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All Under One Head: Christ



by Henk de Jong

I am a pupil of the Dutch theologians and pastors Schilder, Holwerda, Veenhof, Van den Born, and De Graaf. They taught me to preach in the well-known redemptive-historical way. Yet I have always been a critical follower of the illustrious Reformed preachers just mentioned. Critical reflection must be continuous. What was my hesitation?

It was always the word "history" that puzzled me as a minister of the Word. I noticed what a bad effect that word "history" can have on modern

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man. It is often thought today that according to Christian doctrine we must abandon today's actuality and travel to the year zero in order to find redemption and salvation. What a dishonor to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ to be associated with the year zero! Later on there was something in addition to that: The cultural situation in The Netherlands compelled me to deal with the phenomenon of Islam, a religion which pretends to present salvation without history. Is it possible that Islam is more direct than Christianity? If Mohammed lived now and claimed to have received his revelation in our day, the Koran would be just the same now as it was before. You can't say that of the Bible. Isn't the whole historical aspect of the Bible an impeding leg iron? And so I struggled and I struggle still with the essence of history.

What is history, in the biblical sense of the word, all about? Could it be that the Bible grasps the idea of history in a fuller sense than we are used to, so that it ceases to contrast with the present day's actuality? In God's view thousands of years are like one day and one day like a thousand years. Is that an incommunicable attribute of God, or has he also put some simultaneousness in created time which brings past, present, and future closer together without erasing their differences? In the theses listed below, and in the article that follows, I deal with that question, not everywhere, but certainly in the core of my paper.

1. The Bible does not write history, but uses history to place us before God.
2. The character of the biblical use of history is neither linear nor cyclical, but a kind of combination of both: concentric.

3. The inner-biblical movement follows the figure of an hourglass: from Adam on the earth, via Christ on Calvary, to the perspective of the new Adam on the new earth.

4. Biblical history is a paradigm of the history of humankind in general.

5. The aim of biblical preaching is to show that the whole universe, everything in heaven and on earth, is going to be brought under one head, Christ (Ephesians 1 and 10), and to admonish that human behavior should be in accordance with that.

* * *

My first thesis is directed against fundamentalism. Fundamentalism states that with the help of the Bible we can reconstruct history precisely. By this statement fundamentalism gives the Bible an improper aim. It leads away from the Bible instead of bringing us to it.

History is very important for our faith. Take, for instance, the Christian Credo which states that our Lord was "crucified *sub Pontio Pilato*." Gnosticism and Docetism neglect history. They even deny its importance. For us, however, the historical character of the biblical revelation is a sign of the reality of the incarnation.

And so the starting point of fundamentalism is correct but it claims too much and therefore it causes great damage to the preaching of the Word by making it too apologetic. The eye is not directed to the Lord but to science; historicity takes the place of God.

For instance, in a sermon on Genesis 11 concerning the tower of Babel, fundamentalism draws attention to the question of whether that tower was historically real or not, whereas the text itself deals with the danger of centralism as an alternative to trust in God. Of course the tower of Babel is historical, but to seek historical exactness in that chapter is wrong. The phenomenon of the *ziggurat*, the Babylonian temple-tower, is used to confront humankind with its lack of trust in God, a lack which is then neatly punished by the dispersion of the human race all over the surface of the earth.

Through the ages the Bible has been misused in several ways. It has been misused as a medical book. As a result the mentally ill were locked up as people who were possessed by the devil. It has been misused as a book of economics, and as a result

the taking of interest was forbidden. It has been misused as a book of linguistics, and as a result Hebrew was seen as the original language of humankind. It has been misused as a book of geography, and as a result Jerusalem was seen as the center of the earth and the earth itself as the center of the universe.

In the same way, the Bible can be misused to reconstruct history. As a result some preachers in the Easter service defend the historical exactness of the biblical record of the resurrection instead of leading the congregation in praise to God because he raised Jesus from the dead. Hallelujah!

I don't want to dwell too long on this point, but good preaching must have a good understanding of the true character of the word of God. Instead of itself being subjected to the judgment of the historians, the Bible puts us, whether we are historians or not, before God.

It is true that in a general sense the Holy Scripture is offering us a chronological sequence of historical events. The Bible is not unhistorical: it runs a trajectory from Adam on to Noah, to Moses, to David, and to Christ. Yet in that course of events, the Bible does not describe history, but uses history to place us before God.

* * *

We have to take history in a fuller sense than we are used to. It was especially the scholar Gerhard von Rad who stressed the *linear character* of the biblical presentation of history. Von Rad opposed this linear character to the *cyclical idea of history*, which in his opinion was typical of the mythical manner of thinking. Since Von Rad's day you can read this in the handbooks: biblical history is not cyclical but linear.

Von Rad's thesis has not remained uncontested. Scholars, such as Albrektson in the field of Assyriology, have demonstrated that linear thinking was not as typical for Israel and the Bible as was stated by Von Rad. On the other side, Claus Westermann stated that there were cyclical parts in the Bible itself. He distinguished in the Old Testament the domain of salvation and the domain of benediction. In his view, salvation was attached to history, whereas the domain of the benediction (for instance: agricultural prosperity, cattle-growth, and childbirth) was unhistorical and had repetition as its distinguishing feature. (Westermann, however,

failed to integrate those two domains. They stood unrelated side by side. In fact, you can sense that for Westermann benediction is the most important theme of the Bible.)

Although I do not share Westermann's preference, I am grateful to him for his helpful distinction between salvation and benediction. We have to combine and integrate the two themes of salvation and benediction. The Bible tells us that we have forfeited God's benediction. As a result of our sins, we are alienated from the state of benediction, but God has initiated a history of salvation to bring us back to the benediction. God provides salvation in order that we might reach benediction. This benediction not only comes at the very end of history, but also begins during the course of history. Hence, the biblical perspective not only points forward to the future of benediction, but also points sideways to the centers of benediction already reached. *That forward and sideways movement is a characteristic of biblical history.* You may call it a combination of the linear and the cyclical idea of history. Many parts in the Bible are not historical at all, for example, the wisdom literature and the Psalms. We should not exclude those genres from the field of biblical history. They are the elements of rest in history, the centers of benediction already reached.

* * *

The main example of those centers of benediction is the city of Jerusalem and the sanctuary in it. There is a cyclical movement around that center in the Old Testament and repetition of the annual calendar of feasts. Psalm 133, one of the songs of ascent, says that "there the Lord commands the blessing, even life forevermore." And Deuteronomy 12 states that the sanctuary is the place of the "*menucha*," the place of rest—a center of rest and benediction already reached.

But there is also a linear movement to that sanctuary: the history of salvation. In Deuteronomy 26:5-11 an Israelite describes his annual pilgrimage to the temple as the historical journey of his people from the time of the patriarchs onward to the inheritance of the country. Here are two movements to the sanctuary, a cyclical and a linear movement—a movement in the domain of space and a movement in the realm of time. You could also say that it is a spiral or conical movement. *The com-*

ination of these two movements gives the biblical process a special character, as is evident in Deuteronomy 26. It is that unity of time and space in the biblical movement upon which I wish to concentrate.

Gerhard von Rad has said that the Old Testament has no center. This remark is understandable when you remember that his manner of thinking is only linear, but this treatment of history in Scripture gives the Old Testament a restlessness which is not at all biblical. Through the course of time Israel recognized the Sabbath as the preliminary center of time. The Sabbath, just as the temple, implies all those elements of rest. The Sabbath brings one to

The Bible does not describe history, but uses history to place us before God.

the beginning of the Bible and to the first week of the world in Genesis 1. This week was not a linear progress from the first day to the seventh, but a system of concentric circles with the Sabbath at the end as climax. First, there is the circle of the first three days wherein the environment is shaped: light, the space between the heaven and the earth, and the division between the soil and the waters. Then the second triad of days corresponds to the first three days. The fourth day with the creation of the heavenly bodies corresponds to the first day and the creation of light. The fifth day with the creation of the fish and the birds corresponds to the second day on which the expanse between heaven and the moist earth came forth. The sixth day tells us of the shaping of the land animals and human beings who are to inhabit the land, and the sixth day corresponds to the third. So the wide circle of the first three days corresponds to the inner circle of the last three days which finished what had been begun earlier. The seventh day or the Sabbath is, in my opinion, the culmination to which all the previous days are related and point.

In this manner, time is created, not as a restless linear process straightforward from A to B, but in a cyclical course in which rest is imbedded. A week is not just a sequence of time, but is structured as a whole of concentric circles, not with an end in the sense of *sof* (the Hebrew word for "end" as in dead end), but with an end as a fulfillment,

a *gets* (the Hebrew word for “end” in the sense of the end of the agricultural year), a harvest, a culmination.

This structure of the first week predicts the true character of biblical history. The course of history not only points to an end, but also to a center. It is a concentric movement, a spiral movement.

* * *

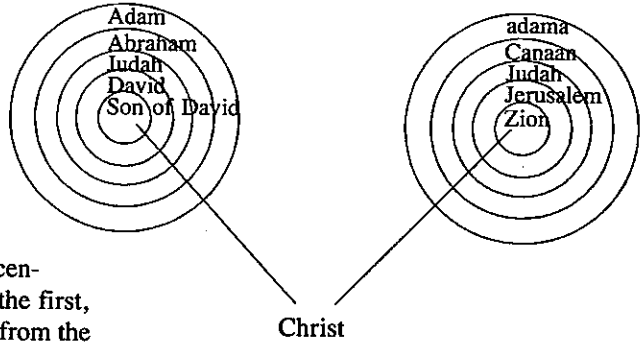
I now come to my third thesis. We have already found the idea of concentration, the movement in the Bible which unifies time and rest, which is portrayed by concentric circles which aim at a center of what is present and future at the same time. Along with that concentration of time goes a second concentration, namely, one in space, which like the first, as can be noted from Scripture, was there from the beginning of the world. It is a concentration in the double sense of the word and we can use those two sorts of concentration to draw an outline of the biblical process. The Bible starts with *Adam* on the *adama*, with Adam on the surface of the earth. This is what God had in mind when he created the world: a blessed Adam on a blessed *adama*. But instead of being blessed, Adam and the *adama* came under the curse of God. The blessed Adam on the blessed face of the earth as the aim of creation was postponed instead of being realized immediately. Then a single people, Israel, was set apart to live on a limited part of the earth, Canaan. Israel and Canaan replaced what was formerly represented by Adam (humankind) and *adama* (world). The perspective was narrowed significantly. Within that people and country a further election took place: the tribe Judah in the land of Judah. As father Jacob had already said in his last words: “Judah, thou art the one whom thy brethren shall praise” (Gen. 49).

Once again the circle of election was narrowed. This time to David and Jerusalem. David conquered and promoted Jerusalem as the capital of the land and brought his people to that very center of their inheritance. With every narrowing, the concentration of time and space remained. The further we read in the Bible (especially the Old Testament), the narrower the perspective becomes. The last narrowing took place when the promise was made to David that he would get an eternal son who would build the sanctuary on Mount Zion.

We can visualize this development with the help of two pairs of five concentric circles:

This is where it stops in the Old Testament: an ellipse with two foci in prophetic perspective: the true David and the true Zion, representing humankind and the earth.

In Psalm 132 you can feel the tension between those two centers of election. Obviously in this



Psalm there is a reciprocity. David builds Zion, but Zion in its turn is the soil for the David-tree. Those two are interrelated, interdependent. But in the Old Testament those two do not come together into one figure. It's only in the New Testament that both are united in the person of Jesus Christ, who is called both the son of David and the temple. He is truly the fulfillment of both. Through his active obedience, prefigured by David, and his passive obedience, prefigured by the atonement sacrifice in the temple, the reconciliation is realized and the benediction for both humankind and the earth is guaranteed, and the message of peace is brought to all the nations wherever they dwell on the face of the earth. Through Jesus Christ, God's plan for a blessed humankind on a blessed earth will be realized, and to a certain extent, has already been realized.

In Jesus Christ the two lines of Adam and *adama* come together, yet also through Jesus Christ these two lines go out towards the new humankind on the new earth. This is the hour-glass figure of which I spoke in my third thesis.

* * *

This figure, as a rough scheme in which the separate texts with all of their own personalities must be placed, can help one when preaching, especially from the Old Testament. I'll give two examples: Genesis 22 and Psalm 78. First Genesis 22. When we compare Genesis 22 with Genesis 12, we see two concentric circles indicated. The first one is of the land and the second of the Holy Place. “Get

thee . . . unto a land that I will show thee" (Gen. 12:1) and "Get thee unto the land of Moriah . . ." (Gen. 22:2). Notice the resemblance of those two phrases. In the second phrase the calling of Abraham from Ur of the Chaldeans is repeated or continued, or better yet, concentrated. And at Moriah, Abraham, in a prophetic situation, witnesses the sacrifice which would be fundamental for his posterity in the land of promise. Obviously, it's not enough for Abraham and his seed to be a people and to have a land (Gen. 12). That circle of people and land has to be narrowed in time and space to the circle of Isaac and Moriah, the one son on the one place. And on that place, "in the Mount of the Lord (which is Zion, see Psalm 24:3) it shall be seen" (Gen. 22:14). That is to say, salvation and benediction shall be seen. Notice the two movements in the calling of Abraham: one to the future and one to the middle, by virtue of the concentration, not only to the future—that would be linear, and not only to the middle—that would be cyclic. But to the future and to the middle—a concentric movement to a center of benediction.

The other example is Psalm 78. The greatest part of this Psalm tells us about the absolute low point of the covenant people in the days of Saul. Until then the people had been placed under the leadership of Joseph, the first born by election of the sons of Jacob (Gen 48:2, I Chron. 5:1), that is to say Ephraim (vs 9). But "the children of Ephraim, being armed, and carrying bows, turned back in the day of battle. They kept not the covenant and refused to walk in his law" (vss 9,10). God's intention to have the people of Israel serving him in the land of Canaan seemed to have failed. But the Psalm goes on to explain that the people and the land were brought under two new centers of election, Zion and David (vss 67-72, read this!). Zion and David, the two smaller circles, point forward to Christ, the son of David and the fulfillment of the temple. And really, it is only by virtue of Christ and his sacrifice that the people of God can live in the land, yes, in the world of God.

Also in the book of Deuteronomy, the reality of Israel in the land of promise is a utopia ("ou *topos*," no place, no possibility), just as Psalm 78 teaches us. Read, for example, in sequence the chapters 5 through 11 of Deuteronomy—chapters which show an increasing pessimism as to the possibility of the covenant. Only in "the place which the Lord shall

choose" is there a place of atonement and reconciliation (12:5 ff.). There is a "*topos*," a place, the possibility and the reality of the covenant people in the land of promise. In a movement of concentric circles, the Bible brings us to the ultimate reality of benediction through salvation, of life through reconciliation. This brings me to the point that the transition from one circle to the next is caused by the growth of sin.

* * *

The circle of Adam on the *adama* is replaced by that of Israel in the land of Canaan at the time of the downfall of the project of the tower of Babel.

*We should try to taste
history in order to recognize
our own days in those of the
Bible.*

Adam on the blessed *adama* disappears from view and does not give any further perspective.

But also the circle of Israel in Canaan turns out to be a dead end. As is shown in Psalm 78, it is replaced by the circle of David-Zion. And as for the last circle, that of the son of David in the real house of God, David confesses its impossibility. The promised Son of David "is not of my house, O Lord" (II Sam. 23:5). Sin always causes the narrowing of the circles. In a pedagogical manner the reader of the Bible is brought to the reconciliation of Christ via the process of elimination. On him the covenant is established and in him it is confirmed. You can see this very clearly in II Samuel 7. The covenant between God and David and his house is regarded there as the basis of the covenant between God and Israel.

We meet two covenant phrases in the Bible. The first is used of God's covenant with Israel and it runs: "I will be their God and they shall be my people" (the first time in Exodus 6:7). The other is used for the Lord's covenant with David and it says: "I will be his father and he shall be my son" (see, for example, Psalm 89:27,28).

In II Samuel 7, we find the two covenant phrases together: the people's covenant (vs 24) and the David covenant (vs 14). In II Samuel 7:24, however, we meet the covenant phrase of the people in a special form: "For thou hast confirmed to

thyself thy people Israel, to be a people unto thee forever; and thou Lord art become their God." This is said by David in his thanksgiving prayer after receiving the promise for his house. This promise of the David-Son is the confirmation of the covenant between God and the people, which was unstable as a result of Israel's sin. How could a covenant between the Lord and Israel be possible in the light of Israel's growing sin? But the covenant with David gave a new basis to the covenant with the people. It was the confirmation of the unstable Israel to an everlasting people of God, and so the text II Samuel 7:24 should be translated "For thou hast confirmed to thyself thy people Israel, to be a people unto thee forever, whereas you, O Lord, wert already their God." As for the possibility of the covenant, there was no shadow of uncertainty on the part of God, but Israel needed to be confirmed. And it was the promise to David of an everlasting son (the David-covenant: I will be his father and he will be my son) that confirmed Israel to be the people of the Lord, whereas God's partnership needed no confirmation.

Since the days of the Nathan-promise you can find the covenant phrase of the people brought under the name of David. For instance, Ezekiel 37:23,24: ". . . so shall they be my people and I will be their God. And David, my servant, shall be king over them. . . ." It is by virtue of David's kingship (that is to say, the kingship of the prophetic "David," i.e., the son of David) that there will be a covenant between God and Israel in the future. The David-promise is the foundation of the covenant between God and the people. In this same chapter, however, Ezekiel 37, you can also read this: "My tabernacle shall also be with them; yea, I will be their God and they shall be my people" (Ezekiel 37:27). That is to say, the covenant of the Lord with his Israel is also brought under the wings of the sanctuary, the other focus point in the ellipse or double circle of David and Zion. From this we may conclude that the circle of Israel and Canaan (which represented humankind on earth) is based on the smaller circle of David and Zion. Or in other terms, that the covenant of God with his people is brought under one head: Christ. (But now we are expressing ourselves in New Testament terms.)

I found one place, in Jeremiah 30, where we meet these two, David and the sanctuary, in a kind of spiritual unity as the umbrella for the covenant. This

is the passage: "A ruler shall appear, one of themselves, a governor shall arise from their own number. I will myself bring him near and so he shall approach me—for no one ventures of himself to approach me, says the Lord—and so you shall be my people and I will be your God" (Jer. 30:21,22). The covenant is here brought under a person who is first of all a ruler and a governor. You think here of a member of the David dynasty. But this ruler is also one who approaches. The term "approaching" is a priestly one. So this king will also be a priest, one who is associated with the sanctuary and the reconciliation. In this passage David and the sanctuary, which were still separated in Ezekiel 37, are together in one priestly king or royal priest, just as in Psalm 110, the psalm of the son of David who is at the same time the Lord of David, to whom the prophecy points: "You are a priest forever" (vs 4).

* * *

Humankind and earth rest on the basis of Jesus Christ. This is shown to us in a pedagogical way with the aid of concentric circles which culminate in a center. Christ's centrality is not an invention of theologians, but comes up out of the texts of the whole of the Old Testament. The narrowing tendency in the Old Testament (paralleled equally in the O.T. by a broadening of the perspective!) is a sign that humankind and earth together are brought under one head, Christ, and when in the New Testament and in church history the perspective becomes broader, it all emanates from Christ. He is the universal head, as is said by the apostle Paul in Ephesians 1:10: "That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are in earth, even in him." There the apostle uses the Greek word, or expression: "*anakephalaiooasthai*" to gather all things in one (under one head, Christ). In this expression I recognize the movement throughout the whole Old Testament. Throughout the whole Bible, throughout the whole human reality, a concentrating movement in time and space occurs which points to Jesus Christ as its center and as its end. And it seems to me that the preaching of the gospel should continue that movement, in any direction of space and time.

* * *

For my fourth thesis we have to switch to another

line of thought. A description of the history of a culture always results in a curve: ascent, apex, descent. After this development the culture disappears, like a flower that vanishes after having completed its cycle. But this is not the case with the people of Israel. Certainly, there is an ascent, a flourishing point (the peak or apex) and a descent, but after those, Israel does not disappear. Israel continues its course, albeit nearly underground.

In Matthew 1 we find the genealogy of Jesus. This genealogy is at the same time a survey of the history of Israel. There are three periods, three blocks of generations: Not *ascent*, flourishing point, *descent*, but *ascent*, *descent*, and *spiritual continuation*. The ascent, from Abraham to David; descent, from David to the exile; and the spiritual continuation (Israel as a congregation) from exile to Jesus Christ. Of course, there was a flourishing point: David, the king, but it was rather a point than a period. The most interesting period is the third one. That is to say, from a spiritual vantage point, it is the most interesting period. In the third period Israel had neither appearance nor glory, and yet it was the people's most characteristic stage in comparison with the other nations. Exile was normally the end of a people or a culture. But Israel received an unpredictable future after the exile. It is an astonishing fact that Israel returned from Babylon's exile. An unheard of fact. But the Holy Spirit needed exactly that period to teach us a very important truth: that God for his redemptive and salvific history is not dependent on a political system. It is the political system of Israel that vanishes during the exile. Though the political structure may disappear—even the house of David as a political reality—this means only that the true intention of the Holy Spirit is now revealed, namely the erection of the kingdom of God in Jesus Christ, which is not of this world.

If this is true, one might say that history in the Old Testament is qualified history. One has to taste its character. And this can help us apply the biblical message to today's situation—the main problem of preaching!

We all know of the struggle in the Dutch Reformed Churches between the exemplaric method and the redemptive historic method of preaching. We know the lack of historical awareness in the first method and the high estimation of history in the second one. On the other hand, we know the directness of the exemplaric method and the detached attitude of the

redemptive historical way of thinking. Each of the two methods has its advantage and its disadvantage.

Perhaps it is possible to combine the advantages of both methods and to avoid the disadvantages. Shouldn't we try to *taste* history in order to recognize our own days in those of the Bible, or at least something of our own days in something of the biblical time? To taste history. That's a strange expression. In physics we distinguish between weight and specific gravity. Should we not distinguish in the same manner between history and specific history? Qualifying rather than quantifying it? My impression is that biblical history is a paradigm of history as such. In European history,

. . . *the resurrection of Lazarus. Why then and why not now?*

for instance, there has also been a development comparable with that of the Bible. A small beginning followed by an ascent to the Middle Ages characterized by a near unity of church and state. But then, after the fourteenth century, came the decline and fall.

And now we are in the age of secularization, which is comparable to the exile of Israel. The church no longer shares a resemblance to political reality. Some people think that this will be the end of the church. But there will be a future for the more invisible church. Then suddenly we discover that from the beginning that invisible church, that spiritual congregation, was the target of the Holy Spirit all along. And so we can put the three periods in Israel's history not only after each other but also under each other. The third period is the deepest level of Israel's history. Israel's history is a qualified history. It has something central and something vertical in it. Biblical history brings us before God. And God, as Jesus Christ, is the same yesterday and today and forever and ever. Therefore, the different times can shift together before him.

So there can be historical awareness and even detachment and at the same time actual directness. The "there" and "then" and the "here" and "now" can be contracted into one point.

* * *

I will conclude with an example: the story of the

resurrection of Lazarus in John 11, that glorious chapter which nevertheless can cause so much pain to those who are in sorrow: Why then and why not now? Why there and why not here?

In preaching that chapter, one can rightly stress the distance. Today Jesus Christ is not with us corporally and it is only by the testimony of the eyewitnesses that this story has come to us. As is written by John in his first letter:

We write to you about the word of life, which has existed from the very beginning. We have heard it, and we have seen it with our eyes; yes, we have seen it and our hands have touched it. When this life became visible, we saw it; so we speak of it and tell you about the eternal life which was with the Father and was made known to us (I John 1:1-2).

We can not deny the historical distance. We can even stress it. On the other hand, John has written this story of Lazarus in a very particular manner, as if he realized our present situation. In the beginning he stresses the fact *that Jesus was not there* when Lazarus was ill and died. And when called, he failed to come, just as is our experience on so many occasions.

And yes, he raised the dead Lazarus and called him from out of his grave. But have you ever noticed that this happened at the very end of the story? At first he talks with Mary and with Martha (Martha is here much better than Mary, as if she now has chosen the good part!). At first he talks, brings the word. And the question: do you believe that? But this is exactly our situation! We also live in the period of the Word and of faith. This is difficult enough and we recognize ourselves when we hear Mary and Martha say: "If you had been here, Lord, my brother would not have died." We can also say:

"If you had lived now, Lord, our beloved ones would not have died."

Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. . . . Do you believe this?" After Martha had said: "Yes, Lord!" there is at the end of the chapter that great event of Lazarus' resurrection. John 11 is a long chapter, just as it is a long time and a long way to go to the end of history. But that very time is filled with the Word and with faith in the Word, the Word that Jesus is already the resurrection and the life. We need not wait for that. Yes, we wait, but at the same time it is already present. History has an end, but history also has a center and in that center, past, present, and future come together. And preaching is this: to confront the congregation with that end and with that center until those two have merged at the return of Christ.

In accordance with this forward and sideways tendency in the Scriptures, to the end and to the middle, the preaching of the biblical message must be centripetal. I do not mean that preaching should not deal with the outskirts of life, but dealing with them we should not remain there. In all doctrine which Scripture contains, we must end in Christ and in all ethical problems with which life confronts us, we must end in his love. The preaching of the biblical message must be *Christocentric*.

Over against all ideologies and new religions of our day, it is time to concentrate the Christian message. To concentrate it in Christ. I would not substitute *Theocentric* for *Christocentric*. The Jewish religion and Islam are theocentric. We are facing a period of time which will be very religious in one sense or another. In view of that development, it will not do to neglect that very clear tendency found in both the Old and New Testament that "all is brought under one head, Christ."