

Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics*

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The chapter divisions of the original do not appear in the contents or text of the study edition. Their names, however, do appear on the back of each fascicle as a part of the synopsis comparing the first edition and the study edition, where they identify the latter's groupings of numbered "paragraphs" (§) into fascicles. Page numbers from the first edition are given in the margins of the study edition, and a note in I.1 encourages continuing to use them for references to this work.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE WORD OF GOD

Volume I

INTRODUCTION

I, Part 1

§ 1. THE TASK OF DOGMATICS

I.1, 3

As a theological discipline dogmatics is the scientific self-examination of the Christian Church with respect to the content of its distinctive talk about God.

Ah! The language of the church needs to be examined, and it is the task of theology so to examine it! The language of the church is sometimes better, sometimes worse. What the church says about God and his Christ is sometimes more faithful, sometimes less faithful. All sermons, all creeds, all pronouncements needed to be criticized, and it is the duty of theology so to do. And there are standards by which such examination is to be conducted.

We are not free in the church to say anything just because we like it. We are not free to preach in any old way we want. We are not free to fashion God and his Christ in our own image. We are not free to invent the gospel. Instead, we are bound to the Word of God. It is our duty to frame our proclamation in conformity with it.

Think what non-sense and worse in the church could be avoided by paying attention to this one sentence summary!

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| 1. The Church, Theology, Science | I.1, 3 |
| 2. Dogmatics as an Enquiry | I.1, 11 |
| 3. Dogmatics as an Act of Faith | I.1, 17 |

§ 2. THE TASK OF PROLEGOMENA TO DOGMATICS

I.1, 25

Prolegomena to dogmatics is our name for the introductory part of dogmatics in which our concern is to understand its particular way to knowledge.

Ah! Echoes of John Calvin already. You will remember that Calvin defined faith as *knowledge*:

“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.” (*Institutes*, 3.2.7, emphasis added)

The Christian faith is not simply a matter of feeling or personal opinion. It is a matter of *knowledge*! And therefore theology, as a study of that faith, has to do with knowledge.

1. The Necessity of Dogmatic Prolegomena

I.1, 25

We believe in the forgiveness of sin! By the freely given promise in Christ and the work of the Holy Spirit, we believe in the forgiveness of sin. Therefore we cannot possibly take sin as seriously as we do forgiveness. We cannot take unbelief as seriously as we do faith.

It occurs to me that this dismissal of planned apologetics might be part of the reason that some Christians who understand themselves as Evangelicals reject Barth. There are non-denominational seminaries in this country where courses are taught in apologetics and, perhaps, where there are departments of apologetics. Books are being written of apologetics, trying to argue to the world how good, useful, and true the Christian faith is. But do not such efforts continue, as Barth pointed out, to take unbelief more seriously than it deserves?

Toleration, the great high virtue of the day in which we live, is not an expression or outgrowth of Christian faith but an abandonment of faith, an abandonment of love, and therefore an act of unbelief! Toleration is not an act of caring for the other but an act of abandoning the other. Toleration does not foster fellowship but is itself a breach in fellowship.

2. The Possibility of Dogmatic Prolegomena

I.1, 36

CHAPTER 1. THE WORD OF GOD AS THE CRITERION OF DOGMATICS

§ 3. CHURCH PROCLAMATION AS THE MATERIAL OF DOGMATICS

I.1, 47

Talk about God in the Church seeks to be proclamation to the extent that in the form of preaching and sacrament it is directed to man with the claim and expectation that in accordance with its commission it has to speak to him the Word

of God to be heard in faith. Inasmuch as it is a human word in spite of this claim and expectation, it is the material of dogmatics, i.e., of the investigation of its responsibility as measured by the Word of God which it seeks to proclaim.

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| 1. Talk about God and Church Proclamation | I.1, 47 |
| 2. Dogmatics and Church Proclamation | I.1, 71 |

As a part of the Church's fear of God, the Church must avoid every attempt to evade the theological task of dogmatics.

Barth concludes with one of my favorite quotations from him, a disclaimer which he actually quotes from Ambrose: "*Non in dialectica complacuit Deo salvum facere populum suum.*" This means, if I have understood it correctly, "It has not pleased God to save his people with [theological] arguments."

§ 4. THE WORD OF GOD IN ITS THREEFOLD FORM I.1, 88

The presupposition which makes proclamation proclamation and therewith makes the Church the Church is the Word of God. This attests itself in Holy Scripture in the word of the prophets and apostles to whom it was originally and once and for all spoken by God's revelation.

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| 1. The Word of God Preached [see Chapter IV, §§ 22–24] | I.1, 88 |
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While we would think of our proclamation of the Word of God as chronologically subsequent to, and dependent upon, the prior forms of the Word of God as written and revealed, Barth takes it up first here. Proclamation has priority in that, as we have seen in previous sections, it is the task of dogmatics to examine the Church's proclamation. Thus, it is taken up first.

The presupposition of proclamation, that without which there is not and could not be any proclamation, is the Word of God. Barth makes four points about the "decisive connections" of proclamation and the Word of God (and he portrays these points as concentric circles of increasing specificity):

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| 2. The Word of God Written [see Chapter III, §§ 19–21] | I.1, 99 |
| 3. The Word of God Revealed [see Chapter II, §§ 8–18] | I.1, 111 |
| 4. The Unity of the Word of God | I.1, 120 |

§ 5. THE NATURE OF THE WORD OF GOD I.1, 125

The Word of God in all its three forms is God's speech to man. For this reason it occurs, applies and works in God's act on man. But as such it occurs in God's way which differs from all other occurrence. i.e., in the mystery of God.

1. The Question of the Nature of the Word of God I.1, 125

See pages 125-131 for note about why Barth rewrote I:1 and how he did so.

2. The Word of God as the Speech of God I.1, 132
 3. The Speech of God as the Act of God I.1, 143
 4. The Speech of God as the Mystery of God I.1, 162

§ 6. THE KNOWABILITY OF THE WORD OF GOD I.1, 187

The reality of the Word of God in all its three forms is grounded only in itself. So, too, the knowledge of it by men can consist only in its acknowledgment, and this acknowledgment can become real only through itself [i.e., it, the Word of God] and can become intelligible only in terms of itself [i.e., it, the Word of God].

If the second clause of the second sentence in boldface above were read in isolation, it would appear that the antecedent of both occurrences of “itself” would be “acknowledgment.” However, when taken in the context of the first clause of the second sentence, “itself” seems to point back to the “it” there, which in turn points back to the first sentence. That is to say, despite the structure of the second sentence, the sense of it seems to be that the use of “itself” there parallels the use of “itself” in the first sentence, and that all three occurrences have as their antecedent “the Word of God.”

1. The Question of the Knowability of the Word of God I.1, 187
 2. The Word of God and Man I.1, 190

The Word of God creates its own hearing. As preachers, we are not to dress it up, make it pretty, make it sensible or believable or practical, or even to make it lively or relevant. We are to proclaim the promises of God as accurately and as faithfully as we can. When and where God chooses, acting in and through the Holy Spirit, preaching actually becomes the Word of God proclaimed and hearing actually becomes faith. Neither of these is a human possibility. Neither is under our control. If there is anything that I have learned out of Volume I, it is that the Word of God, which is Jesus Christ, creates its own hearing. Thanks be to God!

3. The Word of God and Experience I.1, 198

Barth is not impressed with “*finitum non capax infiniti*” (the finite cannot contain the infinite) as a general philosophical statement. The particular point is, instead, that “*homo peccator non capax verbi Domini*” (sinful man cannot contain the Word of the Lord).

4. The Word of God and Faith I.1, 227

§ 7. THE WORD OF GOD, DOGMA AND DOGMATICS I.1, 248

Dogmatics is the critical question about dogma, i.e., about the Word of God in Church proclamation, or, concretely, about the agreement of the Church proclamation done and to be done by man with the revelation attested in Holy Scripture. Prolegomena to dogmatics as an understanding of its epistemological path must therefore consist in an exposition of the three forms of the Word of God as revealed, written, and preached.

1. The Problem of Dogmatics I.1, 248

Barth gives “this theology of ours” an extended name: “*theologia ektypos mediatae revelationis hominum viatorum post lapsum.*” To the extent that I understand this, it means that this theology does not have direct access to God but instead depends upon that which is mediated through revelation to fallen human beings in our present temporality.

2. Dogmatics as a Science I.1, 275

3. The Problem of Dogmatic Prolegomena I.1, 287

CHAPTER II. THE REVELATION OF GOD [see § 4.3]

PART I. THE TRIUNE GOD

§ 8. GOD IN HIS REVELATION I.1, 295

God’s Word is God Himself in His revelation. For God reveals Himself as the Lord and according to Scripture this signifies for the concept of revelation that God Himself in unimpaired unity yet also in unimpaired distinction is Revealer, Revelation, and Revealedness.

1. The Place of the Doctrine of the Trinity in Dogmatics I.1, 295

The important question for Barth is not whether God exists, or what God is, or how we know God. Even to attempt to answer those questions would be already to go in a wrong direction. Instead, there is one question, one question posed by revelation, one question alone to which we are bound and with which we have to do: Who is God? There continue to be many today who would rather start at different places, follow other questions, and thereby pursue alien answers. But is not this the question of our lives, the question of our work, and the question of the church? Who is God?

2. The Root of the Doctrine of the Trinity I.1, 304

To appeal to something outside revelation in an attempt to establish the truth of revelation would necessarily disprove the truth of revelation and expose it as a fraud. If there is a

higher standard to which we must appeal, let us listen to that higher standard, not to that which we were testing.

3. *Vestigium Trinitatis*

I.1, 333

Barth goes on to criticize Augustine and all who followed him for pursuing a knowledge of God as Trinity through the analogy of being.

Does this not also apply to preaching? Does not what Barth has written here about theology apply also to proclamation? Should we not focus upon proclaiming the promises of the gospel as given to us in revelation in the Scripture, interpreting those promises only so far as necessary, and avoiding at all costs all petty and distracting illustrations? Is this not a major point at which Barth can inform our preaching? If we believe in the power of the Word of God to create its own hearing, shouldn't we proclaim that Word boldly and plainly and not try to prop it up (which only bears witness, and necessarily so, to our underlying distress in regard to its weakness, as if it needed to be propped up) with jokes, cute stories, philosophical babbling, psychological gobbledygook, and rank emotional manipulation?

Theology works within certain boundaries. It is not free, and we as theologians are not free, to say anything it wants or we want.

§ 9. THE TRIUNITY OF GOD

I.1, 348

The God who reveals Himself according to Scripture is One in three distinctive modes of being subsisting in their mutual relations: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. It is thus that He is the Lord, i.e., the Thou who meets man's I and unites Himself to this I as the indissoluble Subject and thereby and therein reveals Himself to him as his God.

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| 1. Unity in Trinity | I.1, 348 |
| 2. Trinity in Unity | I.1, 353 |
| 3. Triunity | I.1, 368 |
| 4. The Meaning of the Doctrine of the Trinity | I.1, 375 |

§ 10. GOD THE FATHER

I.1, 384

The one God reveals Himself according to Scripture as the Creator, that is, as the Lord of our existence. As such He is God our Father because He is so antecedently in Himself as the Father of the Son.

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| 1. God as Creator | I.1, 384 |
| 2. The Eternal Father | I.1, 390 |

§ 11. GOD THE SON

I.1, 399

The one God reveals Himself according to Scripture as the Reconciler, i.e., as the Lord in the midst of our enmity towards Him. As such He is the Son of God who has come to us or the Word of God that has been spoken to us, because He is so antecedently in Himself as the Son or Word of God the Father.

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| 1. God as Reconciler | I.1, 399 |
| 2. The Eternal Son | I.1, 414 |

The single most important document in the history of the Christian church's official statements on Jesus Christ as the Son of God is what we call the Nicene Creed, particularly the second paragraph. The remainder of this section, pp. 423–447, comprises a line by line exposition of that part of the creed.

§ 12. GOD THE HOLY SPIRIT

I.1, 448

The one God reveals Himself according to Scripture as the Redeemer, i.e., as the Lord who sets us free. As such He is the Holy Spirit, by receiving whom we become the children of God, because, as the Spirit of the love of God the Father and the Son, He is so antecedently in Himself.

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| 1. God as Redeemer | I.1, 448 |
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The major themes of the freedom of God, of the word of God as event, and of human knowledge of that word and of God as acknowledgment, are all coming together again in this presentation of the Holy Spirit.

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| 2. The Eternal Spirit | I.1, 466 |
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The remainder of this section, pp. 469–489, comprises a line by line exposition of the third paragraph of what we call the Nicene Creed.

At least part of Barth's argument is, I believe, that God is in Himself as He reveals Himself to us, since otherwise it would not be God who is revealed and therefore it would not be God who is revealing. Part of this is that God is a God of truth and not of falsehood. Part of the practical result is that we are to trust that God is, as He has shown us, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit; that is to say, we do not have to look for some other "real" God hidden behind the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit as if they were only masks that hid God from us instead of revealing God to us. God does not merely appear to be Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. God is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

PART II. THE INCARNATION OF THE WORD

I, Part 2

§ 13. GOD'S FREEDOM FOR MAN

I.2, 1

According to Holy Scripture God's revelation takes place in the fact that God's Word became a man and that this man has become God's Word. The incarnation of the eternal Word, Jesus Christ, is God's revelation. In the reality of this event God proves that He is free to be our God.

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| 1. Jesus Christ the Objective Reality of Revelation | I.2, 1 |
| 2. Jesus Christ the Objective Possibility of Revelation | I.2, 25 |

§ 14. THE TIME OF REVELATION

I.2, 45

God's revelation in the event of the presence of Jesus Christ is God's time for us. It is fulfilled time in this event itself. But as the Old Testament time of expectation and as the New Testament time of recollection it is also the time of witness to this event.

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| 1. God's Time and Our Time | I.2, 45 |
| 2. The Time of Expectation | I.2, 70 |
| 3. The Time of Recollection | I.2, 101 |

§ 15. THE MYSTERY OF REVELATION

I.2, 122

The mystery of the revelation of God in Jesus Christ consists in the fact that the eternal Word of God chose, sanctified and assumed human nature and existence into oneness with Himself, in order thus, as very God and very man, to become the Word of reconciliation spoken by God to man. The sign of this mystery revealed in the resurrection of Jesus Christ is the miracle of His birth, that he was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary.

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| 1. The Problem of Christology | I.2, 122 |
| 2. Very God and Very Man | I.2, 132 |
| 3. The Miracle of Christmas | I.2, 172 |

PART III. THE OUTPOURING OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

§ 16. THE FREEDOM OF MAN FOR GOD

I.2, 203

According to Holy Scripture God's revelation occurs in our enlightenment by the Holy Spirit of God to a knowledge of His Word. The outpouring of the Holy Spirit is God's revelation. In the reality of this event consists our freedom to be the children of God and to know and love and praise Him in His revelation.

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| 1. The Holy Spirit and the Subjective Reality of Revelation | I.2, 203 |
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2. The Holy Spirit and the Subjective Possibility of Revelation	I.2, 242
§ 17. THE REVELATION OF GOD AS THE ABOLITION OF RELIGION	I.2, 280

The revelation of God in the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is the judging but also reconciling presence of God in the world of human religion, that is, in the realm of man's attempts to justify and to sanctify himself before a capricious and arbitrary picture of God. The Church is the locus of true religion, so far as through grace it lives by grace.

1. The Problem of Religion in Theology	I.2, 280
2. Religion as Unbelief	I.2, 297
3. True Religion	I.2, 325
§ 18. THE LIFE OF THE CHILDREN OF GOD	I.2, 362

Where it is believed and acknowledged in the Holy Spirit, the revelation of God creates men who do not exit without seeking God in Jesus Christ, and who cannot cease to testify that He has found them.

1. Man as a Doer of the Word	I.2, 362
2. The Love of God	I.2, 371
3. The Praise of God	I.2, 401

CHAPTER III. HOLY SCRIPTURE [see § 4.2]

§ 19. THE WORD OF GOD FOR THE CHURCH	I.2, 457
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The Word of God is God himself in Holy Scripture. For God once spoke as Lord to Moses and the prophets, to the Evangelists and apostles. And now through their written word He speaks as the same Lord to His Church. Scripture is holy and the Word of God, because by the Holy Spirit it became and will become to the Church a witness to divine revelation.

1. Scripture as a Witness to Divine Revelation	I.2, 457
2. Scripture as the Word of God	I.2, 473
§ 20. AUTHORITY IN THE CHURCH	I.2, 538

The Church does not claim direct and absolute and material authority for itself but for Holy Scripture as the Word of God. But actual obedience to the authoritative Word of God in Holy Scripture is objectively determined by the fact that those who in the Church mutually confess an acceptance of the witness of Holy Scripture will be ready and willing to listen to one another in expounding and applying it. By the

authority of Holy Scripture on which it is founded, authority in the Church is restricted to an indirect and relative and formal authority.

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| 1. The Authority of the Word | I.2, 538 |
| 2. Authority Under the Word | I.2, 585 |

§ 21. FREEDOM IN THE CHURCH I.2, 661

A member of the Church claims direct, absolute and material freedom not for himself, but only for Holy Scripture as the Word of God. but obedience to the free Word of God in Holy Scripture is subjectively conditioned by the fact that each individual who confesses his acceptance of the testimony of Scripture must be willing and prepared to undertake the responsibility for its interpretation and application. Freedom in the Church is limited as and indirect, relative and formal freedom by the freedom of Holy Scripture in which it is grounded.

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| 1. The Freedom of the Word | I.2, 661 |
| 2. Freedom under the Word | I.2, 695 |

CHAPTER IV. THE PROCLAMATION OF THE CHURCH [see § 4.1]

§ 22. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH I.2, 743

The Word of God is God Himself in the proclamation of the Church of Jesus Christ. In so far as God gives the Church the commission to speak about Him, and the Church discharges this commission, it is God Himself who declares His revelation in His witnesses. The proclamation of the Church is pure doctrine when the human word spoken in it in confirmation of the biblical witness to the revelation offers and creates obedience to the Word of God. Because this is its essential character, function and duty, the word of the Church preacher is the special and immediate object of dogmatic activity.

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| 1. The Word of God and the Word of Man in Christian Preaching | I.2, 743 |
| 2. Pure Doctrine as the Problem of Dogmatics | I.2, 758 |
| 3. Dogmatics as Ethics | I.2, 782 |

§ 23. DOGMATICS AS A FUNCTION OF THE HEARING CHURCH I.2, 797

Dogmatics invites the teaching Church to listen again to the Word of God in the revelation to which Scripture testifies. It can do this only if for its own part it adopts the attitude of the hearing Church and therefore itself listens to the Word of God as the norm to which the hearing Church knows itself to be subject.

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| 1. The Formal Task of Dogmatics | I.2, 797 |
| 2. The Dogmatic Norm | I.2, 812 |

§ 24. DOGMATICS AS A FUNCTION OF THE TEACHING CHURCH I.2, 844

Dogmatics summons the listening Church to address itself anew to the task of teaching the Word of God in the revelation attested in Scripture. It can do this only as it accepts itself the position of the teaching Church and is therefore claimed by the Word of God as the object to which the teaching Church as such has devoted itself.

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| 1. The Material Task of Dogmatics | I.2, 844 |
| 2. The Dogmatic Method | I.2, 853 |

THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

Volume II

CHAPTER V. THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD

II, Part 1

§ 25. THE FULFILMENT OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD II.1, 3

The knowledge of God occurs in the fulfilment of the revelation of His Word by the Holy Spirit, and therefore in the reality and with the necessity of faith and its obedience. Its content is the existence of Him whom we must fear above all things because we may love Him above all things; who remains a mystery to us because He Himself has made Himself so clear and certain to us.

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| 1. Man before God | II.1, 3 |
| 2. God before Man | II.1, 31 |

§ 26. THE KNOWABILITY OF GOD II.1, 63

The possibility of the knowledge of God springs from God, in that He is Himself the truth and He gives Himself to man in His Word by the Holy Spirit to be known as the truth. It springs from man, in that, in the son of God by the Holy spirit, he becomes an object of the definite good-pleasure and therefore participates in the truth of God.

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| 1. The Readiness of God | II.1, 63 |
| 2. The Readiness of Man | II.1, 128 |

§ 27. THE LIMITS OF THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD II.1, 179

God is known only by God. We do not know Him, then in virtue of the views and concepts with which in faith we attempt to respond to His revelation. But we also do not know Him without making use of His permission and obeying His command to undertake this attempt. The success of this undertaking, and therefore the veracity of our human knowledge of God, consists in the fact that our viewing and

conceiving is adopted and determined to participation in the truth of God by God Himself in grace.

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| 1. The Hiddenness of God | II.1, 179 |
| 2. The Veracity of Man's Knowledge of God | II.1, 204 |

CHAPTER VI. THE REALITY OF GOD

§ 28. THE BEING OF GOD AS THE ONE WHO LOVES IN FREEDOM II.1, 257

God is who He is in the act of His revelation. God seeks and creates fellowship between Himself and us, and therefore He loves us. But He is this loving God without us as Father, Son and Holy Spirit, in the freedom of the Lord, who has His life from Himself.

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| 1. The Being of God in Act | II.1, 257 |
| 2. The Being of God as the One who Loves | II.1, 272 |
| 3. The Being of God in Freedom | II.1, 297 |

§ 29. THE PERFECTION OF GOD II.1, 333

God lives His perfect life in the abundance of many individual and distinct perfections. Each of these is perfect in itself and in combination with all the others. For whether it is a form of love in which God is free, or a form of freedom in which God loves, it is nothing else but God Himself, His one, simple distinctive being.

§ 30. THE PERFECTIONS OF THE DIVINE LOVING II.1, 351

The divinity of the love of God consists and confirms itself in the fact that in Himself and in all His works God is gracious, merciful and patient, and at the same time holy, righteous and wise.

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| 1. The Grace and Holiness of God | II.1, 351 |
| 2. The Mercy and Righteousness of God | II.1, 368 |
| 3. The Patience and Wisdom of God | II.1, 406 |

§ 31. THE PERFECTIONS OF THE DIVINE FREEDOM II.1, 440

The divinity of the freedom of God consists and confirms itself in the fact that in Himself and in all His works God is One, constant and eternal, and therewith also omnipresent, omnipotent and glorious.

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| 1. The Unity and Omnipresence of God | II.1, 440 |
| 2. The Constancy and Omnipotence of God | II.1, 490 |
| 3. The Eternity and Glory of God | II.1, 608 |

CHAPTER VII. THE ELECTION OF GOD

II, Part 2

§ 32. THE PROBLEM OF A CORRECT DOCTRINE OF THE ELECTION OF GRACE II.2, 3

The doctrine of election is the sum of Gospel because of all words that can be said or heard it is the best: that God elects man; that God is for man too the One who loves in freedom. It is grounded in the knowledge of Jesus Christ because He is both the electing God and elected man in One. It is part of the doctrine of God because originally God's election of man is a predestination not merely of man but of Himself. Its function is to bear basic testimony to eternal, free and unchanging grace as the beginning of all the ways and works of God.

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| 1. The Orientation of the Doctrine | II.2, 3 |
| 2. The Foundation of the Doctrine | II.2, 34 |
| 3. The Place of the Doctrine in Dogmatics | II.2, 76 |

§ 33. THE ELECTION OF JESUS CHRIST II.2, 94

The election of grace is the eternal beginning of all the ways and works of God in Jesus Christ. In Jesus Christ God in His free grace determines himself for sinful man and sinful man for Himself. He therefore takes upon Himself the rejection of man with all its consequences, and elects man to participation in His own glory.

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| 1. Jesus Christ, Electing and Elected | II.2, 94 |
| 2. The Eternal Will of God in the Election of Jesus Christ | II.2, 145 |

§ 34. THE ELECTION OF THE COMMUNITY II.2, 195

The election of grace, as the election of Jesus Christ, is simultaneously the eternal election of the one community of God by the existence of which Jesus Christ is to be attested to the whole world and the whole world summoned to faith in Jesus Christ. This one community of God in its form as Israel has to serve the presentation of the divine judgment, in its form as the Church the representation of the divine mercy. In its form as Israel it is determined for hearing, and its form as the Church for believing the promise sent forth to man. To the one elected community of God is given in the one case its passing, and in the other its coming form.

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| 1. Israel and the Church | II.2, 195 |
| 2. The Judgment and the Mercy of God | II.2, 205 |
| 3. The Promise of God Heard and Believe | II.2, 233 |
| 4. The Passing and the Coming Man | II.2, 259 |

§ 35. THE ELECTION OF THE INDIVIDUAL

II.2, 306

The man who is isolated over against God is as such rejected by God. But to be this man can only be by the godless man's own choice. The witness of the community of God to every individual man consists in this: that this choice of the godless man is void; that he belongs eternally to Jesus Christ and therefore is not rejected, but elected by God in Jesus Christ; that the rejection which he deserves on account of his perverse choice is borne and canceled by Jesus Christ; and that he is appointed to eternal life with God on the basis of the righteous divine decision. The promise of his election determines that as a member of the community himself shall be a bearer of its witness to the whole world. And the revelation to his rejection can only determine him to believe in Jesus Christ as the One by whom it has been borne and canceled.

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| 1. Jesus Christ, the Promise and its Recipient | II.2, 306 |
| 2. The Elect and the Rejected | II.2, 340 |
| 3. The Determination of the Elect | II.2, 410 |
| 4. The Determination of the Rejected | II.2, 449 |

CHAPTER VIII. THE COMMAND OF GOD

§ 36. ETHICS AS A TASK OF THE DOCTRINE OF GOD

II.2, 509

As the doctrine of God's command, ethics interprets the Law as the form of the Gospel, i.e., as the sanctification which comes to man through the electing God. Because Jesus Christ is the holy God and sanctified man in One, it has its basis in the knowledge of Jesus Christ. Because the God who claims man for Himself makes Himself originally responsible for him, it forms part of the doctrine of God. Its function is to bear primary witness to the grace of God in so far as this is the saying engagement and commitment of man.

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THE DOCTRINE OF CREATION

Volume III

CHAPTER IX. THE WORK OF CREATION

III, Part 1

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The insight that man owes his existence and form, together with all the reality distinct from God, to God's creation, is achieved only in the reception and answer of the divine self-witness, that is, only in faith in Jesus Christ, i.e., in the knowledge of the unity of Creator and creature actualised in Him, and in the life in the present mediated by Him, under the right and in the experience of the goodness of the Creator towards His creature.

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Creation comes first in the series of works of the triune God, and is thus the beginning of all the things distinct from God himself. Since it contains in itself the beginning of time, its historical reality eludes all historical observation and account, and can be expressed in the biblical creation narratives only in the form of pure saga. But according to this witness the purpose and therefore the meaning of creation is to make possible the history of God's covenant with man which has its beginning, its centre and its culmination in Jesus Christ. The history of this

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§ 47. MAN IN HIS TIME III.2, 437

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THE DOCTRINE OF RECONCILIATION

Volume IV

**CHAPTER XIII. THE SUBJECT-MATTER AND PROBLEMS
OF THE DOCTRINE OF RECONCILIATION**

IV, Part 1

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The subject-matter, origin and content of the message received and proclaimed by the Christian community is at its heart the free act of the faithfulness of God in which He takes the lost cause of man, who has denied Him as Creator and in so doing ruined himself as creature, and makes it His own in Jesus Christ, carrying it through to its goal and in that way maintaining and manifesting His own glory in the world.

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The content of the doctrine of reconciliation is the knowledge of Jesus Christ who is (1) very God, that is, the God who humbles Himself, and therefore the reconciling God, (2) very man, that is, man exalted and therefore reconciled by God, and (3) in the unity of the two the guarantor and witness of our atonement.

The threefold knowledge of Jesus Christ includes the knowledge of the sin of man: (1) in his pride, (2) his sloth and (3) his falsehood—the knowledge of the event in which reconciliation is made: (1) his justification, (2) his satisfaction and (3) his calling—and the knowledge of the work of the Holy Spirit in (1) the gathering, (2) the upbuilding and (3) the sending of the community, and of the being of Christians in Jesus Christ (1) in faith, (2) in love and (3) in hope.

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That Jesus Christ is very God is shown in His way into the far country in which He the Lord became a servant. For in the majesty of the true God it happened that the eternal Son of the eternal Father became obedient by offering and humbling Himself to be the brother of man, to take His place with the transgressors, to judge him by judging Himself and dying in his place. But God the Father raised Him from the dead, and in so doing recognised and gave effect to His death and passion as a satisfaction made for us, as our conversion to God, and therefore as our redemption from death to life.

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§ 61. THE JUSTIFICATION OF MAN IV.1, 514

The right of God established in the death of Jesus Christ, and proclaimed in His resurrection in defiance of the wrong of man, is as such the basis of the new and corresponding right of man. Promised to man in Jesus Christ, hidden in Him and only to be revealed in Him, it cannot be attained by any thought or effort or achievement on the part of man. But the reality of it calls for faith in every man as a suitable acknowledgment and appropriation and application.

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The Holy Spirit is the awakening power in which Jesus Christ has formed and continually renews His body, i.e., His own earthly-historical form of existence, the one holy catholic and apostolic Church. This is Christendom, i.e., the gathering of the community of those whom already before all others He has made willing and ready for life under the divine verdict executed in His death and revealed in His resurrection from the dead. It is therefore the provisional representation of the whole world of humanity justified in Him.

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The Holy Spirit is the awakening power in which Jesus Christ summons a sinful man to His community and therefore as a Christian to believe in Him: to acknowledge and know and confess Him as the Lord who for him became a servant; to be sorry both on his own behalf and on that of the world in face of the victory over his pride and fall which has taken place in Him; and again on his own behalf and therefore on that of the world to be confident in face of the establishment of his new right and life which has taken place in Him.

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IV, Part 2

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Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Lord who humbled Himself to be a servant, is also the Son of Man exalted as this servant to be the Lord, the new and true and royal man who participates in the being and life and lordship and act of God and honours and attests Him, and as such the Head and Representative and Saviour of all other men, the origin and content and norm of the divine direction given us in the work of the Holy Spirit.

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§ 65. THE SLOTH AND MISERY OF MAN

IV.2, 378

The direction of God, given in the resurrection of Jesus Christ who was crucified for us, discloses who is overcome in His death. It is the man who would not make use of his freedom, but was content with the low level of a self-enclosed being, thus being irremediably and radically and totally subject to his own stupidity, inhumanity, dissipation and anxiety, and delivered up to his own death.

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§ 66. THE SANCTIFICATION OF MAN

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The exaltation of man, which in defiance of his reluctance has been achieved in the death and declared in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is as such the creation of his new form of existence as the faithful covenant-partner of God. It rests wholly and utterly on his justification before God, and like this it is achieved only in the one Jesus Christ, but effectively and authoritatively for all in Him. It is self-attested, by its operation among them as His direction, in the life of a people of men who in virtue of the call to discipleship which has come to them, of their awakening to conversion, of the praise of their works, of the mark of the cross which is laid upon them, have the freedom even as sinners to render obedience and to establish themselves as the saints of God in a provisional offering of the thankfulness for which the whole world is ordained by the act of the love of God.

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§ 67. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE UPBUILDING OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

IV.2, 614

The Holy Spirit is the quickening power with which Jesus the Lord builds up Christianity in the world as His body, i.e., as the earthly-historical form of His own existence, causing it to grow, sustaining and ordering it as the communion of His saints, and thus fitting it to give a provisional representation of the sanctification of all humanity and human life as it has taken place in Him.

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§ 68. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND CHRISTIAN LOVE	IV.2, 727
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The Holy Spirit is the quickening power in which Jesus Christ places a sinful man in His community and thus gives him the freedom, in active self-giving to God and his fellows as God's witness, to correspond to the love in which God has drawn him to Himself and raised him up, overcoming his sloth and misery.

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§ 69. THE GLORY OF THE MEDIATOR	IV.3, 3
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“Jesus Christ as attested to us in Holy Scripture is the one Word of God whom we must hear and whom we must trust and obey in life and in death.”

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§ 70. THE FALSEHOOD AND CONDEMNATION OF MAN	IV.3, 368
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As the effective promise of God encounters man in the power of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, man proves himself to be a liar in whose thinking, speech and conduct his liberation by and for the free God transforms itself into an attempt to claim God by and for himself as the man who is bound in his self-assertion—a perversion in which he can only destroy himself and finally perish.

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2. The Falsehood of Man	IV.3, 434
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§ 71. THE VOCATION OF MAN	IV.3, 481
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The Word of the living Jesus Christ is the creative call by which He awakens man to an active knowledge of the truth and thus receives him into the new standing of the Christian, namely, into a particular fellowship with Himself, thrusting him as His afflicted but well-equipped witness into the service of His prophetic work.

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§ 72. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE SENDING OF THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY IV.3, 681

The Holy Spirit is the enlightening power of the living Lord Jesus Christ in which He confesses the community called by Him as His body, i.e., as His own earthly-historical form of existence, by entrusting to it the ministry of His prophetic Word and therefore the provisional representation of the calling of all humanity and indeed of all creatures as it has taken place in Him. He does this by sending it among the peoples as His own people, ordained for its part to confess Him before all men, to call them to Him and thus to make known to the whole world that the covenant between God and man concluded in Him is the first and final meaning of its history, and that His future manifestation is already here and now its great, effective and living hope.

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§ 73. THE HOLY SPIRIT AND CHRISTIAN HOPE IV.3, 902

The Holy Spirit is the enlightening power in which Jesus Christ, overcoming the falsehood and condemnation of sinful man, causes him as a member of His community to become one who may move towards his final and yet also his immediate future in hope in Him, i.e., in confident, patient and cheerful expectation of His new coming to consummate the revelation of the will of God fulfilled in Him.

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BAPTISM AS THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHRISTIAN LIFE IV, Part 4

A man's turning to faithfulness to God, and consequently to calling upon Him, is the work of this faithful God which, perfectly accomplished in the history of Jesus Christ, in virtue of the awakening, quickening and illuminating power of this history, becomes a new beginning of life as his baptism with the Holy Spirit.

The first step of this life of faithfulness to God, the Christian life, is a man's baptism with water, which by his own decision is requested of the community and which is administered by the community, as the binding confession of his obedience, conversion and hope, made in prayer for God's grace, wherein he honours the freedom of this grace.

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