Lecture I

The University

INTRODUCTION

For the third time I am honored to address the Unionville conference. Deeper than this honor, however, I feel the heavy responsibility of taking part in the effort to erect a Christian university on this continent.

He who looks at this project with secular eyes will observe only a very small taskforce that can hardly be expected to succeed. And if it should nevertheless succeed, the result his eyes would see could safely be ignored.

But when you look at this project with spiritual eyes--and that is the only way to see things truly--you will observe something having the features of the mustard seed; you will see the Kingdom of the Lord that has come and is still coming.

When the Lord grants this project success, your spiritual eyes will witness a major achievement of our civilization, a piece of true culture and true civilization, because, and in so far as, it is controlled by the Christ of the Scriptures and by the Word of Christ.

But before you become proud, look again, look at its history, and at the history of Christian civilization with its endless chain of human failures. Then you will learn that it is man himself who fails. His failures are caused by the inclination of the human heart to hypostatize the results of his successful actions, thereby to secularize them so that they lose their true meaning and start to decline.

However, before history disheartens you, look again and observe that at the bottom this history is the victorious execution in Jesus Christ of the project of God in which everyone is used as and ought to be an obedient instrument.

My task for the present lectures is now clear. Its program has to be: What is the meaning of the university? What is the lesson of history? What is needed to found a Christian university?

This task is lightened considerably by the published lectures of the former conferences which are at your disposal.

As to my own lectures, the three series, although not deliberately planned that way, display a good coherence and logical sequence, forming a certain whole. The first lectures about science and the second about philosophy form important topics for the study of the university, which topics can now be dealt with in the form of a summary.

In the first series I discussed science in general. I demonstrated that science cannot be, as is frequently supposed, a field of autonomous and neutral human activity. It is based on and guided by faith.
The very idea of neutrality and independence of science has a
religious origin. Although many scientists are not aware of this fact
and although this faith is rather the common world and life view and
the spirit of the time than the belief of the individual scientist,
be it nonetheless has a strong influence on the whole of science and its
course. It is up to the Christian scientist to clarify this relation
between science and faith. He should understand moreover how this
faith ought to guide him in science. And he is bound to discover
whether eventually he himself is not unsuspectingly ruled by other
concepts of life.

The topic of the second series was philosophy. It is the scien-
tific tie that embraces all the special sciences. It unlocks the gate
to the reservoir of all the basic questions of the sciences.

In general, philosophy is the territory of all the last questions
of mankind, where the philosophy is motivated by his search for wisdom.
It will be clear that especially in this area the problem of the
presuppositions of science, of the relation between scientific activity
and faith emerges.

In the present series we have to deal with the institution where
science and philosophy are studied. Our task will be to investigate
what the structure of the university ought to be and especially, how
the dependence of science and philosophy on faith has to be accounted
for in the structure of the university. That investigation will con-
front us with the basis of the university. We are of course above
all else interested in the Christian university.

I sincerely hope that my contribution will be of some use to you
in your joint effort to establish such a university on the American
continent.

The Meaning of the University

What then is a university? Is it a top level school of preparation
for a profession? No, since that would only be a first rate trade
school or a combination of such schools. What relation professional
study has to the university we shall see later on.

Could the university then be an institution for scientific investi-
gation and research? Not that either, although investigation and
research have their rightful place at the university as we shall
also see.

In my opinion the university is the place for training in science.
We shall have to develop the correct feeling for these words: training
and science. But first I must add another feature. The private study
room is also such a place. The difference is, however, that the
university is a place of joint training. It is a community of learning.
It uses the forces of group activity, but then in a special sense.
There are two kinds of members of this community. Some are already
learned men, the others are learning students. It is for these students
that the university exists. They are the professional goal of the
other members, the professors. The student, not the professor and his
research, is the human core of the university.
The scientific training of the student is the true meaning of the university.

Now let us look into the word training. Newman in his famous book, The idea of a University, typifies its activity as education and not as training. While I prefer training to education, it is not because I would deny an educational relation between professor and student but because true study demands that increasingly the guidance of the student has to make room for the student's own development into a scholar. This independence is essential for the man of science and the university fails its task when it does not provide the student with the opportunity to operate independently at the peak of intellect. You will agree, I trust, that training in science expresses this state of affairs better than education. Although on the one hand the student will have to follow the guidance of his professor until the end of his training, on the other hand he will have to grow gradually into a partner of his master.

This is necessary too when we look at the question from another angle. Training in science is no less than being engaged at the frontier of human knowledge. At this frontier the professor is learning also and in that sense he has to view the student as a companion. That is the reason why in the field of teaching at the university, and only there, the process of teaching can never be separated from original research. This research is, as I stated above, not the goal of the university, but an indispensable means to provide that training in science which is the true aim of the university. In addition to the training of the student at the university, therefore, the advancement of knowledge through investigation and research on the part of the professor in collaboration with his more advanced students must be accorded a place.

We must understand this relation between training and investigation thoroughly because it is a very important feature of the university and is easily misconstrued. Ortega Y Gasset, as could be expected, has written a remarkable book about the university. He is so very much afraid that the instruction will lose its true aim that he proposes to eliminate investigation and science proper from the university. The university, he maintains, must not search for knowledge.

This proposal cannot be correct. The highest level of training of the mind involves that the training takes place at the dynamic frontline of knowledge. It therefore must include investigation.

There can, however, be another faulty relation at the university between training in science and investigation. It is this false trend against which Ortega takes a stand, because it threatens the very existence of the university in our time. I have in mind the trend that the investigation become an independent and perhaps the most important goal of the university. Where this happens the student soon becomes the forgotten man at the university which will then become a research centre. Of course investigation at the university too must be true investigation, it must maintain the sovereignty of its sphere and live up to its own nature. But it is bound by a limiting condition comparable to the conditions of the research department in an industrial concern. It has to serve the training of the
student. The method of investigation has to be adjusted to this service and the field of investigation has to be chosen accordingly.

What, now, does the training of the student really mean?

It of course has something to do with the accumulation of a certain coherent body of knowledge, which the student must assimilate as his own knowledge. But we know already that at the university level knowledge is always on the move. The student is trained for the habit of the learned man. The university aims at the cultivation of his mind. In addition to a content of knowledge, this cultivation means both the instrumentation and motivation of the mind. The student has to learn how to attack a problem, how to investigate, analyze, think, reason, judge, withhold judgment etc. But the training moreover requires that he become aware of problems, that he develop a real and hearty interest in them, that he engage in them fully for their own sake. Thus the cultivation of his mind means that he believes in the meaning of the search for knowledge and that he be motivated by this belief.

To which problems should his mind attend? To all that are important for human life. That is the first answer. And I have to stress it and to repeat it because it is largely forgotten in the world of the university that the student has to confront himself with all the important problems of reality. As a university student he needs a universal interest. Only when we are thoroughly aware of the significance of this first answer may we observe that there is also a second answer: he has to occupy himself with a particular field of problems.

We may put it this way: the student has to philosophize as well as specialize. The need of specialization itself will occupy us in due time. At this moment I only draw your attention to this very important statement, that in order to philosophize thoroughly it is necessary to specialize, and in order to specialize efficiently it is necessary to philosophize.

In developing my idea of the university as the place where students are trained in science, we should consider also the meaning of science. On the territory of science we meet the special sciences from mathematics to theology, as well as philosophy. Well then, can training in science mean that the student has to become a learned man in all these sciences? Centuries ago such an aim was realizable and was in fact attained by many a learned man. But for a hundred years and more that has been out of the question and every decade the scientific world removes itself farther from such an all-around expertness.

More important than the reflection that it is impossible for a learned man to be an expert in every area, is the understanding, that such an exhaustive learning is unnecessary. It is already superfluous because the student later on will enter a certain profession for which only a special science is needed. But we shall say no more of this argument for we have not yet discussed the relation of the university to the professions. The purpose of training in science is not to control all knowledge of all the sciences but it is the training in science as such, in its method, in its approach to the major problems of our world, to one or another of them and
the whole of them. Its aim moreover is to obtain the habit and the
motivation of the scholar. It is the awakening of an interest in
our civilization and its problems. It is the training in the master-
ship that will enable him to take a leading part in our civilization
and to make a special scientific contribution to it.

Here again we meet with the two sides of the university: the
universal and the special side of the training. You will understand
that for the universal side of the training—with which I mean the
over-all, all-around, general scientific view—philosophy is the
subject in which the student ought to be trained. Philosophy, the
all embracing science, provides the background for the special
sciences and is the field of the fundamental problems. It gives
the general scientific approach to reality.

Newman considers philosophy to be the core of university education.
Knowledge at the university is for him essentially philosophical
and the philosophical habit of mind is that for which the student
should be trained.

You will perhaps object that this is the typical one-minded
approach of the philosopher. But then you have missed the point.
Although I grant that the universal study may not be the only
center of gravity at the university and that special study has
importance of its own as a second center, I agree with Newman that
a general training is the first goal of the university and that it
cornsits itself with teaching the student to philosophize.

However, let me advance two arguments for specialized training.
Some special training will be necessary in order that the student,
in getting a general education, may thoroughly learn the scientific
method, the relation of a special science to reality and also the
procedure by which the questions that are passed on to philosophy
arise in the special sciences. Only in that way will he be able to
grasp their meaning.

The second argument for specialized training is this: in carrying
out his leading function in our civilization as a universally trained
man of science, the scholar has to operate somewhere in the front
lines of this civilization. Therefore he must be trained to act
expertly in this position. At that point the profession comes in.
The student is prepared for a profession by studying the special
sciences which are related to that profession and by practicing
that profession and applying his knowledge.

But I maintain that the proper goal of the university must be
the cultivation of the mind in order that the universally or philo-
sophically trained man, having acquired the habit of the scholar,
be formed. According to Newman, the university produces the gentle-
man and according to Ortega it produces the cultured man. Although
I mistrust somewhat the content of their ideal as a kind of
hypostatization of the scholar, which we encounter already in the
humanist of the Middle ages, I agree with them that the university
falls short of its goal when it does not share in the building the
universally cultured man; more to the point: the wise man who knows
truth and practises it. Remembering the role of philosophy in
university education, you will agree that it is better to say that
the university ought not only to train the students for a profession, but in the first place to develop them into wise men equipped with the habits of learning and the methods of science. That should be the result of the training in science. The modern university is far removed from this ideal; I know it all too well. You will recognize hardly anything of the picture I have designed in the university you attend.

But at the beginning of a new university it is possible, however difficult it may be, to take this conception into consideration. As for me, I think this is the right course to follow.

There is another argument I have as yet not used. I merely made my point by the proper analysis of the structure of the university, the place where the student is trained in science so that his mind may be cultivated to its highest level.

The argument I have in mind concerns the needs of society. The modern university in most of its faculties is of the opinion that it will meet the needs of the present society best when it produces highly specialized scientists and scholars. It cannot be denied that they are urgently needed in our time. There is, however, reason to doubt that the university is the institution that ought to train them. One could make a case that it is the task of scientific trade schools to educate specialists. It would also be possible to use graduates from the university afterwards as specialists so that society and not the university would furnish this specialized training.

Something of that kind is realized at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Warned by the dangers of over-specialization, other universities in the U.S.A. go even farther in the rejection of specialization at the university and have generalized their courses, so I have been told.

I cannot judge whether such a project would be possible and useful. I have already demonstrated that a specialized training is also necessary for the training of the universally cultured man. But I don't think that a conflict need arise between this requirement and a project to generalize the university. The question is this: for what purpose is the specialization introduced?

However, looking at the needs of society, I had quite another point in mind. I state it too feebly if I say that society needs not only specialists but also broadly cultured men on the level of science. Too feebly, because our civilization is in urgent need of wise men of culture and because the present university does not train them. More than anything else in the crisis of our time we need wisdom based on learning. This quality is needed for an all-encompassing and well balanced approach to the complexity of modern problems. The situation is, however, such that the university produces specialists and that broader leadership is occupied by men who are educated by experience and sometimes by university graduates who, however, have not been equipped for this job at the university. The conclusion is that the university does not train and provide the men that it could and ought to provide.

We may say therefore that according to the structure of the university and the needs of society the university must train wise men of culture, capable of a scientific approach.
At this point I must elucidate the concepts of wisdom, culture and science, because they are often used in a sense different from the one I have in mind. I will discuss this question only briefly as it has been dealt with extensively in my former lectures.

Generally these concepts are given a secular meaning that is the fundamental opposite of the religious character these concepts really have.

Taken in their true sense, they are qualities of man's religious being, of his absolute dependence upon God. Only when we in faith give them this meaning, can true wisdom develop; only when Christ occupies our heart, only then can true culture, that is man's growth in the image of God, develop. And only then can true scientific knowledge, that is the understanding of the command of the Lord over reality, arise.

When on the contrary these concepts are understood in a secular sense, while they do remain in fact religious qualities, they are considered to be qualities of man's autonomy. As a result of this error wisdom turns into foolishness, the image of God into the image of fallen man, who longed to be equal to God; and science becomes the tool of man's desired independence.

However, although the religious and the secular views are fundamentally opposed, they occupy a common ground because they can exist only as religious qualities; truly or as idolatrous images of their true being. In that latter sense too they can never exist outside their true being as restored in Christ. That is why the Christian is on speaking terms with the world. That is why the Christian is never allowed to deny the traces of wisdom, culture and knowledge in secular life.

The antithesis between the religious and the secular view has an important bearing upon the community of the university. If science were entirely free, as is frequently supposed, the antithesis would of course not arise. But then neither a community nor study would be possible at the university.

However, such absolute freedom is impossible, because that could only mean an endless, pointless searching. Scientific activity is in fact building up knowledge upon knowledge. Not only is science bound by the states of affair which are investigated but is moreover at least unconsciously bound by the continuity of knowledge already gained and by the direction of the search inspired by the current trend.

What is really meant by the freedom of science is its autonomy and that too has a religious tie.

Returning to the above mentioned antithesis, we may state that the university always displays the features of a community. And it cannot be both a religious and a secular community at the same time.

Actually, the situation can become more complicated. It is possible that the university as a whole is not an active community. It is then only an organization and the community consists merely,
of a common feeling behind that organization. General training for
the student in the university then becomes impossible. It will then
be possible that the faculty only forms an active community. When
that community too ceases to exist it will be necessary, if the
university is to function at all, that a community of learning be
formed by the individual professor and his students.

Of course the professor does not make the student wise, cultured
and learned but he does contribute to the development of these
virtues and that can only be done by means of a community within
which the professor assumes a leading role and therefore he ought
to proceed selfconsciously in a definite direction. Otherwise he
is useless.

I need not explain to you that this remnant of a university,
whatever its direction, is not my idea of a university. My point
is that study at the university can only be performed in a community,
however small it may be. The student, at least during his beginning
years, has to trust and to follow his professor who has a directional
influence upon him. That direction is decisive in the training of
the student. It is because of the secular direction of the liberal
universities that so many Christian students in attendance there
gradually fall away from the Christian faith.

In my opinion the university in its entirety ought to be an
active directional community and its direction should be that true
religious response of the university to God which its own peculiar
nature requires.

I have given a rather lengthy analysis of the university. In
order that you may keep in touch with the essentials, let me sum
them up. We are at this moment of course only interested in what
the university ought to be,

1. The university is the place for training in science.
2. This training should be performed in a learning community.
3. The object of university training is the student who is the reason
   for the existence of the university.
4. Investigation and research should be introduced to support and
   serve this training.
5. The inner purpose of the training of the student's mind is the
   building of a wise man of culture who masters the tools of
   science.
6. For this purpose the approach to science ought to be both uni-
   versal and special.
7. The external purpose should be the training for general leader-
   ship in society combined with training for a profession.
8. Study of the university is directional. The direction is mainly
determined by the university, a faculty or the individual
professor.

It is such a community of universal and specialized learning that
so strongly attracts young people who are eager to challenge their
mind, who like to dwell on the highest levels of thought and invention
and who have developed an interest in the important problems of
reality, presuming that there and nowhere else they will be able to
tackle these problems methodically and expect precise and clear
results.
The experience of the young men and women, once inside, however, is one of disappointment. Some of them complain that the university is too conservative, impractical and inefficient. Students who like to study meet quite another disappointment. Instead of a community of learning they find an organization of more or less isolated scholars. From the beginning they lose sight of the unity and the whole of science, and enter upon a road of specialization with never a chance for a universal approach. On that road they experience in most faculties that they become victims of "cramming" for a profession with no opportunity or time for independent learning. In the end they have forgotten the important problems that interested them at the start. Worst of all, they gradually come to believe that their specialized approach and particular problems are the only really important ones.

It is necessary to underline this deterioration of the university because we have become so accustomed to it, we begin to consider it normal. However, when it is compared with the forms of the university in previous centuries, it appears quite abnormal.

What the modern university has lost is:

1. The community of learning, which has been replaced by an organization.
2. The general approach of science, which has been replaced by specialization.
3. The liberal character of study, which has been replaced by the system of cramming useful knowledge into the mind of the student.

I am saying nothing new. And up to a certain point I also agree with the general view that the present state of the university is caused by the development of society and of science. Before considering that point, let us try to understand what the development of science and society has meant for the university.

I mentioned already the trend of specialization. Caused by the growth of science and the extension of knowledge it will at length become a threat to the community and the universality of the university.

It must, however, be clear that this trend of specialization cannot satisfactorily be explained by the growth of science from inside. More important still is the fact that during the last 150 years science has become a growing force in society due to its application, especially in the field of technology. In our time it has become the decisive power in society. But to maintain its predominant position it had to fulfil at the university the expectation of society concerning the ever broadening needs that science itself had created. Therefore it had to specialize more and more.

That brings up an important fact. The university today has a tremendous intellectual influence on society. More so than ever before. It is greater than that of any other institution. It has far outdistanced the influence of the church. But this influence could only be gained and can only be maintained by the sacrifice of the independence of the university. Losing its sphere sovereignty
and thereby its own character, it deteriorated into an institution whose law is mainly prescribed by society and eventually by the representative of the so-called community, the state. That is the reason why pragmatism, the philosophy that made truth dependent on practical use, obtained such an influence at the university and in the sciences.

Besides this specialization and the compelling influence of society upon the university, there is a third cause for this change. The rise of living standards in the last century opened the gates of the university to more and more levels of society. And still more people from all strata of society entered it when it became known that that was the road to greater influence and comfortable living. The university has become a mass institution. Its task is considered to be the mass production of the crop of executives and specialists needed by society.

Such modern characteristics: specialization, a pragmatic relation to society and mass education, are generally accepted as the causes of the radical changes within the university. It means that the community of the university is lost, that the general area of science have been neglected and that freedom in study is considered as a loss of precious time. Once the university has undergone this change, it is no more the place to train cultured men and women.

Even if it is accepted that the change is a real loss to, and in fact a deterioration of the university, the prevailing opinion is that it is no use to lament, because the change is unavoidable. Of course one has to correct the worst effects, but in general it will be necessary to follow the trend prescribed by the development of society.

I said above that I agreed only to a certain point with the current description of the state of the university and the causes of its change. This is the conception that I had in mind then.

The description thus far is nothing else than the reflection of Marx. The development of society is necessary and everything else has to fit in with its course. To understand why Marx in our time has still such an enormous influence and is still considered as a prophet, you must know that this conception of reality is the result of a certain merely scientific approach to it. For such an approach the spiritual issue (the aspect of faith) is neglected because it does not appear among the facts of science. What does appear there is such a faith that can be shown to be dependent on something else, something factual, e.g., society. And that of course is not a genuine faith.

The result is of course a deterministic conception of reality, and a more or less fatalistic conception of the present university.

If this were true, not only would my exposition of the genuine university have been in vain but the idea of a Christian university would also be a fiction.

However, this conception is the result of a prejudice, of an overestimation of science. Its strength is that the strictly scientific approach—and that is the one you students will most often
encounter—does not reject true faith, but does not detect it. For science with the character of an ostrich, faith does not exist.

As Christians we know that the decisive aspect in human life is faith. At present Western civilization is passing through a crisis of faith. It is in fact a crisis of humanism which has consumed all its idols of faith. This crisis gave rise to a loss of meaning and norms in the faith of more and more men. Some of the effects are that the interest in universal problems is lost and that the ties of the community are loosened. A kind of spiritual disintegration has set in.

I would add three theses to the reflection of the present university and the causes for its change.

1. The decline of the university is due not only to the development of society but also to the development of the spiritual denominator of our civilization.

2. The change of society itself—although one has to consider the interdependence—is chiefly dependent on the spiritual makeup of our time, which is in general the source of the motivation for society.

3. The influence of faith on the university does not come exclusively from outside. The university itself has always practised a kind of leadership in the formation of the spirit of the time. This is especially true in our century.

Let us look at this last thesis. It means that the decline of the universality and its opportunity for study is caused not only by its relation to society but much more by the spiritual makeup of our civilization as it is still mainly formed by the university itself.

In this respect the present university is the precise opposite of the Christian university we hope to establish. The antithesis centers in the question of the basis of the university. To shape and to develop a Christian university requires knowledge of the present state of the existing universities and their failings.

Before discussing this topic it will be necessary to study further the interdependence of the university and society and the spiritual facet of civilization by turning to the history of the university.
Lecture II

A Short History of the University

The Origin of the University

We are especially interested in two points: the idea of the university and the university's relation to its environment.

Within our civilization the first university was that of Salerno, erected in the 11th century and containing only a medical faculty. More important were the three universities founded in the 12th century at Bologna, Paris, and Oxford. Among the universities founded in the 13th and 14th century were those at Salamanca, Cambridge, Montpellier, Prague, Vienna, and Heidelberg.

Of course, older universities existed even before our era, e.g., in the Near East and in India. We are, however, at present interested only in the development within our Western civilization.

The first thousand years of the Christian era formed a period of political instability and oppression of various kinds. In the field of knowledge scholars were mainly occupied with the preservation, compilation and interpretation of the ancient knowledge that had come down from the Greeks and the church fathers. It was the merit of the monasteries that they preserved the treasures of antiquity for the succeeding centuries. They did not make original contributions to science.

Due to various reasons this situation changed in the 11th century. We should not forget that one reason was the Mohammedans' contribution; they reintroduced the classical authors and also opened some important new fields of knowledge.

At that time a revived spirit of curiosity, the beginning of all science, brought students together around one or more famous scholars and thus the university started. Some students went to the university to learn a practical art or profession such as that of lawyer or doctor. But study was not limited to an art or profession. The real aim and interest of the university and for many students was the encyclopedic learning if offered the cultured man of that time. The student was educated as a Christian humanist in the truths of morality and religion. It must be noted however that the way of living of the students of that time was less Christian than that of many agnostic students of our age. Fighting, drinking, raping, stealing, and murdering were daily activities. In general the students practised the study of the so-called liberal arts: the trivium of grammar, logic, and rhetoric and the quadrivium of geometry, arithmetic, astronomy and music.

From the beginning they were true universities and remained such up to our century, with one restriction, namely, that at first the study was rather scholastic, a mere learning of established knowledge. Let me mention also that it was only later that the name university got its significance as an institute of universal study. In the beginning that was covered by the term studium generale. A university then signified merely an association of professors together with their students.
Another important feature was their existence as free associations of scholars and students. In some places the professors were in charge; in others the students themselves controlled every-thing except the examinations. Church and state had no authority at the university. It was a kind of guild in most instances. It was not even initiated by the church or the state or any other outside agent but was the result of private enterprise.

The university was in fact an example of what we may call limited secularization. Limited, because it only concerned its relationship with the church, the dominant spiritual power of that time. The fundamental secularization of which we shall speak later on is of a religious kind and therefore is not limited to relationships within creation. The university aimed at the same limited secularization over against the church as the state was striving for at that time.

The university therefore made a good start. It was a community of universal learning within an association that was independent according to the nature of scientific learning. As such it was the institutional establishment of the sphere sovereignty of science.

University, Church and State

The complete separation of the university from church and state, however, could not last long. The university gradually grew and soon needed aid or backing from outside. The authorities to grant support were the pope and the emperor and later in some cases the ruler of a country. The first need of the university was to be recognized as such. For that purpose it requested a charter from the emperor or the local ruler.

But it also needed some privileges such as freedom from taxes. More important, however, was the fact that the university obtained the jus docendi, the jus promovendi and the effectus civilis. The last concerned the admission to office and was granted by the emperor. That was in fact a right of the state and did not interfere with the sphere sovereignty of the university.

The other two privileges, the right to teach and the right to confer a doctor's degree depended not only upon the required level of learning of the professors, but also upon the orthodoxy of teaching. In many respects this is an important question for our subject.

The pope of course granted these rights. But since it was a time of struggle for power between the emperor and the pope and also between the emperor and the country rulers the latter tried to enhance their influence. They effected it through their right to grant the effectus civilis.

The general historical trend, as you undoubtedly know, has been that pope and clergy had influence over the university in the Middle Ages while the state took over after the time of the Reformation. This too showed the trend toward separation of the university from the church. Whether it was also a religious secularization we will see in due time.
First we have to ask the question whether the bestowing of these rights was really the prerogative of the church or the state.

Abraham Kuyper, the founder of the Free University of Amsterdam, understood clearly that at this point the history of the university went awry. Neither the pope nor the emperor had the right to decide the affairs of the university concerning learning and science. The university itself, executing the right defined by its own nature, had to decide such matters.

You will understand that it was the sphere sovereignty of the university which was violated by this outside interference, with regard to teaching and investigation.

After effects of this interference were the condemnations by the church of the scientific results of such men as Galilei and Bruno and a general frustration of the development of science for a long time. But we also meet them in the struggle of Kuyper for a free university against the state controlled universities of the 19th century.

We can understand very well that the weak universities liked having the church for a strong companion and did not bother much about the price they had to pay. And in that time it could also be expected that the church would try to supervise the universities in order to prevent heresy. And it can also be understood that the state, after succeeding finally in becoming independent from the church, not only defended the university against the church but also tried to bring the university over to its side in the struggle and to secure the new partnership by executing the same control over the university that the church formerly practised. Nevertheless it was a mistake, because it brought the university and its teaching and investigation into an unnatural dependence and handicapped its development.

Nature—Supernature

In order that we may understand clearly where and why the church made the wrong move, we should approach the problem from another angel.

Alongside of the church and the state, the universities in the Middle ages developed into a third power. They originated from an interest in reality, a curiosity about unknown things and a search for knowledge through learning and investigation. They offered the student another road to truth than the church did. Thus far it was a righteous activity. The striving for independence from the church, the secularization from the church, was a correct move.

But just as the schools of Socrates, Plato and Aristotle were in fact competitors of the popular mythology, so too the universities gradually became competitors of the Christian religion. We must not allow all our attention to be distracted from this fact by the secularization of the university from the church. Masked by this limited and legitimate secularization, a religious secularization set in within the university. In the wake of the severance of the ties with the church the ties with religion, weakened. Not on purpose, however.
Humanism as we know it now, did not yet exist at that time. Although the origin of modern humanism can be traced back to the humanism of that time, this movement then was generally faithful to the church and moreover was actually more interested in studying and reading classical literature than in the new universities.

There is another reason why the religious secularization of the university gradually and unnoticeably arose as a result of its separation from the church. The church identified itself with religion and faith and thought that it had to cover and control the field of religion entirely. It will now be understood that the university that declared the independence of science from the church sooner or later would adopt the view that the field of science and learning and the university itself were void of religion and faith.

This question is so very important for our subject that we must investigate it further.

In the background of the church's view on worldly affairs and its policy, stood the then generally accepted theme of nature and supernatural (grace). With regard to our subject the two rather conflicting characteristics of this theme are important: the autonomy of nature and the synthesis of the two parts.

The separation of the world into a field of grace and faith where the church was considered the authority and an autonomous field of nature explains why the church identified itself with faith and religion.

The autonomy of nature (you will have to bear in mind that nature here is not what is investigated in physics but a conception of the creation) then signified that it was being controlled by natural law, was essentially on its own and independent of supernatural (grace). The same was the case with human reason which could autonomously, merely be its own light, discover the laws of nature. Faith and religion therefore had nothing to do with reason.

In other words, nature and human reason that belongs to it on this standpoint are essentially not disturbed by the Fall and therefore too, in the last analysis, do not need the redemption by Jesus Christ.

To that field of nature belonged inter alia the state, the university and science.

This explains why the church restricted faith and religion to its own territory and why the separation of the university from the church also led to a religious secularization.

From the very start the university took this defective course. It used its rightfully won sphere sovereignty for the establishment of a supposed religious autonomy and did so with the consent of the church.

The basis of that university was, negatively, the independence from faith and, positively, the autonomy of human reason.
For that matter, this is still the case today. As we shall see later, this is the bottleneck of the crisis of the modern university as well as the essential point of difference between it and the idea of a Christian university.

But why then did the church try to control the university? For the answer we must turn to the other characteristic of the theme: the synthesis between nature and supernature. The autonomy of the two sides is balanced by their synthesis and in that relation nature ranks lower, as a kind of first step.

The synthesis was designed by Thomas Aquinas as a definite compromise between faith and reason. The church from the beginning had carried on a struggle about which one was predominant. Thomas' synthesis in fact compromised Christianity with Greek culture and philosophy. This compromise led him to rate Aristotle so highly that he would refer to him, without mentioning his name, merely as "the philosopher".

Now the practical significance of the idea of the synthesis was that the church, although it recognized the autonomy of reason and the university in a religious sense, nevertheless claimed for itself the right of supervision over worldly affairs and liked to moderate on the spot. Being in authority in the area of supernature, it had to complete the works of nature and prevent the university from making independent and false statements concerning the affairs of the superstructure about which the church ought to have the final say. Such statements could, e.g., arise in the areas of justice and morality. They were possible because the church taught that although human nature was capable of good, it was weakened and wounded.

We now have a clear picture of the situation. The church granted both too much and too little to the university. It agreed with the religious secularization of the university which was in accordance with the autonomy of reason, but did not wholly agree with the limited secularization of the university from the church.

In other words, the church granted a religious autonomy to reason and the university whereas it ought to have proclaimed that everything within the creation is dependent since everything is of, through and unto God in Jesus Christ. It ought to have proclaimed that everything is in fact religion.

And on the other hand, due to the idea of the synthesis it did not respect the sphere sovereignty of the university but put it mistakenly under its own final supervision.

Well then, it was the very idea of the autonomy of reason that undermined the church's policy of supervision from the start.

The first error, the idea of autonomy of nature, was the beginning of what finally became a religiously secularized university. The second error, the idea of synthesis, was the beginning of the loss of the sphere sovereignty of the university, and therefore the beginning of its dependence, not upon the church, but upon the state and society.
Summary of the University's History

Let us now for a moment look at the history of the university itself. This history displays an ever growing influence upon the course of our civilization. In the last century it even gained a definite mental leadership over civilization and thereby threw off the yoke of the church, which up to that time had been more or less in charge of spiritual affairs.

It is not so easy to weigh the influence of the university in a positive or negative sense and to make up a balance sheet. That is hardly ever the case. The university has certainly made a significant contribution to the cultural level of our civilization, to the welfare of mankind, to the liberalization of life, to the maturity of Western man and to democracy. But it also has produced many disturbances, such as the French Revolution; it was an enemy of the Christian faith and fought it with apparent success, thereby putting the church constantly in the defensive.

At present the university is the main producer of atheism and nihilism, and is, at the same time, their victim. The significance of the idea of the autonomy of science will occupy us later.

The influence of the university in both directions came from the instrumental power of its knowledge and from the personal power of its cultured men. It will be profitable to look at this difference between instrumental knowledge and general culture. From one point of view we have already treated it. I shall now relate these two to the well known division of the university into modern natural sciences and the humanities. It is a mistaken idea that the humanities merely aim at the cultivation of the mind and that the natural sciences train only for instrumental knowledge. Nevertheless there is clearly a close affinity between the first two and between the last two.

These two centers of gravity of the university have followed different courses in history. The teaching and study of the humanities kept from the beginning steady course through the centuries but diminished in influence in the twentieth century. The natural sciences, however, received a strong impulse from the introduction of the experimental and mathematical methods. From the 17th century on modern natural science became a factor of importance at the university and gradually overtook the humanities in influence. In the 19th century it surpassed them as a result of the tremendous success of the application of the knowledge of natural science.

While the situation at present is somewhat confused, it can be said that specialization grew within the sphere of the natural sciences, and consequently the cultured man has nearly become obsolete at the university. Moreover many of the humanities have been taken over already by the methods of natural science.
The Cultured Man of Humanism

Perhaps you will infer from my argument that I am seeking the rehabilitation of the humanities with its training of the cultured man, of the learned gentleman. But that would be a serious mistake.

Let us have a second look at this cultured man of the ancient university in order to understand better what we ourselves are looking for and what we are obliged to avoid.

Of course we appreciate many qualities of the cultured man. He is learned, has a thought-out cultural conviction, and has trained himself to be moderate, well balanced, tolerant, impartial, reasonable, prudent, kind, orderly, loath to quarrel and agitation. We all like these qualities and are eager to acquire them. On the other hand, you will perhaps observe that such a true gentleman will be somewhat weak and seems to lack a standpoint. But if you think that you don't understand him.

Nevertheless we hear that he has a thorough contempt for any kind of dogmatism. He is liberal. At this point the Christian begins to suspect him.

We doubt his qualities still more when we learn that he is motivated by selfrespect and by his belief in the dignity of man. That at least is a dogma he does not condemn and apparently did not even recognize as a faith. At any rate, we know now what his strength and his fundamental standpoint are. His is the standpoint of the superior man who is free in intercourse with his equals and has only contempt for what is below his level. That explains his tolerance and impartiality. But beware lest you touch his selfrespect, for then he will lose all his noble qualities and become intolerant and agitated.

We shall understand him better when we bear in mind that he does not look for his ideal in the Holy Scripture but in the scriptures of the pagan classics. His ideal is the Greek philosopher and the restrained and contemptuous Roman stoic. Socrates and Cicero are his most emulated models. What the cultured man likes about ancient civilization is the superiority of its learned, civilized and liberal elite. It is to such an elite that he himself wants to belong. And reading the classics, he thinks, will perform the miracle. The member of the elite is supposed to be learned. His, he thinks, is the road to true knowledge and wisdom. He is civilized. He is a gentle, moderate, reasonable and orderly member of the community. He also believes that he is liberal, above dogmatism, truly critical and free in all his moves. He tolerates every opinion.

But liberal has a relative meaning. It signifies freedom of the educated, compared with the bondage of other people who have to work for their living. The same holds for the origin of the name scholar. It is derived from leisure time, the opposite of labor, the fate of the masses.
It is probable that the haughty, fastidious and reserved attitude of the cultured man was not yet present, at least not yet dominant, in the university of the 12th century. At that time it was not even a feature of humanism which existed then somewhat apart from the university. The humanist who opposed scholasticism merely tried to imitate and to revive the language of classic literature and to influence his time pedagogically.

What we must see clearer, however, is that the seeds of the cult of the elite of learned men were present then already. And the church had sowed them. The idea of a synthesis between Christianity and pagan philosophy (based on the autonomy of reason, already cherished by Boethius in the 6th century, and given definite shape by Thomas) was predominant at the time of the start of the university as well as of humanism. On this score there was no difference of opinion among church, university and humanism. We might even say that in all three of them the leadership was in the hands of the clergy.

This synthesis meant that the Christian, in addition to his Christianity and its concern for eternal life, had to adapt himself for this life to the purely human and the purely natural values of the classical authors. That was exactly the view which humanism had in mind, and the church proclaimed for the domain of nature, and the university came to accept as its concept of the cultured man. Culture was not the domain of Christianity but belonged to nature and was the work of humanism. And the classics provided man with the ideal of the true humanitas, genuine humanity.

We shall not understand the situation correctly unless we observe that at the time of the decadence of the church the synthesis really sought to restore the church by means of the revival of the classics. This was still true in the 15th century in the case of the humanist Erasmus.

But a synthesis it was all the same. The cultured man of that time was a Christian humanist. Inside the Church, he was a Christian who knew humility and the corruption of the heart, who knew of redemption by Jesus Christ. Outside the Church, he was a humanist who forgot about that knowledge and believed rather in human dignity and autonomy.

The attempt to have both the wisdom of the cross and the wisdom of the ancient world could not last long. When humanism joined forces with the Renaissance and grew from a pedagogical into a religious movement, and the humanistic world view took over the university, the religious secularization began to develop at the university. The ideal of the university, although hidden, yet present from the start, then became clear. It was to train a cultured humanist, a member of the learned elite, shaped by the classics, believing in his independence and dignity, both of which were based on the autonomy of his reason.

The doctrine of human autonomy is incompatible with a harmonious wholeness of life. The Christian humanist is two persons in one. Here two compete and are in fact enemies and keep from clashing only so long as they occupy separate territories. That
is, however, impossible. The idea of synthesis by definition bridges the separation while the religious oneness of life forbids man to resign himself to the separation. Which one will be victorious in the scholar?

After the Middle ages, as soon as man became interested in this life as much as in the next, the humanist in man gradually conquered the Christian. History teaches us accordingly that more and more cultured and learned men turned their back on the church and became mere humanists.

History teaches us too that the classically shaped elite men of culture, the gentlemen, could not last, in a time when everything has a progressive trend, such a backward looking class quickly becomes outdated. That is the impression we get from the fine writings of the historian Huizinga. His longing for the cultured man is vain. And vain too is the attempt of Ortega to remodel the university in order that it will again produce the elite aristocrats of the mind.

What we must clearly understand, however, is that the disappearance of the gentleman was not caused by the development of society but by the idea of human autonomy itself, because the demise is covered by the law of decay that holds for every attempt to establish religious independence and belief in self redemption. This is especially so when the attempt is legalized by a theory.

Do we lose something of value with the disappearance of the gentleman? Yes, indeed, although the concept of his autonomy is thoroughly wrong. When he disappears we lose something of the difference between barbarism and civilization. The university, as Ortega said, is really an uplifting principle.

To know more about this difference, no one can better inform you than the Roman Catholic Newman who a hundred years ago wrote about the university. The goal of the university, he says, is not useful knowledge, but knowledge of the gentleman. "It is well," he says, "to be a gentleman, it is well to have a cultivated mind, a delicate taste, a candid, equitable, dispassionate mind, a noble and courteous bearing in the conduct of life; these are the conatural qualities of a large knowledge; they are the objects of the university."

But he also clearly exposes what I tried to explain about the influence of the concept of nature and supernature on the idea of the university and of the cultured man. Preceding what I just quoted he wrote: "Liberal education makes not a Christian, not the Catholic, but the gentleman". Newman was thoroughly convinced of the exclusive importance of the Greek and Roman civilization for the shaping of the gentleman. He said that that civilization is so intimately associated with Christianity, that it may even be called the soil out of which Christianity grew. That civilization only can provide man with the real and proper cultivation of the mind. Christianity never intended to replace it.
But he saw not only the sunny side of this educated gentleman. That is the difference of his view from that of Huizinga and Ortega. He knew very well that many of these gentlemen became secularized from religion and enemies of the church. However, he was so completely caught up with the idea of the autonomy of nature and reason that he never doubted his conception of the gentleman and merely intended to correct him with the added knowledge from the superstructure. The separation of the secular and the eternal knowledge was evident to him.

The Reformation of the University

You will also like to hear whether the Reformers with their return to the Bible and its radical message did not try to change the fateful course of the university.

They certainly tried. Many Reformed universities were erected and existing ones reformed: Leipzig, Heidelberg, Koningsbergen, Jena, Basel, Geneva, Leiden, etc. But when we investigate them further we learn (and it is a pertinent lesson for our age too) how extremely difficult it is to separate oneself from the spirit of the time.

The return to the Holy Scriptures required at the university not only a new theology but also and especially a new philosophy. It required the rejection of the idea of a neutral and autonomous science and a new approach to the classics. It seems that the Reformation nowhere succeeded with even the beginning of the performance of this task. The history of the Reformed universities in short was as follows: They started an alliance with humanism in opposing scholasticism. When it became clear what humanism really aimed at, that alliance was broken and the Reformers fought humanism with the aid of Aristotle.

Soon afterwards the time to reform the university thoroughly was past, because by then humanism was safely in charge. It took a "boss Atlas" like Kuyper—as he was called by an adversary—to erect a genuine Reformed university. Yours is perhaps the next attempt.

But let us return for the moment to the first Reformed universities. Luther for one distrusted humanism but was not much interested in universities. In his opinion of secular life the influence of Aristotle on his education was strong. Melanchton on the contrary figured strongly in the renewal of universities, but he merely tried to humanize them. The aim of the newly erected Reformed university of Strassburg, where Calvin taught, was to establish a narrow link between the humanistic ideal and Biblical devotion. I am not well enough informed about the university of Geneva that was erected by Calvin and which flourished under Beza. At least Calvin understood that not only theology but the whole field of science ought to be reformed. But nevertheless there too, theology was the main interest, the faculty of letters was humanized and a Christian philosophy that Calvin thought necessary apparently was not developed.
All the universities of the Netherlands of that time were founded as Calvinistic universities: Leiden, Utrecht, Groningen, Franeker and Harderwijk. But the statute of the universities of Leiden, Utrecht and Groningen ruled that the philosophers not deviate from Aristotle. Inventers of new theories were not tolerated. Descartes, a Roman Catholic, whose philosophy was the start of radical humanism, strongly influenced the history of Leiden and Utrecht. He was opposed by Voetius in the name of the Reformation but with the aid of Aristotle.

The University of Leiden

What happened to the Reformed universities and where they went wrong can perhaps best be understood from the example of Leiden. The university (then called "hogeschool") was founded in 1574 by the States of Holland at the request of Prince William I, who in this way wanted to reward the inhabitants of Leiden for the brave defense of their city against the Spaniards. But the background was different.

The Reformed church for some time already had pleaded with the Prince and the States to provide for the education of its ministers. "There are many sheep but the shepherds are missing," the church said. Their request is understandable. The church was merely interested in theologians. But the Prince, writing to the States, asked them to set up a university "not only for the benefit of religion but also for the benefit of the civil government".

This is what happened. In the shortest possible time the States founded and opened a university. It got a charter in the name of the enemy, the King of Spain. It even received the privilege to function as a university court of justice. Four Faculties were set up: Theology, Medicine, Law and the old basic faculty of the Liberal Arts, which was later split up into the Faculties of Natural Science and Letters.

The most important fact, however, was that the goal was a truly Reformed university. The inauguration took place in the church where the Lord was asked to bless the university and cause it to grow to the honor of His name, to the upbuilding of the church and to the salvation, erudition and skill of man in all the honest and worthy arts, and to the welfare of the fatherland and the city of Leiden.

The difference between intention and reality, however, we may observe when we note that in the festive allegorical procession on that day as much honor was given to the evangelists as to the classical authors.

Proofs of the seriousness of the intention were the priority given to theology and the oath requiring every student to declare that he would not adhere to any doctrine not taught at the university.

Perhaps you are impressed by that fine start. If so, you will be all the more astonished to learn how quickly this Christian university succumbed to the influence of a liberal spirit and gradually became humanistic.
The current conception of science, founded by the Greek philosophers and based upon the autonomy of reason of course made it easy for humanism to frustrate a Calvinistic attempt in this field. But that does not wholly explain the failure.

It seems to me that three original mistakes explain this failure.

1. The Reformed people did not yet understand the necessity of a reformation of science;
2. The university was intended to be both Reformed and national, although only ten percent of the Dutch people belonged to the Reformed church;
3. The authorities concerned did not respect the rightful sovereignty of the university in its own sphere.

It is useful to clarify those three mistakes briefly. The mouthpiece of the Reformed people was the church and the church was interested only in ministers. It supposed that when all the professors belonged to the Reformed church everything was all right with the university. It did not even suspect the very large doses of Aristotelian philosophy the theological students had to consume. On the contrary, it urged the students on.

Very important for the history of this university was the circumstance that, although everyone concerned considered the faculty of theology to be the most important, it was the only one that did not succeed. Professors could hardly be found and very few students attended. The erection of a collegium for the theological students improved this situation but then they became a source of unrest of all kinds. Revolts of the students, even bloody rebellions, were frequent. The collegium especially became the battlefield of the Remonstrants and the Contra-Remonstrants.

Twice the church was victorious in the struggle to maintain the Reformed character of the university. The first time was at the Synod of Dordrecht where the Remonstrants were condemned. The church then gained effective control over every appointment of professors. But it was possible only with the aid of the state and did not last long. With the aid of the same state the trustees soon took over. The second victory was the rejection of the doctrine of Descartes. However, it was not a victory for the Reformed principle but for Aristotle.

The error of the idea of a Reformed and national university was most serious. It should be clear that due to this error the university from the beginning became involved in a struggle between a Reformed and a more or less liberal course. Generally speaking, the church and the students often stood together on one side while the trustees, most of the professors and the state stood on the other.

It was an impossible situation. Already at the beginning the oath had to be abolished for the students other than the theologues, because it seriously diminished the student body. In view of this impossible arrangement for a national university, we can appreciate
the anger of a mayor of Leiden concerning a revolt of students against unorthodoxy when he said that the council would fight the inquisition of Geneva as it had fought that of the Spaniards. It will be clear that in the end the liberals were the winners not only because the trend of science was toward liberalism, but also because the state in fact controlled the university and compromised more and more with the liberals.

The third error made was that the church tried to retain enough influence in order to maintain the Reformed character of the university, whereas the state effectively controlled it and the trustees were eager to retain the support of the state in order to suppress the influence of the church. The church and the state in fact handicapped the development of the sphere sovereignty. The effects of this mistake were that the university could not grow freely and naturally, for it had to absorb and digest all the problems and quarrels of both church and state.

What we miss in this story is the influence of the Reformed people. The Reformation had proclaimed the responsibility of everyone to God in every territory of life. A Reformed university was not the responsibility of the church nor of the state but of the Reformed people. But perhaps you will object that to have expected such a vision at that time is too idealistic.

Prof, Rutgers mentioned in 1886 at a meeting of the Free university that he had discovered an important document from the 16th century. It was a design of a free Reformed university consisting of five faculties. The professors would not be nominated by the state but by a university board. The university would not be national but an international association of Reformed churches. All parents would be asked to present their first born son for the service of the church and science. The university would not be paid by the state but by the parents and especially by Reformed people who had no children. This design shows at least some insight into the requirements of the sovereignty of the university over its own affairs. Whether such a project would have succeeded at that time no one can tell. It would at any rate have been a tremendous task to prevent the decline of the Reformed Church as well as the victorious advance of humanism at the universities. But this much we can safely say: it would have avoided the above mentioned errors that from the start caused the defeat of the Reformed cause at the university.

The Free University

In concluding our historical review, we must look at the founding of the Free University at Amsterdam. It was erected in 1880 by Kuyper and his companions. I don't think that you will find one man in this century or the former of the stature of Kuyper: scientific, erudite, inventive, constructive, practical, forceful, industrious, dynamic and with such a feeling for the common people. No Kant, Marx, Lincoln, Churchill or Earth could stand in the shadow of this giant in heart, mind and deed. But he would have been forgotten by now had he not desired in all his life to bow absolutely before the Word of God. That is the way in which the Lord used him for the remarkable revival of the Reformed people in the Netherlands in every area of life.
What was his aim for the Free University? It was the Reformation of science and the university so that they would be entirely ruled by the Word of God. For him it did not concern theology alone. "For Christianity to be a leaven in the life of our people," he said in 1870, "then the judge, the physician, the statesman, the man of letters and the philosopher too must have the content of his science illuminated by the light of Christ." And warning all Christians who were content with the kind of synthesis we dealt with above, he asked them why they again wanted to join the foolishness of the cross with the wisdom of the world which undermines the former and is condemned by it.

We cannot understand why the Free University was planned and designed unless we look into the university situation of that time and examine its structure and its spirit.

As we have seen, the European university started as a free association, then received a charter of the pope and/or of the emperor and received many privileges to establish its freedom. In the course of time it came more and more under the control of the civil authorities; the French revolution then took away the remaining freedom of the university and transformed it into an organ of the state. It became in fact a state monopoly. Not only its finances, but also its structure and the nominations of professors were entirely controlled by the government. The sphere sovereignty of the university was then seriously handicapped. Science and the university came to rest in one powerful hand.

That this development meant a deterioration for the university was felt by many, such as Schleiermacher. Some free universities were founded in the 19th century, such as those in London and Brussels. The constitution of the Netherlands granted such a university too, but the difficulty was of course the actual inequality.

Let us now consider the spirit of the time. Science and the university were then under the control of humanism. And humanism had already revealed itself in the Enlightenment as the enemy of Christian faith. And more important still, humanism from then on tried to prove its superiority with the design of the historical evolution of mankind. Man was thought to have existed first in the childish state of dependence marked by faith in an invented God. Then he passed through a state of adolescence and invented a world of 'metaphysics and speculation. But now he has become mature and thereby free and independent, trusting entirely in established facts and in man's autonomous instrument of science by which he can control reality.

The belief in evolution not only explained and set aside religion as fiction but also gave humanism a strong motivation in the idea of progression through science.

For that purpose science must be absolutely free from every external tie or dogma. It was in that spirit that Heynsius on the occasion of the commemoration of the threehundredth anniversary of the university of Leiden spoke of its principle as that of freedom, ignoring the fact that Leiden started as a Reformed
It may seem that the absolute freedom of science is incongruous with the control of the state over the university but that is no more than appearance. The political form of humanism then was liberalism. It held the ideal of absolute freedom for the individual in society. For the state it meant that it was not allowed to choose any side; that is, it had to be neutral. That attitude liberalism thought was the only possible way the state could give everyone equal justice and be truly general.

This neutral attitude was exactly what the university needed. The idea of the autonomy of science, looked at from the outside, was in fact neutrality, i.e., the neglect of all religious issues. The control of the university by a state that for the purpose of being all things to all men took a neutral standpoint meant in fact the promotion of the idea of an autonomous and therefore neutral science and university.

Of course all this was actually very one-sided and far from neutral. Back of political liberalism stood the religion of the independence, or absolute freedom of man, and back of the neutrality of science and the university stood the same religion of the autonomy of man's reason and the supremacy of scientific truth.

It seems to be nearly impossible for the defenders of neutrality, even for those who are Christians defending the neutrality of a certain field, to understand that they in fact are defending humanism and opposing the scriptural principle of the absolute sovereignty of Christ. In fact they ignore that the standpoint of the withdrawal of all religion from politics is neither neutral nor general but merely another religion and a false one at that. And they fail to see that the withdrawal of all religion at the university does not make science generally valid but merely produces a science that belongs to the religion of humanism and is not valid at all.

The practice of neutrality in the Netherlands meant that men like Bilderdijk, Da Costa and Groen van Prinsterer were not appointed as professors because their philosophy of science followed Reformed principles and was therefore considered to lack neutrality and impartiality. The judgment of history is that their learning has as yet not been forgotten while the work of nearly all of the neutral professors who were nominated has already been forgotten.

Another so called impartial result of neutrality was the law of 1876 that transformed the faculty of theology into a faculty of the science of religion, thereby breaking the tie that bound it with the Christian religion.

Such then were the state and the university that opposed the concept of a Free Reformed University. It was opened in 1880 with the famous oration of Kuypers on sphere sovereignty. That principle, he said, was the stamp of the new university. Neither the state nor the church had the right to control the university. It had to be a free association of the people. Only in that form could it develop according to its own laws. Such a university
would not claim neutrality, and would not give the appearance of
generality, as if it was suitable for everyone, but it would clearly
display its basis and direction. While the aim of the Free Uni-
versity was science, its character was Reformed.

The effect of the principle of sphere sovereignty showed it-
self during the Doleantie. This rupture of the church of course
had a disadvantageous influence on the university, but, generally
speaking, the school's development was not as disturbed by the
conflict as the church conflict in 1618 disturbed the Leiden Uni-
versity, when the church interfered directly and the impossible
situation of a Reformed and general university existed.

It was very well understood that the right to found a univer-
sity was not enough to make it prosper so long as there remained
inequality between it and the state universities concerning the
conditions for the university's existence.

The equalization of the Free University with the other univer-
sities was the subject of a law proposed and defended in 1905 by
Kuyper, who was prime minister at that time. Its main topic was
not the financial inequality but the effectus civilis. The debate
in parliament was conducted mainly between Kuyper and the professors
of the state universities and was most interesting and revealing.
The adherents of a neutral university considered the introduction
of dogmatic universities a disaster for the country. Such a uni-
versity would bind the study from start to finish. Not the search
for knowledge but the possession of established knowledge would be
its aim. Science and the university ought to be free. The lack of
freedom, they thought, was irreconcilable with science. One of the
most important opponents, however, held that science could not be
irreligious and admitted that every science is based on faith. But
nevertheless he defended the neutrality of the university and opposed
the Free University, because he thought that an institution lacked
the right to bind the individual professor. Admitting that science
is not neutral, he defended the neutrality of the university but at
the same time was obliged to abandon the community of the university
and the universality of science in the practice of the study.

The emergency solution proposed by the same law, granting an
association the freedom to appoint professors at a state university
to correct the so called neutrality also ignores the requirement of
a community of learning at the university (Please note that I am
such an "emergency" professor).

Besides opposing the tie between dogma and science, some objected
to the principle of the initiative and control by people who knew
little about science. Bakers, for instance, it was said, could not
very well govern a university and in the long run would destroy it
or at least destroy the freedom of investigation.

It was not so difficult to refute all these objections and Kuyper,
helped by many members of parliament, did it masterfully and wisely.
The law already guaranteed the freedom of education. He only asked
for equality and justice concerning the conditions. It was wrong that
science was in one hand, the hand of the state. The education of the
state universities was directional too. It undermined the church
and drew away from their religion the children of the people. They therefore asked to have their own Reformed university. The high scientific level of teaching and learning was not any more secure at the state universities than at the Free University.

Lecture III

The Basis of the University

University's Problems Focused

You will remember that in the first lecture I described the meaning of the University by calling it the place for training in science. In the second lecture I gave a survey of its historical development under the influence of its external relationship to the church and the state, and to the specific conception of science and philosophy within the academic sphere.

In all these questions the problem of the basis of the university was implicated as the focus of them all. Our present task is to investigate this problem. Let me first explain to you the main characteristic of such a basis. The foundation of a house is a part of it and is qualified by the special structure of the building. But it does not depend upon the house. To the contrary, the house can only exist in dependence upon its foundation which had to provide the house with its basal security.

The same is true of the basis of a university. It belongs to the university, is shaped according to the typical structure of the university and can even be made an object of scientific investigation. But the basis does not depend on the university and its activities. The university, to the contrary, depends upon its basis; it cannot even exist without a basis. The basis is the prerequisite for its existence, rooting it outside the university and operating inside according to the mode of faith. As such the basis cannot be removed, altered or even criticized by fellows of the university acting according to its typical academic mode of being. That is only possible on the level of an exercise of faith whereby faith confronts faith.

My program for today is the contemplation of the basis for a Christian university and the problems both of such a university generally as well as in the present situation. But first I ought to show in what way the university, including the so-called liberal university, depends upon its basis.

Let us repeat in short what has been said already about the university. Its subject is the student and his training, its approach is science and its aim is the growth of wise and cultured men who are also masters in a profession.

The functioning of the university does not come out of blue air. The student enters the university after it has already covered a long distance and while it is moving in a certain direction. It has a store of knowledge and is busy at the frontier to gather more of it. Although this knowledge, for all times and persons, concerns the same creation that knowledge cannot be read off it.
The acquisition of knowledge comes in the human confrontation with
the creation as an act of choice and judgment concerning the laws
that command that creation. Even the store of knowledge cannot be
taken at face value. Ever and again it should be considered criti-
cally. Knowledge does not arise from facts, it is a result of the
human contemplation of facts. This human element is very complex.
But it contains at least more than invention and the trial of an
hypothesis. That which gives the scientific man and the university
trend so that we can recognize them as they move on a
definite road is a set of principles that provide them with a
starting point, a direction and a motivation. This is true whether
they are aware of their belief in these principles or not.

The activities of the university are in fact loaded with prin-
ciples. They concern the character and meaning of every special
science, of science as a whole, of teaching and learning, of the
professions, of culture and of wisdom. It is of course very diffi-
cult to find within the human contribution the demarcation line for
these principles and again it is very difficult to find within this
field of principles the demarcation line for the limited set of
those which form the basis of the university and to which, whether
they are written down or not, every member is bound.

These tremendous difficulties may not close our eyes to the
existence of this state of affairs because it encloses the pre-
requisite for the university. To recognize it and to investigate
it is the proper scientific attitude. To ignore it is in fact
unacademic. We must thoroughly understand that without these prin-
ciples and especially without a basis, the community of the uni-
ersity is lost and the universality of science in teaching and
learning at the university cannot exist as the condition for shaping
the cultured man.

It is this basis too that alone can guarantee the sphere sov-
ereignty of the university, the authority over its own affairs
without interference from the state, the church or other relation-
ships in society. The university, not the state or industry,
ought to make the decisions about the how, the what, the where
and the when of the study. Only a clearly understood community
of the university practised on its basis is in a position, offi-
cially or semi-officially, to prevent outside agents from influencing
the course of the university.

The Liberal University and its Basis

It seems, however, that this gain of outside freedom is paid
for with a loss of freedom inside the university, since the basis
demands a community of faith in its contents. The current objec-
tion to this is that such a basis is in fact a prejudice and will
make science and the university dogmatic and biased. It is said
that this is in contradiction to the character of both science
and the university. Science ought to be free and the university
should be liberal. The champions of the idea of a liberal uni-
versity (and they are not only in the majority, but have always
been and are still considered to be the true defenders of scholar-
ship) have always looked with contempt upon proposals to tie the
university to a basis.
We may not look lightly at their objection. We have to admit that science ought to be essentially free and that therefore the university too ought to have an essential freedom. Especially those who have in mind the erection of a Christian university must be aware of the fact that they will continuously dwell near a border beyond which science and the university lose their proper freedom.

Science must be free from practical interest, it must be freed from all kinds of human prejudices, it must reject the predominance of the set of current opinions, it is allowed to criticise tradition, to doubt every scientific statement, to question everything, to approach everything with wonder. It may choose its subjects and methods freely. Such a freedom is not only the right of the world of science and of the university but also of every single man of science. That is the reason why I prefer to call the university a place for training in science to a place for education in science. The study ought to be free. But granted this freedom, the idea of the university cannot be exhausted by it. That the university is called liberal has only a negative meaning. It does not explain why and how it exists.

The meaning of the word liberal has changed somewhat through the ages. Up to the Middle Ages it expressed the opposite of useful knowledge. One tried thereby to guarantee knowledge in its own right. Afterwards neutrality became the core of the liberal idea. It meant that science and the university were neutral in their relation to religion and every kind of world view. They were thought to be free from every influence of that kind. The idea was strongest in the European university of the 19th century and is still very strong in America. At present, as the struggle of science with religion seems to be nearly over, the idea of neutrality is extended by many scientists to their particular field of science in its relation to the other sciences too and especially to philosophy. A kind of decomposition of science has set in.

I draw your attention to the constant and to the changing features of the word liberal. Constant is (and that is the core of liberalness), that it means being free from..., in fact from one or other influence from outside. If, however, the liberal university pretended to be nothing more, it would be the victim of an undirected, meaningless, deliberate and powerless nihilism. It apparently has always meant something more, something positive: a principle, a faith beyond scientific doubt and criticism. What else could enable the university to be free? What else would have caused the strength of the liberal universities in their fight against the "dogmatic" university of Kuypers? What else would have moved men to erect any university, except a strong and real faith?

The alleged controversy between the liberal and the dogmatic university is false. It is not contempt on the part of a liberal university for a dogmatic one which is a sign of its academic integrity and cleanliness, but the observation and recognition of its own basis and prejudice.
There are some reasons why this basis is mostly unnoticed and thought of as non-existent. First the character of self-evidence that is apparent in every true faith; secondly the university has been and still is considered by nearly everyone to be liberal and without a basis. That opinion has the strength of a matter of course. And in our time especially the dispersion of science and a lack of interest in basic questions puts our question outside the university. But the most important reason is that the recognition of principles of faith and of a basis would annihilate the current claim and pretension of science and the university. To this matter I will return in due time.

We have already seen in general that the university is guided by many principles. We should now examine which principles form the basis of the current university. Already the change in the meaning of the notion of liberalism in the course of history gives away such a positive attitude.

During the first period the word liberal got its modulation from a religious synthesis of Christian faith and scientific knowledge; during the second period the religious antithesis between scientific knowledge and faith caused the change; in our time that tension has lost its force and there now exists a kind of confusion about the specific meaning of liberalism.

Nevertheless in all these phases one positive principle remained constant: the religious autonomy of man in science and the university. That is the true basis of the liberal university. It is a faith in a definite human security. At least within the university it functioned as a religion.

The idea of the autonomy of man in science and the university took various historical forms. They all served the sole purpose to elucidate and the prove that autonomy. That was the case with the idea of the inner light of reason, of the innate ideas, of Descartes' last but sure ditch of doubt, of Hume's sure basis of impressions, of Husserl's method of reduction, and of the historical method of Dilthey, of the principle of verification within logical positivism and its attempt to demonstrate that the field of a prioris is a field of tautologies. It would lead us too far afield to expose how in everyone of these cases one faith was proved by another faith.

Man's belief in the autonomy of man, however, was not enough to start science and to give coherence and motivation to the university. By itself, the false idea of the autonomy of man would have been rather harmless. The power of science and the influence of the university were caused by the alliance of the autonomy of man in science and a world view of the circle of learned men especially of the university. That world view was of course also a matter of faith but it was supposed to be the result of scientific investigation which could claim generally valid truth because it was based on man's autonomy in science.
The idea of generally valid truth as the link between the autonomy of man and his world view, as the knowledge emerging on the basis of man's independence in science and concerning that which could at least be known trustworthily about the world, was essential in the basis of the faith of the university and was its driving force. Only that idea can explain how the university exercised such a tremendous spiritual influence on the course of history and could surpass the influence of the Christian religion and the church, and why it pretended to produce the learned elite of truly cultured men.

Being in fact a matter of apostate faith and not of universal and ever-valid scientific truth, that world view changed with the times. At all times, least of all in ours, however, it has followed a more or less generally accepted pattern, since it has mainly been determined by the spirit of the time, which in its turn in the course of time gradually was determined more and more by the faith that ruled the university and science.

In the Middle Ages it was the view of a stable, orderly and hierarchial world, ordained by God and therefore to be respected as such by man. Man could map and control this world with his reason which could rescue him from his ordinary state of subjection to sense and could carry him halfway to heaven. This natural and human contribution to redemption was especially performed by philosophy and science at the university.

The reigning view of the 19th century was that of a world in progress. The progress was an exclusively this-worldly affair, carried out by a completely mature man with a scientific approach. Religion was not allowed to meddle with this human business, heaven was considered a private concern.

In our time we cannot very well speak of a generally accepted world view at the university. We live in a time of spiritual confusion and paralysis. The signs are mostly negative. Religion has sought re-entry at the university but in the main it is more than ever before a forgotten subject. Although there is a stronger feeling today than in the past about the change and development of the world, strong faith in progress is lost. Man has lost much of his former importance. Important now is the idea of a determined course of society in history to which one has to adapt himself by means of science or from which one ought to free himself by means of existentialism. Instead of faith in progress, with which heaven disappeared, the ideal of the merely human community arose in our century as a last resort for a lost man. It is everywhere present as a driving force that tries to abolish every kind of antithesis in human life. Even in church life many embrace this last result on the road of secularization as a guiding principle.

However, this type of modern world view is not so strong at the university. Strongest there is the vision that science must be useful, that it must equip man more and more with power, even though he walks a dangerous road. It must help man to adjust to the independent development of society. More sober and more realistic, the university still believes (and is thereby congenial with its history) that it is on the road to attain valid truth in autonomous science.
It does not have the pretension to produce a general world view but only produces small pieces of knowledge. This, however, is the only and generally valid truth man can attain. The rest is nonsense.

At the background of the changing world views of the University remains this common agreement throughout its history up to our time: a religiously independent science can provide true knowledge that must be accepted by all.

The liberal and the Christian university differ not only in their basis, but also in this point, that while both claim to teach true and universally acceptable knowledge, the experts of the liberal university, in distinction from the scholar at the Christian university, cannot understand why everyone is not willing to accept their knowledge as true. Here lies both the strength and the weakness of the liberal scientist. His strength, because his arrogant view is above discussion and in the course of history generally has been accepted; his weakness, because he does not understand his own basis as one of faith.

A Christian University

We should now examine the Christian university. That subject is of special interest to us here and now, because we are the guests of the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies which is planning to establish a Christian university. We as Christians belong to the world of science and learning and therefore have a supreme interest in the question: How ought we, a community of learning, act in this field?

Even the design of such a project seems to be an act of foolish bravery. The Christian university can reckon on the enmity and contempt of the whole world of universities and at best the pity of most fellow Christians. The entire history of the university seems to prove that the liberal university is normal and the Christian university is abnormal, and when attempted, has proved to be a failure. The current trend and opinion has been and is still so strong that to establish and maintain a Christian University seems to be something like climbing the Niagara Falls in a boat.

Why then is such a thing undertaken and how can it be done? The reason why is apparently the same that urged Augustine to write his book: De Doctrina Christiana, a blueprint for scientific education on a Christian basis. The same reason why Calvin asked for a Christian philosophy, and erected a Reformed University. The same reason that inspired the establishing of the Universities of Leiden, Utrecht and so many other Reformed Universities. The same reason that in the 19th century impelled Kuyper to establish the Free University. Neither the longing for glory nor for honor drove them on; they were not inspired by the antithesis; they did not build on the expectation of success nor yet on the idea that their performances would be of some profit. Their deed was solely an act of obedience to the Lord. They knew that "the earth is the Lord's and the fulness thereof; the world and they that dwell therein" (Ps. 24:1). They understood that for the university and
They knew they had no choice, even though to follow the Lord meant to carry a cross.

In his inaugural address about sphere sovereignty, Kuyper compressed his intentions in the now famous words: "There is not an inch in the whole territory of human life which Christ, the Sovereign over all, does not call, Mine!"

Well then, there is surely much to be done by Christians. Why did these leading men choose this field? Because they understood that in science and the university the battle of redemption and sin was decisive for human life and for the course of history. Let me quote Bavinck. "We must set against unbelief science the science of faith, a believing scientific system incorporated in a university. Science occupies a chief place and deserves to be delivered from the error of the age and to be proclaimed the Gospel. The schools of unbelief have deprived us of our sons and delivers them over to our adversaries. A Christian science alone can help us; a Reformed army; that army, however, needs officers. One university is worth more than a whole organized Salvation Army. Evangelization is good. Mission too, but high above them stands a free university."

The following question is: how is such a university possible? It is possible if it is built on the true, and at the same time the only definite basis at human disposal: the Word of God, the Bible. I think it of paramount importance to distinguish this basis from any expression of it by man. That distinction is better expressed in Article 2 of the constitution of the Association for Reformed Scientific Studies than in Article 2 of the constitution of the Free University, where the Reformed Principles are declared the basis. It was to be feared, said Rutgers in 1899, that the restriction of the basis to the Holy Scriptures would open the gate for all kinds of interpretations, while the choice of the reformed principles would solve that question about the Scriptures.

That important question may of course not be overlooked. Yet it was solved there upside down. The Reformed Principles should not judge the Scripture but these Scriptures have to judge the Reformed Principles. We can appreciate therefore that Bavinck and Biesterfeld at their nomination as professors in theology said that they conceived of Article 2 in the sense that the Holy Scriptures had been taken as the basic according to the declaration of the Reformed confession.

Yet in that conception too confusion can arise. It seems to solve the question of the interpretation of the Bible, in one sense even better than the wording, "Reformed Principles", because it is a written confession, while it is not so easy to name the Reformed Principles. Granted that Rutgers when he made his remark had at his disposal a set of theses about these principles, made in 1895 you see how carefully Kuyper and his partners expressed themselves—, we must not forget that although they were of some value they nevertheless got no general approval and by now are entirely forgotten.
Such an approach does have its value, but the result of it cannot be taken as a real basis; it is relative to the true basis.

The result of such an active approach, to be put entirely under the corrective control of the Word of God, can in our case be found in the preamble and the creed of the constitution of the ARSS. We shall now deal with them.

The preamble expresses what is asked and expected from the Lord. The creed articulates the obligation of man in science and at the university. The creed expresses the reformed principles for a university.

I don’t know of any other attempt to express the reformed principles for a university besides that of the Free University and this one. The last attempt clearly has attained a greater success. In my opinion the composers should be heartily congratulated with this product of skill and dedication. It comprises a truly Scriptural start for a university.

What will strike everyone who reads the Preamble is that the Christian university at bottom is not understood as an achievement of man but as a work of the Lord. It reads:

In humble awareness of our dependence upon the Triune God, Who called all things into being to His own glory and proclaimed to men, after they had transgressed His Law, His forgiving love, which was revealed to us fully in the sending of His Son, Jesus Christ, we do, out of gratitude for His undeserved favour and in conformity with His requirement that we consecrate ourselves and all things to Him, establish in accordance with the principles and provisions herein set forth, an association for the promotion of Scripturally directed higher learning. To this end we beseech of Him that He graciously grant us both now and in the future men equipped for our task with special gifts of heart and mind together with the means to enable them to do this work, and that He always bless our association to His honour and to the salvation of His people, particularly in Canada and the United States of America, in order that they may be a blessing to both lands and all their inhabitants.

It must never be forgotten, that the Christian university can exist only in the sphere of redemption, as a university built on grace. It is a fruit of the cross of Jesus Christ. It is a matter of to be or not to be for such a university to accept what Jesus said: "Without me ye can do nothing" (John 15:5). As Hannah confessed: "Only the Lord can give strength" (1 Sam. 2:10). Here too the sign of Christian life is that in every activity the believer learns to be still and rest in the expectation that the Lord will perform His work.

The educational creed of which I will speak now is, in my opinion, a masterpiece. It is said by some that some Christian philosophy has crept in and that it therefore is discriminatory. That has to be proved. To my knowledge this has not yet been done. Without proof, such a remark makes no more sense than the well known procedure of disqualifying a thing while keeping out of harm’s way.
Of course we know what Christian philosophy is meant. There exists only one. The one I have the honor to serve: the philosophy of the idea of law. I would say of that philosophy what the president of a Chicago university once said of his own institution: "This is not a very good university but it is the only one there is". So too: This Christian philosophy is not a very good one but it is the only one there is. As soon as it is proved to be untrue to its basis, the Word of God, I hope to be the first to drop it then and there.

Of course this philosophy has had some influence upon the educational creed. The crucial question is whether that influence anywhere has been contrary to the Scriptures, even in the sense of a onesided emphasis. I don't know of such an instance but I am convinced that the ARSS would like to be informed as soon as possible, if such is the case.

The heart of the matter in the creed seems to me to be the statement: "That human life in its entirety is religion".

With this expression the Association confesses its utter dependence upon God and destination in Him and opposes every attempt to be autonomous in science and the university.

We must thoroughly understand this confession. It means, firstly, that everything is religion, that is, in every sense tied to God. This is true of the liberal university and of semi-autonomous science. That is why they can exist and be of some value. In the second place, the Association confesses the willingness to recognize and comply with the character of the creation. And that, applied to university life, is the beginning of the Christian university.

That the university, which is a part of life, is religion means that according to its unique nature as a community for training in science it derives its religious nature from the order that God has laid down in the creation, that it is founded in the cross of Jesus Christ, that it exists wholly dependent on Him and that it serves the honor of God and His coming Kingdom in the typical sense of promoting and equipping to the task to expose and to map the law structure that is valid for the creation. Put in a slightly different manner, that is of course also true for science. Only thus can their sphere sovereignty be explained as independent within the creation.

Newman is in a certain sense correct when he says that scientific knowledge finds its end in itself and is not merely useful. But he is wrong in the presumption that this is the same as stating that science and the university are autonomous. In Jesus Christ they are religiously bound in every sense and on that condition only do they have their end in themselves, and only thus do they exist in relative independence within the creation.

The neglect of the distinction between having its end in itself within the creation and having its end in itself in a religious sense is the reason that Newman cannot explain why from a conception of autonomous science a religion of reason emerges and seduces many scientists to turn their back upon the Christian faith.
We have to consider that, whereas science is religion, and the university too, only the confession of this state of affairs by the scientists can bring science and the university on their road of life. To oppose or to ignore this confession does not mean that science is dead and utterly false, but it does mean that science and the university will travel the road of death, a road of decline where they handle the truth in a decomposing sense that thus will deteriorate in the course of time.

The confession that the university is religion means that science and education start with revealed truth and that scientific knowledge as a whole and in its details is in fact the theoretical expression of faith. That approach is the safeguard for the coherence and the universal features of science which are indispensable for the culture of the mind and the growth of wisdom. It will now be understood that true culture and wisdom do not have their origin in the university but in the faith of the student. The task of the university should be to cultivate the seeds of culture and wisdom.

Without that religious approach, when in the end the humanistic speculations have lost their fascination, science will be delivered up to more specialization, to senseless analysis or to pragmatism.

In addition to stating the true character of science, and confessing that the university is religion the creed claims that the university should be staffed with men and women who are driven by their covenantal communion with God in Christ to form a learning community of faith at the university. As we have seen, the community of the university is the prerequisite for the student's study. The disintegration of humanism in our time has made community at the modern university impossible.

In the third place, we must understand what it means when from their religious character we infer that science and study are free. On the standpoint of autonomy, freedom means being free from all outside interference in order to be entirely independent. On a Scriptural standpoint not only does such a freedom not exist but the idea of it is exposed by the Bible as slavery to a human idol. Christian freedom means to be free in Christ, to surrender to Him and thereby to be freed from such an idol, as human autonomy. Such a freedom as the response of faith to the religious being of the creation is the sphere where science can grow and where study has a perspective, and where both of them together with the university can maintain their true sphere sovereignty within the creation.

The university has to form wise men of culture. For a Christian university Christ is wisdom and, to grow in the image of God is the true culture of man. A typical share in the building up of that wisdom and that culture is the task of the university in a broader sense. We here touch a subject of immense scope. For our purpose it is, however, enough to point to the fact that in this and in all the other instances dealt with above the characteristic of the Christian university is its religious attitude and approach. The characteristics of wisdom, such as tolerance, moderation, knowledge of oneself, strength, a fine touch of reality and practical ability we can describe without at the same time describing their reference.
point but not without in fact viewing them from such an angle. It is the religious view and approach that gives them their true meaning and that puts them together as wisdom.

The secret of this approach, the secret of the university, science and study is the Bible, is God speaking to the community of the university and everyone of its members, and to all who are willing to listen to Him.

The relation of the university to the Lord's people makes the university their responsibility to check the Scriptural attitude and approach of the university. It is necessary therefore that the university develops a method for the exposition of its intentions, plans and results in understandable language. However difficult that may be, that task too is an essential obligation for the university.

Antithesis

The Christian university and the liberal university constitute an antithesis. It is important to understand that the Christian university, once erected, does not posit but only reveals the antithesis that has been posited by the liberal university. Moreover, the Christian is allowed neither to delight in the antithesis nor to avoid it. Whenever the duty to stand up in this antithesis arises it is good to remember the word of Peter: "For so is the will of God, that with well-doing ye may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men" (1 Peter 2:15).

At any rate, a battle has to be fought. That is not new in the field of science and the university. It has always been a battlefield. The important point is to understand that there are in the final analysis only two parties: one with the approach of the autonomy of man, and one with the approach of true religion. In this battle the Christian will meet with many difficult circumstances. I shall mention a few.

To walk upon an old and long-used road is of course far more easy than to turn into a new road that has to be laid as one advances. This is especially difficult when the travelers are generally considered rather ridiculous. That is the reason why so many Christians content themselves with walking on the old road and try to excuse themselves for it.

The second difficult circumstance is that not all Christians see the need of a Christian university. As a result that topic becomes a cause of conflict and confusion within their circle.

The third point will take us somewhat longer. Back of the antithesis in human life is the clear and radical antithesis between Christ and Satan. It is projected into the principles of man, which also show a rather distinct picture of the antithesis. These principles guide and motivate human life. Thus we find the antithesis back in practical life in a mixed form, in the deeds of both the Christian and the non-Christian. The mixed character of the behavior and the results of both types of universities make it more difficult to explain the difference.
But why should this argument always be used against the
endeavour to erect a Christian university? Such unfair treatment
is in fact derived from the wrong supposition that the liberal
university is the normal one. The Christian, however, must look
upon this state of affairs from the religious viewpoint. He should
understand that the benevolence of the Lord still connects apostate
science with truth. That must not disquiet or trouble the Christian,
but cause him to rejoice and strengthen him more and more to follow
Christ. Augustine already knew that he could and ought to learn
from the pagan philosopher.

In my opinion it is not correct to say that, although as a
whole the theories originating in the mind of the non-Christians
are wrong, we can take pieces of truth from them. Every theory
as a whole and in its parts is related to truth. We should look
at it from the religious angle in order to see the truth it con-
tains. We should also look at it from the angle of the man who
originated it in order to understand what he really intended and
how and in what sense he misconstrued the truth and implicated
further deterioration of it. There is nothing in a theory nor in
a part of it apart from its meaning. That is even valid for ana-
lysis, which is not identical with science. It is also true for
the preposition that two times two is four and that A is A, because
the question of the meaning of such simple laws transcends their
senseless and factually impossible isolation.

When we look at the present circumstances for the erection of
a Christian university, as I will do now for a moment, we conclude
that the chances of such a university, looked upon from that angle,
are neither better nor worse than in former times. Generally
speaking, we can say that the spirit of the university started in
the neighborhood of the synthesis, and was ruled by the church.
Later and as a consequence of that synthesis, humanism took over
and in our time, as a sequence of humanism, the spirit of the uni-
versity dwells in the neighborhood of nihilism. That has resulted
in a crisis of the university, of its community, the universality
of science, the study, and the view of wisdom and culture. Here
of course the Christian university at present has an advantage
over the liberal one.

We must, however, not forget that humanism's advance from its
optimistic belief in man towards nihilism has also changed its
attitude towards religion from fighting it to neglecting it. That
seems to be to the advantage of the Christian university. But a
second look will show it is otherwise.

Modern man has lost his trust and security. He distrusts so-
ciety and its development and is deprived of his relation to the
past. He is lonely and roaming in the dark, resigned to the fact
that nothing can justify life, that nowhere can a valid norm be
found and that the search for meaning is vain. But nihilism re-
sulting from that situation is not a companion that man can stand
for long. The development of the philosophies of Heidegger, Sartre
and Wittgenstein bear witness to that fact. Nihilism can exist in
man as a kind of modern "Sturm und Drang" period.
In some cases the despair and doubt will turn man to Christian faith but more often the agony makes place for another more positive attitude. The despairing and doubting man is considered more sober, honest and mature than his idealistic father. It is a sign of his honesty that he resigns himself to his fate and that he conforms to the inevitable development of society. That is the point where among the scientists the fellow traveller of communism, the latest form of society, enters the stage.

Another escape from nihilism and also a kind of conformity is found in the 20th century ideal of community. In America its origin is at the beginning of the history of the United States. Gradually it has become an ideal and now it seems to have become an escape from nihilism and as such it has been taken over by Europe. In Jaspers' theory of communication it receives a more fundamental treatment as a last ditch stand for humanity.

The Christian university is therefore confronted with a world within which the sense of religion is almost lost and the antithesis is very suspect because it intends to destroy the community. In my opinion that situation, compared with former situations, is a disadvantage for the Christian university.

At the university we are met with two main adversaries: the existentialist and the logical positivist. We learn from them that at bottom nothing has changed, that they express in one way or other man's old faith in human autonomy. Absolute freedom of man is the existentialist's expression of autonomy, the scientific method, especially that of verification and analysis is the fundamental faith of the logical positivist.

Due to their faith in autonomy, they are in no way less inclined to oppose the idea of a Christian university than former humanists. In fact they think themselves superior to their predecessors in the struggle with Christianity. The existentialist, because he has broken the chains of rationalism and thinks he has entered the fields where religion can be defeated with the same weapons. The logical positivist, because he thinks he has finally passed the region of metaphysics and speculation and is now able to disqualify every religious question as mere nonsense. He is convinced that man in science, although capable of taking only very small steps and having to go a very long way, is yet finally in touch with the truth. It is science that has delivered man from his false pretensions. It is science that he can still trust.

Let me quote Carnap: "As a result of Copernicus' work, man lost the distinction of a central position in the universe; as a result of Darwin's, he was deprived of the dignity of a special supra-animal existence; as a result of Marx's, the factors by means of which history can be causally explained were degraded from the realm of ideas to that of material events; as a result of Nietzsche's, the origin of morals were stripped of their halo; as a result of Freud's, the factors by means of which the ideas and actions of men can be causally explained were located in the darkest depths, in man's nether regions."
Compared with this desperate attachment to autonomy in science as the adversary of Christian science it seems to me that Augustine had handier means at his disposal to defend his idea of a Christian science against a philosophy that was considered to be rhetoric. And Calvin had at least a common basis with the defenders of the synthesis.

Nevertheless, all these comparisons concern questions of second rank. The main antithesis was and still is that between the religious approach and the approach of the autonomy of man.

I will now briefly return to those Christians who are not willing to join the Christian university movement but consciously and unconsciously join the forces of the enemy. This concerns in fact a second type of antithesis, the one within the community of Christians, am constantly in need of more understanding, more patience, a more cordial approach and more humility. It does not seem to me to be a lone fault and where it occurs it surely retards the cause of the Christian university. But I am not inclined to admit that the two types of Christians correspond with the tough and the tender minded in the famous distinction of James. The type of character of course has something to do with it but the difference is firstly a matter of principle.

Every Christian is inclined to oscillate between the choice of two starting points in life: the religious and the secular and therefor his perspective of life and his approach to it swings between and is mixed with a horizontal and a vertical view, a worldly and a religious.

That too is in fact an antithesis, occurring in every Christian's life. I will call it the third type of antithesis. The second type we are dealing with arises when the Christian turns his twofold approach into a principle. In that case he asserts that reality consists of two territories: one secular and one religious, and that he has to approach and view them differently. The first territory is that of human affairs science, politics, business, etc. It is generally thought that in this territory no essential differences exist between Christians and non-Christians. The fundamental difference exists in the territory of religion, of faith, and of the church. Some hesitation exists among these Christians concerning the question as to which territory belong such items as family life, education, the school, friendships and marriage.

However, they deal with life according to two different modes. Some of them separate the territories, others try to reach a synthesis. At any rate they consider one of those territories as a field where man is on his own, where he is neutral towards religion. It is essentially the theme of supernature and autonomous nature that they have adapted. They do not understand the differences between this theme and what Kuyper called common grace. The first theme is based on the autonomy of nature, the second, common grace (better: the common goodwill of the Lord), rejects all autonomy within the creation.
That the principle of autonomy is at work in the conception of many Christians when they consider science and the university is of course not always clear not even to themselves. Their attitude is sometimes merely an inclination towards the secular view, or even no more than a resignation to their customary state of life.

We ought to recognize and reject the worldly, neutral approach to problems. What betrays the non-religious approach is of course in the case of Christians usually not a secular conception of totality. It is rather the approach arising from the pieces, from the facts, from the side of some unmistakable law. The method of dealing with the religious side points to a general acceptance, to the lack of difference between Christians and non-Christians when viewing such a piece, fact or law. Whether they then discriminate against the religious approach and stand for neutrality of science and the university or confess that there must exist some bridge but that they don't know how to close the gap and have many doubts and questions about the religious issue, they suffer from the same fault: the wrong approach, or the approach from the bottom. That is the reason why they will perhaps tolerate the idea of a Christian university but will never join its cause cordially. Only from the religious view does the Christian university show itself as a vocation.

The opposition of fellow Christians to that idea has perhaps many sentimental reasons but when they are cleared away one has to detect it in the approach to the problems and then trace it back to the principle of autonomy which is active somewhere, perhaps hidden from view, perhaps unobserved. It will be clear that the controversy among Christians about the Christian university is one of the main obstacles.

Conclusion

Up to now we have discussed the chances of the Christian university from the limited viewpoint of its circumstances. Having little strength, the supporters of that university seem to meet with overwhelming difficulties and superior opposition. How can one believe in possible success, after looking at its failure-ridden history and comparing it with the invincible liberal university.

I have already told you that not the expectation of success but the obedience to God has to be our guide and motivation; Yet it is necessary to consider also the question of success and failure, but then of course in a religious sense. That enables us to understand the history of the liberal university, the reason for the failures of the Christian university and its final security.

The first point is already discussed at length. It appeared that the existence of the liberal university does not prove its success. At present it has lost many features of the structure of the true university and is in a state of crisis.
The failures of the Christian universities, together with all the failures of Christianity, can be traced back to the heart of the Christian. Upon the appearance at the horizon of only a glimmer of result of his activities, he is inclined to pursue some kind of independence and trust in that result. There and then he tries to cut the religious ties of the university, secularizes it, forming an antithesis, cultivating some kind of autonomy, laying the foundation of an idol and starting the decline and death of the university, because here too "the wages of sin is death" (Rom, 6:23).

Various possibilities for secularization can be found at the university. The beginning is always small and unobservable. It can start somewhere in science or in philosophy, in the status of the university, in its organization, in the recognition of its ability to investigate, in the quality or number of its graduates or in the mode of living at the university. Not only adaptation to the world but also isolation from it would be a sure sign that something is wrong with the university. The learned Christian has to guard especially against the seductive supposition, that he belongs to the elite of Christianity. Such a class does not exist.

At the Christian university one must not be troubled about contempt, defamation and oppression from without. One must be prepared for them and be troubled with the desire to avoid them at all costs.

It is not so easy for a Christian at a time of prosperity at the university to understand himself as a pilgrim in search of a better fatherland. No matter how difficult that may be, that must be his life, not alongside of his work but in his work. The well-being of the Christian university depends on it. Its members must understand that only on the rough, narrow road of the Kingdom of God, where Jesus Christ precedes them, and where they must lose themselves to be found back in Christ, can their university succeed, that is, show the coming Kingdom as already present.

To be captivated by the Word of God is the secret of that attitude. It means at the same time the understanding that the future of the Christian university and of Christian science does not depend on us. They are redeemed by Christ and secure in God, Who carries on with His work, with or without us.

It is valid for the whole creation and therefore for the university too, that the Lord says: "For mine own sake, even for mine own sake, will I do it; for how should by name be polluted? And I will not give my glory to another" (Is. 48:11).

The sum and substance of starting and proceeding with a university is trust in God and the knowledge that the conclusion of the whole matter is: "Fear God and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Eccl. 12:13).
5. Souvereiniteit in eigen kring, 1930, Kampen.
6. Het Calvinisme, Kampen.
10. C. de Ru: De strijd over het Hoger Onderwijs tijdens het ministerie-Kuyper, 1953, Kampen.