

*Reformed Thinking: Christian Scholarship***I. The Question**

When I was a student at Calvin, one of the important questions, perhaps the *main* question, was a question that has occupied Christians from the very beginning: the question of how Christianity and culture, taken broadly, should be related. Nearly all of the great thinkers of the Western world from the early days of Christianity to the 17th century devoted some of their best efforts to this question. The early Christians found themselves in a world with an ongoing culture, with art, literature, science, philosophy, history, business, the state, medicine, music, etc.; and the question was, how should the Christian approach these things? How does being a Christian make a difference to your taking part in culture or in some particular aspect of it? How does your being a Christian bear on your attitude towards it? Does it make a difference? *Should* it make a difference? That was the chief question of the early reflective Christians, including in particular the Church Fathers (Origen, for example, and Tertullian, Clement, Justin Martyr, and above all Augustine); it remains a fundamental question for us Christians today. It is of course by virtue of a quite specific view on this topic, a view held with deep resolve and commitment, that there is such a thing as Calvin College. We are here, tonight, only because those who went before us, our spiritual ancestors, took a particular view of this issue, and thought this view so important that they were prepared to expend an enormous amount of energy and resources in order to bring it into concrete expression.

So the most general question was: how shall we Christians think about, fit into, react to contemporary culture generally? But Henry Stob

and the others also raised a more specific (though still very general) question: how shall we Christians fit into, think about, react to the world of contemporary scholarship? Still more specifically: what should we think about the theoretical disciplines, those disciplines that have to do with understanding ourselves and the world around us? In these two lectures I want to try to add just a bit to what I learned then on these topics; or perhaps I should say that what I want to do is repeat or report what I learned in my own way. Admittedly, this means that I may not have anything particularly original to say; but here (unlike in, say, French philosophy or liberal theology) we are less interested in novelty than in truth. So much of what I shall say I originally learned from Professors William Harry Jellema and Henry Stob and others many years ago here at Calvin College. I also recognize that here my reach vastly exceeds my grasp. To do this properly, one would need enormously more knowledge and insight than I can command; what is required is another Augustine, or perhaps another Abraham Kuyper. Still, it is of the first importance for us to think about these matters, and if we wait for another Augustine or Kuyper, we may be waiting for a long time. Accordingly, I want to say something about these topics, recognizing the risks and pitfalls. It's a nasty job, but someone has to do it. And given that the job *is* so risky, and requires so much knowledge and insight, it is obviously a good idea to try to find the right time to have your say — I mean the right time in your life. You should wait until you probably won't learn a whole lot more, but you must also make sure you say it before you are too far over the hill. Just before the onslaught of senility sounds about the right time. You'll have to judge whether I've made it in time.

Now what I learned, of course, is that we Reformed Christians do indeed think of the world of scholarship, the life of the intellect, as a place where Christianity makes a big difference. It is a basic Reformed tenet that all of life must be lived from the perspective of Christianity; in particular, then, our scholarly life must be so lived. A part of what distinguishes us from other Christian communities — from our more pietistic and fundamentalist brothers, for example — is our affirmation of all of life, and our determination to see all of it from the perspective of our faith. The genius of specifically Reformed Christianity is this effort to work out and embody our faith in our entire lives. We profess to try, and we do try, to live out our faith in our entire lives in their every aspect. Therefore we recognize this obligation in scholarship, and we often pay homage to it — particularly at the beginning of courses and on public and ceremonial occasions.

It isn't hard to see, however, that this homage is to some degree a matter of lip service with us. Or if that is too harsh a judgment, at the least it must be admitted that, when it comes to the level of detail and specificity, we often don't have much of an idea just how to do it; indeed we hardly know how to start. In a way, it is our *lack* of success here that is most striking. This whole matter of Christian scholarship is difficult, taxing, frustrating, baffling; it is easy (and tempting) to lose sight of it in the welter of everyday demands and concerns. And don't we sometimes suspect that our forefathers may have been wrong here? Is there really such a thing as Christian scholarship — or is there only scholarship *simpliciter*, which can be practiced by Christians and non-Christians, though perhaps practiced in a Christian and in a non-Christian way? Physics is physics; can we sensibly speak of Christian physics? What could that possibly be like? Where would it differ from just plain physics? History too is what it is; there isn't a Christian course of history and a non-Christian course of it: so what could specifically Christian history be? Will Christians and non-Christians differ, for example, as to whether there was such a thing as the Peloponnesian war, or as to when it occurred? Why do we need specifically Christian scholarship in areas other than theology? In what follows I want to go back to the beginning and ask what, from a Christian perspective, recommends the Reformed way of thinking about scholarship. Why do we need a place like Calvin College? Why should the Christian community concern itself with these matters? Why should it do so precisely as a *Christian community*?

There are, I think, two fundamental reasons. These reasons are at bottom both religious: but one is rooted in our nature and the other in our historical situation. Suppose we begin with the second; we'll think about the first tomorrow night.

II. The First Reason

So why do we need Christian scholarship? Here I can call on some of the great names in our tradition and wrap myself in their mantles like a politician in the flag. In particular I'd like to mention two great Reformed stalwarts here, Abraham Kuyper and St. Augustine. (Some of you might complain that St. Augustine is at best dubiously Reformed, since he displays insufficient acquaintance with the works of John Calvin. No doubt you are right; let's think of him as an early Calvinist by courtesy.) Augustine and

Kuyper both saw human life as involving a sort of struggle, a battle between two implacably opposed forces. Augustine spoke of the City of God and the Earthly City or City of the World: the *Civitas Dei* and the *Civitas Mundi*. The former is dedicated, in principle, to God and to his will and to his glory; but the latter is dedicated to something wholly different. Kuyper spoke of the antithesis between belief — Christian belief — and unbelief, an antithesis that is evident, in one way or another, in all the important areas of human life. Both emphasize a certain universality here: being a Christian, if done properly, involves the entire life of the *Civitas*, all the things a city or state or society does: not just private beliefs and private commitments acted on, perhaps, by way of going to church on Sunday. And of course both Augustine and Kuyper saw scholarship (taken broadly) as a central area in which the conflict in question is carried out.

I believe Kuyper and Augustine are dead right, and I want to begin by developing their insights in my own way. Indeed, we *must* do this in our own way and from our own historical perspective: the precise relationship between the City of God and the Earthly City constantly changes; the form the Earthly City itself takes constantly changes; an account of the fundamental loyalties and commitments of the Earthly City that was correct in Augustine's day, now some fifteen centuries ago, does not directly apply now. And even since the time of Kuyper (1837-1920), roughly a century ago, there has been substantial change and substantial clarification and differentiation; in some ways it is now considerably easier, I think, to see the essential contours of the modern ways of thinking that have emerged since the 17th and 18th centuries.

Augustine and Kuyper are right; and the contemporary Western intellectual world, like the worlds of their times, is a battleground or arena in which rages a battle for men's souls. This battle, I believe, is a three-way contest. There are three main contestants, in the contemporary Western intellectual world, and I want to try to characterize them. Of course an undertaking like this is at best fraught with peril (and at worst arrogantly presumptuous); the contemporary Western world is a vast and amorphous affair, including an enormous variety of people, in an enormous variety of places, with enormously different cultural backgrounds and traditions. We all know how hard it is to get a real sense of the intellectual climate of a *past* era — the Enlightenment, say, or 13th-century Europe, or 19th-century America. It is clearly much *more* difficult to come to a solid understanding of one's own time. For these general reasons, real trepidation is very much

in order. There are also special less universally applicable reasons for trepidation: wouldn't it be the historians, not the philosophers, whose job it is to figure out intellectual trends, take the intellectual pulse of the time, ferret out underlying presuppositions of the whole contemporary era? So here I should defer to the historians at Calvin, who are my betters, if not my elders. I shall do my best, but I can't promise much.

As I see it, therefore, there are three main competitors vying for supremacy: three fundamental perspectives or ways of thinking about what the world is like, what we ourselves are like, what is most important about the world, what our place in it is, and what we must do to live the good life. The first of these perspectives is Christianity or Christian theism; since you all know a good bit about that, I shall say little about it. I do want to remind you, however, that despite recent successes in our part of the world, the Christian perspective has been very much on the defensive (at least in the West) ever since the Enlightenment.

In addition to the Christian perspective, then, there are, fundamentally, two others. Both of these pictures have been with us since the ancient world; but each has received much more powerful expression in modern times. According to the first perspective, there is no God, and we human beings are insignificant parts of a giant cosmic machine that proceeds in majestic indifference to us, our hopes and aspirations, our needs and desires, our sense of fairness or fittingness. This picture goes back to Epicurus, Democritus, and others in the ancient world and finds magnificent expression in Lucretius's poem, *De Rerum Natura*: call it 'Perennial Naturalism.' According to the second perspective, on the other hand, it is we ourselves — we human beings — who are responsible for the basic structure of the world. This notion goes back to Protagoras, in the ancient world, with his claim that man is the measure of all things, but finds enormously more powerful expression in Immanuel Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*: call it 'Enlightenment Humanism,' or 'Enlightenment Subjectivism,' or maybe 'Creative Anti-Realism.' These two perspectives or pictures are very different indeed; I shall say a bit about each.

A. Perennial Naturalism

Perennial Naturalism ('Naturalism' for short), as I say, goes back to the ancient world; it is also to be found in the medieval world, among some of the

Avrotrists, for example. It was left to modernity, however, to display the most complete and thorough manifestations of this perspective. Hobbes, the Enlightenment Encyclopedists, and Baron D'Holbach are early modern exponents of this picture; among our contemporaries and near contemporaries there are John Dewey, Willard van Orman Quine, Wilfrid Sellars, Donald Davidson, an astounding number of liberal theologians, and a host of others in and out of academia. From this perspective, there is no God and human beings are properly seen as parts of nature. The way to understand what is most distinctive about us, our ability to love, to act, to think, to use language, our humor and playacting, our art, philosophy, literature, history, our morality, our religion, our tendency to enlist in sometimes unlikely causes and devote our lives to them — the fundamental way to understand all this is in terms of our community with (nonhuman) nature. We are best seen as parts of nature and are to be understood in terms of our place in the natural world.

A couple of examples here: first, a trivial one. Those who endorse this view often seem to think that the way to find out how we human beings should live is to see how the other animals manage things; this is the naturalistic equivalent of the biblical "Go to the ant, thou sluggard." I recently heard a TV talk show in which a scientist was belittling traditional sexual ethics and mores — "heterosexual pair bonding," he called it — on the grounds that only three percent of the other animals do things this way. He didn't say anything about plants, but no doubt even more interesting conclusions could be drawn there.

A second more serious example: a couple of years ago I heard a distinguished contemporary American philosopher reflecting on knowledge, belief, and the whole human cognitive enterprise. The way to understand this whole situation, he said — the way to see what is most basic and important about it — is not, of course, to see it as one of the manifestations of the image of God, a way in which we resemble the Lord, who is the prime knower, and who has created us in such a way as to be finite and limited mirrors of his infinite and unlimited perfection. This philosopher took quite a different line. Human beings, he said, hold beliefs; and these beliefs can cause them to act in certain ways. Put in more sophisticated if no more insightful terms, a person's beliefs can be part of a causal explanation of her actions. Now how can this be? How does it happen, how can it be that human beings are such that they can be caused to do certain things by what they believe? How does my believing there is a doughnut in the refrigerator cause

or partly cause this largish lumpy physical object which is my body to heave itself out of a comfortable armchair, move over to the refrigerator, and open its door? The answer: think of a thermostat: it too has beliefs — simple-minded beliefs, no doubt, but still beliefs. What it believes are such things as *it's too hot in here*, or *it's too cold in here*, or *it's just right in here*; and it is easy to see how its having those beliefs brings it about that the furnace or the air conditioning goes on. And now the basic idea: we should see human thinking as a rather more complicated case of what goes on in the thermostat. The thought was that if we think about how it goes with the thermostat, we will have the key to understanding how it goes with human beings. Of course this is just one example of a much broader project: the project of seeing *all* that is distinctive about us — literature, art, play, humor, music, morality, religion, those tendencies to enlist in improbable causes, even at serious costs to ourselves — the project is to explain *all* of these things in terms of our community with nonhuman nature.

The form this perspective takes in our own day is broadly evolutionary: we are to try to understand the above phenomena by way of their origin in genetic mutation and their perpetuation by natural selection. Consider sociobiological explanations of love, for example: love between men and women, between parents and children, love for one's friends, love of college, church, country — love in all its diverse manifestations and infinite variety. Love is a significant human phenomenon and a powerful force in our lives. On the sort of evolutionary account in question, love arose, ultimately and originally, by way of random genetic mutation; it persisted via natural selection because it has or had survival value. Male and female human beings, like male and female hippopotami, get together to have children (cubs? calves? colts? [etymologically hippopotami are river horses]) and stay together to raise them; this has survival value. Once we see that point, we understand that sort of love and see its basic significance; and the same goes for these other varieties and manifestations of love. And that, fundamentally, is what there is to say about love. From a theistic perspective, of course, this is hopelessly inadequate as an account of the significance and place of love in the world. The fact is love reflects the basic structure and nature of the universe; for God himself, the first being of the universe, is love, and we love because he has created us in his image. From the naturalistic perspective, furthermore, what goes for love goes for those other distinctively human phenomena: art, literature, music; play and humor; science, philosophy, and mathematics; our tendency to see the world

from a religious perspective, our inclinations towards morality, and so on. All these things are to be understood in terms of our community with non-human nature. All of these are to be seen as arising, finally, by way of the mechanisms driving evolution, and are to be understood in terms of their place in evolutionary history.

B. Enlightenment Humanism

I turn now to the other main competitor: Enlightenment Humanism, or Enlightenment Subjectivism, or Creative Anti-Realism. Here the fundamental idea — in sharp contrast to Naturalism — is that we human beings, in some deep and important way, are ourselves responsible for the structure and nature of the world; it is *we*, fundamentally, who are the architects of the universe. This view received magnificent if obscure expression in Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*. Kant did not deny, or course, that there really are such things as mountains, horses, planets, and stars. Instead, his characteristic claim is that their existence and their fundamental structure have been conferred upon them by the conceptual activity of persons — not by the conceptual activity of a personal God, but by *our* conceptual activity, the conceptual activity of human beings. According to this view, the whole phenomenal world — the world of trees and planets and dinosaurs and stars — receives its basic structure from the constituting activity of mind. Such fundamental structures of the world as those of space and time, object and property, number, truth and falsehood, possibility and necessity — these are not to be found in the world as such, but are somehow constituted by our own mental or conceptual activity. They are contributions from our side; they are not to be found in the things themselves. We impose them on the world; we do not discover them there. Were there no persons like ourselves engaging in noetic activities, there would be nothing in space and time, nothing displaying object-property structure, nothing that is true or false, possible or impossible, no kind of things coming in a certain number — nothing like this at all.

We might think it impossible that the things we know — trees, mountains, plants, and animals — exist but fail to be in space-time and fail to display object-property structure; indeed, we may think it impossible that there be a thing of *any* sort that doesn't have properties. If so, then Kant's view implies that there would be nothing at all if it weren't for the creative

structuring activity of persons like us. Of course I don't say Kant clearly *drew* this conclusion; indeed, he may have obscurely drawn the opposite conclusion: that is part of his charm. But the fundamental *thrust* of Kant's self-styled Copernican Revolution is that the things in the world owe their basic structure and perhaps their very existence to the noetic activity of our minds. Or perhaps I should say not minds but *mind* ; for whether there is just one transcendental ego or several is, of course, a vexed question, as are most questions of Kantian exegesis. Indeed, this question is more than vexed; given Kant's view that quantity, number, is a human category imposed on the world, there is presumably no number *n* , finite or infinite, such that the answer to the question "how many of those transcendental egos are there?" is *n* .

Until you feel the grip of this sort of way of looking at things, it can seem a bit presumptuous, not to say preposterous. Did we structure or create the heavens and the earth? Some of us think there were animals — dinosaurs, let's say — roaming the earth before human beings had so much as put in an appearance; how could it be that those dinosaurs owed their structure to our noetic activity? What did we do to give *them* the structure they enjoyed? And what about all those stars and planets we have never so much as heard of: how have we managed to structure them? When did we do all this? Did we structure ourselves in this way too? And if the way things are is thus up to us and our structuring activity, why don't we improve things a bit?

Creative Anti-Realism can seem faintly or more than faintly ridiculous; nevertheless it is widely accepted and an extremely important force in the contemporary Western intellectual world. Vast stretches of contemporary Continental philosophy, for example, are anti-realist. There is Existentialism, according to which, at least in its Sartrean varieties, each of us structures or creates the world by way of our own decisions. There is also contemporary Heideggerian hermeneutical philosophy of various stripes; there is contemporary French philosophy, much of which beggars description, but insofar as anything at all is clear about it, is clearly anti-realist. In Anglo-American philosophy, there is the Creative Anti-Realism of Hilary Putnam and Nelson Goodman and their followers; there is the reflection of Continental Anti-Realism in such philosophers as Richard Rorty; there is the Linguistic Anti-Realism of Wittgenstein and his many followers. It is characteristic of all of these to hold that we human beings are somehow responsible for the way the world is — by way of our linguistic or more

broadly symbolic activity, or by way of our decisions, or in some other way. This sort of view is to be found even in theology, for example in some of the works of Gordon Kaufmann and others heavily influenced by Kant. The same view has made its way into physics or at least philosophy of physics. It is said that there is no reality until we make the right observations; there is no such thing as reality in itself and unobserved, or if there is, it is nothing at all like the world we actually live in. In ethics, this view takes the form of the idea that no moral law can be binding on me unless I myself (or perhaps my society) issue or set that law.

Perennial Naturalism and Creative Anti-Realism are related in an interesting manner: the first vastly underestimates the place of human beings in the universe, and the second vastly overestimates it. According to the first, human beings are essentially no more than complicated machines, with no real creativity; in an important sense we can't really act at all, any more than can a spark plug, or coffee grinder, or a truck. We are not ourselves the origin of any causal chains. According to the second, by contrast, we human beings, insofar as we confer its basic structure upon the world, really take the place of God. What there is and what it is like is really up to us, and a result of our activity.

C. *Relativism*

So the two basic pictures or perspectives of our time, as I see it, are Naturalism and Creative Anti-Realism. But here I must call attention to some complications. First, I say that on these anti-realist views, it is we, we the speakers of language, or the users of symbols, or the thinkers of categorizing thoughts, or the makers of basic decisions, who are responsible for the fundamental lineaments of reality; in the words of Protagoras, "Man is the measure of all things." But sometimes a rather different moral is drawn from some of the same considerations. Suppose you think our world is somehow created or structured by human beings. You may then note that human beings apparently do not all construct the *same* worlds. Your *Lebenswelt* may be quite different from mine; which one, then (if either), represents the world as it really is? Here it is an easy step to another characteristically contemporary thought: the thought that there simply isn't any such thing as objective truth, or an objective way the world is, a way the world is that is the same for all of us. Rather, there is my version of reality,

the way I've somehow structured things, and your version, and many other versions: and what is true in one version need not be true in another. As Marlowe's Dr. Faustus says, "Man is the measure of all things; I am a man; therefore I am the measure of all things."¹ But then there isn't any such thing as the truth *simpliciter*. There is no such thing as *the* world is; there is instead *my* version of reality, *your* version of it, and so on. Perhaps, then, there are as many versions as there are persons; and each at bottom is as acceptable as any other. Thus a proposition really could be true for me but false for you. I always used to think this a peculiarly sophomoric (excuse me, sophomores) confusion, but in fact it fits well with this formidable and important if lamentable way of thinking. The whole idea of an objective truth, the same for all of us, on this view, is an illusion, or a bourgeois plot, or a silly mistake. Thus does Anti-Realism breed relativism and nihilism.

In some ways this seems quite a comedown from the view that there is indeed a way the world is, and its being that way is owing to our activity. Still, there is a deep connection: on each view, whatever there is by way of truth is of our own making. The same ambiguity is to be found in Protagoras himself. "Man is the measure of all things"; we can take this as the thought that there is a certain way the world is, and it is that way because of what we human beings — all human beings — do, or we can take it as the idea that each of some more limited group of persons — perhaps even each individual person — is the measure of all things. Then there would be no one way everything is, but only different versions for different individuals. This form of Enlightenment Subjectivism, like the previous ones, suffers, I think, from deep problems with self-referential incoherence; but I don't here have the time to explain why I think so.

A second complication: we have, as I said, three major perspectives, three wholly different and deeply opposed perspectives. But of course what we also have, as William James said in a different connection, is a blooming, buzzing confusion. These three main perspectives or total ways of looking at man and the world can be found in every conceivable and inconceivable sort of combination and mixture. There are many crosscurrents and eddies and halfway houses; people think and act in accordance with these basic ways of looking at things without being at all clearly aware of

1. Quoted in David Lyle Jeffrey, "Caveat Lector: Structuralism, Deconstructionism, and Ideology," *The Christian Scholar's Review*, June, 1988.

them, having at best a sort of dim apprehension of them. There is much confusion, halting between two opinions, unreflective and hasty and incongruous combinations. But what I say, I believe, is fundamentally correct. Even if it isn't, what is clear is that something *like* it is: in our culture there are deep, predominant, pervasive ways of thinking that are deeply antagonistic to a Christian way of looking at the world.

I trust it unnecessary to point out that these ways of thinking are not just *alternatives* to Christianity; they run profoundly *counter* to it. From a Christian perspective the naturalist is, of course, deeply mistaken in rejecting or ignoring God. That is bad enough; but in so doing he also cuts himself off from the possibility of properly understanding us and the world. And as for Enlightenment Subjectivism, the idea that it is really we human beings who have made or structured the world, from a Christian perspective, is no more than a piece of silly foolishness, less heroically Promethean than laughably Quixotic.²

III. Are Science and Scholarship Neutral?

Now the first thing to see is that scholarship and science are not neutral in this struggle for men's souls. It isn't as if there is a large neutral area of scholarship where we all agree, with disagreement rearing its ugly head only when it comes to religion and politics, perhaps. The facts are very different: the world of scholarship is intimately involved in the battle between

2. There are other important presuppositions of our age, and it isn't easy to see just how they fit with the above two. The Enlightenment demand for freedom and autonomy, of course, fits well with Creative Anti-Realism; indeed the latter is just the former taken, as we sometimes say, to its logical extreme. But what about such characteristically contemporary ideas as that religion is properly a private matter, and should not intrude into scholarship, politics, and the other important arenas? How does that fit in with either or both of the above two? Or is it simply another disconnected idea? And the positivistic idea that science is all there is to know: this goes, somehow, with Naturalism, but how exactly? Furthermore, there are various halfway houses between the two main views. For example, there is fact, on the one hand, and value on the other. We are responsible for value: for interpretation, understanding, significance, and the like. On the other hand, there is the world of fact; this owes nothing to us and our activity. The humanities, then (broadly), are the realm of value and are such that what is true or right there is our own doing; the natural sciences, broadly, go the other way. A sort of truce, an uneasy compromise.

these opposing views; contemporary scholarship is rife with projects, doctrines, and research programs that reflect these non-Christian ways of thinking. There are hundreds of examples: I shall give just a couple, and each of you can make up your own list. First, Enlightenment Humanism, with its accompanying entourage of relativism, runs rife in the humanities. Contemporary philosophy, for example, is overrun with varieties of relativism and Anti-Realism.

One widely popular version of relativism is Richard Rorty's notion that truth is what my peers will let me get away with saying. On this view what is true for me, naturally enough, might be false for you; *my* peers might let *me* get away with saying something that *your* peers won't let *you* get away with saying: for of course we may have different peers. (And even if we had the *same* peers, there is no reason why they would be obliged to let you and me get away with saying the same things.) Although this view is very much *admirant* and with-it in the contemporary intellectual world, it has consequences that are peculiar, not to say preposterous. For example, most of us think that the Chinese authorities did something monstrous in murdering those hundreds of young people in Tiananmen Square, and then compounded their wickedness by denying that they had done it. On Rorty's view, however, this is an uncharitable misunderstanding. What the authorities were really doing, in denying that they had murdered those students, was something wholly praiseworthy: they were trying to bring it about that the alleged massacre never happened. For they were trying to see to it that their peers would let them get away with saying that the massacre never happened; that is, they were trying to make it *true* that it never happened; and who can fault them for that? The same goes for those contemporary neo-Nazis who claim that there was no holocaust; from a Rortian view, they are only trying to see to it that such a terrible thing never happened; and what could be more commendable than that? This way of thinking has real possibilities for dealing with poverty and disease: if only we let each other get away with saying that there isn't any poverty and disease — no cancer or AIDS, let's say — then it would be true that there isn't any; and if it were true that there isn't any, then of course there wouldn't be any. That seems vastly cheaper and less cumbersome than the conventional methods of fighting poverty and disease. At a more personal level, if you have done something wrong, it is not too late: lie about it, thus bringing it about that your peers will let you get away with saying that you didn't do it, then it will be true both that you didn't do it, and, as an added bonus, that you didn't even lie about it.

Another prominent example in the humanities is presented by structuralism, post-structuralism, and deconstructionism in literary studies. All of these, at bottom, pay homage to the notion that we human beings are the source of truth, the source of the way the world is, if indeed there is any such thing as truth or the way the world is. Sometimes this is explicit and clear, as in Roland Barthes:

Once the Author is removed, the claim to decipher a text becomes quite futile. To give a text an Author is to impose a limit on that text, to furnish it with a final signified, to close the writing. . . . In precisely this way literature (it would be better from now on to say *writing*) by refusing to assign a secret, an ultimate meaning, to the text (and to the world as text) liberates what may be called an antitheological activity, an activity that is truly revolutionary since to refuse to fix meaning is, in the end, to refuse God and his hypostases — reason, science, law.³

The move from structuralism to post-structuralism and deconstruction, furthermore, nicely recapitulates the move from Enlightenment Subjectivism to relativism. According to the structuralist, we human beings constitute and structure the world by language and do so *communally*; there are deep common structures involved in us all by which we structure our world. The post-structuralists and deconstructionists, noting in their incisive way that different people structure the world differently, insist that there aren't any such common structures; it is every woman for herself, each of us structures her own world her own way. Put thus badly and held up to the clear light of day, these views may seem to be hard to take seriously. But the fact is they can be deeply seductive. First, they ordinarily aren't put clearly and usually aren't held up to the clear light of day; and second, they come in versions — Wittgensteinian Anti-Realism, for example — that are vastly more subtle and thus vastly more enticing.

My second main example is from science more narrowly so called: evolution, about which I gave a lecture at Calvin last January. Here I take evolution in the sense of universal common ancestry: it is the view according to which any two living creatures can trace their ancestry back to a common progenitor. If you go back far enough, you and the mosquitoes in

3. Roland Barthes, *Image-Music-Text*, trans. Stephen Heath (New York: Hill and Wang, 1977), p. 147.

your back yard have common ancestors; indeed, the same goes for you and the weeds growing in your garden. (So perhaps herbicide is a sort of fratricide.) The experts — Francisco Ayala, Stephen Gould, Richard Dawkins, Philip Spieth, and a thousand others — tell us that this view is no mere theory; it is as solid and rock-ribbed, they say, as that the earth is round and revolves around the sun. (All of those I mentioned explicitly make the comparison with that astronomical fact.) Not only is it declared to be wholly certain; if you venture to suggest that it *isn't* absolutely certain, if you raise doubts or call it into question you are likely to be howled down; you will probably be declared an ignorant fundamentalist obscurantist or worse. In fact this isn't merely *probable*; you have already *been* so called: in a recent review in the *New York Times*, Richard Dawkins, an Oxford biologist of impeccable credentials, claims that "It is absolutely safe to say that if you meet someone who claims not to believe in evolution, that person is ignorant, stupid or insane (or wicked, but I'd rather not consider that)." (Dawkins indulgently adds that "You are probably not stupid, insane or wicked, and ignorance is not a crime. . . .")

As I argued last January, however, from a Christian perspective evolution is nowhere nearly as certain as that the earth is round. Take as evidence what the Christian knows as a Christian together with the scientific evidence — the fossil evidence, the experimental evidence, and the like: it is at best absurd exaggeration to say that, relative to that evidence, evolution is as certain as that the earth is round. My own judgment is that, relative to that evidence and leaving out of account whatever evidence is offered, if any, by the early chapters of Genesis, evolution (the thesis of universal common ancestry) is somewhat less likely than its denial. From a naturalistic perspective, on the other hand, evolution is vastly more likely and has vastly more to be said for it. First, there is the evaluation of the scientific evidence itself: some of this evidence is much stronger taken within a naturalistic context than taken within a theistic context. For example, *given* that life arose by chance, without direction by God, the fact that all living creatures employ the same genetic code strongly suggests a common origin for all living creatures. Again, given the enormous difficulty of seeing how life could have arisen even once by natural, nonteleological means, it is vastly unlikely that it arose in that way more than once; but if it arose only once, then the thesis of common ancestry follows.

But second, from a naturalistic perspective evolution is the only game in town. It is the only available answer to the question "How did it all

happen? How did all of these forms of life get here? Where did this vast profusion of life come from? And what accounts for the apparent design, Hume's 'nice adjustment of means to ends' to be found throughout all of living nature?" A Christian has an easy answer to those questions: "The Lord has created life in all its forms, and they got here by way of his creative activity; and as for the appearance of design, that is only to be expected since living creatures are in fact designed. But the naturalist has a vastly more difficult row to hoe. How did life get started and how did it come to assume its present multifarious forms? It is monumentally implausible to think these forms just popped into existence; that goes contrary to all our experience. So how did it happen? The evolutionary story gives the answer: Somehow life arose from nonliving matter by way of purely natural means, without the direction of God or anyone else; and once life started, all the vast profusion of contemporary plant and animal life arose from those early ancestors by way of common descent, driven by random variation and natural selection. To return to Richard Dawkins:

All appearances to the contrary, the only watchmaker in nature is the blind forces of physics, albeit deployed in a very special way. A true watchmaker has foresight: he designs his cogs and springs, and plans their interconnections, with a future purpose in his mind's eye. Natural selection, the blind, unconscious automatic process which Darwin discovered, and which we now know is the explanation for the existence and apparently purposeful form of all life, has no purpose in mind. It has no mind and no mind's eye. It does not plan for the future. It has no vision, no foresight, no sight at all. If it can be said to play the role of watchmaker in nature, it is the *blind* watchmaker.⁴

Here we have a nice summary (complete with the obligatory bit of as-we-now-knowism) of the role played by evolution in naturalistic thought. As Dawkins once remarked to A. J. Ayer, "although atheism might have been logically tenable before Darwin," said he, "Darwin made it possible to be an intellectually fulfilled atheist."⁵ And here Dawkins seems to me to be quite correct. Evolution is an essential part of any reasonably complete nat-

4. Richard Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker* (London and New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 1986), p. 5.

5. Dawkins, *The Blind Watchmaker*, pp. 6 and 7.

uralistic way of thinking; it plugs a very large gap in such ways of thinking; hence the pious devotion to it, the suggestions that doubts about it should not be aired in public, and the venom and abuse with which dissent is greeted. In contemporary academia, evolution has become an idol of the tribe; it serves as a shibboleth, a litmus test distinguishing the benighted fundamentalist goats from the enlightened and properly acculturated sheep. It functions as a *myth*: a widely shared way of understanding ourselves at the level of religion, a deep interpretation of ourselves to ourselves, a way of telling us why we are here, where we come from, and where we are going. And my point: the Christian community must recognize that there is vastly more to the role played by evolution in contemporary academia than a sort of straightforward science which has the same credentials viewed from any perspective.⁶

Of course many more examples could be given — from psychology, sociology, economics — across the length and breadth of the academic disciplines. And by now the moral is obvious: the Christian community as a whole must be aware of these things; it must be attuned to them, sensitive to them. We must see that intellectual culture does indeed involve a contest for basic human allegiance. It isn't enough to make the occasional ceremonial reference to world and life views or Reformed thought. We must really see that there is a battle here, and we must know what the main contestants are and how they permeate the various scholarly disciplines. These perspectives are seductive; these are widespread; they are the majority views in the universities and in intellectual culture generally in the West. We live in a world dominated by them; we imbibe them with our mother's milk; it is easy to embrace them and their projects in a sort of unthoughtful, unconscious way, just because they *do* dominate our intellectual culture. But these perspectives are also deeply inimical to Christianity; these ways of thinking distort our views of ourselves and the world. To the degree that we are not aware of them and do not understand their allegiances, they

6. Of course my point is not that you can't accept evolution without accepting naturalism. Obviously you can; evolution doesn't *entail* Naturalism; it is logically possible (obviously enough) that God should have created life in such a way that the thesis of universal common ancestry is true. My point is that the contemporary allegiance to evolution and the claims of certainty on its behalf arise out of its *mythic* function, rather than out of a sober inspection of evidence that has the same evidential bearing for a Christian as for someone committed to Naturalism.

make for confusion, and for lack of intellectual and spiritual wholeness and integrity among us Christians.

At the beginning of my talk I promised two reasons why Christian scholarship is of the first importance for the Christian community. The first reason is now obvious: clearly the Christian community needs what I shall call Christian cultural criticism. This reason is rooted in our historical situation; given its immersion in the sort of culture in which it finds itself, the Christian community sorely needs this cultural criticism, this testing of the spirits. And of course it is the Christian scholarly community on which this responsibility most directly falls. Christian scholars have an obligation to discern and analyze these perspectives, to plumb the full extent of their influence, to recognize the way in which they underlie vast stretches of contemporary intellectual life, to note how they manifest themselves in the intellectual projects and pursuits that are currently fashionable. We have an obligation to point out what we see, to react to it, to comment upon it. We must be aware of the broadly religious conflict in which scholarship is enmeshed. The Christian scholarly community must test the spirits, to see what comes ultimately from God, the source of all truth, and what comes from other sources. We need deep, penetrating, thoughtful, informed analyses of the various cultural movements and forces we encounter. To go with the crowd, to accept and take for granted what we find around us can lead us *away* from the Lord, away from an integral and unified Christian way of looking at the world.

This, therefore, is the first reason why we need Christian scholarship.

SECOND LECTURE

Christian Thinking: The Twin Pillars

I. Positive Christian Science

Last night I joined Reformed thinkers going all the way back to Augustine in affirming that a spiritual battle is being waged in our world. This battle has gone on for centuries. In bold and bald outline, the battle is between the *Civitas Dei*, the spiritual forces of those who enlist under Christ's banner, on the one hand, and, on the other, those who fly the flag of the Earthly City. The latter, of course, displays itself differently at different times and places. At present, and at least since the Enlightenment, its forces are divided: there are the battalions of Perennial Naturalism, but there are also the powerful forces of Enlightenment Humanism or Modern Subjectivism. Both trace their lineage back to the ancient world: the former to Lucretius and Epicurus and their bleak view of a world of atoms without God, and the latter to Protagoras with his grandiose claim that man is the measure of all things. The opposition between the *Civitas Dei* and the Earthly City is basic, fundamental, and serious; it is a battle for our very souls. I went on to draw the corollary drawn by Augustine, Kuyper, Dooyeweerd, Jellema, Stob, and many other Reformed stalwarts: scholarship and science, taken broadly, is deeply involved in this three-way battle. In a thousand ways contemporary science and scholarship displays its involvement in this struggle. Last time I gave a couple of obvious examples; they could be multiplied indefinitely. It is hard to overestimate the degree to which our own ways of thinking are likely to be shaped and molded by these visions of reality — visions that are deeply antagonistic to Christianity. These corrosive acids affect us in a thousand ways; we must recognize and combat them.

Now you may complain that this is all excessively obvious; we have learned it at our mother's knee. No doubt you are right; but these things must be recalled regularly and often; they must be kept near the forefront of our minds. And of course it is not that our only aim here is to keep ourselves pure and undefiled, unspotted from the world. We are our brothers' (and sisters') keepers, and we require this awareness also in order to witness, in a broad sense, to the rest of the world and to bring the benefits of the gospel to our fellows.

But perhaps you will go on to complain that all of this is negative; where, you say, is the positive? (Don't we need the power of positive thinking?) Tonight I do want to speak of something positive. There is much to be said here and little time to say it; so I shall have to leap lightly over large areas, areas that really require a great deal by way of investigation and discussion. (You may think this is less like leaping lightly than like skating on thin ice.)

So first: do we as Christian community need anything *more* than the cultural criticism of which I spoke last time? Do we need, not just awareness and assessment of contemporary answers to scholarly questions, but also answers of our own to those questions? Some Christians — among them many of our fundamentalist brothers and sisters — are inclined to think not. They think scholarship of this positive sort is at best unimportant and at worst spiritually dangerous. We need to cultivate the knowledge needed to live well, to conquer sickness, to build condominiums, houses, and airplanes, they say; but that kind of know-how, impressive and difficult as it is, has little to do with understanding ourselves and the world and God. And as for the latter, here we have Christianity, a revelation from God himself; what more could we possibly need? In paying heed to contemporary scholarship and intellectual culture, don't we run the risk of being deeply misled? After all, St. Paul himself issues a trenchant warning: "Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world and not after Christ" (Colossians 2, v. 8). That's the King James version: I am happy to say Paul doesn't really have *philosophy* in mind (as opposed to, e.g., history or literary criticism); here the term 'philosophy' is being used in an older and broader sense in which it applies to all the interpretive disciplines. So in another and more current translation: "Be on your guard; do not let your minds be captured by hollow and delusive speculations, based on traditions of man-made teaching and centered on the elemental spirits of the universe and

not in Christ" (*New English Bible*). Is there not here a warning against trying to go beyond what we learn from the Lord himself?

This attitude is widespread in contemporary Christianity; it underlies some of the anti-intellectualism to be found in fundamentalist circles. Sometimes it is also attributed to the church father Tertullian (160 AD), who explicitly adverts to Paul's advice:

From philosophy come those fables and endless genealogies and fruitless questionings, those "words that creep like as doth a canker." To hold us back from such things, the Apostle testifies expressly in his letter to the Colossians that we should beware of philosophy. . . . He had been at Athens where he had come to grips with the human wisdom which attacks and perverts the truth, being itself divided up into its own swarm of heresies by the variety of its mutually antagonistic sects. What has Jerusalem to do with Athens, the Church with the Academy, the Christian with the heretic? Our principles come from the porch of Solomon, who had himself taught that the Lord is to be sought in simplicity of heart. I have no use for a stoic or a Platonic or a dialectic Christianity. After Jesus Christ we have no need of speculation, after the gospel, no need of research. When we come to believe, we have no desire to believe anything else; for we begin by believing that there is nothing else which we have to believe.

You probably know Tertullian as the author of that dubious aphorism, *Credo quia absurdum est*: I believe because it is absurd. Many have ridiculed Tertullian for this suggestion. Sigmund Freud, for example, taking it to represent a fundamental Christian attitude, asks whether I am to try to believe every absurdity (that would be pretty hard to accomplish, given the long list of absurdities); and if not why should I believe *this* one, as opposed to the others?

I very much doubt that Tertullian ever said any such thing as *Credo quia absurdum est*; I think he suffers from a bad press. Of course, great rhetorician that he was, he sometimes exaggerates for effect; but his main point, so far as I can see, is eminently sensible. "After Jesus Christ we have no need of speculation, after the gospel, no need of research. When we come to believe, we have no desire to believe anything else; for we begin by believing that there is nothing else which we have to believe." Tertullian wasn't a fool, after all, he doesn't mean literally that there is nothing else at all that

we have to believe. I need to have beliefs about what my name is, where I live, how to get to my office, and whether pizza is more nourishing than mud; and those things are not, so far as I know, revealed in the Scripture. What Tertullian meant is something different and very much worth thinking about. In pursuing the theoretical or interpretative disciplines, our aim is to understand ourselves and our world and the relations between us and it; but doesn't Christianity already give us what we need to know along those lines? What is the world fundamentally like, and what is our place in it? Christianity gives us the answer: the world is fundamentally God's creation. The same God who created the world also created us human beings in his image. We human beings, however, have fallen into sin, thus bringing ruin upon ourselves and our world; we require rescue and salvation. God has graciously offered a means for restoring us to health and wholeness; this is accomplished through the death and resurrection of the man Jesus Christ, who is also the second person of the Trinity. Through him we can have justification and eternal life.

And now Tertullian's point: there are some who keep trying to do research into the questions whether the fundamental lineaments and contours of Christianity are indeed true. Often they wind up convinced that these basic Christian claims cannot be true, as they stand; so they offer various substitutes of their own invention. Among the prime examples in our own day, oddly enough, are theologians, 'liberal' theologians who have given up the gospel and its claims and who propose various pale and ghostly substitutes. A century ago absolute idealism was a popular substitute; now it is considerably harder to figure out what these theologians propose, but certain brands of Heideggerian existentialism seem to be popular. For the serious Christian, however, this is wholly anomalous; as a Christian she already knows the answer to those questions; she doesn't need further research on them, and she doesn't need any of those sickly and lifeless substitutes.¹

So here Tertullian is correct, and what he says is important. But can we properly conclude that we Christians don't need those theoretical and interpretative disciplines — philosophy, psychology, literary studies, history, economics, sociology, the natural sciences? Here the Reformed tradition is nearly unanimous: certainly not. So I shall not waste valuable time

arguing the point; that would be like carrying coals to Newcastle, or perhaps *banquet* to Friesland.

Instead, I shall pass on to the next question: given that we *do* need these disciplines, how, exactly, shall we pursue them? Shall we work at them in the same way as the rest of the academic world, or shall we pursue them in a way that is specifically Christian? Take a given area of scholarship: philosophy, let's say, or history, or psychology, or anthropology, or economics, or sociology; should we take for granted the Christian answer to the large questions about God and creation, and then go on from that perspective to address the narrower questions of that discipline? Or is that somehow illicit or ill-advised? Put it another way: to what sort of premises can we properly appeal in working out the answers to the questions raised in a given area of scholarly or scientific inquiry? Can we properly appeal to what we know as Christians? In psychology (which I mention because it is an area in which I am unencumbered by a knowledge of the relevant facts): must the Christian community accept the basic structure and presuppositions of the contemporary practice of that discipline in trying to come to an understanding of its subject matter? Must Christian psychologists appeal only to premises accepted by all parties to the discussion, whether Christian or not?

Last time I mentioned the striking phenomenon of human love. There is love between man and woman, between parents and children, among friends; there is love of country, love for institutions such as Calvin College and the Christian Reformed Church and the broader Christian church of which the former is a small but in our estimation important part: how shall we understand this phenomenon? When a Christian psychologist addresses this question, can she properly take into account what she knows as a Christian — that, for example, we are created in God's image, that God himself *is* love, that our loving is something like a reflection of his? How shall we understand the sense of beauty we human beings share? We exulted in those marvelous, golden, luminous days of autumn of a couple of weeks ago; and a Mozart concerto can bring tears to our eyes. How must we think about this sensitivity to beauty on our part? How shall we understand this phenomenon? No doubt some will tell us that it arose, somehow, by way of genetic mutation; its significance is to be seen in the fact that it turned out, somehow, to be adaptive, or to be somehow connected with something that is adaptive. But if we take for granted a Christian explanatory background, we might come up with an entirely different

1. Even Paul, after all, warns against those who "are always learning but never arrive at a knowledge of the truth" (2 Tim. 3:7).

view. To turn to still another example, can a Christian psychologist take account of the reality of sin in order to understand aggression and hate in all their forms?

When a Christian philosopher addresses a given philosophical question — e.g. what is the nature of knowledge, or of moral obligation, or of natural law? — can she properly appeal to what she knows as a Christian? Can a Christian economist properly take account of what he knows about human nature in trying to understand the phenomena addressed by economics? Should someone who aims to think scientifically, in a scholarly way, about the origin of the human race, appeal to the premise that God has created life generally, and us specifically? That will make a difference, as I argued last time, as to the way in which one estimates the probability or likelihood of the theory of universal common ancestry, not to mention claims to the effect that life arose in the first place by way of nothing more than the workings of the laws of physics and chemistry. Similar questions arise, of all places, even in theology. It is widely argued, for example, that a Christian Scripture scholar should not appeal to her theological beliefs — that Jesus was the divine son of God, for example — in working at Scripture scholarship; to do so would be to sacrifice detachment and objectivity.²

II. The Argument

Now most Reformed thinkers have held that the Christian scholar may indeed appeal to what she knows as a Christian. In fact she must. For the Christian community needs answers to these questions, and needs answers, naturally enough, that take into account *all* that we know, *everything* that is relevant to the question at hand. Take Scripture scholarship for example: here there are questions to which we need answers. There are apparent eyewitness accounts of the appearance of the risen Lord; are these really what they seem to be, or were they slipped in by the early church intent on making a theological or political point? Here, clearly enough, what you

2. See, for example, Barnabas Lindars: "The religious literature of the ancient world is full of miracle stories, and we cannot believe them all. It is not open to a scholar to decide that, just because he is a believing Christian, he will accept all the Gospel miracles at their face value, but at the same time he will repudiate miracles attributed to Isis. All such accounts have to be scrutinized with equal detachment" (*Theology*, March, 1986, p. 91).

think of Christ will be crucially relevant. Christians think that he was in fact the incarnate second person of the Trinity. If so, however, principles that may be quite acceptable in trying to decide what some merely human person would have said and done may be wholly off the mark when it is Christ of whom we speak. So if we do Scripture scholarship 'from below,' as they say, then we might get wildly wrong answers. Here what the Christian community needs is scholarship that takes into account *all* that we know, including what we know as Christians. Perhaps it might be sort of an interesting exercise or puzzle to try to see what we would think about Scripture, if we *didn't* think that Jesus Christ was divine. But in the first place it isn't necessary for us *Christians* to do that; there are plenty of others who don't think Jesus was divine, and they are only too happy to tell us what they think about Scripture. And second, the interest of the project, surely, is limited at best. It would be a bit like painting your house with a toothbrush, or mowing your lawn with a nail scissors, or emptying Reeds Lake with a coffee cup: challenging, no doubt, but hardly worth the effort.

So here we need scholarship that starts from all that we know, including what we know as Christians. But the same goes for the Christian scholar in other areas. If we need to understand love, or knowledge, or aggression, or our sense of beauty, or humor, or our moral sense, or our origins, or a thousand other things — if it is important to our intellectual and spiritual health to understand these things, then what we must do, obviously enough, is use *all* that we know, not just some limited segment of it. Why should we be buffaloed (or cowed) into trying to understand these things from a naturalistic perspective? So the central argument here is simplicity itself: as Christians we need and want answers to the sorts of questions that arise in the theoretical and interpretative disciplines; in an enormous number of such cases, what we know as Christians is crucially relevant to coming to a proper understanding; therefore we Christians should pursue these disciplines from a specifically Christian perspective.

III. Two Objections

This line of argument seems obvious and uncontroversial. Oddly enough, however, it has been widely controverted, even among Christians; and even those who endorse it often seem to pay it little more than lip service. Why should that be so? In what follows I want to address two objections to or

reservations about this project of Christian scholarship. First, there is the idea that what we believe as Christians is something we *believe*, and believe by faith. But then it is a matter of faith, not knowledge. On the other hand, scholarship, science, *Wissenschaft* (*Wissenschaft*, if you like), is clearly a matter of knowledge; here faith is not relevant. We have science only if we have knowledge; but if in our practice of the discipline in question we rely essentially upon what we accept by faith, then the result will be faith rather than knowledge. And second, even if the first objection is mistaken — even if specifically Christian scholarship achieves knowledge rather than faith — the result of such an enterprise will be *theology* — theology rather than psychology, economics, sociology, philosophy, or whatever. This sort of suggestion is often made by our Catholic and Thomist colleagues: it is a fine thing to understand knowledge or love or aggression from a Christian perspective, but to do so is to do theology rather than philosophy or psychology. No doubt a good thing, but no substitute for the scientific understanding in question.

A. Faith vs. Knowledge

Suppose we take up these objections one at a time and in order. Is it true that if we use the deliverances of the faith in a cognitive enterprise — if, for example, we appeal to them as premises or accept them as explanatory background conditions — then the result is not knowledge but faith? How can we answer this question? Clearly, what we need first of all is some idea of what knowledge is; here we need a brief course in epistemology. So let's begin. First, everyone agrees that what is known must be true; you can't sensibly claim that Paul knows something but then go on to add that what he knows is false. (Of course we sometimes say something like "As any good liberal theologian knows, there is no such thing as absolute truth"; but that is an ironic use of the term.) So if you know something, it follows that it's true. But truth is not enough for knowledge: you can have a true belief that does not constitute knowledge. Perhaps you make a lucky guess as to which way the stock market will go tomorrow; if it really is just a guess, then it isn't knowledge, even if it turns out to be true. What *else* is needed for knowledge? Call this 'the problem of the *Theaetetus*'; it first appears in Plato's dialogue by that name and has been with us ever since. (Here we have another confirmation of Whitehead's remark that philoso-

phy is a series of footnotes to Plato.) Suppose we use the term 'warrant' to refer to whatever it is that is needed in addition to true belief to have knowledge, whatever it is that distinguishes knowledge from mere true belief. Then our question is: what is warrant?

There are three views on this topic nowadays (and in our part of the world). First, there is the view dominant since the beginnings of modern philosophy. It is hard to think of a good name for this view: 'Classical Deontologism' (from the Greek word 'deon' for duty or obligation) is accurate but too forbidding. I'll use it anyway. This view goes back all the way to Descartes and Locke; its principal contemporary representative is Professor Roderick Chisholm (the dean of American epistemologists) from Brown University. The view starts from the idea that there are intellectual duties or obligations; duties to regulate our beliefs in such a way as to come into the right relationship to truth. Thus Locke:

Faith is nothing but a firm assent of the mind: which if it be regulated, as is our duty, cannot be afforded to anything, but upon good reason; and so cannot be opposite to it. He that believes, without having any reason for believing, may be in love with his own fancies; but neither seeks truth as he ought, nor pays the obedience due his maker, who would have him use those discerning faculties he has given him, to keep him out of mistake and error. He that does not this to the best of his power, however he sometimes lights on truth, is in the right but by chance; and I know not whether the luckiness of the accident will excuse the irregularity of his proceeding. This at least is certain, that he must be accountable for whatever mistakes he runs into: whereas he that makes use of the light and faculties God has given him, and seeks sincerely to discover truth, by those helps and abilities he has, may have this satisfaction in doing his duty as a rational creature, that though he should miss truth, he will not miss the reward of it. For he governs his assent right, and places it as he should, who in any case or matter whatsoever, believes or disbelieves, according as reason directs him. He that does otherwise, transgresses against his own light, and misuses those faculties, which were given him. . . . (*Essay* IV, xvii, 24)

This passage calls for much by way of comment; I call your attention only to the repeated suggestion that we have *duties* and *obligations* with respect to the regulation of our belief or assent. "He that does not believe in

accord with reason," says Locke, "transgresses against his own light and misuses those faculties that were given him by God." And now the first idea as to what warrant is: warrant essentially involves conforming to intellectual duties. A belief has warrant for you if in accepting it you go contrary to no intellectual obligations. More broadly, your duty, as a rational being, a being capable of understanding and belief, is to try to get into the right relation with the truth; and a proposition has warrant for you if believing it is a good way to satisfy those intellectual duties.

But this is clearly unacceptable; satisfying your duty is surely not enough, together with truth, for knowledge. A person may be doing his level best, may be satisfying his intellectual obligations *in excelsis*; but his beliefs may still have very little by way of warrant. Descartes mentions "certain persons, devoid of sense, whose cerebella are so troubled and clouded by the violent vapors of black bile, that they . . . imagine that they have an earthenware head or are nothing but pumpkins or are made of glass." But even a madman may be trying his best to get into the right relation to the truth; it's just that, by virtue of cognitive malfunction, he can't manage much success. He may be conforming to all his intellectual obligations; his problem is disorder or sickness rather than dereliction of duty. If I am mad, intellectually disordered, then no matter how conscientious I am about my intellectual duties in forming my beliefs, those beliefs may still have no warrant for me. Imagine that Paul suffers from a rare but interesting disorder: whenever his visual experience is like ours when we see a tree, he forms the belief that what he sees is an elephant in disguise. That belief under those circumstances seems as obvious to him as that $2 + 1 = 3$. He doesn't know that he is abnormal, and his lack of awareness is in no way due to flouting his epistemic duty. Indeed, Paul is unusually dutiful, unusually concerned about fulfilling his epistemic duties; fulfilling these duties is the main passion of his life. Then, surely, Paul may be doing his epistemic duty *in excelsis* in believing as he does; but the proposition in question has little by way of warrant for him. Paul is beyond reproach; he does his duty as he sees it. He is deontologically justified, and more; for in working as hard as he does to achieve epistemic excellence, he performs works of epistemic supererogation. But that is not sufficient for warrant. Paul can be ever so conscientious about his epistemic duties, and still, because of cognitive malfunction, be such that his beliefs have very little warrant. So this view is clearly mistaken.

The second view: what makes for warrant is your belief's being *coherent* with some other body of beliefs — the rest of what you believe, for exam-

ple. No doubt you believe that London, England, is larger than London, Ontario; if this belief fits in well enough, coheres well enough with the rest of what you know, then it has warrant for you; and if it is true as well, then you know it. This view, naturally enough, is called coherentism. It has always been bedeviled by a tough problem: what is this coherence, this fitting in? Mere logical consistency isn't sufficient for coherence, but then what more is required? I think we can easily see, however, that coherence isn't enough for warrant no matter *how* you think of it. For coherence is a relation just among beliefs; but even if your beliefs are related to each other in the right way, even if they are splendidly coherent, you might still fail to have knowledge; your beliefs might not be related in the right way to your *experience*. Consider the Case of the Epistemically Inflexible Climber. Rick is climbing Guide's Wall, on Storm Point in the Grand Tetons; having just led the difficult next to last pitch, he is seated on a comfortable ledge, bringing his partner up. He believes that Cascade Canyon is down to his left, that the cliffs of Mt. Owen are directly in front of him, that there is a hawk gliding in lazy circles 200 feet below his feet, that he is wearing his new Fire rock shoes, and so on. His beliefs, we may add, are coherent. Now imagine that Rick is struck by a wayward burst of high energy cosmic radiation. This causes his beliefs to become fixed, no longer responsive to changes in experience. At the cost of considerable effort his partner gets him down the Wall, and, in a desperate last ditch attempt at therapy, takes him to the opera in Jackson, where the New York Metropolitan Opera on tour is performing "La Bohème" (with Pavarotti singing the tenor lead). Rick is appeared to in the same way as everyone else there; he is inundated by wave after wave of golden sound. Sadly enough, this effort at therapy fails; his beliefs remain fixed and wholly unresponsive to his experience; he still believes that he is on the belay ledge at the top of the next to last pitch of Guide's Wall, that Cascade Canyon is down to his left, that there is a hawk sailing in lazy circles 200 feet below him, that he is wearing his new Fire rock shoes, and so on. Furthermore, since he believes the very same things he believed when seated on the ledge, his beliefs are coherent. But surely they have little or no warrant for him. The reason is cognitive malfunction; his beliefs are not appropriately responsive to experience. Clearly, then, coherence is not sufficient for positive epistemic status.

According to the third view, warrant is a matter of *reliability*. If your belief is produced by a reliable faculty, or cognitive process, or belief-producing mechanism, then you have warrant; if it is also true, then it consti-

tures knowledge. I believe that this account of warrant is closer to the truth than the other two: nevertheless it is still mistaken. Return to Rick on Guide's Wall; perhaps the burst of high energy radiation causes the following sort of malfunction: whenever he hears the word 'prime' — as in 'The prime rate has gone down,' or 'you must prime the pump before it will work,' or 'that is certainly a piece of prime real estate,' or 'the prime minister of Great Britain is no friend of the universities' — whenever he hears the word 'prime,' he forms the belief, about some randomly selected number greater than 100, that it is not prime (i.e., that it is divisible by some number other than 1 and itself). He can't see that the number in question isn't prime; he simply finds himself believing it. Then his views, arising in malfunction as they do, have little by way of warrant for him. Nonetheless, since the vast majority of numbers greater than 100 are indeed nonprime, the belief is produced by a reliable cognitive process.

So none of the three current views seems right. I wish to suggest a fourth, one that fits in well with the fact that we have been created by God, but also seems correct in its own right. And the first thing to see is that (on any Christian or theistic view of the matter) we human beings, like automobiles and linear accelerators, have indeed been created and designed — by God. Further, we have been created by him *in his own image*; in certain crucial respects we resemble him. Now God is an actor, an agent, a creator: one who chooses certain ends and takes action to accomplish them. God is therefore a *practical* being. But he is also an *intellectual* or *intellecting* being. He holds beliefs; he has knowledge. Indeed, he has the maximal degree of knowledge; he knows every truth and believes no falsehoods.

In setting out to create human beings in his image, then, God set out to create them in such a way that they could reflect something of his capacity to grasp concepts and hold beliefs. Furthermore, as the whole of the Christian tradition suggests, his aim was to create them in such a way that they could reflect something of his capacity for holding *true* beliefs, for attaining *knowledge*. This has been the nearly unanimous consensus of the Christian tradition.³ The great bulk of the tradition has seen our imaging

3. It is worth noting, however, that it isn't inevitable. God's aim in creating us with the complicated, highly articulated establishment of faculties we have could have been something quite different; in creating us with these faculties he could have been aiming us, not at truth, but at something of some other sort — survival, for example, or a

God in terms (among other things) of *knowledge*: knowledge of ourselves, of God himself, and of the world in which he has placed us; and here I shall take for granted this traditional understanding of the *imago dei*.

God has therefore created us with cognitive faculties designed to enable us to achieve true beliefs with respect to a wide variety of propositions — propositions about our immediate environment, about our own interior lives, about the thoughts and experiences of other persons, about our universe at large, about right and wrong — and about himself. These faculties are enormously complex and articulate; they work with great subtlety. They function in such a way that under the appropriate circumstances we form the appropriate belief. More exactly, the appropriate belief is *formed in us*; in the typical case we do not *decide* to hold or form the belief in question, but simply find ourselves with it. Upon being appeared to in the familiar way, I find myself holding the belief that there is a large tree before me; upon being asked what I had for breakfast, I reflect for a moment and then find myself with the belief that what I had was eggs on toast. In these and other cases I do not decide what to believe; I don't total up the evidence (I'm being appeared to redly; on most occasions when thus appeared to I am in the presence of something red; so most probably in this case I am) and make a decision as to what seems best supported; I simply find myself believing. Of course in *some* cases I may go through such a procedure. For example, I may try to assess the alleged evidence in favor of the theory that human life evolved by means of the mechanisms of random genetic mutation and natural selection from unicellular life (which itself arose by substantially similar random mechanical processes from nonliving material); I may try to determine whether the evidence is in fact compelling or, more modestly, such as to make the theory plausible. Then I may go through a procedure of that sort. Even in this sort of case I still don't really *decide* anything; I simply call the relevant evidence to mind, try in some way to weigh it up, and find myself with the appropriate belief. But in more typical and less theoretical cases of belief formation nothing like this is involved.

God has therefore created us with an astonishingly complex and subtle establishment of cognitive faculties. These faculties produce beliefs on capacity to appreciate art, poetry, beauty in nature, or an ability to stand in certain relationships with each other and with him. In C. S. Lewis's novel *Out of the Silent Planet* the creatures on Mars are of several different types displaying several different kinds of cognitive excellences: some are particularly suited to scientific endeavors, some to poetry and art, and some to interpersonal sensitivity.

an enormously wide variety of topics — our everyday external environment, the thoughts and feelings of others, our own internal life (someone's internal musings and soliloquies can occupy an entire novel), the past, mathematics, science, right and wrong, what is necessary and possible, our relationships with God himself, and a host of other topics. They work with great subtlety to produce beliefs of many different degrees of strength — ranging from the merest inclination to believe to absolute dead certainty. Our beliefs and the strength with which we hold them, furthermore, are delicately responsive to changes in experience — to what people tell us, to perceptual experience, to what we read, to further reflection, and so on.

Now: how shall we think of warrant from this point of view? Note first that the problems with the other views could be brought out by considering the possibility of cognitive malfunction, of things not working right, not working the way they ought to. So here is a natural first approximation to a better view of warrant: a belief has warrant for a person only if his faculties are *working properly*, working the way they ought to work, working the way they were designed to work (working the way God designed them to work), in producing and sustaining the belief in question. I therefore suggest that a necessary condition of warrant is that one's cognitive equipment, one's belief forming and belief sustaining apparatus, be free of cognitive malfunction. It must be functioning in the way it was designed to function by the being who designed and created us — God himself. Initially, then, a belief has warrant, for me, to the degree that my faculties are functioning properly in producing and sustaining that belief, and my faculties are working properly if they are working in the way they were designed to work by God. And suppose we add that under these conditions of proper function, the more firmly you believe a proposition, the more warrant it has for you; and if you believe it firmly enough, it will have enough warrant for knowledge.

B. The Twin Pillars

There is much more to be said here: many qualifications and additions to the simple original picture are needed.⁴ Nonetheless I think it is the right

4. For fuller accounts, see my "Justification and Theism," *Faith and Philosophy*, October, 1987; "Positive Epistemic Status and Proper Function," in *Philosophical Perspectives*,

basic picture: it is a better picture, I think, than any of its rivals, and it grows naturally out of the Christian conviction that we have been created by God. And now suppose we return to the objection that precipitated this entire epistemological excursus. That claim, you will recall, is that what we believe by faith, we *believe* rather than know. But then a discipline that essentially employs the deliverances of faith will itself deliver faith rather than knowledge. Science and scholarship, on the other hand (so the objection goes), involve knowledge, not faith; so if we pursue the scholarly disciplines in a way that essentially depends upon faith, we may have something valuable, but we won't have science or scholarship.

From our present perspective on knowledge and warrant, however, there is a prior question: why suppose that what I believe by faith cannot also constitute knowledge? That isn't just obvious or self-evident, after all. There are two important points here. First, the objector simply assumes without argument, that belief in God — belief that there is such a person as God — is a matter of faith rather than reason. But is he right? The difference between faith and reason, briefly put, is that reason is part of our original created noetic endowment, the cognitive powers and faculties we have just by way of being human beings. Faith, on the other hand, is a special cognitive response to a special revelation on the part of God; what we believe by faith is what the Lord teaches (in Scripture and through the church) about himself and his plan for our salvation. But then what about the belief that there really is such a person as God? Is that a matter of faith or a matter of reason? Well, what is the Reformed view on this matter? According to John Calvin, as good a Calvinist as any, there is a knowledge of God that is part of our original created endowment. As he says,

There is within the human mind, and indeed by natural instinct, an awareness of divinity. This we take to be beyond controversy. To prevent anyone from taking refuge in the pretense of ignorance, God himself has implanted in all men a certain understanding of his divine majesty. Ever renewing its memory, he repeatedly sheds fresh drops. Since, therefore, men one and all perceived that there is a God and that he is their Maker, they are condemned by their own testimony because they have failed to honor him and to consecrate their lives to his

2; *Epistemology*, 1988, ed. James Tomberlin (Arcascadero, California: Ridgeview Publishing Co., 1988); and *Warrant* (not yet committed for publication).

will . . . therefore, since from the beginning of the world there has been no region, no city, in short, no household, that could do without religion, there lies in this a tacit confession of a sense of deity inscribed in the hearts of all.

Indeed, the perversity of the impious, who though they struggle furiously are unable to extricate themselves from the fear of God, is abundant testimony that this conviction, namely, that there is some God, is naturally inborn in all, and is fixed deep within, as it were in the very marrow. . . . From this we conclude that it is not a doctrine that must first be learned in school, but one of which each of us is master from his mother's womb and which nature itself permits no one to forget. . . .

Lest anyone, then, be excluded from access to happiness, he not only sowed in men's minds that seed of religion of which we have spoken but revealed himself and daily discloses himself in the whole workmanship of the universe. As a consequence, men cannot open their eyes without being compelled to see him.⁵

So according to Calvin, there is a natural knowledge of God. In a wide variety of circumstances — upon beholding the starry heavens above, when in danger, upon seeing that we have done something deeply wrong — we human beings find ourselves aware of God's presence, realizing that we owe him obedience and allegiance. We praise him for his glory, or ask for his help, or see him as disapproving. This is not a knowledge of God that depends upon regeneration or faith; it is a knowledge we have by virtue of our created nature. Of course it has been spoiled, suppressed, damaged by sin. We don't know God the way we would if there were no sin; if it weren't for sin, Calvin thinks, we would all believe in God with the same spontaneous and simple trust with which we believe in other human persons, our own existence, the past, and so on. Still, we do have this natural knowledge.

So the first point is that belief in God is not necessarily a matter of faith; there is a natural apprehension of God, and belief in God produced by that mechanism or cognitive process — suppose we follow Calvin and call it the *Sensus Divinitatis* — is produced by reason, not by faith. Of course this natural knowledge isn't nearly sufficient for salvation. In the believer,

5. *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, trans. Ford Lewis Battles (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1960), Book I, ch. iii, sec. i.

furthermore (and it is presumably the believer who will be engaged in the project of Christian scholarship), it isn't a *merely* natural knowledge; it is a natural knowledge qualified and corrected by faith, absorbed by and taken up into faith. The believer accepts God's promises; she therefore knows vastly more about God than is to be had by the workings of the *Sensus Divinitatis* alone. But then (and here I come to the second important point) how does the believer come to believe those things? According to Calvin, once more showing his Reformed colors, it is by virtue of the internal testimony of the Holy Spirit. The believer doesn't just *guess* at these matters, and it isn't just by accident that she holds the views she does. Rather, there is a cognitive process of a quite different sort occurring in her:

Since for unbelieving men religion seems to stand by opinion alone, they, in order not to believe anything foolishly or lightly, both wish and demand rational proof that Moses and the prophets spoke divinely. But I reply: the testimony of the Spirit is more excellent than all reason. For as God alone is a fit witness of himself in his Word, so also the Word will not find acceptance in men's hearts before it is sealed by the inward testimony of the Spirit. The same Spirit, therefore, who has spoken through the mouths of the prophets must penetrate into our hearts to persuade us that they faithfully proclaimed what had been divinely commanded.⁶

So says John Calvin; and so says any Reformed Christian and most other Christians as well. There is such a thing as the testimony of the Holy Spirit; by virtue of that testimony we come to believe what the Scriptures teach. So to recapitulate, there is an original, increated, natural knowledge of God. That knowledge has been spoiled and distorted, overlaid and suppressed by sin; it has been obscured by the smoke of our wrongdoing, as Anselm said. In the believer, it is restored, deepened, broadened by virtue of the testimony of the Holy Spirit.

And now return, once more, to the objection: the claim that if we employ what we believe as Christians in doing scholarship, then the result won't be knowledge but only faith. Clearly the objector is jumping to conclusions. For why suppose that if a belief of mine is a deliverance of faith, it

6. Book I, ch. vii, sec. iv.

can't also be something I know, a case of knowledge? Why suppose that faith and knowledge are mutually exclusive? Calvin, again, does not:

... faith consists in the knowledge of God and Christ.⁷

Now we shall possess a right definition of faith if we call it a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit.⁸

In understanding faith it is not merely a question of knowing that God exists, but also — and this especially — of knowing what is his will toward us. For it is not so much our concern to know who he is in himself, as what he wills to be toward us.⁹

Now therefore, we hold faith to be a knowledge of God's will toward us, perceived from his Word.¹⁰

According to Calvin, faith is a kind or variety of knowledge; faith and knowledge are not opposed, for faith itself *is* knowledge. It is essentially a knowledge of God's will towards us, that is, of his hatred of sin and his plan of salvation for us.

Calvin's claims here fit nicely into the perspective on knowledge I outlined a moment ago. The *Sensus Divinitatis* and the testimony of the Holy Spirit are, of course, sources of belief, belief producing processes or mechanisms, as we might say; in this regard they are just like memory, perception, and other belief producing systems. Their purpose is to enable us to form true beliefs we wouldn't otherwise form. God provides them in order to enable us to have true beliefs on these extremely important topics. The beliefs they produce, furthermore, are in fact true, and they are often held with very considerable firmness. But then it follows, on the above account of knowledge, that they do indeed sometimes constitute knowledge. If so, however, reasoning from them in doing scholarship won't have the

7. Book III, ch. II, sec. iii.

8. Book III, ch. II, sec. vii.

9. Book III, ch. II, sec. vi.

10. Book III, ch. II, sec. vi.

slightest tendency to bring it about that the result of doing scholarship in that way is not knowledge. This objection, therefore, fails.

I turn to the other objection: the complaint that if as a scholar you start from what you know by way of faith, then your results will really be *theology* rather than philosophy or psychology or sociology or whatever. If you start from theological convictions in a given area — in understanding love, or humor, or aggression, for example — then any conclusions you come to will be dependent upon theological convictions and will themselves, in consequence, be theology. Theology in, theology out, as we may say, drawing on the computer *literati*. And while a theological understanding of these phenomena may indeed be desirable or necessary, it is still the-ology; it isn't psychology, or sociology or whatever. To have the latter, we must keep ourselves pure and unspotted from theology.

This is a common view; I have heard it urged at Calvin, and it is perhaps something like a semi-official position of our Catholic brothers and sisters. But here we must note that there are two quite different Christian traditions on this point: call them the Augustinian and Thomist traditions. According to the latter, there is theology, and there are the other sciences. The nontheological sciences are the province of reason; they contain what we can know by natural reason unaided by faith or special revelation. They concern general revelation as opposed to special revelation; and in pursuing them it is illegitimate to appeal to theology or to what one knows by way of faith. Of course the reason isn't that we don't need to know what we know by faith; theology is both important and necessary. But we also need the nontheological disciplines. According to the Augustinian tradition, by contrast, what we need and want, in studying a given area, is the best total understanding we can get: the question whether that best understanding should be called 'theology' on the one hand, or 'sociology' or 'psychology' or 'philosophy' on the other, is of secondary interest.

Well, *why* does the Thomist think it is important to have a psychology, for example, that is unspotted by theology? What is the value of such science, and why should we expend a portion of our intellectual resources on it? (After all, it is not as if the latter are unlimited.) The Thomist will answer that what we know by way of reason has for us an epistemic or epistemological or cognitive *advantage* over what we know by way of faith. What we grasp by faith, we know by way of *testimony*; we take it on the authority of someone else. If that someone else is God, then the belief in question is backed up by high authority indeed; objectively speaking, fur-

thermore, it is also maximally certain. Still, we don't really *know* what we take on trust, what we take someone else's word for, even if that someone else is God himself. Or, if we say that we *do* know it, we don't have the highest and best form of knowledge of it. Consider, for example, the Pythagorean Theorem, or the proposition that there is no set of all sets, or Gödel's Theorem on the incompleteness of arithmetic, and consider two ways of believing it. In the first way, you believe it on the authority of your favorite mathematician, for example, who, however confused and unreliable he may be on other topics, is authoritative on ones like these. Then compare believing it by way of grasping, understanding the proof, and seeing for yourself that the theorem is not only true, but couldn't possibly be false. It makes good sense to say, with the Thomist, that in the second case the knowledge you have of that truth is better, more valuable, a higher kind of knowledge than in the first case. It is more like God's knowledge — God, after all, never has to take anybody's word for anything.

This reply has a sort of appeal, but I think the appeal is limited. For in most of the sciences we don't at all have the sort of knowledge we have of the Pythagorean Theorem or the Fundamental Theorem of the Calculus; we don't have anything like the sort of certainty we have in elementary logic and mathematics. Consider physics, for example. First, most of us who know anything about physics know what we know by way of taking someone else's word for it. How do I know that the velocity of light in a vacuum is 186,000 miles per second? I read it in a physics text, or heard it in a physics class, or saw it in an article in *Scientific American*. I certainly didn't measure the velocity of light myself, and I daresay the same is true for you. How do I know that there are experiments that favor relativity theory over Newtonian mechanics? The same way; I learned it in a physics class. I didn't myself perform those experiments involving muon decay or the rapid transport of cesium clocks. Indeed, the same goes for the physicists at Calvin: so far as I know, they haven't performed those experiments either; no doubt they read about them in a physics journal, and took the author's word for what he said. As a matter of fact, even those who *did* perform the experiments had to take a great deal on the authority of others: that the velocity of the plane transporting the cesium clock was in fact so and so, that the plane flew the relevant distance and the right course, and so on. Anyone who makes an advance in physics and discovers something new obviously takes an enormous amount on the say so of others — for example, how the earlier experiments relevant to his project turned out. Ac-

ording to the Thomist, the difference in noetic value between theology and the nontheological sciences is said to be that in the former we must rely on the testimony of others (even if on such an other as God himself), while in the latter we have the level of knowledge that goes with simply seeing that some proposition is true. This difference, however, is a difference that applies very narrowly — only to elementary mathematics and logic, and perhaps to such obvious perceptual beliefs as that, e.g., the pointer is now between the 4 and the 5 on the dial.

My sympathies, therefore, lie with the Augustinian view; I am at best suspicious of the epistemic benefits claimed on behalf of science unaided by theology. But perhaps there is less separation here than meets the eye: I wish to make an irenic proposal. Think again about those theoretical or interpretative sciences: philosophy, anthropology, psychology, sociology, economics, and others. The best way to do these sciences, says the Augustinian, is to use all that we know, including what we know by way of faith or revelation; according to the Thomist the way to proceed is to bracket what we know by faith and appeal only to premises we know by reason. But Thomist and Augustinian agree that the Christian community badly needs that fuller understanding of these phenomena. So suppose we think of the matter as follows. There are the deliverances of faith: call them 'F'; there is also the result of thinking about the subject matter of science, appealing to the deliverances of faith as well as to the deliverances of reason: call that 'FS.' Thomist and Augustinian concur that we need FS; but the Thomist adds that FS is really theology rather than sociology or psychology or whatever. But now consider the conditional or hypothetical proposition *if F then FS*: the proposition that says what the implications of the faith are for the discipline in question. Perhaps this proposition *if F then FS* is best thought of as a large number of propositions, each explicating the bearing of the faith on some part of the discipline in question — or perhaps we should think of it as one enormously long proposition. Either way, both parties to the discussion will agree that this proposition is not *itself* among the deliverances of faith; we learn it, or know it, by reason, not by faith. It is by reason rather than faith that we see what the bearing of the faith is on psychology; it is by reason rather than faith that we see how the scriptural teaching on love, or sin, or morality bears on what we study in psychology or anthropology or sociology.

So both sides agree, in fact, insist that we, the Christian community, need to know how the faith bears on these areas. And both agree that work-

ing at these conditionals is a matter, not of faith and theology, but of reason and the relevant science. Further, both agree that we Christians will *assert* the consequents of these conditionals; that is, we will assert the result of seeing how faith applies to the domain in question. The two sides differ only in this: according to the Thomist, but not the Augustinian, when you assert the consequent of the conditional you are really doing theology rather than the science in question. Well, why shouldn't the Augustinian peaceably concede the point, at least for present purposes? Perhaps it doesn't greatly matter whether we say that asserting those consequents is theology, on the one hand, or philosophy, psychology or economics or whatever on the other. What *is* of great importance, at present, is that we work at discovering the conditionals. And working at those conditionals is not doing theology: it clearly falls within the domain of the nontheological disciplines involved. It is not the theologian who is most appropriately trained and qualified for work on these conditionals; it is instead the psychologist, historian, biologist, economist, sociologist, literary critic, and so on. Here Augustinian and Thomist can agree. They can agree on the importance, the enormous importance of this work for the spiritual and intellectual health of the Christian community, and they can agree that in working at these conditionals we are doing nontheological science rather than theology.

By way of conclusion, then: I wish to add my voice to the voices of those who call for Christian scholarship. This scholarship has at least two important parts: the criticism I mentioned last time, but also the positive application of what we know by faith to the central areas of science and scholarship. We all realize, of course, that both of these, but in particular the second, are matters of uncommon difficulty. We Christians who go on to become professional scientists and scholars attend 20th-century graduate schools and universities (we don't have much by way of an alternative). But the kind of scholarship of which I speak gets short shrift at these universities. Questions about the bearing of Christianity on economics or psychology or literary theory are not high on the agenda there. At the major universities, these topics are not given pride of place; they are given no place at all. There are no courses in psychology or sociology at Oxford entitled "Aggression and the Christian View of Man." At Yale they don't teach a course called "Deconstruction from a Christian Perspective" (and not because they aren't interested in deconstruction). It is very difficult to write a dissertation on topics such as these. They don't form a part of the ordinary

day to day work done in these disciplines in the major universities; the entire structure of contemporary university life is such as to discourage serious work on them. A student who wants to think seriously about these topics is very much on her own; more than that, she is likely to be thought weird, peculiar, marginal, out of the mainstream. Scholarship is an intensely social activity; we learn our craft from our elders and mentors; but we can't learn how to do Christian scholarship from our mentors at these universities. That is why it is of first importance that there be Christian universities, institutions where these questions do take pride of place, and where a student can think about the bearing of Christianity on her disciplines in a regular and institutionally sanctioned way.

So the Christian community needs to work on these questions. We need to work on them; for the Reformed community is perhaps uniquely well-equipped by way of tradition and training to offer leadership here. That means that a genuinely serious responsibility falls squarely on our shoulders. I say we must get on with it. I commend to you this task of Christian scholarship.