

Editorial

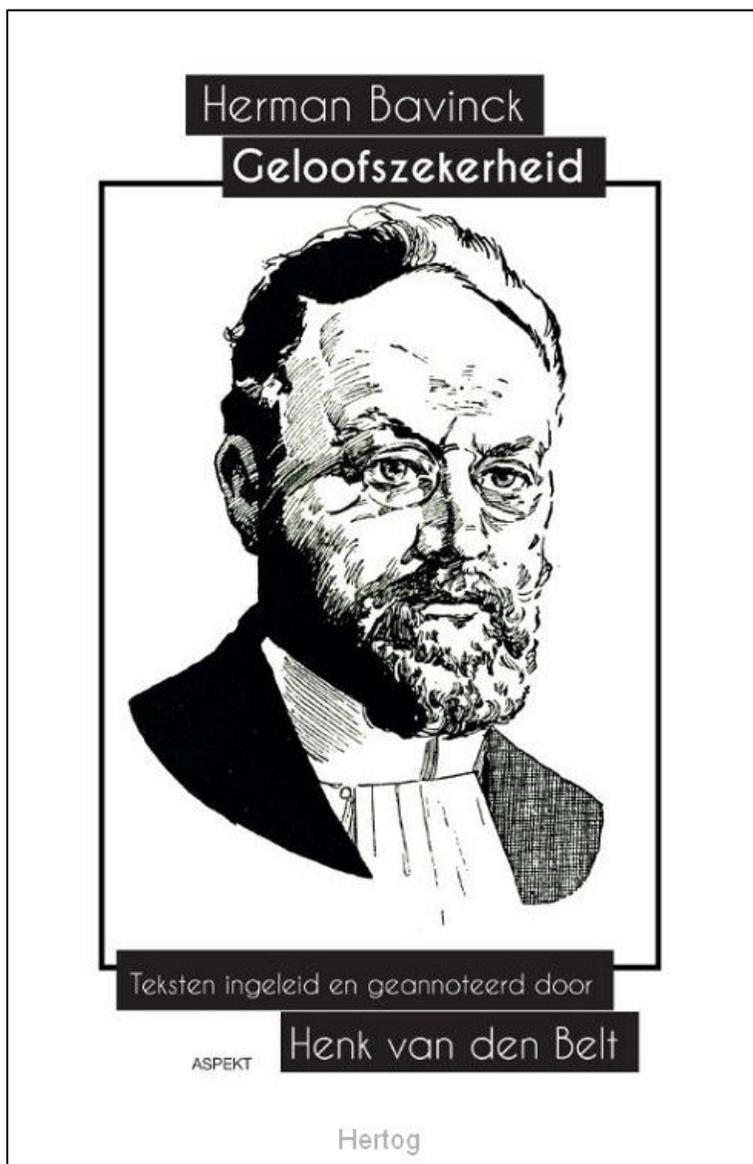
John Bolt

This eighth volume of *The Bavinck Review* is like an elephant in that its gestation period has been extraordinarily long. Personnel changes among the editorial staff of *The Bavinck Review* and the oversight of the *Bavinck Institute* website, along with the retirement of the editor from his faculty position at Calvin Theological Seminary, created a backlog of work and significant delays in the publication process. My thanks herewith to Jordan Ballor, Gayle Doornbos, Jessica Joustra, and Antoine Theron, whose names now grace the masthead of this digital journal as Associate Editors and Managing Editor, a thanks that hardly does justice to their many contributions to the work of the Bavinck Institute in general and this issue of *The Bavinck Review* in particular. And a big thank you to Laurence O' Donnell, who served with distinction in all those roles since the Bavinck Institute and *The Bavinck Review* came into existence.

From now on, please submit manuscripts and proposals for submissions to *The Bavinck Review* to Gayle Doornbos (Gayle.doornbos@gmail.com), notices of publications (books and articles) on Herman Bavinck or J. H. Bavinck to Jessica Joustra (jessjoustra@gmail.com), and general correspondence regarding *The Bavinck Review* along with matters involving the Bavinck Institute website to Antoine Theron (atheron9@calvinseminary.edu).

The main theme of this issue is assurance and certainty of faith and was precipitated by the publication of Henk van den Belt's anno-

tated texts of Bavinck's writings on the topic (see his introductory article in this issue).



At the presentation launch of this volume on December 22, 2016, Professors Cornelis van der Kooi and Gijsbert van den Brink delivered prepared remarks on Herman Bavinck which have been translated and are included in this issue of *The Bavinck Review*. The question of faith's certainty and assurance of salvation was one of Bavinck's lifelong concerns and we are including in this issue the précis of Chapter 10 in his *Reformed Ethics*, "Persevering in the Christian Life." Readers of this journal can look forward reading the fullness of Bavinck's wisdom on this subject when the first volume of the *Reformed Ethics* is published early next year.

We include two translations in this issue that reveal two distinct and important sides of Bavinck as a man and as a theologian: his commitment to Reformed orthodoxy and his honest wrestling with the questions of modernity and modern theology. Bavinck knew the tradition of Protestant orthodoxy well and, once his dissertation on Ulrich Zwingli's ethics was finished in 1880, his next scholarly work involved preparing the sixth and final edition of the Leiden *Synopsis Purioris Theologiae*, now being made available for the first time in side-by-side Latin/English translation.¹ The editor of the second volume in this latest production, Henk van den Belt, prepared Bavinck's Preface to the sixth edition for publication and we are honored to publish it. The second translation reflects Bavinck's principled but friendly relationship with the decidedly modern stream of thought known in the Netherlands as "de ethische theologie." This term, which translates literally as "the ethical theology," does not refer to narrower moral concerns but to what might better be called "existential" interests, the concern that theology reflect a "living" faith, a personal faith in Jesus. Along with Daniel Chantepie de la

¹ *Synopsis Purioris Theologiae/Synopsis of Purer Theology*, published by Brill Academic Publishers, Leiden. Two volumes have appeared thus far: 2014, volume 1 (Disputations 1–23), ed. Dolf te Velde, trans. Riemer A Faber; 2016, volume 2 (Disputations 24–42), ed. Henk van den Belt, trans. Riemer A. Faber.

Sausaye (1818–1874), who was the subject of Bavinck’s next major work of theological scholarship,² Johannes Hermanus Gunning (1848–1940) was a key theological inspiration for this ethical theology. Quite aware of the significant theological gulf between them, Gunning and Bavinck nonetheless had a high regard for each other and engaged in significant correspondence. We are pleased to provide translations of Gunning’s epistolary review of the first and second volumes of Bavinck’s *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek*. Prof. Leo Mietus, a Gunning scholar who has recently prepared and published a three-volume set of Gunning’s collected works,³ has also written a helpful introduction.

In view of our history with *The Bavinck Review* volume 8, it may seem risky to venture into our plans for future issues, but here we go. Volume 9 (2018) will be a “special” issue and feature only one contribution, a translation of Herman Bavinck’s *Foundations of Psychology* (1897; revised, 1923). This was translated, along with introduction and evaluation, by Dr. Jack Vanden Born as his thesis for the Master of Christian Studies degree at Calvin College, Grand Rapids, Michigan in 1981. An edited version is being prepared by your editor and our goal is to have this completed and published by the end of this year. We are gathering material for the tenth volume (2019) and hope to get back on our regular annual cycle by 2020. We invite proposals for future essays.

We are not done with Bavinck’s psychology after this issue. Readers may or may not be aware that my teacher Anthony Hoekema wrote *two* Th.D. dissertations at Princeton Theological Seminary.

² Herman Bavinck, *De theologie van Prof. Dr. Daniel Chantepie de la Saussaye* (Leiden: Donner, 1884).

³ J. H. Gunning, Jr., *Verzameld werk*, ed. Leo Mietus, 3 vols. (Zoetermeer: Boekencentrum, 2012–2015).

His 1953 dissertation on “Herman Bavinck’s Doctrine of the Covenant” is generally known to people familiar with Bavinck scholarship, but this was his *second* thesis. The first, submitted on February 28, 1948, was titled “The Centrality of the Heart: A Study in Christian Anthropology with Special Reference to the Psychology of Herman Bavinck.” With permission from the Hoekema family, we will be publishing the complete dissertation in another special issue of *The Bavinck Review* along with an introduction by the editor. We trust that these efforts will stimulate further interest in Bavinck’s psychology which definitely deserves renewed attention from scholars. It is the heart of our mission at the Bavinck Institute to encourage young scholars at all levels to contribute to a better understanding of this great Reformed catholic Christian thinker and inspire others to follow his example.