

Van Til often characterizes this relation as an "absolute dependence" on the part of human knowing upon God's absolute knowing. (He also attempts clarity by equating analogical knowledge with human knowledge that is "derivative" of God's "original" knowledge, and by stressing that humans know "truly" only when they succeed in "reinterpreting" God's original interpretation.) The trouble for Van Til's interpreters has been how to construe this *dependency* relation.

Here it is extremely difficult to combine brevity, clarity, and persuasiveness, for there is a profound sense in which this pivotal notion of Van Til's defies comprehension *by design!* We thus risk a necessarily futile rationalistic "raid on the ineffable," from Van Til's perspective, in order to gain so much as a drop of clarity. Gaining clarity is further discouraged, it seems to me, because in Van Til's writings discussions of analogical reasoning are invariably drenched in the vocabulary of righteousness and piety. Hence, to many of his followers what I am about to do will sound like profaning the holy. Since I am convinced that Van Til's notion of analogicity is neither holy nor coherent, I propose to eff the ineffable as follows.

(Lucy smells blood and cheers me on. "But that's not the right spirit!" I tell her. "If indeed Van Til proves to be hoist by his own petard we still need to show respect. This is a 'Peanuts' account of his problems for pity's sake, *not* 'The Perfect Squelch' rendition!" Lucy seems somewhat chastened, but I still sense her glee. Her enthusiasm, while encouraging, triggers caution in me. We are about to tread with heavy philosophical boots on Van Til's most hallowed theoretical ground.)

Van Til's highly eccentric doctrine of analogical reasoning is notoriously obscure. He has always insisted that the Christian's reasoning, and so the Christian's argumentation, must be analogical—*not* univocal. The non-Christian, he says, always reasons univocally. That is, the non-Christian presumes to reason *on a logical plane* that uniformly extends to all of intelligible reality.

Why is that so bad? For one thing, it leads to total skepticism about knowledge, according to Van Til. If there is a *single* abstract logic or rationality (constraining the thought of both God and man) to be applied to what is surely an *infinite* range of data (counting, that is, *all* that possibly