2016

Herman Bavinck between scholastic and modern psychology: toward a "reformed psychology."

Joohyun Kim
Calvin Theological Seminary

CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

HERMAN BAVINCK BETWEEN SCHOLASTIC AND MODERN PSYCHOLOGY: TOWARD A "REFORMED PSYCHOLOGY"

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO
THE FACULTY OF CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY
IN CANDIDACY FOR THE DEGREE OF
MASTERS OF THEOLOGY

THEOLOGICAL DIVISION

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORICAL THEOLOGY

BY
JOOHYUN KIM

GRAND RAPIDS, MICHIGAN
MAY 2016

CALVIN THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

THESIS APPROVAL

This thesis entitled

"Herman Bavinck's Psychology: Toward a 'Reformed Psychology'"

written by

JOOHYUN KIM

was submitted in partial fulfillment of

the requirements for the degree of

Master of Theology

and successfully defended on July 14, 2016

has been accepted by the faculty of Calvin Theological Seminary

upon the recommendation of the following readers:

Prof. John Bolt, Supervisor

Prof. John Cooper

Th. M. Adviser

July 15, 2016
Date

CONTENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The completion of this thesis would not have been possible without the guidance and training provided by the faculty of Calvin Theological Seminary. I would like to first thank my supervisor, Dr. John Bolt, for his support of my own ideas and helpful suggestions, and my second advisor, Dr. John Cooper, for his insightful comments. I also deeply thank Dr. Richard Muller for broadening my theological horizons with his teachings on the post-Reformation era. Also, I want to thank Dr. George Marsden for his lecture on Jonathan Edwards and C. S. Lewis that rekindled my theological imagination. In particular, I thank Dr. David Sytsma for providing me with quality academic training in research methodology. I also wish to thank the theological librarians at Hekman Library, Lugene Schemper and Paul Fields, for their editing and excellent help with my research throughout the Th.M. program. Above all, special thanks goes to my wife Kyoungha, who has given me her untiring support and constant encouragement. Also, I thank my little son, Ian, for making me so happy with his killer smile. Finally, I give glory and honor to the Triune God for His unfailing love for me.

ABSTRACT

Bavinck completed his first psychology book, *Principles of Psychology* (*Beginselen der Psychologie*, 1897) in the middle of his theological writings from his interaction with the nineteenth century psychologies. In 1920, Bavinck published another psychology book entitled *Biblical and Religious Psychology (Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie)* on the basis of solid exegesis and biblical principles. In *Principles of Psychology*, Bavinck intended that his psychological principles would be as worthy as the empirical psychology of his day. Kuyper also stressed the doctrinal value of faculty psychology to Bavinck's first psychology book in his review. Yet, these two psychology books were virtually neglected both in the field of psychology and in Reformed anthropology. What is more, scholars like Hepp and Jaarsma demonstrated that in his later years Bavinck rejected the scholastic faculty psychology defended in his first psychology book. It, however, is shown that Bavinck does not change his views on faculty psychology, but elaborates on the doctrine of faculties for a more integrated view of the soul, even while interacting with the modern psychology of his day. Throughout his writings, Bavinck consistently advocates the unity of the soul in a more balanced way by presenting the supremacy of the heart, the central organ of all human faculties. Beyond scholastic psychology, Bavinck also properly embraces the new ideas of nineteenth century psychologies like the unconsciousness theory, the psychology of religion, and child psychology.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The Significance of Bavinck's Psychology

Bavinck was actively involved with the newly emerging psychology of his day and he cited numerous contemporary psychologists ranging from German psychoanalysis and experimental psychology to American psychologies of religion, such as Johann Friedrich Herbart, Sigmund Freud, Wilhelm Wundt, Theodore Lipps, G. Stanley Hall, William James, Edward D. Starbuck and James H. Leuba, etc. Indeed, while engaging in intensive critical dialogue with these new modern psychologies in the nineteenth century, Bavinck published his first book on psychology, *Principles of Psychology* (*Beginselen der Psychologie*) on December 5, 1897.[1] Also, in 1920, Bavinck released another psychology book, *Biblical and Religious Psychology* (*Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie*), which is based on solid exegesis and biblical principles rather than metaphysical or philosophical discussions.[2]

In his preface to the second edition of *Principles of Psychology* (1923), Bavinck expressed his hopes that his psychological principles would be as worthy as empirical psychology. Bavinck wrote, "It would be unfortunate if this booklet were totally to disappear from the psychological literature. For the principles described in

[1] Herman Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, 1st ed. (Kampen: Bos, 1897); and the second edition: Herman Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, ed. Valentine Hepp, 2nd ed. (Kampen: Kok, 1923); and English translation of the 2nd ed by Jack Vanden Born. Herman Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, trans. Jack Vanden Born (M.C.S. thesis, Calvin College, 1981).

[2] Herman Bavinck, *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie* (Kampen: Kok, 1920). This book was partly translated into English by H. Hanko. It should be noted that although the two English versions by Vanden Born and Hanko are helpful, the translations are sometimes unclear and are missing some content. For this reason, I consulted both Bavinck's original texts and English translations. Herman Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, trans. H. Hanko (Grand Rapids: Protestant Reformed Theological School, 1974).

the booklet have been approved by the whole of the author's life and they retain powerful principles deserving practice and development alongside the pure empirical psychology."[3] But contrary to such desires, Bavinck's psychology book received little attention by scholars after its publication from the beginning of the last century.[4] Only one doctoral dissertation, *The Centrality of the Heart* in which two chapters were dedicated to discussion on Bavinck's psychology was written by Anthony Hoekema.[5] Apart from that, Bavinck's psychology books are only occasionally partly mentioned or cited by other scholars.[6]

---

[3] "Nu zou het jammer zijn, als dit boekje geheel en al uit de psychologische literatuur verdween. Want de beginselen, waarvan dit boekje uitging, blijven van kracht, bleven zijn leven lang de instemming van den schrijver behouden en verdienen beoefening en uitwerking naast de zuivere empirische psychologie." Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, 5.

[4] Besides his *Reformed Dogmatics*, Bavinck left his legacy in writings in a wide variety of fields such as philosophy, politics, pedagogy, and psychology. In his later years, Bavinck spent most of his time wrestling with the pedagogy and psychology of his day. After his death, Bavinck's *Pedagogical Principles* (*Paedagogische Beginselen*, 1904) has been studied by two scholars. By contrast, Bavinck's psychology has not yet been adequately studied. See Herman Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen* (Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1917). For the studies on Bavinck pedagogy, see Jakob Brederveld, *Christian Education: A Summary and Critical Discussion of Bavinck's Pedagogical Principles* (Smitter, 1928); and Cornelius Richard Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy of Herman Bavinck: A Textbook in Education* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1935). More recently, a doctoral dissertation on Bavinck's pedagogy was published. See also Timothy Shaun Price, "Pedagogy as Theological Praxis: Martin Luther and Herman Bavinck as Sources for Engagement with Classical Education and the Liberal Arts Tradition" (Ph.D. diss., University of Aberdeen, 2013). Since pedagogy is based on psychology, Bavinck's pedagogical book also contains his psychological principles.

[5] Finally, this dissertation was not accepted and defended for the Th.D. degree at Princeton Theological Seminary. Professor Hoekema was delayed in completing the dissertation and when he finally submitted it in 1948, his dissertation supervisor had passed away and Professor Hoekema wrote another dissertation for a new supervisor. Anthony A. Hoekema, "The Centrality of the Heart: A Study in Christian Anthropology with Special Reference to the Psychology of Herman Bavinck" (Th.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1948).

[6] Among them, Jacob A. Belzen provides historical context in which Bavinck was interested in the psychology of religion. In his articles, Belzen attempts to evaluate Bavinck's position with regard to the early reception and nondevelopment of the psychology of religion among orthodox Dutch Calvinists. Concerning Bavinck's position, Belzen concludes, "Bavinck' s ambivalence with respect to the psychology of religion is clear: on the one hand, he emphatically underscores its right to exist and expects much from it, but, on the other, he does not trust it." Jacob A. Belzen, ed., *Aspects in Contexts: Studies in the History of Psychology of Religion* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 99; Jacob A. Belzen, "The Introduction

It should be noted that Bavinck completed his psychology book in the middle of his theological writings and intended to revise the small book at the end of his life.[7] Unfortunately, Bavinck's premature death halted the process of revision. Perhaps Bavinck's views underwent more changes in the field of psychology than in any other field until his death,[8] which indicates that psychology was a crucial issue in his age. Abraham Kuyper's review of Bavinck's first edition of *Principles of Psychology* reported a growing "Babylonian confusion" in the field of psychology of his day.[9] It seems that Bavinck was much impressed by the new experimental method in the area of psychology. Despite his critical remarks on empirical psychology, Bavinck recognized the value and benefits and expected to make good use of it in the more practical fields.[10] Walking a fine line between modern and scholastic psychology, Bavinck thus attempted to construct his scientific psychology distinct from his theological anthropology.

---

of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands: Ambivalent Reception, Epistemological Concerns, and Persistent Patterns," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 37, no. 1 (2001): 45–62; Jacob A. Belzen, "The Development of Early Psychology of Religion: A Dutch Falsification of the Received View," *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 44, no. 3 (2008): 258–72; Jacob A. Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality: Shaping Forces in Dutch Psychology of Religion, 1907-1957," *History of Psychology* 12, no. 3 (2009): 157–82.

[7] In 1923, Valentine Hepp, who was a successor at the Free University, published the revised edition of *Principles of Psychology*. Concerning the second edition, Hepp "deleted many of the references to Biblical texts and included such revisions as were contained in Bavinck's papers." Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, ix.

[8] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 32.

[9] "Er begon toch gaandeweg op het gebied der zielkunde onder on seen Babylonische spraakverwarring te heerschen..." Gereformeerde Kerk in de Nederlanden and Abraham Kuyper, "De Heraut.," *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*, 1897.

[10] E.g., see Herman Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, ed. John Bolt, trans. Harry Boonstra and Gerrit Sheeres (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 63; Herman Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1953), 209.

Bavinck's letter to Kuyper about his *Reformed Dogmatics* indicates why psychology as a separate discipline is important. On September 20, 1897, Bavinck wrote, " I think that I shall put together two more volumes. And then I still need to limit things at every turn. The doctrine of man is incomplete. Therefore, in a couple of months I shall publish a small, separate work: *Beginselen der Psychologie*. The copy is ready and the first proofs have been set."[11] Soon after the completion of the second volume of *Gereformeerde Dogmatike* in 1887, Bavinck prepared the small psychology book as distinguished from the *Dogmatics*. In his review, Kuyper was delighted that this small book was widely accessible and could be helpful for Calvinists circles, in particular for Christian schools and teachers.[12] Above all, the doctrine of faculties, writes Kuyper, is most important and worth its weight in gold.[13] Thus, Kuyper concludes, "He [Bavinck] not only maintains the faculties but there are two of them, which makes for the firmness of exchanging names between the desiring and willing faculty."[14] Kuyper highly praised Bavinck's book on faculty psychology in his review.

Despite such approval, Bavinck's faculty psychology has been underestimated by the secondary literature. Hepp, the editor of the second edition of this book and

---

[11] "Ik denk nu, gelijk Ge vermoedet, nog twee deelen te leveren. En dan is nog beperking ieder oogenblik geboden. De leer van den mensch is onvolledig. Ik geef daarom met een paar maanden een afzonderlijk werkje uit: *Beginselen der Psychologie*. De copie is gereed. En de eerste vellen zijn gezet." R. H. Bremmer, *Herman Bavinck als Dogmaticus* (Kampen: Kok, 1961), 28. Cited from Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, vii.

[12] The Dec 3, 1897 issue of *De Heraut* included Kuyper's review of Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie (1897)*. Gereformeerde Kerk in de Nederlanden and Abraham Kuyper, "De Heraut." See also Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, vii–ix.

[13] "Vooral op, het stuk van de leer der vermogens is dit goud waard." Gereformeerde Kerk in de Nederlanden and Abraham Kuyper, "De Heraut."

[14] "Hij handhaaft niet alleen die vermogens, maar ook haar tweeheid, en daargelaten nu of het geraden is, den naam wilsvermogen met dien van begeervermogen te verwisselen, light in deze beslissing de vastheid zijner psychologie." Gereformeerde Kerk in de Nederlanden and Abraham Kuyper, "De Heraut."

Bavinck's the successor, asserted in his foreword, "Bavinck determined that his *Beginselen der Psychologie* [*Principles of Psychology*] should be supplemented or modified… In the course of the years I [Hepp] came to the conclusion that the scheme of scholastic psychology, especially the doctrine of the faculties that forms the basis of this writing, must be abandoned."[15] Hepp presumed that Bavinck revised his views on faculty psychology toward the end of his life.

Similarly, in his doctoral thesis on *The Education Philosophy of Herman Bavinck* (1935), affirmed Jaarsma, "Bavinck accepts the Aristotelian doctrine of faculties, cognition and striving, in his *Principles of Psychology*, written in 1897, but refutes these in his *Victory of the Soul*, which appeared approximately twenty years later."[16] Jaarsma wrote, "Bavinck rejected the faculty psychology defended in his first book in psychology for a more integrated view of the individual."[17] By contrast, Hoekema dismisses these claims in his doctoral dissertation by insisting that there is little or no evidence that Bavinck rejected the doctrine of faculty psychology.[18] These conflicting views on Bavinck's faculty psychology probably suggest two sides of Bavinck, between modern and scholastic psychology.

Yet, Bavinck still used the faculty psychological model as a useful tool for the formulation of Christian doctrines throughout his writings. Without a doubt, by using scholastic psychology, he defended the powers of the soul against modern psychology

---

[15] "Voorts bepaalde hij, dat het boekje, waar noodig, aangevuld of gewijzigd mocht worden… In den loop der jaren was ik tot de overtuiging gekomen, dat het schema van de scholastieke psychologie en inzonderheid van de leer der vermogens, dat de grondvorm aan dit geschrift gaf, moest worden prijsgegeven. Het valt niet te ver verwonderen, de auteur met een herziene uitgave juist van dit werk niet gereed kon komen." Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, 5.

[16] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 78.

[17] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 32.

[18] Hoekema, "The Centrality of the Heart," 33.

like empiricism, materialism, and reductionism that excluded metaphysics. What is more, Bavinck synthesized the findings of modern psychology such as the theory of the unconscious into his dogmatics for the purpose of developing theology as a science while interacting with the modern psychology of his day. Given that faculty psychology played a pivotal role in Bavinck's anthropology, it is important to examine whether Bavinck continued to hold the scheme of scholastic psychology.

This thesis will demonstrate that Bavinck did not alter his views on traditional faculty psychology, but rather his views is an elaboration of his theological anthropology, and that he maintains the unity of the soul in a more balanced way by presenting the supremacy of the heart, the central organ of all human faculties.

The present study will deal with Bavinck's psychology in the following order. Chapter 2 will consider the historical context to determine why Bavinck was interested in the newer psychology of his day. Chapter 3 will examine how Bavinck's psychology differs from theological anthropology, and how he interacted with the modern psychology of his day. This chapter will also present the influences of modern psychology on Bavinck's thought, as he was relatively receptive to the new findings of nineteenth century psychologies like the unconsciousness theory, the psychology of religion, and child psychology. Finally, chapter 4 will provide an assessment of Bavinck's psychology in the light of the two previous chapters. The question to be addressed will be whether Bavinck adopted the faculty psychology of Reformed orthodoxy as such. This chapter will also provide examples of the adoption of the Aristotelian faculty psychology of two major Reformers: Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499-1562) and John Calvin (1509-1564), and then present Bavinck's unified psychological view of the human soul.

CHAPTER TWO

WHY WAS BAVINCK INTERESTED IN PSYCHOLOGY?

I. The Historical Context of Bavinck's Interest in Psychology

Bavinck lived in an era of unparalleled change, especially in a scientific, social, cultural, and educational realm. One of the most serious challenges in Bavinck's day was the emergence of modern science. As the modern scientific method was applied to all sciences such as biology, geology, psychology and pedagogy, the relation of faith and science became an urgent question among Dutch theologians. In the Dutch Neo-Calvinism tradition of the nineteenth century, Bavinck had to face the huge challenge of modern science. The emergence of modern science often threatened the Christian faith and the authority of Scripture in the Dutch Reformed community.

Bavinck devoted much time to dogmatics at Kampen, but during his years in Amsterdam, he shifted his interest to more practical fields such as culture, philosophy, psychology, and pedagogy. Nevertheless, it should be noted that Bavinck had already published a psychology textbook, *Principles of Psychology* in 1897 at Kampen.[1] When Bavinck was a professor of dogmatics at Kampen Theological Seminary, he had already been engaged in practical matters relating to the modern world. A few years later, Bavinck delivered a lecture against modern thought based on an evolutionary worldview, and his lecture on *Creation and Development* was printed in 1901.[2]

[1] Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*.

[2] Herman Bavinck, "Creation or Development," *Methodist Review* 83 (1901): 849–74.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Darwin's theory of evolution was considered as a new worldview in which the world was seen as an accidental and mechanical process, challenging the Christian worldview based on creation. These attempts to separate and exclude God from all sciences became more common in Europe in the nineteenth century. Facing a new worldview based on modern scientific method, Bavinck responded with his lecture on *Creation or Development*. In the lecture he says, "With the change of the century there has been gradually a new world-view arisen which undertakes to interpret not merely the inanimate but also the animate creations, not merely the unconscious but also the conscious, and all this without exception independently of God, and only and alone from an immanent self-development."[3] Bavinck detected danger in the new modern scientific world and engaged in critical dialogues over the achievements of modern science. He was rather skeptical about the results of modern science and raised objections to the evolutionary worldview.

It does appear that Bavinck's interest in the modern world began in Leiden, although he was especially concerned about modern psychology while in Amsterdam. The periods of transition in Bavinck's life can basically be divided into three cities: Leiden, Kampen, and Amsterdam. Life in these three cities greatly affected Bavinck's views on the modern world and his theological perspectives. In his youth, "Bavinck wanted to attend Leiden in order to receive a more 'scientific' education than that which the Theological Seminary in Kampen could offer," writes Ron Gleason.[4] While studying at Leiden, it is most likely that Bavinck was equipped with the necessary

[3] Bavinck, "Creation or Development," 2.

[4] Ron Gleason, *Herman Bavinck: Pastor, Churchman, Statesman, and Theologian* (Phillipsburg, N.J: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 2010), 44. For Bavinck's decision to study at Leiden, see Gleason, *Herman Bavinck*, 45–48.

knowledge to engage with the modern scientific world. Gleason writes, "It was Bavinck's settled intention to learn about modern liberal theology firsthand. He fully believed if criticism were to be leveled at a theology or theologian, the one delivering the criticism should be conversant with the author's works. That way, he believed, there would be no 'cheap shots' taken against one's opponents."[5]

During his first period in Leiden, Bavinck was exposed to modern thought and became well versed in modern sciences such as geology, biology, and psychology. Nevertheless, "when Bavinck entered Leiden, he was Reformed and had a strong faith. Upon completion of his degrees he was practically unscathed and left pretty much as he had entered," notes Gleason.[6] Even if it is somewhat exaggerated, John Bolt has suggested two sides of Bavinck as "the fundamentalist scholastic and the good progressive modern man."[7] According to Bolt, "the pull of the former led him to Leiden and is reflected in his engagement with modern culture and science. It also explains Bavinck's passion for scholarly precision and fair mindedness even with those who were his religious or theological opponents."[8] While engaging with the modern scientific world, Bavinck maintained a good balance between orthodoxy and modernity.

Admittedly, in Bavinck's earlier life at Kampen, he is chiefly remembered as a sort of dogmatician who was the author of *Reformed Dogmatics* (*Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*). Bavinck, however, was close to a "modern man" who was active in those

---

[5] Gleason, *Herman Bavinck*, 44.

[6] Gleason, *Herman Bavinck*, 55.

[7] John Bolt, "Grand Rapids between Kampen and Amsterdam: Herman Bavinck's Reception and Influence in North America," *Calvin Theological Journal* 38, no. 2 (2003): 267.

[8] Bolt, "Grand Rapids between Kampen and Amsterdam," 267.

fields like pedagogy, psychology, the role of women in society, economics, war and even international relations in the last decade of his life.[9] Among others, he obviously had a deep affection for Christian education and psychology in his later life, and wrestled in depth with empirical psychology until his death.

A. The Advent of Modern Psychology

The advent of modern experimental psychology is one of the biggest achievements of modern science. Psychology has been conducted in a scientific manner in which empirical psychology was dominant in Bavinck's day. Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, psychology as the study of the mind was generally treated as a department of philosophical epistemology. Historically, before John Locke (1632-1704), psychology was similar to Aristotelian faculty psychology that defined the faculties of the soul in terms of a threefold division. Similarly, following Aristotle's psychology, Reformed orthodoxy adopted traditional faculty psychology, which divides the soul into faculties of intellect and will.[10] As faculty psychology occupied a

[9] Bolt, "Grand Rapids between Kampen and Amsterdam," 268.

[10] Thomas H. Leahey defines faculty psychology as follows: "The view that the mind is a collection of departments responsible for distinct psychological functions… Faculty psychologies oppose theories of mind as a unity with one function (e.g., those of Descartes and associationism) or as a unity with various capabilities (e.g., that of Ockham), and oppose the related holistic distributionist or mass-action theory of the brain. Faculty psychology began with Aristotle, who divided the human soul into five *special senses,* three *inner senses* (*common sense, imagination, memory*) and *active* and *passive mind.* In the Middle Ages (e.g., Aquinas) Aristotle's three inner senses were subdivied, creating more elaborate lists of five to seven *inward wits*." Robert Audi, ed., *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 303. Regarding the Reformers' use of the Aristotelian faculty psychology, Richard A. Muller sums up as follows: The Reformers "viewed intellect and will as the faculties or parts of the soul (*partes animae*) and, following the traditional faculty-psychological model, placed the affections below the will as those qualities of soul that desire the things of sense perception and, in turn, influence the will in its choices. The concept of dispositions of intellect and will toward certain objects or kinds of object is an integral part of faculty psychology." See Richard A. Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca. 1520 to ca. 1725*, 2nd ed., 4 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003), 1:355–356.

central role in Reformed anthropology, it elucidated the major doctrines using the faculties of the soul, like the image of God, human free will, sin and faith.

Locke's major treatise *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* (1690), however, opened a new horizon of epistemology against traditional faculty psychology. Rather than the description of the faculties as the operations of separate entities, he presented the mind in various powers. By presenting that the human mind is a united power, Locke brought about a remarkable change concerning the understanding of the workings of the human mind. Locke claimed that there are only two reliable sources of knowledge: sensation and representation.[11] Locke denied, writes Bavinck, the doctrine of innate ideas and later became known as the father of empirical psychology.[12]

In *Principles of Psychology*, Bavinck raises five substantial points against empiricism.

> (1) Empiricism is unable to explain those elements of our knowledge which have a universal, necessary, or unchangeable character. Perception teaches us to know only factual and actual events but not the eternal, unchangeable and necessary truths. (2) Explaining the character of truths as something only customary, whether it be that way with one person or even with all of mankind, does not succeed. This is because we can distinguish the truths known on empirical grounds from the truths that are of an unchangeable nature. (3) That Empiricism is to account for the necessary character of many truths is also manifested in its limitation of science, a limitation that has given rise to positivism. (4) Empiricism goes beyond even this. If there can be nothing besides contingent truths, then principial differences between sensory perception and thinking, between higher and lower knowing faculties, between man and beast must be lost. Thinking is explained purely in terms of sensations. (5) Empiricism's final

[11] See Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 4.

[12] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 17. According to Bavinck, this modern empiricism represented by Francis Bacon, Locke, Hume, A. Comte and J. Stuart Mill is in fact the same as that of the Greek atomists and the medieval nominalists. See also Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, ed. John Bolt, trans. John Vriend, 4 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008), 1:219–222.

> conclusion is materialism. All human consciousness is based in sensuality and all knowledge has its origin in sensation.[13]

In his *Reformed Dogmatics*, Bavinck also makes critical remarks upon empiricism.

> All intellectual activity has its beginning and source in this faculty. This view fails to take into account the active role of the human mind, the role of unproven presuppositions in all scientific observation. In addition to its flawed starting point, empiricism denies the term "science" for all but the "exact sciences." The entire range of the "human sciences," including theology, is excluded; the fundamental religious and metaphysical questions faced by all people must be ignored. Taken strictly, this leads to materialism, because even human consciousness itself, including our faculty of knowing, finally has to be reduced to explainable causes in the material, sensory world. Mind is only matter, the matter of the physiological brain.[14]

Both in his psychology book and in his dogmatics, Bavinck points out that empiricism inevitably results in materialism. He made much more detailed and highly critical comments about empiricism by using the psychological terms in his psychology book rather than in his dogmatics.

After Locke, Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) completely changed the reigning epistemological paradigm which held that the mind was simply a passive mirror of the external world. In his *Critique of Pure Reason* (1781), Kant attempted to exclude the possibility of metaphysics. According to Bavinck, "after Kant's metaphysical refusal, it was hoped that in this way Christian theology could regain its honorable status in the eyes of secular science. What it needed to do was become thoroughly empirical and build a scientific construction on the facts of religious experience."[15] Under his influence, a metaphysical account in psychology was gradually regarded as unnecessary or nonsense, since then empirical science became mainstream. Like

---

[13] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 67–69.

[14] Herman Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Abridged in One Volume*, ed. John Bolt, Abridged edition (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 50-51.

[15] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Abridged*, 118.

psychology, "theology has, since Kant's time, become a theology of consciousness and experience and thus loses itself in religious anthropology," notes Bavinck.[16]

With the stream of time, Wilhelm Wundt (1832-1920) founded the first formal laboratory for research in psychology at the University of Leipzig in 1879. This meant that psychology itself became a separate discipline as a pure science of experience apart from philosophy. Wundt's book, *Principles of Physiological Psychology* in 1874 is one of the most important works in the history of psychology and is considered to be the first textbook in psychological literature. Bavinck asserts that Wundt's *Principles of Physiological Psychology* "depended on a mathematical, experimental method and had the purpose of investigating the forms and laws that connect bodily and psychic events."[17] Bavinck pointed out, "the application of the mathematical and experimental method forced psychologists to study natural sciences, mathematics, anatomy, chemistry, mechanics, physics, physiology,"[18] As psychology became infected by the growing natural sciences, psychological research was mainly conducted by the scientific method and thoroughly ruled out metaphysics. The result is that traditional faculty psychology described in the epistemological aspects gave place to empirical psychology upon the data of subjective personal experiences and feelings.

B. The Challenge of the Nineteenth-Century Psychologism

Undoubtedly, Wundt's experimental psychology played a significant role in shaping the outlook of modern experimental psychology. After Wundt's first experimental laboratory, psychology was studied under scientific research. There

---

[16] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 206.

[17] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 18.

[18] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 18.

were significant psychological developments in many European countries and in North America.[19] Psychology was recognized as the queen of sciences in the nineteenth century. In the middle of the modern scientific world, Bavinck had a sense that the psychologism of the nineteenth century threatened the Christian faith and biblical truth of the human soul. The psychologism of various forms was basically the product of science with the exclusion of metaphysical speculation. As psychology emerged as an independent scientific field in the nineteenth century, psychology developed and flourished in connection with other disciplines. Psychologism is a sort of reductionism which attempts to reduce human behavior or cognitive processes, including logic and mathematics into a series of chemical reactions. Thus, psychologism rejects the idea of a priori knowledge of principles and concepts in logic and mathematics.

According to Bavinck, a form of "extreme psychologism" believes that "psychology is the basis of all spiritual sciences and that all of these can be reduced to psychology and are part of psychology."[20] To be more specific, this psychology "believes that it has dealt sufficiently with religion, ethics, logic and aesthetics, metaphysics and philosophy when it describes how the ideas and norms, the notions and concepts that appear in them have arisen from psychology."[21] For Bavinck, this psychologism still has a limitation on measuring an objective validity in human beings. Bavinck writes, "at the most, psychologism can describe, although always very incompletely and inadequately, how all those norms and ideas were formed by

[19] See Thomas Teo, *The Critique of Psychology: From Kant to Postcolonial Theory* (New York: Springer, 2005), 39–41.

[20] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 173.

[21] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 173.

humans, but it never gets around to the question of what their inner, independent, objective value is."[22]

Furthermore, Bavinck discusses the necessity of a pure psychological viewpoint in his essay. "From a purely psychological perspective, it is just as important to trace how a mistake, a lie, a criminal plan, a horrible intention was formed in the human soul as it is to investigate how a change of mind, a conversion, or a sacrificial act came about in a human being," notes Bavinck.[23] Bavinck does not underestimate the value and insights that were derived from psychological studies. Bavinck, however, asserts, "whatever useful contribution it makes, it has its limitations and will never replace logic and ethics, religion and aesthetics; pedagogy also, although thankful for psychology's guidance, maintains its independence, which belongs to it according to its own nature."[24]

II. Predominance of the Psychology of Religion in the Netherlands

Before the Second World War, many Dutch Protestant theologians had shown a strong interest in the emerging psychology of religion, which was taking a new approach to the study of religion, in spite of the claims about its alleged dangers.[25] Perhaps, many of them thought that despite such potential threats, psychology would not only offer "possibilities for reinventing theology and the ministry," but also improve "the position of Christianity and Church in modern society and culture."[26]

---

[22] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 173.

[23] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 173.

[24] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 173.

[25] Erik Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods: Secularization and Transformation of Religion in the Netherlands since 1950*, v. 3 (Hilversum: Verloren, 2005), 101; Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 163.

[26] Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 102–103.

Certainly, many liberal Protestant Dutch theologians appeared to have been relatively receptive to the new ideas by psychological research. Most liberal Protestants in the Netherlands recognized its curative value like "a potential remedy for 'intellectualism' and 'objectivism' in theology and the Church."[27] It was hoped that psychology "could teach ministers or theologians to attune to parishioners' individual, subjective, emotional perception of religious truths, instead of harping on about scholastic details."[28] Like many liberal Dutch theologians, the neo-Calvinists in the Netherlands also had a positive outlook on the psychology of religion, with an expectation of "rehabilitation of the soul."[29]

During the first decade of the twentieth century in the Netherlands, the psychology of religion appeared to have solidified its place as an important branch of psychology with receiving much recognition internationally. In the Netherlands, it was not too much to say that the development of psychology of religion can be attributable to an exclusive interest of Bavinck.[30] Tracking newly emerging trends in modern psychology, Bavinck became one of the leading scholars in introducing the development of psychology of religion in neighboring countries to the Netherlands.[31] Jacob A. Belzen asserts that the initial "discovery" of psychology of religion in the Netherlands was due largely to two Dutch scholars: Hannes T. de Graaf (1875-1930) and Herman Bavinck.[32] It, however, seems that De Graaf's article *Over Godsdienstpsychologie* (*On the Psychology of Religion*), which was to introduce a

[27] Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 103-104.

[28] Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 103.

[29] Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 102.

[30] Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 164.

[31] Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 164.

[32] Belzen, "The Introduction of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands," 48.

new discipline of psychology, and was virtually the first article in the field of psychology of religion in the Netherlands, received scant attention in the history of psychology.[33]

Around the same time, Bavinck became a member of the Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences in recognition of the scholarly value of his works in 1906. And then the following year, Bavinck introduced the newly emerging discipline of the psychology of religion in his first academic oration to the society.[34] In the middle of his speech, Bavinck withheld his judgment on the psychology of religion by mentioning as follows: "When assessing the value of the psychology of religion, for which I now ask your attention for a while, I will abstain in this context from all theological objections that could be raised against it, limiting myself to a few comments of a generally scholarly nature."[35] Yet, Bavinck implies the benefits of the studying the psychology of religion at the beginning of his speech.

> Such a study of religion will also have its benefits. Of late, many have become estranged from all religion and can no longer be reached or rescued by means of evangelistic efforts or missions. However, when religion is studied, not metaphysically or historically but psychologically and socially, in its relation to the whole person and all of society, then its importance, its indispensability, and its usefulness will be acknowledged once again. Acknowledging its value could then lead to showing the truth and legitimacy of religion. Pedagogy and pastoral work, religious and ecclesiastical life, evangelism and missionary work—all will benefit from the fruit yielded by the psychological study of religion.[36]

---

[33] Graaf H. T. de., "Over Godsdienstpsychologie [On the Psychology of Religion]," *Teekenen Des Tijds* 7 (1905): 28–38. Cited from Belzen, "The Introduction of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands," 48.

[34] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*. See also Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 164.

[35] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 76.

[36] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 63.

In the latter part of his speech, Bavinck also makes a reference to such benefits of studying of the psychology of religion:

> The difference in the religious life of the child, the youth, the man, and the old man; the connection between the religious revival and puberty; the explanation of conversion through repeated transformations of consciousness; the working of subliminal forces in the religious process; all of this, and more, expands the horizon, deepens the insight into religious life, and yields benefits that are not to be despised by the theologian, the pastor, the homiletician, the missionary, the teacher, or the educator.[37]

But at the same time, Bavinck reminds his audience that psychology of religion "is still a recent discipline and therefore sometimes eager to pick fruits before they are ripe, and "even though an inquiry is extended quite far, it nevertheless always remains limited to between ten and a few hundred people."[38] With reference to the psychology of religion in Bavinck's works, Belzen asserts, "It is clear that Bavinck was ambivalent with regard to the psychology of religion, as becomes evident in this quote and in other places: on the one hand he emphasizes its right to exist and he expects a great deal from it; on the other hand he distrusts it."[39]

After his first visit to America in 1882, Bavinck visited America for a second time in 1908 and delivered the Stone Lectures at Princeton Theological Seminary, *Wijsbegeerte der Openbaring* (*The Philosophy of Revelation*).[40] In his Stone Lectures, Bavinck tends to give proper recognition to the value of the psychology of religion than in any of his other works.

---

[37] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 76.

[38] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 77.

[39] Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 165.

[40] See Cornelis P. Venema, "Herman Bavinck: His Life and Theology," *New Horizons*, October 2008.

> If we reject the empirical order and proceed in an opposite direction, we reach the so-called psychology of religion which has latterly aroused so much attention. There is no doubt that this young science, for which Pietism and Methodism prepared the way, and which is a direct fruit of the empirical psychology and theology, has a right to exist, and may be expected to yield important aid for the knowledge and guidance of religious life.[41]

Thus, Bavinck does "acknowledge that dogmatics, especially in the doctrine of the *ordo salutis*, must become more psychological, and must reckon more fully with religious experience. But this does not alter the fact that the psychology of religion only inquires into the experience of the soul and cannot form a judgment upon their right and value."[42] It is likely that with the expectation of the greater benefits from it, Bavinck inserted more details on the psychology of religion in the second edition of his own *Reformed Dogmatics.*[43]

It is noteworthy that Bavinck fostered an emerging discipline like the psychology of religion at the Free University. Certainly, Bavinck was impressed by the new empirical approach of the American psychologists of the religion.[44] Accordingly, he encouraged his doctoral students to study subjects related to the psychology of religion. Bavinck engaged the attention of Johannes G. Geelkerken (1879-1960) to the American psychology of religion.[45] In 1909, Geelkerken, who was one of Bavinck's pupils, defended a dissertation on *De Empirische Godsdienstpsychologie* (*Empirical Psychology of Religion*) at the Free University of

---

[41] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 209.

[42] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 209.

[43] Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 165.

[44] Belzen, "The Introduction of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands," 53.

[45] J.G. Geelkerken, *De empirische godsdienstpsychologie* (Amsterdam: Scheltema & Holkema, 1909), VII. Cited from Belzen, "The Introduction of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands," 53.

Amsterdam.[46] Geelkerken's dissertation, under the direction of Bavinck, remained one of the most valuable resources for understanding the history and development of the early empirical psychology of religion in the Netherlands.[47] In his dissertation, Geelkerken presented that Bavinck with his essay in 1907 "became the very first person to introduce it [the psychology of religion] in our country."[48]

After his dissertation, Geelkerken had a greater influence in the field of the psychology of religion than Graaf and Bavinck.[49] Although Bavinck more or less recognized the benefits from this new discipline, Geelkerken was more receptive to the empirical psychology of religion. In his dissertation, Geelkerken acknowledged the value of the psychology of religion; "it has both scientific importance for theology, science of religion, and psychology, and practical use for pastors guiding their parishioners' religious life."[50] It is clear that Bavinck and his PhD student, Geelkerken, had a profound interest in a new science of the psychology of religion because "it might be instrumental in the development of a more effective religious pedagogy, and for other pastoral concerns."[51] Yet, they were adamant that the psychology of religion could not answer the question of the truth of religions and religious experiences. According to them, "Being 'ametaphysical' (non-metaphysical),

---

[46] Geelkerken, *De Empirische Godsdienstpsychologie*. For a brief survey of the dissertation by Geelkerken, see Belzen, "The Introduction of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands," 48–52.

[47] Belzen, "The Introduction of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands," 45.

[48] Geelkerken, *De empirische godsdienstpsychologie*, 59–60. Cited from Jacob A. Belzen, ed., *Aspects in Contexts: Studies in the History of Psychology of Religion* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 96n.

[49] Belzen, "The Introduction of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands," 48.

[50] Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 104.

[51] Lammert Leertouwer, *Modern Societies and the Science of Religions: Studies in honour of Lammert Leertouwer*, ed. Gerard Albert Wiegers and Jan Platvoet (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2002), 98–99.

it neglected the 'objective' elements in religious experience, and therefore had to be rejected. Being a 'subjectivist' and 'relativist,' introspective science, it was also dangerous, for it would ultimately cause ordinary believers to view religion as an illusion, because they would take its findings for objective truths."[52] At the Free University, none of the neo-Calvinists performed empirical investigations on the religious experiences of individuals or communities, unlike the American psychologists of religion.[53]

T. Hoekstra (1880-1936), another PhD student of Bavinck, was also deeply interested in the psychology of religion as a teacher at the Calvinist theological college in Kampen, and was more willing to receive the new ideas of the psychology of religion than Bavinck.[54] Surprisingly, he proclaimed that the psychology of religion "brings to light the necessity of religion as a biological function. Certainly religion also has biological value." [55] As Hoekstra was more interested in psychology as an auxiliary science for pastoral theology than in the academic psychology of religion, he taught pastoral theology in his school. It is interesting to note that Hoekstra wrote that "Calvinists were still astonishingly backward" in the field of the psychology of religion.[56]

---

[52] Leertouwer, *Modern Societies*, 99.

[53] Belzen, "The Introduction of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands," 47–48.

[54] Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 168.

[55] Belzen, *Aspects in Contexts*, 104–105; Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 168.

[56] Belzen, *Aspects in Contexts*, 107.

In 1904, the *Journal of Religious Psychology* was founded by Granville Stanley Hall (1844-1924) for the first time in the United States.[57] In Bavinck's essay on "Psychology of Religion," he paid more attention to the American psychologists of religion who studied religious phenomena like William James (1842-1910), Hall, Edward Diller Starbuck (1866-1947), James H. Leuba (1848-1946), and George A. Coe (1862-1951) than to the other psychologists in Europe like Johann Friedrich Herbart (1776–1841), Theodore Lipps (1851-1914), and Wilhelm Wundt whom Bavinck often cites throughout his writings.

Bavinck's lecture on the psychology of religion is obviously attached to the Clark school represented by James, Hall, and Starbuck.[58] Bavinck seems to be aware of the significance of "the Clark school of religious psychology" that attracted great attention from psychologists in his day. James Bissett Pratt (1875-1944) who was a student of William James asserts, "The most important single contribution to the psychology of religion is… James's *Varieties of Religious Experience*, first given as the Gilford Lectures at Edinburgh in 1901-1902, and later published in book form (London, 1903)."[59] Bavinck was also aware of the importance of the study done by James, but did not make any further comment on it.[60]

More importantly, Leendert Bouman (1869-1936) was appointed the first professor covering Psychiatry, Neurology, and Theoretical Biology at the Free

---

[57] In his lecture on "Psychology of Religion," Bavinck devotes much more attention to James and Hall than other psychologists of religion.

[58] See Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 63–67.

[59] James Bissett Pratt, "The Psychology of Religion," *Harvard Theological Review* 1, no. 4 (1908): 441. Cf. Hendrika Vande Kemp, "G. Stanley Hall and the Clark School of Religious Psychology," *American Psychologist* 47, no. 2 (1992): 290–98.

[60] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 64.

University in Amsterdam, Netherlands in 1907.[61] It is astonishing that a Calvinist University, which belonged to a relatively conservative side, even with the recommendation of Bavinck, appointed him in a field like psychiatry. In fact, Bouman's appointment was to produce physicians due to the growing number of psychiatric hospitals within the Calvinists circles in the Netherlands.[62] Also, in 1907, there was an important event in the history of psychology in that Sigmund Freud published his first psychoanalytical essay on the psychology of religion, *Zwangshandlungen und Religionsübungen* (*Obsessive Actions and Religious Practices*, 1907). Unquestionably, the results of Freud's investigations by a psychoanalytical approach on religion were unacceptable to most neo-Calvinist intellectuals of the time.[63] Not surprisingly, Bavinck was aware of Freud and made only a passing reference to his theory on the slips of the tongue in his essay on unconsciousness.[64]

According to Bavinck, "The reports that revivalists gave of their meetings and conversion results most immediately triggered the rise of the psychology of religion."[65] Bavinck notes that the German pietism in the late seventeenth century, the Methodism in the mid-eighteenth century England and the Great Awakening of 1740 in America provided fodder for the psychological study of religious phenomena.[66] Bavinck believes that the activation of psychological research on religion was caused

---

[61] See Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 103; Jacob A. Belzen, ed., *Aspects in Contexts: Studies in the History of Psychology of Religion* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000), 94.

[62] Belzen, *Aspects in Contexts*, 94; Sengers, *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 103.

[63] Sengers, ed., *The Dutch and Their Gods*, 103.

[64] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," in *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 190.

[65] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 3:556.

[66] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 61.

by a sudden transition from "objectivity" to "subjectivity" in religion, especially under the influence of Kant and Schleiermacher.[67] For instance, Schleiermacher attempted to define religion in terms of piety as "feeling of dependence that precedes all thinking and willing, and it forms the mystical foundation of man's entire life and development."[68] Thus, these subjective approaches to religion since the late seventeenth century in fact incited modern psychologists to create a new discipline which people call "the psychology of religion" today.

Bavinck certainly acknowledges that the psychological and sociological researches on religion are useful in terms of understanding the relation between the individual and society. Even Bavinck asserts, "pedagogy and pastoral work, religious and ecclesiastical life, evangelism and missionary work—all will benefit from the fruit yielded by the psychological study of religion."[69] It is noteworthy that the revivalists during the Great Awakening collected reports from people and made a list of the number of converts according to the age and gender.[70] This method corresponds to today's questionnaire. James's student, G. Stanley Hall who was the first president of Clark University as well as a pioneer of child and educational psychology, appears to have been captivated by inquiry reports on the religious revivals of 1740 in the United States.[71] With reference to the psychology of religion, Bavinck devotes much more time to American psychologists like James, Hall, and Starbuck. For Bavinck, the systematic use of the questionnaire by the Clark school

---

[67] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 61.

[68] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 61.

[69] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 63.

[70] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 63.

[71] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 63.

such as Hall, Starbuck and Albert Coe was certainly noticeable in the field of psychology of religion.[72] In particular, Starbuck's study on the period of the conversion among religious experiences probably attracted the special attention of Bavinck.[73]

Indeed, Bavinck discusses in detail the period of puberty with regard to religious change in his lecture on "Psychology of Religion." On the basis of the revivalists' vivid reports, Hall concludes in his own study that "adolescence was the age of religious impressionability in general and of conversion in particular," says Bavinck.[74] Not surprisingly, Bavinck does not refute Hall's claim that a physiological and psychological change during puberty has a close relation to the religious experiences of those years. He does not comment on the results of psychological study on religious experiences. Bavinck gives his opinion about the issue of the psychology of religion very cautiously in the final part of his speech.

Bavinck appeared to be somewhat surprised at Germany's reserved attitude with regard to the psychology of religion, considering psychology in various fields was actively discussed and studied in Germany. Of course, albeit in only a few comments, Bavinck mentioned Flournoy's lectures about the psychology of religion.

As far as the psychology of religion is concerned, Bavinck's major concern was that the psychology of religion was still young and a nascent discipline and

---

[72] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 66; Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 164.

[73] Cf. Edwin Diller Starbuck, *The Psychology of Religion: An Empirical Study of the Growth of Religious Consciousness* (London: W. Scott; New York: Scribner, 1901).

[74] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 64.

"therefore sometimes eager to pick fruits before they are ripe."[75] Bavinck further comments:

> Even though an inquiry is extended quite far, it nevertheless always remains limited to between ten and a few hundred people… Intentional dishonesty is out of the question. But there is such a lack of self-knowledge here, such danger of deception, such a great distance between being and consciousness, that it is hard to construct anything on the basis of such descriptions. And when these religious experiences, which often attach such different meanings to the same word, are processed, categorized under the same formula, arranged in categories, and finally generalized into laws—then difficulties mount up so that people shrink back from drawing a general conclusion. In the history of religions, just as also in sociology and history in general, searching for fixed laws has thus far not been crowned with success. For that reason there is a legitimate fear that the psychology of religion will not see its efforts rewarded as soon as some think.[76]

Bavinck asserts that although there is some connection between religious awakening and the development of puberty, "the nature of that connection is still a mystery, just as is the connection between body and soul."[77] Moreover, Bavinck points out that as many religious awakenings take place during puberty, the number of converts that happen before and after puberty is quite a lot.[78]

It is interesting to note that "the academic establishment of the psychology of religion in the Netherlands has been stronger than in any other Western country."[79] What is more, in the history of psychology, Han Fortmann (1912-1970) is considered to be the first chair appointed as a professor of the psychology of religion in 1957 with a full-time position at the Catholic University in Nijmegen, Netherlands.[80] The

---

[75] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 77.

[76] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 77.

[77] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 77.

[78] Bavinck, *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 77.

[79] Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 157.

[80] For a brief history regarding the emergence of the psychology of religion in the Netherlands, see Belzen, "Ideology, Politics, and Personality," 157–160.

psychology of religion as an independent academic discipline began to flourish during the end of the nineteenth century. Bavinck appears to have been attracted to the psychology of religion as a psychological study relating to various religious phenomena or experience, especially when it comes to "modern" psychology in the nineteenth century. In the early stage of the psychology of religion, he gave much attention to it.

Bavinck's Evaluation of the Psychology of Religion

Bavinck addressed the issue of the psychology of religion in various places in his works. Besides his lecture of 1907, Bavinck included the matter of the psychology of religion, especially in his second edition of his *Reformed Dogmatics*. In the section of *the method of dogmtics*, Bavinck notes that this new science of the psychological approach to religious life should be treated with much more discernment. He attempts to make four critical comments about the application of the psychology of religion. Even though psychological explanations of religious phenomena give some benefits, "the experimental method is applicable only to a very limited degree even in psychology and therefore less so in the case of psychic-religious phenomena."[81] Secondly, since it is impossible to perform psychological research on religious life without any presupposition, such psychological approach will inevitably lead to the "consistent relativism" like "total indifferentism."[82] Thirdly, the premise of modern psychologists concerning the religion is basically based on the states of consciousness, not mental ideas and actions, as already introduced by Schleiermacher.[83] Lastly, the psychology of religion will never establish objective criteria for the study of religion,

[81] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:73.

[82] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:73.

[83] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:74.

and consequently "produces a serious conflict between faith and theology, church and school, and Scripture and science."[84] It is true that although Bavinck acknowledged its value and benefits, he tended to mistrust the psychology of religion as a young science.

In the chapter on "Revelation and Religious Experience" in his Stone Lectures, Bavinck takes the problem of the psychology of religion in a more serious way than in any of his other works. For Bavinck, the foremost issue of the psychology of religion concerns the truth. Bavinck's major criticism of the psychology of religion in his day was dismissing the objective of the truth as a subjective dimension. According to Bavinck, "It observes and describes the phenomena of religious consciousness, but it cannot pronounce upon their truth and purity. It regards religion, no doubt, as one of 'the most important biological functions of mankind,' but it can never come to the question of its truth, it cannot elevate itself to a *logos* of religion, and therefore can never replace metaphysics or dogmatics."[85] Here, Bavinck's ultimate question concerns the question of the truth. Furthermore, "the psychology of religion not merely conceives conversion as a 'natural and necessary process,' forming a part of man's biological development and connected intimately with puberty, but its investigation gradually loses sight of what must be understood by conversion. In itself it has no standard by which to form a judgment of what conversion consists in; it inquires into and describes conversion only as a psychological phenomenon."[86] With regard to the study of psychology religion, Bavinck therefore declares:

---

[84] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:76.

[85] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 209.

[86] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 210.

> If all these religious phenomena are studied only from a psychological standpoint, the result is that they lose their character and their content is sacrificed to their form. Conversion thus loses its special meaning; on the ground of certain analogies with other psychological phenomena it is confused and identified with them in the t1ame manner as in the religio-historical method… What conversion is and ought to be no psychology of religion can teach us; the Scriptures psychological phenomenon alone can tell us that; and if they do not tell it to us, nobody knows.[87]

Bavinck makes it clear that these studies of religious experiences and phenomena do not penetrate to their core and essence. He has a concern that these perspectives of the psychological studies of religious phenomena might replace metaphysics, theology and dogmatics.[88]

III. The Absence of a Sound Psychology for Christian Pedagogy

As regards the background of Bavinck's involvement in Christian education, it is important to understand the political situation surrounding the recognition of separate religious primary schools in the Netherlands. The so-called *schoolstrijd*, the "battle" for Christian education was still one of the major issues in the beginning of the twentieth century in Dutch politics, and "it resulted in the foundation of many Christian schools, which gradually gained recognition and financial support from the state."[89] In 1881, Bavinck already seemed interested in the school question when he was a pastor in Franeker. Serving as a minister in the congregation of the Christian Reformed Church at Franeker, Bavinck "had listened well and carefully to the members of his congregation who complained—on a regular basis according to

---

[87] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 210.

[88] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 212.

[89] V. Hepp, *Dr. Herman Bavinck* (Amsterdam: W. ten Have, 1921), 100. Cited from Willem J. de Wit, *On the Way to the Living God: A Cathartic Reading of Herman Bavinck and an Invitation to Overcome the Plausibility Crisis of Christianity* (Amsterdam: VU Uitgeverij / VU University Press, 2011), 58n21; For the political issue on the *schoolstrijd*, see Gordon Graham, ed., *The Kuyper Center Review*, 5 vols. (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010), V:64-65.

Hepp—about having to send their children to public school."[90] What Bavinck had in mind during his pastorate at Franeker was "his work with the youth and the establishment of a Christian school."[91]While there, he first seems to have inquired "whether the education at the Christian school in the town is able to compete with that at the state school. When it turns out that the existing Christian school does not function well, he suggests that the congregation should consider founding its own school."[92] After Bavinck became a member of the School Council (*Schoolraad*) in 1890, he also emphasized the importance of the confession as the foundation for Christian education. Perhaps Bavinck knew the importance of education because his father, Jan Bavinck, formed the character of Herman's childhood in a Christian upbringing. In his 1902 farewell speech in Kampen, Bavinck speaks of his childhood experience in this upbringing as a child of the Secession from his parents: "The best I have I am indebted to the Secession. My father and mother were both from Secession circles. And I do not owe the Reformed confession to Dr. Kuyper, but to my father and mother…"[93] In the same year, while attending a meeting of the Association for the Reformed School Education (*Vereniging voor Gereformeerd Schoolonderwijs*), Bavinck suggested that "this ailing association for Reformed school education should be reformed."[94]

---

[90] Hepp, *Dr. Herman Bavinck*, 100. Cited from Gleason, *Herman Bavinck*, 88.

[91] Gleason, *Herman Bavinck*, 88.

[92] De Wit, *On the Way to the Living God*, 58n21.

[93] Willem De Wit, "'Will I Remain Standing?': A Cathartic Reading of Herman Bavinck," *The Bavinck Review* 2 (2011): 13.

[94] R. H. Bremmer, *Herman Bavinck en Zijn Tijdgenoten* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1966), 243–47. Cited from Wit, *On the Way to the Living God*, 58n21.

After his move to Amsterdam, Bavinck's continuous interest and involvement in Christian education led him to publish the *Pedagogical Principles* (*Paedagogische Beginselen*) in 1904.[95] Without doubt, the *Pedagogical Principles*, which covered education's objectives, methods and the nature of the student, set the standard textbook for those training to be educators alongside modern pedagogy on secular psychology. This pedagogical book had a huge influence on Christian teachers and schools in the Netherlands. From 1903 to 1908, it was an especially busy time for Bavinck because of his many speaking engagements and his work on pedagogy.[96]

Bavinck continued to show special interests in educational problems. In 1906, Bavinck founded a new Reformed school league, *Gereformeerde Schoolverband* (Association of Reformed Schools), and he became the first chairman.[97] As the first chairman, Bavinck delivered an oration and his lecture was published as *De taak van het Gereformeerd Schoolverband* (The Task of the Reformed School League).[98] In 1916, Bavinck published *The Education of the Mature Youth* (*De Opvoeding der rijpere Jeugd*), in which Bavinck displayed his erudition about "what was occurring in Germany and America in the area of education as well as what the Roman Catholic Church and the socialists were teaching their students."[99] The following year, Bavinck also published *The New Education* (*De Nieuwe Opvoeding*), in which he "discussed

---

[95] Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*. It is noteworthy that after Bavinck's death, two important books on Bavinck's pedagogy and educational philosophy were published. Both of them were written in English. See Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*; Brederveld, *Christian Education*.

[96] Gleason, *Herman Bavinck*, 345.

[97] See Roger R. Nicole, Charles E. Hill, and Frank A. James, eds., *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Historical & Practical Perspectives: Essays in Honor of Roger Nicole* (Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2004), 333.

[98] Bremmer, *Herman Bavinck en Zijn Tijdgenoten*, 243–47. Cited from Wit. *On the Way to the Living God*, 58n21.

[99] Gleason, *Herman Bavinck*, 414.

the problems of secondary education and the new German method of empirical education." During the Amsterdam years, these pedagogical works received "the warmest welcome," and "were used and appreciated even in Roman Catholic circles."[100]

As Bavinck became more deeply involved with cultural and political activities in Amsterdam, his attention to pedagogy and psychology grew immensely along with his inner development. According to Brederveld, "It [Bavinck's inner development] does not at all consist in saltatory changes but in the gradual growth and ever clearer appearance of that fundamental trait in his career as a student of life and in his whole personality, which can best be described as his concern for man, and which causes him to seek the field of study most congenial to this concern."[101] Here Bavinck's main purpose in writing a pedagogical textbook is clearly seen as arising from his concern for man. Brederveld asserts that "this solicitude for man is not first of all for man in his obvious, everyday aspect, the aspect of his daily struggle for natural existence—though he by no means ignores this side—but is especially for man on his ideal side, the side of his desperate struggle for the highest good, of his search, often a blundering one, for the right."[102] With reference to his inner struggle, Bavinck once wrote a letter to Snouck Hurgronje on December 22, 1888.

> Sometimes I perceive in my own soul an unspoken desire that Scripture might not be true, that the newer criticism might be right, and in this I see something of that secret enmity that the sinful heart feels against the Holy One and that can only be overcome by faith and prayer… Exactly this experience of the soul, in connection with others, ties me to Scripture and confession, although I feel in my mind the objections that can be brought against Christianity as deeply as you do.

---

[100] Gleason, *Herman Bavinck*, 414; Nicole, Hill, and James, *The Glory of the Atonement*, 333.

[101] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 10.

[102] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 10.

> As for me, primarily heart and conscience prevent me from being modern and liberal…[103]

Bavinck's deep concern for man might be triggered by his own inner conflict. Yet as he confesses above, his heart and conscience, built on a firm foundation with Scripture and confession, sustained him. At the center of his introspection and ultimate question was always "his struggle for spiritual goods."[104] Brederveld tends to portray Bavinck somewhat as a idealist who "longs to know that which is unchangeable and far beyond all human caprice, that which is immovable amidst the shifting opinions."[105] Brederveld writes, "He is not primarily interested in external nature and the natural sciences," but "he inclines rather toward humanism than toward realism, though believing that above both stands Christian pedagogy."[106] Thus, Bavinck's ultimate interest always originates from the matter of the human soul, from consideration of what a human being is, what he is as a human being, and the inner working of the soul.

Bavinck's interest in psychology and pedagogy was also caused by external factors. With the emergence of modern psychology in the nineteenth century, most educational principles and methods were highly dependent on empirical psychology. Within Calvinistic circles in the Netherlands, Christian schools and teachers needed a proper educational psychology based on biblical principles, as distinguished from modern pedagogy on empirical psychology. Perhaps Bavinck early detected this need for a sound psychology and pedagogy suited for Christian education. In his *Paedagogische Beginselen* (*Principles of Pedagogy*), Bavinck clearly states,

---

[103] De Wit, "Will I Remain Standing," 27.

[104] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 11.

[105] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 11–12.

[106] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 12.

"pedagogy rests on the anthropology, and especially the psychology as its foundation."[107] He underlines the fact that "there are plenty of reasons that a sound psychology is necessary and indispensable for pedagogy beyond all doubt."[108]

Soon after the completion of the second volume of *Gereformeerde Dogmatike* in 1987, Bavinck published the first edition of *Beginselen der Psychologie* (*Principles of Psychology*) in the same year. It must be noted that Bavinck produced a psychological work relating to practical application in the middle of his theological writings. Just before the publication of his first edition of *Beginselen der Psychologie*, Bavinck wrote a letter to Abraham Kuyper on September 20, 1897. In his note, Bavinck also expressed his anthropological concern: "I think that I shall put together two more volumes. And then I still need to limit things at every moment. The doctrine of man is incomplete. Therefore, in a couple of months I shall publish a small, separate work: *Beginselen der Psychologie*. The copy is ready and the first proofs have been set."[109] Here Bavinck completed a psychology textbook as a separate work from his *Reformed Dogmatics* since the doctrine of man had been one of the paramount challenges of his time. The *Beginselen der Psychologie*'s 1897 edition of De Heraut included Kuyper's review on Bavinck's psychology textbook with a warm welcome. In the hope that Bavinck's psychology textbook would be used by instructors in schools with the Bible, Kuyper also stressed the importance of psychology as providing fundamental principles for Christian pedagogy. In his review,

---

[107] "De paedagogiek heeft de anthropologie, en met name de psychologie tot grondslag." Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*, 54.

[108] "Redenen in overvloed dus, die de noodzakelijkheid en onmisbaarheideener deugdelijke psychologie voor de paedagogiek boven allen twijfel verheffen." Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*, 54.

[109] Bremmer, *Herman Bavinck als Dogmaticus*, 28. Cited from Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, vii.

Kuyper said, “School instructors are specifically in danger of stumbling on this terrain. Through their educational preparations, they automatically come into contact with psychology. Pedagogy is unthinkable without psychological foundations.”[110] He further explains: “In the instruction teachers give and in the literature that is produced about instruction, all sorts of choices have to be made in answering the psychological questions that are confronted because there has not been a psychology available from our circles.”[111] Like Bavinck, Kuyper had also been sensing upcoming dangers in the education field due to the increasing development of modern empirical psychology, which Kuyper descried at the time as a Babylonian confusion.[112] At the same time, this meant that there was an urgent need for sound psychology textbooks for Christian schools, teachers and ministers in the Dutch Reformed community.

After Bavinck’s death, the revised version of *Beginselen der Psychologie* was edited by Valentijn Hepp and the second edition came out in 1921.

In his preface to second edition, Bavinck expressed his hopes that his psychological principles would be worthy enough as empirical psychology. Bavinck said, “It would be unfortunate if this booklet were totally to disappear from the psychological literature. For the principles described in the booklet have been approved by the whole of author’s life and they retain powerful principles deserving practice and development alongside the pure empirical psychology.”[113] But at the same time, by

---

[110] Cited from Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, vii.

[111] Cited from Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, vii.

[112] Gereformeerde Kerk in de Nederlanden and Abraham Kuyper, “De Heraut.” See note 9 of chapter 1 of this study.

[113] “Nu zou het jammer zijn, als dit boekje geheel en al uit de psychologische literatuur verdween. Want de beginselen, waarvan dit boekje uitging, blijven van kracht, bleven zijn leven lang de instemming van den schrijver behouden en verdienen beoefening en uitwerking naast de zuivere empirische psychologie.” Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, 5.

Hepp's account, "Bavinck determined that his *Beginselen der Psychologie* should be supplemented or modified."[114] Presumably, it suggests that there was a change of thinking in Bavinck's mind between his first edition in 1897 and the second edition in 1921, regardless of either a gradual evolution of his ideas or his surrender to empirical psychology. Here, it seems that once again Bavinck's old scholastic psychology confronts the new empirical psychology. There seems to exist a duality in Bavinck: one who tries to stick to Reformed Scholasticism and the other one who was broadening his horizons with modern consciousness.[115]

It is striking that in the preface to the second edition, Hepp assumes a critical attitude to Bavinck's revised version. Accroding to Hepp, the scheme of the scholastic faculty psychology, which forms the basis of Bavinck's psychology, must be discarded. It is not surprising that Bavinck could not complete rightly his work with a revised edition.[116] Hepp assert, "It seems to me that it is impossible to fit the psychological facts and insights of recent time, however much they may have to be sifted through the criticism from the Reformed principles, to fit into the framework of the scholastic psychology. And I have the impression that no psychological expert among the scholars of religious studies thinks otherwise."[117] Probably, Hepp thought that Bavinck's *Principles of Psychology* was not compatible with the findings of modern psychology in his day.

---

[114] "Voorts bepaalde hij, dat het boekje, waar noodig, aangevuld of gewijzigd mocht worden." Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, 5.

[115] Cf. Bolt, "Grand Rapids between Kampen and Amsterdam," 267.

[116] Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, 5. See also note 15 of chapter 1 of this study.

[117] "Naar het mij voorkomt is het niet mogelijk de psychologische feiten en inzichten van den laatsten tijd, hoezeer ook door de kritiek der Gereformeerde beginselen gezift, in het raam der scholastieke psychologie in te passen. En ik heb den indruk, dat geen min of meer psychologisch deskundige onder de geloofsgenooten van den schrijver er anders over denkt." Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, 5.

Bavinck's later years were devoted largely to practical matters such as psychology, pedagogy, and then biblical psychology based on a biblical perspective. These broad interests show how Bavinck interacted with the modern world without moving back. Engaging in an intensive critical dialogue with a new modern world, Bavinck published many books in various field. Bavinck's intention to write a psychology book can be also explained in terms of educational value. He wanted to teach the doctrine of the faculties of the soul through his psychology textbook. Bavinck notes, "The doctrine about abilities [faculties] of the soul is highly significant for education. Precisely because the soul has different abilities, it can be educated and led. Through education the abilities (as power) are imprinted with habits (proficiency, suitability, dispositions) and specific actions."[118] This was indeed the core of his psychology textbook, just as Reformed theology has held firm to those principles. Likewise, Kuyper emphasized the importance of the doctrine of faculty psychology in his review to the first edition of *Beginselen der Psychologie*: "Most important is the section on the doctrine of faculties—it is worth gold. He not only maintains the faculties but that there are two of them, makes for the firmness of his psychology. This omits the question about the wisdom of exchanging names between the desiring and willing faculty."[119]

[118] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 42.

[119] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, ix.

CHAPTER THREE

HOW DOES BAVINCK'S PSYCHOLOGY DIFFER FROM HIS THEOLOGICAL ANTHROPOLOGY?

I. Bavinck's *Principles of Psychology* (1887)

In the middle of the nineteenth century, it was generally recognized within the Calvinist circles that pedagogy and psychology belonged to the field of theology.[1] Bavinck, however, attempted to develop new areas of psychology and pedagogy as an independent science and first introduced such disciplines certainly different from his dogmatic theology to the Christian community. According to Aalders, Bavinck's shift to those subjects was not a departure from his dogmatics, but rather was a farewell to a way of thinking that existed in many Reformed churches.[2] More than any other Reformed leader, Bavinck probably felt that church and theology would need to formulate a response to the changing circumstances.[3] Thus, Bavinck wrote two psychology books and addressed recent issues regarding psychology in his Stone Lectures.

In 1887, Bavinck released his first psychology book, *Principles of Psychology* right after the second volume of *Reformed Dogmatics*. The question might be raised about how his psychology book differs from his dogmatics. As he implied in his preface, Bavinck completed the separate work for the sake of an insufficient anthropology, especially for the doctrine of man.[4] In *Principles of Psychology*,

---

[1] Maarten Johan Aalders, *125 Jaar Faculteit der Godgeleerdheid aan de Vrije Universiteit* (Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2005), 100.

[2] See Aalders, *125 Jaar Faculteit*, 100–102.

[3] Aalders, *125 Jaar Faculteit*, 100–101.

[4] See note 11 of chapter 1 of this study.

Bavinck was primarily concerned with the matters of the soul like the faculties and unity of the soul. He appeared to want to maintain his theistic conceptions and construct a psychology for a Christian community.

As Kuyper highly praised in his review, the most valuable part is the doctrine of faculties in which Bavinck describes the knowing and desiring faculty as playing a pivotal role in the human soul. Unlike his theological anthropology, Bavinck further illustrates the doctrine of the faculties by introducing various powers of the soul such as sensation, perception, representation, memory, emotions, and so forth. In the psychology book, Bavinck not only expounds all capabilities about the activities of the mind, but also defends the traditional psychology of faculties. Above all, Bavinck holds to the uniqueness and distinctiveness of the soul against empirical psychology that denied the existence of a substantial soul.

Furthermore, Bavinck offers penetrating criticisms to the new psychologies of the nineteenth century in his psychology book. In his theological writings, Bavinck typically tends to have a few criticisms regarding modern psychology, but in *Principles of Psychology*, he makes substantial criticisms against the nineteenth century psychologies. Notably, he opposes the nineteenth century psychologism that was expressed in various forms such as empiricism, associationism, materialism, and positivism. The primary targets of criticism are Herbert's metaphysical psychology, Wundt's experimental psychology, Mill's associationist psychology, and an emotion-centered psychology or feeling psychology since these psychologies teach an incomplete doctrine of the soul. In other words, Bavinck rejects three varying psychologies according to the primacy of mind, which he described as intellectual, feeling and voluntaristic psychology.

A. The Rejection of Metaphysical Psychology

In *Principles of Psychology*, Bavinck makes critical remarks on intellectual psychology built on metaphysics in which Johann F. Herbart (1776-1841) as a dominant figure made use of mathematics about the psyche. Bavinck notes, "Herbart built psychology on the metaphysics. He considered the soul even the bearer of psychic phenomena. He saw "Realia" in the ideas (*voorstelling*)."[5] For Herbart, the ideas or representations (*voorstelling*) are taken as fundamental principles of psychology and such representations "are not images or the workings of things outside of us, but they are products of the soul's interaction with other Reals."[6] According to Bavinck, Herbart "prepared the way for physiological psychology in that he applied the method of natural science with its methods of statics and mechanics to psychology."[7] For Herbart, psychic phenomena such as feeling, desire, and will are no more than alterations of representations.[8] Bavinck writes, "All these exchanges take place according to certain laws and the relationships develop mechanically and mathematically. Psychology becomes a mathematical theory of 'representation mechanics.' In all of this there can be no room for faculties, of course."[9] Thus, the notion of faculties is not useful, and the psychic faculties are actually nothing more than the classification of representations.

---

[5] "Herbart bouwde de psychologie nog op de metaphysica. Hij beschouwde de ziel nog als draagster van psychische verschijnselen. Hij zag in de voorstellingen Realia." Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, 28.

[6] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 33.

[7] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 18.

[8] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 34.

[9] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 34.

Bavinck says that although some of Herbart's criticisms are useful, his psychology cannot be accepted due to some reasons. Bavinck points out, if "space, time, and categories are products of a representation mechanism and thus merely apparent," then the unchangeability of the reals should be clearly defined in how they are related to each other. [10] Bavinck argues, "Representations are not the first things available to the life of the soul. Perceptions, impressions, realizations, intuitions, instincts come first. A representation is actually only the name for a product of a perception or a recollection and cannot include all the activities of consciousness."[11] Bavinck points out that "Herbart allows the whole of psychic-life to emerge from the mechanics of representations."[12] Bavinck, however, is adamant, "The use of mathematics in psychology runs aground on the impossibility of measuring one representation by another. One can show one representation as stronger or weaker than another but the difference cannot be expressed numerically."[13]

Bavinck observes, "Herbart was unable to derive feeling and desire from representations," and for him "feeling, desires and will are essentially identical, or, at best, modifications of consciousness events, i.e., representations."[14] However, Bavinck declares, "Feelings, desires and will do not exist without some consciousness, and although connected to representations, they are themselves not representations. They have an independent power and ability. Just as an imaginative power of the soul is revealed in representations themselves, so a power of another sort is displayed in

---

[10] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 34.

[11] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 35.

[12] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 35.

[13] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 36.

[14] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 36.

feeling, desire and will."[15] Bavinck points out that Herbart's metaphysical psychology dismisses the notion of faculties as events of consciousness. Bavinck makes it clear that various ideas and images also are the products that arose from the activities of the soul.[16]

Furthermore, Bavinck objects to associationist psychology as expounded by John Stuart Mill (1806-1873). He points out that a pure description of events is impossible because phenomena cannot be empirically perceived but found by thinking.[17]

Bavinck's criticisms on associationist psychology can be summarized as follows:

> (1) Associationist psychology is always a consciousness psychology that identifies the soul with consciousness and wants to limit itself to ascertaining and describing the conditions of consciousness. (2) Associationist psychology, therefore, never stays with the ascertaining and description of events. (3) Associationist psychology states that the changes and successions of representations can be explained in terms of communication paths gradually formed by the physical movements of brain cells… At best such a theory could count as an explanation for sensual representations which originate with specific physical' conditions. (4) Associationist psychology explains the connection of psychic events by the laws of association… However, while such laws describe the manner by which one representation elicits another, they indicate nothing whatever of the causes of the elicitation. (5) Finally, associationist psychology makes conscious life an illusion. There is no subject that carries the representations and links together the contents of consciousness.[18]

For Bavinck, associationist psychology does "deny the distinction between the knowing faculty and the willing faculty, between the soul and its faculties, between soul and body, and between spirit and matter," and consequently leads to pantheism

---

[15] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 36.

[16] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 33.

[17] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 36.

[18] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 37–40.

or materialism.[19] In terms of association psychology, the human soul turns out to be nothing but intricate phenomena of consciousness.[20] In short, associationist psychology ignores the doctrine of faculties.

B. The Rejection of the "Feeling Faculty"

Bavinck is adamantly opposed to another form of psychologism in which psychology considers "feeling" as a separate faculty of the soul. For Bavinck, the faculties of the soul are limited to the knowing faculty and the desiring faculty, and therefore the "feeling faculty" cannot be accepted as the third faculty of the soul. To prove this, first he traces back to the origin of the third faculty of the soul. Bavinck argues that the independence of the feeling faculty began to emerge in the middle of the eighteenth century where the philosophy of feeling was known throughout Europe.[21] Jean Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778) was one of the leading figures in the *Romantic Movement*, and then Schleiermacher considered feeling to be a touchstone for religion.[22] Afterward, J. N. Tetens (1736-1805) became the father of the "trichotomy of soul faculties" since he placed the feeling faculty with equal status as understanding and will.[23] Thus, Tetens asserted three separate faculties of the soul: understanding, feeling and will.

After Kant's taxonomy of faculties of the soul, the three faculties of the soul were accepted as a fixed doctrine in the field of psychology.[24] Bavinck observes, "Even those who reject the idea of faculties usually discuss the conditions of

[19] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 40.

[20] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 40.

[21] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 46.

[22] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 45.

[23] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 46.

[24] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 46.

consciousness in the three groupings of understanding, feeling and will. But thoughts regarding the essence of feeling found little unanimity and the concept of feeling became a difficult psychological problem."[25] In fact, the notion of feeling is vague and varies markedly. Bavinck writes, "Kant placed feelings in close relation to the lower knowing and desiring faculties but he gave them independent status as the feeling of appetite and non-appetite."[26] And then, "Johann Fichte (1762-1814) presented a spread-out conception of feelings that made them the point of unification for being and consciousness, of the objective and subjective, and of consciousness and will. Feeling for him was the basis of knowing and desiring."[27] Bavinck goes on to say, "Schleiermacher attached himself to this position and described feelings as immediate self-consciousness, prior to all thinking and willing, through which a person becomes conscious of his own being and his absolute dependence on God."[28]

According to Bavinck, the new psychologies of his day tend to explain feelings in terms of the subjective, active, immediate perception or an objective, passive condition of the soul. Bavinck, however, asserts:

> It is immediately clear that feeling in the first subjective sense, as the immediate perception or consciousness of agreeable or disagreeable conditions, cannot be an individual faculty. As perception of consciousness it belongs, together with all impressions, perceptions, conceptions, etc. to the knowing faculty. Those who describe feeling as perception of consciousness cannot maintain it as a separate faculty between knowing and desiring.[29]

---

[25] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 46.

[26] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 49.

[27] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 49.

[28] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 49.

[29] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 50.

Bavinck makes it clear that feeling "is not a special faculty but a special activity within the knowing faculty."[30] It should be noted that "those who reject feeling as a faculty do not, thereby, object to the use of the word 'feeling' in psychology."[31] Thus, Bavinck concludes, "Feeling as immediate perception belongs to the knowing faculty and is but one of its special activities."[32]

Furthermore, Bavinck insists that feelings, affections and emotions appertain to the desiring faculty of the soul. He argues, "The presumed independence of the feeling faculty forces the knowing and desiring faculties to release a portion of their domain. The integrity of the knowing and desiring faculties are then endangered."[33] Therefore, if feeling is placed alongside understanding and will, then feeling faculty should also be considered as an independent source of knowledge, and thus the balance of faculties of the soul is destroyed.[34] Bavinck asserts that if feeling is considered to be a separate faculty, then such feelings "fall outside the control of human understanding and will and, consequently, outside human responsibility."[35]

Therefore, Bavinck rejects Wundt's voluntaristic psychology, which regards the will as the basis for explaining psychic events, or as the hidden power behind consciousness.[36] Furthermore, Bavinck also denies feeling psychology, which put feelings into the origin of psychic activities. Such psychologists, writes Bavinck,

---

[30] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 51.

[31] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 52.

[32] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 52.

[33] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 56.

[34] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 56.

[35] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 56.

[36] For the criticism of voluntaristic psychology, see Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 57–63.

assume feelings as a special faculty of the soul. Bavinck, however, affirms that feeling is not a unique faculty of the soul but a special activity within the knowing faculty.[37] Thus, Bavinck forcefully opposes such new psychology, which denies the unity of the soul.

C. Bavinck's Criticisms of Empirical Psychology

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the new psychology based on experimental methods had already been threatening Christian faith because the new psychology denied the existence of the soul. Empirical psychology exerted a profound influence on the various academic disciplines like education, philosophy, biology, physiology etc. Bavinck believes that this empirical psychology started with Kant.[38] Although Kant did not think that experience was the source of knowledge, he understood that knowledge begins there. And such knowledge arises from two main sources: sensibility and understanding. Reason cannot go beyond one's experiences and reach true knowledge on its own. As knowledge is only attained by the combined operation of sensibility and understanding, one cannot know things in oneself (*Dinge an sich*). That implies that metaphysical knowledge is impossible and only empirical knowledge is valid. Consequently, only empirical psychology offers a feasible explanation for psychical phenomena. Bavinck, however, indicates an error of such arguments in his psychology book.[39]

Bavinck's largest opposition to the mid-nineteenth century's psychological current of thought is mostly concerned with empirical psychology. Since the

---

[37] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 51.

[38] See Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 71–73.

[39] While mentioning Kant's reconciliation of empiricism and rationalism, Bavinck points out his errors. "Thus Kant's reconciliation really went nowhere and he only succeeded in producing confusion," says Bavinck. See Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 71–73.

experimental method's introduction, such as the biological or physiological method, psychology was considered to be a natural science, and then the experimental method became a part of psychology. Bavinck, however, writes, "By arranging a repetition of that same constellation of circumstances and by changing some of the external conditions, it is possible to influence psychic events. Thus we can gain some insight into the relation of the two."[40] Bavinck further illustrates the benefits of the experimental method:

> The experimental method can be helpful within its limits. It can, for example, explore the conditions under which sensations originate, the duration of elementary psychic events, the limitations of consciousness, the strength or weakness of attention, or the reproduction and association of ideas.[41]

Here Bavinck acknowledges to a certain extent the effectiveness of the experimental method.

Nevertheless, Bavinck sharply observes the wrongheadedness of empirical psychology. According to Bavinck, most psychologies before the second half of the nineteenth century rested on metaphysics for integration, but as psychology has been influenced by the rapidly developing natural sciences and by the philosophies of Kant and Comte, psychologists have excluded metaphysical aspects from psychology and tried to treat it as an area of natural science.[42]

Bavinck advances reasons for the one-sidedness of this empirical method. It can be summarized in six arguments. Here it is in Bavinck's own words:

> (1) There is no such thing as any observation that does not already bring along its *a priori* or that does not flow from metaphysical understandings. (2) It cannot be assumed that the observation and description of events of consciousness can be purely objective and

---

[40] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 8.

[41] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 8.

[42] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 9.

> fully exact because everyone sees events with his own eyes and from his own standpoint. (3) The application of the empirical method has brought anything but unity and agreement. (4) Psychic-life is so complicated and interwoven that it is impossible for scientific research to make it its object as such. (5) Registering events is not enough; ordering and classifying must follow. And this is not possible without a point of view. (6) Science is explanation. If psychology wants to be a science, it cannot remain with only a description of events.[43]

In his Stone Lectures of 1908, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, Bavinck also points out the misguided notion of empirical psychology. He says, "Empirical psychology cannot suffice for the right understanding of the psychical life," and therefore "will never be able fully to explain psychical life."[44] Although empirical psychology might allow one to investigate the conditions of consciousness or self-consciousness, it still remains an unsettled question whether a hidden ego or an independent soul lies behind it.[45] Accordingly, "as soon as it occupies itself with this question it passes beyond itself into metaphysics."[46] Thus, Bavinck points out that empirical psychology takes a starting point from an abstract idea.[47]

Bavinck, furthermore, points out contradictions and errors of Materialists who deny the mental nature of man. According to Bavinck, although we do not perceive the essence and powers of the soul directly, we recognize it only by its activities.[48] He supports the real existence of the soul by making a comparison to the atoms of natural science. When Materialists presume atoms as the carriers of physical events, atoms are in fact not an empirical thing, but a metaphysical object. Materialist's assumption

---

[43] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 10–11.

[44] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 214–215.

[45] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 214.

[46] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 215.

[47] Bavinck, *The Philosophy of Revelation*, 215.

[48] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 21.

about an atom, therefore, exposes self-contradictory thinking since it cannot be perceived.[49] Even Bavinck says that "the idea of an atom is not any clearer or more persuasive than that of a soul."[50] Thus, he insists that psychic acts of the soul can only be explained by a spiritual principle, not by an atomistic manner.

> Natural science escapes to the atoms in its explanation and psychology to a spiritual substance. All psychic events are of the sort that demand a spiritual soul as carrier. Sensations, consciousness, thinking, self-consciousness, willing, personal identity in all their materialized expressions, of language, worship, morality, art, science, or history point to the soul of man as the spiritual principle.[51]

For that reason, Bavinck concludes, "A psychology can retain or reject the doctrine of faculties and it can avoid metaphysical foundations, but it can never dismiss the task of investigating the relationships of psychic phenomena and tracing these back to their basic elements."[52]

II. Bavinck's *Biblical and Religious Psychology* (1920)

In 1920, Bavinck wrote another psychology book, entitled *Biblical and Religious Psychology*. As Bavinck said in his preface, at first he wrote the psychology essays for Christian schools within the Calvinist circles in the Netherlands, and it "covers topics that are important for the understanding of man, and that also determines child."[53] As the title indicates, these psychology essays are divided into two parts: *Biblical Psychology* and *Religious Psychology*. In the first part, Bavinck

---

[49] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 27.

[50] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 27.

[51] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 28.

[52] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 47.

[53] "De hiervolgende opstellen over Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie vonden eerst eene plaats in het Orgaan van het Gereformeerd Schoolverband, en worden thans, op veler verzoek, afzonderlijk uitgegeven. Zij maken niet op volledigheid aanspraak, maar behandelen onderwerpen, die voor de kennis van den mensch, en bepaald ook van het kind, van belang zijn." Bavinck, *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie*, foreword.

begins to discuss the character and significance of biblical psychology. In his day, observes Bavinck, "In the books which narrate the history of psychology, the knowledge of the soul, which is on the foreground in the Bible, is either entirely passed over or treated very scantily. There are not many definite works concerning biblical psychology, at least not in our language, and they are not usually suitable for use by teachers."[54] Bavinck therefore argues, "our Christian teachers ought to go in another direction and acquaint themselves with what the Scriptures teach them concerning man, his nature, his faculties and abilities."[55]

Before discussing the topic of biblical psychology, Bavinck admits great difficulties with constructing a biblical psychology, and asks whether such a subject exists and can lay claim to the right of existence.[56] With regard to an exact biblical psychology, Bavinck rightly refutes the argument that "the Scriptures present to us all the material for a complete and systematic psychology; that this psychology, when built upon the Scripture, has by far the preference over that scientific psychology which is constructed by man himself from the investigation of human nature by itself and with others."[57] Before constructing his own biblical psychology, Bavinck clearly indicates:

> The Bible is certainly not given for the purpose that we should be able to derive from it a complete psychology… If the Bible gives us a scientific psychology, one could with equal right assert that a scientific cosmology, geography, astronomy, physics, general history, logic, philosophy, etc., ought to be constructed from the Bible; and where then is the independence and freedom of all these sciences?[58]

---

[54] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 1.

[55] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 1.

[56] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 1.

[57] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 2.

[58] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 2.

Bavinck makes it clear that it is impossible to derive a precise scientific psychology from the Bible. Thus, Bavinck notes, "it is completely accurate to say that the Bible does not teach us how the stars move, but how we go to heaven. Also, if men want to try it, it will be impossible to draw from the Bible a psychology which supplies us with something in our need."[59] As Bavinck himself admits, his psychology book "is not suitable for nor intended to be a textbook or a scientific handbook."[60]

Nevertheless, Bavinck recognizes the importance of biblical psychology by stressing the fact that Scripture teaches many important truths about human beings. Although the Scriptures do not describe man in a scientific or psychological manner, Bavinck finds legitimacy of a biblical psychology in terms of what the Bible says about man. Bavinck believes that a sound biblical psychology based on good exegesis is needed for having a correct understanding of such words as spirit, heart, feeling, etc. in a biblical sense.[61] He asserts, "The significance which Biblical Psychology has for our study appears thus in the first place from this that Scripture speaks of the same man who still exists, lives and thinks, feels, wills, and acts."[62]

Bavinck presents a threefold benefit of the study of biblical psychology. In the first place, "it teaches us to know man as he is and as he will always remain, in its origin, nature and destination."[63] For Bavinck, these questions have a far-reaching significance because psychology "always remains a philosophical science" regardless

---

[59] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 10.

[60] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 10.

[61] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 10.

[62] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 8.

[63] "Ten eerste leert zij ons den mensch kennen, zooals hij is en altijd blijven zal, in zijn oorsprong, wezen en bestemming." Bavinck, *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie*, 13.

of how empirical research was done.[64] Among diverse psychologies, "the difference lies only whether the view of man comes from Plato, Aristotle, Kant, Herbart, Wundt or it derives from the prophets and apostles," states Bavinck.[65] In the second place, "the study of Scripture introduces us to man's psychic life in a way that no other book does or can do" as the Bible describes the states and changes of human being by sin and grace.[66] Finally, Bavinck emphasizes that the Scriptures "never do all these in abstract concepts but gives us to see everything in the full reality of life."[67] For Bavinck, biblical psychology has great significance for both Christian schools and teachers because Scripture "never makes use abstract, philosophical ideas, but always speaks the rich language of life."[68] Thus, Bavinck himself emphasized that *Biblical Psychology* is written in more concrete language rather than a philosophical or speculative language.

As for the two psychology books, *Principles of Psychology* and *Biblical Psychology*, Bremmer provides a proper comparison. He asserts, "It is clear that Bavinck attempted to find congruence between the traditional Greek-philosophical concept of man and the concept of man of the Holy Scriptures. Particularly, in his

---

[64] "Dit is reeds van diep ingrijpende beteekenis, want de zielkunde, hoe empirisch ook beoefend, blijft steeds een wijsgeerige wetenschap." Bavinck, *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie*, 13.

[65] "Het verschil is alleen, of men zijne beschouwing van den mensch aan Plato, Aristoteles, Kant, Herbart, Wundt enz., dan wel aan de profeten en apostelen ontleent." Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 13.

[66] "Maar daar komt in de tweede plaats bij, dat de studie der H. Schrift ons in 's menschen zieleleven inleidt, zooals dat geen ander boek doet of doen kan." Bavinck, *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie*, 13–14.

[67] "En eindelijk doet zij dit alles weer nooit in afgetrokken begrippen, maar ze geeft ons alles te zien in de volle realiteit van het leven." Bavinck, *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie*, 14.

[68] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 10.

later *Biblical and Religious Psychology* Bavinck, even more than in his *Principles of Psychology*, tried to come up with the biblical references in harmony."[69]

As Bremmer says, there is a significant difference between traditional faculty psychology and biblical psychology.[70] In the last part of *Biblical Psychology*, Bavinck himself concluded, "This biblical psychology appeared to us to be, not an abstract, dogmatic conceptual psychology, which under the influence of scientific knowledge, changes by the day, but a psychology of observation and of daily experience, illuminated by the revelation, and thus subsists, so long as the man remains the same in all times and in all places."[71]

III. Bavinck's Reception of Modern Psychology

It is worth noticing that Bavinck synthesized the findings of modern psychology into his dogmatics for the purpose of developing theology as a science. Bavinck could interact with the nineteenth century psychologies while remaining a dogmatician. He certainly took note of the values of the nineteenth century psychologies and adopted modern psychological ideas in an appropriate manner. The influences of modern psychology on Bavinck's works are apparent; various psychological terms are found in his works. When he writes a theological book or comments on the Scriptures, he often states his case in a psychological way. Indeed,

---

[69] "Bavinck een congruentie trachtte te vinden tussen het traditioneel grieks-wijsgerig mensbeeld en dat van de Heilige Schrift. Vooral in zijn latere "Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie" heeft hij, meer nog dan in zijn "Beginselen der Psychologie" getracht met de bijbelse gegevens in harmonie te komen." Bremmer, *Herman Bavinck als Dogmaticus*, 222.

[70] See Bremmer, *Herman Bavinck als Dogmaticus*, 224.

[71] "En deze psychologie bleek ons te zijn, niet eene abstracte, dogmatische begrips psychologie, die onder den invloed van wetenschappelijke inzichten, wisselt bij den dag, maar eene psychologie der aanschouwing en der dagelijksche ervaring, belicht door de openbaring, en dus van kracht blijvend, zoolang de mensch in alle tijden en aan alle plaatsen dezelfde blijft." Bavinck, *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie*, 71.

one can notice that Bavinck frequently uses modern psychological words like "the unconsciousness," "introspection," "brain," and "self" in his writings.

As discussed in the previous chapter, Bavinck argued that psychology could be utilized in a number of ways, like in pedagogy, pastoral care, religious activities and missionary work. A psychological study of religion provides many benefits for church and its members. Although these various psychological studies on personal religious experiences, psychic events, the limitations of conscious and attention deficit can be helpful and promote the welfare of the people, it is not capable of reaching the problem of the truth and penetrating the essence of the human soul.

A. The Reception of the Theory of the Unconscious

For Bavinck, the doctrine of the unconscious is indispensable in explaining biblical truth. Particularly, Bavinck attempted to elaborate on the doctrine of *ordo salutis* using psychological terms. When Bavinck comments on Rom. 7:21, he adopts a psychological way to elucidate the meaning of the conflict between the two natures. He says, "Psychologically this can be explained in such a way that in the field of consciousness two groups of ideas have taken position over against each other, and in the field of the heart and desires two series of passions oppose each other."[72]
The concept of the conscious and unconscious is in fact indispensable to Bavinck's thought. Although these modern psychological terms are not found in the Scripture, Bavinck underlines the fact that the Scripture supports the concept of the conscious and unconscious.

Bavinck was well versed in the modern field of psychology of the nineteenth century. Not surprisingly, Bavinck discusses the doctrine of the unconscious in a

[72] Herman Bavinck, *Our Reasonable Faith* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956), 494.

separate essay, *Over het Onbewuste* (1915).[73] Concerning this doctrine of the unconscious, Bavinck largely deals with three aspects, its definition, history and phenomena. Before defining what the unconscious is, he first tries to investigate a conscious phenomenon by presenting that it cannot be explained by means of a definition. According to Bavinck, consciousness means awareness or knowledge that is obtained through an immediate experience or an inner sense.[74] Yet, he writes, "this inner sense is nothing but consciousness itself."[75]

When it comes to the theory of the unconscious, Bavinck points out a nebulous concept of the unconscious. According to Bavinck, the unconscious is something that can never be observed in the same way as that no one has ever seen an atom, which only exists in the supposition.[76] The unconscious, however, is distinct from the subconscious, concomitant consciousness, or weak consciousness. Bavinck certainly recognizes the necessity of such a concept. He says that "it needs to be discussed because of its importance for the entire life of the soul."[77]

There, writes Bavinck, might be an earlier antecedent of the doctrine of the unconscious. He says that the origin of the view of the unconscious may be found in early Greek philosophy, which accepted the preexistence of the soul. Bavinck correctly recognizes that Schelling is the originator of the new theory of the

---

[73] Herman Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 175–197. According to the editor's note, "This essay was delivered as a lecture to a scholarly conference at the Free University of Amsterdam on July 7, 1915, and then published as a monograph in Amsterdam by W. Kirchener."

[74] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 176.

[75] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 176.

[76] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 178.

[77] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 179.

unconscious.[78] For all psychologists today, the concept of the unconscious is indispensable, and such unconsciousness is very closely related to cerebral activity as Bavinck asserts. Here, the question is raised as where to draw the boundaries between physiology and psychology.[79] Bavinck also discusses a physiological unconsciousness. By presenting various examples of one's reflexes in daily life, he reminds that "the psychophysical life of man runs much deeper and more extensively than his consciousness."[80]

Interestingly, Bavinck indicates that the concept of the unconscious can also be found in the thought of Reformed orthodoxy. He writes, "When one also considers that Scholasticism considered the soul to be a God-created, spiritual entity, which brought with it from the beginning all sorts of powers, (innate) habits, and gifts and was able through education and nurture to gain all kinds of acquired habits—then this provides sufficient proof that the old psychology, though it never spoke of the unconscious, understood the matter thoroughly, at least in principle."[81] Bavinck further illustrates the unconscious activities of the soul:

> The unconscious activity of the soul with its representations does not only appear during sleep, but the soul also carries on this activity when we are awake. It can happen that while we are speaking with someone our thoughts are directed to some entirely different thing and we hear nothing of our friend's speaking and, yet, later we recall what he said.[82]

---

[78] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 182.

[79] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 184.

[80] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 185.

[81] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 181.

[82] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 81.

According to Bavinck, "All these activities of the soul are more appropriately described as unconscious activities that fail to pierce through to consciousness."[83]

With regard to experimental psychology, Bavinck first points out the credibility in terms of methodology. Citing Wundt's argument, Bavinck states that "psychology could never be a pure science of perceptions as long as changing circumstances and impermanent objects were its objects."[84] Bavinck, nevertheless, takes note of the validity of the experimental method. He, for instance, refers to Sigmund Freud's theory of the slips of the tongue and of the pen.[85] According to Bavinck, these theories help us better understand the psychic acts "since it sheds light on other phenomena of the life of the soul."[86]

Besides, the theory of the unconscious, Bavinck says, can also be utilized in explaining the so-called occult phenomena, such as superstition, magic and mantic divination. Bavinck therefore writes:

> The theory of the unconscious that has gained such prominence in psychology of late is proof that "psychology without a soul" (*psychologie ohne seele*) is untenable, and in this respect is a recovery of the old theory of the soul, according to which soul and consciousness are distinct and consciousness is not the essence of the soul but a property.[87]

Bavinck concludes that whereas the doctrine of the unconscious rejects the concept of *tabula rasa*, it is a return to the doctrine of faculties of the soul. In other words, the

---

[83] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 82.

[84] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 7.

[85] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 190.

[86] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 190.

[87] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 196.

traditional faculty psychology that describes the powers (*potentiae*) and habits (*habitus*) of the soul is supported by the doctrine of the unconscious.[88]

According to Bavinck, it is true that the theory of the unconscious does not give a satisfactory solution to various phenomena of mental problems. Nevertheless, it certainly serves to explain the pathological cases, such as dreams, hypnosis and lunacy.[89] Furthermore, Bavinck corroborates the theory of the unconscious by presenting Bible passages because Scripture supports this doctrine. He writes, "When regeneration is thus traced back from the actions to the faculties, and from the faculties to the soul itself, and from the soul to its essence and substance, it naturally and necessarily has to take place in the unconscious."[90]

B. The Indispensability of a Proper Psychology for Education

In his essay on pedagogy, Bavinck believes that "the psychology that can be most fruitful in education is that which takes full account of the whole of man in his spiritual as well as in his sensual qualities." Whereas a spiritualistic psychology takes no account of the physical processes, a materialistic psychology denies the mental nature of man. "Bavinck's organic philosophy, however, seeks the integration of the mental and physical qualities, regarding the spiritual as the life principle operating in all physical function."[91]

As Bavinck recognized the value of psychology for education, he believed that the new applied psychology would contribute much to the field of the pedagogy.

---

[88] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 196.

[89] Bavinck, "The Unconscious," 196–197.

[90] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Abridged*, 515.

[91] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 143–144.

Bavinck knew people's expectations that the new scientific, experimental, statistical psychology of the child would be placed as the foundation of the pedagogy, serving as a norm in both curriculum and method.[92] In this hope, people believed, "Not religion and morality, not metaphysics and philosophy, not abstract theory or idle speculation, but the basic facts should form the basis of the new education. Not the dogma proclaimed by church or state, but the dogma promulgated by science, can only claim to authority in the future."[93] Bavinck pointed out that the experimental method could have its limitations like uncontrolled elements in the instant of reporting his experiences. Although the experimenter observes movements, one must infer the results or facts of experience while measuring physical and psychic phenomena.[94] Bavinck notes that the experiments in children can "give invaluable data to be used in directing the educative process."[95]

> The contribution of psychology to education is in direct proportion to its integrative character. Its recognition of the psychic as facts as well as the physical, the use o£ legitimate methods of experimentation, purposeful observation, and introspection, allowing for their respective limitations, and confining its conclusions to its own sphere will enhance its scientific value. It is for educational philosophy to recognize these conclusions, evaluate them, and to incorporate them in a synthetic whole.[96]

Bavinck appreciated the importance of empirical sciences in terms of the pedagogy. Bavinck states, "No pedagogy arises through purely theoretical deductions from ultimate principles. Experience and induction are necessary as well if we are to

---

[92] Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*, 67–68.

[93] "Geen godsdienst en moraal, geen rnetaphysica en philosophie, geen abstracte theorie en ijdele speculatie, maar feiten moeten de basis der nieuwe opvoeding zijn. Niet het dogma, door kerk of staat afgekondigd, maar het dogma, uitgevaardigd door de wetenschap, heeft in de toekomst alleen aanspraak op gezag." Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*, 68.

[94] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 146.

[95] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 146.

[96] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 146.

become acquainted with the children who are to be taught; and thus biology, physiology and psychology are indispensable as sciences auxiliary to pedagogy."[97] Although pedagogy does not despise experience and historical facts, the most pedagogically essential knowledge cannot be obtained by those empirical and historical facts, inasmuch as pedagogy concerns what the origin, the nature, and the destiny of man are.[98] Bavinck makes it clear that such knowledge will be possible from religion and ethics, from theology and philosophy.[99]

When Bavinck discusses psychology as a starting point in education, he refers to the characters of the older psychology and the new psychology. According to Bavinck, whereas the older psychology or rational psychology "relied mainly on introspection as a means of collecting data about the soul," the new psychology or empirical psychology "deemed it more advisable to concern itself exclusively with the external manifestations of mental life and in treating them to employ the same methods as are used in the natural science."[100] Bavinck further illustrates, "The results of this empirical psychology, however, were relatively meagre because the higher life of the soul could not so be approached and evaluated, and consequently origin, nature, and purpose of the psychical phenomena remained a mystery."[101] Bavinck points out that there is no certainty or unity in the experimental and physiological research. He

---

[97] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 21.

[98] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 21.

[99] Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*, 21.

[100] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 43–44.

[101] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 44.

correctly observes, "The division and confusion is greater than ever before as if there are as many psychologies as there are psychologists."[102]

Bavinck raises three objections to the application of the new psychology to education. This empirical psychology cannot be a basis for pedagogy in that "it is too much uncertain as to its own point of departure, method and results."[103] Secondly, "one must remember that psychology can serve pedagogy only in terms of general laws and principles, and these are not the outcome of so-called exact investigation but of 'reflection, i.e. of philosophy.'"[104] Thirdly, modern psychology cannot identify "whether man is a developed animal or an image carrier of God," and answer the question whether we must "consider the soul of man as a product of metabolism or as a substance of spiritual nature" as it intentionally avoids answering such questions.[105]

Wundt's experimental psychology gave a fresh impetus to the new movement, like the establishment of psychological laboratories, and Child psychology and psychopathology became a popular area of study.[106] As the secularization of public education on an anthropocentric philosophy increased, Christian schools based on a theocentric philosophy emerged. With regard to pedagogy, Bavinck was much interested in child education, as the starting point of education is the child. He also

---

[102] "De verdeeldheid en verwarring is grooter dan ooit te voren. Er zijn zooveel psychologieën, als er psychologen zijn." Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*, 59.

[103] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 44.

[104] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 44.

[105] "In de derde plaats zal ieder erkennen, dat het voor de paedagogiek van het hoogste gewicht is, of wij in den mensch een ontwikkeld dier of een beelddrager Gods zien. Het zal op onze theorie en practijk der opvoeding een grooten invloed uitoefenen, of wij de ziel des menschen beschouwen als een product van stofwisseling dan wel als een substantie van geestelijke natuur." Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*, 61.

[106] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 36.

mentions that "every child is a gift of God."[107] In recognition of the breakthroughs in modern psychology, Bavinck takes special note of child psychology, which is mainly the study of the mental capacity and life of the child, and various child diseases and defects, even including school and mental hygiene.[108] Bavinck had "the greatest praise for the efforts in genetic psychology to trace historically the origin and the development of psychic life in the child and the attempt in experimental education to determine the influence of certain kinds of environmental stimuli upon child behavior."[109] Bavinck appreciated its merits of studies in pedagogical pathology, mental and social life and school hygiene, and thus looked upon such research as very promising.[110] Thus, "No one should overlook the good bound up with this child psychology." On the other hand, one "must remember that child psychology is possible only in as far as the child's mind is analogous to mature consciousness, so that in the last analysis it is still dependent on general psychology," asserts Bavinck.[111]

Bavinck's interaction with modern psychology is clearly shown in his references to education. He writes, "When it proceeds to determine how this theory of education should be implemented and applied, it takes on a character of an art."[112] Bavinck set a high value on using the modern techniques and devices in educational theory. Bavinck's later work, *The New Education* (*De Nieuwe Opvoeding*) showed a

---

[107] "Elk kind is een gave Gods." Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*, 79.

[108] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 45.

[109] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 145.

[110] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 145.

[111] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 46.

[112] "Wanneer zij echter voortschrijdt en ook aanwijst, hoe deze theorie der opvoeding moet uitgevoerd en toegepast worden, neemt zij het karakter aan van eene kunst." Bavinck, *Paedagogische Beginselen*, 22; Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 129.

strong affinity in the modern pedagogy based on experimental psychology. As regards to the new education movement, Bavinck agrees with the theory of Ernst Meumann (1862-1915). Bavinck embraced the theory about the stages of development in the child that Meumann theorizes in his *Experimental Pedagogy*:

> (1) The child from the very beginning is active in that he reacts to impressions from within and from without. (2) The order of development of function corresponds to the biological importance of it. (3) The development both physically and mentally takes place in a periodic fashion, but the transition from one period to another is a gradual one. (4) Variation and repetition is the key to all learning. (5) The development of one function will facilitate the development of another.[113]

Bavinck certainly admitted much contribution of empirical psychology to education, especially to child education inasmuch as child psychology concerns pedagogical skills and devices for effective training. Bavinck's interaction with the modern pedagogy built on experimental psychology is brief as follows:

> Psychology by virtue of its object of study is one of the basic contributing sciences to the theory of education. A mechanistic psychology, be it ever so valuable as a working hypothesis in the science of psychology, is inadequate as a basis for education, for it leaves out of account the psychic as facts of experience. Genetic psychology, mental and social hygiene, and pedagogical pathology have great contributing value to education.[114]

Bavinck fully recognized the indispensability of a proper psychology that fitted into Christian education. With reference to the method in education, Bavinck emphasized one's acknowledgment of both the physical and spiritual stages of development in children. As he insists, every teacher must reckon with the development stages of the child because "psychology can perform valuable service here."[115] According to Bavinck, child psychology must be helpful in that child psychology can contribute to

---

[113] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 148.

[114] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 149.

[115] Brederveld, *Christian Education*, 111.

one's understanding of the child and the learning process. He highlights that education must address the personality of the child.

CHAPTER FOUR

BAVINCK'S POSITION ON TRADITIONAL FACULTY PSYCHOLOGY

One of the most fascinating issues in Bavinck's psychology is faculty psychology. In 1897, Bavinck produced his first psychology book based on the riches of scholastic psychology. But in the last decade of his life, Bavinck allegedly turned down the scholastic faculty psychology that he had adopted as his psychological principles. Jaarsma argued in his doctoral thesis, "Bavinck accepts the Aristotelian doctrine of faculties, cognition and striving, in his *Principles of Psychology*, written in 1897, but refutes these in his *Victory of the Soul*, which appeared approximately twenty years later." He asserted, "Bavinck rejected the faculty psychology defended in his first book in psychology for a more integrated view of the individual."[1]

Indeed, Bavinck tried to revise his first psychology textbook toward the end of his life, but his premature death halted the process of revision. Valentijn Hepp, who was Bavinck's successor at the Free University, also insisted in the preface of the second edition to the *Principles of Psychology* that Bavinck's scholastic faculty psychology must be abandoned.[2] By contrast, Hoekema dismisses these claims in his doctoral dissertation by insisting that there is little or no evidence that Bavinck rejected the doctrine of faculty psychology. In fact, the issue of Bavinck's faculty psychology remained unresolved, by implying his own conflict between scholastic psychology and modern psychology.

Nevertheless, it should be noted that Bavinck still used the faculty psychological model as an effective tool for the formulation of Christian doctrines in

---

[1] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 32.

[2] Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie*, 5.

his writings. By using scholastic psychology, he also defended the powers and capacities of the soul against empiricism, materialism, and associationism, which all exclude metaphysics. This chapter will demonstrate that Bavinck continued to accept the basic outlines of scholastic faculty psychology throughout his writings. To show this, we will first briefly look at the use of Aristotelian faculty psychology in the Reformed tradition. Lastly, we will demonstrate Bavinck's unified psychological view of the soul.

I. Use of Aristotelian Faculty Psychology in the Reformed Tradition

Prior to Herman Bavinck, the Reformers adopted traditional Aristotelian faculty psychology. Of course, the use of Aristotelian concepts and distinctions does not mean that Reformed Scholastics were wedded to Aristotelianism. They were critical in their reception of Aristotle's thought, and in a suitable way, accepted Aristotle's ideas without any distortion of Scripture.[3]

One of the prominent teachings of Aristotelianism within the Reformed tradition is the adoption of faculty psychology. Regarding the Reformed use of Aristotelian faculty psychology, Richard Muller argues that the adoption of faculty psychology makes "a strong case" for the continuity of Christian Aristotelianism during the Reformation and post-Reformation eras.[4] Muller states, "Faculty psychology, with its characteristic distinction of spiritual life into the faculties of intellect and will, or, more precisely, of the soul into four faculties–intellect, will, sensitive power, and vegetative power–had its roots in Aristotle and became, in the

[3] Concerning the use of Reformed Aristotelianism, see Willem J. Van Asselt, *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011), 26–44.

[4] For the Reformers and faculty psychology, see Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:355–356.

thirteenth- century development of a Christian Aristotelianism, the dominant view of spiritual or rational existence."[5]

During the Reformation and Post-Reformation eras, Reformed orthodoxy developed major doctrines, such as the image of God, human nature, *ordo salutis*, and human freedom by using Aristotelian faculty psychology. In this section, we will briefly examine how the Reformers adopted Aristotelian faculty psychology by the examples of two major figures: Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499-1562), and John Calvin (1509-1564). First, however, it would be helpful first to look at Aristotle's psychology, in which he described the human soul and its faculties.

In book I of his *Nicomachean Ethics*, Aristotle divides the soul into two elements: the rational and the irrational. The irrational soul is divided into the vegetative element and the appetitive element. The vegetative soul gets involved in nutrition and growth, which is held in common for all living things.[6] According to Aristotle's account, "the vegetative element in no way shares in reason, but the appetitive and in general the desiring element in a sense shares in it, in so far as it listens to and obeys it."[7] When it comes to the rational parts of the soul, Aristotle divides the rational soul into two parts: "one part is that by which we contemplate all those sorts of beings whose principles do not admit of being otherwise, one part that

[5] Richard A. Muller, *God, Creation, and Providence in the Thought of Jacob Arminius: Sources and Directions of Scholastic Protestantism in the Era of Early Orthodoxy* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1991), 143.

[6] Aristotle, *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins (Chicago and London: The University Of Chicago Press, 2011), 1102a34-35.

[7] Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1102b29–30.

by which we contemplate all those things that do admit of being otherwise."[8] Therefore, he states that "one of these is 'the scientific,' the other 'the calculative.'"[9]

In his *De Anima*, Aristotle also speaks of the animal soul (sensitive soul): "The soul of animals is demarcated by two potencies (the power of distinguishing, which is the work of thinking and perception, and in addition the power of moving with regard to change of place)."[10] The animal soul (sensitive soul) is concerned with the sensitive cognition, different degrees of sensitive appetite, and local movement. Thus, it can be summarized that Aristotle has three major divisions of the soul: vegetative soul (*anima vegetative*), sensitive soul (*anima sensitive*), and rational soul (*anima intellective* or *rationalis*). These faculties of the soul are placed in a hierarchy.

Peter Martyr Vermigli (1499-1562) was one of the most erudite Reformers of his age. Among the important second-generation codifiers of the Reformed doctrine, he could be considered the most exceptional scholar in that he synthesized Augustine's heritage in a late medieval context and Aristotelian philosophy.[11] Vermigli's exposition on the human soul and its faculties is a prime example of his

---

[8] Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1139a6–10.

[9] Aristotle, *Ethics*, 1139a13.

[10] Aristotle, *De Anima: On the Soul*, trans. Mark Shiffman, 1 edition (Newburyport, MA: Focus, 2010), 432a15–18.

[11] According to John Patrick Donnelly, Vermigli's view of man includes two aspects, both of which possess a theological perspective on Augustine's anthropology and a philosophical perspective of an Aristotelian faculty psychology. What is more, Vermigli's eclectic nature in his theology not only absorbs various academic traditions but it also makes use of a variety of sources; this eclecticism style dominates across his whole theology. See John Patrick Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism in Vermigli's Doctrine of Man and Grace* (Leiden: Brill, 1976), 75–90. For Vermigli's use of Augustine and Christian antiquity, see Karla Pollmann and Willemien Otten, eds., *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*, 3 vols. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013), 3:1852–1854. According to this book, Vermigli has an overwhelmingly positive view of Augustine, particularly relying on for the sacramental theology, and the doctrine of grace, justification, and predestination. However, Vermigli's theological method owes more to Aristotle and medieval scholasticism than to Augustine.

scholastic clarification of Aristotelian faculty psychology, which clearly shows how he adopted Aristotelianism. While at Strasburg, he lectured on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* and discussed in detail the faculties of the soul. In his commentary on *Ethics*, Vermigli rests his theory on Aristotle's human psychology and thus uses Aristotle's soul division.[12]

In Aristotelian psychology, a "faculty" basically means a "power" to obtain an object in relation to human desires or passions. Like Aristotle, Vermigli identifies a "faculty" with a "power" of the soul in his commentary on Aristole's *Nicomachean Ethics*.

> A faculty is a power of the soul that the Scholastics commonly call a "potency." It is defined causally; because we are endowed with and helped by a faculty, we are considered subject to the passions. We cannot become angry unless we have the soul's power of anger, nor can we desire anything unless we are endowed with the desiring power.[13]

When it comes to the faculties of the soul, Vermigli appropriates much of the Aristotelian psychology. In Aristotelian faculty psychology, the faculties of the soul are divided into three parts: vegetative faculty, sensitive faculty, and rational faculty.

First, the vegetative faculty is an irrational force and it in no way shares in reason. It is only concerned with the maintenance and development of organic life.[14] Secondly, the sensitive faculty is the capacity for perception and sense, which is closely associated with the desires and appetites that are common to humans and animals. Lastly, the rational faculty is a uniquely human capability. The activity of the

---

[12] For Reformed Aristotelianism, see Peter Martyr Vermigli, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Emidio Campi and Joseph C. McLelland (Kirksville, Mo: Truman State University Press, 2006), xxvi–xxx; Muller, *God, Creation, and Providence in the Thought of Jacob Arminius*, 143–149.

[13] Vermigli, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, 333.

[14] Vermigli, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, 280.

soul is manifested in the acts of rational cognition and rational appetite. Here, according to Aristotle's view of the human soul, rational faculty is superior to sensitive and vegetative faculty.

Like Aristotle, Vermigli divides the human soul into the superior soul and the inferior soul.[15] In his commentary on Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, Vermigli affirms that "the inferior appetites must be moved, governed and ruled by the superior faculty, the will."[16] According to him, the faculty of the will belongs to the superior faculty. To explain the relationship between the superior faculty and inferior faculty, Vermigli gives a concrete example: "when the inferior powers are stirred up and prompt one to do something, they are ruled by thought, and thought by reason. We all experience in our own persons that the passions, once aroused, are pacified by applying natural reason."[17] Thus the superior faculty (the intellect and will) controls the inferior faculty (the desires and appetites) and the will itself follows the lead of the intellect.

In the superior soul, there are the knowing faculty and the appetitive faculty. The knowing faculty and the appetitive faculty are also called the intellect and the will. According to Vermigli, the knowing faculty in the superior soul has various names: "*mens, ratio, intellectus, intelligentia, facultas intelligens, vis intelligendi, vis cognoscendi, vis ratiocinandi.*"[18] What is more, the faculty of the intellect has a prominent part in the soul and is the most powerful force in human beings.[19]

---

[15] Vermigli, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, 277, 292, 320, 342.

[16] Vermigli, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, 320.

[17] Vermigli, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, 320.

[18] Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism*, 85.

[19] Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism*, 85.

As we have seen, the inferior or irrational soul is further subdivided into the sensitive soul and the vegetative soul. In the inferior soul, there are three kinds of senses: external, internal, and appetitive.[20] This sensitive level of the soul in human beings which is composed of the external, internal, and appetitive senses is shared with animals. While the external senses mean the five senses of all human bodies, the internal senses are called common sense (*sensus communis*), fantasy (*phantasia*), and memory (*memoria*). The appetitive sense is kind of a sensory response to information about some external object, which is derived from the senses.[21] Because the appetitive sense plays a pivotal role in ethical and theological implications, Vermigli treats the sense appetite in much more depth than the internal and external senses.[22] In addition, he asserts that these sense appetites are under the control of the intellect and the will.

For John Calvin, faculty psychology is also a major issue in that the faculties of the soul lay the doctrinal groundwork. Particularly, he says that to know of what parts the image of God consists, it is valuable to discuss the faculties of the soul. Calvin objects to Augustine's idea that "the soul is the reflection of the Trinity because in it reside the understanding, will, and memory."[23] He writes, "that speculation of Augustine… is by no means sound."[24]

Mentioning the five senses, which Plato referred to as organs, Calvin divides the faculties of the soul into two categories: the three cognitive faculties and the three appetitive faculties. The three cognitive faculties of the soul are fantasy, reason and

---

[20] See Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism*, 81.

[21] See Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism*, 81.

[22] See Donnelly, *Calvinism and Scholasticism*, 81.

[23] John Calvin, *Institutes of the Christian Religion (1559)*, ed. John T. McNeill, trans. Ford Lewis Battles, 2 vols. (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960), I.xv.4.

[24] Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xv.4.

understanding: "*fantasy*, which distinguishes those things which have been apprehended by common sense; then *reason*, which embraces universal judgment; finally *understanding*, which in intent and quiet study contemplates what reason discursively ponders."[25] As the corresponding faculties, there are similarly three appetitive faculties of the soul: "*will*, whose functions consist in striving after what understanding and reason present; *the capacity for anger*, which seizes upon what is offered to it by reason and fantasy; *the capacity to desire* inordinately, which apprehends what is set before it by fantasy and sense."[26]

With regard to these divisions of the soul, Calvin also mentions the philosophers' other classification concerning the powers of the soul (*animae potentias*), in which the soul can be divided into the appetitive and the intellective faculty, including three principles of action: sense, understanding, and appetite. Calvin does not refute the viewpoint that proposes a division of the soul into appetite and understanding. According to this view, the understanding is sort of contemplative because knowledge has no active motion, whereas the appetite that can be further divided into will and concupiscence is sort of practical because it drives the will by grasping good or evil.[27]

Although these divisions of the soul that philosophers have presented are useful to a certain degree, Calvin points out the ignorance of philosophers concerning the corruption of human nature. Therefore, in order to make this point clear in terms of philosophers' lessons, Calvin simply speaks of the understanding and the will as the truly fundamental faculties.

---

[25] Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xv.6.

[26] Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xv.6.

[27] Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xv.6.

Following the traditional faculty psychological model, Calvin distinguishes the soul into the faculties or parts of intellect (or understanding) and will. In his 1559 *Institutes*, Calvin asserts:

> The human soul consists of two faculties, *understanding* and *will*. Let the office, moreover, of understanding be to distinguish between objects, as each seems worthy of approval or disapproval; while that of the *will*, to choose and follow what the *understanding* pronounces good, but to reject and flee what it disapprove.[28]

Here Calvin holds to Aristotelian faculty psychology, which divides the soul into parts (*partes*) of intellect (*intellectus*) and will (*voluntas*). He refers to Aristotle's idea that "the mind has no motion in itself, but is moved by choice," in order to describe the concept of the choice that is called the appetitive understanding. Calvin continues his discussion by noting, "the understanding is, as it were, the leader and governor of the soul; and that the will is always mindful of the bidding of the understanding, and in its own desires awaits the judgment of the understanding."[29] What is more, he clearly shows a strong affinity with the teachings of Aristotle. Calvin asserts, "For this reason, Aristotle himself truly teaches the same: that shunning or seeking out in the appetite corresponds to affirming or denying in the mind."[30] He admires Aristotle's psychological model over Plato's teachings. Thus, Calvin's description that the soul can be divided into the faculties or parts of intellect and will is derived from Aristotelian psychology. He certainly relies on Aristotelian faculty psychology in his description of the soul.

Calvin, however, does not deal with this issue in a more scholastic way than Vermigli. He simply speaks of two faculties of the intellect and will in one soul.

---

[28] Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xv.7.

[29] Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xv.7.

[30] Calvin, *Institutes*, I.xv.7.

When it comes to the emotions or affections in human beings, Calvin also follows Aristotle's understanding. He tends to place the affections below the will "as those qualities of soul that desire the things of sense perception and, in turn, influence the will in its choices."[31]

In his statement about the doctrine of faculties in the *Institutes*, Calvin seems to be closer to intellectualism than to voluntarism in describing the relationship of intellect and will, since the will follows the judgment of the intellect. In fact, the ideas of "voluntarism" and "intellectualism" stem from the medieval faculty psychology tradition that can be traced back to Aristotle. Whereas intellectualism indicates the functional priority of the intellect over the will, voluntarism is the functional priority of the will over the intellect.[32]

On the basis of his modified Aristotelian psychology, Calvin develops his anthropology, which includes major doctrines such as sin, faith and the image of God. In his Commentary on Philippians, Calvin also identifies that the Scripture divides the soul into two faculties, the intellect (or understanding) and the will:

> Scripture is accustomed to divide the soul of man, as to its faculties, into two parts, the *mind* and the *heart.* The *mind* means the *understanding,* while the *heart* denotes all the *disposition* or *inclinations* (*voluntates*). These two terms, therefore, include the entire soul.[33]

---

[31] Muller, *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics*, 1:355. See Calvin, *Institutes*, II.i.9; II.ii.2,12.

[32] For Calvin's vocabulary in relation to the intellectualist and voluntarist traditions, see Richard A. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin: Studies in the Foundation of a Theological Tradition* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 161–164.

[33] John Calvin, *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians*, ed. David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance, trans. T. H. L. Parker (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1965), 290. Cf. Muller, *The Unaccommodated Calvin*, 169.

While Calvin illustrates the faculties of the soul, he distinguishes between the mind as a faculty of understanding and the heart as an inclination of the will. The entire soul connotes two different faculties of the mind and the heart. The intellect has to do with the mind and the will has to do with affections or desires. In addition, Calvin holds that sin affected the whole person as well as the faculties of the intellect and will.

Another example in which Aristotelian psychology was used during the post Reformation era is exemplified in a recent book *Reformed Thought on Freedom* (2010).[34] This book shows how six different prominent Reformed orthodox thinkers demonstrate the concept of free choice using traditional scholastic psychology. According to this book, "The scholastics did not intend to hypostatize the soul into a separate entity, but to indicate the relevant aspect of man's personality in the acts of knowing and willing."[35] The co-authors of this book make it clear that "the Reformed scholastics follow the traditional Aristotelian 'faculty psychology.' The main capacities of the 'soul' are knowing and willing."[36]

With Aristotelian faculty psychology, the Reformed theologians explain the soul (*anima*) in terms of three levels: potency (*facultas*), disposition (*habitus*), and act (*actus*):

---

[34] In response to the modern criticism of the Reformed doctrine of free choice based on Aristotelian faculty psychology, Reformed theologians have begun an in a depth investigation into primary sources of early Reformers and Post-Reformers, considering historical and contextual features. With their painstaking examination of the primary sources, the works of highly important sixteenth and seventeenth-century Reformed writers like Girolamo Zanchi (1516-1590), Franciscus Gomarus (1563- 1641), Gisbertus Voetius (1589-1676), Franciscus Junius (1591-1677), Francis Turretin (1623-1687), and Bernardinus de Moo (1709-1780), have been revealed. Willem J. van Asselt, Martin J. Bac, and Roelf T. te Velde, eds., *Reformed Thought on Freedom: The Concept of Free Choice in Early Modern Reformed Theology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010).

[35] Asselt, J. Bac, and Velde, *Reformed Thought on Freedom*, 44.

[36] Asselt, J. Bac, and Velde, *Reformed Thought on Freedom*, 44.

> The concrete act (*actus*): "I know this person," "I want a cup of coffee," etc. the disposition (*habitus*): a disposition is formed by repeated actions that result in a certain pattern of behavior; "I know how to drive a car," "I want the best for my neighbors," etc. the potency (*facultas*): the capacity of knowing or willing, viewed apart from its concrete actions and possible objects.[37]

The Reformed scholastics analyzed the knowing and willing faculty at three levels, that is, the concrete act, the disposition, and the potency. The only difference between these Reformed orthodox thinkers is how they placed "choice" in relation to will and intellect.[38]

II. Bavinck on Traditional Faculty Psychology: Reception or Rejection?

A. Critical Assessments of Faculty Psychology in the Nineteenth Century

In order to understand Bavinck's position on faculty psychology, it is necessary to look briefly at the criticisms of faculty theory in the nineteenth century. It was not until the nineteenth century that faculty psychology yielded to empirical psychology for a scientific study of the mind. There were harsh attacks on faculty psychology during the nineteenth century with the development of the natural sciences. Herbart is the most dominant figure in demolishing the theory of faculties. As we have seen in chapter three, Herbart opposed the faculty psychology by an erroneous assumption that the doctrine of faculties is nothing more than a classification concept.[39] Herbart and Théodule-Armand Ribot (1839-1916) dismissed "faculty theory" as a metaphysical oddity since they "fail to recognize essential differences in mental states."[40] They argued, "The word faculty seems to carry a somewhat metaphysical meaning, as involving the *cause* rather than the simple class;

---

[37] Asselt, J. Bac, and Velde, *Reformed Thought on Freedom*, 44.

[38] Asselt, J. Bac, and Velde, *Reformed Thought on Freedom*, 44.

[39] See Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 32–37.

[40] James Mark Baldwin, *Handbook of Psychology* (New York: Henry Holt, 1890), 35.

properly restricted, it is synonymous with *function*."[41] For these reasons, Herbart affirmed, "One could use the concept of a faculty not to produce psychological laws, but in order to clarify psychological phenomena."[42] Thus, Herbart played a crucial role in the demise of faculty psychology, and his elimination of faculty theory is regarded as one of the most important contributions in the history of psychology.[43]

Like Herbart, Eduard Beneke (1798-1854) "extended the critique of faculty psychology by comparing the developed and undeveloped soul and argued that psychological phenomena, which could be identified in the developed mind, would not allow the conclusion that faculties or powers of these phenomena exist in the undeveloped mind."[44] For Beneke, faculties of the soul were "not substances but expressions and activities of an underlying basic faculty."[45] In his *Principles of Psychology* (1890), William James also rejected the theory of faculties because "the whole analysis of faculties was vague and erroneous from a psychological point of view."[46]

A British psychologist, Edward B. Titchener (1867-1927), who studied under Wundt, harshly criticized faculty psychology. In his *Experimental Psychology*, Titchener explained, "The psychology of eighteenth century is often spoken of as the 'faculty psychology,' for the reason that it attempted to explain all the various

---

[41] Baldwin, *Handbook of Psychology*, 35n2.

[42] Teo, *The Critique of Psychology*, 53.

[43] Teo, *The Critique of Psychology*, 51.

[44] Teo, *The Critique of Psychology*, 54.

[45] Teo, *The Critique of Psychology*, 54.

[46] William James, *The Principles of Psychology* (New York: Henry Holt, 1890), 28.

phenomena of mind by the assumption of different mental faculties."[47] Then, he makes critical comments about faculty psychology:

> The faculty names are merely classificatory concepts… A faculty psychology must, that is to say, be at best a merely descriptive psychology, and can never rise to the level of explanation. But, further, the faculties, which as class-names are products of scientific abstraction, become changed in the faculty-systems into actual forces or powers, which are supposed to give rise to the separate ideas, feelings, etc. In other words, the faculty which, rightly defined, is incapable of affording explanation, is substantialized… The first criticism charges the faculty psychology with impotence; the second charges it with seeking by false pretences to conceal its impotence.[48]

Under the influence of Wundt and Titchener's experimental psychology, faculty psychology was regarded as being useless and no longer needed in the atmosphere of the nineteenth century. Most modern psychologists abandoned the theory of faculties with the Thomistic philosophy.

B. Bavinck's Ambivalence about Faculty Psychology

In continuity with the Reformed tradition, Bavinck, however, affirms that a theistic conception cannot be explained without the doctrine of faculties. In 1897, Bavinck set forth fundamental psychological principles on the basis of the modified Aristotelian and Thomistic faculty psychology. Bavinck's first psychology book, *Principles of Psychology* presents the more developed form of the faculty doctrine, which is the knowing and the desiring faculty, though there is another name of the understanding and the will. Kuyper also recognized, in his review to the first edition of *Principles of Psychology*, the doctrine of faculties as the most valuable part of the book.

---

[47] Edward Bradford Titchener, *Experimental Psychology: A Manual of Laboratory Practice* (London: Macmillan, 1910), 187.

[48] Titchener, *Experimental Psychology*, 188.

Despite this recognition, there are allegations that Bavinck denied his doctrine of the faculties near the end of his life.[49] It remains unclear as to whether Bavinck rejected traditional faculty psychology since he intended to publish a revised and enlarged edition of his first psychology book. However, as mentioned earlier, Jaarsma asserts that Bavinck rejected the concept of faculty psychology. According to Jaarsma, Bavinck accepts the Aristotelian doctrine of faculties in his *Principles of Psychology* (1897), but nearly twenty years later rejects traditional faculty psychology in his *De Overwinning der Ziel* (1916).[50] At the same time, however, Jaarsma acknowledges that Bavinck attempted to make an explanation of the complexities and varieties of human behavior not by mechanistic or vitalistic approaches, but by the doctrine of faculties. Nevertheless, "since Bavinck altered his position at this point, it seems unnecessary to enter into this any further," asserts Jaarsma.[51] In terms of Bavinck's use of faculty psychology, Jaarsma sums up as follows:

> Though beginning his study of psychology with the emphasis upon the Aristotelian faculties, he refuted this position in his later works and asserted that psychic life must be regarded as a unified whole, interrelated, and one might better speak of functions than faculties (*vermogens*).[52]

Despite Jaarsma's allegation, there is little or no evidence that Bavinck rejected the concept of faculty psychology. In his dissertation on *The Centrality of the Heart*, Hoekema rebutted Jaarsma's assertion.

---

[49] Concerning Bavinck's position on faculty psychology, Vanden Born argues, "It apparently did not occur to Bavinck that theistic accounts of psychic-life might also do without souls and faculties, at least not in 1897. However, as noted earlier, Bavinck was in the process of changing his thought and it is possible that he rejected the doctrine of faculties near the end of his life." See Bavinck, "Translator's Introduction," in *Foundations of Psychology*, xxix.

[50] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 78.

[51] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 78.

[52] Jaarsma, *The Educational Philosophy*, 83.

> Did Bavinck first teach and then later reject this doctrine of the faculties?... I have, however, gone carefully through the lecture referred to, *De Overwinning der Ziel*, published in 1916, but find no evidence that Bavinck there repudiates his doctrine of the faculties.[53]

Here, the issue of Bavinck's faculty psychology depends on his book, *The Victory of the Soul* (*De Overwinning der Ziel*), which he wrote in the last decade of his life. Unlike Jaarsma's assertion, Bavinck, however, appeared to have adhered to his position on faculty doctrine in *The Victory of the Soul*. At the beginning of the book, Bavinck voices the spirit of his age by mentioning that "after the supreme dominion of materialism in the last century, every place resounded with the word liberation."[54] He detects that victory by a precise application of empirical and experimental methods was the victory of a mechanical worldview.[55] Bavinck observes, "the thinking is to the brain like the gall to liver and urine to the kidneys; no thought without phosphorus; thought and language are concomitants of physical processes; the soul is a natural phenomenon, a function of the brain mass, and the human product of his senses; scientific psychology is a part of physiology."[56] He, however, strongly objects to this materialistic idea. Bavinck clearly sates that psychic events like perception, imagination, and joy are fundamentally different from physical events like weights of atoms, stimulation of nerves, and muscle relaxation.[57]

---

[53] Hoekema, "The Centrality of the Heart," 33.

[54] "Na de oppermachtige heerschappij van het materialisme in de vorige eeuw, heeft allerwege het bevrijdingswoord weerklonken." Herman Bavinck, *De overwinning der ziel.* (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1916), 5.

[55] Bavinck, *De overwinning der ziel.*, 5.

[56] "het denken staat tot de hersens, als de gal tot de lever en de urine tot de nieren; zonder phosphor geen gedachte; gedachte en taal zijn begeleidende verschijnselen van physische processen; de ziel is een natuurverschijnsel, een functie van de hersenmassa, de mensch een product van zijne zintuigen; de wetenschappelijke psychologie is een deel der physiologie." Bavinck, *De overwinning der ziel.*, 6.

[57] Bavinck, *De overwinning der ziel.*, 6.

When it comes to Aristotelian faculty psychology, Bavinck only makes a few critical comments about the Greek dualistic view of the human mind in his *The Victory of the Soul*.[58] He argues that the concept of the three souls (*anima vegetativa, anima senstitiva, anima rationalis*) by Aristotle takes the human mind away from an integrated whole of psychic activities. According to Bavinck, "This whole idea was hanging together with the Greek dualism between reason and sensuality. But the form was defective, the two greatest philosophers of Greece in their doctrine of the soul very clearly expressed the essential difference between perceiving and thinking, imagination and understanding, doxa and episteme."[59]

Not surprisingly, Bavinck already pointed to the problem in his first *Principles of Psychology*. He pointed out that the scholastic way in which Aristotle and his followers arrived at the three divisions of the soul (vegetative, sensitive, reasonable) did not fully explain the unity of the soul. Bavinck asserts, "With the division of the soul into plant soul (*anima vegetati*ve), animal soul (*anima sensitiva*), and thinking soul (*anima intellective*), the unity of psychic-life and the mutual relationship of the three psychic activities is not emphasized strongly enough."[60] He goes on to say that "in spite of the clear insight into man's rational being, the connectedness of soul and body and the relation of physiology and psychology is absent."[61] Thus, Bavinck

---

[58] See Bavinck, *De overwinning der ziel.*, 20–21.

[59] "Heel deze voorstelling hing met het Grieksche dualisme tusschen redelijkheid en zinnelijkheid saam. Maar al was de vorm gebrekkig, de beide grootste wijsgeeren van Griekenland hebben in hunne leer van de ziel zeer duidelijk het wezenlijk onderscheid uitgesproken tusschen waarnemen en denken, voorstelling en begrip, doxa en epistèmè." Bavinck, *De overwinning der ziel.*, 21.

[60] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 15.

[61] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 15.

rightly points out that scholastic faculty psychology did not present a whole, integrated soul in a balanced way alongside the divisions of the soul.

In spite of his incisive comments, Bavinck does not repudiate the faculty doctrine itself because he explicitly states the victory of the rational soul beyond the victory achieved by a materialistic view of the soul. Bavinck proclaimed in *The Victory of the Soul* that the highest and cleanest victory is "the victory achieved by the rational soul."[62] Just as art retains its value transcending time and space, the human soul proves its superiority over nature in these days of science and technology more than ever.[63] Moreover, Bavinck rejects the mechanical causality that willing is nothing but a form of desiring. According to Bavinck, the pantheistic or materialistic philosophies deny the distinction between the knowing and the willing faculty, between soul and body.[64] He clearly states, "Willing (*willen*) is not a form of wishing and desiring, but an own private power of the soul."[65] Bavinck draws a sharp demarcation between the mechanical association of representations and willing as a unique and distinct ability of the soul. According to Bavinck, "To form a concept, we have to notice those features and the similarity of objects with respect to them. The process is possible only through thinking. The activity of the Soul which is carried out

---

[62] "Grootsch en schoon is de overwinning, door de redelijke ziel in wereldbeschouwing, persoonlijkheid en cultuur over de zinnelijke wereld behaald. Maar de hoogste en schoonste overwinning is deze nog niet." Bavinck, *De overwinning der ziel.*, 29.

[63] "In geene eeuw heeft zij zoo hoog zich verheven als in die, waarin wij leven; nooit bewees de menschelijke geest zijne superioriteit boven de natuur krachtiger, dan in deze dagen van 'wetenschap en techniek… Niettemin, ook zoo behoudt de kunst hare waarde. Want zij is eene van die vele overwinningen der ziel…" Bavinck, *De overwinning der ziel.*, 27, 34.

[64] See Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 40.

[65] "Analoog daarmede is het willen niet een vorm van wenschen en begeeren, maar eene eigene zielskracht." Bavinck, *De overwinning der ziel.*, 24. Cf. Hoekema, "The Centrality of the Heart," 33–35.

in associating and reproducing representations is not sufficient for this task."[66] Of course, the power of willing and thinking is clearly distinct from the soul *per se*. Given that Bavinck still maintains the unique and distinct faculties of the soul, there is no evidence to justify that Bavinck changed his position on traditional scholastic psychology in his *The Victory of the Soul*.

Bavinck also presented his own views on why the doctrine of faculties should be supported by those who try to explain psychological phenomena in his essay *Trends in Psychology*. Bavinck explicitly states in the essay:

> Every psychology that does not dissolve the phenomena of the soul's life into appearances, but considers them to be functions, turns around and will have to return in one way or another to the theory of abilities (*vermogens*). Nearly all psychologists and also all psychopathologists continue to speak of intellect, feelings, and will as special powers of the soul, even though they reject the name of abilities.[67]

According to Bavinck, although modern psychologists regard the doctrine of faculty psychology as unnecessary, the concept of faculty is still available. In the place where he points out the limits of Wundt's voluntarism and unfruitful attempts, Bavinck also contends that "psychology, in explaining psychic events, cannot do without either the soul or the soul's faculties."[68] Thus, Bavinck says that although faculty psychology has not yet proffered a satisfactory explanation of human mental activities, "the doctrine of the soul and its faculties only opens the possibility for explaining psychic events."[69]

---

[66] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 94.

[67] Bavinck, "Trends in Psychology," in *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 170–171.

[68] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 61.

[69] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 61.

In his later work *Primacy of the Intellect or the Will*, Bavinck clearly establishes the faculties of the soul:

> Desire itself as *act* presupposes consciousness, a realization, an idea of that which one desires, but the realization does not arise from or is not generated by that consciousness; rather, the idea points back to another, original capacity or power of the soul. And that desire as *capacity*, as potential, is present in the soul from the beginning. The capacities for knowing, desiring, and striving are equally as original as *capacity* so that one cannot speak of primacy or even of priority.[70]

Here Bavinck lists faculties of the soul: knowing, desiring, and striving faculty. He still sticks to the faculty doctrine. In his *Principles of Psychology*, Bavinck, however, already presented two faculties of the soul, which are the knowing faculty and the desiring or striving faculty as fundamental psychological principles of the human mind. According to Bavinck, these two major faculties of the soul are closely intertwined and not separate in the soul, but distinct.[71]

In his *Principles of Psychology,* as Bavinck argued, "Thinking and willing are characteristics and workings of the soul but they are not the soul itself," and therefore "the soul and its faculties or abilities are distinct."[72] Bavinck does not view "faculties as anything other than both a capacity naturally proper to the soul and as psychic activity." Rather, "it is always the same soul which in its various activities is more or less conscious or active."[73] Thus Bavinck defines a faculty as a natural capability of the soul in order to perform mental activities.

---

[70] Bavinck, "Primacy of the Intellect or the Will," in *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*, 202–203. Cf. Hoekema, "The Centrality of the Heart," 35.

[71] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 119.

[72] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 41.

[73] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 41.

III. The Unified Psychology of the Human Soul

A. The Knowing Faculty and the Desiring Faculty

For Bavinck, there are two important reasons why the faculty doctrine should be maintained. The first reason is that human faculties belong to the image of God.[74] In his *Magnalia Dei* (Our Reasonable Faith), Bavinck asserts, "the image of God is revealed in the abilities and powers with which the spirit of man has been endowed."[75] He expounds the concept of faculties as follows:

> By means of thought, which cannot be understood as a movement of the brain but must be regarded as a spiritual activity, man deduces the general from the particular, rises from the level of the visible to that of the invisible things, forms ideas of the true, the good, and the beautiful, and he learns to know God's eternal power and Godhead from God's creatures. By means of his willing, which must also be distinguished from his sinful desire, he emancipates himself from the material world and reaches out for invisible and suprasensuous realities.[76]

Human mental activities thus arise from these faculties that are endowed with understanding and will from God. Bavinck says, "All these abilities and activities are characteristics of the image of God. For God, according to the revelation of nature and Scripture, is not an unconscious, blind force, but a personal, self-conscious, knowing, and willing being."[77]

Another reason to maintain is that the doctrine of faculties must necessarily be retained for education. Bavinck clearly states, "The doctrine about abilities of the soul is highly significant for education. Precisely because the soul has different abilities, it can be educated and led. Through education the abilities (as power) are imprinted with habits (proficiency, suitability, dispositions) and specific actions. In this way

---

[74] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 2:556.

[75] Bavinck, *Our Reasonable Faith*, 212.

[76] Bavinck, *Our Reasonable Faith*, 212.

[77] Bavinck, *Our Reasonable Faith*, 212.

education must build on all human abilities, recognizing that sin has damaged many abilities, but not letting any fall away."[78] Thus, all mental activities of human beings cannot be adequately explained without the faculty doctrine.

In keeping with the traditional doctrine of faculties, Bavinck distinguishes between the knowing faculty and the desiring faculty of the human mind as scholastic psychology divided the faculties of the soul into understanding and will. And he subdivides the knowing faculty into lower and higher knowing activities. Bavinck accounts for the relationship between the higher knowing ability and the lower knowing ability. He notes, "The higher knowing activities begin with lower activities, consciousness begins with unconsciousness, knowledge begins with life and activities begin with both a design and an ability."[79]

According to Bavinck, the lower knowing capacity includes sensation and attention. All human knowing or knowledge begins with sensations.[80] Attention is an independent action of the soul in the lower knowing faculty that "isolates one sensation (or representation, or thought) from others and directs notice to that sensation making it stand out clearly in consciousness," and through it "sensation is shifted to perception."[81] Bavinck explains a major distinction between sensation and perception. While sensing is passive and irrelevant to external objects, perceiving is

[78] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 42.

[79] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 66.

[80] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 51, 64, 101.

[81] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 78.

active and establishes relations between itself and its causes.[82] Hence, "sensations provide impressions but perceptions provide representations."[83]

The higher knowing faculty involves understandinging and reason. Bavinck illustrates the differences between them:

> Higher knowing has long been separated into understanding and reason but they belong to the same faculty. Their difference lies in the fact that reason points to discursive thinking, which involves conceptualizations, judgments and conclusions. Understanding is the possession of knowledge given by truth. Human beings come to a knowledge of truth through reasoning. They are rational creations. Thus reason is to understanding as motion is to rest, as obtaining is to possession. Reasoning is the mark of a sensual, earthy, incomplete being; understanding and knowing are the marks of heavenly, complete beings.[84]

Even though understanding and reason form the higher knowing power, "the richest and deepest life lies behind understanding and reason in the human heart."[85] The higher knowing abilities also include conscience, aesthetics, judgment, self-consciousness, and language. According to Bavinck, "Animals have perceptions and representations of beautiful things but they do not know the beautiful. They only know the useful and the attractive. For that reason the perception and recognition of the beautiful, also of sensual things, belongs to the higher knowing ability."[86] For Bavinck, "the most noteworthy accomplishment of the higher knowing ability is self-consciousness."[87]

---

[82] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 79.

[83] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 79.

[84] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 95.

[85] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 80.

[86] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 105.

[87] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 106.

In addition, thinking is closely bound up with knowing.[88] For Bavinck, "Memory is the soul itself, a soul which retains possession of representations once experienced, forms these anew and recalls them to consciousness."[89] The psychic abilities such as memory, imagination, understanding, reason, and conscience are not a faculty in the narrow sense of faculty, but various activities by one knowing faculty.[90] Bavinck is adamant that there is only one knowing faculty "even if it performs many activities which interact continuously."[91] Thus, the knowing faculty involves various psychic activities such as sensing, perceiving, knowing, reasoning, understanding, apprehending, judging, remembering, etc. [92]

Like the knowing faculty, Bavinck differentiates between the higher and the lower desiring faculty. According to him, the lower desiring faculty "has only the sensual, temporary good as its object and it is driven toward those objects necessarily," whereas the higher desiring faculty "has both sensual and spiritual, eternal goods as its objects and it directs itself toward them in freedom and majesty."[93] When it comes to the higher desiring faculty, the most important activity of the desiring capacity is exerted in the character of will.[94] Bavinck notes, "Just as the knowing faculty gradually raises itself to the activities of understanding and reason, so the desiring faculty slowly ascends from the lower forms of instinctive action, wishing and

---

[88] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 66.

[89] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 89.

[90] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 88.

[91] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 101.

[92] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 79.

[93] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 147.

[94] "De hoogste en belangrijkste werkzaamheid van het begeervermogen is die, welke het uitoefent in het karakter van wil." Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie (1897)*, 166.

desiring to the highest acts of will."[95] He goes on to explain, "The will does not enter into human life suddenly and without preparation, but the life is preformed by the moving forces in the inorganic beings, by the natural drives and instincts in plants and animals (*appetitus naturalis*), and by the lower forms of desiring faculty in the man himself (*appetitus sensitivus*)."[96]

With regard to the difference between the will and the desiring faculty, Bavinck asserts, "The will is not a particular faculty, but is nothing more than the desiring faculty itself in its highest form; willing is one special activity and thus has its root and foundation in this whole desire power."[97] He also draws a line between desire and desiring faculty. Bavinck affirms, "Desire is only one of the activities of the desiring faculty. It belongs to every action, in which the soul determines its real relation to things, not only of desire and will, but also of inclination and passion, pleasure and pain, emotion and passion."[98] For him, "Just as the knowing faculty includes sensations, impressions, representations, judgments, etc., beyond just knowing, so the desiring faculty goes beyond desiring."[99]

---

[95] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 145.

[96] "De wil treedt in het menschelijk leven niet plotseling en onvoorbereid op, maar hij wordt gepraeformeerd door de bewegende krachten in de anorganische schepselen, door de natuurlijke driften en instincten bij planten en dieren (appetitus naturalis), door de lagere vormen van het begeervermogen bij den mensch zelf (appetitus sensitivus)." Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie (1897)*, 167.

[97] "De wil is geen bijzonder vermogen, maar is niets anders dan het begeervermogen zelf in zijn hoogsten vorm; het willen is er ééne, bijzondere, werkzaamheid van en heeft dus zijn wortel en grondslag in dat gansche begeervermogen." Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie (1897)*, 179.

[98] "Begeerte is maar eene der werkzaamheden van het begeervermogen. Er behoort elke actie toe, waarin de ziel hare reëele verhouding tot de dingen bepaalt, dus niet alleen begeerte en wil, maar ook neiging en drift, lust en onlust, aandoening en hartstocht." Bavinck, *Beginselen der Psychologie (1897)*, 131.

[99] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 119–120.

In addition, feelings, affections and emotions are not a separate faculty of the soul but special activities of the desiring faculty.[100] Bavinck makes it clear that although there is a close connection between knowing and desiring abilities, the desiring faculty is a unique power of the human mind.[101] What is more, "the desiring faculty can only strive for that which understanding holds up as good."[102]

Bavinck never denies the distinction between the soul and its faculties, between the knowing faculty and the desiring faculty, between soul and body.[103] He certainly holds to the traditional faculty psychology throughout his writings. More precisely, Bavinck attempted to present in a more integrated view of the human soul the knowing faculty and the desiring faculty as psychological principles rather than in the dualistic form of Aristotelian faculty psychology. He also maintains the balance of the faculties not to put too much emphasis on either the knowing faculty or the desiring faculty because such an emphasis would necessarily lead to intellectualism or voluntarism. In this regard, Bavinck's faculty psychology should not be discounted as either a Thomistic psychology that stressed the role of the intellect or a Scotus's psychology that exerted the influences of the will over the intellect. Rather, Bavinck's psychology has its roots in the "heart."

B. The Heart: The Central Organ of the Human Faculties

Although Bavinck teaches about the soul and its faculties in all of his works, he always tries to maintain the unity of the soul. Bavinck emphasizes the wholeness of the human personality. In fact, Bavinck's psychology returns to a biblical

---

[100] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 56.

[101] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 119.

[102] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 125.

[103] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 40–41.

psychology in which he integrates the concept of the soul into a biblical term "heart." He teaches that "the heart in Scripture is, in the first place, the organ of ideas and thoughts."[104] For Bavinck, the most fundamental principle of the human faculties is the heart. In his *Biblical Psychology*, "The heart is the organ of emotional life, the seat of all affections and passions. The heart is also the origin and organ of man's desiring and willing," writes Bavinck.[105] In *Reformed Dogmatics*, Bavinck already elaborated on the concept of the heart.

> While the spirit is the principle and the soul the subject of life in man, the heart, according to Scripture, is the *organ* of man's life. It is, first, the center of physical life but then also, in a metaphorical sense, the seat and fountain of man's entire psychic life, of emotions and passions, of desire and will, even of thinking and knowing. From the heart flow "the springs of life" (Prov. 4:23).[106]

For Bavinck, the heart is the central organ of the human faculties and the psychic life. Thus, "the heart is the seat of all the emotions, passions, urges, inclinations, attachments, desires, and decisions of the will, which have to be led by the mind (*nous*) and express themselves in action," notes Bavinck. In sum, all the abilities of the soul are channeled through and actualized by the heart.

Nevertheless, Bavinck clearly maintains the doctrine of the faculties. Faculty psychology is still available and potentially useful to us. Without it, one cannot get to the bottom of the matter of psychic phenomena. In his *Reformed Dogmatics*, Bavinck presents the importance of the doctrine of faculty psychology through which Christian doctrine can be explained properly. Bavinck declares, "Reformed theologians stressed even more vigorously that not just the actions and not even the faculties alone but also the whole person with all one's capacities, soul and body, heart, intellect, and will, is

---

[104] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 58.

[105] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 59.

[106] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics*, 2:556–557.

the subject of regeneration."[107] For Bavinck, the concept of faculties thus must be a means to explain the variations of consciousness and all psychic events as well as Christian doctrines.

In his *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, Bavinck devotes one chapter to "The Faculties of the Soul."[108] He discusses the doctrine of the faculties with numerous biblical references. Bavinck argues that in order to know exactly what the Scriptures teach about the faculties of the soul, we have to begin the discussion from the heart.[109] Bavinck defines, "the heart is thus no independent fountain of knowledge, but it is the central, innermost, and at the same time, most receptive and impressionable organ of the human soul."[110] For him, the heart is the source of all psychic activities including the intellect, feeling and the will. And such psychic activities or events are regarded as a unified whole. In *Principles of Psychology*, Bavinck considers the soul to "be the inner life beginning of all organic being, the ground of its existence and its movement."[111] Although Bavinck describes the heart as a special organ of the soul, the heart as the source of psychic activities is identical to the soul.

One thing that should be noted is that Bavinck clearly distinguishes the soul from self-consciousness. According to Bavinck, "self-consciousness is not a substance and it is not the essence of the soul because it awakens gradually and because it can be partly or entirely lost, e.g., in sleep, sickness, insanity or

---

[107] Bavinck, *Reformed Dogmatics: Abridged*, 515.

[108] See Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 55–65.

[109] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 55.

[110] Bavinck, *Biblical and Religious Psychology*, 57.

[111] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 30.

drunkenness. It is the result of a long psychic process."[112] For Bavinck, the unity of the soul is unique. When he describes the soul and its faculties, he always maintains the unified personality of the soul while emphasizing the distinction of the faculties. Bavinck thus declares, "it is always the same subject, the one undivided person that through body, soul, and various faculties and powers is able to live, know, desire and move."[113]

[112] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 106.

[113] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, 63.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

Toward a "Reformed Psychology"

Today, psychology tends to be regarded as a pure science completely separate from philosophy. Before the mid-nineteenth century, psychology as a study of the mind was, in fact, a branch of philosophy or theology. It is true that Reformed theology has repeatedly discussed the doctrine about the faculties of the soul as faculty psychology played a pivotal role in Reformed anthropology. Some of them devoted a whole book to a specific study of the soul, which might be called a sort of psychology book.[1] Despite the tremendous legacy of the Reformed faculty doctrine, this faculty psychology has been considered simply as part of Reformed theological anthropology.

With the remarkable development of experimental psychology, new findings of scientific psychology have been applied in almost every academic field, even including theology. The doctrine of faculties was discounted as useless knowledge in the field of psychology. Bavinck, however, was adamant that psychology cannot be discussed in isolation from theology and philosophy. He separately produced a

[1] E.g. Philip Melanchthon dealt with psychological topics in detail in his 1544 *Commentarius de Anima* (Comments on the Soul). See Philipp Melanchthon, *Commentarius de anima* (Argentorati: Crato Mylius, 1544); see also Wolfgang Holzapfel and Georg Eckardt, "Philipp Melanchthon's Psychological Thinking under the Influence of Humanism, Reformation and Empirical Orientation," *Revista de Historia de la Psicología* 20 (1999): 5–34. According to this article, Melanchthon differentiated between the somatic faculties of the soul (perception, fantasy, memory, desire etc.) and the immaterial facutlies (will, intellect). In the post-Reformation era, there are also two important books written about faculty psychology. See Edward Reynolds, *A Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man: With the Several Dignities and Corruptions Thereunto Belonging* (London: Printed by R. H. for Robert Bostock, 1640); John Flavel, *Pneumatologia: A Treatise of the Soul of Man* (London: Printed by J.D. for Tho. Parkhurst, 1698). Both of them discuss the doctrine of the human soul and its faculties in minute detail throughout the entire book.

psychology booklet in critical dialogue with nineteenth century psychology. Bavinck's psychology book should not be simply treated as a theological anthropology. He attempted to construct his own psychology as an independent and scientific discipline, even though he did not develop any psychoanalytic or physiological psychology in the field of empirical psychology.

It is remarkable that Bavinck took a keen interest in the practical use of psychology, especially for pedagogy in the Dutch Reformed community. He appreciated empirical psychology's value and some benefits in more practical fields, but at the same time was concerned that experimental psychology would replace all psychologies. Bavinck hoped that his psychology book would become a valuable educational resource for Christian schools and teachers alongside empirical psychology. His first psychology book is not an integrated form of theology and modern psychology, but rather it can be called a "Reformed psychology" textbook from the Reformed tradition perspective.

Surprisingly enough, scholars have hardly discussed a "Reformed psychology" from the perspective of the Reformed. These days there are many different theories of Christian psychology that simply take accredited theories of modern psychology, but the "Reformed psychology" is not one of them. This psychology is certainly different from such a Christian psychology mixed with modern therapeutic psychology. This is also distinct from a theological anthropology. This "Reformed psychology" may contain not only the legacy of the scholastic faculty psychology, but also Augustine's Christian psychological idea, which Reformed orthodoxy historically has adopted.

In fact, Bavinck's *Principles of Psychology* satisfies these demands to a surprising degree. As he mentioned in his preface, Bavinck set forth his psychological principles based on the Reformed theological perspectives against empirical

psychology. Indeed, Kuyper's review on Bavinck's first edition of *Principles of Psychology* mentions a "Reformed psychology." Kuyper's review on December 3, 1897 notes, "Professor Bavinck has happily been able to find time to set out the first installment of what with further studies can become a Reformed Psychology (*Gereformeerde Psychologie*)… and we sincerely hope it will have a fixed place in many locations, also with Servants of the Word and instructors in schools with the Bible."[2] As Kuyper mentions, Bavinck completed his psychology book using the riches of Reformed Scholasticism and probably became a pioneer in this field. In his letter, Kuyper believes confidently that "our Reformed public will still be deeply appreciative for his trailblazing work."[3] It is not too much to say that Bavinck paved the way for the development of a "Reformed psychology" in an attempt to cultivate a new discipline as distinguished from a theological anthropology.

Bavinck's essays and books on psychology should be considered an important contribution to the development of a Reformed psychology, even if he did not develop any experimental methods or make a contribution to the field of empirical psychology. His writings on the subject of psychology suggest the importance of constructing a Reformed psychology. Of course, there are difficulties in defining the boundary of a Reformed psychology. It may seem to be a huge project to construct such a psychology from the Reformed perspectives, but a Reformed psychology should be necessarily discussed in practical terms for Christian education and church ministries as Bavinck attempted to do. As mentioned earlier, Bavinck's main purpose

[2] "De hoogleeraar Bavink heft, wat we zeer op prijs stellen, tijd kunnen vinden, om nu reeds een eerste proeve in het licht te zenden van wat bij voortgezette studie zal kunnen leiden tot een Gereformeerde Psychologie." Gereformeerde Kerk in de Nederlanden and Abraham Kuyper, "De Heraut."

[3] Bavinck, *Foundations of Psychology*, viii.

of his psychology book was to provide sound psychological principles for pedagogy. It is worth developing the idea and practice of a Reformed psychology.

Reformed psychology should not only resonate with the Reformed tradition, but it should also make use of the riches of the scholastic psychology. Reformed psychology should present the views of the soul in a balanced way. In Reformed psychology, cognitive capacity and volitional capacity are unified in the human soul and not separate, but distinct. Reformed psychology rejects the form of psychology like intellectualism, voluntarism, and emotionalism. Reformed psychology does not either emphasize the knowing faculty or the desire faculty of the soul, but rather the unified whole of mental activities. In other words, a Reformed psychology maintains the unified personality or soul without primacy of the intellect or the will.

Furthermore, a Reformed psychology attempts to overcome the weaknesses of traditional scholastic psychology. Bavinck quite rightly pointed out the danger of Aristotle's three divisions of the soul because Aristotle's psychology did not fully explain the mutual relationship of the three psychic activities. Bavinck always retains the unified personality of the soul while drawing the clear distinction of the faculties. For Bavinck, various abilities such as understanding, will, memory, and emotion are not separate entities of the mind but simply functions of the unified soul. Among them, the heart is the most fundamental principle of the human desiring and willing faculties. Thus, Reformed psychology denies any psychology that harms the unity of the soul. This psychology must be based on biblical principles, and therefore a Reformed psychology places emphasis on the unified being or self.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

A. Works of Herman Bavinck

Bavinck, Herman. *Beginselen der Psychologie*. 1st ed. Kampen: Bos, 1897.

———. *Beginselen der Psychologie*. Edited by Valentine Hepp. 2nd ed. Kampen: Kok, 1923.

———. *Biblical and Religious Psychology*. Translated by H. Hanko. Grand Rapids: Protestant Reformed Theological School, 1974.

———. *Bijbelsche en Religieuze Psychologie*. Kampen: Kok, 1920.

———. "Creation or Development." *Methodist Review* 83 (1901): 849–74.

———. *De overwinning der ziel.* Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1916.

———. *Essays on Religion, Science, and Society*. Edited by John Bolt. Translated by Harry Boonstra and Gerrit Sheeres. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

———. *Foundations of Psychology*. Translated by Jack Vanden Born. M.C.S. thesis, Calvin College, 1981.

———. *Our Reasonable Faith*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1956.

———. *Paedagogische Beginselen*. Kampen: J. H. Kok, 1917.

———. *Reformed Dogmatics*. Edited by John Bolt. Translated by John Vriend. 4 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2008.

———. *Reformed Dogmatics: Abridged in One Volume*. Edited by John Bolt. Abridged edition. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.

———. *The Philosophy of Revelation*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1953.

B. Primary Sources

Aristotle. *Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Robert C. Bartlett and Susan D. Collins. Chicago and London: The University Of Chicago Press, 2011.

———. *De Anima: On the Soul*. Translated by Mark Shiffman. 1 edition. Newburyport, MA: Focus, 2010.

Calvin, John. *Institutes of the Christian Religion (1559)*. Edited by John T. McNeill. Translated by Ford Lewis Battles. 2 vols. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1960.

———. *The Epistles of Paul the Apostle to the Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians*. Edited by David W. Torrance and Thomas F. Torrance. Translated by T. H. L. Parker. Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1965.

Flavel, John. *Pneumatologia: A Treatise of the Soul of Man*. London: Printed by J.D. for Tho. Parkhurst, 1698.

Geelkerken, J.G. *De Empirische Godsdienstpsychologie*. Amsterdam: Scheltema & Holkema, 1909.

Gereformeerde Kerk in de Nederlanden, and Abraham Kuyper. "De Heraut." *Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland*, 1897.

James, William. *The Principles of Psychology*. New York: Henry Holt, 1890.

Locke, John. *The Works of John Locke*. 10 Vols. London: Thomas Tegg, 1823.

Melanchthon, Philipp. *Commentarius de anima*. Argentorati: Crato Mylius, 1544.

Reynolds, Edward. *A Treatise of the Passions and Faculties of the Soul of Man: With the Several Dignities and Corruptions Thereunto Belonging*. London: Printed by R. H. for Robert Bostock, 1640.

Starbuck, Edwin Diller. *The Psychology of Religion: An Empirical Study of the Growth of Religious Consciousness*. London: W. Scott; New York: Scribner, 1901.

Titchener, Edward Bradford. *Experimental Psychology: A Manual of Laboratory Practice*. London: Macmillan, 1910.

Vermigli, Peter Martyr. *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*. Edited by Emidio Campi and Joseph C. McLelland. Kirksville, Mo: Truman State University Press, 2006.

C. Secondary Sources

Aalders, Maarten Johan. *125 Jaar Faculteit der Godgeleerdheid aan de Vrije Universiteit*. Zoetermeer: Meinema, 2005.

Asselt, Willem J. van, Martin J. Bac, and Roelf T. te Velde, eds. *Reformed Thought on Freedom: The Concept of Free Choice in Early Modern Reformed Theology*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2010.

Asselt, Willem J. Van. *Introduction to Reformed Scholasticism*. Grand Rapids, MI: Reformation Heritage Books, 2011.

Audi, Robert, ed. *The Cambridge Dictionary of Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 1999.

Baldwin, James Mark. *Handbook of Psychology*. New York: Henry Holt, 1890.

Belzen, Jacob A., ed. *Aspects in Contexts: Studies in the History of Psychology of Religion*. Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2000.

———. "Ideology, Politics, and Personality: Shaping Forces in Dutch Psychology of Religion, 1907-1957." *History of Psychology* 12, no. 3 (2009): 157–82.

———. "The Development of Early Psychology of Religion: A Dutch Falsification of the Received View." *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 44, no. 3 (2008): 258–72.

———. "The Introduction of the Psychology of Religion to The Netherlands: Ambivalent Reception, Epistemological Concerns, and Persistent Patterns." *Journal of the History of the Behavioral Sciences* 37, no. 1 (2001): 45–62.

Bolt, John, ed. *Five Studies in the Thought of Herman Bavinck, A Creator of Modern Dutch Theology*. Lewiston, N.Y.: Edwin Mellen Press, 2012.

———. "Grand Rapids between Kampen and Amsterdam: Herman Bavinck's Reception and Influence in North America." *Calvin Theological Journal* 38, no. 2 (2003): 263–80.

Brederveld, Jakob. *Christian Education: A Summary and Critical Discussion of Bavinck's Pedagogical Principles*. Grand Rapids, MI: Smitter Book Company, 1928.

Bremmer, R. H. *Herman Bavinck als Dogmaticus*. Kampen: Kok, 1961.

———. *Herman Bavinck en Zijn Tijdgenoten*. Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1966.

De Wit, Willem. "'Will I Remain Standing?': A Cathartic Reading of Herman Bavinck." *The Bavinck Review* 2 (2011): 9–42.

Donnelly, John Patrick. *Calvinism and Scholasticism in Vermigli's Doctrine of Man and Grace*. Leiden: Brill, 1976.

Gleason, Ron. *Herman Bavinck: Pastor, Churchman, Statesman, and Theologian*. Phillipsburg, N.J: Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company, 2010.

Graham, Gordon, ed. *The Kuyper Center Review*. 5 vols. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2010.

Hepp, V. *Dr. Herman Bavinck*. Amsterdam: W. ten Have, 1921.

Hoekema, Anthony A. “The Centrality of the Heart: A Study in Christian Anthropology with Special Reference to the Psychology of Herman Bavinck.” Th.D. diss., Princeton Theological Seminary, 1948.

Holzapfel, Wolfgang, and Georg Eckardt. “Philipp Melanchthon’s Psychological Thinking under the Influence of Humanism, Reformation and Empirical Orientation.” *Revista de Historia de la Psicología* 20 (1999): 5–34.

H. T. de., Graaf. “Over Godsdienstpsychologie [On the Psychology of Religion].” *Teekenen Des Tijds* 7 (1905): 28–38.

Jaarsma, Cornelius Richard. *The Educational Philosophy of Herman Bavinck: A Textbook in Education*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1935.

Leertouwer, Lammert. *Modern Societies and the Science of Religions: Studies in honour of Lammert Leertouwer*. Edited by Gerard Albert Wiegers and Jan Platvoet. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2002.

Muller, Richard A. *Dictionary of Latin and Greek Theological Terms: Drawn Principally from Protestant Scholastic Theology*. Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 2006.

———. *God, Creation, and Providence in the Thought of Jacob Arminius: Sources and Directions of Scholastic Protestantism in the Era of Early Orthodoxy*. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1991.

———. *Post-Reformation Reformed Dogmatics: The Rise and Development of Reformed Orthodoxy, ca 1520 to ca 1725*. 2nd ed. 4 vols. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2003.

Nicole, Roger R., Charles E. Hill, and Frank A. James, eds. *The Glory of the Atonement: Biblical, Historical & Practical Perspectives: Essays in Honor of Roger Nicole*. Downers Grove, Ill: InterVarsity Press, 2004.

Pollmann, Karla, and Willemien Otten, eds. *The Oxford Guide to the Historical Reception of Augustine*. 3 vols. Oxford, United Kingdom: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Pratt, James Bissett. “The Psychology of Religion.” *Harvard Theological Review* 1, no. 4 (1908): 435–54.

Price, Timothy Shaun. “Pedagogy as Theological Praxis: Martin Luther and Herman Bavinck as Sources for Engagement with Classical Education and the Liberal Arts Tradition.” Ph.D. diss., University of Aberdeen, 2013.

Sengers, Erik, ed. *The Dutch and Their Gods: Secularization and Transformation of Religion in the Netherlands since 1950*. v. 3. Hilversum: Verloren, 2005.

Teo, Thomas. *The Critique of Psychology: From Kant to Postcolonial Theory*. New York: Springer, 2005.

Tjeerd, Hoekstra. “Duitsche Godsdienstpsychologie.” *Gereformeerd Theologisch Tijdschrift* 36 (1936 1935): 191–93.

Vande Kemp, Hendrika. “G. Stanley Hall and the Clark School of Religious Psychology.” *American Psychologist* 47, no. 2 (1992): 290–98.

Venema, Cornelis P. “Herman Bavinck: His Life and Theology.” *New Horizons*, October 2008.

Wit, Willem J. de. *On the Way to the Living God: A Cathartic Reading of Herman Bavinck and an Invitation to Overcome the Plausibility Crisis of Christianity*. Amsterdam: VU Uitgeverij / VU University Press, 2011.