

# THE NATURE OF FAITH

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Unique in many respects among world-religions, Christianity is strikingly unique in the emphasis which it assigns to faith. So, for example, Gerhard Ebeling, professor of Theology at Zurich, declares:

The decisive thing in Christianity is faith . . . However confusing the manifold historical forms in which Christianity makes its appearance in the different centuries and different parts of the earth, the different nations and civilizations, the different confessions and personalities, however repulsive the contentions about faith, and however attractive only so-called practical Christianity may seem, nevertheless there cannot be the least doubt that Christianity itself has at all times and in all places regarded faith as constituting its essence. He who becomes a Christian has always been asked, do you believe?<sup>1</sup>

In thus identifying faith with the essence of Christianity, Ebeling is echoing the famous American Calvinist, B. B. Warfield, who in a typically masterful article on the Biblical meaning of *pistis* shows how in the New Testament this term evolves into "a synonym for 'Christianity' . . . and we may trace a development," Warfield adds, "by means of which *pistis* has come to mean the religion which is marked by and consists essentially in 'believing.' . . . the idea of 'faith' is conceived of in the New Testament as the characteristic idea of Christianity."<sup>2</sup>

Our concern, therefore, is not with faith-in-general, faith *per se*, either as concept or phenomenon. Our concern is with Christian faith in particular and with Christian faith in its theological formulation. At once many issues, important and engrossing in their own right, are swept aside as irrelevant. Thus we shall not be considering faith, Christian or otherwise, epistemologically,<sup>3</sup> historically,<sup>4</sup> lexically,<sup>5</sup> apologetically<sup>6</sup>, polemically,<sup>7</sup> or psychologically.<sup>8</sup> Our attention will be focused on the analyses of faith made by Soren Kierkegaard, nineteenth century litterateur, and alleged father of existentialism.

## I. FAITH IN THE THEOLOGY OF PROTESTANT ORTHODOXY

In order to evaluate Kierkegaard's views on this subject we must first glance at its treatment by Reformed theologians.

Biblical religion in the Old Testament no less than in the New is a religion of faith. Such is Warfield's measured verdict.

The religion of the Old Testament is obviously as fundamentally a religion of faith as that of the New Testament . . . its very essence consisted in faith, and was the same radical self-commitment to God, not merely as the highest good of the holy soul, but as the gracious Saviour of the sinner, which meets us as the characteristic feature of the religion of the New Testament. Between the faith of the two Testaments there exists, indeed, no further difference than that which the progress of the historical working out of redemption brought with it.<sup>9</sup>

Whether in the Old Testament or the New, however, it is the Object of faith, Warfield further observes, which — Who, to be more correct — imparts value to the pistis act or self-commitment.

It is, accordingly, solely from its *object* that faith derives its value. This object is uniformly the God of grace, whether conceived of broadly as the source of all life, light, and blessing, on whom man in his creaturely weakness is entirely dependent, or, whenever sin and the eternal welfare of the soul are in

view, as the Author of salvation in whom alone the hope of unworthy man can be placed. This one object of saving faith never varies from the beginning to the end of the scriptural revelation.<sup>10</sup>

In the New Testament, of course, saving trust finds its object in Jesus Christ, presented as God the Redeemer.

Faith has ever terminated with trustful reliance, not on the promise but on the Promiser,—not on the propositions which declare God's grace and willingness to save, or Christ's divine nature and power, or the reality and perfection of His saving work, but on the Saviour upon whom, because of these great facts, it could securely rest as on One able to save to the uttermost. Jesus Christ, God the Redeemer, is accordingly the one object of saving faith, presented to its embrace at first implicitly and in promise, and ever more and more openly until at last it is entirely explicit and we read that "a man is not justified save through faith in Jesus Christ" (Gal. ii.16).<sup>11</sup>

In Scripture, then, far from being a simple human act, faith is the nexus of Christology, anthropology, hamartiology, soteriology, and pneumatology. To explicate faith—though fortunately not to exercise it!—a whole system of theology must be constructed.

To elucidate the relationship between the Object of faith and the subject of faith, Protestant dogmaticians of the seventeenth century resorted to Latin phrases and terms which have become a kind of doctrinal shorthand. *Fides quae creditur*, the faith which one believes, they set over against *fides qua creditur*, the faith by which one believes. *Fides historica*, faith as an impersonal agreement with the facts and propositions of Christianity, they distinguished sharply from *fides propria* or a personal acceptance of the Saviour; sometimes they made *fides salvifica* synonymous with *fides propria*. Very commonly they stressed the three elements which in their opinion *fides propria* includes—*notitia*, *assensus*, and *fiducia*. Johannes Wolleb, author of *The Compendium of Christian Theology*, framed a classical definition of these elements.

*Notitia* is the apprehension of the things which are necessary to salvation. *Assensus* is that by which it is firmly believed, that the things transmitted by the Word of God are true. *Fiducia*, called *pepoithesis* and *plerophoria* by the Apostle Eph. 3.12 (boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him) I Th. i.5 (our gospel came not unto you in word only, but in power and in the H. Ghost and in much assurance), is that by which each of the faithful applies the promises of the Gospel to himself.<sup>12</sup>

But in the Reformed tradition *fiducia* received an emphasis above and beyond either *notitia* or *assensus*. In other words, trustful self-commitment was viewed as the very essence of faith. As the sixteenth-century dogmatician, Samuelis Maresius wrote, "Trust is the very form of faith as justifying and its noblest part."<sup>13</sup> Yet this emphasis on *fiducia* must not be construed to mean that knowledge and conviction were minimized: they were invariably assumed and as a rule expressly stated to be the foundations of trust. Karl Barth points out that for Old Protestantism or historic orthodoxy, faith as a mere and sheer voluntaristic *fiducia* was unthinkable.

To exclude from faith the element of *notitia* or *assensus*, i.e. the element of knowledge, to conceive of faith as pure trust, which is intellectually without form or, in view of its intellectual form, indifferent, has any kind of trust in any kind of thing, to make the object of faith problematical and to transfer the reality of faith to the believing subject, was a possibility of which we can say with certainty . . . that even in the early period of the Reformation none

of its responsible leaders took it seriously for one single minute . . . True, faith is first faith when it is *fiducia*, and *notitia* and *assensus* by themselves should not be faith at all but just that *apinio historica*, which even the godless may have. But how should it be *fiducia* without at the same time and because it is *fiducia*, being *notitia* and *assensus* too, *fiducia promissionis*, trust in the mercy of God which meets us as the *miser cordia promissa*, i.e. in the objectivity of the Word, which has form and the form of the Word at that, and therefore in the faith that adopts it, the form of knowledge also, the form of conviction?<sup>14</sup>

Nevertheless, in opposition to the *fides historica* which they charged the Roman Catholic Church was teaching, Reformation Protestants insisted that *fides salvifica* must embrace trust, a response of will and heart, and that *fiducia* is indeed the crowning and dynamic element of faith. By this dogged insistence they again displayed their loyalty to Scripture; for as Warfield contends, Biblical faith is never only *notitia* and *assensus*; it is "a firm, trustful reliance," "a vigorous act of commitment," "a profound and abiding disposition, an ingrained attitude of mind and heart towards God which affects and gives character to all the activities," "a trustful appropriation of Christ and surrender of self to His salvation," "an entire selfcommitment of the soul to Jesus as the Son of God, the Saviour of the world."<sup>15</sup>

When faith in its full Biblical significance is exercised—an exercise made possible not by some innate psychic endowment but by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit<sup>16</sup>—then, so the entire Reformed tradition holds, there results a state of assurance, *tranquilla possessio*. To quote another of the Protestant fathers, Franciscus Turretinus,

The view of the orthodox is that the faithful may not only be certain of their faith and its truth and sincerity, a certainty not human and fallible but divine and infallible, which is yet greater or less according as faith itself is found to be firmer or laxer; but both may and ought to be certain of the grace of God and remission of sins, so far as in serious contrition for sins they do with true faith grasp the promise of free mercy in Christ, rest in it confidently and so render their hearts carefree.<sup>17</sup>

By the Spirit's witness the believer has a *certitudo salis*, a certainty of salvation; he knows himself to be among the *beati possedenti*, the blessed possessors of eternal life.

This is the concept of faith, Biblically grounded and dogmatically formulated, which Protestant orthodoxy has always espoused.

## II. FAITH IN THE THEOLOGY OF SOREN KIERKEGAARD

Sometimes curtly dismissed as an irrationalist, a brooding neurotic whose influence on philosophy as well as theology has been perverse,<sup>18</sup> Soren Kierkegaard is nevertheless a major influence in contemporary Christianity. Indeed, the Lutheran theologian, Martin J. Heineken, thinks his influence can scarcely be exaggerated.

It is impossible to go back again beyond Kierkegaard. If what he said is understood, it means as violent an upheaval in theology as at the time of the Reformation, for Kierkegaard is only saying again to this generation what Luther said to his . . . Whether one is aware of it or not, the face of modern theology has altered because of Kierkegaard . . . Even those who do not agree at all with Kierkegaard have had to alter their whole approach. It would be ungra-

cious, therefore, and unrealistic, regardless of whether Kierkegaard himself would approve of it, not to give him his due and to acknowledge that he marks a turning point in the history of Christian thought. No one can be a theologian today without coming to terms with the issues which Kierkegaard raised.<sup>19</sup>

If Heineken is even half-right in his estimate of Kierkegaard, whatever so significant a theologian has to say on so significant a subject as faith merits critical study.

Three comments seem to be in order, however, before we proceed. First, an unsystematic thinker who opposes any attempt to blueprint or straight-jacket reality, Kierkegaard never discusses dogma as such. Largely conventional in his orthodoxy,<sup>20</sup> he uses traditional doctrines as the background for aesthetic, ethical, philosophical, polemical, and evangelistic writings. Yet in the prolific work of this non-professional theologian, a theology is certainly implicit. Second, Kierkegaard employs an amazing array of pseudonyms whose pronouncements must not be taken as his personal *dicta*. Third, Kierkegaard's ideas and formulations changed in some respects over the course of years.<sup>21</sup> With these factors in mind then, we shall examine Kierkegaard's concept of faith.

1. Had he been privileged to read Abraham Kuyper's *Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology* Kierkegaard no doubt would have heartily endorsed this passage:

Nothing can ever be added to man by regeneration which does not essentially belong to human nature. Hence regeneration cannot put anything around us as a cloak, or place anything on our head as a crown. If faith is to be a human reality in the regenerate, it must be an attitude (*habitus*) of our human nature as such; consequently it must have been present in the first man; and it must be discernible in the sinner . . . the pistic element is present in all that is called man.<sup>22</sup>

As Kierkegaard sees it, human nature is constitutionally pistic; hence he describes different kinds and levels of faith phenomenologically. Dividing existence into three spheres—the aesthetic, the ethical, and the religious, with the third of these sub-divided into Religiousness A or non-Christian religiosity and Religiousness B or New Testament Christianity (this division is really a diagrammatic *schema*)—he shows that belief is operative in every mode and situation of life.

In the aesthetic sphere, writes James Collins, professor of philosophy at the University of St. Louis, "Faith signifies a man's immediate attachment to life, his animal conviction in the reality of the world and perhaps of its supreme principle."<sup>23</sup> In the ethical sphere faith, Collins says, is "The individual's confidence in the integrity and ultimate strength of his moral ideal or the social group's confidence in the practicality and humaneness of its social aims."<sup>24</sup> Two types of faith function in the religious sphere, one the product of general revelation, the other born of special revelation. In the words of the Stigmatine scholar, Cornelio Fabro, Religiousness A is "the acme of human wisdom before Christ and was achieved by Socrates;" it "has God the ontological absolute as its object."<sup>25</sup> Kierkegaard, accordingly, does not rule out natural theology. Quite the contrary! He holds that "the *Theologia Naturalis* is truly the indispensable *Anknüpfungspunkt* for the reception of revealed religion."<sup>26</sup>

What catapults a man out of this "religion of immanence"<sup>27</sup> into Christianity? The conviction of sin!<sup>28</sup> Thus Kierkegaard's somewhat abstruse works, *The Concept of Dread* and *The Sickness Unto Death*, are not merely psychological treatises: they are profound tracts on hamartiology. Evangelistic in thrust, they are calculated to arouse a desperate sense of guilt and need which only Jesus Christ can

meet. Their purpose is to motivate the leap of faith, which is "a free intervention of the will."<sup>29</sup> And Religiousness B is the true faith; indeed "only Christian faith is considered by Kierkegaard to be faith in the strict sense."<sup>30</sup>

2. In virtually everything he says about faith Kierkegaard is concerned with its subjective rather than its objective character. Unfortunately, therefore, it is all too widely imagined that he shortsightedly or willfully suppresses of the whole objective side of Christianity. Such is scarcely the case, however. A single passage will help to dissipate this misunderstanding:

Christianity exists before any Christian exists, it must exist in order that one may become a Christian, it contains the determinant by which one may test whether one has become a Christian, it maintains its objective subsistence apart from all believers, while at the same time it is in the inwardness of the believer. In short, here there is no identity between the subjective and the objective. Though Christianity comes into the heart of ever so many believers, every believer is conscious that it has not arisen in his heart . . .<sup>31</sup>

Judicious is Valter Lindstrom's appraisal: "Kierkegaard's thought is not, in fact, exclusively dominated by the argument in favor of subjectivity and against opinions that unduly emphasize objectivity. On the contrary, he tries to do justice to the objective element of Christianity whenever possible."<sup>32</sup>

But Kierkegaard lived in a day when Lutheran orthodoxy, to say nothing of Hegelian philosophy, magnifying the objective and suppressing the subjective, kept people from a vital relationship with Jesus Christ, the living Truth. *Fides quae* and *fides historica* had quite largely supplanted *fides qua* and *fides propria*. Christ as Person was shamefully ignored; only His insights were considered of value. Angrily Kierkegaard exclaims: "They have simply done away with Christ, cast Him out and taken possession of His teaching, almost regarding Him at last as one does an anonymous author—the doctrine is the principal thing, is the whole thing."<sup>33</sup> Hence Kierkegaard sees no option except to supply a corrective: deliberately he overstresses subjectivity, *fides quo*, *fides propria*.<sup>34</sup>

There is no question of a dilemma between the subjective or the objective in the apprehension of religious content of revealed truth. This is the question: Should *emphasis* be placed on the doctrinal content as such, or on the personal assimilation of religious truth? What our age needs, without the shadow of a doubt, is a subjective thinker in the sense of the word.<sup>35</sup>

His task was plain: he must help bring Christianity down from the realm of the abstract to the level of concrete experience where once again the Gospel would be meaningfully *pro me*, for myself as an existing sinner. "We must make effective the authority and inspiration of our example and pattern, in order to awaken at least a certain amount of respect for the religion of Christianity; in order to make it clear, to some extent, what it means to be a Christian, in order to transfer Christianity from the objective plane (the approach of learning, doubt, and chatter) to the subjective."<sup>36</sup>

This explains why Kierkegaard slights the *fides quae* or the *what of faith*, concentrating almost exclusively on its *quo* or *how*.

God himself is precisely this: *how* one relates himself to him. In the case of tangible and external objects, the object is something other than the way. Many ways are possible. One can perhaps hit upon an easy way, and so forth.

In the case of God, *how* is *what*.<sup>37</sup>

Defending his theology of faith, Kierkegaard in his *Journals* refers to Johannes

Climacus, the pseudonymous author of the monumental *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*, which gives about 50 pages to the objective problem of Christianity and devotes its more than 500 remaining pages to the subjective problem:

In all that is usually said about Johannes Climacus being purely subjective . . . . people have forgotten, in addition to everything else concrete about him, that in one of the last sections he shows that the curious thing is: that there is a "how" which has its quality, that if *it* is truly given, then the "what" is also given; and that is the "how" of "faith."<sup>38</sup>

3. Kierkegaard's effort to summon back to the living Truth an orthodoxy bowing down before the shrine of objectivity no doubt inspires his well-known dictum, "Subjectivity is truth."

If subjectivity is truth, the definition of truth must at the same time contain a reflection of the reaction to mere objectivity, a recollection of that parting of the ways, and such allusions would suggest the tension of true inwardness. Here is such a definition of truth: *Objective incertitude, clung to and appropriated with passionate inwardness, is truth, the highest truth that there can be, for one who exists.*<sup>39</sup>

Misleading as this dictum may be, it does not brashly advocate an irrational voluntarism; it must not be brushed aside as nonsensical. Even the Roman Catholic critic, Jerome Hamer, defends Kierkegaard against the charge of "romantic subjectivism."<sup>40</sup> Kierkegaard is simply reminding us that man is more than a disembodied intellect. Man is a self whose essence is not a cool, detached emotionless ratio. "The real subject," he insists, "is not the cognitive but the ethically existing subject."<sup>41</sup> Man, every man, is a flesh-and-blood individual; caught up in all the anxieties and ambiguities of life, he is faced with inescapable choices. Hence truth—not mathematical formulae or logical propositions but ethical and religious truth—remains an abstraction until it has been personally appropriated and incarnationally worked out. Affirmed intellectually, truth is often denied existentially. And therefore truth is really not truth *for me* until I affirm it inwardly, passionately, decisively—yes, existentially!

According to Kierkegaard, then, Christianity falls necessarily into the category of subjectivity.

Christianity is a spirit; a spirit is inwardness; inwardness is subjectivity; subjectivity is essentially passion, and in its highest form an infinite, personal, passionate interest in one's eternal happiness. As soon as the subjectivity is eliminated, and from subjectivity passion, and from passion infinite interest, there is no decision, neither in this problem, nor in any other. All essential decisiveness is rooted in subjectivity . . . . From the objective viewpoint, there are results everywhere, but nowhere are decisive results. This is a perfectly logical position, precisely because decisiveness inheres in subjectivity alone, essentially in its passion, *maxime* in personal passion, which is infinitely interested in its own eternal happiness.<sup>42</sup>

It follows, moreover, that faith, the organ for establishing the God-relationship through Jesus Christ, also falls necessarily into the category of subjectivity, and as such is distinct from knowledge. In point of fact, faith and knowledge are totally heterogeneous; when knowledge intrudes, when objective certainty is achieved, faith immediately evaporates. "If I am capable of grasping God objectively, I do not believe, but precisely because I cannot do this I must believe."<sup>43</sup> In other words, as one of the greatest Scandinavian authorities on Kierkegaard, Eduard Geismar, suggests, subjectivity is Christianity's defense "against every merely intellectual

assimilation, every attempt to regard it as something to understand or explain.”<sup>44</sup> And a merely objective relationship to Christianity, a pseudo-relationship of *notitia* and *assensus* without *fiducia*, is Kierkegaard’s *beta noire*, a soul-destroying counterfeit of faith.

4. We can understand, therefore, why Kierkegaard rejects every attempt to ground faith on evidence. We can understand, too, his fierce polemic against an apologetic which requires history to substantiate and motivate faith.

Kierkegaard recognizes, to be sure, that Christianity is inescapably rooted in history. Indeed, he highlights this fact because the very historical character of the Gospel compels the exercise of faith. In a profound discussion Kierkegaard argues that history is the sphere of Becoming. When an event transpires, an event which was once a mere possibility, it issues out of the womb of non-being into actuality. Thus it is burdened with a twofold uncertainty. First, it might never have been; logically we are at a loss to account for its emergence from non-being, regardless of what Hegel may claim to the contrary. Second, the way in which the event emerged might have been different: though we can grasp what has happened by sense or reason, we cannot grasp why and how it happened precisely as it did.<sup>45</sup> In brief, we are unable to prove the necessity of any historical event, Hegel notwithstanding. In other words, history, a free process of becoming in time, rests upon an abyss of uncertainty. As Hermann Diem helpfully exegetes Kierkegaard’s rather tortuous dialectic:

There is no means of knowing directly that the historical has come to be as the effect of a cause. It can be immediately realized how doubtful it must always be whether it has become thus by necessity or by a freely operating cause. This question cannot be decided by knowledge and the accompanying doubt cannot be argued away. If the historian supposes that what he immediately perceives is the effect of a certain cause and therefore might have been quite different, he is drawing a conclusion against which doubt must protest. In order to preclude this doubt, therefore, the statement must take the form not of a conclusion but of a decision. And for Kierkegaard this decision is *faith* . . . . Faith therefore is the means for the apprehension of the historical.<sup>46</sup>

This basic uncertainty is compounded, furthermore, by other factors. In the first place, the most laborious research can never demonstrate that an event transpired precisely as it has been reported. At best history yields only a probability, an approximation. But rejoice! Kierkegaard exhorts. The impossibility of demonstration compels the exercise of faith.

What a piece of good fortune it is that this so desirable hypothesis, the supreme desire of critical theology, turns out to be an impossibility because even the fullest realization of its aim can only yield approximate results! And again how fortunate for the scholar that the fault is in no sense theirs! If all the angels united their efforts, they could still only afford us approximative conclusions, because in this matter we have only historical knowledge, that is, an approximation as our sole certitude.<sup>47</sup>

In the second place, a devastating objection must be reckoned with. How can an event in time, an event inescapably befogged by uncertainty, furnish the sole and all-determining basis of eternal blessedness? In 1777 Gotthold Ephraim Lessing wrote a tract, “Concerning the Proof of Spirit and Power,” which advances this thesis: “Accidental truths of history can never be the proof of necessary truths of reason.”<sup>48</sup> Lessing inquires:

If on historical grounds I have no objection to the statement that Christ raised to life a dead man; must I therefore accept it as true that God has a Son who is of the same essence as himself? What is the connection between my inability to raise any significant objection to the evidence of the former and my obligation to believe something against which my reason rebels? If on historical grounds I have no objection to the statement that this Christ himself rose from the dead, must I therefore accept it as true that this risen Christ was the Son of God? . . . to jump with that historical truth to a quite different class of truths, and to demand of me that I should form all my metaphysical and moral ideas accordingly; to expect me to alter my fundamental ideas of the nature of the Godhead because I cannot set any credible testimony against the resurrection of Christ: if this is not a *metabasis eis allo genos*, then I do not know what Aristotle meant by this phrase.<sup>49</sup>

This is Kierkegaard's problem—except that from his standpoint the problem is a disguised blessing. The very difficulty compels the exercise of faith. So he remarks concerning his book, *Philosophical Fragments*:

That an eternal blessedness is decided in time through the relationship to something historical was the content of my experiment and what I now call Christianity . . . . To avoid distraction again, I do not wish to bring forward any other Christian principles; they are all contained in this one, and may be consistently derived from it, just as this determination also offers the sharpest contrast with paganism.<sup>50</sup>

In the third place, how can a man living centuries after Jesus Christ achieve contemporaneity with Him? How can distance in time be obliterated? How can we experience the historical Figure as a living Reality today? "Becoming a Christian in truth comes to mean to become contemporary with Christ. And if becoming a Christian does not come to mean this, then all the talk about becoming a Christian is nonsense and self-deception and conceit, in part even blasphemy and sin against the Second Commandment of the Law and sin against the Holy Ghost."<sup>51</sup>

But how, the question persists, can a man living centuries later achieve contemporaneity with Jesus Christ? The very difficulty compels the exercise of faith, the same faith exercised by His first-century disciples who overcame the offense of the God-Man, Deity in time and flesh, the Creator incognito, the paradox which offended most of Christ's first-century contemporaries.

5. Not alone does the historical uncertainty of Christianity compel the exercise of faith; its logical absurdity, argues Kierkegaard, serves the same function.

This area of Kierkegaard's thought has been frequently misunderstood. Hence a consummate dialectician has often been labeled an irrationalist. One can sympathize with Kierkegaard's anger when some of his critics remarked that he had no interest in the bearing of thought upon faith. In his *Journals*, as Lindstrom tells us, Kierkegaard

points out that he had produced a wealth of pseudonymous writings, devoted to the investigation from various angles of the problem of belief, defining the realm of faith and attempting to determine its heterogeneity with respect to other sphere of spiritual life. And how had these investigations been carried out? With the aid of dialectic and thought. He goes on to claim that there is hardly a single writer who has thought about faith in such measure as he who has not been occupied simply by thoughtless speculation about individual dogmas. He claims that he, on the contrary, had really "thought," concluding that indeed one must first clarify the entire problem of faith.<sup>52</sup>



Whatever one may conclude about Kierkegaard's view of the relationship between faith and reason, he cannot dismiss this dialectician as a bigoted voluntarist who flouts logic. An irrational retreat to *fiducia* is something Kierkegaard never advocates.

It is easy enough to leap from the irksome task of developing and sharpening one's intellect, and so get loud applause, and to defend oneself against all objections by remarking: "This is a higher understanding." The believing Christian both has and uses his understanding. By and large he respects what is human, and does not put it down to lack of understanding if anybody is not a Christian. But with regard to Christianity, here he believes against the understanding, and also uses his understanding in order to take care that he believes against the understanding.<sup>53</sup>

It cannot be denied that by his constant underscoring of paradox and absurdity Kierkegaard invites criticism. The doctrine of the God-Man, he insists, is the absolute paradox: eternity's invasion of time is a fact at which reason balks. "Jesus Christ," he writes, "is the paradox, which history can never digest or convert into a common syllogism."<sup>54</sup> How can an absurdity be reduced to a syllogism? And the idea of the God-Man, Kierkegaard contends, is literally absurd. "There is neither in heaven, nor on earth, nor in the depths, nor in the aberrations of the most fantastic thinking, the possibility of a (humanly speaking) more insane combination."<sup>55</sup>

Inseparable from this absolute paradox, however, are other paradoxes. Original sin is such a paradox;<sup>56</sup> so is the forgiveness of sins;<sup>57</sup> so, too, is the inspiration of Scripture;<sup>58</sup> so, once more, is the concept of Providence.<sup>59</sup> What is a paradox, after all, but a hopeless confusion of categories—like the unthinkable effort in the doctrine of original sin to take genetics, an element which belongs to the category of the physical, and merge it with guilt, an element which belongs to the category of the ethical.<sup>60</sup> The supreme example of such confusion is the Incarnation, a dogma which seeks to fuse the incommensurables of time and eternity, deity and humanity, suffering and sovereignty! Kierkegaard calls the Incarnation "a folly to the understanding and an offense to the human heart,"<sup>61</sup> "a crucifixion of the understanding."<sup>62</sup> With respect to the union of the predicates, God and man, in one hyphenated term, God-Man, he exclaims: "That which in accordance with its nature is eternal comes into existence in time, is born, grows up, and dies—this is a breach with all thinking."<sup>63</sup>

There is reason, accordingly, why Kierkegaard is often branded an enemy of reason. But is he? Ontologically, at any rate, he votes for rationality, as a decent Christian is constrained to do. "The eternal essential truth itself is by no means a paradox, but becomes paradoxical through its relation to existence."<sup>64</sup> Epistemologically, moreover, Kierkegaard recognizes that the laws of logic must be obeyed. Logical nonsense, he maintains, is logical nonsense and may be logically exposed as such. The Christian is a believer, not a stupid simpleton. "Nonsense, therefore, he cannot believe against the understanding, for precisely the understanding will discern that it is nonsense and will prevent him from believing it."<sup>65</sup> And in at least one passage Kierkegaard asserts that "no self-contradiction" exists in the idea that "Christ was God in the guise of a servant."<sup>66</sup>

How, then, does he define the absurd? It is a necessary category of thought, marking the boundaries beyond which reason cannot pass.

The Absurd is a category, it is the negative criterion for God or for the relationship to God. When the believer believes, the Absurd is not the Absurd—

faith transforms it; but in every weak moment, to him it is again more or less the Absurd. The passion of faith is the only thing capable of mastering the Absurd. If this were no so, faith would not be faith in the strictest sense, but would be a kind of knowledge. The absurd provides a negative demarcation of the sphere of faith, making it a sphere in itself . . . the Absurd and faith—this is the like for like which is necessary if there is to be friendship and if this friendship is to be maintained between two such dissimilar qualities as God and man . . . The Absurd is the negative criterion for that which is higher than human understanding and human knowing. The function of the understanding is to recognize the Absurd as such—and then to leave it up to each and every man whether or not he will believe it.<sup>67</sup>

And what does Kierkegaard mean by paradox? He means essentially the same thing which he means by the absurd, a necessary category of thought.

Paradox is category: everything turns on this point, really. People have been accustomed to talk thus—to say that one cannot understand such and such a thing does not satisfy science which insists on understanding. But it is this point of view which is wrong. One should say, rather, just the opposite: if *human* knowledge will not admit that there is something which it cannot understand, or, to speak more precisely, something about which it clearly realises that understanding is out of the question, then all is confusion. The problem for human knowledge is to see that there is something else. Human knowledge is normally in a hurry to understand more and more, but if it will at last take the trouble to understand itself, then it must frankly confirm the fact of paradox. Paradox is not a concession but a category, an ontological description expressing the relationship between a personally existent spirit and eternal truth.<sup>68</sup>

In short, logic must “understand that faith cannot be understood;” it must acknowledge that “reasons can be given to explain why no reasons can be given.”<sup>69</sup> “If there is to be a science of Christianity,” Kierkegaard affirms, “it must be erected not on the basis of the necessity of comprehending faith but on the basis of comprehending that faith cannot be comprehended.”<sup>70</sup>

One may argue, consequently, that Kierkegaard’s position is not *contra rationem*, but rather *supra rationem*. This interpretation gains credence from what Fabro considers a pivotal passage in the *Concluding Unscientific Postscript*:

A true sentence of Hugh of St. Victor: “In things which are above reason, faith is not really supported by reason, because reason cannot grasp what faith believes; but there is also a something here as a result of which reason is determined, or which determines reason to honor faith which it cannot perfectly understand.”<sup>71</sup>

Fabro also notes Kierkegaard’s laudatory comment on the Leibnizian distinction between “that which is above reason and that which is against reason.”<sup>72</sup> But Martin J. Heineken argues, on the contrary, that Kierkegaard sanctions no such distinction: he is not Leibnitz *redivivus*. To so interpret Kierkegaard is to misinterpret him grossly. Why saddle upon him the Thomistic philosophy which as a true son of the Reformation he abhors?<sup>73</sup>

In any event, this much is plain: the very nature of Christianity as a tissue of absurdity and paradox compels the exercise of faith.

Is it possible to conceive of a more foolish contradiction than that of wanting to *prove* (no matter for the present purpose whether it be from history or from anything else in the wide world one wants to prove it) that a definite individual

man is God? That an individual man is God, declares himself to be God, is indeed the "offence" *kat echochen*. But what is the offence, the offensive thing? What is at variance with (human) reason? And such a thing as that one would attempt to prove! But to "prove" is to demonstrate something to be the rational reality it is. Can one demonstrate that to be a rational reality which is at variance with reason? Surely not, unless one would contradict oneself.

One can "prove" only that it is at variance with reason.<sup>74</sup>

Or as Kierkegaard concludes this whole matter: "The absurd is the proper object of faith and the only object that can be believed."<sup>75</sup>

Once faith has been exercised, however, the absurd loses its irrationality and paradox ceases to be a heavy burden for the intellect to carry. In the sphere of Christian experience, reached by a fiducial leap, "the absurd is not the absurd—faith transforms it."<sup>76</sup> So Kierkegaard can affirm: "In the category of the Absurd, rightly understood, there is therefore absolutely nothing terrifying. No, it is precisely the category of courage and of enthusiasm . . . . And true faith breathes healthily and blissfully in the Absurd."<sup>77</sup>

6. Grounded on historical uncertainty and logical absurdity, faith is always accompanied by its sinister shadow, the possibility of offense, a violent revulsion of *mind and heart*. Offense is a scandal which impels a man, despite his need, to spurn the appeal of Jesus Christ, "Come unto me, and I will give you rest."

Just as the concept "faith" is a highly characteristic note of Christianity, so also is "offense" a highly characteristic note of Christianity and stands in close relation to faith. The possibility of offense is the crossways, or it is like standing at the crossways. From the possibility of the offense a man turns either to offense or to faith . . . . So inseparable from faith is the possibility of offense that if the God-Man were not the possibility of offense, He could not be the object of faith. So the possibility of offense is assumed in faith, assimilated by faith, it is the negative mark of the God-Man.<sup>78</sup>

This is the crux of existence, the point of decision. And here, motivated by an infinite passion, the Christian turns his back on the offense and makes the leap of faith.

But the offense is not only or primarily intellectual in nature; it is primarily ethical. Recall Kierkegaard's statement that the incarnation is "an offense to the heart."<sup>79</sup> Decision for Christ involves the surrender of autonomy, the practice of self-abnegation, a daily crucifixion. This is what intensifies the intellectual scandal. "It is not difficult for men to understand Christianity, but it is difficult for them to understand how much self-discipline and self-denial Christianity demands."<sup>80</sup> In fact, at bottom man's desire to remain his own master may account for his desperate clinging to the intellectual difficulties which can be marshalled against faith.

Christianity is not a matter of doctrines; all talk of its scandal from the doctrinal point of view rests on a misunderstanding. When people talk of the offensive aspect of the doctrine of the God-man, the doctrine of the Atonement, it means that they are weakening the shock of the offensiveness. No. the moment of scandalisation is connected either with Christ or with the fact that one is oneself a Christian.<sup>81</sup>

Or, to quote Pascal as Kierkegaard does in his *Journals*: "It is so difficult to believe because it is so difficult to obey."<sup>82</sup>

7. The exercise of faith makes the believer contemporaneous with Jesus Christ.

It brings him into a vital God-relationship marked by "courage and enthusiasm." For all its demands, it banishes anxiety and gives peace.

Our Lord Jesus Christ did not bring a system of doctrine into the world, neither did He teach, but rather as a pattern demanded discipleship—and, at the same time, through the power of His atonement, drove, as far as possible, all fear out of the human soul.<sup>83</sup>

If Kierkegaard's own experience may be taken as illustrative—and his devotional writings as well—faith leads a sinful man into a loving fellowship with the transcendent God.

If, on some point or another, I have been mistaken, it remains nonetheless true that God is love. I believe this, and one who believes it is not mistaken. If I am mistaken, this will certainly become evident to me, I am sorry to say . . . but God is love. We can say that He is love, He has been love, but not that He will be love; no, because the future would be too long for me to wait; He *is love*.<sup>84</sup>

How paradoxical it is. Hamer exclaims, that the thinker who accentuates the ontological and moral distance between God and man also magnifies His love—and evidently experienced it!<sup>85</sup>

Yet according to Kierkegaard faith never becomes a *tranquilla possessio*. The believer does not enjoy security. Moment by moment he remains in a state of danger, haunted by the possibility of offense. He floats over a depth of 70,000 fathoms—bouyed up by what? By omnipotent arms or by his own psychic energy tirelessly repeating the decision of faith? Kierkegaard is no Pelagian, of course; but one wishes he were less ambiguous in announcing that faith is a divine gift rather than a human work.

### III. AN ORTHODOX CRITIQUE OF KIERKEGAARD

How is this theology of faith to be appraised? What are its merits and liabilities? Does it mark a significant advance beyond traditional Protestantism?

1. Evangelicals are grateful for Kierkegaard's remarkable genius as a psychologist, a genius which he has focused lovingly and fruitfully on faith as a concept and a phenomenon. They gladly appropriate whatever deeper understanding of the God relationship can be attained introspectively or scientifically. Yet in their opinion no psychology of Christian faith is possible. As a divine mystery, it ultimately defies human penetration, of a Kierkegaard. Lovell Cocks speaks for evangelicals at this juncture:

There are certainly psychological states that accompany faith's verdict, and these the psychologist may describe. But when he calls his description a "psychology of faith" we are bound to protest. So by virtue of its psychological continuity with the rest of our experience the act of faith cannot but occur in a context of "religious experience," of hopes and fears, doubts and assurances; these psychological states are not of faith's essence. And although the "religious experience" of the "twiceborn" shows a certain typical structure and movement, it is still true that faith itself is not a succession of psychological states but an act of knowing whose psychological accompaniments may be quite unsensational and non-typical. The "psychology of faith" may thus be as irrelevant to faith itself as the boredom or interest of the schoolboy to the truth of the geometrical proposition he studies and his ultimate apprehension of it.<sup>86</sup>

Hence, while evangelicals admire the acumen, subtlety, and depth of Kierkegaard's insight, they feel uneasy much of the time in reading these profound analyses of faith. Is this theology or is it psychology? If psychology, is it one more instance of love's labor lost? Perhaps not, however, if sophisticated unbelievers, challenged by a sophistication which exceeds their own and which is yet the servant of a child-like trust, are driven to make the leap of faith.

2. Evangelicals are grateful for Kierkegaard's refusal to classify Christianity as a mere species of the genus faith. He considers the Gospel and the experience it produces absolutely unique. He would, therefore, unquestionably challenge Gerhard Ebeling's statement, "Christian faith is not a special faith, but simply faith . . . when we simply speak . . . of 'the faith,' then we mean Christian faith, but with the implication that it is true faith, just as Christian love is not a special kind of love, but true love, simply love."<sup>87</sup>

By no means, Kierkegaard would reply! Christianity is precisely what Ebeling denies: it is a special faith. To catalogue it as just another specimen of faith-in-general or even as the highest example of faith-in-general is to deny the New Testament.

3. Evangelicals are grateful for Kierkegaard's attack on an intellectualized, rationalized, depersonalized belief which quite completely overlooks *fiducia*, reducing Christianity to a matter of dialectic, a philosophical affair that involves no existential commitment. Evangelicals are grateful for Kierkegaard's passionate advocacy of a trust which inspires the believer to respond with his whole life! Only this emphasis, evangelicals are convinced, will keep orthodoxy from degenerating spiritually. Yet is this emphasis, while made by Kierkegaard with extraordinary effectiveness, something new or original? Is it not the emphasis of historic orthodoxy? Thus B.B. Warfield sums up Kierkegaard's entire polemic in a one-sentence definition of faith: "It is a movement of the whole inner man and is set in contrast with an unbelief that is akin, not to ignorance, but to disobedience."<sup>88</sup>

4. Evangelicals are grateful for Kierkegaard's awareness of the objective ground of faith, its ontological and historical foundations, its sheer givenness, its theocentricity. All of this Kierkegaard never so much as questions. Yet evangelicals wonder whether his entire approach is not overly anthropocentric, concentrating so exclusively on the subject of faith that faith's Object tends to become obscured. Hence evangelicals agree with Barth's criticism:

The objection against the underlying but all the more powerful presupposition of those modern doctrines of faith is in moral categories an objection against their arrogance. They rest on the fact that in the last centuries (on the broad way which leads from the older Pietism to the present-day theological existentialism inspired by Kierkegaard) the Christian has begun to take himself seriously in a way which is not at all commensurate with the seriousness of Christianity. They represent Christian truth as though its supreme glory is to rotate around the individual Christian with his puny faith, so that there is cause for gratification if they do not regard him as its lord and creator. From the bottom up we can neither approve nor make common cause with this procedure of modern doctrines of faith.<sup>89</sup>

For all his stress on wholly Other, then, is Kierkegaard too anthropocentric? Barth thinks that he is, and the evangelical concurs.

5. While grateful for his struggle to correct an exaggerated objectivity, evangelicals fear that Kierkegaard's stress on subjectivity is just as exaggerated. Karl Barth proves to be a discerning critic at this point also. In his *Church Dogmatics*

he proclaims with a power equal to Kierkegaard's that unless Christianity becomes true *pro me*, true for an individual personally, it is abortively "untrue." To that extent Barth identifies himself with the thinking "of Pietism old and new, with that of Kierkegaard, with that of a theology like W. Herrmann's, and with that of the theological existentialism of our own day (so far as it can be seriously regarded as theological)."<sup>90</sup> At the same time Barth warns that an exaggerated subjectivism may, as in Kierkegaard, beget a warped and diminished Christianity.

It was an intolerable truncation of the Christian message when the older Protestantism steered the whole doctrine of the atonement—and with it, ultimately, the whole of theology—into the *cul de sac* of the question of the individual experience of grace, which is always an anxious one when taken in isolation, the question of individual conversion by it and to it, and of its presuppositions and consequences. The almost inevitable result was that the great concepts of justification and sanctification came more and more to be understood and filled out psychologically and biographically, and the doctrine of the Church seemed to be of value only as a description of the means of salvation and grace indispensable to this individual and personal process of salvation . . . we will do well not to allow ourselves to be crowded again into the same *cul de sac* on the detour via Kierkegaard.<sup>91</sup>

Unhappy over the sub-orthodox elements in Barth's theology, evangelicals are happy to join with him in decrying a truncated Christianity which pivots everything on the individual's experience.

6. Evangelicals share Kierkegaard's negative stance with respect to demythologization. As a unflinching supernaturalist, Kierkegaard accepts miracles, especially the miracles of incarnation and resurrection. In this respect he is no forerunner of Rudolf Bultmann. But evangelicals suspect, as does Hermann Diem, that unintentionally Kierkegaard has served as a sort of John the Baptist for Bultmann. How? The sequence of faith, according to Kierkegaard, is this. A man decides to believe in Jesus Christ without any logical reason for doing so. On the basis of his own decision he discovers experientially that Jesus Christ is his Contemporary with power to save. This experiential fact leads him to believe the historical fact recorded in Scripture concerning Jesus of Nazareth. This historical fact leads him in turn to believe the eternal fact that Jesus of Nazareth was God in the flesh. Hence Diem contends that according to Kierkegaard:

It is faith which through the existential fulfilment of the believer transforms a specific historical fact into a revelatory fact, and this change comes about through insight into the meaningfulness of that historical fact. Thus we have at last the figure of that Kierkegaard whom Rudolf Bultmann is said to have commented on in the form of an exegesis of St. John's Gospel.<sup>92</sup>

Diem's study of the Kierkegaardian dialectic shows that like Bultmann, reversing the New Testament order Kierkegaard puts faith before fact. And this is the evangelical's deepest objection to an existentialist theology. Fact must be the foundation of faith or faith has no foundation.

7. Evangelicals are grateful that Kierkegaard's discussion of faith and history brings to the fore perhaps the most crucial problem which Christianity faces today on the intellectual plane. This is a problem—or really a complex of problems—which requires untiring study, reflection and dialogue. But like Lessing, has Kierkegaard failed to stress sufficiently the true nature of the difficulty? Karl Barth apparently penetrates to the very heart of his matter when he inquires whether the basic problem is actually that of historical distance. Is not Lessing's problem a pro-

tective smoke-screen to hide the true problem? And what is that? The problem of decision! This is the problem which the sinner attempts to evade. He dreads the shattering of his ego which he must suffer when confronted by Jesus Christ, the living Reality of the Saviour Who judges even while He offers forgiveness.<sup>93</sup> Lessing's problem resolves itself into a matter of abandoning self-sufficiency, admitting sin, and accepting grace. In short, all the labored historical, philosophical, and logical objections to faith are ultimately a moral and spiritual problem. Kierkegaard, to be sure, perceives and says this. He fails, however, to trumpet it so ringingly as Barth does.

8. Evangelicals are grateful that Kierkegaard stoutly denies the impossibility of creating faith by any human proofs. It is Calvin, evangelicals recall, who states: "They are rash who would prove to unbelievers by arguments that Scripture is of God, for this cannot be known except by faith."<sup>94</sup> Evangelicals recall that Calvin also states:

Faith cannot be content with the witness of men, whoever they may be, if it is not preceded by the authority of God. But when the Holy Spirit has testified to us internally that it is God who is speaking, then we give some place to the testimonies of men in order to assure ourselves as to the certainty of the history. By the certainty of the history I mean the knowledge that we possess of the things which have happened either through having seen them ourselves or through having heard others speak of them.<sup>95</sup>

Evangelicals confess that no apologetic is able to create faith in a human heart. As Auguste LeCerf eloquently avers, only the Holy Spirit can do that:

If the Reformed Christian believes with absolute certainty in the historic appearance of Jesus the Christ, in the reign of Tiberius, in His crucifixion under a Roman procurator named Pilate, it is not on the evidence of a Josephus, a Tacitus or a Suetonius. The discussion of the texts of these authors can give no more than a certitude of probability, contested by scholars as well-informed and as competent as those who maintain the thesis of their historical reliability . . . . The facts of sacred history cannot become certain with a certainty of faith except on condition that, by His infinite power, through contact with the inspired texts or by the supernatural teaching of the Church, the Spirit of God renders present the past and puts on it the seal of His inner witness, the persuasive force of which is irresistible. It is only after the exercise of this divine pressure that the human reasons take on a convincing signification.<sup>96</sup>

In his repudiation of a rationalistic apologetic Kierkegaard fails to provide an adequate source and basis for faith. He neglects the all-sufficient source and the impregnable basis of faith—the witness of the Holy Spirit. Admittedly, there is a passage in which he says: "There is only one proof for the truth of Christianity: the inner proof, testimonium Spiritus Sancti."<sup>97</sup> But this appears to be a rather a typical reference, a grossly deficient comment on I John 5:9.<sup>98</sup> Eliminate or minimize the *testimonium Spiritus Sancti* and what is left once the utter failure of traditional apologetic has been exposed? Nothing remains but a choice between rational skepticism or sub-rational voluntarism. It is to this impasse that Kierkegaard brings Protestant theology. How, then, can we achieve a theological breakthrough? The over-riding need is for a rehabilitation and development of the Reformation doctrine of the Spirit's testimony as the ultimate ground of faith.<sup>99</sup>

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## FOOTNOTES

1. Gerhard Ebeling, *The Nature of Faith*, (London: Collins, 1961), p. 20.
2. Benjamin Breckinridge Warfield, *Biblical Doctrines*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1929), p. 483.
3. John Hick in his *Faith and Knowledge*, (Ithaca, New York: Cornell University Press, 1957), ably reviews the epistemology of faith.
4. A standard work in this field is that of Stewart Means, *Faith: An Historical Study*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1933).
5. Warfield's article, *op. cit.* is still unexcelled. The definitive contemporary study is that of Rudolf Bultmann and Artur Weiser in *Bible Key Words*, Vol. III (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1961), translated from Gerhard Kittel's *Theologisches Wörterbuch Zum Neuen Testament*.
6. From an evangelical viewpoint nothing thus far has replaced J. Gresham Machen's classic, *What Is Faith?* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1935).
7. The major differences between Protestant Reformed and Roman Catholic concepts of faith are tersely stated by Auguste Lecerf, *An Introduction to Reformed Dogmatics*, (London: Lutterworth Press, 1949), pp. 399-403. Franz Arnold, "The Act of Faith, A Personal Commitment," *Lumen Vitae*, Vol. V, No. 2-3, April-September, 1950, pp. 251-255 argues that the Roman Catholic position has been misunderstood and that faith in that tradition always meant "personal decision and confident trust." Cf. too, Jean Mouroux, *I Believe: The Personal Structure of Faith*, (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1959; Romano Guardini, *The Life of Faith*, (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1961); Jerome Hamer, *Karl Barth*, (Westminster, Maryland: The Newman Press, 1962), pp. 84-85, 265-288).
8. Cf. James Lindsay, *The Psychology of Belief*, (London: William Blackwood & Sons, 1910); F. R. Tennant, *The Nature of Belief*, (London: The Centenary Press, 1943); William Ralph Inge, *Faith and Its Psychology*, (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1910); Inge has been updated by W. S. Taylor, "Faith and Its Psychology," *The Hibbert Journal*, Vol. LVIII, No. 3, April, 1960, pp. 237-248; Walter Houston Clark, *The Psychology of Religion*, (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1958), pp. 219-239.
9. Warfield, *op. cit.*, p. 484.
10. *Ibid.*, p. 502.
11. *Ibid.*, p. 503.
12. Cited in Heinrich Hepppe, *Reformed Dogmatics*, (London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd., 1950), p. 530.
13. *Ibid.*, p. 534.
14. Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics, The Doctrine of the Word of God*, Volume IV, Part One, (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1956), pp. 268-269.
15. Warfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 476, 478, 471, 500, 483.
16. Cf. Hepppe, *op. cit.*, p. 538.
17. *Ibid.*, p. 536; cf. Hamer, *op. cit.*, p. 76, n.57.
18. A painful illustration is Walter Kaufmann, *From Shakespeare to Existentialism* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1959), pp. 161-183.
19. Martin J. Heineken, *The Moment Before God* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1956), pp. 17, 19.
20. Kierkegaard's essential orthodoxy is defended by Hermann Diem, *Kierkegaard's Dialectic of Existence* (London: Oliver and Boyd, 1959), pp. 81, 103; Libuse Lukas Miller, *In Search of the Self* (Philadelphia: Muhlenberg Press, 1962), Chapter V, and various authors in a brilliant collection of essays which supply a veritable handbook of Kierkegaard's references to faith, Howard A. Johnson and Niels Thulstrup, eds., *A Kierkegaard Critique* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1962), pp. 215, 223, 224, 226, 246, 255, 258. Hereafter references to this work will usually ignore individual writers and essays.
21. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 201, n. 40.
22. Abraham Kuyper, *Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1898), p. 266.
23. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 143.
24. *Ibid.*, p. 146.
25. *Ibid.*, p. 191.
26. *Loc. cit.*
27. T. H. Croxall, *Kierkegaard Commentary* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956) p. 82.
28. Soren Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1957), pp. 71-72.
29. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 151.
30. *Ibid.*, p. 165.
31. *Ibid.*, p. 235.
32. *Ibid.*, p. 230.
33. Kierkegaard, *op. cit.*, p. 123.
34. Diem, *op. cit.*, pp. 154 ff.
35. Cited in Hamer, *op. cit.*, p. 233.
36. Cited in Diem, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
37. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 171.
38. *Ibid.*, pp. 160-161.
39. Cited in Diem, *op. cit.*, p. 39.
40. Hamer, *op. cit.*, p. 221.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 221.
42. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 245.
43. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 199.



44. Cited in T. H. Croxall, *Kierkegaard Studies* (London: Lutterworth Press, 1948), p. 129.
45. T. H. Croxall, *Kierkegaard Commentary*, pp. 178-189.
46. Diem, *op. cit.*, p. 62.
47. *Ibid.*, pp. 91-92.
48. Henry Chadwick, *Lessing's Theological Writings* (London: Adam and Charles Black, 1956), p. 53.
49. *Ibid.*, p. 53. Cf. B.B. Warfield's incisive remarks, "Christless Christianity," *Christology and Criticism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1929), pp. 318-320.
50. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 214.
51. Kierkegaard, *op. cit.*, p. 67; cf. p. 68.
52. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 228.
53. Cited in Croxall, *Kierkegaard Commentary*, p. 29.
54. Kierkegaard, *op. cit.*, p. 33.
55. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 210.
56. *Ibid.*, p. 216.
57. *Ibid.*, p. 211.
58. *Ibid.*, p. 217.
59. *Ibid.*, p. 216.
60. Cf. *ibid.*, pp. 216-217.
61. *Ibid.*, p. 216.
62. *Ibid.*, p. 217.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 210.
64. Cited in Diem, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
65. Soren Kierkegaard, *Concluding Unscientific Postscript* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1941), p. 504.
66. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 219.
67. *Ibid.*, pp. 182, 183, 184.
68. Diem, *op. cit.*, p. 50.
69. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 218.
70. *Ibid.*, p. 179.
71. Cited in *ibid.*, p. 185.
72. *Ibid.*, p. 187; cf. p. 209.
73. Heinecken, *op. cit.*, pp. 346-355.
74. Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity*, pp. 28-29.
75. Cited in Hamer, *op. cit.*, p. 247.
76. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 221.
77. *Ibid.*, p. 183.
78. Kierkegaard, *Training in Christianity*, pp. 83, 143.
79. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 216.
80. *Ibid.*, p. 218.
81. Cited in Diem, *op. cit.*, pp. 107-108.
82. Cited in Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 226, n. 17.
83. Cited in Diem, *op. cit.*, p. 147.
84. Cited in Hamer, *op. cit.*, p. 236.
85. *Loc. cit.*
86. H. F. Lovell Cocks, *By Faith Alone* (London: James Clarke & Co. Ltd. 1943) p. 72.
87. Ebeling, *op. cit.*, pp. 20-21.
88. Warfield, *op. cit.*, pp. 501-502.
89. Barth, *op. cit.*, p. 741.
90. *Ibid.*, p. 755.
91. *Ibid.*, p. 150.
92. Diem, *op. cit.*, p. 183.
93. Barth, *op. cit.*, pp. 288-293.
94. Cited in Lecerc, *op. cit.*, p. 205.
95. *Ibid.*, p. 228.
96. *Ibid.*, p. 307.
97. Johnson and Thulstrup, *op. cit.*, p. 173.
98. Cf. the weak chapter on the Holy Spirit in Croxall, *Kierkegaard Studies*, pp. 210-219.
99. A notable contribution is that of Bernard Ramm, *The Witness of the Spirit* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1960).