

*criterion* of human knowing would be equally inert. Criteria are marks or discernible characteristics by which we can *test* our knowledge. An inherently indiscernible criterion is self-contradictory—no criterion at all. Analogicity, needless to say, is an inherently indiscernible property, and a Van Tillian analogy is an inherently indiscernible relation. Hence Van Til's analogy doctrine is incurably speculative and systematically unavailable to do any work in epistemology or apologetics.

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**"This is my beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased!":  
Identity of Reference, Meaning, and  
Truth on a Mountaintop**

The foregoing is still pretty abstract, so let me offer a concrete biblical episode. Later in the paper the status of Jesus's own thinking will be taken up. Here I offer a striking instance of God the Father's thinking—the Father's communication to three disciples of Jesus on the Mount of Transfiguration. In II Peter 1:16-18 an aging Peter recalls the episode, many years earlier, when the Father affirmed the identity of his Son with the words: "This is My beloved Son with whom I am well-pleased!" [II Pet. 1:17, ASV]. (In the synoptic Gospels an additional content is also recorded: "Listen to him!" [Mt. 17:5, Mk.9:7, Lk. 9:15]. It is this Jesus we are to reckon with as God's supreme authority for us.)

Peter expressly states that "we ourselves *heard* this utterance made from heaven . . ." [v.18]. What, exactly, would be the force of the "no identity-no coincidence" doctrine as applied to this utterance? Keep in mind that the Father produced this utterance and therefore produced the *content* heard and remembered by Peter (as well as by James and John). The original utterance (whether spoken in Greek or Aramaic—probably Aramaic) had both syntactic and semantic features and I think it is reasonable to think that, minimally, the Father had both sets of features *in mind* when he spoke. So did the disciples, for consider: Since Peter has remembered and reproduced what the Father said (perhaps by a translation from Aramaic to Greek), must we not also say that he (Peter) had *in mind* the original syntax—the *same* syntax used by the Father?

But even more importantly, the syntax (verbal organization) of this utterance from the Father conveys its *semantic* features. Here we must be