

could be said about everything there is), the probability that anyone will ever know anything is zero. That is because relative to all reality, humans can at best take only tiny, local samples of data; and a tiny, local sample within a context of a possible infinity cannot yield a meaningful probability that one knows anything. A *finite* agent cannot categorize even "local reality" by adding mere logical structure to initially uninterpreted particulars. Samples have to be *representative* of larger wholes (or of *the* whole) or they don't even count as samples—certainly not *meaningful* samples at any rate. Worse than that (still according to Van Til), not even a "datum" can be univocally identified, and for the same reason. The interpretation of each datum is dynamically qualified by its logical nesting within a (possibly) infinite context as well as its unique position within the plan of God. But while humans cannot aspire to know exhaustively in order to map themselves locally, the problem is solved when they, as Christians, *presuppose* the God who created and interpreted all things.

There is a remarkable confusion involved in the supposed efficacy of "presupposing" *for the reason just given* (taken up in section [7]), but there is a second problem Van Til sees in the human attempt at "univocal reasoning" that must be identified first. For Van Til, the doctrine of the incomprehensibility of God is at stake. With blinding speed we may characterize the problem as follows: the incomprehensibility doctrine is not merely the claim that humans cannot know *enough*, in the purely quantitative sense, in order intellectually to comprehend the essence of our infinite God. God's incomprehensibility is rooted, says Van Til, in the Creator-creature distinction. It is rooted, he insists, in certain necessary implications concerning the respective *levels of existence* of Creator and creature. And finally to say the same thing in philosophical parlance, the incomprehensibility of God is rooted in an absolute *ontological* difference between God and man. God's *sort* of being, that is, is radically different from, radically other than, the *sort* of being enjoyed by creatures. But on Van Til's reckoning, radical otherness in being *entails* radical otherness in knowing . . .

(Lucy has gone screaming from the room. But she'll be back; we have an agreement, and she's nothing if not a woman of her word. . . . Good, she's back. I tell her that she looks downright cartoonish when she loses it. She promises no more outbursts. Now where were we?)