

5 Carl Truman on B B Warfield 08-03-2013

Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.

Date: 08 March 2013

Preacher: Carl Truman

[0 : 00] I want to talk in the final lecture about B.B. Warfield. B.B. Warfield, a bit of a hero.

If you have not read him I do commend him to you. His writings are available in a number! of different collections. There is the ten volume edition that Oxford University Press put together in the early 1930s that contains most of his longer writings. There is a two volume set put together by Presbyterian Reform still in print, selected shorter writings of B.B. Warfield, that was his more popular stuff. And there is, there were five volumes of thematically organised Warfield writings put out by Presbyterian Reform I think in the 1950s. They are out of print now but you might be able to get them second hand. If you have Logos software you can get the complete B.B. Warfield for Logos which contains all that and more. And Princeton Theological Seminary are at the moment scanning their entire archive which will be available for free on the internet in the next few years. So all of the correspondence etc. of B.B. Warfield will be freely available to anybody with a computer. They may be gastardly liberals but they have a lot of money and they are making all this stuff available for the rest of us. A very significant thing I think if you are looking for somebody who has real exegetical acumen then B.B. Warfield is the man. He is famous for writing, you know most evangelicals will know him for writing on the authority of scripture. But some of his most important stuff I think are the articles, the long articles he did on the definition of biblical words.

also his essay on the emotional life of the Lord Jesus Christ is I think unprecedented in Christian history and a very powerful piece. And his writings on perfectionism are important as well. I had a student just recently did a long paper for me on perfectionism and it struck me how little studied his writings on perfectionism have been and yet how perennially important actually much of what he has to say there is. Interesting enough by a slightly circuitous route I've ended up being the owner of probably the last letter that B.B. Warfield ever wrote dated December the 21st 1920. He has a stroke just a few days after that and he dies in early 1921. Warfield made it a letter to Professor Mackay at Free Church College in Edinburgh. And Warfield, the letter is, he's just foaming at the mouth in this letter. He's about to engage the perfectionist once again. And he's been reading up on the Keswick, he's been reading the Keswick Week and he has some pretty harsh words over the Keswick Week. And one gets the impression that he's gearing up for round three with the perfectionists. And

I often wonder, you know, did that help precipitate the stroke? He's pretty angry in this letter. He's telling Mackay that he's coming out swinging against the perfectionists again and then a couple of days later, sadly, he falls ill and then dies. But a lot of people don't know much about his life, so I thought it would be a fairly laid back ending to reflect on his life.

The interesting thing about the Ferrari pulpit, does it kind of lift up if I press a button, Paul? It's just rather flat. I'm going to put my wallet on the website. Sorry? Well, I was going to say, if Paul actually paid me, it might be a little bigger. I was in Northern Ireland and Chuck said, I'll give you a check for your speaker. I said, I speak for Paul Levy. I'm quite used to the speaker to people who are not getting paid. You know, trying to get the bank to accept the five per set of peace he gave me last time. It was quite an effort. Anyway, B.B. Warfield, born November 5, 1851, near Lexington in Kentucky.

[4 : 20] Born really to the extent that America has an aristocracy. Born really to sort of American aristocracy. He was the result of the convergence of two great families, the Breckenridges and the Warfields. A bit of trivia, if you look up Warfield, if you're looking for Warfield books second hand, you type Warfield into ABE Books, you'll probably find a lot of books popping up on Edward VIII. Why, when you search for Warfield, you get books on Edward VIII?

Well, Mrs. Simpson was a Warfield. Connected to the Warfield family. So, the Warfields are an important family, a kind of noble family, if you like, if that's appropriate in the American context. His

family were members of Lexington's Second Presbyterian Church. Kentucky, of course, is one of those sort of borderline states. Is it north or is it south? I've got friends who teach at Southern Seminary in Louisville, and they'll say, you know, it's just too southern for us. A British guy in America, all Americans seem the same to me. It's north, south, it's all the same. But to Americans, these minor marginal differences are very important to the extent that a northern person is living in Kentucky. It's like living in another country.

You go to the local Italian restaurant, the Olive Garden, of course, and the restrooms and toilets are exactly the same places they are in Chicago. It's all really very much the same. But, I always, you know, the French and the Americans are the two groups that I will be ethnically insensitive about. More about the French than the Americans, because the Americans pay my salary and my money. The Warfields are members of Lexington's Second Presbyterian Church, and the significance of that is that in the American Civil War, the Second Presbyterian Church was the only Presbyterian Church in Lexington that sided with the North.

And that's significant for understanding Warfield. Warfield, in the 1890s, Warfield writes a number of articles on what he calls the colour question. And he's remarkably progressive on race issues, which is important because one of the struggles I have at Westminster is you have a number of African-American students. And to them, of course, Presbyterianism equals slaveholders, by and large. And sadly, there's an awful lot of evidence that that's correct. A lot of African-American students have Scottish names. Why do they have Scottish names? Because their ancestors were owned at some point by Scottish Presbyterians. So the role of Warfield, if you like, in making Presbyterianism an easier pill to swallow is important. So the only time Warfield falls out with Machen at Princeton, Machen the founder of Westminster Seminary, the OPC, is when Warfield integrates the dormitories of Princeton Seminary. And Machen objects to that. Machen's from Maryland, which of course is north of Washington, was with the north in the Civil War, mainly because Lincoln wouldn't allow to do otherwise. You couldn't have a southern state north of the capital. But Machen really brought, you know, Machen was really a son of what we would call a lot of southern prejudices, if you like. Warfield, in some ways, is a much easier sell to African-American students.

Piety of the household was very much shaped by the study of the Shorter Catechism. The Warfields were expected to have memorized the Shorter Catechism by the age of six. They were then expected to memorize the proof texts. And then they were expected to memorize the larger catechism. Remember, of course, that I think, I can't remember the exact wording, I think the Shorter Catechism says, you know, this is for those of weaker minds, I think.

[8 : 13] That's the language that is used. I gave you the Warfield anecdote, of course, on the Shorter Catechism yesterday. He retained a lifelong love for the catechism. He was not initially particularly enthusiastic about theology and divinity. As a youngster, he was far more interested in science. Of course, he was later taking a great interest in cattle breeding. I think his editing a farmer's journal was his first literary editorial role. And it plays into his interest in evolution and Darwinianism. That Warfield had this interest in contemporary trends in science. In 1868, he entered what was then the College of New Jersey, now Princeton University.

He was disciplined for a fight on a Sunday afternoon, apparently. He hit somebody with a chair or something. If you've seen, Warfield was a big man and was no doubt very capable of looking after himself. For some of you, a family tradition, I think his uncle might have been expelled from Princeton at some point for beating somebody up as well. So the Warfields were tough. In 1862, he travelled to Europe, spent time studying in Edinburgh and Heidelberg. In 1873, he decided to enter the ministry. Sorry, it was 1872, not 1862. That would have made him only 11 at the time. In 1873, he decided to enter the ministry. And it was at this time that he became editor of the Farmer's Home Journal.

At Princeton, he studied under men such as Charles Hodge and Hodge's son, Caspar Wister Hodge. And he makes this comment on Charles Hodge. I've sat under many noted teachers and Hodge was superior to them all.

He was in fact my ideal of a teacher, best of all men I've ever known. He knew how to make a young man think. Went on to be licensed, May 1875, and became state of supply at the Concord Church in Nicholas County, Kentucky.

Graduated in 1876, and at that point declined a call to become the minister of First Presbyterian Church in Dayton, Ohio.

[10:46] August the 3rd of 1876, he married the very beautiful, witty and charming Annie Kinkhead, and went to Europe to pursue further study. And there he heard lectures from, among others, the great German liberal church historian Adolf von Harnack.

It's fascinating the connections between Princeton and German liberalism. Charles Hodge, of course, had been in the house of Friedrich Schleiermacher.

There's that weird, odd, pietistic footnote in Hodge's systematic theology where he's talking about Schleiermacher, and he says, you know, over all the problems with his theology, you know, he's got to be a Christian because, you know, he sings hymns in his house with his children of an evening. It's just a really sappy bit of pietism, if you like. But it's interesting to think that Hodge knew Schleiermacher, and was good friends at Tolok in Germany.

Warfield sat under Adolf von Harnack. Machen, of course, sat under, I'm trying to think of the man's name, Wild Hare, Wilhelm Herrmann. Machen sat under Wilhelm Herrmann.

[12:03] Bart also sat under Wilhelm Herrmann. They both have interesting reactions to Herrmann. And I think I'm right in saying that Machen may have been a classmate of Rudolf Bultmann.

Bultmann does a review of Machen's book on Paul, I think. And, you know, why does Bultmann do that? Possibly they were, you know, we don't know much, but maybe they were friends.

Maybe Machen sent a copy, who knows. But there are these interesting interconnections between the Princeton guys and German liberalism. Warfield's marriage is worthy of a few moments' reflection because it's an issue around which considerable mythology has grown up.

If you've got David Calhoun's History of Princeton Seminary, it's a two-volume history published by Bound of Truth. It's a great, when I say it's a great beach read, I don't mean that as a criticism.

It's just one of those books, it's just a real page-turner, and it's just a straightforward story. Calhoun says that while on honeymoon, Annie suffered some kind of a nervous breakdown when she and Warfield were caught in a thunderstorm in Germany's Hartz Mountains, and that she never recovered, and that through all the years of their married life, Warfield carefully and faithfully cared for her as an invalid.

[13:25] That represents the received wisdom on Warfield's marriage. In actual fact, there's not a lot of historical evidence that that was the case.

Fred Zaspel, who lives near Philadelphia, has done quite a bit of research into Warfield. He's this sort of comprehensive knowledge of Warfieldiana. And he's looked long and hard to try to find early first-hand accounts of the Warfield marriage.

I'll read you what he says in his book on the theology of B.B. Warfield, which incidentally is an excellent book. Annie is often reported to have been an invalid their entire married life. But it does not seem that this degree of debilitation came until perhaps 1893.

A notice in the New York Times dated May 1st, 1892. That's the kind of guy Fred is. You can find notices in the New York Times of 1892. Notes of Mrs. Warfield.

You get this. Mrs. Woodrow Wilson and other prominent ladies of Princeton served as patronesses at a lecture event sponsored by the American Whig Society in Princeton on April 30th.

[14:36] So we know that in 1892, B.B. Warfield's wife was quite capable of being a hostess at a big event. Notice also as an aside, Warfield's are friends of the Wilsons.

Woodrow Wilson, of course, would go on to be president of Princeton and would then go on to be president of the United States. Apparently he liked Warfield but regarded him as a bit of a theological dinosaur. You know, the Wilsons were a distinguished southern Presbyterian family. But I think by the time we get to Woodrow, he's starting to sort of move. There's starting to drift in a leftward direction. Whatever, we do know that perhaps from 1893 onwards, it appears that she does seem to have been more and more housebound.

The Warfields never had children, but apparently they would learn the birthdates of all of the children of the faculty and the students and would give little gifts to make sure that the birthdays of all these other children were celebrated.

So they sound like a very sweet couple. And if you go to Princeton Cemetery, they're buried in magnificent tombs in the cemetery, buried side by side, not far, incidentally, from where Jonathan Edwards is buried.

[15:48] But you have Warfield and his wife buried together in the cemetery. She died in 1915, and it was in a sense as if Warfield himself had died with her at that point.

We have a letter from Jay Gressa Machen written to his mother. He says, I think that he will feel dreadfully lost without her. As Mrs. Armstrong said, he had only two interests in life, his work and Mrs. Warfield.

And as she's gone, there may be danger of his using himself up rather quickly. If so, I do not know who is to take his place. I am more and more impressed with him. He is certainly one of the very biggest men in the church, either in this country or in other, or in any other.

And of course, when Warfield dies in 1921, there is really nobody to replace him. And Princeton changes really rather rapidly in the 10, 15 years after the death of Warfield in 1921.

I was chatting to one of the historian guys at the PCA recently, Barry Wall, who's been doing some work on Warfield. And he said, he found it very hard to find obituaries of Warfield. And it puzzled him as to why there were no great, magnificent obituaries of Warfield.

[16:55] And he finally comes to the conclusion, they were glad he was gone. That finally, the last, you know, the last giant oak in the forest, if you like, had been chopped down.

And they could get on with the business of modernising the church. Maybe Barry's right. Maybe he's wrong. Who knows? That's certainly what did happen. One other important impact that Warfield's marriage had on his life, it meant that he didn't have a conventional, ecclesiastical, or conventional, conventional, ecclesiastical, or academic career.

Look at Charles Hodge. He's travelling. He's going to General Assemblies. He's locking horns with people like James Henley Thornwell on the floor of the General Assembly. You don't get that with Warfield. Warfield, by and large, stays in Princeton.

The action, such as it is, is all in the mind. There aren't the great anecdotes of Warfield, you know, facing somebody across the room and taking them down in a debate. It's all going on inside his head.

Warfield also never writes a long monograph. If you've got his books on perfectionism, what it is, it's collections of articles thematically gathered together. So Warfield never produces a systematic theology in the way that Hodge does.

[18:08] It reminds me in some ways, maybe, of the story of Immanuel Kant. You know, Immanuel Kant was a very boring man in many ways. He would walk to his office at the same time, the same route, every day.

And the story is that one day in Königsberg, he was late, and the whole town was delayed because everybody set their time by when Kant walked past their window.

You know, and yet Kant single-handedly almost shattered intellectual life and reconstructed it in Europe. So the fact that Warfield lives a relatively conventional and localised life does not diminish his impact.

While Warfield was in Europe, Western Seminary, which is now Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, contacted him to offer the Old Testament position. It's a sign of a different time, isn't it, where in the 19th century, such as academia, that one could be competent enough in a number of fields to hold a chair in any number of disciplines.

The only person I've ever met in the theological world who I think was competent of holding a chair in more than one field was Richard Borka of St. Andrews. If you know Richard Borka, great sister, he's written great works of systematics, he's written on church history and he's also written in New Testament.

[19:21] He could have held a position, I think, in any three, any one of those three disciplines. 19th century is very different. The world is not awash with information and specialisations. Warfield is offered the Old Testament position.

He turns this down not because he's fallen in love with systematics, but because he's fallen in love with New Testament. And again, he's approached by Western in 1878, this time for the cherished position in New Testament.

And his pulpit supply at first prayers in Baltimore at the time and he accepts the job and takes up the position in September 1878. His time as professor of New Testament was not without significant fruit.

In 1886, he becomes the first American period to publish a book on contextual criticism. It's a fascinating book to read. It's a classic 19th century. You know, some books you read and you can date them within a couple of years.

I've got this torn off Bible cover in my office, beautiful gilt Bible cover, and it says, the Holy Bible, the secret of England's greatness. You know, and you can date that within 10 years because you've got

to look at what point was England at its most arrogance and hubristic.

[20 : 32] You know, it's got to be published at that point. Warfield's book on New Testament criticism, he has this supreme confidence that text criticism will vindicate orthodox views of scripture.

But what text criticism will do is allow you to get back closer and closer and closer to the original manuscripts. And slowly but surely all of the textual problems will be solved.

He says this, if then we undertake the textual criticism of the New Testament under a sense of duty, we may bring it to a conclusion under the inspiration of hope. The orthographic text of the New Testament is distinctly within the reach of criticism.

And so immensely the great part of the volume that we cannot despair restoring to ourselves and the Church of God his book, word for word, as he gave it by inspiration to men.

So the first book in North America, written by North America, on textual criticism is saying, textual criticism, it's the friend of orthodoxy because it will bring back to the Church the very autographs of the word of God.

[21 : 39] Again, this is the late 19th century. Very, very optimistic time for Christians. 1886, he is offered the position which he will then come to occupy for the rest of his life and where he will do his most significant work.

The chair of didactic and polemic theology at Princeton Theological Seminary. The position previously occupied by Charles Hodge and unexpectedly vacated by the premature death of Charles Hodge's successor and indeed Warfield's co-author and the little book on inspiration, Archibald Alexander Hodge.

Warfield's acceptance of this position was very controversial. No less a man than the great British scholar William Robertson Nicoll was upset. Warfield had agreed to provide a volume to Nicoll for his Expositors Bible series.

And when he takes the chair of systematics Nicoll realizes this is probably never going to happen.

And he writes to Warfield, Permit me, he says, first of all to congratulate you on your new position. I do not know if I can do so with unmixed feelings.

You will no doubt do a great work in Princeton for us all but I grudge very much that you should be taken away from the study of the New Testament. I do not release you from the Expositors Bible though you be a professor of dogmatic theology.

[23 : 00] You owe this debt to the position you have forsaken. So that's a real that's like a Pharrell I curse your rest for moving on at this point. Ethelburn, Warfield's brother wrote after his death he says he venerated as only a pure and unselfish spirit can the great men and hallowed memories that should make Princeton one of the most notable seats of theological scholarship.

His reverence for those who taught him was equaled by his admiration of his colleagues and the love which he delighted to express for those who taught him was constantly reproduced in his affection for younger colleagues and the successive classes of students who thronged his classroom.

Say the Warfields never had children but because of because of their love for children they as I said memorized even the dates of birth of the students kids at Westminster so they could give them presence.

Warfield was to engage in significant correspondence with many of the great theologians and figures of his day William Robertson Nichol John Broadus Charles Briggs Warfield of course would become Briggs' nemesis Kellogg G.F. Wright Barber and Kuyper as a recipient of various academic honors from other institutions received the DD and the Doctor of Laws from the College of New Jersey he received an honorary doctorate from Lafayette College and the University of Utrecht and indeed the University of Utrecht took the unprecedented step because of his inability to travel from Princeton because of his wife's circumstances of awarding his doctorate in absentia death when it came came suddenly finally on this started on December the 24th 1920 so the letter I have is December the 21st so you see how quickly Warfield goes downhill after that Warfield had a habit of every evening he would walk around

Princeton with his colleague Gerhardus Voss some of you know with Voss who Banner of Truth publishes biblical theology Gerhardus Voss very significant in developing a redemptive historical approach to the reading of scripture Warfield and Voss were very close friends and colleagues so you know I have the last letter of Warfield my colleague Dick Gavin he has Gerhardus Voss' walking stick not that Protestants are into relics saints anyway at all but I have you know a couple of

students have been cured of leprosy just by looking at him it's quite amazing it has an eerie glow at night which is kind of spooky Warfield is going to see his friend Gerhardus Voss on December the 24th and he collapses some weeks later after resting he returns to the classroom but on February the 16th having taught his class he goes home to his house and apparently suffered a fatal heart attack on February the 16th so Warfield then that's his life relatively the facts the marriage is a bit mysterious but the facts are relatively straightforward what about his contribution what are the things that he does that are perhaps still significant for us today well first of all

[26 : 32] I think most obviously and most famously his work on scripture the famous article he co-wrote with A.A. Hodge on inspiration remains foundational I think for evangelical and conservative protestant discussions of the subject love it or hate it one either agrees with it reacts against it or does something somewhere in between Warfield and Hodge I think basically set the terms of debate for discussions of scripture as they continue today second major area of contribution is his work on perfectionism what is interesting in that work is that Warfield makes the connection there a clear connection between liberalism mysticism pragmatism and perfectionism that all of them reduce the gospel to some sort of psychological state if you like to some form of psychological pragmatism and it's amazing reading

Warfield some of Warfield's critiques as we shall see in a few moments some of Warfield's critiques of 19th century liberalism could be critiques of contemporary evangelical thought on some fronts with the difference that the 19th century German liberals were very sophisticated and by and large a lot of evangelical thought seems to take its cue from sort of Oprah Winfrey level of theology a third area of significance and this is where I think he's interesting for debates and discussions that I know the IPC are having is the area of subscription and confessional revision and actually Fred Zastel and I just we're gathering together Crossway are interested in publishing a volume of Warfield's writings on confessional subscription and this sounds horribly patronising but I'll say it anyway Fred has said to me look I'm a Baptist I don't understand confessional subscription but I love Warfield if I gather the stuff together will you write the introduction so we're putting together a volume on Warfield's discussions of confessional subscription and confessional revision which is a hot button issue in the 1890s in American

Presbyterianism as it was in Scottish Presbyterianism and in some ways as it continues to this day Warfield of course had been he'd opposed the founding of a journal called the Presbyterian Review the journal was founded in order to try to bring together the different sides that were emerging in the Presbyterian Church in America at that time and the idea was to have two editors a liberal and a conservative to sort of hold the show together and Warfield had opposed the founding of it and the first editors the two editors were Charles Briggs and the conservative was Francis Landy Patton and Landy Patton retired or resigned in 1888 and Warfield was chosen as his successor you can just imagine what Briggs must have thought when word came down that oh the guy you're going to work with from now on is B.B.

Warfield it was my notes here say it was a problematic relationship I suspect that's good English understatement they lasted together less than a year actually no sorry oh I've got a minute only a little over a year and then Warfield resigned Briggs resigned and the journal folded shortly thereafter the names of Warfield and Briggs of course epitomise or symbolise perhaps there's no others the growing tensions within American Presbyterianism over confessional subscription indeed when Warfield is asked about 1915 1916 do you think the Presbyterian church will split his answer by that point is you can't split rotten wood it's just so bad you can't even think of it in terms of a split these days and I know the IPC are thinking about office bearing and about confessional issues if you're interested

I can send you some of the Warfield articles that aren't readily available I've got them on a CD-ROM back home Warfield's got some interesting stuff to say he's a thoughtful engager on this issue I want to give you here a quotation from his first inaugural address when he was inaugurated as a professor at Western Theological Seminary he says this about signing up to the Westminster Standards!

[31 : 17] I wish to declare that I sign these standards I'm going to be saying this in public I wish to declare that I sign these standards not as a necessary form which must be submitted to but gladly and willingly as the expression of a personal and cherished conviction and further that the system taught in these symbols is the system which will be drawn out of the scriptures in the prosecution of the teaching to which you have called me not indeed because commencing with the system the

scriptures can be made to teach it but because commencing with the scriptures I cannot make them teach anything else it's a powerful statement and it's worth pondering because behind that statement lies a subscription issue that I think is incredibly hard to get at but is vitally important I think that one can Westminster the language is when we subscribe to the standards we have to subscribe ex animo from the bottom of our hearts with absolute sincerity if you like and that's often the key

I think there are those who honestly subscribe to the confession and there are two ways of doing it they're both honest subscription but the attitude makes all the difference I think there are those who subscribe to confessions and say this is what I believe this is where I want to stand this represents who I am and what I stand for and there are those who sign believing everything that's in the confession and standards but the underlying is okay now I've signed up what can I get away with and I would say that I would not want to say that either group don't sign sincerely and they genuinely believe everything that's in the standards but the difference in attitude is a huge one do the standards represent where you want to stand what you stand for or do they represent yeah I believe them let me take my vow and now what room for maneuver do I have that second attitude over time is lethal I think to confessional subscription and that statement of Warfield I think captures beautifully what should be one's attitude in subscribing and if you can't subscribe in that sense that's not a problem there are other denominations where you can serve as a minister nobody's going to put you in prison because you can't sign nobody's going to say you're not a Christian because you can't sign up like that nobody's going to say you can't do ministry in the absolute sense because you can't sign up but you couldn't be a minister in the OPC for example unless that's your attitude and I think that's important to grasp and those of you who sit on whatever the IPC equivalence of Canada's credentials of training the ministry committee is that's the kind of question you have to ask John have you done your exam John here have you done your exam oh well do you see they're going to change the exam before you come in so I'm thinking about your answer to that one yeah well I would say you know think about it for 72 hours or so guys before you change the way he did it so

Warfield opposed the movements of the late 1880s and the early 1890s for revision it's important to note that he was not against revision if you're truly confessional you cannot be opposed to revision because Western's Confession chapter 1 makes it absolutely clear the confession is subordinate to scripture you have to be in favour of the principle of revision the questions are how and when and who by whom such revision is done Warfield saw very clearly that the proposed revisions and the motivation for the revisions seem to involve a weakening of theology and of the terms of subscription it's interesting to me that you have almost exactly the same thing going on in Scotland with the declaratory acts and of course the birth of the Free Presbyterian Church and the Free Church of Scotland at this point it's interesting how church history across denominations events often seem to happen almost simultaneously 1830s and 40s is there a main established denomination in

Europe that doesn't split Cardinal Newman converts to Rome 1845 and you have the decade the 15 years of Oxford movement before that destruction 1843 1834 you have a split in the Dutch Reformed Church it's interesting how often events in one denomination are mirrored by events in another round at the same time indicating I think there are often powerful social and cultural reasons for these tensions emerging as well clearly Irish immigration into England during the 1820s 1830s 1840s the Reform Act these things are very powerful it has a powerful impact on the established it put tensions on churches and it's interesting confessional revision 1880s and 1890s it's there in Scotland it's there in England Warfield says this the chief reason why I'm personally opposed to revision of the confession of faith is because I believe it's doctrine to be the truth of God and because I believe it's formal statements about doctrine to be at once exact and [36 : 33] Catholic broad enough to include all sadly Calvinistic thinking and precise enough to exclude all tampering with Calvinistic truth I'm confirmed in my conviction that the confession closed the true doctrine in admirably chosen language by the straits and inconsistencies to which those are driven who are trying to point out passages in it which need revision so Warfield then opposed to what he saw as the underlying agenda and that's why I say the key to confessional revision has to be who's it done by and what's the process for doing it the editor revised the confession than to have people crossing their fingers of course that is even more problematic fourth area which Warfield made great contributions and where he's comparatively neglected is the articles he wrote

for various dictionaries on the definition of biblical terms I remember when I was teaching in Aberdeen and asked Professor Howard Marshall what he thought of Warfield he said oh nonsense on scripture but he wrote brilliant essays on the definitions of biblical terms

I thought it was interesting that Howard Marshall was not somebody sympathetic to Warfield's doctrine as a whole but he saw the brilliance of the man when it came to biblical definitions he mentioned his essay on the emotional life of Christ and finally I think his book reviews are well worth looking at as well what time am I meant to wrap up Paul you want me to bring this to a close in five minutes okay his book reviews one of the things he does very well is book reviews of German and American liberal theologians of the 19th century and draws out very clearly that the key difference between orthodox theology and liberal theology lies in well as he sees it liberal theology is really talk about the psychological state of human beings doctrine is a projection or a reflection upon human religious psychology you see that stemming in many ways from Schleiermacher it also comes from pietism which of course provides the background much of the background to Schleiermacher as well what it does and what Warfield does so well is bring out that sometimes it is not what you believe that's a significant thing it's what significance you give to it and this is where I think Warfield's writings on German liberalism can speak to evangelical theology today you may not be familiar with the figure is Joe Osteen does that name mean anything to anybody here your best life now or make everyday Friday or something I make everyday Saturday morning myself what's interesting about figures what I would call the sort of self help figures within evangelicalism is I'm not sure that they're heterodox on one level the key question sometimes is not what do you believe if you sat

Joel Osteen down and said do you believe in the trinity my guess is you'd probably say yeah do you believe Jesus was the son of God yeah do you believe Jesus was God manifest in flesh you'd probably say yes what Warfield brings out beautifully in his interaction with German and American liberalism in the late 19th century is it's what significance you ascribe to this doctrine what difference does it make when Joel Osteen or somebody preaches the question is!

is a reality does that make any difference of what he's preached that's an interesting question to ask about any sermon you hear does Christian truth make a difference to what you've heard or does what you heard assume a generic Christian truth but really doctrine makes them in fact it's a great little book it's very American in its orientation but the basic points I think are quite brilliant and would apply in Britain the same as they do in the States Christless Christianity by Michael Horton which in some ways I read that this is a sort of updated application of what Warfield's doing in the late 19th century the point that Horton makes in that book is not that a lot of modern evangelicalism has lost its doctrine it's still on paper pretty orthodox but Christianity has become something that helps you live a fulfilled life do this do that do the other I'm going to really stick my neck out at this point but I stuck my neck out on this point before and the people who I'm thinking of know it and don't like me for it

[41 : 18] I get worried about the massive expansion of Christian counselling because so much of it is it looks horribly self-help to me and I know that it's not being articulated in that way but when the primary concern of the gospel becomes putting your marriage back together or how to bring up your children I just get concerned that we're starting to de-center things and that the gospel is being sidelined for what it does and how it helps me and Horton has a great anecdote in the book and I'm guessing that any of you who preach or pastor church even in my short time pastoring I can confirm we have similar things in our church he talks about a lady who comes to his church and says something to affect her I went to my church and my marriage is falling apart and all we had was a sermon on how to put your marriage back together and I came to your church and I heard the gospel and that was what I needed to hear

I didn't want somebody giving me a how to how to put my marriage back together I needed to know that God was sovereign and that Christ had died for my sins and that the church would triumph in the end Matthew 16 18 and I just get concerned there are various things that concern me about cancelling one I think it puts huge pressure on office bearing in the church and it really moves things away from the elders in a way that is not helpful and I think it pushes us we always have to think as teachers we understand what we're saying but how is it being received historians we routinely make a distinction about what an author is intending or a person is intending and how that book is received reception how is the book received in the culture Calvin's Institute is a great example it wasn't written as a systematic theology textbook but has by and large been received as

a systematic theology I worry that the emphasis upon putting marriages back together cure of souls which is a good thing but when it becomes a central thing has that being received you may be teaching inappropriately but is it leading people to think that the gospel is ultimately about the impact it has and not about what

God has done in the Lord Jesus Christ and I think that Warfield's discussions of liberalism in the 19th century connect directly to that kind of concern so Warfield then I think probably the greatest Presbyterian mind of the 19th century a man who was able to engage in several different languages at a very very high level a man who had the respect of scholars who despised his theological position and a man who understood the nature of confessionalism and more than anything else understood the importance of doctrine within the testimony of the church thanks very much time for questions some of us who are not English have difficulty identifying the era in that

Bible cover version I'm guessing somewhere between 1890 and 1905 I don't know we protect you guys for centuries and this is all the gratitude we save you from yourselves I always love telling my wife John Knox was always happier in England than he was in Scotland I'm sorry can you just repeat that quote again about what he said about confessional description yeah sure I don't have it committed to memory so you'll have to give me a second bear with me while I pull it up I can certainly send it to you I wish to declare that I sign these standards not as a necessary form which must be submitted to but gladly and willingly as the expression of a personal and cherished conviction and further that the system taught in these symbols is the system which will be drawn out of the scriptures in the prosecution of the teaching to which you have called me not indeed because commencing with that system the scriptures can be made to teach it but because commencing with the scriptures

I cannot make them teach anything else if you want I can actually send you the quotation if you like you can get the first in order address I found in PDF online I have not found it in any of the collections of his writings but I did dig around and I found it online so I can probably dig it out and send you the whole thing thank you very much any more questions I'm slightly sorry to remember this but I think I'm right in saying similar later Western skies to Van Thiel around I've looked back at Warfield with a certain bit of critique and more recently I've heard people critique critique!

[46 : 44] In some ways it's not my field Van Thiel is a law unto himself an afternoon reading Cardinal Newman who wrote English prose beautifully or an afternoon reading Van Thiel who couldn't write a sentence to save his life I'm going to go for Cardinal Newman Van Thiel's criticism of Warfield is really that he gives too much of a rationalist too influenced by Scottish common sense realism it's not my area to be able to offer a response to that really though Paul Helseth has recently written a book published by PNR on the old Princetonian view of reason where he really challenges that view now my own understanding this takes me to a much wider frame I actually think that Thomism is much more influential on the reformed tradition than the Van Thiel guys would like to acknowledge So I find Warfield's quasi rationalism but if you wanted

Van Thiel writes the introduction the PNR five volumes from the 1950s there is a volume on the inspirational authority of scripture and Van Thiel writes the introduction to that and that would give you his take on that my impression of Van Thiel is he's not really a very good historical theologian I don't think he really gets Thomas which would make me suspicious that he may not really get Warfield but I haven't looked at that in detail I can't hear it's not my area to comment on further than I have done what was this book you mentioned sorry Paul Helzeth I can't remember what the title of it is is it reason right reason and the old Princetonians or something got it on my shelf at home Helzeth H-E-L-S-E-T-H yeah Matthew I can't remember the details to be honest no I think the atonement was being broadened do you remember that can you remember

I'd have to go and look good place to get access to that is WGT Sheds Calvinism Pure and Mixed which was his contribution to the debate it's published by Banner of Truth it was a revision of the confession it was not a declaratory act I also think they were toning down the language on depravity can't remember how but Shed outlines it if you go and look up WGT Shed debt I'm remembering the main thing was extra articles one on the Holy Spirit one on the love of God yeah the love of God of course is something of an absence from the Westminster Shorter Catechism that would be one of my examples if we wrote the Catechism today I'd do it differently because I certainly want to include love in my definition of God somewhere I don't think the Catechism excludes it I think it just doesn't include it at that particular point Joe

I have two questions one do you know of Warfield's rewriting of the parable of the Good Samaritan in terms of the good African-American the good Negro no I haven't come across that wow where is that available do you know I'd love to see that if you can find that I would love to see that alright and the other question what do you think is the significance of his supporting of some basic aspects of Darwinian evolution well moving into a sort of contentious area there because Fred Zaspel has actually recently in his book and in a subsequent article seriously questioned!

sort of Martin Old David Livingstone Warfield was an evolutionist by arguing that his positive comments are really restricted it's pretty early stuff and that he does seem to have cut off from earlier statements so I have not looked into that sufficiently to know he is a big believer in historical Adam and unity of the human race in Adam and as far as I see it the special creation of Adam for me we'd raise the question then are his two positions consistent but he does have a special creation of Adam he doesn't seem to be an Adam emerges from a pre-existing group of hominids as far as I can understand him which would I'm not saying I would agree with that position but it would be considerably more acceptable to me than Adam emerges over time from a pre-existing group of hominids but the bigger question of Warfield on evolution as a church historical problem is I think it's just being opened up as an area of some debate and exhaustful I'm not sure I'm entirely convinced by Fred but he certainly shows that it's a lot more complicated than

[51 : 54] Mark Noel and David Livingstone care to make it Warfield was very interested in Kenya he was fascinated by what we would now call genetics I suppose cattle breeding these kind of things he had this scientific mind and was very very interested in the kind of thing kind of questions that evolution was throwing up Warfield's always going to be the big one in the debates that are emerging at the moment over evolution in the Presbyterian church over in the states Warfield's always going to be the guy that the guys on the left bring out as part of their arguments so the Warfield question is not an insignificant one in terms of what's going on in the church today we don't subscribe to Warfield but if he was a full blooded evolutionist then that is quite significant I re-read his sermon on the prodigal son just recently that's an amazing person suddenly recognised where Tim Keller gets his tongue I might be wrong I was quite talking about your passing comment about Warfield saying a podge that he knew how to make a young man think in terms of practically in our churches how can we get our young boys to think well in a world of you can shut down their

Twitter and Facebook accounts so they've got more time to think that would be my first move I suppose it's I'm in a rather privileged position at any given point in time in our church we've got four or five seminary students and they're I would say they're paid to think they're paying to think would be the way to put it what I've tried to do I saw a video with Mark Dever having sort of gently rubbished Mark earlier let's say something really nice about him I saw a video with Mark Dever where he talks about giving away free books to the congregation and what I started doing they budgeted a year's salary for me part time salary forgetting that I didn't start until August the 1st and the church budget year runs from July to the end of June which meant I got an extra month's salary budget this year which they weren't going to give me because I didn't do the work for it but I asked if I could use that month's salary to buy books for the congregation so what I started doing is once one Sunday a month

I give away books for the adults so many students are banned if they want a copy they have to speak to me quietly but the books I buy there and then have to be given to members of the congregation and one Sunday a month I buy books for the kids and I give them away and the kids have to draw me a little picture which I stick up on the wall in my office but that's been my way of trying to get people to read good stuff and to think about it and I say the price you pay for taking the book from me is I reserve the right to jump on you one Sunday and say what do you think of that book so I've been trying to carefully select books that I think will help people to think and interestingly enough to begin with I think people were suspicious I was having difficulty giving away I was saying nobody gives away something for nothing I think it was that kind of mentality now I'm finding I'm having to buy a second batch in because I buy four the four go and other people say can you get a hold of the book for me and I talked to Mark and how long did it take for you to really build this culture he said it takes a couple of years but I think that's one way of doing it is to try to make sure that there's good literature being put into the hands of your congregation it takes money of course and I'm a part time salary which means we've got a bit of flex financially that a lot of churches don't have and also I can get a pretty good deal because both bookstore managers and members of my congregation get a pretty good deal in the bookstore as well but that's the only thing

that

I've done practically to try to encourage two weeks time I'm giving away Jim Packer's latest book Taking God Seriously it's not heavy theology so what would get people thinking what would be those first books you gave away?

I gave away Jim Packer Evangelism and The Sovereignty of God I gave away Rosaria Butterfield's Unlikely Thoughts Secret Thoughts of and Unlikely Convo which is not only her testimony but also gets people thinking about sexuality and gender in quite a profound way I've given away Neil Tolson's book recently This Is Love which is a sort of traces the doctrine of God's love throughout the Bible P&R; and I'm doing Packer I'm trying to buy books that I think will touch on issues that people are wrestling with and are well written I'm not going to give them anything where the first paragraph is Jim and Jane sat on the sofa once they'd been in love now a great distance that opened up the tree I don't give that sound I don't give a way of sovereignty well written and thought provoking Evangelism and The Sovereignty of God I still don't know of any book that in simple but in profound ways wrestles with that question that everybody in a Calvinistic church is going to wrestle with at some point if God is sovereign why do we do evangelism

[56 : 49] I think Jim Packer really nails it and it's amazing how often you get asked that question and it's great to be able to put a book in people's hands will you make available a list of books you give for the adults and children I can certainly send me an email Joe I'll send you what I've done and I try to make it a mix of classics and stuff that's coming out contemporary stuff as well sure so Paul can read some books and learn some stuff great well thank you very very much Carl thanks I've got a very busy schedule and we do really appreciate you I'll be back in London tomorrow