

"I don't think so," replied Harold. "In my opinion what Van Til has attempted is most appropriately regarded as a theology of knowledge—or better, a theological metaphysics of knowledge."

"*Mercy!*" exclaimed Lucy. "Haven't you guys ever heard of *commonsense* and *everyday words*? It's no wonder Charlie's a mess and Linus is a pumpkinhead!"

"The commonsense is coming, Lucy, but first we have to at least identify what the commonsense is supposed to be a response to. The fact is that both Charlie and Linus are Van Tillian in method, though not in content, and unless they deal with that they'll just continue to talk past each other. This is where I think the matter lies: the voluminous writings of Van Til in which we find discussions of human knowledge have nothing to do with *how* one is justified in his or her knowledge claims, but have to do, rather, with the *metaphysical status* of one's knowledge *if* one truly knows something. Although the matter of 'how one is justified in a certain belief' has always been a core concern of traditional epistemology, Van Til is breathtakingly silent on that score. Put another way, Van Til does not theorize about how one comes to know that a proposition is true from the *horizontal* level of considering data and evidence; his is a theory of the *vertical status* of a humanly held belief *if* that belief, *on entirely independent grounds*, should be counted as knowledge. And he theorizes, it seems to me, about epistemic status in an incurably speculative way.

"Anyhow, even if we were to grant that Van Til's 'vertical theory' has merit, what it tells you is how to contrast your mode of knowing with God's absolute knowing; it cannot tell you in any given case *whether* you know—only that *if* you do, the *status* of that knowledge is analogical of divine knowledge—and, of course, that its logical sanction is by way of presupposition. I propose that we try to make sense of knowledge and its acquisition in a very different way . . ."

"Uh, wake Lucy; I think she'll relate to this," said Harold to Marcy.

"What?" moaned Lucy groggily. "Is it time to go? The Pumpkin didn't show, right?"