodge, and James H. Hyslop, attach great significance to reputed communications with the dead. On the basis of psychic phenomena the first was inclined to believe in immortality, while the other two embraced it as an established fact.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Is the doctrine of immortality found in the Pentateuch? What accounts for the comparative scarcity of proofs for it in the Old Testament? On what did Plato base his belief in the immortality of the soul? How did Kant judge of the usual natural arguments for the doctrine of immortality? Is there any place for belief in personal immortality in

either Materialism or Pantheism? Why does the doctrine of so-called "social immortality" fail to satisfy? Is the immortality of the soul in the philosophical sense the same as eternal life? How should we judge of the reputed spiritualistic communications with the dead?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 645-655; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm. De Consummatione Saeculi, pp. 3-24; Hodge, Syst. Theol. III, pp. 713-730; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., pp. 817-823; Dick, Lect. on Theol. Lectures LXXX, LXXXI; Litton, Introd. to Dogm. Theol., pp. 535-548; Heagle, Do the Dead Still Live; Dahl, Life After Death, pp. 59-84; Salmond, Christian Doctrine of Immortality, cf. Index; Mackintosh, Immortality and the Future, pp. 164-179; Brown, The Christian Hope, cf. Index; Randall, The New Light on Immortality; Macintosh, Theology as an Empirical Science, pp. 72-80; Althaus, Die Letzten Dinge, pp. 1-76; A. G. James, Personal Immortality, pp. 19-52; Rimmer, The Evidences for Immortality; Lawton, The Drama of Life After Death; Addison, Life Beyond Death, pp. 3-132.

04.6.1.3. The Intermediate State

III. The Intermediate State A. THE SCRIPTURAL VIEW OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE.

1. THE SCRIPTURAL REPRESENTATION OF BELIEVERS BETWEEN DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION. The usual position of the Reformed Churches is that the souls of believers immediately after death enter upon the glories of heaven. In answer to the question, "What comfort does the resurrection of the body afford thee?" the Heidelberg Catechism says: "That not only my soul, after this life, shall be immediately taken up to Christ its Head, but also that this my body, raised by the power of Christ, shall again be united with my soul, and made like the glorious body of Christ."6 The Westminster Confession speaks in the same spirit, when it says that, at death, "The souls of the righteous, being then made perfect in holiness, are received into the highest heavens, where they behold the face of God in light and glory, waiting for the full redemption of their bodies."7 Similarly, the Second Helvetic Confession declares: "We believe that the faithful, after bodily death, go directly unto Christ."8 This view would seem to find ample justification in Scripture, and it is well to take note of this, since during the last quarter of a century some Reformed theologians have taken the position that believers at death enter an intermediate place, and remain there until the day of the resurrection. The Bible teaches, however, that the soul of the believer when separated from the body, enters the presence of Christ. Paul says that he is "willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be at home with the Lord." 2 Corinthians 5:8. To the Philippians he writes that he has a "desire to depart and to be with Christ," Php 1:23. And Jesus gave the penitent malefactor the joyous assurance, "To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise,"

Luke 23:43. And to be with Christ is also to be in heaven. In the light of 2 Corinthians 12:3-4 "paradise" can only be a designation of heaven. Moreover, Paul says that, "if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," 2 Corinthians 5:1. And the writer of Hebrews cheers the hearts of his readers with this thought among others that they "are come to the general assembly and church of the firstborn who are enrolled in heaven," Hebrews 12:23. That the future state of believers after death is greatly to be preferred to the present appears clearly from the assertions of Paul in 2 Corinthians 5:8 and Php 1:23, quoted above. It is a state in which believers are truly alive and fully conscious, Luke 16:19-31; 1 Thessalonians 5:10; a state of rest and endless bliss, Revelation 14:13.

2. THE SCRIPTURAL REPRESENTATION OF THE STATE OF THE WICKED BETWEEN DEATH AND THE RESURRECTION. The Westminster Catechism says that the souls of the wicked after death "are cast into hell, where they remain in torments and utter darkness, reserved to the judgment of the great day." Moreover, it adds: "Besides these two places (heaven and hell) for souls separated from their bodies, the Scripture acknowledgeth none."9 And the Second Helvetic Confession continues after the quotation cited above: "In like manner, we believe that the unbelievers are cast headlong into hell, from whence there is no return opened to the wicked by any offices of those who live."10 The Bible sheds very little direct light on this subject. The only passage that can really come into consideration here is the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in

Luke 16:1-31, where hades denotes hell, the place of eternal torment. The rich man found himself in the place of torment; his condition was fixed forever; and he was conscious of his miserable plight, sought mitigation of the pain he was suffering, and desired to have his brethren warned, in order that they might avoid a similar doom. In addition to this direct proof there is also an inferential proof. If the righteous enter upon their eternal state at once, the presumption is that this is true of the wicked as well. We leave out of consideration here a couple of passages, which are of uncertain interpretation, namely, 1 Peter 3:19; 2 Peter 2:9.

B. THE DOCTRINE OF THE INTERMEDIATE STATE IN HISTORY. In the earliest years of the Christian Church there was little thought of an intermediate state. The idea that Jesus would soon return as Judge made the interval seem to be of little consequence. The problem of the intermediate state arose when it became apparent that Jesus would not at once return. The real problem that vexed the early Fathers, was how to reconcile individual judgment and retribution at death with the general judgment and retribution after the resurrection. To ascribe too much importance to the former would seem to rob the other of its significance, and vice versa. There was no unanimity among the early Church Fathers, but the majority of them sought to solve the difficulty by assuming a distinct intermediate state between death and the resurrection. Says Addison: "For many centuries the general conclusion was widely accepted that in a subterranean Hades the righteous enjoy a measure of reward not equal to their future heaven and the wicked suffer a degree of punishment not equal to their future hell. The intermediate state was thus a slightly reduced version of ultimate retribution."11 This view was held, though with some variations, by such men as Justin Martyr, Irenæus, Tertullian, Novatian, Origen, Gregory of Nyssa, Ambrose, and Augustine. In the Alexandrian School the idea of the intermediate state passed into that of a gradual purification of the soul, and this in course of time paved the way for the Roman Catholic doctrine of purgatory. There were some, however, who favored the idea that at death the souls of the righteous immediately entered heaven, namely, Gregory of Nazianze, Eusebius, and Gregory the Great. In the Middle Ages the doctrine of an intermediate state was retained, and in connection with it the Roman Catholic Church developed the doctrine of purgatory. The prevailing opinion was that hell received at once the souls of the wicked, but that only those of the righteous who were free from every stain of sin, were admitted at once into the blessedness of heaven, to enjoy the visio Dei. The martyrs were usually reckoned among the favored few. Those who were in need of further purification were, according to the prevalent view, detained in purgatory for a shorter or longer period of time, as the degree of remaining sin might require, and were there purged from sin by a purifying fire. Another idea, that was also developed in connection with the thought of the intermediate state, was that of the Limbus Patrum, where the Old Testament saints were detained until the resurrection of Christ. The Reformers, one and all, rejected the doctrine of purgatory, and also the whole idea of a real intermediate state, which carried with it the idea of an intermediate place. They held that those who died in the Lord at once entered the bliss of heaven, while those who died in their sins at once descended into hell. However, some theologians of the Reformation period assumed a difference in degree between the bliss of the former and the judgment of the latter before the final judgment, and their final bliss and punishment after the great assize. Among the Socinians and the Anabaptists there were some who revived the old doctrine held by some in the early Church, that the soul of man sleeps from the time of death until the resurrection. Calvin wrote a treatise to combat this view. Anathema maranatha. The same notion is advocated by some Adventist sects and by the Millennial Dawnists. During the nineteenth

century several theologians, especially in England, Switzerland, and Germany, embraced the idea that the intermediate state is a state of further probation for those who have not accepted Christ in this life. This view is maintained by some up to the present time and is a favorite tenet of the Universalists.

C. THE MODERN CONSTRUCTION OF THE DOCTRINE OF SHEOL-HADES

1. STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE. There are several representations of the Biblical conception of sheol-hades in present day theology, and it is quite impossible to consider each one of them separately. The idea is quite prevalent at present that the Old Testament conception of sheol to which that of hades in the New Testament is supposed to correspond, was borrowed from the Gentile notion of the underworld. It is held that according to the Old Testament and the New, both the pious and the wicked at death enter the dreary abode of the shades, the land of forgetfulness, where they are doomed to an existence that is merely a dreamy reflection of life on earth. The underworld is in itself neither a place of rewards nor a place of punishment. It is not divided into different compartments for the good and the bad, but is a region without moral distinctions. It is a place of weakened consciousness and of slumbrous inactivity, where life has lost its interests and the joy of life is turned into sadness. Some are of the opinion that the Old Testament represents sheol as the permanent abode of all men, while others find that it holds out a hope of escape for the pious. Occasionally we meet with a somewhat different representation of the Old Testament conception, in which sheol is represented as divided into two compartments, namely, paradise and gehenna, the former containing either all the Jews or only those who faithfully observed the law, and the latter embracing the Gentiles. The Jews will be delivered from sheol at the coming of the Messiah, while the Gentiles will remain forever in the abode of darkness. The New Testament counterpart of this conception of sheol is found in its representation of hades. It is not merely held that the Hebrews entertained the notion of such an underworld, nor that the Biblical writers occasionally accommodated themselves formally in their representations to the views of the Gentiles of whom they were speaking; but that this is the Scriptural view of the intermediate state.

2. CRITICISM OF THIS MODERN REPRESENTATION. In the abstract it is, of course, possible that the idea of such a separate locality, which is neither heaven nor hell, in which all the dead are gathered and where they remain, either permanently or until some communal resurrection, was more or less current in popular Hebrew thought and may have given rise to some figurative descriptions of the state of the dead; but it can hardly be regarded by those who believe in the plenary inspiration of the Bible as an element of the positive teachings of Scripture, since it plainly contradicts the Scriptural representation that the righteous at once enter glory and the wicked at once descend into the place of eternal punishment. Moreover, the following considerations can be urged against this view: a. The question arises, whether the view of sheol-hades, now so widely regarded as Scriptural, is true to fact or not. If it was true to fact at the time, when the books of the Bible were written, but is no more true to fact to-day, the question naturally rises, What brought about the change? And if it was not true to fact, but was a decidedly false view —and this is the prevalent opinion —, then the problem at once arises, how this erroneous view could be countenanced and sanctioned and even taught positively by the inspired writers of Scripture. The problem is not relieved by the consideration, urged by some, that the inspiration of Scripture does not carry with it the assurance that the Old Testament saints were correct when they spoke of men entering some subterranean place at death, because not only these saints but also the inspired

writers of Scripture employed language which, in itself and irrespective of other clear teachings of Scripture, might be so interpreted, Numbers 16:30; Psalms 49:15-16; Psalms 88:3; Psalms 89:48; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Isaiah 5:14; Hosea 13:14. Were these inspired writers in error, when they spoke of both the righteous and the wicked as descending into sheol? It may be said that there was development in the revelation respecting the future destiny of man, and we have no reason to doubt that on this point, as on many others, that which was first obscure gradually gained in definiteness and clearness; but this certainly does not mean that the true developed out of the false. How could this be? Did the Holy Spirit deem it expedient for man that he first receive false impressions and obtain erroneous views, and then exchange these in course of time for a correct insight into the condition of the dead? b. If in the Scriptural representation sheol-hades is really a neutral place, without moral distinctions, without blessedness on the one hand, but also without positive pain on the other, a place to which all alike descend, how can the Old Testament hold up the descent of the wicked into sheol as a warning, as it does in several places, Job 21:13; Psalms 9:17; Proverbs 5:5; Proverbs 7:27; Proverbs 9:18; Proverbs 15:24; Proverbs 23:14? How can the Bible speak of God’s anger burning there, Deuteronomy 32:22, and how can it use the term sheol as synonymous with abaddon that is, destruction, Job 26:6; Proverbs 15:11; Proverbs 27:20? This is a strong term, which is applied to the angel of the abyss in Revelation 19:11. Some seek escape from this difficulty by surrendering the neutral character of sheol and by assuming that it was conceived of as an underworld with two divisions, called in the New Testament paradise and gehenna, the former the destined abode of the righteous, and the latter that of the wicked; but this attempt can only result in disappointment, for the Old Testament contains no trace of such a division, though it does speak of sheol as a place of punishment for the wicked. Moreover, the New Testament clearly identifies paradise with heaven in 2 Corinthians 12:2; 2 Corinthians 12:4. And, finally, if hades is the New Testament designation of sheol and all alike go there, what becomes of the special doom of Capernaum, Matthew 11:23, and how can it be pictured as a place of torment, Luke 16:23? Someone might be inclined to say that the threatenings contained in some of the passages mentioned refer to a speedy descent into sheol, but there is no indication of this in the text whatsoever, except in Job 21:13Job 21:13">, where this is explicitly stated. c. If a descent into sheol was the gloomy outlook upon the future, not only of the wicked but also of the righteous, how can we explain the expressions of gladsome expectation, or joy in the face of death, such as we find in Numbers 23:10; Psalms 16:9; Psalms 16:11; Psalms 17:15; Psalms 49:15; Psalms 73:24.; Psalms 73:26; Isaiah 25:8 (comp. 1 Corinthians 15:54)? The expression in Psalms 49:15 may be interpreted to mean that God will deliver the poet out of sheol or from the power of sheol. Notice also what the writer of Hebrews says of the Old Testament heroes of faith in Hebrews 11:13-16. The New Testament, of course, speaks abundantly of the joyous outlook of believers on the future, and teaches their conscious happiness in the disembodied state, Luke 16:23; Luke 16:25; Luke 23:43; Acts 7:59; 2 Corinthians 5:1; 2 Corinthians 5:6; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Php 1:21; Php 1:23; 1 Thessalonians 5:10; Ephesians 3:14-15 ("family in heaven," not in " hades"); Revelation 6:9; Revelation 6:11; Revelation 14:13. In 2 Corinthians 12:2; 2 Corinthians 12:4 "paradise" is used synonymously with "the third heaven." In connection with this clear representation of the New Testament, it has been suggested that the New Testament believers were privileged above those of the Old Testament by receiving immediate access to the bliss of heaven. But the question may well be asked, What basis is there for assuming such a distinction? d. If the word sheol always denotes the shadowy region to which the dead descend, and never has

any other meaning, then the Old Testament, while it does have a word for heaven as the blessed abode of God and of the holy angels, has no word for hell, the place of destruction and of eternal punishment. But it is only on the assumption that in some passages sheol designates a place of punishment whither the wicked go in distinction from the righteous, that the warnings referred to under (b) have any point. Sheol is actually sometimes contrasted with shamayim (heavens) as in Job 11:8; Psalms 139:8; Amos 9:2. Scripture also speaks of the deepest or lowest sheol in Deuteronomy 32:22. The same expression is also found in Psalms 86:13, but in that passage is evidently used figuratively. e. Finally, it should be noticed that there was a difference of opinion among scholars as to the exact subject of the descent into sheol. The prevailing opinion is that man as a whole is the subject. Man descends into sheol and in some obscure fashion continues his existence in a world of shadows, where the relations of life still reflect those on earth. This representation would seem to be most in harmony with the statements of Scripture, Genesis 37:35; Job 7:9; Job 14:13; Job 21:13; Psalms 139:8; Ecclesiastes 9:10. There are some which point to the fact that the body is included. There is danger that Jacob's "gray hairs" will be brought down to sheol Genesis 42:38; Genesis 44:29; Genesis 44:31; Samuel comes up as an old man covered with a robe, 1 Samuel 28:14; and Shimei's "hoar head" must be brought down to sheol, 1 Kings 2:6; 1 Kings 2:9. But if sheol is a place whither all the dead go, body and soul, what then is laid in the grave, which is supposed to be another place? This difficulty is obviated by those scholars who maintain that only the souls descend into sheol, but this can hardly be said to be in harmony with the Old Testament representation. It is true that there are a few passages which speak of souls as going down into, or as being in, sheol, Psalms 16:10; Psalms 30:3; Psalms 86:13; Psalms 89:48; Proverbs 23:14, but it is a well known fact that in Hebrew the word nephesh (soul) with the pronominal suffix is often, especially in poetical language, equivalent to the personal pronoun. Some conservative theologians adopted this construction of the Old Testament representation, and found in it support for their idea that the souls of men are in some intermediate place (a place with moral distinctions and separate divisions, however) until the day of the resurrection.

3. SUGGESTED INTERPRETATION OF SHEOL-HADES. The interpretation of these terms is by no means easy, and in suggesting an interpretation we do not desire to give the impression that we are speaking with absolute assurance. An inductive study of the passages in which the terms are found soon dissipates the notion that the terms sheol and hades are always used in the same sense, and can in all cases be rendered by the same word, whether it be underworld, state of death, grave, or hell. This is also clearly reflected in the various translations of the Bible. The Holland Version renders the term sheol by grave in some passages, and by hell in others. The St. James or Authorized Version employs three words in its translation, namely, grave, hell, and pit. The English Revisers rather inconsistently retained grave or pit in the text of the historical books, putting sheol in the margin. They retained hell only in Isaiah 14:1-32. The American Revisers avoid the difficulty by simply retaining the original words sheol and hades in their translation. Though the opinion has gained wide currency that sheol is simply the underworld to which all men descend, this view is by no means unanimous. Some of the earlier scholars simply identified sheol and the grave; others regard it as the place where the souls of the dead are retained; and still others, of whom Shedd, Vos, Aalders, and De Bondt may be mentioned, maintain that the word sheol does not always have the same meaning. It would seem that the last opinion deserves preference, and that the following can be said respecting its different meanings: a. The words sheol and hades do

not always denote a locality in Scripture, but are often used in an abstract sense to designate the state of death, the state of the separation of body and soul. This state is frequently locally conceived as constituting the realm of death, and is sometimes represented as a stronghold with gates, which only he who has the keys can lock and unlock, Matthew 16:18; Revelation 1:18. This local representation is in all probability based on a generalization of the idea of the grave, into which man descends when he enters the state of death. Since both believers and unbelievers at the termination of their life enter into the state of death, it can very well be said figuratively that they are without distinction in sheol or hades. They are all alike in the state of death. The parallelism clearly shows what is meant in a passage like 1 Samuel 2:6 : "Jehovah killeth and maketh alive; He bringeth down to sheol, and bringeth up." Cf. also Job 14:13-14; Job 17:13; Job 14:1-22; Psalms 89:48; Hosea 13:14, and several other passages. The word hades is evidently used more than once in the nonlocal sense of the state of the dead in the New Testament, Acts 2:27; Acts 2:31; Revelation 6:8; Revelation 20:2-8. In the last two passages we have a personification. Since the terms may denote the state of death, it is not necessary to prove that they never refer to anything that concerns the righteous and the wicked alike, but only that they do not denote a place where the souls of both are gathered. De Bondt calls attention to the fact that in many passages the term sheol is used in the abstract sense of death, of the power of death, and of the danger of death. b. When sheol and hades designate a locality in the literal sense of the word, they either refer to what we usually call hell, or to the grave. Descent into sheol is threatened as a danger and as a punishment for the wicked, Psalms 9:17; Psalms 49:14; Psalms 55:15; Proverbs 15:11; Proverbs 15:24; Luke 16:23 (hades). The warning and threatening contained in these passages is lost altogether, if sheol is conceived of as a neutral place whither all go. From these passages it also follows that it cannot be regarded as a place with two divisions. The idea of such a divided sheol is borrowed from the Gentile conception of the underworld, and finds no support in Scripture. It is only of sheol as the state of death that we can speak as having two divisions, but then we are speaking figuratively. Even the Old Testament testifies to it that they who die in the Lord enter upon a fuller enjoyment of the blessings of salvation, and therefore do not descend into any underworld in the literal sense of the word, Numbers 23:5; Numbers 23:10; Psalms 16:11; Psalms 17:15; Psalms 73:24; Proverbs 14:32. Enoch and Elijah were taken up, and did not descend into an underworld, Hebrews 11:5 ff. Moreover, sheol, not merely as a state, but also as a place, is regarded as in the closest connection with death. If the Biblical conception of death is understood in its deep significance, in its spiritual meaning, it will readily be seen that sheol cannot be the abode of the souls of those who die in the Lord, Proverbs 5:5; Proverbs 15:11; Proverbs 27:20.

There are also several passages in which sheol and hades seem to designate the grave. It is not always easy to determine, however, whether the words refer to the grave or to the state of the dead. The following are some of the passages that come into consideration here: Genesis 37:25; Genesis 42:38; Genesis 44:29; Genesis 29:31; 1 Kings 2:6; 1 Kings 2:9; Job 14:13; Job 17:13; Job 21:13; Psalms 6:5; Psalms 88:3; Ecclesiastes 9:10. But though the name sheol is also used for the grave, it does not necessarily follow that this is the original use of the word, from which its use to designate hell is borrowed. In all probability the opposite is true. The grave is called sheol, because it symbolizes the going down, which is connected with the idea of destruction. For believers the Biblical symbolism is changed by Scripture itself. Paul says that they go down in death as a grain is sown in the earth, from which springs a new, a more abundant, a more glorious

life. In the Old Testament the word sheol is used more often for grave and less often for hell, while in the corresponding use of hades in the New Testament the contrary holds.

D. THE ROMAN CATHOLIC DOCTRINES RESPECTING THE ABODE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH.

1. PURGATORY. According to the Church of Rome the souls of those who are perfectly pure at death are forthwith admitted to heaven or the beatific vision of God, Matthew 25:46; Php 1:23; but those who are not perfectly cleansed, who are still burdened with the guilt of venial sins and have not borne the temporal punishment due to their sins — and this is the condition of most of the faithful at death — must undergo a process of cleansing before they can enter into the supreme blessedness and joys of heaven. Instead of entering heaven at once, they enter purgatory. Purgatory is not a place of probation, but a place of purification and of preparation for the souls of believers who are sure of an ultimate entrance into heaven, but are not yet fit to enter upon the bliss of the beatific vision. During the stay of these souls in purgatory they suffer the pain of loss, that is, the anguish resulting from the fact that they are excluded from the blessed sight of God, and also endure "the punishment of sense," that is, suffer positive pains, which afflict the soul. The length of their stay in purgatory cannot be determined beforehand. The duration as well as the intensity of their sufferings varies according to the degree of purification still needed. They can be shortened and alleviated by the prayers and the good works of the faithful on earth, and especially by the sacrifice of the mass. It is possible that one must remain in purgatory until the time of the last judgment. The Pope is supposed to have jurisdiction over purgatory. It is his peculiar prerogative to grant indulgences, lightening the purgatorial sufferings or even terminating them. The main support for this doctrine is found in 2Ma 12:42-45, and therefore in a book that is not recognized as canonical by the Protestants. But this passage proves too much, that is, more than the Roman Catholics themselves can consistently admit, namely, the possible deliverance of soldiers from purgatory who had died in the mortal sin of idolatry. Certain passages of Scripture are also supposed to favor this doctrine, such as Isaiah 4:4; Micah 7:8; Zechariah 9:11; Malachi 3:2-3; Matthew 12:32; 1 Corinthians 3:13-15; 1 Corinthians 15:29. It is perfectly evident, however, that these passages can be made to support the doctrine of purgatory only by a very forced exegesis. The doctrine finds absolutely no support in Scripture, and moreover, rests on several false premises, such as (a) that we must add something to the work of Christ; (b) that our good works are meritorious in the strict sense of the word; (c) that we can perform works of supererogation, works in excess of the commands of duty; and (d) that the Church’s power of the keys is absolute in a judicial sense. According to it the Church can shorten, alleviate, and even terminate the sufferings of purgatory.

2. THE LIMBUS PATRUM. The Latin word limbus (fringe) was used in the Middle Ages to denote two places on the fringe or outskirts of hell, namely, the Limbus Patrum and the Limbus Infantum. The former is the place where, according to the teachings of Rome, the souls of the Old Testament saints were detained in a state of expectation until the Lord’s resurrection from the dead. After His death on the cross Christ is supposed to have descended into the abode of the fathers, to release them from their temporary confinement and to carry them in triumph to heaven. This is the Roman Catholic interpretation of Christ’s descent into hades. Hades is regarded as the dwelling place of the departed spirits, having two divisions, one for the righteous and one for the wicked. The division inhabited by the spirits of the righteous was the Limbus Patrum, known to the

Jews as Abraham's bosom, Luke 16:23, and paradise, Luke 23:43. It is maintained that heaven was not open to any man until Christ had actually made propitiation for the sin of the world.

3. THE LIMBUS INFANTUM. This is the abode of the souls of all unbaptized children, irrespective of their descent from heathen or from Christian parents. According to the Roman Catholic Church unbaptized children cannot be admitted to heaven, cannot enter the Kingdom of God, John 3:5. There was always a natural repugnance, however, to the idea that these children should be tortured in hell, and Roman Catholic theologians sought a way of escape from the difficulty. Some thought that such children might perhaps be saved by the faith of their parents, and others, that God might commission the angels to baptize them. But the prevailing opinion is that, while they are excluded from heaven, they are consigned to a place on the outskirts of hell, where its terrible fires do not reach. They remain in this place forever without any hope of deliverance. The Church has never defined the doctrine of the Limbus Infantum, and the opinions of the theologians vary as to the exact condition of the children confined in it. The prevailing opinion is, however, that they suffer no positive punishment, no "pain of sense," but are simply excluded from the blessings of heaven. They know and love God by the use of their natural powers, and have full natural happiness.

E. THE STATE OF THE SOUL AFTER DEATH ONE OF CONSCIOUS EXISTENCE.

1. THE TEACHING OF SCRIPTURE ON THIS POINT. The question has been raised, whether the soul after death remains actively conscious and is capable of rational and religious action. This has sometimes been denied on the general ground that the soul in its conscious activity is dependent on the brain, and therefore cannot continue to function when the brain is destroyed. But, as already pointed out in the preceding (pp. 677 f.), the cogency of this argument may well be doubted. "It is," to use the words of Dahle, "based on the error of confusing the worker with his machine." From the fact that the human consciousness in the present life transmits its effects through the brain, it does not necessarily follow that it can work in no other way. In arguing for the conscious existence of the soul after death, we place no reliance on the phenomena of present day spiritualism, and do not even depend on philosophical arguments, though these are not without force. We seek our evidence in the Word of God, and particularly in the New Testament. The rich man and Lazarus converse together, Luke 16:19-31. Paul speaks of the disembodied state as a "being at home with the Lord," and as something to be desired above the present life, 2 Corinthians 5:6-9; Php 1:23. Surely, he would hardly speak after that fashion about an unconscious existence, which is a virtual non-existence. In Hebrews 12:23 believers are said to have come to... "the spirits of just men made perfect," which certainly implies their conscious existence. Moreover, the spirits under the altar are crying out for vengeance on the persecutors of the Church, Revelation 6:9, and the souls of the martyrs are said to reign with Christ, Revelation 20:4. This truth of the conscious existence of the soul after death has been denied in more than one form.

2. THE DOCTRINE OF THE SLEEP OF THE SOUL (PSYCHOPANNYCHY). a. Statement of the doctrine. This is one of the forms in which the conscious existence of the soul after death is denied. It maintains that, after death, the soul continues to exist as an individual spiritual being, but in a state of unconscious repose. Eusebius makes mention of a small sect in Arabia that held this view. During the Middle Ages there were quite a few so-called Psychopannychians, and at the time of the Reformation this error was advocated by some of the Anabaptists. Calvin even wrote a

treatise against them under the title Psychopannychia. In the nineteenth century this doctrine was held by some of the Irvingites in England, and in our day it is one of the favorite doctrines of the Russellites or Millennial Dawnists of our own country. According to the latter body and soul descend into the grave, the soul in a state of sleep, which really amounts to a state of non-existence. What is called the resurrection is in reality a new creation. During the millennium the wicked will have a second chance, but if they show no marked improvement during the first hundred years, they will be annihilated. If in that period they give evidence of some amendment of life, their probation will continue, but only to end in annihilation, if they remain impenitent. There is no hell, no place of eternal torment. The doctrine of the sleep of soul seems to have a peculiar fascination for those who find it hard to believe in a continuance of consciousness apart from the corporeal organism. b. Supposed Scriptural warrant for this doctrine. Scripture proof for this doctrine is found especially in the following: (1) Scripture often represents death as a sleep, Matthew 9:24; Acts 7:60; 1 Corinthians 15:51; 1 Thessalonians 4:13. This sleep, it is said, cannot be a sleep of the body, and therefore must be a sleep of the soul. (2) Certain passages of Scripture teach that the dead are unconscious, Psalms 6:5; Psalms 30:9; Psalms 115:17; Psalms 146:4; Ecclesiastes 9:10; Isaiah 38:18-19. This is contrary to the idea that the soul continues its conscious existence. (3) The Bible teaches that the destinies of men will be determined by a final judgment and will be a surprise to some. Consequently, it is impossible to assume that the soul enters upon its destiny immediately after death, Matthew 7:22-23; Matthew 25:37-39; Matthew 25:44; John 5:29; Revelation 20:12 f. (4) None of those who were raised from the dead have ever given any account of their experiences. This can best be understood on the assumption that their souls were unconscious in their disembodied state. c. Consideration of the arguments presented. The preceding arguments may be answered as follows in the order in which they were stated: (1) It should be noted that the Bible never says that the soul falls asleep, nor that the body does so, but only the dying person. And this Scriptural representation is simply based on the similarity between a dead body and a body asleep. It is not unlikely that Scripture uses this euphemistic expression, in order to suggest to believers the comforting hope of the resurrection. Moreover, death is a break with the life of the world round about us, and in so far is a sleep, a rest. Finally, it should not be forgotten that the Bible represents believers as enjoying a conscious life in communion with God and with Jesus Christ immediately after death, Luke 16:19-31; Luke 23:43; Acts 7:59; 2 Corinthians 5:8; Php 1:23; Revelation 6:9; Revelation 7:9; Revelation 20:4. (2) The passages which seem to teach that the dead are unconscious are clearly intended to stress the fact that in the state of death man can no more take part in the activities of this present world. Says Hovey: "The work of the artisan is arrested, the voice of the singer is hushed, the scepter of the king falls. The body returns to the dust, and the praise of God in this world ceases forever." (3) It is sometimes represented as if man’s eternal destiny depends upon a trial at the last day, but this is evidently a mistake. The day of judgment is not necessary to reach a decision respecting the reward or punishment of each man, but only for the solemn announcement of the sentence, and for the revelation of the justice of God in the presence of men and angels. The surprise of which some of the passages give evidence pertains to the ground on which the judgment rests rather than to the judgment itself. (4) It is true that we do not read that any of those who were raised from the dead ever told anything about their experiences between their death and resurrection. But this is a mere argument from silence, which is quite worthless in this case, since the Bible clearly teaches the conscious existence of the dead. It may well be, however, that those persons were

silent about their experiences, but this can readily be explained on the assumption that they were not permitted to tell about them, or that they could not give an account of them in human language. Cf. 2 Corinthians 12:4.

3. THE DOCTRINE OF ANNIHILATIONISM AND OF CONDITIONAL IMMORTALITY. a.Statement of these doctrines. According to these doctrines there is no conscious existence, if any existence at all, of the wicked after death. The two are one in their conception of the state of the wicked after death, but differ in a couple of fundamental points. Annihilationism teaches that man was created immortal, but that the soul, which continues in sin, is by a positive act of God deprived of the gift of immortality, and ultimately destroyed, or (according to some) forever bereaved of consciousness, which is practically equivalent to being reduced to non-existence. According to the doctrine of conditional immortality, on the other hand, immortality was not a natural endowment of the soul, but is a gift of God in Christ to those who believe. The soul that does not accept Christ ultimately ceases to exist, or loses all consciousness. Some of the advocates of these doctrines teach a limited duration of conscious suffering for the wicked in the future life, and thus retain something of the idea of positive punishment. b.These doctrines in history. The doctrine of annihilationism was taught by Arnobius and the early Socinians, and by the philosophers Locke and Hobbes, but was not popular in its original form. In the previous century, however, the old idea of annihilation was revived with some modifications under the name of conditional immortality, and in its new form found considerable favor. It was advocated by E. White, J. B. Heard, and the Prebendaries Constable and Row in England, by Richard Rothe in Germany, by A. Sabatier in France, by E. Petavel and Ch. Secretan in Switzerland, and by C. F. Hudson, W. R. Huntington, L. C. Baker, and L. W. Bacon in our own country, and therefore deserves special notice. They do not all put the doctrine in the same form, but agree in the fundamental position that man is not immortal in virtue of his original constitution, but is made immortal by a special act or gift of grace. As far as the wicked are concerned some maintain that these retain a bare existence, though with an utter loss of consciousness, while others assert that they perish utterly like the beasts, though it may be after longer or shorter periods of suffering. c. Arguments adduced in favor of this doctrine. Support for this doctrine is found partly in the language of some of the early Church Fathers, which seems to imply at least that only believers receive the gift of immortality, and partly also in some of the most recent theories of science, which deny that there is any scientific proof for the immortality of the soul. The main support for it, however, is sought in Scripture. It is said that the Bible: (1) teaches that God only is inherently immortal, 1 Timothy 6:16; (2) never speaks of the immortality of the soul in general, but represents immortality as a gift of God to those who are in Christ Jesus, John 10:27-28; John 17:3; Romans 2:7; Romans 6:22-23; Galatians 6:8; and (3) threatens sinners with "death" and "destruction," asserting that they will "perish," terms which are to be taken to mean that unbelievers will be reduced to non-existence, Matthew 7:13; Matthew 10:28; John 3:16; Romans 6:23; Romans 8:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:9. d. Consideration of these arguments. It cannot be said that the arguments in favor of this doctrine are conclusive. The language of the early Church Fathers is not always exact and self-consistent, and admits of another interpretation. And the speculative thought of the ages has, on the whole, been favorable to the doctrine of immortality, while science has not succeeded in disproving it. The Scriptural arguments may be answered in order as follows: (1) God is indeed the only one that has inherent immortality. Man’s immortality is derived, but this is not equivalent to saying that he does not possess it in virtue of his creation. (2) In the second argument the bare

immortality or continued existence of the soul is confused with eternal life, while the latter is a far richer concept. Eternal life is indeed the gift of God in Jesus Christ, a gift which the wicked do not receive, but this does not mean that they will not continue to exist. (3) The last argument arbitrarily assumes that the terms "death," "destruction," and "perish" denote a reduction to non-existence. It is only the baldest literalism that can maintain this, and then only in connection with some of the passages quoted by the advocates of this theory. e. Arguments against this doctrine. The doctrine of conditional immortality is plainly contradicted by Scripture where it teaches: (1) that sinners as well as saints will continue to exist forever, Ecclesiastes 12:7; Matthew 25:46; Romans 2:8-10; Revelation 14:11; Revelation 20:10; (2) that the wicked will suffer eternal punishment, which means that they will be forever conscious of a pain which they will recognize as their just desert, and therefore will not be annihilated, cf. the passages just mentioned; and (3) that there will be degrees in the punishment of the wicked, while extinction of being or consciousness admits of no degrees, but constitutes a punishment that is alike for all, Luke 12:47-48; Romans 2:12. The following considerations are also decidedly opposed to this particular doctrine: (1) Annihilation would be contrary to all analogy. God does not annihilate His work, however much He may change its form. The Biblical idea of death has nothing in common with annihilation. Life and death are exact opposites in Scripture. If death means simply the cessation of being or consciousness, life must mean only the continuation of these; but as a matter of fact it means much more than that, cf. Romans 8:6; 1 Timothy 4:8; 1 John 3:14. The term has a spiritual connotation, and so has the word death. Man is spiritually dead before he falls a prey to physical death, but this does not involve a loss of being or consciousness, Ephesians 2:1-2; 1 Timothy 5:6; Colossians 2:13; Revelation 3:1. (2) Annihilation can hardly be called a punishment, since this implies a consciousness of pain and ill- desert, while, when existence terminates, consciousness also ceases. It might at most be said that the dread of annihilation would be a punishment, but this punishment would not be commensurate with the transgression. And naturally the dread of a man who never had within him the spark of immortality, will never equal that of him who has eternity in his heart, Ecclesiastes 3:11. (3) It often happens that people consider the extinction of being and of consciousness a very desirable thing, when they grow tired of life. For these such a punishment would be in reality a blessing.

F. THE INTERMEDIATE STATE NOT A STATE OF FURTHER PROBATION.

1. STATEMENT OF THE DOCTRINE. The theory of the so-called "second probation" found considerable favor in the theological world of the nineteenth century. It is advocated, among others, by Mueller, Dorner, and Nitzsch in Germany, by Godet and Gretillat in Switzerland, by Maurice, Farrar, and Plumptre in England, and by Newman Smythe, Munger, Cox, Jukes and several Andover theologians in our own country. This theory is to the effect that salvation through Christ is still possible in the intermediate state for certain classes or, perhaps, for all; and that this is offered on substantially the same terms as at present, namely, faith in Christ as Saviour. Christ is made known to all who still need Him unto salvation, and acceptance of Him is urged on all. No one is condemned to hell without being subjected to this test, and only they are condemned who resist this offer of grace. The eternal state of man will not be irrevocably fixed until the day of judgment. The decision made between death and the resurrection will decide, whether one will be saved or not. The fundamental principle on which this theory rests, is that no man will perish without having been offered a favorable opportunity to know and accept Jesus. Man is condemned

only for the obstinate refusal to accept the salvation that is offered in Christ Jesus. Opinions differ, however, as to the persons to whom the gracious opportunity to accept Christ will be offered in the intermediate state. The general opinion is that it will certainly be extended to all children who die in infancy, and to the adult heathen who in this life have not heard of Christ. The majority hold that it will even be granted to those who lived in Christian lands, but in this present life never properly considered the claims of Christ. Again, there is great diversity of opinion as to the agency and the methods by which this saving work will be carried on in the future. Moreover, while some entertain the largest hope as to the outcome of the work, others are less sanguine in their expectations.

2. THE FOUNDATION ON WHICH THIS DOCTRINE RESTS. This theory is founded in part on general considerations of what might be expected of the love and justice of God, and on an easily understood desire to make the gracious work of Christ as inclusive as possible, rather than on any solid Scriptural foundation. The main Scriptural basis for it is found in 1 Peter 3:19; 1 Peter 4:6, which are understood to teach that Christ in the period between His death and resurrection preached to the spirits in hades. But these passages furnish but a precarious foundation, since they are capable of quite a different interpretation.12 And even if these passages did teach that Christ actually went into the underworld to preach, His offer of salvation would extend only to those who died before His crucifixion. They also refer to passages which, in their estimation, represent unbelief as the only ground of condemnation, such as John 3:18; John 3:36; Mark 16:15-16; Romans 10:9-12; Ephesians 4:18; 2 Peter 2:3-4; 1 John 4:3. But these passages only prove that faith in Christ is the way of salvation, which is by no means the same as proving that a conscious rejection of Christ is the only ground of condemnation. Unbelief is undoubtedly a great sin, and one that stands out prominently in the lives of those to whom Christ is preached, but it is not the only form of revolt against God, nor the only ground of condemnation. Men are already under condemnation when Christ is offered to them. Other passages, such as Matthew 13:31-32; 1 Corinthians 15:24-28; and Php 2:9-11 are equally inconclusive. Some of them prove too much and therefore prove nothing.

3. ARGUMENTS AGAINST THIS DOCTRINE. The following considerations can be urged against this theory: (a) Scripture represents the state of unbelievers after death as a fixed state. The most important passage that comes into consideration here is Luke 16:19-31. Other passages are Ecclesiastes 11:3 (of uncertain interpretation); John 8:21; John 8:24; 2 Peter 2:4; 2 Peter 2:9; Jude 1:7-13 (comp. 1 Peter 3:19). (b) It also invariably represents the coming final judgment as determined by the things that were done in the flesh, and never speaks of this as dependent in any way on what occurred in the intermediate state, Matthew 7:22-24; Matthew 7:22-23; Matthew 25:34-46; Luke 12:47-48; 2 Corinthians 5:9-10; Galatians 6:7-8; 2 Thessalonians 1:8; Hebrews 9:27. (c) The fundamental principle of this theory, that only the conscious rejection of Christ and His gospel, causes men to perish, is un-Scriptural. Man is lost by nature, and even original sin, as well as all actual sins, makes him worthy of condemnation. The rejection of Christ is undoubtedly a great sin, but is never represented as the only sin that leads to destruction. (d) Scripture teaches us that the Gentiles perish, Romans 1:32; Revelation 21:8; Revelation 21:8. There is no Scripture evidence on which we can base the hope that adult Gentiles, or even Gentile children that have not yet come to years of discretion, will be saved. (e) The theory of a future probation is also calculated to extinguish all missionary zeal. If the Gentiles can decide as to the acceptance of Christ in the future, it can only bring a speedier and increased judgment upon many, if they are

placed before the choice now. Why not leave them in ignorance as long as possible?

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Is the position tenable that sheol-hades always designates an underworld whither all the dead go? Why is it objectionable to believe that the Bible in its statements respecting sheol and hades simply reflects the popular notions of the day? Must we assume that the righteous and the wicked at death enter some temporary and provisional abode, and do not at once enter upon their eternal destiny? In what sense is the intermediate state only transitional? How did the notion of purgatory arise? How do Catholics conceive of the purgatorial fire? Is this fire merely purifying or also penal? What sound element do some Lutherans recognize in the doctrine of purgatory? What mixture of heresies do we meet with in Millennial Dawnism? Does the intermediate state, according to Scripture, represent a third aion between the aion houtos and the aion ho mellon? Is the Scriptural emphasis on the present as "the day of salvation" in harmony with the doctrine of a future probation?

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04.6.2.1. The Second Coming of Christ

I. The Second Coming of Christ

While the prophets do not clearly distinguish a twofold coming of Christ, the Lord Himself and the apostles make it abundantly clear that the first coming will be followed by a second. Jesus referred to His return more than once towards the end of His public ministry, Matthew 24:30; Matthew 25:19; Matthew 25:31; Matthew 26:64; John 14:3. At the time of His ascension angels pointed to His future return, Acts 1:11. Moreover, the apostles speak of it in numerous passages, Php 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:10; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28. Several terms are used to denote this great event, of which the following are the most important: (1) apocalupsis (unveiling), which points to the removal of that which now obstructs our vision of Christ, 1 Corinthians 1:7; 2 Thessalonians 1:7; 1 Peter 1:7; 1 Peter 1:13; 1 Peter 4:13; (2) epiphaneia (appearance, manifestation), a term referring to Christ's coming forth out of a hidden background with the rich blessings of salvation, 2 Thessalonians 1:1; 1 Timothy 6:14; 2 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:13; and (3) parousia (lit. presence), which points to the coming that precedes the presence or results in the presence, Matthew 24:3; Matthew 24:27; Matthew 24:37; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 4:15; 1 Thessalonians 5:23; 2 Thessalonians 2:1-9; James 5:7-8; 2 Peter 1:16; 2 Peter 3:4; 2 Peter 3:12; 1 John 2:28.

A. THE SECOND COMING A SINGLE EVENT.

Present day dispensationalists distinguish between a twofold future coming of Christ, though they sometimes seek to preserve the unity of the idea of the second coming by speaking of these as two aspects of that great event. But since these two are in reality represented as two different events, separated by a period of several years, each having a purpose of its own, they can hardly be regarded as a single event. The first of these is the parousia or simply "the coming," and results in the rapture of the saints, sometimes represented as a secret rapture. This coming is imminent, that is, it can occur at any moment, since there are no predicted events which must precede its occurrence. The prevailing opinion is that at this time Christ does not come down to earth, but remains in the upper air. Those who die in the Lord are raised from the dead, the living saints are transfigured, and together they are caught up to meet the Lord in the air. Hence this coming is also called the "coming for His saints," 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16. It is followed by an interval of seven years, during which the world is evangelized, Matthew 24:14, Israel is converted, Romans 11:26, the great tribulation occurs, Matthew 24:21-22, and Antichrist or the man of sin will be revealed, 2 Thessalonians 2:8-10. After these events there is another coming of the Lord with His saints, 1 Thessalonians 3:13, which is called "the revelation" or "the day of the Lord," in which He comes down to earth. This coming cannot be called imminent, because it must be preceded by several predicted events. At this coming Christ judges the living nations, Matthew 25:31-46, and ushers in the millennial kingdom. Thus we have two distinct comings of the Lord, separated by a period of seven years, of which the one is imminent and the other is not, the one is followed by the glorification of the saints, and the other by the judgment of the nations and the establishment of

the kingdom. This construction of the doctrine of the second coming is very convenient for the dispensationalists, since it enables them to defend the view that the coming of the Lord is imminent, but is not warranted by Scripture and carries with it un-Scriptural implications. In 2 Thessalonians 2:1-2; 2 Thessalonians 2:8 the terms parousia and "day of the Lord" are used interchangeably, and according to 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 the revelation mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 1:7 synchronizes with the parousia which brings the glorification of the saints of which 2 Thessalonians 1:10 speaks. Matthew 24:29-31 represents the coming of the Lord at which the elect are gathered together as following immediately after the great tribulation mentioned in the context, while according to the theory under consideration it should occur before the tribulation. And. finally, according to this theory the Church will not pass through the great tribulation, which is represented in Matthew 24:4-26 as synchronizing with the great apostasy, but the representation of Scripture in Matthew 24:22; Luke 21:36; 2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 2 Timothy 3:1-5; Revelation 7:14 is quite different. On the basis of Scripture it should be maintained that the second coming of the Lord will be a single event. Happily, some Premillenarians do not agree with this doctrine of a twofold second coming of Christ, and speak of it as an unwarranted novelty. Says Frost: "It is not generally known, and yet it is an indisputable fact that the doctrine of a pretribulation resurrection and rapture is a modern interpretation — I am tempted to say, a modern invention."13 According to him it dates from the day of Irving and Darby. Another Premillenarian, namely, Alexander Reese, puts up a very strong argument against this whole idea in his work on The Approaching Advent of Christ.

B. GREAT EVENTS PRECEDING THE PAROUSIA.

According to Scripture several important events must occur before the return of the Lord, and therefore it cannot be called imminent. In the light of Scripture it cannot be maintained that there are no predicted events which must still come to pass before the second coming. As might be expected in view of what was said in the preceding, Frost, in spite of his dispensationalism, rejects the doctrine of imminence. He prefers to speak of the coming of Christ as "impending." Support for the doctrine of the imminence of the return of Christ is found in Scripture statements to the effect that Christ is coming after "a very little while," Hebrews 10:37; or "quickly," Revelation 22:7; in exhortations to watch and wait for His coming, Matthew 24:42; Matthew 25:13; Revelation 16:15; and in the fact that Scripture condemns the person who saith, "My Lord tarrieth" (or, "delayeth his coming"), Matthew 24:48. Jesus did indeed teach that His coming was near, but this is not the same as teaching that it was imminent. In the first place it should be borne in mind that in speaking of His coming, He does not always have in mind the eschatological coming. Sometimes He refers to His coming in spiritual power on the day of Pentecost; sometimes to His coming in judgment in the destruction of Jerusalem. In the second place He and the apostles teach us that several important events had to occur before His physical return at the last day, Matthew 24:5-14; Matthew 24:21-22; Matthew 24:29-31; 2 Thessalonians 2:2-4. Therefore He could not very well regard and represent His coming as imminent. It is evident also that, when He spoke of His coming as near, He did not mean to represent it as immediately at hand. In the parable of the pounds He teaches that the Lord of the servants came to reckon with them "after a long time," Matthew 25:19. And the parable of the pounds was spoken for the very purpose of correcting the notion "that the kingdom of God should immediately appear," Luke 19:11. In the parable of the ten virgins the bridegroom is represented as "tarrying," Matthew 25:5. This is in harmony with what Paul says in 2

Thessalonians 2:2. Peter predicted that scoffers would arise saying, "Where is the day of His coming?" And he teaches his readers to understand the predictions of the nearness of the second coming from the divine point of view, according to which one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, 2 Peter 3:3-9. To teach that Jesus regarded the second coming as immediately at hand, would be to represent Him as in error, since almost two thousand years have already elapsed since that time. Now the question can be raised, How can we then be urged to watch for the coming? Jesus teaches us in Matthew 24:32-33 to watch for the coming through the signs: "when ye see all these things, know ye that He is nigh." Moreover, we need not interpret the exhortation to watch as an exhortation to scan the heavens for immediate signs of the Lord's appearance. We should rather see in it an admonition to be awake, to be alert, to be prepared, to be active in the work of the Lord, lest we be overtaken by sudden calamity. The following great events must precede the coming of the Lord.

1. THE CALLING OF THE GENTILES. Several passages of the New Testament point to the fact that the gospel of the Kingdom must be preached to all nations before the return of the Lord, Matthew 24:14; Mark 13:10; Romans 11:25. Many passages testify to the fact that the Gentiles will enter the Kingdom in goodly numbers during the new dispensation, Matthew 8:11; Matthew 13:31-32; Luke 2:32; Acts 15:14; Romans 9:24-26; Ephesians 2:11-20, and other passages. But those indicated above clearly refer to the evangelization of all nations as the goal of history. Now it will hardly do to say that the gospel has already been proclaimed among all peoples, nor that the labors of a single missionary in each one of the nations of the world would meet all the requirements of the statement of Jesus. On the other hand it is equally impossible to maintain that the words of the Saviour call for the preaching of the gospel to every individual of the different nations of the world. They do require, however, that those nations as nations shall be thoroughly evangelized, so that the gospel becomes a power in the life of the people, a sign that calls for decision. It must be preached to them for a testimony so that it can be said that an opportunity was given them to choose for or against Christ and His Kingdom. These words clearly imply that the great commission must be carried out in all the nations of the world, in order to make disciples of all nations, that is, from among the people of all those nations. They do not justify the expectation, however, that all the nations will as a whole accept the gospel, but only that it will find adherents in all the nations and will thus be instrumental in bringing in the fulness of the Gentiles. At the end of time it will be possible to say that all nations were made acquainted with the gospel, and the gospel will testify against the nations that did not accept it. It will readily be understood from what we said in the preceding that many dispensationalists have quite a different view of the matter. They do not believe that the evangelization of the world need be, nor that it will be, completed before the parousia, which is imminent. According to them it will really begin at that time. They point out that the gospel indicated in Matthew 24:14 is not the gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ, but the gospel of the Kingdom, which is quite different, the good news that the Kingdom is once more at hand. After the Church has been removed from this earthly scene, and with it the indwelling Holy Spirit has gone — which really means, after Old Testament conditions have been restored —, then the gospel with which Jesus began His ministry will again be preached. It will be preached at first by those who were converted by the very removal of the Church, later on perhaps by converted Israel and a special messenger,14 or, particularly during the great tribulation, by the believing remnant of Israel.15 This preaching will be wonderfully effective, far more effective than the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God. It is during this period that the 144,000 and the

great multitude which no man can number of Revelation 7:1-17 will be converted. And in that way the prediction of Jesus in Matthew 24:14 will be fulfilled. It should be remembered that this construction is one which the older Premillenarians did not accept, which is even now rejected by some present day Premillenarians. and which certainly does not commend itself to us. The distinction between a twofold gospel and a twofold second coming of the Lord is an untenable one. The gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ is the only gospel that saves and that gives entrance to the Kingdom of God. And it is absolutely contrary to the history of revelation, that a reversal to Old Testament conditions, including the absence of the Church and of the indwelling Holy Spirit, should be more effective than the preaching of the gospel of the grace of God in Jesus Christ and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

2. THE CONVERSION OF THE PLEROMA OF ISRAEL. Both the Old and the New Testament speak of a future conversion of Israel, Zechariah 12:10; Zechariah 13:1; 2 Corinthians 3:15-16, and Romans 11:25-29 seems to connect this with the end of time. Premillennialists have exploited this Scriptural teaching for their particular purpose. They maintain that there will be a national restoration and conversion of Israel, that the Jewish nation will be re- established in the Holy Land, and that this will take place immediately preceding or during the millennial reign of Jesus Christ. It is very doubtful, however, whether Scripture warrants the expectation that Israel will finally be re-established as a nation, and will as a nation turn to the Lord. Some Old Testament prophecies seem to predict this, but these should be read in the light of the New Testament. Does the New Testament justify the expectation of a future restoration and conversion of Israel as a nation? It is not taught nor even necessarily implied in such passages as Matthew 19:28, and Luke 21:24, which are often quoted in its favor. The Lord spoke very plainly of the opposition of the Jews to the spirit of His Kingdom, and of the certainty that they, who could in a sense be called children of the Kingdom, would lose their place in it, Matthew 8:11-12; Matthew 21:28-46; Matthew 22:1-14; Luke 13:6-9. He informs the wicked Jews that the Kingdom will be taken from them and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof, Matthew 21:43. And even when He speaks of the corruptions which in course of time will creep into the Church, of the troubles it will encounter, and of the apostasy which will finally ensue, He does not hint at any prospective restoration and conversion of the Jewish people. This silence of Jesus is very significant. Now it may be thought that Romans 11:11-32 certainly teaches the future conversion of the nation of Israel. Many commentators adopt this view, but even its correctness is subject to considerable doubt. In Romans 9:1-33, Romans 10:1-21,Romans 11:1-36 the apostle discusses the question, how the promises of God to Israel can be reconciled with the rejection of the greater part of Israel. He points out first of all in Romans 9:1-33 and Romans 10:1-21 that the promise applies, not to Israel according to the flesh, but to the spiritual Israel; and in the second place that God still has His elect among Israel, that there is among them still a remnant according to the election of grace, Romans 11:1-10. And even the hardening of the greater part of Israel is not God’s final end, but rather a means in His hand to bring salvation to the Gentiles, in order that these, in turn, by enjoying the blessings of salvation, may provoke Israel to jealousy. The hardening of Israel will always be only partial, for through all the succeeding centuries there will always be some who accept the Lord. God will continue to gather His elect remnant out of the Jews during the entire new dispensation until the fulness (pleroma, that is, the number of the elect) of the Gentiles be come in, and so (in this manner) all Israel (its pleroma, that is, the full number of true Israelites) shall be saved. "All Israel" is to be understood as a designation, not of the whole nation, but of the whole number of

the elect out of the ancient covenant people. Premillenarians take Romans 11:26 to mean that, after God has completed His purpose with the Gentiles, the nation of Israel will be saved. But the apostle said at the beginning of his discussion that the promises were for the spiritual Israel; there is no evidence of a change of thought in the intervening section, so that this would come as a surprise in Romans 11:26; and the adverb houtos cannot mean "after that," but only "in this manner." With the fulness of the Gentiles the fulness of Israel will also come in.

3. THE GREAT APOSTASY AND THE GREAT TRIBULATION. These two may be mentioned together, because they are interwoven in the eschatological discourse of Jesus, Matthew 24:9-12; Matthew 24:21-24; Mark 13:9-22; Luke 21:22-24. The words of Jesus undoubtedly found a partial fulfilment in the days preceding the destruction of Jerusalem, but will evidently have a further fulfilment in the future in a tribulation far surpassing anything that has ever been experienced, Matthew 24:21; Mark 13:19. Paul also speaks of the great apostasy in 2 Thessalonians 2:3; 1 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 3:1-5. He already saw something of that spirit of apostasy in his own day, but clearly wants to impress upon his readers that it will assume much greater propcrtions in the last days. Here again present day dispensationalists differ from us. They do not regard the great tribulation as a precursor of the coming of the Lord (the parousia), but believe that it will follow "the coming," and that therefore the Church will not pass through the great tribulation. The assumption is that the Church will be "caught up," to be with the Lord, before the tribulation with all its terrors overtakes the inhabitants of the earth. They prefer to speak of the great tribulation as "the day of Jacob’s trouble," since it will be a day of great trouble for Israel rather than for the Church. But the grounds which they adduce for this view are not very convincing. Some of them derive whatever force they have from their own preconceived notion of a twofold second coming of Christ, and therefore have no meaning whatsoever for those who are convinced that there is no evidence for such a twofold coming in Scripture. Jesus certainly mentions the great tribulation as one of the signs of His coming and of the end of the world, Matthew 24:3. It is of that coming (parousia) that He is speaking throughout Matthew 24:1-51, as may be seen from the repeated use of the word parousia, Matthew 24:3, Matthew 24:37, Matthew 24:39. It is only reasonable to assume that He is speaking of the same coming in Matthew 24:30, a coming which according to Matthew 24:29 will follow immediately after the tribulation. This tribulation will affect also the elect: they will be in danger of being led astray, Matthew 24:24; for their sakes the days of agony will be shortened, Matthew 24:22; they will be gathered out of all quarters of the world at the coming of the Son of Man; and they are encouraged to look up when they see these things come to pass, since their redemption draweth nigh, Luke 21:28. There is no warrant for limiting the elect to the elect of Israel, as the Premillenarians do. Paul clearly represents the great falling away as preceding the second coming, 2 Thessalonians 2:3, and reminds Timothy of the fact that grievous times will come in the last days, 1 Timothy 4:1-2; 2 Timothy 3:1-5. In Revelation 7:13-14 saints in heaven are said to have come out of the great tribulation, and in Revelation 6:9 we find such saints praying for their brethren who were still suffering persecution.16

4. THE COMING REVELATION OF ANTICHRIST. The term antichristos is found only in the Epistles of John, namely, in 1 John 2:18; 1 John 2:22; 1 John 4:3; 2 John 1:7. As far as the form of the word is concerned, it may describe (a) one who takes the place of Christ; then "anti" is taken in the sense of "instead of"; or (b) one who, while assuming the guise of Christ, opposes Him; then "anti" is used in the sense of "against." The latter is more in harmony with the context in which the

word occurs. From the fact that John uses the singular in 1 John 2:18 without the article, it is evident that the term "antichrist" was already regarded as a technical name. It is uncertain, whether John in using the singular had in mind one paramount Antichrist, of which the others to which he refers were merely harbingers or forerunners, or simply meant to personify the principle embodied in several antichrists, the principle of evil militating against the Kingdom of God. Antichrist clearly does represent a certain principle, 1 John 4:3. If we bear this in mind, we shall also realize that, though John is the first to use the term "antichrist," the principle or spirit indicated by it is clearly mentioned in earlier writings. Just as there is in Scripture a clearly marked development in the delineation of Christ and of the Kingdom of God, so there is also a progressive revelation of antichrist. The representations differ, but increase in definiteness as God's revelation progresses. In the majority of the Old Testament prophets we see the principle of unrighteousness working in the ungodly nations which show themselves hostile to Israel and are judged by God. In the prophecy of Daniel we find something more specific. The language used there furnished many of the features of Paul's description of the man of sin in II Thessalonians. Daniel finds the wicked, ungodly principle embodied in the "little horn," Daniel 7:8; Daniel 7:23-26, and describes it very clearly in Daniel 11:35 ff. Here even the personal element is not altogether wanting, though it is not entirely certain that the prophet is thinking of some particular king, namely, Antiochus Epiphanes, as a type of Antichrist. The coming of Christ naturally calls forth this principle in its specifically anti-Christian form, and Jesus represents it as embodied in various persons. He speaks of pseudoprophetai and pseudochristoi, who take position against Him and His Kingdom, Matthew 7:15; Matthew 24:5; Matthew 24:24; Mark 13:21-22; Luke 17:23. In order to correct the erroneous view of the Thessalonians, Paul calls attention to the fact that the day of Christ cannot come, "except the falling away come first, and the man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition." He describes this man of sin as "he that opposeth and exalteth himself against all that is called God or worshipped; so that he sitteth in the temple of God, setting himself forth as God," 1 Thessalonians 2:3-4. This description naturally reminds us of Daniel 11:36 ff. and clearly points to Antichrist. There is no good reason for doubting the identity of the man of sin, of whom Paul speaks, and the Antichrist mentioned by John. The apostle sees the "mystery of lawlessness" already at work, but assures his readers that the man of sin cannot come forth until that which (or, "he that") restraineth is taken out of the way. When this obstacle, whatever it may be (it is variously interpreted), is removed, he will appear "whose coming is according to the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders," 2 Thessalonians 2:7-9. In this chapter the personal element is presupposed throughout. The book of Revelation finds the anti-Christian principle or power in the two beasts coming up out of the sea and out of the earth, Revelation 13:1-18. The first is generally thought to refer to governments, political powers, or some world-empire; the second, though not with the same unanimity, to false religion, false prophecy, and false science, particularly the first two. This opponent, or opposing principle, John in his epistles finally calls "Antichrist."

Historically, there have been different opinions respecting Antichrist. In the ancient Church many maintained that Antichrist would be a Jew, pretending to be the Messiah and ruling at Jerusalem. Many recent commentators are of the opinion that Paul and others mistakenly thought that some Roman emperor would be Antichrist, and that John clearly had Nero in mind in Revelation 13:18, since the letters in the Hebrew words for "emperor Nero" are exactly equivalent to 666, Revelation 13:18. Since the time of the Reformation many, among whom also Reformed scholars, looked upon papal Rome, and in some cases even on some particular Pope, as Anti-Christ. And the

papacy indeed reveals several traits of Antichrist as he is pictured in Scripture. Yet it will hardly do to identify it with Antichrist. It is better to say that there are elements of Antichrist in the papacy. Positively, we can only say: (a) that the anti-Christian principle was already at work in the days of Paul and John according to their own testimony; (b) that it will reach its highest power towards the end of the world; (c) that Daniel pictures the political, Paul the ecclesiastical, and John in the book of Revelation both sides of it: the two may be successive revelations of the anti-Christian power; and (d) that probably this power will finally be concentrated in a single individual, the embodiment of all wickedness. The question of the personal character of Antichrist is still a subject of debate. Some maintain that the expressions "antichrist," "the man of sin, the son of perdition," and the figures in Daniel and Revelation are merely descriptions of the ungodly and anti- Christian principle, which manifests itself in the opposition of the world to God and His Kingdom, throughout the whole history of that Kingdom, an opposition sometimes weaker, sometimes stronger, but strongest toward the end of time. They do not look for any one personal Antichrist. Others feel that it is contrary to Scripture to speak of Antichrist merely as an abstract power. They hold that such an interpretation does not do justice to the data of Scripture, which speaks, not only of an abstract spirit, but also of actual persons. According to them "Antichrist" is a collective concept, the designation of a succession of persons, manifesting an ungodly or anti-Christian spirit, such as the Roman emperors who persecuted the Church and the Popes who engaged in a similar work of persecution. Even they do not think of a personal Antichrist who will be in himself the concentration of all wickedness. The more general opinion in the Church, however, is that in the last analysis the term "Antichrist" denotes an eschatological person, who will be the incarnation of all wickedness and therefore represents a spirit which is always more or less present in the world, and who has several precursors or types in history. This view prevailed in the early Church and would seem to be the Scriptural view. The following may be said in favor of it: (a) The delineation of Antichrist in Daniel 11:1-45 is more or less personal, and may refer to a definite person as a type of Antichrist. (b) Paul speaks of Antichrist as "the man of sin" and "the son of perdition." Because of the peculiar Hebrew use of the terms "man" and "son" these expressions in themselves may not be conclusive, but the context clearly favors the personal idea. He opposes, sets himself up as God, has a definite revelation, is the lawless one, and so on. (c) While John speaks of many antichrists as already present, he also speaks of Antichrist in the singular as one that is still coming in the future, 1 John 2:18. (d) Even in Revelation, where the representation is largely symbolical, the personal element is not lacking, as, for instance in Revelation 19:20, which speaks of Antichrist and his subordinate as being cast into the lake of fire. And (e) since Christ is a person, it is but natural to think that Antichrist will also be a person.

5. SIGNS AND WONDERS. The Bible speaks of several signs that will be harbingers of the end of the world and of the coming of Christ. It mentions (a) wars and rumours of wars, famines and earthquakes in various places, which are called the beginning of travail, the travail, as it were, of the rebirth of the universe at the time of the coming of Christ; (b) the coming of false prophets, who will lead many astray, and of false Christs, who will show great signs and wonders to lead astray, if possible, even the elect; and (c) of fearful portents in heaven involving sun, moon, and stars, when the powers of the heavens will be shaken, Matthew 24:29-30; Mark 13:24-25; Luke 21:25-26. Since some of these signs are of a kind which repeatedly occur in the natural order of events, the question naturally arises in what way they can be recognized as special signs of the end. Attention is usually called to the fact that they will differ from previous occurrences in intensity and extent.

But, of course, this does not entirely satisfy, because those seeing such signs can never know, if there be no other indications, whether the signs which they are witnessing may not be followed by other similar signs of even greater extent and intensity. Therefore attention should also be called to the fact that there will be, when the end is near, a remarkable conjunction of all these signs, and that the natural occurrences will be accompanied with supernatural phenomena, Luke 21:25-26. Jesus says: "When ye see all these things, know that He is nigh, even at the doors." Matthew 24:33.

C. THE PAROUSIA OR THE SECOND COMING I1TSELF.

Immediately after the portents just mentioned "the sign of the Son of Man shall be seen coming on the clouds of heaven," Matthew 24:30. In connection with this the following points should be noted:

1. THE TIME OF THE SECOND COMING. The exact time of the coming of the Lord is unknown, Matthew 24:36, and all the attempts of men to figure out the exact date proved to be erroneous. The only thing that can be said with certainty, on the basis of Scripture, is that He will return at the end of the world. The disciples asked the Lord. "What shall be the sign of thy coming, and of the end of the world?" Matthew 24:3. They link the two together, and the Lord does not intimate in any way that this is a mistake, but rather assumes the correctness of it in His discourse. He represents the two as synchronizing in Matthew 24:29-31; Matthew 24:35-44 : comp. Matthew 13:39-40. Paul and Peter also speak of the two as coinciding, 1 Corinthians 15:23-24; 2 Peter 3:4-10. A study of the concomitants of the second coming leads to the same result. The resurrection of the saints will be one of its concomitants, 1 Corinthians 15:23; 1 Thessalonians 4:16, and Jesus assures us that He will raise them up at the last day, John 6:39-40, John 6:44, John 6:54. According to Thayer, Cremer-Koegel, Walker, Salmond, Zahn, and others, this can only mean the day of the consummation, — the end of the world. Another one of its concomitants will be the judgment of the world, Matthew 25:31-46, particularly also the judgment of the wicked, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10, which Premillenarians place at the end of the world. And, finally, it will also carry with it the restoration of all things, Acts 3:20-21. The strong expression "restoration of all things" is too strong to refer to anything less than the perfect restoration of that state of things that existed before the fall of man. It points to the restoration of all things to their former condition, and this will not be found in the millennium of the Premillenarians. Even sin and death will continue to slay their victims during that period.17 As was pointed out in the preceding, several things must occur before the Lord’s return. This must be borne in mind in the reading of those passages which speak of the coming of the Lord or the last day as near, Matthew 16:28; Matthew 24:34; Hebrews 10:25; James 5:9; 1 Peter 4:5; 1 John 2:18. They find their explanation partly in the fact that, considered from the side of God, with whom one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day, the coming is always near; partly in the Biblical representation of the New Testament time as constituting the last days or the last time; partly in the fact that the Lord in speaking of His coming does not always have in mind His physical return at the end of time, but may refer to His coming in the Holy Spirit; and partly in the characteristic prophetic foreshortening, in which no clear distinction is made between the proximate coming of the Lord in the destruction of Jerusalem and His final coming to judge the world. Sectaries have often made the attempt to fix the exact time of the second coming, but these attempts are always delusive. Jesus says explicitly: "But of that day and hour knoweth no one, not even the angels of heaven, neither the Son, but the Father only," Matthew 24:36. The statement respecting the Son probably means that this knowledge was not

included in the revelation which He as Mediator had to bring.

2. THE MANNER OF THE SECOND COMING. The following points deserve emphasis here: a. It will be a personal coming. This follows from the statement of the angels to the disciples on the Mount of the Ascension: "This Jesus, who was received up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye beheld Him going into heaven," Acts 1:11. The person of Jesus was leaving them, and the person of Jesus will return. In the system of present day Modernism there is no place for a personal return of Jesus Christ. Douglas Clyde Macintosh sees the return of Christ in "the progressive domination of individuals and society by the moral and religious principles of essential Christianity, i.e. by the Spirit of Christ."18 William Newton Clarke says: "No visible return of Christ to the earth is to be expected, but rather the long and steady advance of His spiritual Kingdom. . . . If our Lord will but complete the spiritual coming that He has begun, there will be no need of a visible advent to make perfect His glory on the earth."19 According to William Adams Brown "Not through an abrupt catastrophe, it may be, as in the early Christian hope, but by the slower and surer method of spiritual conquest, the ideal of Jesus shall yet win the universal assent which it deserves, and His spirit dominate the world. This is the truth for which the doctrine of the second advent stands."20 Walter Rauschenbusch and Shailer Mathews speak in similar terms of the second coming. One and all, they interpret the glowing descriptions of the second coming of Christ as figurative representations of the idea that the spirit of Christ will be an ever-increasing, pervasive influence in the life of the world. But it goes without saying that such representations do not do justice to the descriptions found in such passages as Acts 1:11; Acts 3:20-21; Matthew 24:44; 1 Corinthians 15:22; Php 3:20; Colossians 3:4; 1 Thessalonians 2:19; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-17; 2 Timothy 4:8; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28. Modernists themselves admit this when they speak of these as representing the old Jewish way of thinking. They have new and better light on the subject, but it is a light that grows rather dim in view of the world events of the present day. b. It will be a physical coming. That the Lord’s return will be physical follows from such passages as Acts 1:11; Acts 3:20-21; Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 1:7. Jesus will return to earth in the body. There are some who identify the predicted coming of the Lord with His spiritual coming on the day of Pentecost, and understand the parousia to mean the Lord’s spiritual presence in the Church. According to their representation the Lord did return in the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost, and is now present (hence parousia) in the Church. They lay special emphasis on the fact that the word parousia means presence.21 Now it is quite evident that the New Testament does speak of a spiritual coming of Christ, Matthew 16:28; John 14:23; Revelation 3:20; but this coming, whether to the Church on the day of Pentecost or to the individual in his spiritual renewal, Galatians 1:16, cannot be identified with what the Bible represents as the second coming of Christ. It is true that the word parousia means presence, but Dr. Vos correctly pointed out that in its religious eschatological usage it also means arrival and that in the New Testament the idea of arrival is in the foreground. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that there are other terms in the New Testament, which serve to designate the second coming, namely apokalupsis, epiphaneia, and phanerosis, every one of which points to a coming that can be seen. And, finally, it should not be forgotten that the Epistles refer to the second coming repeatedly as an event that is still future, Php 3:20; 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; Titus 2:13. This does not fit in with the idea that the coming was already an event of the past. c. It will be a visible coming. This is intimately connected with the preceding. It may be said that, if the coming of the Lord will be physical, it will also be visible. This would seem to follow as a matter of

course, but the Russellites or Millennial Dawnists do not seem to think so. They maintain that the return of Christ and the inauguration of the millennium took place invisibly in 1874, and that Christ came in power in 1914 for the purpose of removing the Church and overthrowing the kingdoms of the world. When the year 1914 passed by without the appearance of Christ, they sought a way of escape from the difficulty in the convenient theory that He remained in hiding, because the people do not manifest sufficient repentance. Christ has come, therefore, and has come invisibly. Scripture does not leave us in doubt, however, as to the visibility of the Lord's return. Numerous passages testify to it, such as Matthew 24:30; Matthew 26:64; Mark 13:26; Luke 21:27; Acts 1:11; Colossians 3:4; Titus 2:13; Hebrews 9:28; Revelation 1:7. d. It will be a sudden coming. Though the Bible teaches us on the one hand that the coming of the Lord will be preceded by several signs, it teaches on the other hand in an equally emphatic manner that the coming will be sudden, will be rather unexpected, and will take people by surprise, Matthew 24:37-44; Matthew 25:1-12.; Mark 13:33-37; 1 Thessalonians 5:2-3; Revelation 3:3; Revelation 16:15. This is not contradictory, for the predicted signs are not of such a kind as to designate the exact time. The prophets pointed to certain signs that would precede the first coming of Christ, and yet His coming took many by surprise. The majority of the people paid no attention to the signs whatsoever. The Bible intimates that the measure of the surprise at the second coming of Christ will be in an inverse ratio to the measure of their watchfulness. e. It will be a glorious and triumphant coming. The second coming of Christ, though personal, physical, and visible, will yet be very different from His first coming. He will not return in the body of His humilation, but in a glorified body and in royal apparel, Hebrews 9:28. The clouds of heaven will be His chariot, Matthew 24:30, the angels His bodyguard, 2 Thessalonians 1:7, the archangels His heralds. 1 Thessalonians 4:16, and the saints of God His glorious retinue, 1 Thessalonians 3:13; 2 Thessalonians 1:10. He will come as King of kings and Lord of lords, triumphant over all the forces of evil, having put all His enemies under His feet, 1 Corinthians 15:25; Revelation 19:11-16.

3. THE PURPOSE OF THE SECOND COMING. Christ will return at the end of the world for the purpose of introducing the future age, the eternal state of things, and He will do this by inaugurating and completing two mighty events, namely, the resurrection of the dead and the final judgment, Matthew 13:49-50; Matthew 16:27; Matthew 24:3; Matthew 25:14-46; Luke 9:26; Luke 19:15; Luke 19:26-27; John 5:25-29; Acts 17:31; Romans 2:3-16; 1 Corinthians 4:5; 1 Corinthians 15:23; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Php 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-17; 2 Thessalonians 2:7-8; 2 Timothy 4:1; 2 Timothy 4:8; 2 Peter 3:10-13; Jude 1:14-15; Revelation 20:11-15; Revelation 22:12. In the usual representation of Scripture, as already intimated in the preceding, the end of the world, the day of the Lord, the physical resurrection of the dead, and the final judgment coincide. That great turning point will also bring the destruction of all the evil forces that are hostile to the Kingdom of God, 2 Thessalonians 2:8; Revelation 20:14. It may be doubted, whether anyone would have read the relevant passages in any other way, if Revelation 20:1-6 had not been set up by some as the standard by which all the rest of the New Testament must be interpreted. According to Premillenarians the second coming of Christ will primarily serve the purpose of establishing the visible reign of Christ and His Saints on earth, and of inaugurating the real day of salvation for the world. This will involve the rapture, the resurrection of the righteous, the wedding of the Lamb, and judgments upon the enemies of God. But other resurrections and judgments will follow at various intervals, and the last resurrection and final judgment will be separated from the second coming by a thousand years. The objections to this view have partly been given in the

preceding and will partly be mentioned in the following chapters.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Why cannot the term parousia simply be rendered 'presence' wherever it is found? In what different senses does the Bible speak of the coming of Christ? How should Matthew 16:28; Matthew 24:34 be interpreted? Does the discourse of Jesus in Matthew 24:1-51 speak of a single coming? Does the doctrine of the national restoration of the Jews necessarily involve the doctrine of the millennium? Do the following passages teach such a restoration: Matthew 23:39; Luke 13:35; Luke 21:24; Acts 3:6-7? Does Daniel refer to Antiochus Epiphanes as a type of Antichrist in Daniel 11:36 ff.? How are the beasts of Revelation 13:1-18 related to Antichrist? Should the man of sin, of which Paul speaks, be identified with Antichrist? What is the restraining power which is mentioned in 2 Thessalonians 2:6-7? Did the apostles teach that the Lord might return during their lifetime? Does the New Testament warrant the idea that the phrase "the end" or "the end of the world" simply means 'the end of the age'?

LITERATURE: Bavinck, Dogm. IV, pp. 712-753; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Consummatione Saeculi, pp. 117-245; Vos. Geref. Dogm. V, Eschatologie, pp. 22-23; id., Pauline Eschatology pp. 72-135; Hodge, Syst. Theol. III, pp. 790-836; Pieper, Christl. Dogm. III, pp. 579-584; Valentine, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 407-411; Schmid, Doct. Theol. of the Ev. Luth. Church, pp. 645-657; Strong, Syst. Theol., pp. 1003-1015; Pope, Chr. Theol. III, pp. 387-397; Hovey, Eschatology, pp. 23-78; Kliefoth, Eschatologie, pp. 126-147, 191-225; Mackintosh. Immortality and the Future, pp. 130-148; Kennedy, St. Paul's Conceptions of the Last Things, pp. 158-193; Salmond, The Chr. Doct. of Immortality, pp. 241-251; Snowden, The Coming of the Lord pp. 123-171.

04.6.2.2. Millennial Views

II. Millennial Views

There are some who connect with the advent of Christ the idea of a millennium, either immediately before or immediately following the second coming. While this idea is not an integral part of Reformed theology, it nevertheless deserves consideration here, since it has become rather popular in many circles. Reformed theology cannot afford to ignore the wide-spread millenarian views of the present day, but should define its position with respect to these. Some of those who expect a millennium in the future hold that the Lord will return before the millennium, and are therefore called Premillennialists; while others believe that His second coming will follow after the millennium, and are therefore known as Postmillennialists. There are large numbers, however, who do not believe that the Bible warrants the expectation of a millennium, and it has become customary of late to speak of them as Amillennialists. The Amillennial view is, as the name indicates, purely negative. It holds that there is no sufficient Scriptural ground for the expectation of a millennium, and is firmly convinced that the Bible favors the idea that the present dispensation of the Kingdom of God will be followed immediately by the Kingdom of God in its consummate and eternal form. It is mindful of the fact that the Kingdom of Jesus Christ is represented as an eternal and not as a temporal kingdom, Isaiah 9:7; Daniel 7:14; Luke 1:33; Hebrews 1:8; Hebrews 12:28; 2 Peter 1:11; Revelation 11:15; and that to enter the Kingdom of the future is to enter upon one's eternal state, Matthew 7:21-22, to enter life, Matthew 18:8-9 (cf. the preceding context), and to be saved, Mark 10:25-26. Some Premillenarians have spoken of Amillennialism as a new view and as one of the most recent novelties, but this is certainly not in accord with the testimony of history. The name is new indeed, but the view to which it is applied is as old as Christianity. It had at least as many advocates as Chiliasm among the Church Fathers of the second and third centuries, supposed to have been the heyday of Chiliasm. It has ever since been the view most widely accepted, is the only view that is either expressed or implied in the great historical Confessions of the Church, and has always been the prevalent view in Reformed circles.

A. PREMILLENNIALISM.

Since Premillennialism has not always assumed the same form, it may be well to indicate briefly the form which it generally assumed in the past (without noting all kinds of aberrations), and then to follow this up with a more detailed description of the most dominant premillennial theory of the present day.

1. THE PREMILLENNIALISM OF THE PAST. The view of Irenæus may be given as that which best reflects that of the early Christian centuries. The present world will endure six thousand years, corresponding to the six days of creation. Towards the end of this period the sufferings and persecutions of the pious will greatly increase, until finally the incarnation of all wickedness appears in the person of Antichrist. After he has completed his destructive work and has boldly seated himself in the temple of God, Christ will appear in heavenly glory and triumph over all His enemies. This will be accompanied by the physical resurrection of the saints and the

establishment of the Kingdom of God on earth. The period of millennial bliss, lasting a thousand years, will correspond to the seventh day of creation, — the day of rest. Jerusalem will be rebuilt; the earth will yield its fruit in rich abundance; and peace and righteousness will prevail. At the end of the thousand years the final judgment will ensue, and a new creation will appear, in which the redeemed will live forever in the presence of God. In general outline this representation is typical of the eschatological views of the early Christian centuries, however these may differ in some details. During all the following centuries and into the nineteenth century, millennial thought remained essentially the same, though there were strange aberrations in some of the sects. Continued study, however, led to further development and to greater clarity in the presentation of some of its particulars. The main features of the common view may be stated somewhat as follows: The coming advent of Christ to the world is near, and will be visible, personal, and glorious. It will be preceded, however, by certain events, such as the evangelization of all nations, the conversion of Israel, the great apostasy and the great tribulation, and the revelation of the man of sin. Dark and trying times are therefore still in store for the Church, since she will have to pass through the great tribulation. The second coming will be a great, single, outstanding, and glorious event, but will be accompanied by several others bearing on the Church, on Israel, and on the world. The dead saints will be raised and the living transfigured, and together they will be translated to meet the coming Lord. Antichrist and his wicked allies will be slain; and Israel, the ancient people of God will repent, be saved, and restored to the Holy Land. Then the Kingdom of God, predicted by the prophets, will be established in a transformed world. The Gentiles will turn to God in great abundance and be incorporated in the Kingdom. A condition of peace and righteousness will prevail in all the earth. After the expiration of the earthly rule of Christ the rest of the dead will be raised up; and this resurrection will be followed by the last judgment and the creation of a new heaven and a new earth. Generally speaking, it may be said that this is the type of Premillennialism advocated by such men as Mede, Bengel, Auberlen, Christlieb, Ebrard, Godet, Hofmann, Lange, Stier, Van Oosterzee, Van Andel, Alford, Andrews, Ellicott, Guinness, Kellogg, Zahn, Moorehead, Newton, Trench, and others. It goes without saying that these men differed in some details.

2. THE PREMILLENNIALISM OF THE PRESENT. In the second quarter of the nineteenth century a new form of Premillennialism was introduced under the influence of Darby, Kelly, Trotter, and their followers in England and America, a Premillennialism wedded to Dispensationalism. The new views were popularized in our country especially through the Scofield Bible, and are widely disseminated through the works of such men as Bullinger, F. W. Grant, Blackstone, Gray, Silver, Haldeman, the two Gaebeleins, Brookes, Riley, Rogers, and a host of others. They really present a new philosophy of the history of redemption, in which Israel plays a leading role and the Church is but an interlude. Their guiding principle prompts them to divide the Bible into two books, the book of the Kingdom and the book of the Church. In reading their descriptions of God’s dealings with men one is lost in a bewildering maze of covenants and dispensations, without an Ariadne thread to give safe guidance. Their divisive tendency also reveals itself in their eschatological program. There will be two second comings, two or three (if not four) resurrections, and also three judgments. Moreover, there will also be two peoples of God, which according to some will be eternally separate, Israel dwelling on earth, and the Church in heaven. The following will give some idea of the Premillennial scheme that enjoys the greatest popularity to-day: a. Its view of history. God deals with the world of humanity in the course of history on the basis of several

covenants and according to the principles of seven different dispensations. Each dispensation is distinct, and each one of them represents a different test of the natural man; and since man fails to meet the successive tests, each dispensation ends in a judgment. The theocracy of Israel, founded on Mount Sinai, occupies a special place in the divine economy. It was the initiatory form of the Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of the Messiah, and had its golden age in the days of David and Solomon. In the way of obedience it might have increased in strength and glory, but as the result of the unfaithfulness of the people, it was finally overthrown, and the people were carried away into exile. The prophets predicted this overthrow, but also brought messages of hope and raised the expectation that in the days of the Messiah Israel would turn to the Lord in true repentance, the throne of David would be re-established in unsurpassed glory, and even the Gentiles would share in the blessings of the future Kingdom. But when the Messiah came and offered to establish the Kingdom, the Jews failed to show the requisite repentance. The result was that the King did not establish the Kingdom, but withdrew from Israel and went into a far country, postponing the establishment of the Kingdom until His return. Before He left the earth, however, He founded the Church, which has nothing in common with the Kingdom, and of which the prophets never spoke. The dispensation of the law made way for the dispensation of the grace of God. During this dispensation the Church is gathered out of Jews and Gentiles, and forms the body of Christ, which now shares in His sufferings, but will once, as the bride of the Lamb, share in His glory. Of this Church Christ is not the King, but the divine Head. She has the glorious task of preaching, not the gospel of the Kingdom, but the gospel of the free grace of God, among all the nations of the world, to gather out of them the elect and further to be a testimony unto them. This method will prove to be a failure; it will not effect conversions on any large scale. At the end of this dispensation Christ will suddenly return and effect a far more universal conversion. b. Its eschatology. The return of Christ is imminent now, that is, He may come at any time, for there are no predicted events that must still precede it. However, His coming consists of two separate events, separated from each other by a period of seven years. The first of these events will be the parousia when Christ will appear in the air to meet His saints. All the righteous dead will then be raised up, and the living saints will be transfigured. Together they will be caught up into the air, will celebrate the wedding of the Lamb, and will then be forever with the Lord. The translation of the living saints is called " the rapture ," sometimes " the secret rapture. " While Christ and His Church are absent from the earth, and even the indwelling Holy Spirit has gone with the Church, there will be a period of seven years or more, often divided into two parts, in which several things will happen. The gospel of the Kingdom will again be preached, primarily, it would seem, by the believing remnant of the Jews, and conversions on a large scale will result, though many will still continue to blaspheme God. The Lord will again begin to deal with Israel and it will probably at this time (though some say it will be later) be converted. In the second half of this period of seven years there will be a time of unequalled tribulation, the length of which is still a subject of debate. Antichrist will be revealed and the vials of God’s wrath will be poured out upon the human race. At the end of the seven-year period the " revelation " will follow, that is, the coming of the Lord down to earth, now not for but with His saints. The living nations are now judged (Matthew 25:31 ff.), and the sheep separated from the goats; the saints that died during the great tribulation are raised up; Antichrist is destroyed; and Satan is bound for a thousand years. The millennial kingdom will now be established, a real visible, terrestrial, and material kingdom of the Jews, the restoration of the theocratic kingdom, including the re-establishment of the Davidic kingship. In it the saints will reign

with Christ, the Jews will be the natural citizens and many Gentiles adopted citizens. The throne of Christ will be established at Jerusalem, which will also again become the central place of worship. The temple will be rebuilt on Mount Zion, and the altar will again reek with the blood of sacrifices, even of sin- and trespass-offerings. And though sin and death will still claim their victims, it will be a time of great fruitfulness and prosperity, in which men's lives will be prolonged and the wilderness will blossom as the rose. In this time the world will speedily be converted, according to some by the gospel, but according to the majority by totally different means, such as the personal appearance of Christ, the envy aroused by the blessedness of the saints, and above all great and terrible judgments. After the millennium Satan will be loosed for a little season, and the hordes of Gog and Magog assemble against the holy city. The enemies are devoured, however, by fire from heaven, and Satan is cast into the bottomless pit, whither the beast and the false prophet have preceded him. After this little season the wicked dead are raised up and appear in judgment before the great white throne, Revelation 20:11-15. And then there will be a new heaven and a new earth. c. Some of the variations of this theory. Premillenarians are by no means all agreed as to the particulars of their eschatological scheme. A study of their literature reveals a great variety of opinions. There is indefiniteness and uncertainty on many points, which proves that their detailed construction is of rather doubtful value. While the majority of present day Premillenarians believe in a coming visible rule of Jesus Christ, even now some anticipate only a spiritual rule, and do not look for a physical presence of Christ on earth. Though the thousand years of Revelation 20:1-15 are generally interpreted literally, there is a tendency on the part of some to regard them as an indefinite period of shorter or longer duration. Some think that the Jews will be converted first, and then brought back to Palestine, while others are of the opinion that this order will be reversed. There are those who believe that the means used for the conversion of the world will be identical with those now employed, but the prevailing opinion is that other means will be substituted. There is a difference of opinion also as to the place where the risen saints will dwell during their millennial reign with Christ, on earth or in heaven, or in both places. Opinions differ very much, too, with respect to the continuance of the propagation of the human race during the millennium, the degree of sin that will prevail at that time, and the continued sway of death, and many other points.

3. OBJECTIONS TO PREMILLENNIALISM. In the discussion of the second advent the premillennial view of it was already subjected to special scrutiny and criticism, and the succeeding chapters on the resurrection and the final judgment will offer further occasion for a critical consideration of the premillennial construction of these events. Hence the objections raised at this point will be of a more general nature, and even so we can only pay attention to some of the most important ones. a. The theory is based on a literal interpretation of the prophetic delineations of the future of Israel and of the Kingdom of God, which is entirely untenable. This has been pointed out repeatedly in such works on prophecy as those of Fairbairn, Riehm, and Davidson, in the splendid work of David Brown on The Second Advent, in Waldegrave's important volume on New Testament Millennarianism, and in the more recent works of Dr. Aalders on De Profeten des Ouden Verbonds, and Het Herstel van Israel Volgens het Oude Testament. The last volume is devoted entirely to a detailed exegetical study of all the Old Testament passages that might bear in any way on the future restoration of Israel. It is a thorough work that deserves careful study. Premillenarians maintain that nothing short of a literal interpretation and fulfilment will satisfy the requirements of these prophetic forecasts; but the books of the prophets themselves already contain indications that point to a spiritual fulfilment, Isaiah 54:13; Isaiah 61:6; Jeremiah 3:16;

Jeremiah 31:31-34; Hosea 14:2; Micah 6:6-8. The contention that the names "Zion" and "Jerusalem" are never used by the prophets in any other than a literal sense, that the former always denotes a mountain, and the latter, a city, is clearly contrary to fact. There are passages in which both names are employed to designate Israel, the Old Testament Church of God, Isaiah 49:14; Isaiah 51:3; Isaiah 52:1-2. And this use of the terms passes right over into the New Testament, Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22; Revelation 3:12; Revelation 21:9. It is remarkable that the New Testament, which is the fulfilment of the Old, contains no indication whatsoever of the re-establishment of the Old Testament theocracy by Jesus, nor a single undisputed positive prediction of its restoration, while it does contain abundant indications of the spiritual fulfilment of the promises given to Israel, Matthew 21:43; Acts 2:29-36; Acts 15:14-18; Romans 9:25-26; Hebrews 8:8-13; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; Revelation 5:10. For further details on the spiritualization found in Scripture the work of Dr. Wijngaarden on The Future of the Kingdom may be consulted. The New Testament certainly does not favor the literalism of the Premillenarians. Moreover this literalism lands them in all kinds of absurdities, for it involves the future restoration of all the former historical conditions of Israel’s life: the great world powers of the Old Testament (Egyptians, Assyrians, and Babylonians), and the neighboring nations of Israel (Moabites, Ammonites, Edomites, and Philistines) must again appear on the scene, Isaiah 11:14; Amos 9:12; Joel 3:19; Micah 5:5-6; Revelation 18:1-24. The temple will have to be rebuilt, Isaiah 2:2-3; Micah 4:1-2; Zechariah 14:16-21; Ezekiel 40:1-49; Ezekiel 41:1-26; Ezekiel 42:1-20; Ezekiel 43:1-27; Ezekiel 44:1-31; Ezekiel 45:1-25.; Ezekiel 46:1-24; Ezekiel 47:1-23; Ezekiel 48:1-35, the sons of Zadok will again have to serve as priests, Ezekiel 44:15-31; Ezekiel 48:11-14, and even sin and trespass offerings will again have to be brought upon the altar, not for commemoration (as some Premillenarians would have it), but for atonement, Ezekiel 42:13; Ezekiel 43:18-27. And in addition to all that, the altered situation would make it necessary for all the nations to visit Jerusalem from year to year, in order to celebrate the feast of tabernacles, Zechariah 14:16, and even from week to week, to worship before Jehovah, Isaiah 66:23. b. The so-called postponement theory, which is a necessary link in the premillennial scheme, is devoid of all Scriptural basis. According to it John and Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom, that is, the Jewish theocracy, was at hand. But because the Jews did not repent and believe, Jesus postponed its establishment until His second coming. The pivotal point marking the change is placed by Scofield in Matthew 11:20, by others in Matthew 12:1-50, and by others still later. Before that turning point Jesus did not concern Himself with the Gentiles, but preached the gospel of the kingdom to Israel; and after that He did not preach the kingdom any more, but only predicted its future coming and offered rest to the weary of both Israel and the Gentiles. But it cannot be maintained that Jesus did not concern Himself with the Gentiles before the supposed turning point, cf. Matthew 8:5-13; John 4:1-42, nor that after it He ceased to preach the kingdom, Matthew 13:1-58; Luke 10:1-11. There is absolutely no proof that Jesus preached two different gospels, first the gospel of the kingdom and then the gospel of the grace of God; in the light of Scripture this distinction is untenable. Jesus never had in mind the re-establishment of the Old Testament theocracy, but the introduction of the spiritual reality, of which the Old Testament kingdom was but a type, Matthew 8:11-12; Matthew 13:31-33; Matthew 21:43; Luke 17:21; John 3:3; John 18:36-37 (comp. Romans 14:17). He did not postpone the task for which He had come into the world, but actually established the Kingdom and referred to it more than once as a present reality, Matthew 11:12; Matthew 12:28; Luke 17:21; John 18:36-37; (comp. Colossians 1:13). This whole postponement theory is a comparatively recent fiction, and is very

objectionable, because it breaks up the unity of Scripture and of the people of God in an unwarranted way. The Bible represents the relation between the Old Testament and the New as that of type and antitype, of prophecy and fulfilment; but this theory holds that, while the New Testament was originally meant to be a fulfilment of the Old, it really became something quite different. The kingdom, that is, the Old Testament theocracy, was predicted and was not restored, and the Church was not predicted but was established. Thus the two fall apart, and the one becomes the book of the kingdom, and the other, with the exception of the Gospels, the book of the Church. Besides, we get two peoples of God, the one natural and the other spiritual, the one earthly and the other heavenly, as if Jesus did not speak of "one flock and one shepherd," John 10:16, and as if Paul did not say that the Gentiles were grafted into the old olive tree, Romans 11:17. c. This theory is also in flagrant opposition to the Scriptural representation of the great events of the future, namely, the resurrection, the final judgment, and the end of the world. As was shown in the preceding, the Bible represents these great events as synchronizing. There is not the slightest indication that they are separated by a thousand years, except this be found in Revelation 20:4-6. They clearly coincide, Matthew 13:37-43; Matthew 13:47-50 (separation of the good and the evil at "the end," not a thousand years before); Matthew 24:29-31; Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:25-19; 1 Corinthians 15:22-26; Php 3:20-21; 1 Thessalonians 4:15-16; Revelation 20:11-15. They all occur at the coming of the Lord, which is also the day of the Lord. In answer to this objection Premillenarians often suggest that the day of the Lord may be a thousand years long, so that the resurrection of the saints and the judgment of the nations takes place in the morning of that long day, and the resurrection of the wicked and the judgment at the great white throne occurs in the evening of that same day. They appeal to 2 Peter 3:8... "one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." But this can hardly prove the point, for the tables might easily be turned here. The same passage might also be used to prove that the thousand years of Revelation 20:1-15 are but a single day. d. There is no positive Scriptural foundation whatsoever for the Premillennial view of a double, or even a three- or fourfold resurrection, as their theory requires, nor for spreading the last judgment over a period of a thousand years by dividing it into three judgments. It is, to say the least, very dubious that the words, "This is the first resurrection" in Revelation 20:5, refer to a physical resurrection. The context does not necessitate, nor even favor this view. What might seem to favor the theory of a double resurrection, is the fact that the apostles often speak of the resurrection of believers only, and do not refer to that of the wicked at all. But this is due to the fact that they are writing to the churches of Jesus Christ, to the connections in which they bring up the subject of the resurrection, and to the fact that they desire to stress the soteriological aspect of it, 1 Corinthians 15:1-58; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15. Other passages clearly speak of the resurrection of the righteous and that of the wicked in a single breath, Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15. We shall consider this matter further in the following chapter. e. The Premillennial theory entangles itself in all kinds of insuperable difficulties with its doctrine of the millennium. It is impossible to understand how a part of the old earth and of sinful humanity can exist alongside of a part of the new earth and of a humanity that is glorified. How can perfect saints in glorified bodies have communion with sinners in the flesh. How can glorified saints live in this sin-laden atmosphere and amid scenes of death and decay? How can the Lord of glory, the glorified Christ, establish His throne on earth as long as it has not yet been renewed. The twenty-first chapter of Revelation informs us that God and the Church of the redeemed will take up their dwellingplace on earth after heaven and earth have

been renewed; how then can it be maintained that Christ and the saints will dwell there a thousand years before this renewal. How will sinners and saints in the flesh be able to stand in the presence of the glorified Christ, seeing that even Paul and John were completely overwhelmed by the vision of Him, Acts 26:12-14; Revelation 1:17? Beet truly says: "We cannot conceive mingled together on the same planet some who have yet to die and others who have passed through death and will die no more. Such confusion of the present age with the age to come is in the last degree unlikely."22 And Brown calls out: "What a mongrel state of things is this! What an abhorred mixture of things totally inconsistent with each -other!"23 f. The only Scriptural basis for this theory is Revelation 20:1-6, after an Old Testament content has been poured into it. This is a very precarious basis for various reasons. (1) This passage occurs in a highly symbolical book and is admittedly very obscure, as may be inferred from the different interpretations of it. (2) The literal interpretation of this passage, as given by the Premillenarians, leads to a view that finds no support elsewhere in Scripture, but is even contradicted by the rest of the New Testament. This is a fatal objection. Sound exegesis requires that the obscure passages of Scripture be read in the light of the clearer ones, and not vice versa. (3) Even the literal interpretation of the Premillenarians is not consistently literal, for it makes the chain in verse 1 and consequently also the binding of verse 2 figurative, often conceives of the thousand years as a long but undefined period, and changes the souls of verse 4 into resurrection saints. (4) The passage, strictly speaking, does not say that the classes referred to (the martyr saints and those who did not worship the beast) were raised up from the dead, but simply that they lived and reigned with Christ. And this living and reigning with Christ is said to constitute the first resurrection. (5) There is absolutely no indication in these verses that Christ and His saints are seen ruling on the earth. In the light of such passages as Revelation 4:4; Revelation 6:9, it is far more likely that the scene is laid in heaven. (6) It also deserves notice that the passage makes no mention whatsoever of Palestine, of Jerusalem, of the temple, and of the Jews, the natural citizens of the millennial kingdom. There is not a single hint that these are in any way concerned with this reign of a thousand years. For a detailed interpretation of this passage from the Amillennial point of view we refer to Kuyper, Bavinck, De Moor, Dijk, Greydanus, Vos, and Hendriksen.

B. POSTMILLENNIALISM. The position of Postmillennialism is quite the opposite of that taken by Premillennialism respecting the time of the second coming of Christ. It holds that the return of Christ will follow the millennium, which may be expected during and at the close of the gospel dispensation. Immediately after it Christ will come to usher in the eternal order of things. In the discussion of Postmillennialism it will be necessary to distinguish two different forms of the theory, of which the one expects the millennium to be realized through the supernatural influence of the Holy Spirit, and the other expects it to come by a natural process of evolution.

1. DIFFERENT FORMS OF POSTMILLENNIALISM. a. The earlier form. During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries several Reformed theologians in the Netherlands taught a form of Chiliasm, which would now be called Postmillennialism. Among them were such well-known men as Coccejus, Alting, the two Vitringas, d'Outrein, Witsius, Hoornbeek, Koelman, and Brakel, of which some regarded the millennium as belonging to the past, others thought of it as present, and still others looked for it in the future. The majority expected it toward the end of the world, just before the second coming of Christ. These men rejected the two leading ideas of the Premillenarians, namely, that Christ will return physically to reign on earth for a thousand years, and that the saints

will be raised up at His coming, and will then reign with him in the millennial kingdom. While their representations differed in some details, the prevailing view was that the gospel, which will gradually spread through the whole world, will in the end become immeasurably more effective than it is at present, and will usher in a period of rich spiritual blessings for the Church of Jesus Christ, a golden age, in which the Jews will also share in the blessings of the gospel in an unprecedented manner. In more recent years some such Postmillennialism was advocated by D. Brown, J. Berg, J. H. Snowden, T. P. Stafford, and A. H. Strong. The last named theologian says that the millennium will be "a period in the later days of the Church militant, when, under the special influence of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of the martyrs shall appear again, true religion be greatly quickened and revived, and the members of Christ's churches become so conscious of their strength in Christ that they shall, to an extent unknown before, triumph over the power of evil both within and without."24 The golden age of the Church will, it is held, be followed by a brief apostasy, a terrible conflict between the forces of good and evil, and by the simultaneous occurrence of the advent of Christ, the general resurrection, and the final judgment. b. The later form. A great deal of present day Postmillennialism is of an entirely different type, and concerns itself very little about the teachings of Scripture, except as a historical indication of what people once believed. The modern man has little patience with the millennial hopes of the past with their utter dependence on God. He does not believe that the new age will be ushered in by the preaching of the gospel and the accompanying work of the Holy Spirit; nor that it will be the result of a cataclysmic change. On the one hand it is believed that evolution will gradually bring the millennium, and on the other hand, that man himself must usher in the new age by adopting a constructive policy of world-betterment. Says Walter Rauschenbusch: "Our chief interest in any millennium is the desire for a social order in which the worth and freedom of every least human being will be honored and protected; in which the brotherhood of man will be expressed in the common possession of the economic resources of society; and in which the spiritual good of humanity will be set high above the private profit interests of all materialistic groups.... As to the way in which the Christian ideal of society is to come, — we must shift from catastrophe to development."25

Shirley Jackson Case asks: "Shall we still look for God to introduce a new order by catastrophic means or shall we assume the responsibility of bringing about our own millennium, believing that God is working in us and in our world to will and to work for His good pleasure?" And he himself gives the answer in the following paragraphs: "The course of history exhibits one long process of evolving struggle by which humanity as a whole rises constantly higher in the scale of civilization and attainment, bettering its condition from time to time through its greater skill and industry. Viewed in the long perspective of the ages, man's career has been one of actual ascent. Instead of growing worse, the world is found to be constantly growing better . . . Since history and science show that betterment is always the result of achievement, man learns to surmise that evils still unconquered are to be eliminated by strenuous effort and gradual reform rather than by the catastrophic intervention of Deity.... Disease is to be cured or prevented by the physician's skill, society's ills are to be remedied by education and legislation, and international disasters are to be averted by establishing new standards and new methods for dealing with the problems involved. In short, the ills of life are to be cured by a gradual process of remedial treatment rather than by a sudden annihilation."26 These quotations are quite characteristic of a great deal of present day Postmillennialism, and it is no wonder that the Premillenarians react against it.

2. OBJECTIONS TO POSTMILLENNIALISM. There are some very serious objections to the Postmillennial theory. a. The fundamental idea of the doctrine, that the whole world will gradually be won for Christ, that the life of all nations will in course of time be transformed by the gospel, that righteousness and peace will reign supreme, and that the blessings of the Spirit will be poured out in richer abundance than before, so that the Church will experience a season of unexampled prosperity just before the coming of the Lord, — is not in harmony with the picture of the end of the ages found in Scripture. The Bible teaches indeed that the gospel will spread throughout the world and will exercise a beneficent influence, but does not lead us to expect the conversion of the world, either in this or in a coming age. It stresses the fact that the time immediately preceding the end will be a time of great apostasy, of tribulation and persecution, a time when the faith of many will wax cold, and when they who are loyal to Christ will be subjected to bitter sufferings, and will in some cases even seal their confession with their blood, Matthew 24:6-14; Matthew 24:21-22; Luke 18:8; Luke 21:25-28; 2 Thessalonians 2:3-12; 2 Timothy 3:1-6; Revelation 13:1-18. Postmillennialists, of course, cannot very well ignore entirely what is said about the apostasy and the tribulation that will mark the end of history, but they minimize it and represent it as predicting an apostasy and a tribulation on a small scale, which will not affect the main course of the religious life. Their expectation of a glorious condition of the Church in the end, is based on passages which contain a figurative description, either of the gospel dispensation as a whole, or of the perfect bliss of the external Kingdom of Jesus Christ. b. The related idea, that the present age will not end in a great cataclysmic change, but will pass almost imperceptibly into the coming age, is equally un-Scriptural. The Bible teaches us very explicitly that a catastrophe, a special intervention of God, will bring the rule of Satan on earth to an end, and will usher in the Kingdom that cannot be shaken, Matthew 24:29-31; Matthew 24:35-44; Hebrews 12:26-27; 2 Peter 3:10-13. There will be a crisis, a change so great that it can be called "the regeneration," Matthew 19:28. No more than believers are progressively sanctified in this life until they are practically ready to pass, without much more change, into heaven, will the world gradually be purified and thus made ready to enter upon the next stage. Just as believers must still undergo a great change at death, so must the world suffer a tremendous change when the end comes. There will be a new heaven and a new earth. Revelation 21:1. c. The modern idea that natural evolution and the efforts of man in the field of education, of social reform, and of legislation, will gradually bring in the perfect reign of the Christian spirit, conflicts with everything that the Word of God teaches on this point. It is not the work of man, but the work of God to bring in the glorious Kingdom of God. This Kingdom cannot be established by natural but only by supernatural means. It is the reign of God, established and acknowledged in the hearts of His people, and this reign can never be made effective by purely natural means. Civilization without regeneration, without a supernatural change of the heart, will never bring in a millennium, an effective and glorious rule of Jesus Christ. It would seem that the experiences of the last quarter of a century should have forced this truth upon the modern man. The highly vaunted development of man has not yet brought us in sight of the millennium.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: What is the historic origin of Premillennialism? Was it actually the prevailing view in the second and third centuries? What was Augustine’s view of the Kingdom of God and the millennium? Are the Kingdom of God and the Church distinct or identical in Scripture? Is the one natural and national, and the other spiritual and universal? Do Luke 14:14; Luke 20:35 teach a partial resurrection? Will any part of Israel constitute a part of the bride of Christ? Will the bride be complete when Christ returns? Are the Postmillennialists necessarily

evolutionists? Is the optimism of the Postmillennialists, that the world is gradually getting better, justified by experience? Does the Bible predict continuous progress for the Kingdom of God right up to the end of the world? Is it necessary to assume a cataclysmic change at the end?

LITERATURE: Bavinck,; Geref. Dogm, IV, pp. 717-769; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Consummatione Saeculi, pp. 237-279; Vos, Geref. Dogm. V. Eschatologie, pp. 36-40; id., The Pauline Eschatology, pp. 226-260; Hodge, Syst. Theol. III, pp. 861-868; Warfield, The Millennium and the Apocalypse in Biblical Studies, pp. 643-664; Dahle, Life After Death pp. 354-418; D. Brown, The Second Advent; Ch. Brown, The Hope of His Coming; Hoekstra, Het Chiliasme; Rutgers, Premillennialism in America; Merrill, Second Coming of Christ; Eckman, When Christ Comes Again; Heagle, That Blessed Hope; Case, The Millennial Hope; Rall, Modern Premillennialism and the Christian Hope; Fairbairn, The Prophetic Prospect of the Jews (by Pieters); Berkhof, Premillennialisme; Riley, The Evolution of the Kingdom; Bultema, Maranatha; Berkhoff, De Wederkomst van Christus; Brookes, Maranatha; Haldeman, The Coming of the Lord; Snowden, The Second Coming of the Lord; Blackstone; Jesus is Coming; Milligan, Is the Kingdom Age at Hand? Peters, The Theocratic Kingdom; West, The Thousand Years in Both Testaments; Silver, The Lord's Return; Bullinger, How to Enjoy the Bible; Waldegrave, New Testament Millenarianism; Feinberg, Premillennialism and Amillennialism; Gæbelein, The Hope of the Ages; Hendriksen, More Than Conquerors; Dijk, Het Rijk der Duizend Jaren; Aalders, Het Herstel van Israel Volgens het Oude Testament; Mauro, The Gospel of the Kingdom, and The Hope of Israel; Frost; The Second Coming of Christ; Reese, The Approaching Advent of Christ; Wyngaarden, The Future of the Kingdom.

04.6.2.3. The Resurrection of the Dead

III. The Resurrection of the Dead The discussion of the second advent of Christ naturally leads on to a consideration of its concomitants. Foremost among these is the resurrection of the dead or, as it is sometimes called, "the resurrection of the flesh."

A. THE DOCTRINE OF THE RESURRECTION IN HISTORY. In the days of Jesus there was a difference of opinion among the Jews respecting the resurrection. While the Pharisees believed in it, the Sadducees did not, Matthew 22:23; Acts 23:8. When Paul spoke of it at Athens, he met with mockery, Acts 17:32. Some of the Corinthians denied it, 1 Corinthians 15:1-58, and Hymenæus and Phyletus, regarding it as something purely spiritual, asserted that it was already a matter of history, 2 Timothy 2:18. Celsus, one of the earliest opponents of Christianity, made especially this doctrine the butt of ridicule; and the Gnostics, who regarded matter as inherently evil, naturally rejected it. Origen defended the doctrine over against the Gnostics and Celsus, but yet did not believe that the very body which was deposited in the grave would be raised up. He described the body of the resurrection as a new, refined, and spiritualized body. While some of the early Christian Fathers shared his view, the majority of them stressed the identity of the present body and the body of the resurrection. The Church already in the Apostolic Confession expressed its belief in the resurrection of the flesh (sarkos). Augustine was at first inclined to agree with Origen, but later on adopted the prevalent view, though he did not deem it necessary to believe that the present differences of size and stature would continue in the life to come. Jerome insisted strongly on the identity of the present and the future body. The East, represented by such men as the two Gregories, Chrysostom, and John of Damascus, manifested a tendency to adopt a more spiritual view of the resurrection than the West. Those who believed in a coming millennium spoke of a double resurrection, that of the righteous at the beginning, and that of the wicked at the end of the millennial reign. During the Middle Ages the Scholastics speculated a great deal about the body of the resurrection, but their speculations are mostly fanciful and of little value. Thomas Aquinas especially seemed to have special information about the nature of the resurrection body, and about the order and manner of the resurrection. The theologians of the period of the Reformation were generally agreed that the body of the resurrection would be identical with the present body. All the great Confessions of the Church represent the general resurrection as simultaneous with the second coming of Christ, the final judgment and the end of the world. They do not separate any of these events, such as the resurrection of the righteous and that of the wicked, and the coming of Christ and the end of the world, by a period of a thousand years. The Premillenarians, on the other hand, insist on such a separation. Under the influence of Rationalism and with the advance of the physical sciences some of the difficulties with which the doctrine of the resurrection is burdened were accentuated, and as a result modern religious liberalism denies the resurrection of the flesh, and explains the Scriptural representations of it as a figurative representation of the idea that the full human personality will continue to exist after death.

B. SCRIPTURAL PROOF FOR THE RESURRECTION.

1. IN THE OLD TESTAMENT. It is sometimes said that the Old Testament knowns of no resurrection of the dead, or knows of it only in its latest books. The opinion is rather common that Israel borrowed its belief in the resurrection from the Persians. Says Mackintosh: "Strong evidence exists for the hypothesis that the idea of the resurrection entered the Hebrew mind from Persia."27 Brown speaks in a somewhat similar vein: "The doctrine of individual resurrection first appears in Israel after the exile, and may have been due to Persian influence."28 Salmond also mentions this view, but claims that it is not sufficiently warranted. Says he: "The Old Testament doctrine of God is of itself enough to explain the entire history of the Old Testament conception of a future life."29 De Bondt comes to the conclusion that there is not a single people among those with whom Israel came in contact, which had a doctrine of the resurrection that might have served as a pattern for the representation of it that was current among Israel; and that the faith in the resurrection which finds expression in the Old Testament does not find its basis in the religions of the Gentiles, but in the revelation of Israel's God.30 It is true that we find no clear statements respecting the resurrection of the dead before the time of the prophets, though Jesus found that it was already implied in Exodus 3:6; cf. Matthew 22:29-32, and the writer of Hebrews intimates that even the patriarchs looked forward to the resurrection of the dead, Hebrews 11:10; Hebrews 11:13-16; Hebrews 11:19. Certainly evidences are not wanting that there was a belief in the resurrection long before the exile. It is implied in the passages that speak of a deliverance from sheol, Psalms 49:15; Psalms 73:24-25; Proverbs 23:14. It finds expression in the famous statement of Job 19:25-27. Moreover, it is very clearly taught in Isaiah 26:19 (a late passage, according to the critics), and in Daniel 12:2, and is probably implied also in Ezekiel 37:1-14.

2. IN THE NEW TESTAMENT. As might be expected, the New Testament has more to say on the resurrection of the dead than the Old, because it brings the climax of God's revelation on this point in the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Over against the denial of the Sadducees, Jesus argues the resurrection of the dead from the Old Testament, Matthew 22:23-33, and parallels, cf. Exodus 3:6. Moreover, He teaches that great truth very clearly in John 5:25-29; John 6:39-40; John 6:44; John 6:54; John 11:24-25; John 14:3; John 17:24. The classical passage of the New Testament for the doctrine of the resurrection is 1 Corinthians 15:1-58. Other important passages are: 1 Thessalonians 4:13-16; 2 Corinthians 5:1-10; Revelation 20:4-6 (of dubious interpretation), and Revelation 20:13.

C. THE NATURE OF THE RESURRECTION.

1. IT IS A WORK OF THE TRIUNE GOD. The resurrection is a work of the triune God. In some cases we are simply told that God raises the dead, no person being specified, Matthew 22:29; 2 Corinthians 1:9. More particularly, however, the work of the resurrection is ascribed to the Son, John 5:21; John 5:25; John 5:28-29; John 6:38-40; John 6:44; John 6:54; 1 Thessalonians 4:16. Indirectly, it is also designated as a work of the Holy Spirit, Romans 8:11.

2. IT IS A PHYSICAL OR BODILY RESURRECTION. There were some in the days of Paul who regarded the resurrection as spiritual, 2 Timothy 2:18. And there are many in the present day who believe only in a spiritual resurrection. But the Bible is very explicit in teaching the resurrection of the body. Christ is called the "firstfruits" of the resurrection, 1 Corinthians 15:20; 1 Corinthians 15:23, and "the firstborn of the dead," Colossians 1:18; Revelation 1:5. This implies that the resurrection of the people of God will be like that of their heavenly Lord. His resurrection was a

bodily resurrection, and theirs will be of the same kind. Moreover, the redemption wrought by Christ is also said to include the body, Romans 8:23; 1 Corinthians 6:13-20. In Romans 8:11 we are told explicitly that God through His Spirit will raise up our mortal bodies. And it is clearly the body that is prominently before the mind of the apostle in 1 Corinthians 15:1-58, cf. especially 1 Corinthians 15:35-49. According to Scripture there will be a resurrection of the body, that is, not an entirely new creation, but a body that will be in a fundamental sense identical with the present body. God will not create a new body for every man, but will raise up the very body that was deposited in the earth. This cannot only be inferred from the term "resurrection," but is clearly stated in Romans 8:11; 1 Corinthians 15:53, and is further implied in the figure of the seed sown in the earth, which the apostle employs in 1 Corinthians 15:36-38. Moreover, Christ, the firstfruits of the resurrection, conclusively proved the identity of His body to His disciples. At the same time Scripture makes it perfectly evident that the body will be greatly changed. Christ's body was not yet fully glorified during the period of transition between the resurrection and the ascension; yet it had already undergone a remarkable change. Paul refers to the change that will take place, when he says that in sowing a seed we do not sow the body that shall be; we do not intend to pick the same seed out of the ground. Yet we do expect to reap something that is in a fundamental sense identical with the seed deposited in the earth. While there is a certain identity between the seed sown and the seeds that develop out of it, yet there is also a remarkable difference. We shall be changed, says the apostle, "for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." The body "is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown in dishonor; it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body." Change is not inconsistent with the retention of identity. We are told that even now every particle in our bodies changes every seven years, but through it all the body retains its identity. There will be a certain physical connection between the old body and the new, but the nature of this connection is not revealed. Some theologians speak of a remaining germ from which the new body develops; others say that the organizing principle of the body remains. Origen had something of that kind in mind; so did Kuyper and Milligan. If we bear all this in mind, the old objection against the doctrine of the resurrection, namely, that it is impossible that a body could be raised up, consisting of the same particles that constituted it at death, since these particles pass into other forms of existence and perhaps into hundreds of other bodies, loses its force completely.

3. IT IS A RESURRECTION OF BOTH THE RIGHTEOUS AND THE WICKED. According to Josephus the Pharisees denied the resurrection of the wicked.31 The doctrine of annihilationism and that of conditional immortality, both of which, at least in some of their forms, deny the resurrection of the ungodly and teach their annihilation, embraced by many theologians, has also found favor in such sects as Adventism and Millennial Dawnism. They believe in the total extinction of the wicked. The assertion is sometimes made that Scripture does not teach the resurrection of the wicked, but this is clearly erroneous, Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Revelation 20:13-15. At the same time it must be admitted that their resurrection does not stand out prominently in Scripture. The soteriological aspect of the resurrection is clearly in the foreground, and this pertains to the righteous only. They, in distinction from the wicked, are the ones that profit by the resurrection.

4. IT IS A RESURRECTION OF UNEQUAL IMPORT FOR THE JUST AND THE UNJUST. Breckenridge quotes 1 Corinthians 15:22 to prove that the resurrection of both saints and sinners

was purchased by Christ. But it can hardly be denied that the second "all" in that passage is general only in the sense of "all who are in Christ." The resurrection is represented there as resulting from a vital union with Christ. But, surely, only believers stand in such a living relation to Him. The resurrection of the wicked cannot be regarded as a blessing merited by the mediatorial work of Christ, though it is connected with this indirectly. It is a necessary result of postponing the execution of the sentence of death on man, which made the work of redemption possible. The postponement resulted in the comparative separation of temporal and eternal death, and in the existence of an intermediate state. Under these circumstances it becomes necessary to raise the wicked from the dead, in order that death in its widest extent and in all its weight might be imposed on them. Their resurrection is not an act of redemption, but of sovereign justice, on the part of God. The resurrection of the just and the unjust have this in common, that in both bodies and souls are reunited. But in the case of the former this results in perfect life, while in the case of the latter it issues in the extreme penalty of death, John 5:28-29.

D. THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION.

1. THE PREMILLENNIAL VIEW RESPECTING THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION. It is the common opinion among Premillenarians that the resurrection of the saints will be separated by a thousand years from that of the wicked. They almost seem to regard it as an axiomatic truth that these two classes cannot possibly arise at the same time. And not only that, but the type of Premillennialism which is now dominant, with its theory of a twofold second coming of Christ, feels the need of positing a third resurrection. All the saints of former dispensations and of the present dispensation are raised up at the parousia or the coming of the Lord. Those still alive at that time are changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. But in the seven years that follow the parousia many other saints die, especially in the great tribulation. These must also be raised up, and their resurrection will occur at the revelation of the day of the Lord. seven years after the parousia. But even at this point Premillenarians cannot very well stop. Since the resurrection at the end of the world is reserved for the wicked, there must be another resurrection of the saints who die during the millennium, which precedes that of the wicked, for the two cannot be raised up at the same time.

2. SCRIPTURAL INDICATIONS AS TO THE TIME OF THE RESURRECTION. According to Scripture the resurrection of the dead coincides with the parousia, with the revelation or the day of the Lord, and with the end of the world, and will immediately precede the general and final judgment. It certainly does not favor the premillennial distinctions with respect to this doctrine. In several places it represents the resurrection of the righteous and that of the wicked as contemporaneous, Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; Revelation 20:13-15. All of these passages speak of the resurrection as a single event and do not contain the slightest indication that the resurrection of the righteous and that of the wicked will be separated by a period of a thousand years. But this is not all that can be said in favor of the idea that the two coincide. In John 5:21-29 Jesus combines the thought of the resurrection, including the resurrection of the righteous, with the thought of the judgment, including the judgment of the wicked. Moreover, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10 clearly represents the parousia (2 Thessalonians 1:10), the revelation (2 Thessalonians 1:7), and the judgment of the wicked (2 Thessalonians 1:8-9) as coinciding. If that is not the case, language would seem to have lost its meaning. Furthermore, the resurrection of believers is directly connected with the second coming of the Lord in 1 Corinthians 15:23; Php

3:20-21; and 1 Thessalonians 4:16, but it is also represented as occurring at the end of the world, John 6:39-40; John 6:44; John 6:54 or at the last day. That means that believers are raised up at the last day, and that the last day is also the day of the coming of the Lord. Their resurrection does not precede the end by a period of a thousand years. Happily, there are several Premillenarians who do not accept the theory of a threefold resurrection, but who nevertheless cling to the doctrine of a double resurrection.

3. CONSIDERATION OF THE ARGUMENTS FOR A DOUBLE RESURRECTION. a. Great emphasis is placed on the fact that Scripture, while speaking in general of the resurrection ton nekron that is, "of the dead," repeatedly refers to the resurrection of believers as a resurrection ek nekron that is, "out of the dead." Premillenarians render this expression, "from among the dead," so that it would imply that many dead still remain in the grave. Lightfoot also asserts that this expression refers to the resurrection of believers, but Kennedy says, "There is absolutely no evidence for this definite assertion." This is also the conclusion to which Dr. Vos comes after a careful study of the relevant passages. In general it may be said that the assumption that the expression he anastasis ek nekron should be rendered "the resurrection from among the dead," is entirely gratuitous. The standard lexicons know nothing of such a rendering; and Cremer-Koegel interprets the expression to mean "from the state of the dead," and this would seem to be the most natural interpretation. It should be noted that Paul uses the terms interchangeably in 1 Corinthians 15:1-58. Though speaking of the resurrection of believers only, he evidently does not seek to stress the fact that this is of a specific character, for he uses the more general term repeatedly, 1 Corinthians 15:12-13, 1 Corinthians 15:21, 1 Corinthians 15:42, 32 b. Premillenarians also appeal to certain specific expressions, such as "a better resurrection," Hebrews 11:35, "the resurrection of life," John 5:29, "the resurrection of the just," Luke 14:14, and "the resurrection of the dead in Christ," 1 Thessalonians 4:16, — all of which refer to the resurrection of believers only. These expressions seem to set that resurrection off as something apart. But these passages merely prove that the Bible distinguishes the resurrection of the righteous from that of the wicked and afford no proof whatsoever that there will be two resurrections, separated from each other by a period of a thousand years. The resurrection of the people of God differs from that of unbelievers in its moving principle, in its essential nature, and in its final issue, and can therefore very well be represented as something distinctive and to be desired far above the resurrection of the wicked. The former does, and the latter does not, deliver men from the power of death. In spite of their resurrection unbelievers remain in the state of death. c. One of the principal proof passages of the Premillenarians for a double resurrection is found in 1 Corinthians 15:22-24 : "For as in Adam all die, so also in Christ shall all be made alive. But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; then they that are Christ’s, at His coming. Then cometh the end, when He shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father." In this passage they find three stages of the resurrection indicated, namely, (1) the resurrection of Christ; (2) the resurrection of believers; and (3) the end (as they interpret it) of the resurrection, that is, the resurrection of the wicked. Silver puts it rather picturesquely: "In the resurrection Christ and many saints who rise in and around Jerusalem appear as the first band. More than 1900 years afterwards ’they that are Christ’s, at His coming’ appear as the second band. ’Then,’ but not immediately, ’cometh the end’ (1 Corinthians 15:24), the last great body like a band of forlorn creatures ending the procession."33 It will be noted that the idea "not immediately" is carried into the text. The argument is that because epeita (then) in 1 Corinthians 15:23 refers to a time at least 1900 years later, the word eita (then) in 1 Corinthians

15:24 refers to a time 1000 years later. But this is a mere assumption without any proof. The words epeita and eita do indeed mean the same thing, but neither one of them necessarily implies the idea of a long intervening period. Notice the use of epeita in Luke 16:7 and James 4:14, and that of eita in Mark 8:25; John 13:5; John 19:27; John 20:27. Both words can be used for that which will immediately occur and for that which will occur only after some time, so that it is a pure assumption that the resurrection of believers will be separated by a long period of time from the end. Another gratuitous assumption is that "the end" means "the end of the resurrection." According to the analogy of Scripture it points to the end of the world, the consummation, the time when Christ will deliver up the kingdom to the Father and will have put all enemies under His feet. This is the view adopted by such commentators as Alford, Godet, Hodge, Bachmann, Findley, Robertson and Plummer, and Edwards.34 d. Another passage to which the Premillenarians appeal is 1 Thessalonians 4:16, "For the Lord Himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first." From this they infer that those who did not die in Christ will be raised up at a later date. But it is perfectly clear that this is not the antithesis which the apostle has in mind. The statement following is not, "Then the dead who are not in Christ shall arise," but, "Then we that are alive, that are left, shall together with them be caught up in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord." This is frankly admitted by Biederwolf.35 Both in this passage and in the preceding one Paul is speaking of the resurrection of believers only; that of the wicked is not in his purview at all. e. The most important passage to which the Premillenarians refer is Revelation 20:4-6 :... "and they lived and reigned with Christ a thousand years. The rest of the dead lived not until the thousand years should be finished. This is the first resurrection." Here Revelation 20:5-6 make mention of a first resurrection, and this, it is said, implies that there will be a second. But the supposition that the writer is here speaking of a bodily resurrection is extremely dubious. The scene in the Revelation 20:4-6 is evidently laid, not on earth, but in heaven. And the terms employed are not suggestive of a bodily resurrection. The seer does not speak of persons or bodies that were raised up, but of souls which "lived" and "reigned." And he calls their living and reigning with Christ "the first resurrection." Dr. Vos suggests that the words, " This (emphatic) is the first resurrection," may even be "a pointed disavowal of a more realistic (chiliastic) interpretation of the same phrase."36 In all probability the expression refers to the entrance of the souls of the saints upon the glorious state of life with Christ at death. The absence of the idea of a double resurrection may well make us hesitate to affirm its presence in this obscure passage of a book so full of symbolism as the Revelation of John. Wherever the Bible mentions the resurrection of the righteous and the wicked together, as in Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15, it does not contain the slightest hint that the two are to be separated by a thousand years. On the other hand it does teach that the resurrection will take place at the last day, and will at once be followed by the last judgment, Matthew 25:31-32; John 5:27-29; John 6:39-40; John 6:44; John 6:54; John 11:24; Revelation 20:11-15.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Does the Apostolic Confession speak of the resurrection of the body, or of the resurrection of the flesh? How do you account for the change from the one to the other? Do not all Premillenarians have to posit another resurrection of the righteous in addition to those that occur at the parousia and at the revelation? How do Premillenarians construe even Daniel 12:2 into an argument for a double resurrection? How do they find an argument for it in Php 3:11? What is the principal argument of modern liberals against the doctrine of a physical resurrection? What does Paul mean, when he speaks of the resurrection body as a soma

pneumatikon, 1 Corinthians 15:44?

LITERATURE: Bavinck,; Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 755-758, 770-777; Kuyper, Dict. Dogm., De Consummatione Saeculi, pp. 262-279; Vos, Geref. Dogm. V. Eschatologie, pp. 14-22; ibid. The Pauline Eschatology, pp. 136-225; Hodge, Syst. Theol. III, pp. 837-844; Dabney, Syst. and Polem. Theol., pp. 829-841; Shedd. Dogm. Theol. pp. 641-658; Valentine, Chr. Theol. II, pp. 414-420; Dahle, Life After Death, pp. 358-368, 398-418; Hovey, Eschatology, pp. 23-78; Mackintosh, Immortality and the Future, pp. 164-179; Snowden, The Coming of the Lord, pp. 172-191; Salmond, The Chr. Doct. of Immortality, pp. 262-272, 437-459; Kennedy, St. Paul's Conceptions of the Last Things, pp. 222-281; Kliefoth, Eschatologie pp. 248-275; Brown, The Chr. Hope, pp. 89-108; Milligan. The Resurrection of the Dead, pp. 61-77.

04.6.2.4. The Final Judgment

IV. The Final Judgment

Another one of the important concomitants of the return of Christ is the last judgment, which will be of a general nature. The Lord is coming again for the very purpose of judging the living and consigning each individual to his eternal destiny.

A. THE DOCTRINE OF THE LAST JUDGMENT IN HISTORY. The doctrine of a final general judgment was from the very earliest times of the Christian era connected with that of the resurrection of the dead. The general opinion was that the dead would be raised up, in order to be judged according to the deeds done in the body. As a solemn warning the certainty of this judgment was stressed. This doctrine is already contained in the Apostolic Confession: "From thence He shall come to judge the living and the dead." The prevailing idea was that this judgment would be accompanied with the destruction of the world. On the whole the early Church Fathers did not speculate much about the nature of the final judgment, though Tertullian forms an exception. Augustine sought to interpret some of the figurative statements of Scripture respecting the judgment. In the Middle Ages the Scholastics discussed the matter in greater detail. They, too, believed that the resurrection of the dead would be followed immediately by the general judgment, and that this would mark the end of time for man. It will be general in the sense that all rational creatures will appear in it, and that it will bring a general revelation of each one’s deeds, both good and evil. Christ will be the Judge, while others will be associated with Him in the judgment; not, however, as judges in the strict sense of the word. Immediately after the judgment there will be a universal conflagration. We leave out of consideration some of the other particulars here. The Reformers shared this view in general, but added little or nothing to the prevailing view. The same view is found in all the Protestant Confessions, which explicitly affirm that there will be a day of judgment at the end of the world, but do not enter into details. It has been the official view of the Churches up to the present time. This does not mean that no other views found expression. Kant inferred from the categorical imperative the existence of a supreme Judge who would right all wrongs in some future life. Schelling in his famous dictum, "The history of the world is the judgment of the world," evidently regarded the judgment merely as a present immanent process. Some were not inclined to grant the moral constitution of the universe, did not believe that history was moving on to some moral termination, and thus denied the future judgment. This idea was given a philosophical construction by Von Hartmann. In modern liberal theology, with its emphasis on the fact that God is immanent in all the processes of history, there is a strong tendency to regard the judgment primarily, if not exclusively, as a present immanent process. Says Beckwith: "In his (God’s) dealing with men there is no holding in abeyance, no suspension of any attribute of his being. The judgment is, therefore, no more truly future than it is present. So far as God is the author of it, it is as constant and perpetual as his action in human life. To postpone the judgment to a future public hour is to misconceive of justice, as if it were dormant or suspended, wholly bound up with outward conditions. On the contrary the sphere of justice must be sought not first without but within, in the inner life, in the world of consciousness."37 Dispensationalists believe

whole-heartedly in the future judgment, but speak of judgments in the plural. According to them there will be one judgment at the parousia, another at the revelation of Christ, and still another at the end of the world.

B. THE NATURE OF THE FINAL JUDGMENT. The final judgment of which the Bible speaks may not be regarded as a spiritual, invisible and endless process, which is identical with God's providence in history. This is not equivalent to a denial of the fact that there is a providential judgment of God in the vicissitudes of individuals and nations, though it may not always be recognized as such. The Bible clearly teaches us that God even in the present life visits evil with punishment and rewards the good with blessings, and these punishments and rewards are in some cases positive, but in other instances appear as the natural providential results of the evil committed or of the good done, Deuteronomy 9:5; Psalms 9:16; Psalms 37:28; Psalms 59:13; Proverbs 11:5; Proverbs 14:11; Isaiah 32:16-17; Lamentations 5:7. The human conscience also testifies to this fact. But it is also manifest from Scripture that the judgments of God in the present are not final. The evil sometimes continues without due punishment, and the good is not always rewarded with the promised blessings in this life. The wicked in the days of Malachi were emboldened to cry out, "Where is the God of judgment?" Malachi 2:17. The complaint was heard in those days: "It is vain to serve God; and what profit is it that we have kept His charge, and that we have walked mournfully before Jehovah of Hosts? And now we call the proud happy; yea, they that work wickedness are built up; yea, they tempt God and escape," Malachi 3:14-15. Job and his friends were wrestling with the problem of the sufferings of the righteous, and so was Asaph in the 73rd Psalm. The Bible teaches us to look forward to a final judgment as the decisive answer of God to all such questions, as the solution of all such problems, and as the removal of all the apparent discrepancies of the present, Matthew 25:31-46; John 5:27-29; Acts 25:24; Romans 2:5-11; Hebrews 9:27; Hebrews 10:27; 2 Peter 3:7; Revelation 20:11-15. These passages do not refer to a process, but to a very definite event at the end of time. It is represented as accompanied by other historical events, such as the coming of Jesus Christ, the resurrection of the dead, and the renewal of heaven and earth.

C. ERRONEOUS VIEWS RESPECTING THE JUDGMENT.

1. THE JUDGMENT PURELY METAPHORICAL. According to Schleiermacher and many other German scholars the Biblical descriptions of the last judgment are to be understood as symbolical indications of the fact that the world and the Church will finally be separated. This explanation serves to evaporate the whole idea of a forensic judgment for the public determination of the final state of man. It is an explanation which surely does not do justice to the strong statements of Scripture respecting the future judgment as a formal, public, and final declaration.

2. THE JUDGMENT EXCLUSIVELY IMMANENT. Schelling's dictum that "the history of the world is the judgment of the world" undoubtedly contains an element of truth. There are, as was pointed out in the preceding, manifestations of the retributive justice of God in the history of nations and individuals. The rewards or punishments may be of a positive character, or may be the natural result of the good or evil done. But when many liberal scholars claim that the divine judgment is wholly immanent and is determined entirely by the moral order of the world, they certainly fail to do justice to the representations of Scripture. Their view of the judgment as "self-acting" makes God an otiose God, who merely looks on and approves of the distribution of rewards and punishments.

It completely destroys the idea of the judgment as an outward and visible event, which will occur at some definite time in the future. Moreover, it cannot satisfy the longings of the human heart for perfect justice. Historical judgments are always only partial and sometimes impress men as a travesty on justice. There always has been and still is occasion for the perplexity of Job and Asaph.

3. THE JUDGMENT NOT A SINGLE EVENT. Present day Premillenarians speak of three different future judgments. They distinguish: (a) A judgment of the risen and living saints at the parousia or the coming of the Lord, which serves the purpose of vindicating the saints publicly, rewarding each one according to his works, and assigning to them their respective places in the coming millennial kingdom. (b) A judgment at the revelation of Christ (the day of the Lord), immediately after the great tribulation, in which, according to the prevailing view, the Gentile nations are judged as nations, according to the attitude they have assumed to the evangelizing remnant of Israel (the least of the brethren of the Lord). The entrance of these nations into the kingdom depends on the outcome. This is the judgment mentioned in Matthew 25:31-46. It is separated from the earlier judgment by a period of seven years. (c) A judgment of the wicked dead before the great white throne, described in Revelation 20:11-15. The dead are judged according to their works, and these determine the degree of punishment which they will receive. This judgment will be more than a thousand years later than the preceding one. It should be noted, however, that the Bible always speaks of the future judgment as a single event. It teaches us to look forward, not to days, but to the day of judgment, John 5:28-29; Acts 17:31; 2 Peter 3:7, also called "that day," Matthew 7:22; 2 Timothy 4:8, and "the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God," Romans 2:5. Premillenarians feel the force of this argument, for they reply that it may be a day of a thousand years. Moreover, there are passages of Scripture from which it is abundantly evident that the righteous and the wicked appear in judgment together for a final separation, Matthew 7:22-23; Matthew 25:31-46; Romans 2:5-7; Revelation 11:18; Revelation 20:11-15. Furthermore, it should be noted that the judgment of the wicked is represented as a concomitant of the parousia and also of the revelation, 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2 Peter 3:4-7. And, finally, it should be borne in mind that God does not judge the nations as nations where eternal issues are at stake, but only individuals; and that a final separation of the righteous and the wicked cannot possibly be made until the end of the world. It is hard to see how anyone can give a tolerable and self-consistent interpretation of Matthew 25:31-46, except on the supposition that the judgment referred to is the universal judgment of all men, and that they are judged, not as nations, but as individuals. Even Meyer and Alford who are themselves Premillenarians consider this to be the only tenable exposition.

4. THE FINAL JUDGMENT UNNECESSARY. Some regard the final judgment as entirely unnecessary, because each man’s destiny is determined at the time of his death. If a man fell asleep in Jesus, he is saved; and if he died in his sins, he is lost. Since the matter is settled, no further judicial inquiry is necessary, and therefore such a final judgment is quite superfluous. But the certainty of the future judgment does not depend on our conception of its necessity. God clearly teaches us in His Word that there will be a final judgment, and that settles the matter for all those who recognize the Bible as the final standard of faith. Moreover, the underlying assumption on which this argument proceeds, namely, that the final judgment is for the purpose of ascertaining what should be the future state of man, is entirely erroneous. It will serve the purpose rather of

displaying before all rational creatures the declarative glory of God in a formal, forensic act, which magnifies on the one hand His holiness and righteousness, and on the other hand, His grace and mercy. Moreover, it should be borne in mind that the judgment at the last day will differ from that at the death of each individual in more than one respect. It will not be secret, but public; it will not pertain to the soul only, but also to the body; it will not have reference to a single individual, but to all men.

D. THE JUDGE AND HIS ASSISTANTS.

Naturally, the final judgment, like all God's opera ad extra, is a work of the triune God, but Scripture ascribes it particularly to Christ. Christ in His mediatorial capacity will be the future Judge, Matthew 25:31-32; John 5:27; Acts 10:42; Acts 17:31; Php 2:10; 2 Timothy 4:1. Such passages as Matthew 28:18; John 5:27; Php 2:9-10, make it abundantly evident that the honor of judging the living and the dead was conferred on Christ as Mediator in reward for His atoning work and as a part of His exaltation. This may be regarded as one of the crowning honors of His kingship. In His capacity as Judge, too, Christ is saving His people to the uttermost: He completes their redemption, justifies them publicly, and removes the last consequences of sin. From such passages as Matthew 13:41-42; Matthew 24:31; Matthew 25:31, it may be inferred that the angels will assist Him in this great work. Evidently, the saints will in some sense sit and judge with Christ, Psalms 149:5-9; 1 Corinthians 6:2-3; Revelation 20:4. It is hard to say just what this will involve. It has been interpreted to mean that the saints will condemn the world by their faith, just as the Ninevites would have condemned the unbelieving cities of Jesus' day; or that they will merely concur in the judgment of Christ. But the argument of Paul in 1 Corinthians 6:2-3 would seem to require something more than this, for neither of the two suggested interpretations would prove that the Corinthians were capable of judging the matters that arose in the Church. Though the saints cannot be expected to know all those who appear in judgment and to apportion the penalties, yet they will have some real active share in the judgment of Christ, though it is impossible to say just what this will be.

E. THE PARTIES THAT WILL BE JUDGED.

Scripture contains clear indications of at least two parties that will be judged. It is quite evident that the fallen angels will stand before the tribunal of God, Matthew 8:29; 1 Corinthians 6:3; 2 Peter 2:4; Jude 1:6. Satan and his demons will meet their final doom in the day of judgment. It is also perfectly clear that every individual of the human race will have to appear before the judgment seat, Ecclesiastes 12:14; Psalms 50:4-6; Matthew 12:36-37; Matthew 25:32; Romans 14:10; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Revelation 20:12. These passages certainly leave no room for the view of the Pelagians and of those who follow in their wake, that the final judgment will be limited to those who have enjoyed the privileges of the gospel. Neither do they favor the idea of those sectarians who hold that the righteous will not be called into judgment. When Jesus says in John 5:24, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word and believeth Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life," he clearly means in view of the context, that the believer cometh not into condemnatory judgment. But it is sometimes objected that the sins of believers, which are pardoned, certainly will not be published at that time; but Scripture leads us to expect that they will be, though they will, of course, be revealed as pardoned sins. Men will be judged for "every idle word," Matthew 12:36, and for "every secret

thing," Romans 2:16; 1 Corinthians 4:5, and there is no indication whatsoever that this will be limited to the wicked. Moreover, it is perfectly evident from such passages as Matthew 13:30; Matthew 13:40-43; Matthew 13:49; Matthew 25:14-23; Matthew 25:34-40; Matthew 25:46, that the righteous will appear before the judgment seat of Christ. It is more difficult to determine, whether the good angels will be subject to the final judgment in any sense of the word. Dr. Bavinck is inclined to infer from 1 Corinthians 6:3 that they will be; but this passage does not prove the point. It might do this, if the word aggelous were preceded by the article, which is not the case. We simply read, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" Because of the uncertainty connected with this matter, it is better to be silent. The more so, since the angels are clearly represented only as ministers of Christ in connection with the work of judgment, Matthew 13:30; Matthew 13:41; Matthew 25:31; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-8.

F. THE TIME OF THE JUDGMENT.

Though the time of the future judgment cannot be determined absolutely, it can be fixed relatively, that is, relative to other eschatological events. It will clearly be at the end of the present world, for it will be a judgment passed on the whole life of every man, Matthew 13:40-43; 2 Peter 3:7. Moreover, it will be a concomitant of the coming (parousia) of Jesus Christ, Matthew 25:19-46; 2 Thessalonians 1:7-10; 2 Peter 3:9-10, and will follow immediately after the resurrection of the dead, Daniel 12:2; John 5:28-29; Revelation 20:12-13. The question whether it will immediately precede, be coincident with, or immediately follow, the renewal of heaven and earth, cannot be settled conclusively on the basis of Scripture. Revelation 20:11 would seem to indicate that the transformation of the universe will take place when the judgment begins; 2 Peter 3:7, that the two will synchronize; and Revelation 21:1, that the renewal of heaven and earth will follow the judgment. We can only speak of them in a general way as concomitants. It is equally impossible to determine the exact duration of the judgment. Scripture speaks of "the day of judgment," Matthew 11:22; Matthew 12:36, "that day," Matthew 7:22; 2 Thessalonians 1:10; 2 Timothy 1:12, and "the day of wrath," Romans 2:5; Revelation 11:8. We need not infer from these and similar passages that it will be a day of exactly twenty-four hours, since the word "day" is also used in a more indefinite sense in Scripture. On the other hand, however, the interpretation of some of the Premillenarians, that it is a designation of the whole millennial period, cannot be regarded as a plausible one. When the word "day" is used to denote a period, it is a period which is, as a whole, characterized by some special characteristic, usually indicated by the genitive that follows the word. Thus "the day of trouble" is the period that is characterized throughout by trouble, and "the day of salvation" is the period which is in its entirety noted for its outstanding display of God’s favour or grace. And it certainly cannot be said that the millennial period of the Premillenarians, while beginning and ending with a judgment, is throughout a period of judgment. It is rather a period of joy, of righteousness and of peace. The outstanding characteristic of it is certainly not that of judgment.

G. THE STANDARD OF JUDGMENT. The standard by which saints and sinners are judged will evidently be the revealed will of God. This is not the same for all. Some have been privileged above others, and this naturally adds to their responsibility, Matthew 11:21-24; Romans 2:12-16. This does not mean that there will be different conditions of salvation for different classes of people. For all those who appear in judgment entrance into, or exclusion from, heaven, will depend on the question, whether they are clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. But there will be

different degrees, both of the bliss of heaven and of the punishment of hell. And these degrees will be determined by what is done in the flesh, Matthew 11:22; Matthew 11:24; Luke 12:47-48; Daniel 12:3; 2 Corinthians 9:6. The Gentiles will be judged by the law of nature, inscribed in their hearts, the Israelites of the old dispensation by the Old Testament revelation and by that only, and those who have enjoyed, besides the light of nature and the revelation of the Old Testament, the light of the gospel, will be judged according to the greater light which they have received. God will give to every man his due.

H. THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF THE JUDGMENT.

Here we should distinguish:

1. THE COGNITIO CAUSAE. God will take cognizance of the state of affairs, of the whole past life of man, including even the thoughts and secret intents of the heart. This is symbolically represented in Scripture as the opening of the books, Daniel 7:10; Revelation 20:12. The pious of the days of Malachi spoke of a book of remembrance written before God, Malachi 3:16. It is a figurative description which is added to complete the idea of the judgment. A judge usually has the book of the law and the record of those who appear before him. In all probability the figure in this case simply refers to the omniscience of God. Some speak of the book of God's Word as the statute book, and of the book of remembrance as the book of predestination, God's private record. But it is very doubtful whether we should particularize in that fashion.

2. THE SENTENTIAE PROMULGATIO. There will be promulgation of the sentence. The day of judgment is the day of wrath, and of the revelation of the righteous judgment of God, Romans 2:5. All must be revealed before the tribunal of the supreme Judge, 2 Corinthians 5:10. The sense of justice demands this. The sentence pronounced upon each person will not be secret, will not be known to that person only, but will be publicly proclaimed, so that at least those in any way concerned will know. Thus the righteousness and grace of God will shine out in all their splendor.

3. THE SENTENTIAE EXECUTIO. The sentence of the righteous will convey everlasting blessedness, and that of the wicked everlasting misery. The Judge will divide mankind into two parts, as a shepherd separates the sheep from the goats, Matthew 25:32 ff. In view of what will be said of their final state in the following chapter, nothing more need be added here.

04.6.2.5. The Final State

V. The Final State The last judgment determines, and therefore naturally leads on to, the final state of those who appear before the judgment seat. Their final state is either one of everlasting misery or one of eternal blessedness.

A. THE FINAL STATE OF THE WICKED.

There are especially three points that call for consideration here:

1. THE PLACE TO WHICH THE WICKED ARE CONSIGNED. In present day theology there is an evident tendency in some circles to rule out the idea of eternal punishment. The Annihilationists, which are still represented in such sects as Adventism and Millennial Dawnism, and the advocates of conditional immortality, deny the continued existence of the wicked, and thereby render a place of eternal punishment unnecessary. In modern liberal theology the word "hell" is generally regarded as a figurative designation of a purely subjective condition, in which men may find themselves even while on earth, and which may become permanent in the future. But these interpretations certainly do not do justice to the data of Scripture. There can be no reasonable doubt as to the fact that the Bible teaches the continued existence of the wicked, Matthew 24:5; Matthew 25:30; Matthew 25:46; Luke 16:19-31. Moreover, in connection with the subject of "hell" the Bible certainly uses local terms right along. It calls the place of torment gehenna, a name derived from the Hebrew ge (land, or valley) and hinnom or beney hinnom, that is, Hinnom or sons of Hinnom. This name was originally applied to a valley southwest of Jerusalem. It was the place where wicked idolators sacrificed their children to Moloch by causing them to pass through the fire. Hence it was considered impure and was called in later days "the valley of tophet (spittle), as an utterly despised region. Fires were constantly burning there to consume the offal of Jerusalem. As a result it became a symbol of the place of eternal torment. Matthew 18:9 speaks of ten geennan tou puros, the gehenna of fire, and this strong expression is used synonymously with to pur to aionion, the eternal fire, in the previous verse. The Bible also speaks of a "furnace of fire," Matthew 13:42, and of a "lake of fire," Revelation 20:14-15, which forms a contrast with the "sea of glass like unto crystal," Revelation 4:6. The terms "prison," 1 Peter 3:19, "abyss," Luke 8:31, and "tartarus," 2 Peter 2:4 are also used. From the fact that the preceding terms are all local designations, we may infer that hell is a place. Moreover, local expressions are generally used in connection with it. Scripture speaks of those who are excluded from heaven as being "outside," and as being "cast into hell." The description in Luke 16:19-31 is certainly altogether local.

2. THE STATE IN WHICH THEY WILL CONTINUE THEIR EXISTENCE. It is impossible to determine precisely what will constitute the eternal punishment of the wicked, and it behooves us to speak very cautiously on the subject. Positively, it may be said to consist in (a) a total absence of the favor of God; (b) an endless disturbance of life as a result of the complete domination of sin; (c) positive pains and sufferings in body and soul; and (d) such subjective punishments as pangs of conscience, anguish, despair, weeping, and gnashing of teeth, Matthew 8:12; Matthew 13:50; Mark 9:43-44; Mark 9:47-48; Luke 16:23; Luke 16:28; Revelation 14:10; Revelation 21:8.

Evidently, there will be degrees in the punishment of the wicked. This follows from such passages as Matthew 11:22; Matthew 11:24; Luke 12:47-48; Luke 20:17. Their punishment will be commensurate with their sinning against the light which they had received. But it will, nevertheless, be eternal punishment for all of them. This is plainly stated in Scripture, Matthew 18:8; 2 Thessalonians 1:9; Revelation 14:11; Revelation 20:10. Some deny that there will be a literal fire, because this could not affect spirits like Satan and his demons. But how do we know this? Our body certainly works on our soul in some mysterious way. There will be some positive punishment corresponding to our bodies. It is undoubtedly true, however, that a great deal of the language concerning heaven and hell must be understood figuratively.

3. THE DURATION OF THEIR PUNISHMENT. The question of the eternity of the future punishment deserves more special consideration, however, because it is frequently denied. It is said that the words used in Scripture for "everlasting" and "eternal" may simply denote an "age" or a "dispensation," or any other long period of time. Now it cannot be doubted that they are so used in some passages, but this does not prove that they always have that limited meaning. It is not the literal meaning of these terms. Whenever they are so used, they are used figuratively, and in such cases their figurative use is generally quite evident from the connection. Moreover, there are positive reasons for thinking that these words do not have that limited meaning in the passages to which we referred. (a) In Matthew 24:46 the same word describes the duration of both, the bliss of the saints and the penalty of the wicked. If the latter is not, properly speaking, unending, neither is the former; and yet many of those who doubt eternal punishment, do not doubt everlasting bliss. (b) Other expressions are used which cannot be set aside by the consideration mentioned in the preceding. The fire of hell is called an "unquenchable fire," Mark 9:43; and it is said of the wicked that "their worm dieth not," Mark 9:48. Moreover, the gulf that will separate saints and sinners in the future is said to be fixed and impassable, Luke 16:26.

B. THE FINAL STATE OF THE RIGHTEOUS.

1. THE NEW CREATION. The final state of believers will be preceded by the passing of the present world and the appearance of a new creation. Matthew 19:28 speaks of "the regeneration," and Acts 3:21, of "the restoration of all things." In Hebrews 12:27 we read: "And this word, Yet once more signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken (heaven and earth), as of things that are made, that those things which are not shaken (the kingdom of God) may remain." Peter says: "But according to His promise, we look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness," 2 Peter 3:13, cf. 2 Peter 3:12; and John saw this new creation in a vision, Revelation 21:1. It is only after the new creation has been established, that the new Jerusalem descends out of heaven from God, that the tabernacle of God is pitched among men, and that the righteous enter upon their eternal joy. The question is often raised, whether this will be an entirely new creation, or a renewal of the present creation. Lutheran theologians strongly favor the former position with an appeal to 2 Peter 3:7-13; Revelation 20:11; and Revelation 21:1; while Reformed theologians prefer the latter idea, and find support for it in Psalms 102:26-27; (Hebrews 1:10-12); and Hebrews 12:26-28.

2. THE ETERNAL ABODE OF THE RIGHTEOUS. Many conceive of heaven also as a subjective condition, which men may enjoy in the present and which in the way of righteousness will naturally become permanent in the future. But here, too, it must be said that Scripture clearly presents

heaven as a place. Christ ascended to heaven, which can only mean that He went from one place to another. It is described as the house of our Father with many mansions, John 14:1, and this description would hardly fit a condition. Moreover, believers are said to be within, while unbelievers are without, Matthew 22:12-13; Matthew 25:10-12. Scripture gives us reasons to believe that the righteous will not only inherit heaven, but the entire new creation, Matthew 5:5; Revelation 21:1-3.

3. THE NATURE OF THEIR REWARD. The reward of the righteous is described as eternal life, that is, not merely an endless life, but life in all its fulness, without any of the imperfections and disturbances of the present, Matthew 25:46; Romans 2:7. The fulness of this life is enjoyed in communion with God, which is really the essence of eternal life, Revelation 21:3. They will see God in Jesus Christ face to face, will find full satisfaction in Him, will rejoice in Him, and will glorify Him. We should not think of the joys of heaven, however, as exclusively spiritual. There will be something corresponding to the body. There will be recognition and social intercourse on an elevated plane. It is also evident from Scripture that there will be degrees in the bliss of heaven, Daniel 12:3; 2 Corinthians 9:6. Our good works will be the measure of our gracious reward, though they do not merit it. Notwithstanding this, however, the joy of each individual will be perfect and full.

QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY: Why does the moral sense of mankind demand a future judgment? To what historical precursors of the final judgment does Scripture refer? Where will the final judgment take place? What encouragement is there for believers in the fact that Christ will be the Judge? Does not the expression that he who believes on the Son "shall not come into condemnation," John 5:24, prove that believers will not be judged? What works will come into consideration in the final judgment according to Scripture? If all believers inherit eternal life, in what sense is their reward determined by their works? Does the judgment serve the purpose of acquainting God better with men? What purpose does it serve? Will men be finally lost only for the sin of consciously rejecting Christ?

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S. Christian Amusements

Christian Amusements

Louis Berkhof I. Should a Christian Attend the Theater?

1. The Exact Meaning of This Question. The question is not whether performances in which one person impersonates another are lawful or not. These may be perfectly legitimate.

Neither is it whether the persons participating in some such performance have the moral right to don costumes. Even this may be permissible.

It is not even the question whether we cannot conceive in the abstract of theatrical performances that might pass muster. This may be quite possible. The only question is whether a Christian can with a good conscience visit the theater as we know it, the theater as it is known all over the world.

2. This Question Answered.

First of all a Christian should not visit the theater because:

the plays that are staged there are mostly of such a character that they palliate sin, or even present it as a virtue;

they make what is sacred to the heart of a Christian the object of mockery;

they sing the praises of immorality and incite the baser passions of man. In general the theater books only such performances as will draw a crowd, so that it is able to maintain itself. And if anyone should venture to say that a Christian can avoid such plays and attend only those that are good and truly elevating, we would urge our second objection to theater-going. A Christian should desist from attending the theater because of the character and life of the performers. It is a well known fact that the life of the stage is full of temptations and pitfalls, and that the men and women that amuse the public, are generally of a low moral character and are given to immoral practices. He who visits the theater is supporting the actors and actresses in their practices, while he knows that it is to the detriment of their souls. Even if they occasionally perform in classical plays, they must supplement this by appearing in other roles in order to earn a living. And finally a Christian should not visit the theater because it is decidedly a place of worldly pleasures, where the people of the world go to be amused. The company that one meets there is not the proper company for the people of God. The Bible demands of us that we be separate from the world and have no communion with the unfruitful works of darkness.

II. The Craze for Amusement 1. The Proper Place of Amusement in Life.

Amusements are of two kinds, namely, popular and professional, that is, amusements that the people provide for themselves — and those which are provided for them by professional players. The first are the more universal and spontaneous and have the greater value.

Amusement or play has a perfectly legitimate place in life. This follows from the very constitution of both animals and men; it is natural for the one as well as for the other to play. Moreover, the Bible speaks of playing once and again without a single note of disapproval; yes, even with approbation.

Amusement serves especially a three-fold purpose:

in the first place it promotes physical health,

in the second place it affords relaxation from the daily routine of life

and in the third place it affords positive pleasure.

It is lawful and useful only in so far as it serves one of these purposes or all of them together. It may never become an end in itself, but should always promote and enrich life in some way.

2. The Present Inordinate Desire for Amusement.

It is an undeniable fact that in our day the condition of things is largely reversed. To a great extent amusement has become an end in itself, and professional amusement assumes a disproportionate place in life. People seek above all to be amused. The subversive character of present day amusement is perfectly evident from the following facts:

(1) Many people do not seek to promote their health by partaking of the pleasures of life, but rather aim to be amused by others.

(2) An ever increasing number does not seek pleasure in order to enhance its capacity for work, but works primarily for the purpose of obtaining pleasure.

(3) And in numerous instances they indulge in the pleasures of life to such an extent that they become unfit for their daily task. In view of these things it is high time that we put a check on our amusements. They should be reduced to their proper proportions and should be so chosen or arranged that they may minister to our physical and moral welfare.

III. Our Christian Youth and Amusements 1. Our Youth Entitled to Amusements.

We do not agree with those who would deny our young people all the joys of life. This was characteristic of some, who even went as far as to require that they should wear a characteristic dress and never laugh. They would not permit them to sing hymns and frowned on the organ and still more on the piano and the violin. Our Christian youth may and must have its amusements.

(1) The Word of God does not condemn, but rather pre-supposses participation in the enjoyments of life. Think of the feasts among Israel, of the word of the wise preacher of Israel (Ecclesiastes 11:9) and of the word of the prophet (Zechariah 8:5).

(2) Moreover, the desire for amusement is inborn in every man, and is particularly strong in young people. This is perfectly natural too in view of the fact that man is destined to rejoice forever.

(3) Our young people need relaxation, for a bow long bent, at last waxes weak. Refuse them all enjoyment, and they will finally turn their backs on Christianity.

2. The Choice of Amusements.

There are certain general principles that should guide our youth in the choice of their amusements. In the first place they should bear in mind that, since they consist of both body and soul, they should seek the necessary relaxation for both body and mind. They may exercise their bodies by running, exercise, playing ball, riding on horseback, etc., and relax their minds by music and song, by reading or by playing checkers and chess. At the same time they must bear in mind that they are intellectual and moral beings and should therefore choose their amusements intelligently and never allow these to rob them of their liberty. It is incumbent on them to guard against all degrading pleasures, such as those of alcohol, the theater, the dance and all sorts of immorality. Moreover, they ought never to allow any pleasure to dominate or enslave them. There is always a danger of this, even in the most innocent pleasures, such as playing checkers or ball. And finally our young people must bear in mind that the great purpose of their life is to glorify God. In some way even their pleasures must minister to this great end. These should really afford the necessary relaxation, reinvigorate them, fit them better for life's task and heighten the enjoyment of life.

S. Common Grace

Common Grace. by Louis Berkhof A. Origin of the Doctrine of Common Grace.

1. The problem with which it deals. The origin of the doctrine of common grace was occasioned by the fact that there is in the world, alongside of the course of the Christian life with all its blessings, a natural course of life, which is not redemptive and yet exhibits many traces of the true, the good, and the beautiful. The question arose, How can we explain the comparatively orderly life in the world, seeing that the whole world lies under the curse of sin? How is it that the earth yields precious fruit in rich abundance and does not simply bring forth thorns and thistles? How can we account for it that sinful man still “retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the difference between good and evil, and shows some regard for virtue and for good outward behavior”? What explanation can be given of the special gifts and talents with which the natural man is endowed, and of the development of science and art by those who are entirely devoid of the new life that is in Christ Jesus? How can we explain the religious aspirations of men everywhere, even of those who did not come in touch with the Christian religion? How can the unregenerate still speak the truth, do good to others, and lead outwardly virtuous lives? These are some of the questions to which the doctrine of common grace seeks to supply the answer.

2. Augustine’s attitude to this problem. Augustine did not teach the doctrine of common grace, though he did not use the word “grace” exclusively as a designation of saving grace. He spoke of a grace which Adam enjoyed before the fall, and even admitted that man´s existing as a living, sentient, and rational being might be termed grace. But over against Pelagius, who stressed the natural ability of man and recognized no other grace than that consisting in the natural endowments of man, the law and the gospel, the example of Christ, and the illumination of the understanding by a gracious influence of God, – he emphasized the total inability of man and his absolute dependence on the grace of God as an inner renewing power, which not only illumines the mind but also acts directly on the will of man, either as operating or as cooperating grace. He employs the word “grace” almost exclusively in this sense, and regards this grace as the necessary condition to the performance of each good act. When the Pelagians pointed to the virtues of the heathen, who “merely through the power of innate freedom” were often merciful, discreet, chaste, and temperate, he answered that these so-called virtues were sins, because they did not spring from faith. He admits that the heathen can perform certain acts which are in themselves good and from a lower point of view even praiseworthy, but yet considers these deeds, as the deeds of unregenerate persons, to be sin, because they do not spring from the motive of love to God or of faith, and do not answer to the right purpose, the glory of God. [1] He denies that such deeds are the fruit of any natural goodness in man.

3. The view that developed during the Middle Ages. During the Middle Ages the Augustinian antithesis of sin and grace gave way to that of nature and grace. This was based on another antithesis which played an important part in Roman Catholic theology, namely, that of the natural and the supernatural. In the state of integrity man was endowed with the supernatural gift of

original righteousness', which served as a bridle to hold the lower nature in check. As the result of the fall, man lost this supernatural gift, but his real nature remained or was but slightly affected. A sinful bias developed, but this did not prohibit man from producing much that was true, and good, and beautiful. However, without the infusion of the grace of God, all this did not suffice to give one a claim to life eternal. In connection with the antithesis of the natural and the supernatural, the Roman Catholic Church developed the distinction between the moral virtues of humility, obedience, meekness, liberality, temperance, chastity, and diligence in what is good, which men can gain for themselves by their own labors, and with the timely aid of divine grace; and the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, which are infused into man by sanctifying grace. Anabaptism and Socinianism suffer from the same antithesis, but with the distinction that the former exalts grace at the expense of nature, while the latter exalts nature at the expense of grace.

4. The position of the Reformers and of Reformed theology. On this, as on some other points of doctrine, Luther did not entirely escape the leaven of Roman Catholicism. While he did return to the Augustinian antithesis of sin and grace, he drew a sharp distinction between the lower earthly sphere and the higher spiritual sphere, and maintained that fallen man is by nature capable of doing much that is good and praiseworthy in the lower or earthly sphere, though he is utterly incapable of doing any spiritual good. With an appeal to Augustine the Augsburg Confession teaches "that man´s will hath some liberty to work a civil righteousness and to choose such things as reason can reach unto; but that it hath no power to work the righteousness of God." [2] The Article contains a quotation from Augustine, in which many of the good works pertaining to the present life, which the natural man can do, are named. Zwingli conceived of sin as pollution rather than as guilt, and consequently regarded the grace of God as sanctifying, rather than as pardoning, grace. This sanctifying influence, which penetrated in a measure even into the Gentile world, accounts for the true, the good, and the beautiful that is in the world. Calvin did not agree with the position of Luther, nor with that of Zwingli. He firmly maintained that the natural man can of himself do no good work whatsoever and strongly insisted on the particular nature of saving grace. He developed alongside of the doctrine of particular grace the doctrine of common grace. This is a grace which is communal, does not pardon nor purify human nature, and does not effect the salvation of sinners. It curbs the destructive power of sin, maintains in a measure the moral order of the universe, thus making an orderly life possible, distributes in varying degrees gifts and talents among men, promotes the development of science and art, and showers untold blessings upon the children of men. Since the days of Calvin the doctrine of common grace was generally recognized in Reformed theology, though it also met with occasional opposition. For a long time, however, little was done to develop the doctrine. This was in all probability due to the fact that the rise and prevalence of Rationalism made it necessary to place all emphasis on special grace. Up to the present Kuyper and Bavinck did more than any one else for the development of the doctrine of common grace.

B. Name and Concept of Common Grace.

1. Name. The name "common grace" as a designation of the grace now under discussion cannot be said to owe its origin to Calvin. Dr. H. Kuiper in his work on Calvin on Common Grace says that he found only four passage in Calvin´s works in which the adjective "common" is used with the noun "grace," and in two of these the Reformer is speaking of saving grace. [3] In later Reformed theology, however, the name gratia communis came into general use to express the idea that this

grace extends to all men, in contrast with the gratia particularis which is limited to a part of mankind, namely, to the elect. In course of time it became evident that the term “communis” admitted of various interpretations. In Dutch theology it is often regarded as equivalent to “general,” and as a result it became customary to speak of “general grace” (algemeene genade) in the Netherlands. Strictly speaking, however, the term communis, as applied to grace, while implying that it is general in some sense of the word, stresses the fact that this grace is communal, that is, possessed in common by all creatures, or by all men, or by those who live under the administration of the gospel. Thus Dr. H. Kuiper classifies the common grace of which Calvin speaks under three heads, namely: (1) Universal Common Grace, a grace that extends to all creatures; (2) General Common Grace, that is a grace which applies to mankind in general and to every member of the human race; and (3) Covenant Common Grace, a grace that is common to all those who live in the sphere of the covenant, whether they belong to the elect or not. It is quite evident that Reformed theologians also subsumed under the term “common grace” a grace that is not general, namely, the external privileges of those who are living under the administration of the gospel, including the external universal calling. At the same time they point out that this grace, in distinction from general common grace, belongs to the economy of redemption. [4] Finally, it should be noted that the term gratia communis is susceptible of, and has actually received, not only a quantitative, but also a qualitative interpretation. It may denote a grace that is common in the sense of ordinary. The ordinary, in distinction from the special, operations of the Holy Spirit are called common. His natural or usual operations are contrasted with those which are unusual and supernatural. This is the meaning of the term “common” in the Westminster Confession X. 4; and the Westminster Larger Catechism, Q. 60. W. L. Alexander declares of the common grace enjoyed by those who live under the gospel: “The grace thus bestowed is common, not in the sense of being given to all men in common, but in the sense of producing effects which are ordinary, and may fall short of a real saving efficacy.”[5] So understood, the grace of God may be common without being general or universal.

2. Concept. The distinction between common and special grace is not one that applies to grace as an attribute in God. There are no two kinds of grace in God, but only one. It is that perfection of God in virtue of which he shows unmerited and even forfeited favor to man. This one grace of God manifests itself, however, in different gifts and operations. The richest manifestation of it is seen in those gracious operations of God which aim at, and result in, the removal of the guilt, the pollution, and the punishment of sin, and the ultimate salvation of sinners. But while this is the crowning work of the grace of God, it is not its only manifestation. It appears also in the natural blessings which God showers upon man in the present life, in spite of the fact that man has forfeited them and lies under the sentence of death. It is seen in all that God does to restrain the devastating influence and development of sin in the world, and to maintain and enrich and develop the natural life of mankind in general and of those individuals who constitute the human race. It should be emphasized that these natural blessings are manifestations of the grace of God to man in general. Some prefer to say that they are expressions of His goodness, kindness, benevolence, mercy, or long-suffering, but seem to forget that He could not be good, kind, or benevolent to the sinner unless He were first of all gracious. It should be borne in mind, however, that the term gratia communis, though generally designating a grace that is common to the whole of mankind, is also used to denote a grace that is common to the elect and the non-elect that are living under the gospel, such as the external gospel call that comes to both alike, and that inner illumination and

those gifts of the Spirit of which we read in Hebrews 6:4-6. It is understood, however, that these privileges can be called common grace only in the sense that they are enjoyed by the elect and the reprobate indiscriminately, and that they do not constitute special, in the sense of saving, grace. In distinction from the more general manifestations of common grace they, while they do not constitute a part of the grace of God that necessarily leads to salvation, are nevertheless related to the soteriological process. They are sometimes called “special” grace, but then “special” is not equivalent to “saving.” In general it may be said that, when we speak of “common grace,” we have in mind, either (a) those general operations of the Holy Spirit whereby He, without renewing the heart, exercises such a moral influence on man through His general or special revelation, that sin is restrained, order is maintained in social life, and civil righteousness is promoted; or, (b) those general blessings, such as rain and sunshine, food and drink, clothing and shelter, which God imparts to all men indiscriminately where and in what measure it seems good to Him. The following points of distinction between special (in the sense of saving) and common grace should be noted: a. The extent of special grace is determined by the decree of election. This grace is limited to the elect, while common grace is not so limited, but is granted to all men indiscriminately. The decree of election and reprobation has no determining influence on it. It cannot even be said that the elect receive a greater measure of common grace than the non-elect. It is a matter of common knowledge, and has frequently been observed, that the wicked often possess a greater measure of common grace and have a greater share in the natural blessings of life than the pious. b. Special grace removes the guilt and penalty of sin, changes the inner life of man, and gradually cleanses him from the pollution of sin by the supernatural operation of the Holy Spirit. Its work invariably issues in the salvation of the sinner. Common grace, on the other hand, never removes the guilt of sin, does not renew human nature, but only has a restraining effect on the corrupting influence of sin and in a measure mitigates its results. It does not effect the salvation of the sinner, though in some of its forms (external calling and moral illumination) it may be closely connected with the economy of redemption and have a soteriological aspect. c. Special grace is irresistible. This does not mean that it is a deterministic force which compels man to believe against his will, but that by changing the heart it makes man perfectly willing to accept Jesus Christ unto salvation and to yield obedience to the will of God. Common grace is resistible, and as a matter of fact is always more or less resisted. Paul shows in Romans 1:1-32; Romans 2:1-29 that neither the Gentiles nor the Jews were living up to the light which they had. Says Shedd: “In common grace the call to believe and repent is invariably ineffectual, because man is averse to faith and repentance and in bondage to sin.” [6] It is ineffectual unto salvation because it leaves the heart unchanged. d. Special grace works in a spiritual and recreative way, renewing the whole nature of man, and thus making man able and willing to accept the offer of salvation in Jesus Christ, and to produce spiritual fruits. Common grace, to the contrary, operates only in a rational and moral way by making man in a general way receptive for the truth, by presenting motives to the will, and by appealing to the natural desires of man. This is equivalent to saying that special (saving) grace is immediate and supernatural, since it is wrought directly in the soul by the immediate energy of the Holy Spirit, while common grace is mediate, since it is the product of the mediate operation of the Holy Spirit through the truth of general or special revelation and by moral persuasion. This conception of common grace should be carefully distinguished from that of the Arminians, who regard common grace as a link in the ordo salutis and ascribe to it saving significance. They hold that, in virtue of the common grace of God, the unregenerate man is perfectly able to perform a

certain measure of spiritual good, to turn to God in faith and repentance, and thus to accept Jesus unto salvation. They go even farther than that, and maintain that common grace by the illumination of the mind and the persuasive influence of the truth incites the sinner to accept Jesus Christ and to turn to God in faith and repentance, and will certainly achieve this end, unless the sinner obstinately resists the operation of the Holy Spirit. The Canons of Dort have this in mind where they reject the error of those who teach “that the corrupt and natural man can so well use the common grace (by which they understand the light of nature), or the gifts still left him after the fall, that he can gradually gain by their good use a greater, that is, the evangelical or saving grace, and salvation itself.”[7] C. Common Grace and the Atoning Work of Christ. The question naturally arises, whether the manifestation of common grace is in any way connected with the atoning work of Christ. As far as we know, Dr. Kuyper does not posit such a connection. According to him Christ as the Mediator of creation, the light that lighteth every man coming into the world, is the source of common grace. This means that the blessings of common grace flow from the work of creation. But this hardly suffices to answer the question, how it is to be explained that a holy and just God extends grace to, and bestows favors upon, sinners who have forfeited everything, even when they have no share in the righteousness of Christ and prove finally impenitent. The question is exactly, How can God continue to bestow those blessings of creation on men who are under the sentence of death and condemnation? As far as the elect are concerned this question is answered by the cross of Christ, but how about the reprobate? Perhaps it can be said that it is not necessary to assume a specific judicial basis for the bestowal of common grace on man in view of the fact (a) that it does not remove the guilt of sin and therefore does not carry pardon with it; and (b) that it does not lift the sentence of condemnation, but only postpones the execution. Perhaps the divine good pleasure to stay the revelation of His wrath and to endure “with much long-suffering vessels of wrath fitted unto destruction,” offers a sufficient explanation for the blessings of common grace.

Reformed theologians generally hesitate to say that Christ by His atoning blood merited these blessings for the impenitent and reprobate. At the same time they do believe that important natural benefits accrue to the whole human race from the death of Christ, and that in these benefits the unbelieving, the impenitent, and the reprobate also share. In every covenant transaction recorded in Scripture it appears that the covenant of grace carries with it not only spiritual but also material blessings, and those material blessings are generally of such a kind that they are naturally shared also by unbelievers. Says Cunningham: “Many blessings flow to mankind at large from the death of Christ, collaterally and incidentally, in consequence of the relation in which men, viewed collectively, stand to each other.” [8] And it is but natural that this should be so. If Christ was to save an elect race, gradually called out of the world of humanity in the course of centuries, it became necessary for God to exercise forbearance, to check the course of evil, to promote the development of the natural powers of man, to keep alive within the hearts of men a desire for civil righteousness, for external morality and good order in society, and to shower untold blessings upon mankind in general. Dr. Hodge expresses it thus: “It is very plain that any plan designed to secure the salvation of an elect portion of a race propagated by generation and living in association, as is the case with mankind, cannot secure its end without greatly affecting, for better or for worse, the character and destiny of all the rest of the race not elected.” He quotes Dr. Candlish to the effect that “the entire history of the human race, from the apostasy to the final judgment, is a dispensation of forbearance in respect to the reprobate, in which many blessings, physical and moral, affecting their characters and destinies forever, accrue even to the heathen,

and many more to the educated and refined citizens of Christian communities. These come to them through the mediation of Christ, and coming to them now, must have been designed for them from the beginning."[9] These general blessings of mankind, indirectly resulting from the atoning work of Christ, were not only foreseen by God, but designed by Him as blessings for all concerned. It is perfectly true, of course, that the design of God in the work of Christ pertained primarily and directly, not to the temporal well-being of men in general, but to the redemption of the elect; but secondarily and indirectly it also included the natural blessings bestowed on mankind indiscriminately. All that the natural man receives other than curse and death is an indirect result of the redemptive work of Christ. [10] D. The Relation Between Special and Common Grace.

Several questions may be raised respecting this relation, of which the following are some of the most important.

1. Do special and common grace differ essentially or only in degree? Arminians recognize alongside of sufficient (common) grace the grace of evangelical obedience, but aver that these two differ only in degree and not in essence. They are both soteriological in the sense that they form part of the saving work of God. The former makes it possible for man to repent and believe, while the latter, in cooperation with the will, causes man to repent and believe. Both can be resisted, so that even the latter is not necessarily effectual unto salvation. Reformed theology, however, insists on the essential difference between common and special grace. Special grace is supernatural and spiritual: it removes the guilt and pollution of sin and lifts the sentence of condemnation. Common grace, on the other hand, is natural; and while some of its forms may be closely connected with saving grace, it does not remove sin nor set man free, but merely restrains the outward manifestations of sin and promotes outward morality and decency, good order in society and civic righteousness, the development of science and art, and so on. It works only in the natural, and not in the spiritual sphere. It should be maintained therefore that, while the two are closely connected in the present life, they are yet essentially different, and do not differ merely in degree. No, amount of common grace can ever introduce the sinner into the new life that is in Christ Jesus. However, common grace does sometimes reveal itself in forms that can hardly be distinguished by man from the manifestations of special grace as, for instance, in the case of temporal faith. Dr. Shedd does not seem to bear the essential difference between the two in mind especially when he says: "The non-elect receives common grace, and common grace would incline the human will if it were not defeated by the human will. If the sinner should make no hostile opposition, common grace would be equivalent to saving grace." In a note he adds: "To say that common grace, if not resisted by the sinner, would be equivalent to regenerating grace, is not the same as to say that common grace, if assisted by the sinner, would be equivalent to regenerating grace. In the first instance, God would be the sole author of regeneration; in the second He would not be."[11] This reminds one of Lutheran theology, but the author´s meaning is not entirely clear, for elsewhere he also ascribes the nonresistance of the sinner to the operation of the Holy Spirit.[12]

2. Which one of the two is primary, common or special grace? To this question it must be answered that in a temporal sense neither one of them can be said to be prior to the other. The third chapter of Genesis clearly reveals that both of them go into operation at once after the fall. Logical priority should be ascribed to special grace, however, because common grace is made subservient to this in its operation in the world.

3. Does common grace serve an independent purpose or not? It cannot be doubted that common grace finds its purpose in part in the redemptive work of Jesus Christ; it is subservient to the execution of the plan of God in the life of the elect and in the development of the Church. But in addition to that it also serves an independent purpose, namely, to bring to light and to harness for the service of man the hidden forces of nature, and to develop the powers and talents that are latent in the human race, in order that man may ever-increasingly exercise dominion over the lower creation, to the glory of God the Creator. [13]

4. Do special and common grace each have a peculiar sphere entirely distinct from that of the other? It may be said that in a certain sense special grace has its own peculiar sphere in the organized Church, though it is not necessarily limited to this, and common grace is also operative in the Church for it is granted to all men. Both operate in the world, but while common grace in the more usual sense of the term pertains to the things of the natural world and this present life, special grace bears on the things of the new creation. They cannot but influence each other. Common grace enriches the Church with its blessings; and the Church raises the fruits of common grace to a higher level by bringing them under the influence of the regenerate life.

E. The Means by Which Common Grace Operates.

Several means can be distinguished by which common grace effects its work. Calvin suggests some of these when he, in speaking of the restraining influence of common grace says: “Hence, how much soever men may disguise their impurity, some are restrained only by shame, others by fear of the laws, from breaking out into many kinds of wickedness. Some aspire to an honest life, as deeming it most conducive to their interest, while others are raised above the vulgar lot, that, by the dignity of their station, they may keep inferiors to their duty. Thus God by his providence, curbs the perverseness of nature, preventing it from breaking forth into action, yet without rendering it inwardly pure. [14] The following are some of the most important means through which common grace effects its work.

1. The light of God´s revelation. This is fundamental for without it all other means would be impossible, and even if possible, would fail to function properly. We have in mind here primarily the light of God´s revelation that shines in nature and lightens every man coming into the world. It is itself the fruit of common grace, but in turn becomes a means for the further manifestation of it, since it serves to guide the conscience of the natural man. Paul speaks of the Gentiles who do by nature the things of the law, “in that they show the word of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them.” Romans 2:14-15. Calvin in commenting on this passage says that such Gentiles “prove that there is imprinted on their hearts a discrimination and judgment by which they distinguish between what is just and unjust, between what is honest and dishonest.”[15] In addition to this, however, it may be said that common grace in a more restricted sense also operates in the light of God´s special revelation, which is not itself the fruit of common, but of special, grace.

2. Governments. Of these too it may be said that they are at once the fruit and the means of common grace. According to Romans 13:1-14 governments are ordained of God, to maintain good order in society. To resist them is to resist the ordinance of God. The ruler, says Paul, “is a minister of God to thee for good.” Romans 13:4. He finds support in the conscience of man (Romans 13:5) and for the rest “beareth not the sword in vain.” On this point the Belgic Confession

says: “We believe that our gracious God, because of the depravity of mankind, hath appointed kings, princes, and magistrates, willing that the world should be governed by certain laws and policies; to the end that the dissoluteness of men might be restrained, and all things carried on among them with good order and decency.”[16]

3. Public Opinion. The natural light that shines in the hearts of men, especially when reinforced by the influence of God´s special revelation, results in the forming of a public opinion that is in external conformity with the law of God; and this has a tremendous influence on the conduct of men who are very sensitive to the judgment of public opinion. Naturally public opinion will be a means of common grace only when it is formed under the influence of God´s revelation. If it is not controlled by conscience, acting in harmony with the light of nature, or by the Word of God, it becomes a mighty influence for evil.

4. Divine punishments and rewards. The providential arrangements of God, whereby He visits the iniquity of men upon them in this life, and rewards deeds that are in outward conformity with the divine law, serve an important purpose in curbing the evil that is in the world. The punishments have a deterring effect, and the rewards serve as incentives. By these means, whatever there is of moral goodness in the world is greatly encouraged. Many shun evil and seek that which is good, not because they fear the Lord, but because they feel that good brings its own reward and best serves their interests.

F. The Fruits of Common Grace. In the preceding it was already intimated that what is left to us of the light of nature, is still operative only in virtue of the common grace of God. It is one of the most important fruits of common grace, without which some of the others would not be conceivable. The following fruits may be mentioned here:

1. The execution of the sentence is stayed. God pronounced the sentence of death on the sinner. Speaking of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, He said. “In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die.” Man did eat of it, and the sentence went into execution to a certain extent, but clearly was not fully executed at once. It is due to common grace that God did not at once fully execute the sentence of death on the sinner, and does not do so now, but maintains and prolongs the natural life of man and gives him time for repentance. He does not at once cut short the life of the sinner, but affords him an opportunity to repent, thereby removing all excuse and justifying the coming manifestation of His wrath upon those who persist in sin unto the end. That God acts on this principle is abundantly evident from such passages as Isaiah 48:9; Jeremiah 7:23-25; Luke 13:6-9; Romans 2:4; Romans 9:22; 2 Peter 3:9.

2. The restraint of sin. Through the operation of common grace sin is restrained in the lives of individuals and in society. The element of corruption that entered the life of the human race is not permitted, for the present, to accomplish its disintegrating work. Calvin says: “But we ought to consider that, notwithstanding the corruption of our nature, there is some room for divine grace, such grace as, without purifying it, may lay it under internal restraint. For, did the Lord let every mind loose to wanton in its lusts, doubtless there is not a man who would not show that his nature is capable of all the crimes with which Paul charges it, (Romans 3:1-31 compared with Psalms 14:3 ff) .” [17] This restraint may be external or internal or both, but does not change the heart. There are passages of Scripture which speak of a striving of the Spirit of God with men which does not lead to repentance, Genesis 6:3; Isaiah 63:10; Acts 7:51; of operations of the Spirit that are

finally withdrawn, 1 Samuel 16:14; Hebrews 6:4-6; and of the fact that in some cases God finally gives up men to the lusts of their own hearts, Psalms 81:12; Romans 1:24, Romans 1:26, Romans 1:28. In addition to the preceding passages there are some which are clearly indicative of the fact that God restrains sin in various ways, such as Genesis 20:6; Genesis 31:7; Job 1:12; Job 2:6; 2 Kings 19:27-28; Romans 13:1-4.

3. The preservation of some sense of truth, morality and religion. It is due to common grace that man still retains some sense of the true, the good, and the beautiful, often appreciates these to a rather surprising degree, and reveals a desire for truth, for external morality, and even for certain forms of religion. Paul speaks of Gentiles who “show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness therewith, and their thoughts one with another accusing or else excusing them,” Romans 2:15, and even says of those who gave free vent to their wicked lives that they knew the truth of God, though they hindered the truth in unrighteousness and exchanged it for a lie, Romans 1:18-25. To the Athenians, who were devoid of the fear of God, he said, “Ye men of Athens, in all things I perceive that ye are very religious,” Acts 17:22. The Canons of Dort express themselves as follows on this point: “There remain, however, in man since the fall, the glimmerings of natural light, whereby he retains some knowledge of God, of natural things, and of the difference between good and evil, and shows some regard for virtue and for good outward behavior. But so far is this light of nature from being sufficient to bring him to a saving knowledge of God and true conversion that he is incapable of using it aright even in things natural and civil. Nay, further, this light, such as it is, man in various ways renders wholly polluted, and hinders in unrighteousness, by doing which he becomes inexcusable before God.” III-IV. 4.

4. The performance of outward good and civil righteousness. Common grace enables man to perform what is generally called justitia civilis, that is, that which is right in civil or natural affairs, in distinction from that which is right in religious matters, natural good works especially in social relations, works that are outwardly and objectively in harmony with the law of God, though entirely destitute of any spiritual quality. This is in harmony with our Reformed Confession. Art. XIV of the Belgic Confession speaks in its title of man´s incapacity to perform what is truly good, says that man retained only small remains of his excellent gifts, so as to render him without excuse, and rejects only the Pelagian error that man can of himself perform spiritual or saving good. The Canons of Dort III-IV, Art. 3, speak in a similar vein: “Therefore all men are conceived in sin, and are by nature children of wrath, incapable of saving good” etc. It may be objected that the Heidelberg Catechism speaks in absolute terms when it says in Question 8 that we are incapable of doing any good unless we are regenerated. But it is quite evident from the Commentary of Ursinus himself that he would not deny that man can do civil good, but only that he can perform good works such as are defined in Question 91 of the Catechism.

Reformed theologians generally maintain that the unregenerate can perform natural good, civil good, and outwardly religious good.[18] They call attention to the fact, however, that, while such works of the unregenerate are good from a material point of view, as works which God commanded, they cannot be called good from a formal point of view, since they do not spring from the right motive and do not aim at the right purpose. The Bible repeatedly speaks of works of the unregenerate as good and right, 2 Kings 10:29-30; 2 Kings 12:2 (comp. 2 Chronicles 24:17-25); 2 Kings 14:3, 2 Kings 14:14-16, 2 Kings 14:20, 2 Kings 14:27 (comp. 2 Chronicles 25:2); Luke 6:33; Romans 2:14-15.

5. Many natural blessings. To common grace man further owes all the natural blessings which he receives in the present life. Though he has forfeited all the blessings of God, he receives abundant tokens of the goodness of God from day to day. There are several passages of Scripture from which it appears abundantly that God showers many of His good gifts on all men indiscriminately, that is, upon the good and the bad, the elect and the reprobate, such as: Genesis 17:20 (comp. Genesis 17:18); Genesis 39:5; Psalms 145:9, Psalms 145:15-16; Matthew 5:44-45; Luke 6:35-36; Acts 14:16-17; 1 Timothy 4:10. And these gifts are intended as blessings, not only for the good but also for the evil. In the light of Scripture the position is untenable that God never blesses the reprobate, though He does give them many gifts which are good in themselves. In Genesis 39:5 we read that “Jehovah blessed the Egyptian´s house for Joseph´s sake; and the blessing of Jehovah was upon all that he had in the house and in the field.” And in Matthew 5:44-45 Jesus exhorts His disciples in these words, “Bless those that curse you... that ye may be children of your Father who is in heaven.” This can only mean one thing, namely, that God also blesses those who curse Him. Cf. also Luke 6:35-36; Romans 2:4.

G. Objections to the Reformed Doctrine of Common Grace.

Several objections have been and are even now raised by some against the doctrine of common grace as it is presented in the preceding. The following are some of the most important of these: I. Arminians are not satisfied with it, because it does not go far enough. They regard common grace as an integral part of the saving process. It is that sufficient grace that enables man to repent and believe in Jesus Christ unto salvation, and which in the purpose of God is intended to lead men to faith and repentance, though it may be frustrated by men. A grace that is not so intended and does not actually minister to the salvation of men is a contradiction in terms. Hence Pope, a Wesleyan Arminian, speaks of common grace in the Calvinistic system as “being universal and not particular; being necessarily, or at least actually, inoperative for salvation in the purpose of God,” and calls this a “wasted influence.” He further says: “Grace is no more grace, if it does not include the saving intention of the Giver.”[19] But, surely, the Bible does not so limit the use of the term “grace.” Such passages as Genesis 6:8; Genesis 19:19; Exodus 33:12, Exodus 33:16; Numbers 32:5; Luke 2:40 and many others do not refer to what we call “saving grace,” nor to what the Arminian calls “sufficient grace.”

2. It is sometimes argued that the Reformed doctrine of common grace involves the doctrine of universal atonement, and therefore leads into the Arminian camp. But there is no good ground for this assertion. It neither says nor implies that it is the purpose of God to save all men through the atoning blood of Jesus Christ. The objection is based particularly on the universal proclamation of the gospel, which is considered possible only on the basis of a universal atonement. It was already suggested by the Arminians themselves at the time of the Synod of Dort, when they asserted that the Reformed with their doctrine of particular atonement could not preach the gospel to all men indiscriminately. But the Synod of Dort did not recognize the implied contradiction. The Canons teach particular atonement [20] and also require the universal proclamation of the gospel.[21] And this is in perfect harmony with Scripture, which teaches on the one hand, that Christ atoned only for the elect, John 10:15; Acts 20:28; Romans 8:32-33; cf. also John 17:9; and on the other hand, that the gospel call must be extended to all men indiscriminately, Matthew 22:2-14; Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:15-16. If it be objected that we cannot fully harmonize the indiscriminate and sincere offer of salvation on condition of faith and repentance with the doctrine of particular

atonement, this may be admitted but with the distinct understanding that the truth of a doctrine does not depend on our ability to harmonize it with every other doctrine of Scripture.

3. Another objection to the doctrine of common grace is that it presupposes a certain favorable disposition in God even to reprobate sinners, while we have no right to assume such a disposition in God. This stricture takes its starting point in the eternal counsel of God, in His election and reprobation. Along the line of His election God reveals His love, grace, mercy, and long-suffering, leading to salvation; and in the historical realization of His reprobation He gives expression only to His aversion, disfavor, hatred, and wrath, leading to destruction. But this looks like a rationalistic over-simplification of the inner life of God, which does not take sufficient account of His self-revelation. In speaking on this subject we ought to be very careful and allow ourselves to be guided by the explicit statements of Scripture rather than by our bold inferences from the secret counsel of God. There is far more in God than we can reduce to our logical categories. Are the elect in this life the objects of God´s love only, and never in any sense the objects of His wrath? Is Moses thinking of the reprobate when he says: “For we are consumed in thine anger, and in thy wrath are we troubled”? Psalms 90:7. Does not the statement of Jesus that the wrath of God abideth on them that obey not the Son imply that it is removed from the others when, and not until, they submit to the beneficent rule of Christ? John 3:36. And does not Paul say to the Ephesians that they “were by nature children of wrath even as the rest”? Ephesians 2:3. Evidently the elect can not be regarded as always and exclusively the objects of God´s love. And if they who are the objects of God´s redeeming love can also in some sense of the word be regarded as the objects of His wrath, why should it be impossible that they who are the objects of His wrath should also in some sense share His divine favor? A father who is also a judge may loathe the son that is brought before him as a criminal, and feel constrained to visit his judicial wrath upon him, but may yet pity him and show him acts of kindness while he is under condemnation. Why should this be impossible in God? General Washington hated the traitor that was brought before him and condemned him to death, but at the same time showed him compassion by serving him with the dainties from his own table. Cannot God have compassion even on the condemned sinner, and bestow favors upon him? The answer need not be uncertain, since the Bible clearly teaches that He showers untold blessings upon all men and also clearly indicates that these are the expression of a favorable disposition in God, which falls short, however, of the positive volition to pardon their sin, to lift their sentence, and to grant them salvation. The following passages clearly point to such a favorable disposition: Proverbs 1:24; Isaiah 1:18; Ezekiel 18:23, Ezekiel 18:32; Ezekiel 33:11; Matthew 5:43-45; Matthew 23:37; Mark 10:21; Luke 6:35: Romans 2:4; 1 Timothy 2:4. If such passages do not testify to a favorable disposition in God, it would seem that language has lost its meaning, and that God´s revelation is not dependable on this subject.

4. Anabaptists object to the doctrine of common grace, because it involves the recognition of good elements in the natural order of things, and this is contrary to their fundamental position. They regard the natural creation with contempt, stress the fact that Adam was of the earth earthy, and see only impurity in the natural order as’ such. Christ established a new supernatural order of things, and to that order the regenerate man, who is not merely a renewed, but an entirely new man, also belongs. He has nothing in common with the world round about him and should therefore take no part in its life: never swear an oath, take no part in war, recognize no civil authority, avoid worldly clothing, and so on. On this position there is no other grace than saving

grace. This view was shared by Labadism, Pietism, the Moravian brethren, and several other sects. Barth´s denial of common grace seems to be following along these same lines. This is no wonder, since for him too creaturliness and sinfulness are practically identical. Brunner gives the following summary of Barth´s view: “It follows from the acknowledgment of Christ as the only saving grace of God that there exists no creative and sustaining grace which has been operative ever since the creation of the world and which manifests itself to us in God´s maintenance of the world, since in that case we should have to recognize two or even three kinds of grace, and that would stand in contradistinction with the singleness of the grace of Christ.... Similarly, the new creation is in no wise a fulfillment but exclusively a replacement accomplished by a complete annihilation of what went before, a substitution of the new man for the old. The proposition, gratia non tollit naturain sed peficit, is not true in any sense but is altogether an arch- heresy." [22] Brunner rejects this view and is more in line with the Reformed thought on this point.

FOOTNOTES

1. cf. Polman, De Predestinatieleer van Augustinus, Thomas van Aquino en Calwijn. pp. 77 f.; Shedd, History of Christian Doctrine 11, pp. 75 f.

2. Art. XVIII

3. Cf. p. 178

4. Cf. Mastrieht, God geleerdheit I, p. 441; Brakel, Redelijke Godsdienst I, pp. 729 f.; Hodge, Syst. Theol. II, p. 654; A. A. Hodge, Outlines of Theol., p. 449; Sbedd, Calvinism Pure and Mixed, pp. 98 f.; Vos, Geref. Dogm. IV, pp. 13 f.

5. System of Bib. Theol. II, p. 352.

6. Calvinism Pure and Mixed, p. 99.

7. III-IV. Rejection of errors 5.

8. Hist. Theol. II, p. 333.

9. The Atonement, pp. 358 f.

10. Cf Turretin, Opera, Locus XIV, Q. XIV, par. XI; Witsius, De Verbonden, B. II, Kap. 9, s. 4; Cunningham, Hist. Theol. II, p. 332; Symington, Atonement and Intercession, p. 255; Bavinck, Geref. Dogm. III, p. 535; Vos, Ger, Dogm. III, p. 150, 11. Dogm. Theol. II, p. 483.

12. Calvinism Pure and Mixed, p. 101.

13. Cf. Kuyper, Gemeene Cratie IJ, pp. 622,628,633; Bavinck. De Algemeene Genade, p. 45.

14. Inst II. 3,3.

15. Comm. on Romans in loco.

16. Art. XXXVI.

17. Inst. Il. 3,8,

18. Cf. Calvin, Inst. III. 14,2; Van Mastricht, Codgeleerdheid, Bk. IV. 4,11,12; Voetius, Catechisatie I, p. 168-172; Ursinus, Comm. on the Catechism, Lord´s Day II, p. 77; Charnock, On the Attributes II, pp. 303,304; Brakel, Redelijke Godsdienst I, p. 338.

19. Christian Theology II, pp. 387 f.

20. II. 8.

21. II. 5 and III. 8.

22. Natur and Gnade, p. 8

Chapter 151

S. Does the State Have the Right to Compel All Children to Attend the Public School?

Does the State Have the Right to Compel

All Children to Attend the Public School?

Louis Berkhof

1. Affirmative:

The State is vitally interested in the education of its citizens. This is particularly true in the case of a democracy. Illiteracy spells doom for a nation in these times of enlightenment.

Instruction given in sectarian schools is only narrowly effective. It is education for the Church rather than for the State, and does not meet the demands of life in a broad way.

Moreover, it is only education in the public school that truly unifies the people and creates a national spirit. Education in sectarian schools, on the other hand, divides the people and is a drag on patriotism.

2. Negative:

The State is not the proper educator of the children. The parents are responsible for the education of their children, and only in case they are negligent has the State the right to show its hand. The main object of education is not to make good citizens, but to perfect the man of God, that he may be perfectly furnished unto all good work. State education is too narrow for this broad purpose.

It is impossible for the State to educate the children in harmony with the religious convictions of all the parents. To compel parents to send their children to schools that go contrary to their religion is against Article I of the Amendments to the Constitution of the United States.

S. Is the Pulpit More Influential than the Press?

Is the Pulpit More Influential than the Press?

Louis Berkhof

1. Affirmative:

The pulpit comes to man with the Word of God, clothed with divine authority. This Word is binding on the conscience and cannot be set aside at will. The pulpit is more influential than the press in so far as the spoken word is more effective than the written word. The facial expression of the speaker, his tone of voice, his gestures, etc., all help to drive the message home.

Moreover, the pulpit comes to man with a word that is God's agency for the conversion of sinners. It transforms the entire life of man and makes him the salt of the earth and the light of the world.

2. Negative:

While the pulpit is limited to the discussion of religious subjects, the press is not so restricted. It touches the entire life of man in all its relations and discusses this from every possible angle. The message of the press is not as evanescent as that of the pulpit. Man can read and reread it. He can turn to an article that was written months or even years ago and study it, while he possibly cannot recall as much as the text of the previous Sunday. The press reaches a much larger public than the pulpit does.

S. Is the Union of All Churches Desirable?

Is the Union of All Churches Desirable?

Louis Berkhof

1. Affirmative:

Such a union is highly desirable in view of the fact that the Church is essentially a unity. This unity should express itself in its outward appearance in the world. The existing division is a practical negation of it. This union is desirable also because in unity there is strength. The divided Church of the present day is not able to accomplish what she could do if she presented a united front. The union of all churches is also practicable if the various denominations are only willing to overlook their petty differences and emphasize the great essentials on which they agree.

2. Negative:

History plainly teaches us that a real church union is impossible from a practical point of view. There have been divisions in the Church from the very dawn of Christianity. Every union attempted was forced and superficial and failed miserably.

Though the divisions in the Church are to a great extent the result of sin, we should not forget that they are not altogether evil. The Church, like every organism in nature, reveals itself in a variety of forms. God loves diversity in unity.

Such a union as is practicable would not be desirable. It would require that all the differences in doctrine, polity and worship should be toned down to such a degree that the most characteristic elements of Christianity would disappear.

S. Must a Christian Take an Active Part in War When Called Upon?

Must a Christian Take an Active Part in War When Called Upon?

Louis Berkhof

1. Affirmative:

Through the influence of sin war is, under certain circumstances, a necessity. The sword was entrusted to the government and must be wielded by it in defense of justice. War is not always forbidden, but in several instances commanded in the Bible. The Christian is a citizen of the State, enjoying the privileges of citizenship and therefore also obliged to shoulder its duties. When the call to arms comes, he is in duty bound to obey the government. If he did not, he would be a traitor to his country.

If a Christian refuses to take part in a war that is waged in the interest of justice, he not only helps the enemies of his country, but, in fact, upholds injustice while he should minister to righteousness.

2. Negative:

The Bible commands love and forbids hatred, and especially murder. Now war is simply wholesale murder, in which Christians are compelled to slay their own brethren. The Church of Jesus Christ is the great agency of God to promote peace on earth. She must reflect in her own life and in all her activities the peace that she enjoys in virtue of the saving work of the Prince of Peace. A Christian is in duty bound to obey the government only as long as its demands do not go contrary to the Word of God. If these do conflict with the clear precepts of the Bible, he must refuse obedience, must obey God rather than man.

S. Novel-reading

Novel-reading

Louis Berkhof

1. Negative:

Novels do not, as a rule, contain a sound, healthy view of life, a view that corresponds with reality, and as a result raise expectations that are doomed to bitter disappointment. The reading of novels, like the use of liquor, produces unnatural excitement, after which a reaction follows, resulting in general lassitude. Many a person was thereby brought to the verge of despair.

Novel-reading robs a person of a great deal of time that might be spent to much better advantage. It often makes him unfit for the serious tasks of life.

Many novels foster a spirit that is inimical to Christianity. They are all the more dangerous because they often do this in a very subtle way.

2. Affirmative:

We must discriminate between different kinds of novels. Many of them picture life as it really is, others represent it ideally and thereby lead us up to a higher view of life. The reading of a good novel affords healthy relaxation to the mind. For students it is as refreshing as a bath. Instead of making them unfit for work, it renews their strength.

Many novels give us an insight into the life of past ages that could not be conveyed in any other way. They enable us to realize conditions and customs of the distant past. In many cases too the religious and moral views of life which they contain are truly uplifting.

S. Perversions of the Gospel

Perversions of the Gospel

Louis Berkhof In the second century the Christian religion as a new force in the world, revealing itself in the organization of the Church, had to engage in a struggle for existence. It had to guard against dangers from without and from within, had to justify its existence, and had to maintain the purity of doctrine in the face of subtle error. The very existence of the Church was threatened by State persecutions. The first persecutions were entirely Jewish, due to the fact that the Church was largely limited to Palestine, and that the Roman Government for some time considered the followers of Christ as a Jewish sect and therefore regarded their religion as a religio licita. But when it became apparent that Christianity laid claim to a universal character, thus endangering the State religion, and that the Christians largely disregarded the affairs of the State and refused to join in the idolatrous worship of the Romans, and particularly in their emperor worship, the Roman government inaugurated a series of persecutions which threatened the very existence of the Christian Church. At the same time Christianity had to suffer a great deal from the written attacks of some of the keenest minds of the age, such as Lucian, Porphyry, and Celsus, men of a philosophical bent of mind, who hurled their invectives against the Christian religion. Their arguments are typical of the philosophical opposition to Christianity throughout the centuries and frequently remind one of those employed by rationalistic philosophers and higher critics in the present day. But however great these dangers from without were, there were even greater dangers which threatened the Church from within. These consisted in different types of perversions of the Gospel.

I. JEWISH PERVERSIONS

There were three groups of Jewish Christians which revealed a Judaistic tendency. Traces of them are found even in the New Testament.

[a] The Nazarenes. These were Jewish Christians who adopted the tenets of the Christian religion. They used only the Hebrew Gospel of Matthew, but at the same time recognized Paul as a true apostle. In distinction from other Jewish sects they believed in the divinity and the virgin birth of Jesus. And while they bound themselves in practice to a strict observance of the law, they did not demand this of Gentile Christians. “They were”, as Seeberg says, “really Jewish Christians, whereas the two following groups were only Christian Jews.”

[b] The Ebionites. This sect really constituted the continuation of the Judaistic opponents of the Apostle Paul and was of a Pharisaic type. Its adherents refused to recognize the apostleship of Paul, whom they regarded as an apostate from the law, and demanded that all Christians should submit to the rite of circumcision. They had a Cerinthian view of Christ, which was probably due to their desire to maintain the Old Testament monotheism. Both the divinity of Christ and His virgin birth were denied. In their opinion Jesus distinguished Himself from others only by a strict observance of the Jaw, and was chosen to be the Messiah on account of His legal piety. He

became conscious of this at the time of His baptism, when He received the Spirit, which enabled Him to perform His task, the work, of a prophet and teacher. They were rductant to think of Him as subject to sufferings and death.

[c] The Elkesaites. This group represented a type of Jewish Christianity marked by theosophic speculations and strict asceticism. While they rejected the virgin birth of Christ and claimed that He was born as other men, they also spoke of Him as a higher spirit or angel. They regarded Him as an incarnation of the ideal Adam, and also called Him the highest archangel. Circumcision and the sabbath were held in honour; there were repeated washings, to which a magical cleansing and reconciling meaning was ascribed; and magic and astrology were practiced among them. They had their secret doctrines respecting the observance of the law. Their movement was probably an attempt to gain general recognition for Jewish Christianity by adapting it to the syncretistic tendencies of the age. In all probability the Epistle to the Colossians and First Timothy refer to this heresy.

2. GENTILE PERVERSIONS: GENTILE-CHRISTIAN GNOSIS In Gnosticism we meet with a second perversion of Christianity. It had this in common with the Judaistic sects, that it conceived of the relationship between the Old Testament and the New, and between their respective religions, as one of opposition. Its original form was rooted in Judaism, but it ultimately developed into a strange mixture of Jewish elements, Christian doctrines, and heathen speculative thought.

[a] Origin of Gnosticism. There are indications in the New Testament that an incipient Gnosticism was already making its appearance in the days of the Apostles. There were heretical teachers even then who drew their immediate impulse from Judaism, engaged in speculations respecting angels and spirits, and were characterized by a false dualism, leading on to asceticism on the one hand, and to an immoral libertinism on the other hand, who spiritualized the resurrection and made the Church’s hope the object of derisive mockery; Colossians 2:18 ff; 1 Timothy 1:3-7; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 1 Timothy 6:3 f; 2 Timothy 2:14-18; Titus 1:10-16; 2 Peter 2:1-4; Jude 1:4, Jude 1:16; Revelation 2:6, Revelation 2:15, Revelation 2:20 f. There was also a tendency to religious philosophical speculation, which appeared especially in the heresy of Cerinthus, who distinguished between the human Jesus and Christ as a higher spirit which descended on him at the time of his baptism and left him again before the crucifixion. John indirectly combats this heresy in his writings, John 1:14; John 20:31; 1 John 2:22; 1 John 4:2, 1 John 4:15; 1 John 5:1, 1 John 5:5,1 John 5:6; 2 John 1:7. From the early part of the second century these errors assumed a more developed form, were openly proclaimed, and at once bad an amazingly wide circulation. This can be understood only in the light of the general syncretism of the period. There was a widespread religious unrest and a surprising eagerness to absorb all possible religious ideas, and to generalize and harmonize them. Western religions had ceased to satisfy, and Eastern cults, diligently propagated by itinerant preachers, were eagerly embraced. The great aim was to gratify the thirst for deeper knowledge, the desire for mystic communion with God, and the hope of securing a sure path for the soul in its ascent to the upper world at death. It is no wonder that this tendency attached itself to Christianity, which seemed to address itself to the same task with marked success. Moreover, it found support in the claim of Christianity to be the absolute and universal religion. It may be said that Gnosticism mistakenly sought to elevate Christianity to its rightful position, that of universal religion, by adapting it to the needs of all, and by interpreting it in harmony with the wisdom of the world.

[b] The essential character of Gnosticism. Gnosticism was first of all a speculative movement. The speculative element was very much in the foreground. The very name Gnostikoi, adopted by some of its adherents, indicates that they laid claim to a deeper knowledge of divine things than could be obtained by common believers. The Gnostics grappled with some of the deeper problems of philosophy and religion, but approached them in the wrong manner and suggested solutions totally at variance with the truths of revelation. Their two greatest problems were those of absolute being and of the origin of evil, problems not of Christian but of heathen religious thought. They developed a phantastic cosmogony, in which they borrowed freely from oriental speculation, and with which they sought to combine the truths of the Gospel. Undoubtedly, they were serious in their attempts to make the Gospel acceptable to the educated and cultured classes of their day. In spite of its speculative character, Gnosticism was also a popular movement. In order to sway the masses, it had to be something more than mere speculation. Therefore attempts were made in special associations to popularize the general cosmical theory by symbolic rites, mystic ceremonies, and the teaching of magic formulas. In the initiation into these associations strange formulas and rites formed an important part. These were supposed to form a necessary and effective protection against the power of sin and death, and to be a means of gaining access to the blessedness of the world to come. In reality their introduction was an attempt to transform the Gospel into a religious philosophy and into mystic wisdom. Yet Gnosticism claimed to be Christian in character. Whenever possible, it appealed to the words of Jesus explained in an allegorical way, and to a so-called secret tradition handed down from the times of the Apostles. Many received its teachings as genuine Christian truth.

Gnosticism was also a syncretistic movement within the sphere of Christianity. It is still a matter of discussion, whether the Gnostics were Christians in any sense of the term. According to Seeberg Gnosticism was pagan rather than Gentile Christian. It addressed itself to the solution of problems that originated in the religious thought of the heathen world, and merely gave its discussions a somewhat Christian colouring. Apparently it placed a high estimate on Jesus Christ as marking the decisive turning-point in human history, and as a teacher of absolute truth. Harnack speaks of it as “the acute Hellenizing of Christianity”, and calls the Gnostics “the first Christian theologians”. Prof. Walther is more correct, when he says that Gnosticism is “. . . a stealing of some Christian rags to cover heathen nakedness”. This corresponds with the description of Seeberg when he speaks of it as “an ethnicizing of Christianity”.

[c] The main teachings of Gnosticism. We cannot discuss the various Gnostic systems, such as those of Valentinus and Basilides, but can only briefly indicate the teachings of Gnosticism in general. A trait of dualism runs through the whole system and manifests itself in the position that there are two original principles or gods, which are opposed to each other as higher and lower, or even as good and bad. The supreme or good God is an unfathomable abyss. He interposes between Himself and finite creatures a long chain of aeons or middle beings, emanations from the divine, which together constitute the Pleroma or fullness of the divine essence. It is only through these intermediate beings that the highest God can enter into various relations with created beings. The world is not created by the good God, but is the result of, probably, a fall in the Pleroma, and is the work of a subordinate, possibly a hostile, deity. This subordinate god, is called the Demiurge, is identified with the God of the Old Testament, and is described as an inferior, limited, passionate, and vengeful being. He is contrasted with the supreme God, the source of

goodness, virtue, and truth, who revealed Himself in Christ. The world of matter as the product of a lesser and possibly an evil god, is essentially evil. There is found in it, however, a remnant from the spirit-world, namely, the soul of man, a spark of light from the upper world of purity which in some inexplicable way became entangled in evil matter. Its deliverance can be obtained only through some intervention of the good God. A way of deliverance has been provided by the sending of a special emissary from the kingdom of light into the world of darkness. In Christian Gnosticism this emissary is regularly identified with Christ. He is variously represented, either as a celestial being appearing in a phantasmal body, or as an earthly being, with whom a higher power or spirit temporarily associated himself. Since matter is in itself evil, this higher spirit could not have an ordinary human body.

Participation in redemption, or victory over the world, was gained only through the secret rites of the Gnostic associations. Initiation into the mysteries of marriage to Christ, of peculiar baptism, of magic names, and of special anointing, by which the secret knowledge of Being was secured, formed the path of redemption. At this point Gnosticism became more and more system of religious mysteries. Men are divided into three classes: the pneumatic who constitute the elite of the Church, the psychic consisting of the ordinary Church members, and the hylic or the Gentiles. Only the first class is really capable of higher knowledge (epignosis) and thus obtains the highest blessedness. The second class may be saved through faith and works, but can only attain to an inferior blessedness. Those belonging to the third class are hopelessly lost. The ethics, or moral philosophy, accompanying these views of redemption, was dominated by a false estimate of sensuousness, which resulted either in strict ascetic abstinence or in low carnality, born of the assurance that nothing could really hinder those who were favoured of heaven. There was asceticism on the one hand and libertinism on the other. The ordinary eschatology of the Church had no place in this system. The doctrine of the resurrection of the dead was not recognized. When the soul was finally released from matter, it returned to the Pleroma, and this marked the end.

[d] Historical significance of Gnosticism. Even Gnosticism, however formidable an enemy of the truth, was not able to check the onward march of Christianity. Many were indeed swept along for a time by its daring speculations or by its mystic rites, but the great body of believers was not deceived by its phantastic representations nor by its alluring promises of secret bliss. In fact, Gnosticism was short-lived. Like a meteor it lit up the sky for a moment, and then suddenly disappeared. It was overcome by the direct refutations of the Church Fathers, by the preparation and circulation of short statements of the fundamental facts of the Christian religion (Rules of Faith), and by a more rational interpretation of the New Testament and a limitation of its canon, to the exclusion of all the false Gospels, Acts, and Epistles that were in circulation. Yet it did not fail to leave a lasting impression on the Church. Some of its peculiarities were absorbed by the Church and in course of time came to fruition in the Roman Catholic Church With its peculiar conception of the sacraments, its philosophy of a hidden God, who should be approached through intermediaries (saints, angels, Mary), its division of men into higher and lower orders, and its emphasis on asceticism. The Church also derived actual profit from the appearance of Gnosticism, but only in an indirect way. It learned to mark off clearly the limits of divine revelation, and to determine the relation of the Old Testament to the New. Moreover, it became keenly alive to the necessity of drawing up short statements of the truth, based on current baptismal formulas,

which could serve as standards of interpretation (Rules of Faith). There was also a very evident doctrinal gain. Christianity was now first conceived as a “doctrine” and as a “mystery”. The intellectual element in the Christian religion was emphasized, and this marked the real starting-point for doctrinal development. The Christian idea of God was rescued from the mythological speculations of the Gnostics. The Church came into conscious possession of the truth that God is the Supreme Being, the Creator and Upholder of the Universe, the same in the Old and in the New Testament. The doctrine of the Demiurge and his creative activity was set aside, and the dualism of the Gnostics, making matter essentially evil, was overcome. Over against the Gnostic tendency to regard Jesus Christ merely as one of the aeons, His unique character as the Son of God was emphasized, and at the same time His true humanity was defended against all kinds of docetic denials. The great facts of His life, His virgin birth, miracles, sufferings, death, and resurrection, were all maintained and set in dearer light. Moreover, the doctrine of redemption through the atoning work of Christ was put forward in opposition to the speculative vagaries of the Gnostics; and the universal receptivity of men for the Gospel of Jesus Christ was stressed in answer to Gnostic exclusiveness and pride.

S. Roger Williams

Roger Williams

Louis Berkhof The different colonies in Massachusetts and later also in Connecticut formed in reality a theocratic state. They restricted the right of voting to church members, so that nearly three-fourths of the people were excluded from the rights of free men. This naturally implied also that church members only were eligible to office.

Taxes were levied for the support of the Gospel, and attendance on public worship was enforced by law. The laws of Moses were provisionally adopted as their civil code.

Though the government was democratic, there was as yet no separation of church and state, nor religious toleration.

While the colonies of the New England Puritans formed a theocracy, Roger Williams declared that a church merged with a state was impossible and demanded a complete separation of the two.

He maintained that the civil magistrate has no right to interfere in church affairs, not even to stop a church from apostasy and heresy, and that his power extends only to the bodies, the goods and the outward estate of men.

He claimed equal rights for believers and unbelievers in the state and opposed the citizen’s oath that was required by the magistrate. All these things were subversive of the theocracy.

Roger Williams was in advance of his own time. His theory of the separation of Church and State was in the main correct and is justified by history. The colonists denied him the right which they claimed for themselves, namely, the right to serve God according to the dictates of his own conscience. Williams stood for the fullest religious toleration.

S. The Character and Influence of Good and Bad Literature

The Character and Influence of Good and Bad Literature

Louis Berkhof 1. The CHARACTER of Good and Bad Literature. The word "literature" is here used in a limited sense to denote collectively those literary productions of the human mind that are works of art rather than of science, and that are meant to be read rather than studied. They may be works of poetry or prose, biographies or histories, books of travel, historical romances or works of fiction generally, etc.

These literary productions may be divided from various points of view. The distinction made in our subject is a moral distinction. Good books are those that are characterized by a good moral tone, that praise virtue and piety, that reveal to us something of the ideal beauty of life — while they condemn all evil. Bad books, on the other hand, are those that describe evil in such a manner that it appears virtuous, and that mock at religion and morality. This is done in many of the sentimental romances that describe the lowest stages of society, and that teach immorality and represent vice as heroism.

2. The INFLUENCE of Good and Bad Literature. The books we read naturally exercise a great and lasting influence on us. In that respect they are like the people with whom we associate. We may even call them our best friends, since they are always the same, are ever faithful and never grow peevish. It is readily understood that their influence may be for good or for evil.

Good literature has an elevating influence, where it reveals to us something of the ideal beauty of life. Moreover, it ennobles us by bringing us into soul-contact with noble characters. This again is instrumental in leading our lives into the right channels. And finally the reading of good literature affords us relaxation and thereby renews our strength for life’s arduous task.

Bad literature, on the other hand, has a degenerating influence. It draws us down into the mire of sin, blunts the moral faculties by palliating and even glorifying evil, pollutes the imagination by immoral representations, and, by the unnatural excitement it produces, causes weariness and fatigue and often leads to sins of thought or act.

S. The Choice of One's Companions

The Choice of One’s Companions

Louis Berkhof

1. The Necessity of Choosing Companions. This necessity follows in the first place from the fact that man is a sociable being. He feels the need of and takes great delight in the company of others. The boys and girls that go to school, and the man on his way to work, all seek their companions. And the neighborly visits of women testify to their sociability. A normal person cannot be truly happy without the — of others. The recluse and the hermit are abnormal beings. But it is not only necessary that man have companions; he should and generally does deliberately choose his associates in life. In the animal world we also notice the workings of the social instinct, but we can hardly say that the animals choose their companions. Man, however, is a free, self-determining moral being, and therefore can and should intelligently choose his comrades.

2. The Importance of Making a Careful Choice.

Great care must be exercised in choosing one’s companions, since we come in contact with all kinds of people, cheerful and gloomy, kind-hearted and brutal, wise and foolish, persons of bad and of good moral habits, pious and wicked people.

Those whom we choose will always exercise some formative influence on us. We may not be conscious of this at the time, yet their influence will work steady and sure. Their thoughts, their words, their conduct and all their deeds will make a lasting impression on our minds. This is particularly the case if we are still young. Then, as a rule, we have no firm convictions and no sufficient will-power to resist the influences that act upon us from without. And if they are evil--we are easily led astray.

3. The Proper Procedure in Choosing Our Friends.

It is necessary, first of all, that we make a prayerful choice. Let us never forget the significance of prayer in this respect. In connection with this we should allow ourselves to be guided by the Word of God. In the second place it is incumbent on us to pay particular attention to the moral character of those whom we contemplate as our friends. Moral character is of far more consequence in this respect than physical or mental ability. Choose above all, those who fear the Lord.

Moreover, in the third place our young people should never forget to consult their parents in the choice of their friends and must always heed their advice, since these see things far better as a rule than they do.

S. The Work of Christian Charity

The Work of Christian Charity

Louis Berkhof 1. The Character of Christian Charity.

Christian charity is, as the name indicates, a specifically Christian virtue, the fruit of saving grace. It is Christian love extended to those that are in misery, a love that reveals itself in a voluntary and unselfish devotion to those that are subject to the ills of life, particularly, when they are in straitened circumstances. The Christian, in his work of charity, seeks those that are in misery, of whatever rank they may be, and aims at promoting the glory of God.

Christian charity differs even from the charity that was exercised by Israel under the Old Testament. This was limited almost exclusively to the poor of their own nation. Moreover, it was carefully regulated by an external law. Christian charity, on the other hand, is inspired and regulated by an internal principle and is universal.

2. The Motives for Christian Charity. The primary motive is found in the fact that the Word of God calls upon us to show forth the image of God also in this respect. "Be merciful, even as your Father is merciful" (Luke 6:36). This is a very high ideal. In the second place the Christian love that fills our hearts prompts us to exercise charity. This charity will reveal itself in all its tenderness and compassion where misery is greatest, as, for instance, during a pestilence, or a famine, or on the battlefield.

Moreover, it is necessary for our own spiritual development that we exercise charity. This is not selfishness, but merely a part of the law of our spiritual existence.

3. Opportunities for Exercising Christian Charity.

There is always abundant opportunity for exercising this virtue. We can do it wherever we come in contact with misery.

S. The Work of Missions

The Work of Missions

Louis Berkhof 1. Missionary Motives. The true missionary must first conquer sin in his own life before he can successfully combat it in the lives of others. The missionary motives are naturally derived from the Word of God and from the new life that is born within the hearts of the missionaries, in connection with the condition of those who are the objects of missionary efforts. In the Word of God we find the great commission that Christ gave His disciples to preach the Gospel to all nations (Matthew 28:19). The missionary goes out first of all because it is the command of his King. But the new life of the missionary operates in various ways also as a motive:

(1) The grace that fills his heart is of a communicative character.

(2) The holiness of his new life reacts strongly against sin in the world and naturally seeks to create a holy atmosphere in which it can flourish.

(3) This new life feels that it is responsible also for sin in the lives of others, and therefore impels one to conquer sin in the world of unbelief.

(4) That new life, as it exists in the lives of individuals, is conscious of the fact that it forms but an insignificant part of the body of Christ, and necessarily seeks to complete itself.

2. The Great Importance of Missionary Work. This work is very important, first of all, for Christ, for in it He sees the good pleasure of Jehovah prosper in His hand. It is the ingathering of the fruits of His labors, the increase of His subjects and the completion of His body.

It is very significant too for the Church--it promotes her growth, leads her on to completeness and strengthens her by increasing the number of the soldiers of the cross.

It is of the utmost importance for the nations that are won for Christ. New life is born within them; new light kindled in their hearts. Schools are opened for the education of their children, their moral life is raised to a higher level and their religion is purified.

3. The Factors on Which Missionary Victory Depends.

Negatively we can say that spiritual victory does not depend on the sword or on persecution. Neither does it, in the last analysis, depend on any efforts of man, such as great oratory, educational activities or measures of social reform.

Positively it does depend, first of all, on the grace of God, operating in the hearts of the missionaries, of those that support the work of missions and of those that are the objects of missionary efforts. And in the second place on the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ in its purity. Some of the above named agencies may, of course, aid in the work.

S. What is the Word of God?

What is the Word of God?

Louis Berkhof

PERMIT me first of all to express my sincere gratitude for the kind invitation to address the Second Calvinistic Conference. It may be regarded as an encouraging sign that such Conferences as these are held. They augur well for the future of Calvinism in our country, and may make a real, though modest, contribution to American religious life, a contribution that is much needed in these days of spiritual declension. And certainly the subject that will engage the attention of this Conference is one of supreme importance, and one that is fully deserving of careful consideration.

It is only natural that one of the first of the Calvinistic Conferences should focus its attention on the Word of God, the foundation on which Calvin built. Some are of the opinion that Calvin was too speculative in his theological work, but they who are really acquainted with his writings are deeply impressed with the fact that all his teachings are pre-eminently Scriptural and strike their roots deep down into the sub-soil of God's special revelation. His thought is never divorced from the Word of God, as he understands it, and he is thoroughly honest in his convictions. All true Calvinism lories in the fact that it is not independent of the Word, but aspires to be a true reflection of the thoughts of God. In the eyes of many scientists and philosophers, this is exactly the great offense of Calvinism. It is the fruit of an unquestioning faith, based on authority, and does not recognize human reason as the final arbiter of the truth. Moreover, it even dares to assert that the wisdom of men may be foolishness in the sight of God. The Calvinist stands in the firm conviction that it is impossible to know God, unless he has been pleased to make Himself known to man. He recognizes the force of Zophar's question, "Canst thou by searching find out God?" It seems utterly impossible to him that man, by his unaided reason, should discover God, and he therefore considers the question, "Has God spoken?" as one of the utmost importance. The subject assigned to me for this occasion proceeds on the assumption that He has, for it puts the question as to the nature or character of His Word.

It is not only perfectly natural — Calvinism being what it is — that this Conference should take up the subject of the Word of God at once. The subject is also a very timely one. During the last decennia the revelation of God has repeatedly been called in question by scientists and philosophers. The new materialistic psychology excludes the idea of such a revelation, and the Humanists ridicule it. Julian Huxley wrote a book on Religion Without Revelation, a religion, in which we worship the impersonal, the unknown, and the unknowable. It seemed to some as if the account with revelation had finally been settled.

Today, however, there is in the religious world a new emphasis on the subject of revelation. Several recent works testify to this fact, such as those of E. F. Scott, The New Testament Idea of Revelation, E. P. Dickie, Revelation and Response, F. W. Camfield, Revelation and the Holy Spirit, E. Gilson, Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages, J. Baillie, Our Knowledge of God,

Revelation (a Symposium, edited by John Baillie and Hugh Martin), and G. C. Berkouwer, Geloof en Openbaring in de Nieuwere Duitsche Theologie. This new emphasis is in part due to a reaction against the extreme position taken by the protagonists of Psychoanalysis, Behaviourism, and Humanism, and in part to the appearance of the Theology of Crisis, which calls the Churches back to the Word of God. Barth's Prolegomena is entitled Die Lehre vom Worte Gottes. The theology, to which Barth and Brunner, Thurneysen and Gogarten, and others, have given rise, is commonly known as the Theology of Crisis, or the Dialectical Theology. But of late it was repeatedly pointed out that Barth's theology might with greater propriety be called the Theology of the Word of God. Since he wants to be considered as a Reformed theologian, it is not only fitting, but also imperative, that a Calvinistic Conference should take some account of his conception of the Word of God.

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What is the Word of God? This is a very simple question, and one to which a Calvinist, it would seem, could give a very simple answer. And yet that simple answer would hardly be adequate for an occasion of this kind, since the query to which a reply is sought involves such questions as these: Is it a natural or a supernatural Word? Is it a communication of truth, addressed to the intellect, or a behest or command, addressed to the will? Is it a written or a spoken Word or both? Does it represent a verbal or a factual revelation, or one that is both verbal and factual? Is it a Word spoken in the past, and now a finished product, or is it rather a continuous speaking of God? Is it wholly or only in part identical with the divine revelation? Is the Bible the Word of God or is it not? The mere mention of these questions is sufficient to indicate, at least in a measure, the comprehensive character of the subject under consideration, and to lead to the surmise that it may not be possible to do justice to it in a single paper. Such a surmise would be perfectly correct, and it would not surprise me at all if, after this paper is read, the verdict should be that it can hardly be regarded as an adequate treatment of this vast subject. After careful consideration, it seemed to me that a historical approach to the subject would have decided advantages, since it would enable us to see the different views that come into consideration in their true historical perspective. And therefore the greater part of this paper will consist of a historical survey of the doctrine of the Word of God.

* * * * In this study there is one point that stands out with great clarity, namely, that from the earliest Christian centuries up to the present time the idea of the Word of God is always in some way connected with the Bible. The prevailing opinion in the Churches has always been, that the Bible is the Word of God, though the Roman Catholic would insist on qualifying this by saying that the Bible is the written Word of God. This qualification should be borne in mind in reading the strong statement of Brunner in his The Word and the World, p. 82. Says he — and we intentionally quote him at length here —:

"Christian faith is faith in the Bible. When the Christian speaks of the Word of God, he means in the first place the Word of Holy Scripture. That which holds together all the Churches of the world, from Roman Catholicism to the Quakers, from Luther to Cardinal Newman, that which throughout all historical changes of the Church has remained the same, the source from which Christianity has again and again drawn the power of renewal, is the Bible. During the nineteen hundred years of its history the Church has been more than once sick unto death; two hundred years ago Voltaire

prophesied its end as certain in the near future. In the very house in which he made that prophecy there is at present an office of the British Bible Society, which annually sends out millions of Bibles in all languages into the world. It is the Bible which has again and again made the Church young and sound. True, there would be no Bible without the Church: this will be our subject tomorrow. But it is just as true that there would be no Church without the Bible. Christianity without the Bible would long ago have degenerated into an unrecognizable caricature. When we say that Christian faith is belief in Jesus Christ, we tacitly imply that it is faith in the Bible. No Bible — no Christ; no Bible — no Word of God." But to Brunner this does not mean that the Bible and the Word of God are altogether identical, for he wants to consider separately the question: "What now more accurately is the relation between the Word of God and the Bible?" That is a question which we shall also have to bear in mind in our historical survey.

* * * *

There were disputes about the Bible in the early Church. The canon of the Old Testament was fixed, but that of the New Testament was in process of formation under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. When the opinion of the Church on this point crystalized, the two Testaments were regarded as integral parts of an organic whole, and were together honored as the Word of God. The Gnostics and Marcion sought to undermine the unity of the two by representing the Old Testament as the work of a lesser or evil God; but the Anti-Gnostic Fathers gave a clear representation of the proper relationship between the two, and thus maintained the organic unity of both. From that time on there was a frank recognition of the Bible as the Word of God. Its inspiration was in some cases tacitly assumed, and in others clearly expressed. Justin and Athenagoras thought of the writers as passive under the divine influence, like a lyre in the hands of a player. Clement of Alexandria and Tertullian regarded both the Old Testament and the New as equally inspired and therefore infallible. Eusebius called it presumptuous to admit the possibility of error in the sacred books, and Augustine said that the apostles wrote what Christ dictated. Chrysostom saw in the prophets "the mouth of God," and Gregory the Great spoke of the Holy Spirit as the real author of Scripture. All this goes to show that the Bible was regarded as the Word of God.

It may be well to remind ourselves here of the fact that some of the early teachers of the Church, such as the Apologetes and the Alexandrian Fathers used the term "Word of God" in an even more fundamental sense in their Logos doctrine. The Logos was identified with divine reason, the principle of all revelation in God. This impersonal Logos was personalized with a view to the creation of the world, and went forth from God, first of all as the creative Word, then also as the divine revelation in Old Testament theophanies and prophecy, and finally as the highest revelation of God in the incarnate Word. This Logos doctrine, stressing the significance of Christ as the supreme revelation of God, redeeming man through the inculcation of divine truth, gradually retired into the background, when the attention was focused more particularly on the priestly work of Christ for the redemption of sinners; but it contained a valuable element, which should never be forgotten in the construction of the doctrine of the Word of God.

* * * * The firmly established belief that the Bible is the Word of God was not shaken during the middle Ages. However, the thought was stressed that the apostolic kerugma was originally handed down to succeeding generations, not merely in a written, but also in an oral, form. This gradually led to the development of the idea of an apostolic tradition, handed down by the Church from

generation to generation. And this tradition was soon regarded as being equal, if not superior, to the Bible in authority. The theory gained ground that Holy Scripture stands in need of tradition. Only tradition can testify to the Bible as an inspired book; it only can determine with certainty and authority the right meaning of Scripture; and without it the Bible can be made to speak in so many discordant ways that its authority is altogether destroyed. The result of this theory was detrimental to the appreciation of Holy Writ. It is true, in theory, the Bible was still regarded as the Word of God, but in practice its authority was made dependent on tradition, and that means, on the Church. The importance ascribed to the so-called apostolic tradition was of such a nature, that it even involved a denial of the absolute necessity, the sufficiency, and the perspicuity of the Bible.

Another problem, which received a great deal of attention during the Middle Ages, was that of the relation between reason and revelation, and this also bore on the proper conception of the Word of God. The work of E. Gilson on Reason and Revelation in the Middle Ages contains an instructive survey of the different representations of this relationship. He points out that Augustine opened up a new era in the history of western thought, when he said that the safest way to reach truth, is not the one that takes its starting point in reason, and then proceeds from rational certainty to faith, but the one that starts from faith, and then proceeds from revelation to reason. Among the Scholastics who accepted this principle, Anselm was the most outstanding. Like Augustine, he too said, “I believe that I may understand,” but the two did not agree as to what it means to understand. For Augustine it meant giving an interpretation of Christian truth in terms of Platonic philosophy, but for Anselm it was equivalent to logical demonstration. His bold procedure was entirely foreign to the mind of Augustine. Roger Bacon was also interested in a rational understanding of the Christian revelation, but he placed the greatest emphasis on an experimental investigation, and on a mystical insight into the truth.

Others ascribed the primacy to reason. The Arabian philosopher, Averroes, held that the absolute truth could not be found in any sort of revelation, but only in the writings of Aristotle. If the latter had said anything, reason itself had spoken. He felt, however, that some sort of agreement between religious faith and philosophical reason was not improbable, and asserted that revelation even demands that we seek God by rational methods. He and his followers were not successful, however, in reconciling the truths of reason and revelation. Yet some of his followers, though conscious of their inability to harmonize the two, were eager to retain them both.

Still another tendency found expression particularly in Thomas Aquinas. He deemed it necessary to keep the truth of philosophy and the truth of revelation each in its own place, and stressed the fact that it was necessary to handle philosophical problems as a philosopher, and theological problems, as a theologian. Of these two methods, the one leads to scientific knowledge, and the other to faith, that is, to an assent which the intellect does not see to be true. He considered it possible to construct a science or the basis of reason, but not on the basis of faith, though some of the propositions of faith can and should be proved. From all this it is quite evident that the evaluation of the Bible differed during the Middle Ages.

* * * * The background, briefly sketched in the preceding, should be borne in mind in considering the doctrine of the Word of God during the Reformation. In some points of this doctrine the Reformers felt constrained to take position over against that of the Roman Catholic Church. When they spoke of the Word of God, they had the Bible, and the Bible only, in mind. They rejected the

authority of what was called apostolic tradition, and acknowledged the Bible alone as the final authority and the absolute norm in matters of faith and conduct. Instead of admitting its dependence on the testimony of the Church, they boldly declared its auto pistia. Moreover, they maintained the perspicuity of Scripture, and asserted the right of private judgment. It was pointed out that the so-called apostolic tradition was not necessary for the authentication of Scripture, nor for the maintenance of its authority, since it is the inspired Word of God. The doctrine of inspiration was given greater prominence than it had before, though its detailed formulation followed at a later date. Finally, they also rejected the dualism between general and special revelation, taught by Thomas Aquinas, and took the position that the truths of general revelation, that is, its revelatory elements, were incorporated, republished, and even interpreted in God's special revelation. Speaking generally, it may certainly be said that the Reformers considered an appeal to Scripture as quite sufficient for the establishment of theological truth. For them the Bible was in the strictest sense the Word of God.

However, this statement does not go unchallenged. It has become a rather common practice among those who are averse to the doctrine of plenary inspiration, to stigmatize this doctrine as a product of the Protestant Scholasticism of the seventeenth century, and to appeal from it to the more spiritual conception of the Reformers. Such writers profess to be in agreement with the latter, but declare that the former with its cold intellectualism is inimical to true evangelical Christianity. This sentiment can be found in the writings of Rationalists, of Schleiermacherians, of Ritschlians, and even of the representatives of the Theology of Crisis. They usually appeal to the supposed fact that the Reformers place great emphasis on religious experience as warranting the authority of the Bible; that they stress the fact that it is only by faith that the Bible becomes a real revelation for man; and that they express themselves with great freedom respecting the canonicity of some of the books of the Bible. This means that the advanced proofs are inferential rather than direct.

It is confidently asserted that the Reformers distinguished between the Bible and God's special revelation, and therefore did not identify the two. This assertion may even be found in such works as Heppe's Dogmatik der evangelisch-reformierten Kirche, p. 16; A. Schweizer's Die Glaubenslehre der evangelisch-reformierten Kirche I, p. 198 ff.; Sabatier's Religions of Authority, p. 174 f.; Ladd's What is the Bible?, p. 47, and Brunner's The Word and the World, p. 94. Permit me to quote a couple of typical statements. Says Lindsay in his History of the Reformation: "The Reformers drew a distinction between the Word of God and the Scripture which contains or presents that Word. This distinction was real and not merely formal; it was more than the difference between the Word of God and the Word of God written; and important consequences were founded upon it. . . . The Reformers uniformly teach that the substance of all Scripture is the Word of God, and that what is no part of the record of the Word of God is not Scripture. Finally, the distinction between the two need not prevent us from saying that the Scripture is the Word of God. . . . Only it must be clearly understood that the copula is does not express logical identity, but some such relation as can be more exactly expressed by contains, presents, conveys, records — all of which phrases are used in the writings of the Reformers or in the creeds of the Reformed Churches." (Vol. I, p. 463.) The second quotation is taken from the more recent work of Edgar P. Dickie, Revelation and Response, p. 126, where we read: "Over against the misuse of tradition, the Reformers set the Word of God. But they did not fall into the error of 'verbal inspiration'. They pointed to the moral and religious substance of Scripture, which were matters for faith; they left on

one side the letter and the outward form, which are matters for historical study. They did not hold that the Word of God was identical with the books contained in the canon."

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There is a familiar notion, rather current in our day, that Luther regarded only those parts of the Bible as the Word of God which preach or urge Christ ("Christum treiben"). It is expressed also by some of the writers in the Symposium, edited by Vergilius Ferm, on What is Lutheranism? Cf. pp. 25, 238. The gospel of Jesus Christ is the Word of God in the Bible. Is this a correct appraisal of Luther's evaluation of the Bible? Faulkner in his article on Luther and the Bible in the Union Seminary Review, Oct. 1931, quotes several statements from Luther's Werke which point in quite a different direction. He says that Tholuck started the "liberal" Luther on his way, to be followed by Luthardt in his Dogmatik. He points out that Luther recognized, as does every one else, that different books Of the Bible have different values, and that for the great Reformer, from his soteriological point of view, the value of a book depended on the measure in which it preached Christ. This is quite in harmony with the interpretation of Koestlin and Pieper. The former says in his work on The Theology of Luther II, p. 223: "Luther designates the Sacred Scriptures as 'the Book given by God, the Holy Spirit, to His Church.' Without any discrimination, he presents as the rule of faith and practice, now 'the Scriptures,' now 'the Word of God,' employing the two terms as perfectly synonymous." And he further points out that, according to Luther, when the question of the significance of a book is raised, "Christ Himself is the central point, by its relation to which all else is to be estimated." p. 228.

Pieper in his Christliche Dogmatik strongly defends the view that according to Luther the whole Bible is the Word of God, and shows that the other view rests on the misinterpretation of a couple of passages in Luther's Werke. Cf. I, p. 334 ff. And Locher, who wrote a splendid monograph on De Leer van Luther over Gods Woord, proves that, while Luther in his earliest period did not speak of the Bible as a whole as the Word of God, he does this clearly and repeatedly in the later periods of his life. He quotes even the Epistle of James several times without any restriction, but does bring in, alongside of the testimony of the Holy Spirit, also the gospel of Jesus Christ as a test of Scripture.

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Now the question may still be raised, How about Calvin? Ladd says that Calvin "only in the most general and indefinite way makes the Bible as a whole identical with the Word of God." — The Doctrine of Sacred Scripture, II, p. 155. J. Selden Strong avers that, according to Calvin "the Bible is authoritative, not in a close literal sense, not as a mere rule, but as giving account of the best religious experience of the human race, the best thinking about God, the best life ever lived, the best statement of those great moral and social principles, upon which religious and civilized society must be built."— The Essential Calvinism, p. 120. Would any Calvinist recognize this as Calvinism? Would Calvin himself recognize this picture? Quite contrary to these views, Seeberg makes the following statement: "Thus Calvin establishes the authority of the Scriptures partly upon their divine dictation, and partly upon the testimony of the Holy Spirit working through them. Historically considered, he thereby combines the later medieval conception of inspiration (supra, p. 192) with the theory of Luther. Calvin is therefore the author of the so-called inspiration theory of the older dogmaticians." (Italics mine, B.). Several statements of the great Reformer could easily

adduced to prove this point. He says that the historical books as well as the prophecies were "composed under the dictation of the Holy Spirit" (Inst. IV. viii. 6), declares of the New Testament authors that they were "infallible and authentic amanuenses of the Holy Spirit" (IV. viii, 9), and speaks in the most absolute terms of the authority of Scripture. Says he:

"But since no daily responses are given from heaven, and the Scriptures are the only records in which God has been pleased to consign His truth to perpetual remembrance, the full authority which they ought to possess with the faithful is not recognized, unless they are believed to have come down from heaven as directly as if God had been heard giving utterance to them." And he repeatedly refers to the testimony of the Holy Spirit as the guarantee of his assurance on this point. There can be no reasonable doubt about it that Calvin recognized the Bible in all its parts as the Word of God; and that the idea of it as a book which can be called unique and divine only because it breathes an exalted spirit, or because it contains among many myths and legends, and many human stories, also a divine message, is entirely foreign to him. The following statement of Dr. Warfield is perfectly warranted:

"Now these sixty-six books of canonical Scriptures handed down to us, in the singular providence of God, in a sound text which meets the test of critical scrutiny, Calvin held to be the very Word of God. This assertion he intended in its simplest and most literal sense. He was far from overlooking the fact that the Scriptures were written by human hands; he expressly declares that, though we have received them from God's own mouth, we have nevertheless received them 'through the ministry of men.' But he was equally far from conceiving that the relation of their human authors to their divine author resembled in any degree that of free intermediaries, who, after receiving the divine Word, could do with it what they listed. On the contrary, he thought of them rather as notaries (IV. viii. 9), who set down in authentic registers (I. vi. 3) what was dictated to them." Calvin and Calvinism, p. 60 f.

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It was deemed necessary to devote considerable attention to the views of Luther and Calvin, because so many of those who do not believe in the plenary inspiration of Scripture claim the support of these great Reformers, and seek to play them off against the great dogmaticians of the seventeenth century, who worked out the doctrine of Scripture in greater detail in their discussion of the perfections of Scripture.

Under the influence of Rationalism, strong opposition arose to this strict view of the Bible as the infallible Word of God. Rationalistic philosophy, historical and literary criticism of the Bible, natural science with its application of the principles of evolution, and the study of the history of religions, — all served to undermine belief in the supernatural, and therefore also in the divine inspiration of Scripture. The old conception of the Bible as the Word of God was brushed aside as untenable, and several other theories were suggested as alternatives, but, even according to Ladd, not a single one of these succeeded in entrenching itself in the hearts and minds of Christian people in general. The only conclusion which may be said to be quite generally accepted in modern liberal theology is that the old theory cannot stand the test of reason. Cf. Ladd, What is the Bible, p. 72 ff.

It may be well to give a brief indication of the views of Schleiermacher and Ritschl, which have had a determining influence on modern views of the Bible. Under the influence of Schleiermacher the

idea of inspiration was gradually replaced by that of divine illumination. There was a heightening of the spiritual life, the spiritual insight or intuition of the New Testament writers (inspiration), as a result of which they saw the truth about God and His redemptive work with greater clarity, so that it really became a revelation to them. Here revelation ceases to be a positive divine communication of truth to man in unusual ways, and by means not open to the ordinary channels of investigation, and therefore supernatural; and it becomes a disclosure of the truth through the ordinary channels of human experience; through reason, reflection, and intuitive insight. It is something like a spiritual dawn, dimly revealing the beauties of a new landscape. One feels at once that it is a far cry from the old conception of revelation, as a self-disclosure of God by communicating to man divine truth in redemptive facts and words, to this modern conception, in which one, as Dr. Warfield expresses it, conceives "that which from the divine side is spoken of as revelation, as on the human side simply the natural development of the moral and religious consciousness." Revelation and Inspiration, p. 41. There is nothing supernatural about this process of revelation. Mackintosh is perfectly correct when he says: "To Schleiermacher, on the whole, revelation is only another name for human discovery" Types of Modern Theology, p. 71. Hence it is no wonder that they who have come under the spell of this theory often speak of discovering God, as if this were quite within the range of human possibility. John Baillie, who is very much under the influence of Schleiermacher, says: "What we have learned, then, is that human discovery and divine revelation, instead of dividing the field of religious knowledge between them, hold the field of it in common and are but complementary parts of the self-same fact of experience." He does not want to go quite as far as some others who say: "Discovery and revelation are two aspects of the same process," so that "all truth is both discovered and revealed." The Interpretation of Religion, p. 458. In this view, the Bible becomes a mere record of human experiences without any divine authority, though having a certain normative significance. The school of Ritschl wanted to improve on this view. In truly Neo-Kantian fashion it denies the possibility of any theoretical knowledge of God and, in opposition to Schleiermacher, also repudiates the idea of a direct mystical communion of the soul with God. The Ritschlians want to be more objective, and therefore make a show of basing their views on an objective revelation. True to the activism of Kant, they conceive of the divine revelation as a series of divine acts rather than as a communication of the truth. It is the historical manifestation of God in Christ, as the Founder of the Kingdom of God. This manifestation makes such an impression on the minds of men as to warrant their speaking of it as a revelation of God. Strictly speaking, however, this idea is worked out in the Ritschlian system in such a way that even the objective manifestation of God in action, that is, in the work of Christ, does not in itself constitute the revelation. Revelation consists rather in the value which faith ascribes to the various phases of the life and work of Christ. Value judgments determine the extent of that which is recognized as the revelation in Christ, and these lead to the exclusion of, for instance, the virgin birth and the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ. According to Dr. Orr: "Revelation generally, it is held, does not consist in a sum of doctrines, or even of facts, but is associated with any event which produces in us a vivid immediate realization of the presence and working of God. But this realization of God's presence is awakened in us in a powerful and pre-eminent degree by the historical manifestations of Jesus Christ." The Ritschlian Theology, p. 89; cf. also Warfield, Revelation and Inspiration, p. 42. In faith we feel that God is really drawing near to us; it connects up with the historical fact of Christ's appearance. Yet it is not dependent on any historical testimony, and therefore is in no way contingent on the establishment of the genuineness of the

historical records. Cf. On, op. cit., p. 90.

Now the question arises, What conception of Scripture does this position imply? It sounds rather encouraging when Ritschl says in his Unterricht in der christlichen Religion, p. 2: “The Christian doctrine is to be drawn alone from Scripture.” But it is quite evident that this does not imply that he regards the Bible as the inspired Word of God. He rejects the doctrine of inspiration, and this naturally gives rise to the question, What then gives Scripture its supreme value? How does it come to be defined as the sole source of theology? According to the Ritschlians this value belongs exclusively to the New Testament, and that not because of any special inspiration, but because the writings which it comprises constitute “a perfect monument of the beginning of Christianity.” They are the records of the foundation epoch of the Church, and their value lies in their historical witness. Yet they are not the rule of faith for Ritschl and his school. The books of the New Testament are given up to the freest criticism. Miracles are eliminated, the virgin birth and the physical resurrection of Jesus Christ are set aside as non-essential. Moreover, the elements of the primitive faith, found in the Epistles, which do not harmonize with the Ritschlian postulates or the Ritschlian system, or are regarded as unsuitable to modern requisites, are simply excluded, as, for instance, the Logos doctrine, the pre-existence of Christ, His deity, and His future advent. On the one hand Christ — not the Bible — because of His work is lauded as the revelation of God, and on the other hand the figure of Christ, as represented in the Gospels, is mutilated beyond recognition. This emphasis on Christ as the revelation of God continues right down to the present time. This appears very clearly from the recent Symposium on Revelation, edited by John Baillie and Hugh Martin. And for this emphasis we may well be grateful for, rightly understood, Christ is the supreme revelation of God. He only could say: “He that hath seen me hath seen the Father.” The Ritschlian interpretation of Him, however, is unacceptable, since it is contrary to the Word of God. However the Ritschlians may have tried to escape from the subjectivism of Schleiermacher, they did not succeed in surmounting it. Even in their own theology, there is what Berkouwer calls “a latent subjectivism.”

* * * * From the views of Schleiermacher and Ritschl we pass on to a brief consideration of the conception of the Word of God that is found in the writings of Barth cum suis. H. Strathearn McNab, the translator of Credo, credits Barth with having led the Church back to the Word of God. He even calls him “Doctor of the Holy Scriptures.” It should be borne in mind, however, that this is true only in a certain sense. The dialectical theology must certainly be regarded as, at least in part, a reaction against the subjectivism of Schleiermacher and Ritschl. There is in it a renewed emphasis on the Bible as a reliable witness to the truth. But this does not signalize a return to the Bible as the infallibly inspired Word of God, for that idea does not find favor with the representatives of that theology. Brunner is more explicit on this point than Barth (Cf. his Theology of Crisis, p. 19; Our Faith, p. 10; The Philosophy of Religion, pp. 32, 34, 36; The Word and the World, p. 92); but even Barth is sufficiently clear (Cf. his The Word of God and the Word of Man, pp. 60, 61; The Doctrine of the Word of God, pp. 126, 139). In the matter of inspiration the latter is quite in agreement with his favorite teacher, Herrmann. Both Barth and Brunner on more than one occasion speak of a word quoted from the Bible as a “very human” word, albeit a word that witnesses to the original revelation.

Brunner says that “the word of Scripture is not in itself the Word of God, but of man, just as the appearance of the God-man is in itself that of a man.” The Philosophy of Religion, p. 32. The Word

of God can never become static, can never be so objectified that we can lay our hands on it and say, Here it is. It does not lie in a book as an abiding possession of man, of which we can make use. It is always God speaking to, God addressing, man, that is, some particular man. “The Bible,” says Barth, “is God’s Word, so far as God speaks through it.” Doctrine of the Word of God, p. 123. Brunner speaks of the “incognito of the purely human appearance” of the Word, and says that this “is unmasked only by faith, by the testimony of the Holy Spirit which enables us to hear the Word of God in the mere word of man. Only by becoming ‘clear’ does it become the Word of God, and if it does not become ‘clear,’ it is not the Word of God.” The Philosophy of Religion, p. 32. The Word is never “uttered in a vacuum,” but is always addressed to someone. McConnachie, a very sympathetic interpreter of Barth, says that according to him, “The whole Bible is never to any individual the Word of God, perhaps only a small part of it is, and now one and now another.” The Significance of Karl Barth, p. 115. Strictly speaking, it cannot even be said that parts of the Bible are in themselves the Word of God — for this would again make the Word static — but parts of it may become for some individual the Word of God, and then come to that individual with the force of a personal message.

It is a well-known fact that Barth distinguishes three forms of the Word of God. (1) The primary form, the original revelation, is Jesus Christ, the revelation given once for all. Hence, both Barth and Brunner speak of the revelation as einmalig. Says Barth: “To know anything about revelation in the original, true and strict sense of the concept, we must know Jesus Christ.” Revelation, p. 45. However, this revelation given once for all is not to be found, where the liberals find it, in Jesus as a historical person, nor in the teachings of Jesus, but in the appearance of something absolutely new in Him, something formerly veiled and hidden. It is the manifestation of the eternal Word of God in Him, the actual coming of God to man as a God of grace, bringing sinful man into judgment, but at the same time offering a way of escape. This revelation shines forth especially in the incarnation, in the passion of our Lord, and in His resurrection. However, even this revelation is not completed and does not become a real revelation, until it is brought to recognition in, and meets with the response of, a God-given faith. Faith must pierce the incognito of Jesus and see in Him very God of God. (2) The second form of the Word of God is the written Word, the Bible. This is not in itself the divine revelation, but a human word full of imperfections; and yet it can be called the Word of God in a secondary sense. Says Barth: “Holy Scripture as such is not the revelation. And yet Holy Scripture is the revelation, if and in so far as Jesus Christ speaks to us through the witness of His prophets and apostles.” Revelation, p. 67. One may read or listen to many parts of the Bible without hearing the voice of Jesus; but may also, while reading, all at once, through the operation of the Holy Spirit, recognize the voice of the Master addressing one personally. The Bible is not the revelation, but the witness to the revelation. The Word of God may come up out of the word of this witness, and is never heard apart from it. In view of all this the Bible can still be called the Word of God. (3) The third form of the Word of God is that in Church proclamation or preaching. Barth expresses the relationship between this and the previous form as follows: “But the Bible, speaking to us and heard by us as God’s Word, attests the past revelation. The proclamation that speaks to us and is heard by us as God’s Word promises the future revelation.” The Doctrine of the Word of God, p. 125. Church proclamation rests upon the attestation of the past revelation in the Bible. And what constitutes preaching Church proclamation, is exactly the hope or anticipation with which it is accompanied, that it will itself become a real revelation through faith in Jesus Christ on the part of those that hear it.

There is one point that deserves special emphasis here, namely, that the polarity of revelation and faith is in a sense dissolved. The situation is not this, that God gives a revelation, and that man accepts this by faith. God is the subject in both, and God's revelation never becomes an object for man. It may be thought, and has sometimes been said, that Barth, by emphasizing this point, simply wants to stress the fact, over against Pelagians and Arminians, that faith is a gift of God; but there is something more in it than that. In the first place, Barth does not conceive of faith, even after it is wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, as a constant possession of man, something which enables man to lay hold on God and His revelation. This would again put man in possession of a way from man to God, and would make God and His revelation an object. And in the second place revelation is always simply God speaking, and never something given, and now having an objective existence apart from the Speaker, so that man can accept it by faith. Revelation does not exist as a historical datum. It is something that comes from above and strikes through history. The conception of the revelation of God as a given datum at once places man as subject over against God as object; and this may not be. Hence, Barth cannot possibly identify God's revelation and the Bible, and merely says that the Bible may become for us the Word of God at various times. The Doctrine of the Word of God, p. 124. There is no revelation apart from faith, and this faith is not primarily an activity of man; it is rather something in which man is passive. It is a miracle wrought in man by the Holy Spirit. Says Camfield in his Barthian study on Revelation and the Holy Spirit, p. 103: "In faith man becomes the subject of a great aggression upon his life, a great approach of God, which disqualifies his consciousness, his thought-world for purposes of revelation." The revelation itself creates faith through the operation of the Holy Spirit. Where this God-wrought faith is non-existent, there is no revelation. The principle that God is always subject, and never object, is thus consistently carried through.

There are, of course, several other particulars connected with the Barthian doctrine of the Word of God, which might be mentioned, but what was said is sufficient to convey at least some idea of the Barthian view. We gratefully record the fact that he absolutely rejects the modern view of the Bible as a record of the experiences of the writers in their search for God. The idea of man's discovering God is entirely foreign to his theology. Moreover, it is a matter of satisfaction also that he declares war on the philosophy of evolution, which underlies the modern conception of Scripture. He maintains that the Word of God speaks to us from the Bible and from the Bible only, and does not believe that it can be learned also from nature, from history, or from the sacred books of other religions. While he strongly emphasizes the unity of the Bible and the Biblical revelation, the idea of a progressive revelation does not find favor with him, since it would again make revelation something historical. It is regrettable that he regards the Bible as a merely human book with many imperfections, and therefore as a legitimate subject for literary and historical criticism. He absolutely repudiates the doctrine of plenary inspiration, and of the Bible as an infallible book. At the same time he is willing to regard the Bible as the Word of God in the sense that it is the accredited witness to the original revelation, that various parts of it may become at different times, for individuals, the Word of God in the strict sense of the word, and that the revelation of God never comes to us apart from the Bible. In his search for the truth man is bound to the Word of God that speaks from the Bible. Of course, he would fully agree with Brunner in saying that "the statement that God's Word speaks to us in the Holy Scriptures has at once to be supplemented by adding that the word of the Bible is the Word of God to us only in so far as God's Holy Spirit opens our ears so that we can hear His voice in the word of the Apostles — something which at no time

can be taken for granted." The Word and the World, p. 89 f. The following statement of the same author is also significant: "While for living Christians the Bible always is the living present voice of God, orthodoxy has made the Bible an independent thing, which just as such, a corpus mortuum, is stamped with divine authority." Ibid., p. 92.

* * * *

We have briefly reviewed the most important historical views respecting the Word of God, and the question remains which one of these deserves preference. There is but one who can give us a satisfactory answer, and that is God Himself. We shall have to place ourselves at His feet also in this respect instead of depending on our own ingenuity, and this means that we shall have to turn to the Bible for the authoritative word. This is what modern liberal theology failed to do, since it placed human reason above the Bible. It accuses those, who turn to the Bible for an answer, of reasoning in a circle. But the question may well be raised, whether this bogie of the 'circle' should deter us from seeking the answer in the Bible. Edwards says in work on The Philosophy of Religion, where he feels that he cannot give a normative definition of religion without reasoning in a circle: "It may well be doubted whether in our actual reasoning we ever quite avoid the 'circle,' except when our reasoning is purely formal, sterile, and pedantic." P. 137. Girardeau meets a similar objection in connection with his discussion of the doctrine of inspiration, when he says: "Suppose we should use the argument: God declares that He is true; therefore God is true. Here God's truth would be proved by His truth. Would that be a vicious reasoning in a circle? The atheist might say, You assume that there is a God of truth. So we do, and so do all sensible men." Discussions of Theological Questions, p. 297. Jesus did not recognize the force of that objection, John 8:13, John 8:14, and it has often been met apologetically.

It is quite evident that the Bible does not always use the term "Word of God" in the same sense. Sometimes it is used to denote the word of God's power, the word by which He created the universe and by which He upholds all things, Psalms 33:6; Hebrews 1:3; Hebrews 11:2. It is frequently employed to designate the divine communications to the prophets and to other organs of revelation, Genesis 15:1; Exodus 30:1. It was one of the characteristics of the true prophets among Israel, that the word of Jehovah was communicated to them. Hence the prophetic formula, "The word of the Lord came unto me," and others of the same import. Such direct communications of God to the prophets are also recognized by Barth and Brunner as part of the original revelation, and therefore as part of the Word of God in the primary sense of the word. But the term 'word of God' is not only applied to these direct divine communications to the prophets, but also to the resultant messages of the prophets to the people, the messages contained in the Bible, which constitute the sum-total of all that we know about them. And these, according to the same scholars, are not themselves a part of the Word of God, of the revelation, but merely constitute a part of the witness to the revelation, or a token of it, since the revelation itself never assumes an objective form, but is always simply God speaking. Yet the Bible designates them as the Word of God. Again, the term 'word of God' is repeatedly used to denote a divine commandment,Numbers 20:24, which in many cases is simply equivalent to the law, Deuteronomy 5:5; Psalms 105:8; Psalms 119:11, Psalms 119:17, Psalms 119:89, Psalms 119:105. Furthermore, it may refer to a word of promise, Psalms 119:25, Psalms 119:41, Psalms 119:81. Such commandments and promises, as coming directly from God to individuals or to the nation of Israel, according to Barth and Brunner, belong to the revelation, and as such are a part of the original revelation, but as

recorded in the Bible can only be regarded as a part of the witness to the revelation.

However, the term ‘Word of God’ is also used in a far higher sense in the Bible. It is applied to the Second Person of the Trinity in the Prologue of John. It is expressive of the idea that the Second Person is as closely related to God as a word is to the speaker, and also sustains a similar relation to Him. He is the eternal principle of all revelation in God and can therefore also be said to represent God as the Revealer. At the same time He is also the revelation of God in the most exalted sense of the word. He is the Revealer and the revelation of God first of all in the work of creation, the true light, “which lighteth every man coming into the world,” though the world did not know Him. He continues to be the Revealer and the great central revelation in the work of redemption, coming to His own already during the Old Testament period in theophanies and in the word of prophecy, and at last appearing as the Logos ensarkikos, the Word become flesh. He is the highest revelation of God, and the center from which all other revelations radiate. In view of the great revelatory significance of Jesus Christ, it is no wonder that a great deal of modern theology has represented Him as the revelation of God, and that Barth is doing the same thing today. It cannot be said, however, that modern liberal theology does justice to Him as the Logos, since it denies His eternal pre-existence, refuses to honor Him as very God, and simply regards Him as the most perfect product of the historical process of evolution. Theirs is, to use Sanday’s term, only “a reduced Christianity.” Barth goes to another extreme. He not only repudiates the “historical Jesus” of modern liberal theology and the idea that Jesus is to be regarded as the product of history, but also denies that the revelation of God is to be found in the appearance of Jesus in history as such. According to him, the revelation is found only in the super-historical in the life of Jesus, as this is recognized by faith. Brunner expresses this thought briefly in these words: “Thus the historical appearance of the human personality of Jesus is not, as such, revelation; it is the revelation only in so far as in this historical, human personality the eternal Son of God is recognized. The incognito of the historical appearance can be pierced only by the eye of faith.” The Theology of Crisis, p. 35. This representation really destroys the connection between history and revelation, and makes the historical reality of the revelation in Christ, depend on its recognition as such. It really reduces the revelation in Christ to certain flashes which come to man in faith. This whole representation, which limits the revelation to those who recognize it as such, can hardly be said to do justice to the statement of Scripture, that the Word, the revelation, dwelt among men, and scarcely comports with the Scriptural idea that the appearance of Christ heightened the responsibility of those who persisted in unbelief, Matthew 11:20-24; John 15:22, John 15:24. While emphasizing a very important truth, namely, that God is not recognized as He should be unto salvation, without the special operation of the Holy Spirit, Barth does not seem to do justice to the fact of human responsibility. There are, of course, many problems connected with this subject, which we cannot even begin to discuss in this paper, and therefore we hasten on to the concluding question. Does Scripture justify our speaking of the Bible as the Word of God? It may be said at once that the term ‘Word of God’ is not used in Scripture as a designation of the Bible as a whole. And it could not be, since the Bible as a whole was not yet in existence at that time. It might have been used in the New Testament to denote the Old Testament in its written form, since this did exist as such, cf. John 15:25; 1 Corinthians 15:54. But it is not even used in that limited sense. However, the mere fact that this term is not so employed in Scripture does not necessarily mean that the Bible does not warrant such use. The Church of Jesus Christ certainly never showed any hesitancy on that point.

Some Scriptural data deserve notice here. The Old Testament writings, as inspired of God, are called ta hiera grammata, the holy writings, 2 Timothy 3:15; and a part of that sacred written legacy is called “the prophetic word,” 2 Peter 1:19, since the writers spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit. Some quotations from the Old Testament are introduced in the New with the words, “It is written in the law,” and these words have the exact force of, “It is written in your authentic Scriptures,” John 10:34; John 15:25; Romans 3:19; 1 Corinthians 14:21. In other cases the simple formula, “It is written” is used, and this was equivalent to, “God says,” Matthew 4:4,Matthew 4:7,Matthew 4:10; Matthew 26:24; Mark 11:17; 24:46. The terms hegraphe and hai graphai were designations of the written word, and the formula, “The Scripture saith,” is used synonymously with “God says,” Romans 9:17; Galatians 2:8. In view of the fact that the Old Testament in its written form was thus represented as the Word of God in the New Testament, it need cause no surprise that the New Testament revelation, when it assumed a written form, should also be so represented, and that the term “Word of God” at once became a designation for the Bible as a whole. Peter explicitly places the Epistles of Paul on a level with the Old Testament writings, 2 Peter 3:16. The Biblical authors therefore do not hesitate to consider the written Word as the revelation of God, and this finds it explanation in the fact that they were deeply conscious of the fact that the books of the Bible were written under divine inspiration, and are therefore absolutely reliable. By supernatural inspiration the Bible became the Word of God for all coming generations. In it God continually speaks to all the generations of men, and the Holy Spirit makes this continuous speaking effective where and when He pleases.

Barth objects that, by regarding the written word as the revelation, this revelation is separated from God as the speaker, and acquires an objective and static form. But it is hard to see why God cannot express Himself in the written word as well as in the spoken word, and why He should not continue to be the responsible author of the one as well as of the other. The real objection of Barth seems to be that, if the Word of God is objectified in that way, it becomes a historical datum and thus destroys the discontinuity between God and man. Man can say, I have God’s revelation, and then make this, and in it God, an object of study, while God is never object but always subject. Now it is true, as Dr. Kuyper has said long ago, that man cannot place himself above God and elicit knowledge from Him as he does from other objects of study. He can acquire the necessary knowledge only from God’s revelation. And when he studies this revelation, he does not place himself above God, but he lets God speak to him, and seeks to think the thoughts of God after Him. And, surely, for the knowledge of God and of His will it is better to depend on the written Word of God than on flashes of revelation, now and then, here and there. Barth himself attaches far more importance to the Bible than his principles would seem to warrant. It does not greatly surprise us to find Pauck coming to the conclusion that “The Bible is his final authority after all.” Karl Barth, p. 169.

Mindful of the perennial value of the Bible as the inspired Word of God, we close with the words of the poet: The starry firmament on high, And all the glories of the sky, Yet shine not to thy praise, O Lord, So brightly as thy written word.

Almighty Lord, the sun shall fail, The moon forget her nightly tale, And deepest silence hush on high, The radiant chorus of the sky;

But, fixed for everlasting years, Unmoved amid the wreck of spheres, Thy word shall shine in cloudless day, When heaven and earth have passed away.

Author

Louis Berkhof (1873-1957) was born in the Netherlands and emigrated as a child to the United States where his family joined the Christian Reformed Church. His theological training began at Calvin Seminary in Grand Rapids, Michigan. He then went on to study at Princeton Seminary. After briefly serving as a pastor of a local congregation he was called to teach at Calvin Seminary in 1906 where he remained for three decades. His magnum opus was the still popular, Reformed Dogmatics (Systematic Theology) publishsed by Eerdmans. This work was condensed into the Manual of Christian Doctrine, 1933. He was also the author of The History of Christian Doctrines, published by the Banner of Truth Trust. This article is taken from The Word of God and the Reformed Faith, addresses delivered at the Second American Calvinistic Conference held at Calvin College and Seminary, Grad Rapids, Michigan, June 3, 4, and 5, 1942. (Baker)

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