

## The Reformed View of Education

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Cornelius Van Til was born at Grootegast, Netherlands, May 3, 1895. He studied at Calvin College (A.B., 1922); Princeton Seminary (Th.B., 1924; Th.M., 1925); and Princeton University (Ph. D., 1927). He was pastor of the Spring Lake, Michigan, Christian Reformed Church from 1927-1928; instructor of apologetics at Princeton Seminary (1927-29); professor of apologetics and ethics at Westminster Seminary (1929-1979?). Van Til was a prolific writer and authored some 30 books and syllabii, and over 220 articles, pamphlets and reviews. He is probably best known for his book, *The Defense of the Faith*, published by Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 1955.

Only upon a Reformed basis can God really be made central in education. This is true because only in the Reformed system are Christ and the Holy Spirit really central in education. The Reformed view is based exclusively upon the Bible. The doctrines of creation and providence imply that God originates and arranges all the facts of the universe according to a "logic" that is above man. Man's systems must therefore be consciously analogical to the system of God.

The God of the Bible is self-contained and all-sufficient. He is a Spirit, infinite, eternal and unchangeable in his being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness, and truth. Being self-sufficient, he is not correlative to a principle of individuality that is as original as he and which needs him as its correlative. He is not merely a formal or abstract principle of unity which is meaningless until it is brought into contact with brute factuality that stands over against him. There is no non-being or potentiality that acts as an original opposite him.

In the nature of the case, this God must be presupposed by man. He cannot be proved to exist in the way that pragmatism or idealism seeks to prove its principle of continuity. If his existence would be proved in this way then he would be only a correlative to factuality as ultimate as himself. He would then again be worthless as a principle of unity.

It is the Bible alone that speaks of such a God. And the Bible speaks of his absolute authority. This God always speaks with authority. This God of the Bible, who speaks authoritatively through his Word, is the presupposition of the intelligibility of human experience. He is recognized in the Reformed Faith as the

final reference point for all human predication. In this respect the Reformed Faith really stands squarely opposed to all forms of non-Christian thinking. Non-Christian thinking takes man as the final reference point in predication. It places man where the Reformed Faith recognizes God.

The two positions are therefore basically opposed to each other on all scores. The question is not simply as to which one is in accord with fact and logic. The question is rather in terms of which presupposition fact and logic have meaning at all. On which position is there any intelligible application of logic to fact at all? The question therefore concerns the philosophy of fact and the philosophy of logic. Any argument between them that does not go back to the question of presuppositions begs the question. The Christian position seeks to make human experience intelligible in terms of the presupposition of God; the non-Christian position seeks to make human experience intelligible in terms of man who is conceived of as ultimate. On this basic matter we have seen how the Roman Catholic tries to straddle the fence by trying to interpret part of human experience in terms of man and part in terms of God. And the Fundamentalistic position makes a similar attempt with the same fatal results. There is therefore no orthodox position except the Reformed Faith that is really able to challenge Dewey or Plato.

It should be emphasized that it is not simply by means of an appeal to the so-called distinct doctrines of Calvinism that the Reformed Faith makes this claim. It is rather by the full consistency with which it maintains all the Christian doctrines that this end is obtained. It is in terms of God who is self-existent and self-contained and in terms of the doctrines of creation and providence, taken without qualification, that man knows the goal, the standards and the motivating principle of life. Let us look at each of these separately.

## **A. THE GOAL OF EDUCATION**

On the Reformed basis man from the beginning knew the goal of his life. God made all the facts that surrounded him. God made man in his own image. There was thus no fact within or outside of man which was not fully revelational of God. The nature or essence of every created fact lies in its function in the process of the divine self-revelation to man.

Therefore, even man himself must fulfil this revelational function. He was created in the image of God and he was to become more fully expressive of that image. His historical task was, as God's image bearer, to show forth the glory of God.

It is in this connection that we must refer to the original supernatural revelation that was given to Adam. Through it man was actually told about his future task. He was to increase in the self-conscious manipulation of the facts of the universe to the glory of God. He was thus to build the kingdom of God.

This positive supernatural revelation of God to man is both correlative to and supplementary to the revelation of God in the facts within and outside of man. Only when they are thus immediately involved in one another are they seen for what they truly are. Only when “natural” and “supernatural” revelation are seen thus to supplement one another, is man placed in his proper historical perspective. Only thus do we see what he was and what he was meant to become both individually and racially. Only in this way is man functionally defined as the covenant being that he is. God has given man a project in which he is to be engaged.

Man’s project is to build the kingdom of God. And this is to be done by mankind as a whole since the first man represented all men. Man knew it because he had been informed of it by God through a supernatural communication of thought joined to factual revelation. Thus, God first taught the philosopher-scientist, and the latter was to instruct the teacher so he as the teacher could teach the pupil what man’s task is.

It has already been noted that on a non-Christian basis man cannot know what this task is. He would then have to know everything in order to know anything. Yet, he is himself surrounded by Chance and cannot even distinguish one fact from another.

But even non-Reformed Christian positions are unable to define man’s cultural task. The God of Romanism and of Arminianism does not himself know the cultural objective. He does not control the future in an unqualified way. The realization of his own objectives is dependent upon what millions of men will do. If he desires man to be his representative on earth, he can urge him to take that place. He can tell men that he hopes his project, with their help, will be successful. But even to himself his own ideals are but limiting concepts; he has no ultimate control over history.

Only the Reformed Faith maintains the biblical idea of a God who from all eternity is sovereign, who knows what he wants and is able to attain his goal without doubt. This position alone can challenge the non-Christian in the field of education. Only in the God of Christianity as set forth in the Reformed Faith does one escape the abstract universal of idealistic philosophy, and with it the god who needs an environment to become conscious of himself, a god who must gradually learn what he wants to do and what he wants mankind to do.

## **B. CRITERION IN EDUCATION**

Secondly, there is the question of the criterion or standard. It has been indicated earlier that on the non-Christian presupposition, the distinction between what is educative and what is miseducative cannot be made.

The Reformed Faith frankly begins with the presupposition of the absolute truth of the Christian position. It is this that the teacher tells the pupil. As he has learned that the goal of human life can be known only from the authoritative revelation of God, so he knows that the criterion by which man must live can be found only in this revelation too.

Here again any standpoint short of the Reformed Faith takes a compromising position, because there education is considered as a matter of choosing between the two positions from the vantage point of some neutral third area. Commitment to God and to Christ as Lord is supposed to be made without the initial regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. But such a commitment is neither a commitment to God or to Christ in the full sense of the term. For the God and the Christ of the Scripture remain what they are only if commitment to them is made in terms of being drawn to them by the power that proceeds from them. Without this, the God and the Christ of the Scriptures turn once again into abstract universals who are themselves dependent upon a non-rational principle of individuation. So also a Bible that must first be proved to be a worthy criterion for human experience by being tested by a higher standard is no ultimate criterion. If human experience in terms of itself as the criterion must first judge the Bible, why should it after that need any Bible at all? Our conclusion is that not only on the question of the goal or purpose of human life but also on the question of criterion, the Reformed Faith alone offers a clear-cut challenge to both Dewey and Plato. On the Reformed basis alone the teacher has a criterion for judging what is educative and what is miseducative. Whatever is in accord with Scripture is educative; whatever is not in accord with it is miseducative. Difficult as it may be for both the teacher and the pupil to make out in individual instances how to apply this criterion, the criterion itself is plain and simple enough.

### **C. THE MOTIVATING PRINCIPLE IN EDUCATION**

Finally, there is the question of the motivating power in human experience. For the non-Christian, this is faith in man himself, but for the consistent Christian position it is faith in the triune God of the Scriptures.

On the non-Christian basis human experience operates in a vacuum. On its basic presupposition men are in a cave and doomed to remain there forever. They are in darkness and day will never dawn for them. Darkness and irrationality are by definition ultimate. The pupil is in darkness, the teacher is in darkness, the scientist-philosopher is in darkness and their god is likewise in darkness.

They could not begin to think of the light of rationality, for rationality must come by chance. And absolute rationality must come by projection on the part of a rational animal that has itself attained its rationality by accident. This rational animal then uses the law of contradiction, itself a growth by accident, and by means of it assures himself that the God of Christianity cannot exist.

In contrast with this the Reformed position again begins frankly with the doctrines of creation and providence as given in Scripture. On the basis of these doctrines the teacher and the pupil were, from the beginning, surrounded by light. They were in contact with the truth. They could not help but be in contact with the truth. They themselves are revelational of God as their Creator and their Lord.

But again the various Christian positions that fall short of the Reformed view compromise with the non-Christian position. By insisting on their notion of human freedom, they take man out of contact with their God. They do this supposedly in the interest of logic. They seek to shield God from responsibility for sin. But in thus shielding God they reduce him to finite proportions. They make him a God who has no ultimate control over man and the universe. Thereby they again bring God and man into the cave of ultimate chance and darkness. According to the non-Reformed position, Christ does the best he can to save man; he makes salvation "possible" for all. But his purpose may also fail with respect to them; all of them may decide not to accept his offer. Then Christ would have failed. Then Satan would not be defeated. And the kingdom of hell may yet prevail against the kingdom of God.

How on this basis can the teacher urge the pupil to work for the kingdom of God? He can find no intelligible explanation for such a kingdom, if there is no all-controlling plan of God for the universe. A God not truly sovereign can only dream as to what he would like to realize in the course of history. His dreams have no discernible delineations. Reality is ultimately irrational. The teacher then cannot know how to integrate himself. How can any one integrate himself with the indeterminate? And if unable to integrate himself, neither can he teach the pupil proper integration.

#### **D. THE UNITY OF CULTURE**

In the preceding discussion we have maintained that only consistent Christianity can account for the process of learning and of teaching. It has been our contention that on the non-Christian basis, there would be no coherence in human experience at all.

The antithesis between the Christian and the non-Christian principle is therefore absolute. There are those who serve and worship the creature, and there are those who serve and worship the Creator. There are those who know the ideal of human life and the criterion for human life and who are alive by the power of the Spirit so that they strive for the realization of the true ideal of life. On the other hand, there are those who know neither the true ideal nor the true criterion and are spiritually dead. There are no degrees of deadness. There is therefore an absolute antithesis between the two principles.

Yet, the absolute antithesis is one *of principle only*. And principles do not come to full expression in human life until the end of history. In practice therefore, the non-Christian can know and teach much that is right and true.

Shall we say that the philosophers, in their exquisite researches and skillful description of nature were blind? Shall we deny the possession of intellect to those who drew up rules for discourse, and taught us to speak in accord with reason? Shall we say that those who, by the cultivation of medical arts, expended their industry in our behalf, were only raving? What shall we say of the mathematical sciences? Shall we deem them to be the dreams of madmen? Nay, we cannot read the writings of the ancients on these subjects without the highest admiration; and admiration which their excellence will not allow us to withhold.<sup>1</sup>

It is thus that Calvin speaks after he has shown that human depravity “not only extends to the whole human race, but has complete possession of every soul.”<sup>2</sup>

Nor does Calvin fear to stress the absoluteness of the principle of sin lest he do injustice to the goodness and truth and beauty that he finds in the culture of unbelieving men and nations. On the contrary, the ideas of total depravity and of the unity of human culture are involved in one another. They are involved in one another because they spring from the same root — God’s all-controlling counsel. God has one unified plan. It is within this plan that men engage in their cultural pursuits. This is the positive basis for the unity of human culture. It is from this positive basis that the Reformed view takes its direction.

## **1. The Common Goal**

In the first place, God speaks to the human race as a whole when he set before it the ideal of a common racial culture. God offered all men the prospect of great reward for a common cultural task faithfully performed.

On the non-Christian principle, there is no God to offer such a prospect. There is no unity at all. There is nothing but diversity. Any unity that is sought cannot be a unity of culture attained by a common striving for a common goal through history. For the unity of the non-Christian principle is the timeless unity which reduces all diversity to identity. There is on this basis no meaning to the idea of universal history and universal culture.

All non-Reformed positions are not adequately aware of this fact. Of course, it is true that they do teach much about God and the world that is true. It is even true that non-Reformed Christians often use the same concepts that are used by those of the Reformed Faith. And so the Reformed Christian should rejoice in the

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<sup>1</sup> Calvin, John, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book II, Chap. 2, Section 15.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* Book II, Chap. 2, Section 1.

fact that there are many schools which are based upon evangelical Christianity. The opposition between the Reformed and the evangelical Protestant positions should always be that of friends stirring up each other to see and teach the full truth. The sharpest criticism made against the Arminian view of education by those who are Reformed must never obscure the fact that each is seeking in his own way to magnify the name of God and of his Christ.

But precisely because Arminians insist that man is able to do that which goes against the ultimate counsel of God we insist that it does not do full justice to the biblical idea of the unity of the human race and the unity of culture. God is in control of history and all that comes to pass comes to pass because of his ultimate determination. Nothing less than this idea, directly taken from Scripture, will do justice to the unity of culture. Without this idea, human activity would be activity in the void. God is the captain of the ship. He has made the ship and he controls the wind and the seas. He has taken on his crew. He has offered them a rich reward at the end of the journey. He will see to it that the ship reaches its destination.

## **2. The Common Revolt Against God**

The second point to be mentioned is based upon the first. There was at the beginning of history a common rejection of the mandate given man and a common spurning of the reward promised at the end of the journey. There was mutiny on board and every member of the crew was party to it. It was the purpose of the chief mutineer to take over the ship. Satan had seen a vision. He had envisioned himself as the captain of the ship. He promised the crew "greater" rewards than God had promised them.

But Satan's vision was a mirage. He had forgotten that God, as captain, was in complete control of all things. Satan did not realize that his success would at the same time be his failure. If he had really taken over the ship the ship would have floundered. And with it Satan, the captain, and his fellow mutineers would have gone down to destruction.

But even so, this would have been Satan's victory. For he would have succeeded in defeating God. God would have gone down with the ship also.

Had this taken place, it would only have meant that God had himself been mistaken about his own control of the ship. He really had never been the captain. He had only dreamed that he could bring the ship to its desired haven. The Romanist and the Arminian ideas of God assume at the outset of their thinking that God may be defeated. But if he could be defeated, then he never was absolute. Then there were forces over against him that were from all eternity as original or ultimate as he. Sin cannot on their basis be defined as any want of conformity to or transgression of the law of God. For strictly speaking there is

then no *law* of God. The law of God actually is the arrangement that God has ordered for the created universe and therefore also for man the rational creature.

But on the Romanist and Arminian basis, law is that which God and man together do in cooperation with one another in a common environment. Of course, this is so only to the extent that the Roman and Arminian views hold to their doctrine of free will. To the extent that they hold to the doctrines of God's creation and providence, they virtually deny this their own view of free will. But the point that distinguishes their views from that of Reformed thought is precisely that in some measure they ascribe autonomy or free will to man. And to the extent that they ascribe such a free will to man, to that extent they virtually deny the law of God. And in virtually denying the law of God they virtually deny that sin is defined exclusively in relation to the law of God. They virtually deny that it is the business of the crew to take its orders from the captain only. It is their assumption that they too, as well as God, should have the veto power in the control room of the ship. Thus, the matter of criterion is not settled in the way that it should be settled on Christian principles. There is no longer any absolute and clear knowledge of the goal. The distinction between north and south has been blurred. In fact, the ship's captain cannot direct his course as he desires. He, together with the crew, is adrift in the ship which he thought he could control but actually cannot. The rudder has broken.

On the other hand, upon the Reformed view, sin is sin against the law of God. God knows the goal of history and can therefore promise mankind an eternal reward for faithful labor and obedience. Any rebellion is exclusively opposition to God. And therefore, it is *absolute* rebellion. His position is absolute and therefore rebellion against him must be absolute. It is the setting aside of God as God. Is that anything less than absolute?

### **3. The Offer of Common Victory Over Evil**

But thirdly, it must be added that although this rebellion is absolute, it is certain to be absolutely destroyed. Satan is bound to fail. The crew that follows the first mutineer is bound to be defeated. The true captain knows all the while what they were doing. Nothing was hid from him. Their secret thoughts were as clear to him as the midday sun. Their thoughts, like everything else, were completely under his control. The captain will therefore surely bring his ship to the intended harbor. There will be absolute frustration of Satan who intended absolute destruction.

It is through Christ the Son of God, whose work is sovereignly applied to the hearts of men by the Holy Spirit, that the ship is saved. Christ saves the world. He not only *intends to save* the world. He *will save* the world. He has in principle saved the world. The world and its culture is even now saved for God. It is also being saved for God.

So the gospel of salvation is offered universally. It is offered to mankind. It is offered generally. It is offered indiscriminately. But it is offered conditionally. Men must accept their cultural task and opportunity anew in Christ. They are told that God will by this means attain his original goal. If they desire to be saved and if they desire their culture to be saved, they must accept the Christ of God. Of course, they cannot really accept Christ except through the regenerating power of the Holy Spirit. But even Adam could have been obedient to God only through the power of God. All human action is, in the nature of the case, based upon the more ultimate action of God. Man's action, like his thought, is analogical. But for that very reason it is significant. Because it is surrounded by the ultimate will and plan of God human action and thought is not performed in a void.

But what about those who do not accept the Christ of God? What about those who continue their mutiny against the captain of the ship? God continues to call them, as part of the crew, to repentance. He sends forth a general call to the whole human race, promising those who repent and believe that they will be saved and have their culture saved also. He also continues to threaten those who will not believe that they will be destroyed. They will be kept on board until the end of the journey. They will not simply be kept in ward. They will even be allowed the freedom of the ship. But they will of necessity help to do the work of the ship. And so of necessity the total culture to which they had to contribute will be saved.

This saving of their culture will therefore be in spite of their own principle. Their principle, the principle of mutiny, was aimed to destroy the ship. It may be compared to the fire that is started in one of the cabins of the ship. If not put out it would destroy the ship. Its principle is absolutely destructive. But it is under perfect control. Hence, those who have made the fire cannot even succeed in destroying the work that they, together with the rest of the crew, perform daily aboard the ship as it sails on to its destined haven.

It should be remembered that the mutineers are not perfectly self-conscious. But at bottom they realize that their own mutinous endeavors are bound to fail. Calvin, like Paul, emphasizes the fact that all men have the knowledge of God within them. They know therefore that mutiny is certain to end in self-frustration. They know that to sin against God is at the same time to sin against the law of their own being. They know that mutiny does not pay. For mutineers must still work, and as mutineers they must labor for the captain without finally reaping the reward that he has offered them.

So their mutiny is something that requires artificial stimulation all the time. Rules of navigation are carefully drawn up by the chief mutineer which are calculated to show that the captain is not properly directing the ship and that he will therefore be unable to reach his own destination. Yet, such rules of Satan are artificial and false imitations of the rules which he himself learns from the way the captain actually handles the ship.

Even so, the mutineers believe that they will finally be successful. They make themselves believe that no one, while still on the open sea, ought to make a choice for the captain rather than for the chief mutineer. So there are degrees of self-deception by which the mutineers labor.

The conclusion of the whole matter is this. There are two mutually exclusive principles for the interpretation of life. The Christian principle presupposes God who speaks authoritatively through the Bible, giving man basic principles for the interpretation of the whole of life. The non-Christian principle presupposes man who speaks authoritatively of himself. Psychologically, of course, the Christian must also begin with man. But he begins with man acknowledged as the creature of God. So, it is still true that the Christian interprets all of life in terms of God and the non-Christian interprets all of life in terms of man.

It is impossible to choose between these two positions by an appeal to a neutral third position. To attempt to do so is in effect to judge the case in advance in favor of the non-Christian position.

The discussion between the two positions must therefore be one that takes place for the sake of the argument. This means that each takes his place, hypothetically only, upon the presupposition of the other in order to see what happens to human experience.

Since the Christian must seek to win the non-Christian, it is he who should first be ready to think himself sympathetically into the position of the party he is trying to win. He therefore listens patiently to all the objections that the non-Christian has against the Christian position. But he at once sees that all these objections rest upon one fundamental assumption, the assumption of man's ultimacy. And therefore the real question between the two positions has not even been touched unless it be asked upon what foundation the non-Christian can make his objections to Christianity intelligible. On what foundation rests the guns which he directs against the Christian position?

When this question is considered, it appears that this placement is the truth of Christianity itself. In other words, the non-Christian needs the truth of the Christian religion in order to attack it. As a child needs to sit on the lap of its father in order to slap the father's face, so the unbeliever, as a creature, needs God the Creator and providential controller of the universe in order to oppose this God. Without this God, the place on which he stands does not exist. He cannot stand in a vacuum.

Applying this to the problem of Christian education, we see that on the non-Christian basis the teacher cannot teach unless he borrows the truths of Christianity. He needs the very idea of God and his authoritative revelation in order to make this God and his revelation entirely subject to man.

Thus the fact that he can and does teach is intelligible only because that which he assumes not to be true is actually true. He teaches, therefore, but he teaches by accident. He is able to teach because his own principle is not true and because the principle of Christianity is true.

Understanding this the Christian becomes conscious of the necessity and value of his own educational program. It is he who must furnish not only the philosophy of education for himself, but he must also furnish the weapons with which the unbeliever must attack him in order to be defeated. And when the unbeliever is defeated, then his own work is established. When the fire on the boat is put out, then the work of the crew is saved from destruction.

## **E. COMMON GRACE**

In what has preceded, a sharp distinction has been made between the Reformed and the non-Reformed or evangelical Christian views of education. The "particularism" of the Reformed Faith has necessarily been emphasized. In Romanism, Lutheranism and Arminianism, God cannot deal directly with the individual. God can present a general offer of salvation to men, but the individual man must finally decide whether he will accept it. But the Reformed faith holds that God not merely offers general possibilities but also actually accomplishes his will within individual men.

But individualism or particularism by itself is not the hallmark of the Reformed Faith. There is a distinct universalism involved in Reformed particularism. This has already been mentioned. We must examine it briefly now in connection with the Reformed conception of common grace and its bearing on education.

It has been repeatedly indicated that in non-Christian thought an abstract or formal universal is the correlate of an abstract, purely contingent, particular. It has also been indicated that in the non-Reformed orthodoxy, Christianity is toned down by the introduction of remnants of these two.

It is clear then that true universalism goes with true particularism. Where God does reach the individual directly, he reaches him in all his relationships. It is upon a Reformed basis only that the unity of the race and the unity of its culture is fully maintained. It is this that the Reformed doctrine of common grace underlines and helps to effect.

But in order to assign this doctrine its appropriate function in education it must be woven into the whole complex of Christian doctrine. And the heart of this system of doctrines lies in the recognition that God himself directly and constantly confronts the race with his requirements and promises. In the beginning, God's attitude to mankind was one of general favor. After mankind rebelled against him, he still is gracious to them while at the same time he calls them to repentance.

But the call to repentance has a forward as well as a backward look. God continually calls mankind toward the goal that he has set for it. After the entrance of sin, the call toward that goal must be accomplished through the Christ. Thus, the idea of common grace is directly related to special or saving grace. In other words, common grace is Christologically conditioned. There would be no commonness if it were not Christologically conditioned, otherwise commonness would be reduced to blank identity. The "goodness of God," says Paul, is calculated to lead men to repentance (Rom. 2:4). But repentance also includes sorrow for not having undertaken the cultural task assigned to mankind, and a determination to undertake it anew.

If God's gifts of common grace such as "rain and sunshine," are thus seen as being a part of God's general call to repentance, then believers must also include that in their "testimony" to unbelievers. Believers have by grace repented from sin and undertaken their cultural task anew. They ask unbelievers to join them in a common obedience to God through Christ. "It is for that reason," they testify, "that God's good gifts are given you. We beseech you, in Christ's name, be ye reconciled to God." It is God's longsuffering patience which would lead you to repentance that enables you to do all those things which "for the matter of them" are "in themselves praiseworthy and useful." God intends to accomplish his ultimate end, the establishment of his kingdom. That is the reason why you are now able to contribute positively to the coming of that kingdom. The harps you make, the oratorios you produce, the great poems you have written, the scientific discoveries you have made will, with your will or against your will, all find their place in the unified structure of the kingdom of God through Christ. Now, then, in God's name repent, for otherwise the Israelites will "borrow" your treasures and you shall perish in the Red Sea like the Egyptians.

The Roman Catholic has no such doctrine of common grace. In his system, the believer and the unbeliever have an area in common *without* difference. Romanism assumes that the "natural theology" of the natural man is a true evaluation of the revelation of God in nature. It thus virtually confuses God's revelation to man with man's response to that revelation. The same is true, in large measure, of non-Reformed Protestantism. Here too the objective and the subjective are confused, and the confusion introduces the abstract universal and the abstract particular into Christianity.

It goes without saying that the Reformed doctrine of common grace may not rest upon such confusion. The idea of common grace may not become the basis for a "neutral territory" between believer and unbeliever, patterned after the natural theology of Rome. Then the challenge that believers must present to unbelievers in the field of scientific knowledge, e. g., would be unnecessary. Such an essentially scholastic notion of common grace would also mean the loss of the hope of the unity of science.

The doctrine of common grace, properly imbedded in Reformed thinking as a whole, is indispensable for the unity of science, and therefore for the duty of challenging unbelief thoroughly and comprehensively.

The Reformed community, we conclude, must follow its own educational program. Much as it appreciates what is done by brethren of non-Reformed Christian persuasion, it is on the Reformed basis alone that a comprehensive Christian view of life can be set over against the world of unbelief. Only the Reformed view shows the full power of Christianity in meeting the challenge of the wisdom of the world and in offering men, with the pleading voice of the Christ who wept over the multitudes of Jerusalem, the reward of their labor for this life and the life to come. The Reformed community takes no delight in building alone. It takes no delight in living in ecclesiastical isolation. But if there is reason for it to live and to work alone ecclesiastically then there is the same reason for working alone educationally. And yet our hope is not to work alone forever. Our aim is the ultimate good of all who love the gospel and all those who should love the truth.

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