

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ROBERT SCHULLER'S CONCEPT OF
HUMAN SELF-ESTEEM IN RELATION TO SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF
THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION IN NEO-ORTHODOXY, ²⁰⁰

BY /

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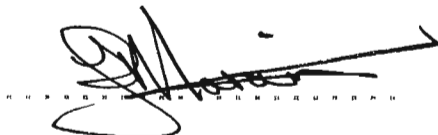
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DECLARATION

I declare that "A Comparative Study Of Robert Schuller's Concept of Human Self-Esteem In Relation To Specific Aspects Of The Doctrine Of Sanctification In Neo-Orthodoxy" is my own work and that all the sources that I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

Signed:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'L.J. Marais', is written over a horizontal dotted line.

L.J. MARAIS

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The title of this thesis implies that there is in fact a relationship between Dr Robert Schuller's concept of human self-esteem and specific aspects of the doctrine of Sanctification in Neo-Orthodoxy.

The objective of this thesis is to examine these doctrines in question in order to determine just how closely linked they are and to what degree they influence each other. Self-esteem, or self-love, as it is often referred to, is regarded by some evangelicals as being a concept which may not be entirely biblical. Paul Brownback states in his book The Danger of Self-Love that self-love is a popular myth which has crept into evangelicalism and is busy destroying the process of honest examination of ourselves in order to come to terms with certain realities pertaining to a life in the sight of a Holy God.¹

ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING AND ASSESSMENT

the self-love, self-esteem concept have distanced themselves from what men like Dr Schuller are in actual fact saying when it comes to one's relationship with oneself in relation to a Holy God.

The writer's particular interest in considering Schuller's concept of human self-esteem in relation to the doctrine of Sanctification in Neo-Orthodoxy arises from the fact that he believes that Karl Barth, a leading figure in Neo-Orthodoxy, has introduced a doctrine of Sanctification that the evangelical church of the modern era has yet to grasp and to apply in order to experience a positive attitude to life.

Schuller's message to the world today is a message of successful living, a message of possibilities that the average individual has not even begun to dream about as yet.

Barth's message to the world today is that until we can picture ourselves absolutely and totally redeemed and set free in Christ Jesus we will continue to regard ourselves a failure and in doing so will continue to strive within our own strength to be the achiever that we, having acknowledged Christ as Saviour, already are in Christ.²

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Has Schuller simply developed a doctrine of Humanism based on some of the other great positive thinkers of our time? Has he not in fact moved beyond them in introducing a psychology of self-esteem, which does not detract from the work of Christ, but rather enables individuals to move beyond the gloomy world of their own failure to a point of seeing themselves in a new light? Schuller substantiates this by pointing out that, "If any person is (engrafted) in Christ, the Messiah, he is (a new creature altogether) a new creation; the old (previous moral and spiritual condition) has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come." 3.

In considering some of the above questions the writer intends introducing a concept that is relatively new in evangelical circles. A concept of human self-esteem that goes beyond humanity itself and points us to our position in Christ. An approach that does not simply examine Schuller with presuppositions that place him in one particular camp that then creates a bias toward his material either positive or negative irrespective of how good or bad, relevant or irrelevant, his material might be.

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For far too long evangelical theologians have been guilty of this unforgivable naivety. If evangelical fundamentalists claim to have all the answers in 20th century theology and in particular in the last decade, the 80's, then we must take cognisance of what Jerry Falwell in his book The Fundamentalist Phenomenon⁴ has to say. In doing so it is of utmost importance that we hear Bernard Ramm in his book After Fundamentalism⁵ where he argues that evangelical theology, to be taken seriously in the 20th century, must be able to come to terms with historical criticism, scientific developments, and human progress, while retaining faithfulness to Scripture.⁶

The writer of this thesis is of the opinion that the church, generally speaking, has refused to recognise the desperate heartcry of a depressed and despondent world. There has been a continual convincing of people of their sinful nature, irrespective of their so-called spiritual position. People are constantly reminded of their self-worthlessness until they are reduced to an absolute nothing. Having been brought to this position they are then told that there is a degree of hope in Christ and as then as they reach out in desperation they are reminded that they will never attain Christlikeness /...

and continuously need to repent because of their shortcomings. The point Schuller makes is that we need to build on the positive which a life in Christ has to offer and not the negative.

Dr James Dobson introduces his book Hide or Seek with a chapter entitled "The Epidemic of Inferiority" and in doing so stresses the importance of self-esteem by stating that,

The matter of personal worth is not only the concern of those who lack it. In a real sense, the health of an entire society depends on the ease with which its individual members can gain personal acceptance. Thus, whenever the keys to self-esteem are seemingly out of reach for a large percentage of the people, as in 20th century America, then widespread mental illness, neuroticism, hatred, alcoholism, drug abuse, violence and social disorder will certainly occur. Personal worth is not something human beings are free to take or leave. We must have it, and when it is unattainable, everybody suffers.⁷.

In the same way as Dr Dobson sees inferiority affecting society, the writer of this thesis believes that a spiritual inferiority has crept into the church. Christians continue to regard themselves as failures because of the constant teaching in this regard. Unless we can be brought to the point of realising that we are what we are in Christ and that /...

we can never be anything other than this, a continual spiritual decline and guilt trip will take place that will leave us struggling in an attempt to win favour with God in our own strength.

The development of the thesis will include a study of the man Schuller, his background, theology and methodology. In doing so his concept of human self-esteem will also be discussed at length in order to determine a platform from which a comparative study in relation to the doctrine of Sanctification will then take place.

In considering the doctrine of Sanctification it will also be necessary to include a brief study of the doctrine of Justification as these two are integrally linked.

In presenting the final chapter of this thesis the objective of comparing Schuller's human self-esteem to Neo-Orthodox thinking regarding Sanctification will become clear.

/...

END NOTES

1. Brownback, P. pg. 15 The Danger of Self-Love.
2. Barth, K. pg. 499 Church Dogmatics IV. The
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3. Schuller, R.h. pg. 116 Your Church Has A Fantastic
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4. Falwell, J. The Fundamentalist Phenomenon
Doubleday & Co., Inc. Garden
City, New York, 1981.
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CHAPTER TWO

THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN SELF-ESTEEM IN RELATION TO SANCTIFICATION

Part One - Positive Thinking

The very thought of entering a discussion pertaining to positive thinking when discussing evangelical doctrines such as Sanctification and Justification would at the outset seem heretical. It is, however, important in examining the concept of human self-esteem, to begin with the question of positive thinking in the light of the fact that this issue has played a major role in the thinking of Schuller. This is not the only line of thinking that Schuller has adopted as some critics have attempted to convince the conservative evangelical world to believe, but has undoubtedly influenced his approach to ministry significantly.

The previous chapter introduced the concept of Schuller's human self-esteem in relation to the doctrine of Sanctification. The point was made that as people discovered their position in Christ as a direct result of the atoning /...

work of Christ they are certainly in a position to examine themselves more positively. In order then to appreciate Schuller's thinking within its broader context, but nevertheless in relation to one's Sanctification, we must pause and examine briefly the question of positive thinking.

Positive thinking is a philosophy that has been adopted and used widely in nearly every walk of life. There is one word that sums up most of the research in this field, that is the word achiever. Being successful in that which we set out to do is very important. Having the assurance that we have in fact achieved that which we have set out to do is just as important. All persons at some point in their lives wants to or have wanted to be achievers.

This concept of being an achiever and the importance of it plays a major role in the realm of positive thinking. In order to show how this approach to life has indeed become a very relevant topic we need to briefly consider the types of material that have been forthcoming in this field. Let us not for a moment lose sight of the fact that Schuller has developed positive thinking to the point of possibility thinking. The central theme of the writers mentioned below /...

is that we can all succeed. There is no reason why any person should be a failure in anything that they attempt.

This approach to life has definitely influenced Schuller as will be pointed out later on. The positive thinkers have introduced a concept. Schuller has developed this concept to the point of applying it to Christianity in pointing out that we are achievers in Christ Jesus. Karl Barth, although never claiming to be a positive thinker, has introduced the theological world to a positive dynamic. Barth has pointed out that our position is complete in Christ Jesus and this ought to motivate us positively.¹

With the above in mind let us now briefly note some of the material that has certainly influenced Schuller's thinking regarding his approach to the concept of human self-esteem.

The following persons are of importance to Schuller for they reflect the importance of the concept of the winner.

Dr Norman Vincent Peale : One of America's leading authors in the field of positive thinking whose book The Power of Positive Thinking made the best seller list in the U.S.A. in /...

1957, and has continued to affect the lives of people ever since. Achieving is right at the centre of Dr Peale's thinking and his book You Can if you Think you Can clearly illustrates this.

Perhaps this book may do something comparable for you. The principles it teaches are packed with power; so why not draw on that power? The book tells you how. And remember, always remember: You can if you think you can.³

Dr Peale is a personal friend of Robert Schuller and has certainly influenced Schuller's life and ministry. Schuller has applied Vincent Peale's dynamics of positive thinking to almost every aspect of his ministry. He contributes a large part of the success of his ministry to it. The point to note, as will be pointed out later in the thesis, is that Schuller continually applies this principle to his relationship with Jesus Christ and the individual's relationship with Jesus Christ.

Ed Foreman : A United States Congressman is currently rated as America's most persuasive speaker - trainer - motivator in the art of "Successful Daily Living". The title of his series is Laughing Loving and Living - Your way to the Good

South Africa being one, making him one of the worlds most listened to broadcasters. The title of his series which was widely accepted was Lead The Field.^{8.}

The obvious link in the thinking of the abovementioned is "winner" orientated. To the degree that if failure does occur one would be regarded as an outcast or a social misfit. This could be just as dangerous psychologically as creating a negative approach to life from the outset that would lead to poor, or low self-esteem.

Now placed in the midst of this positive thinking school is Dr Robert Schuller himself. His series on Possibility Thinking has been widely accepted and greatly used.^{9.} The point to note is that Schuller's positive thinking and pure secular positive thinking have plenty of similarities. They both emphasize that the individual has the potential of being a success. The difference being that pure secular positive thinking does not incorporate the individual's completeness in Christ whereas Schuller does. In examining Schuller's doctrine of Human Self-Esteem this will become apparent. The writer of this thesis is of the opinion that conservative evangelicals and other critics of Schuller, such as those /...

mentioned earlier and those mentioned below, have never really looked beyond this approach of his regarding possibility thinking and have therefore accused him of humanism.

Dave Hunt and T.A. McMahon in their book The Seduction of Christianity ¹⁰. equate Robert Schuller with the likes of Jim Jones who was responsible for the mass suicide in Jonestown. "The Church needs to recognise that cults are only part of a much larger and more seductive deception known as the New Age Movement." ¹¹. Schuller is classified by Hunt and McMahon as being part of this movement and it is suggested by them in their book that the likes of him will cause humanity to worship the antichrist. ¹².

Surely this is a rather radical bias to adopt based on some fundamentalistic presupposition that Schuller has moved away from an evangelical approach to fulfilling the Great Commission of Jesus Christ. Quoting Christianity Today, Hunt and McMahon point out that "Schuller is now reaching more non-Christians than any other religious leader in America."¹³ The response should be one of praise to God, not condemnation.

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If anything this type of naivety can only be destructive. We are certainly of the opinion that positive thinking or possibility thinking as Schuller refers to it, totally isolated from the individual's relationship with Jesus Christ is not acceptable in evangelical circles. This has never been Robert Schuller's intention and we will see this in a later chapter.

Remembering then that it has been pointed out that the link between self-esteem and Sanctification centres in individuals realising their potential within themselves as a result of Christ's finished work on the cross, it should now be clear as to why it has been necessary to consider this question of possibility thinking as Schuller calls it, or positive thinking as it is more commonly known.^{14.}

Schuller's central theme in his approach to the Christian walk is that of being the achiever, the winner. The thought of failure should not be accommodated when one is in Christ.^{15.}

The positive thinkers mentioned earlier concentrate on being a winner. In the previous chapter on pages 2 and 3 it was shown that Karl Barth centres in the individual being

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complete in Christ. Schuller brings together the positive thinking approach and the individual's completeness in Christ and emphasizes that thinking positively enhances one's understanding of the completeness that is now available in Jesus Christ.¹⁶

Schuller regards self-esteem as being the deepest need of the human person. Without self-esteem we are blinded as to the unique potential that each one has within oneself to be the achievers that Christ intended us to be.¹⁸ Everything he has to say pertaining to the incredible achievements he has made in his 34 years of ministry relate to this idea and therefore, it is absolutely vital in understanding Schuller to now consider how he has applied these philosophies to his own life and ministry. Having done this we will then be in a position to consider his doctrine of Self-Esteem.

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Part Two - Robert Schuller : His Life and Ministry

Robert Schuller is a breed apart from most super-church pastors. Like the others, he has sensitivity to the needs of people and persistently gears his programs to meet those needs. Like the others, he knows how to manage well, how to make the big decisions, and how to rally the people for accomplishing goals. Like the others, he understands the function of religion and focuses the gospel of Jesus Christ on the hurts and hopes of people in such a way that they are drawn to the Saviour.¹⁹

This brief assessment of Schuller's ministry by C. Peter Wagner, who is a recognised and respected church growth specialist in all circles including some of the most fundamental ones (theologically speaking), certainly puts the man Schuller in a different category to that view presented by Dave Hunt and T.A. McMahon in The Seduction of Christianity (see previous reference).

The point that seems to have been missed by most critics of Schuller is that he did not suddenly come up with a magic formula based on possibility thinking and self-esteem and then suddenly found himself as the senior minister of one of the largest churches in the U.S.A. To date, Schuller has ploughed 34 years of his life into a particular ministry and /...

as a direct result of exceptional hard work, positive ministry principles and an absolute trust and faith in God, he now finds himself reaping the fruit of his ministry. "In everything you do, put God first, and he will direct you and crown your efforts with success."²⁰.

The above quote from Prov. 3:6 is the verse Schuller uses to introduce the preface to his book Your Church Has A Fantastic Future and what follows is a summary of his first chapter entitled "The Garden Grove Story", pages 25 - 53.²¹.

The Garden Grove Story

Seeing a dream realised is no accident. We must work to see our dreams fulfilled. And we worked hard. But first let me tell you how this dream began.

I was inspired in seminary by the example of the late Dr George Truett. He spent 40 years in one church - the First Baptist Church of Dallas Texas - and built what was in his lifetime the largest and, by most standards, the best Baptist Church in the world. I thought, that's fabulous. I'd like to do that. I'd like to find one place and spend 40 years, devoting my life to one church. So I prayed, 'Lord, just send me to some place where there are enough unsaved people that I can work with.' It was that simple. When the call came in 1955 to start a new church in California, I had no doubt this was what I had prayed for, as there were

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enough lost souls in the state of California to keep me busy a whole lifetime. In response all I could say was, Halleluja, here we come.²²

As Schuller prepared to leave the church in which he had served for 5 years in Chicago, they gave him a cheque for 300 dollars which he used as a down-payment on a two-manual electronic organ. His starting salary in 1955 was 320 dollars per month. With the challenge that awaited him he knew that in order to even make an attempt at this incredible task he needed to be positive from the outset.

Having heard from a friend that it was impossible to find a place to start a church in California was a challenge to Schuller. It was in fact this concept of impossibility that was to form the beginning of Schuller's possibility thinking. He simply listed the various possibilities that came to mind where he could start the church. They were,

1. A school building
2. An Elks hall
3. A mortuary chapel
4. A Masonic Temple
5. An empty warehouse
- /...

6. A Seventhday Adventist Church
7. A synagogue
8. A drive-in theatre
9. An acre of ground on which to pitch a tent

After exhausting 8 of the 9 possibilities he ended up at the drive-in theatre. It was made available to him at 10 dollars a week and the first service commenced Sunday, 27 March, 1955.

In order to underscore Schuller's positive attitude it needs to be noted that he, for more than 5 years, personally loaded the organ he had purchased, onto a little trailer and transported it to and from the drive-in theatre. The thought which comes to mind is how many of Schuller's critics would have been prepared to put in this type of manual labour?

This trailer incident emphasizes Schuller's positive attitude to that which he had committed himself and believed in.

Being positive does not exclude hard work but often involves it. "From the very beginning I was able to promise the people that they were most fortunate to be a part of an exciting program that God was moving and planning in Orange County. I believed it. I felt it. I knew it. And this /...

conviction spread through the lives of those who listened."²³.

Schuller had been impressed by Norman Vincent Peale's book, as mentioned earlier, The Power of Positive Thinking which was on the best-seller list in the U.S.A. at the time and he approached Peale to preach for him. In introducing Peale to a capacity crowd of 200 cars that filled the theatre in June 1957 Schuller said:

Ladies and gentlemen, we have with us in person the greatest positive thinker alive in the world today. His name is a household word. Many of you have read His inspiring writings and if you have, your life has been changed. I have gotten to know Him personally on a one-to-one basis, and if you get to know Him that way, you will be born again. How proud am I that He's with us today. His name is Jesus Christ. And here to tell us all about Him is Norman Vincent Peale.²⁴.

Shortly after this two acres of ground was purchased at a cost of 4000 dollars and much to the disgust of the extension committee who seemed a little frightened at the rate things were moving, another 4000 dollars were spent on an architect to design the new church building. On completion of the new chapel it was decided to keep up the theatre services. Both churches grew until a merger took place against much

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opposition from both sides.

The 5 November 1961 saw the opening of the new Garden Grove Community Church, once again with Norman Vincent Peale as the guest speaker. By 1968 the Tower of Hope had been completed which offered a 24 hour counselling service.

Twenty years after the commencement of the first services at the drive-in theatre the idea of the Crystal Cathedral was presented to the church. December 1977 saw the ground-breaking ceremony of the Crystal Cathedral. On the 14 September 1980 a monument to God's Glory became an instrument in His Service, as the cathedral was dedicated debt-free just as had been promised.²⁵.

A quick calculation of the expenses recorded in Schuller's book indicates that well in excess of 20 million dollars has been spent to-date. The man who set out with 500 dollars and a faith that took God seriously.

The purpose in working through a very brief account of the Garden Grove story is twofold.

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Firstly. Having considered the past 34 years of ministry in the life of Schuller it soon becomes evident that his ministry involved a lot of very hard work and that this was no simple flash-in-the-pan type of instant success story.

Secondly. Throughout the success story, in the midst of all the growth and excitement, Schuller always put Christ first.

This is the point that needs to be noted. The fact that Schuller had Norman Vincent Peale preach for him has labelled him as humanist/existentialist and not as theologian/evangelist. Schuller will be the first to admit that possibility/positive thinking has been the key to the success of the ministry at Orange Grove but he will be the first one to quickly add to that concept that God had ultimately brought them to where they are today and He will continue to lead them into the future. This is evident throughout his testimony and we note just one of many quotes that emphasizes the above.

Many of you have heard the statement, 'I've got to see it before I believe it.' That's negative-thinking statement if there ever was one, and it's as wrong as can be!

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Learn to say it right. Turn it backwards and say, 'I've got to believe it before I see it.' That's truth! So don't ever say, 'I've got to see it before I believe it,' because you've got to believe it before you'll see it! You see, it is God at work in us, giving us the will and the power to achieve His purpose. (See Phil. 2:13).

God doesn't go to work in you to achieve these big, thrilling break-through ideas until you've demonstrated faith. That's how God works, for 'without faith it is impossible to please him; for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him' (Heb. 11:6).

'If you have faith as a grain of mustard seed, you will say to this mountain, 'Move ...,' and it will move; and nothing will be impossible to you' (Matt. 17:20, RSV). But nothing is more important than faith, and faith is believing it before you see it.²⁶

If Schuller were not a possibility thinker there is just no possibility that he would have even attempted to do what he did. Believing in a Mighty God enabled him to believe in himself. Believing in himself he started out in a small way but never stopped thinking big. The key phrase in his series on possibility thinking is "What great thing would you attempt if you knew you could not fail".²⁷

The reason for considering Schuller's positive thinking and how this influenced his ministry will now be elaborated on as we examine his concept of human self-esteem. In doing so, it /...

is important to continually remind ourselves where this thesis is leading us to. Positive thinking played a major role in Schuller's life. This fact cannot and may not be disputed. However, this was just the beginning. Schuller now expounds his self-esteem to show the world that at the very centre of his thinking is not a proud "I", but rather a Victorious Christ.^{28.}

With this in mind let us now consider Schuller's concept of human self-esteem.

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Part Three - Human Self-Esteem

In 1982 Schuller published his book Self-Esteem : The New Reformation.²⁹ This new approach to reaching those without Christ seemed so unorthodox and contrary to evangelical principles that it was regarded as being almost heretical as has been pointed out earlier. Schuller introduced an approach to the world without Christ that never had its roots securely bedded in traditional evangelism. He claimed that individuals without Christ needed to be met where they were at in life and not where the so-called evangelical church expected them to be, namely, with a fully blown understanding of the Triune God. This approach, beginning with the individual, seemed totally out of character for the Christian church. The church was asking how a message of evangelism could possibly begin with the individual and not with his or her Creator.

Dr Martin Marty, who kindly critiqued this manuscript said, 'Is not this a philosophy which makes room for God more than a theology that incorporates psychology?' Schuller replied saying, my ministry has, for over thirty years, been a mission to the unbelievers. If I were a churchman talking to church leaders, I would agree that the theocentric approach is the right

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approach. However, I have seen my calling as one that communicates spiritual reality to the unchurched who may not be ready to believe in God. I have been trying to carry on a dialogue with persons who are not prepared to listen to someone with God-talk. As a missionary, I find the hope of respectful contact is based on a human-need approach rather than a theological attack.³⁰

In attempting to understand Schuller and his rather so-called humanistic approach to reaching the non-christians the question that is in our mind is whether or not this has not been the very approach of the church over the decades in sending out missionaries. At present all over the world there are missionary organisations sending out doctors, dentists, engineers and others representing almost every profession that are addressing human needs. Having achieved this then a presentation of the Gospel can be made.

It was appropriate for Calvin and Luther to think theocentrically. After all, everyone was in the church and the issues were theological not philosophical. For them, the central issue was, 'What is the truth in theology?' The reformers didn't have to impress the unchurched so there was no need for them to take the human needs approach. They were a church after all, not a mission. They would proclaim the Word of the Lord and all had better listen!³¹

In considering Schuller's approach to this concept of human

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self-esteem the writer intends leading up to a point where one can see oneself as a complete and total person in Christ. It will be at this point in the final chapter of this thesis where certain questions pertaining to Schuller's definition of the "complete person" irrespective of his or her position in Christ will be considered and evaluated.

Schuller defines self-esteem in the following way: "Self-esteem is the human hunger to be our emotional birthright as children created in His image."³² Schuller holds to the point of view that self-esteem, or pride in being a human being is the single greatest need facing the human race today.³³ We need to develop this line of Schuller's thinking in order to see how he is leading up to a position in Christ and a relationship with Christ. Doing so will also help us in relating this concept to Barth.

The fact that the Bible condemns pride is a generally accepted point of view and is also accepted by Schuller with a certain qualification. Let us now briefly examine that qualification. The fact that people, generally speaking, have lost their pride in being human is an indictment on the church. The reason is that the church has never paused to /...

distinguish between positive and negative pride. What needs to be noted is how Schuller in making this distinction moves away from a humanistic/existential definition of man's capabilities.

Negative pride is that destructive arrogance that assumes, 'I can do anything all by myself!' that creative and compassionate confidence Christ inspired when He said 'You are the light of the world!' Saint Paul expressed this positive pride when he said, 'I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me'.³⁴

Four years later Schuller had developed his concept of human self-esteem and, in the publication of his book Your Church Has A Fantastic Future, he re-emphasises this concept as being the deepest need of the human person. What he had previously said about not having a theocentric theology he now qualifies.

Many years ago when I began to get into self-esteem theology I began from a different premise; not the doctrine of God, but the doctrine of the human person. In my opinion, you cannot possibly talk about the nature of the human being without being in the theological realm because the human creature is created in the image of God.³⁵

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What Schuller now does with this qualification is to point out that his responsibility is not first to convince the individual that he or she is a creature of the Supreme Creator, this is an accomplished fact and whether they see it or not is not going to change it. What needs to happen is that men and women need to discover who they are within themselves and having brought themselves to a point of realising their own potential can now see beyond this in acknowledging the potential that exists in a relationship with a Holy God.

Schuller is undoubtedly aware of the interpretation in his use of the term "A Theology of Self-Esteem" and always offers an explanation or sometimes what would seem to be an apology for the use of it. Let us pause to examine one such explanation before considering the scriptural background to his theology of self-esteem.

I'm not particularly crazy about the words self-esteem theology, but after all, no matter what language you speak on Planet Earth, all human language has shortcomings, frailties, imperfections. I happen to choose language that, to the best of my knowledge, relates to Scriptural truth and, at the same time, translates into the cultural idiom so that we can talk and communicate with non-christians in our society and in the other disciplines.³⁶

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In order to determine and understand Schuller's concept of human self-esteem, a summary of his explanation on pages 107-129 of his book Your Church has a Fantastic Future³⁷. and how this relates to one's position in Christ as interpreted by Karl Barth will be necessary.

Schuller's Scriptural Background of Self-Esteem

In approaching this particular section we believe that once again our attention must be drawn to the connection between Schuller's self-esteem and Barth's Sanctification.

Barth has been labelled neo-orthodox by the evangelical world. That is to say that he has been regarded as having moved to a theological position that is beyond orthodoxy. If this is entirely true then in the same light it must be said of Schuller that he is neo-evangelical.

In the next chapter Barth's thinking will be elaborated on and we will point out that Barth holds to a very orthodox view pertaining to the doctrines of Justification and Sanctification. As this chapter is now developed it will also become apparent that Schuller's view is anything but /...

neo-evangelical and that both he and Barth are pointing mankind to a complete position in Christ. Neo-evangelical meaning that he has moved beyond an evangelical position to the point where his thinking could be regarded by some as bordering on being heretical. A position that moves away from the people's failures and incompleteness within themselves and turns them toward a God who can only accept them because of the finished work of Christ on the cross.

Let us now move on to consider how Schuller has come to a biblical basis for his concept of human self-esteem.

The fact that Schuller does not believe that the place to begin with unregenerate man is with a theocentric theology has already been established. To conclude then that Schuller does not have a theocentric theology would be a mistake that many of his critics have already made and one that we need to avoid.

What, after all, is the scriptural background to this theology of self-esteem? It is the story of Creation with which the Bible begins. The psychological or the psychiatric background arises because, in the 20th century, Christian theologians have abandoned the Doctrine of the Human Being to a new

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discipline called psychiatry and to a new breed of professionals called psychologists. And we have said that self-esteem deals with the human being and that's humanism. You take care of that. We deal with God. We are not man-centred; we are God-centred.³⁸

Schuller then proceeds at great length to substantiate his claim that we are created in God's image and that it was for the world out of fellowship with its Creator that He sent His Son to die, not simply because He felt sorry for his human creation, but because of the worth of this creation in His sight.

Quoting Psalm 8:5 the point is made by Schuller that man was created just a little lower than the angels and that he has been crowned with glory and honour. In order to establish a platform upon which to proceed Schuller defines his doctrine of the Fall of Man. It is imperative to understand that with the fall came a loss of the glory and honour referred to in Psalm 8:5.

As this doctrine of the Fall of Man is developed it is essential to note that although Schuller was ordained in the Reformed Church in America he has departed from the Reformed doctrine pertaining to the depravity of man.

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This Reformed Church in America was originally the Dutch Reformed Church which was started when the Dutch settlers landed in New Amsterdam, now New York, from Holland. Schuller recently made a statement on the Hour of Power national television broadcast that the Dutch settlers actually traded with the Indians for the purchase of Manhattan Island in order to establish a Dutch Reformed Church there.^{39.}

The point that is being made is that although Schuller is very proud of the fact that his theological roots are found in the Reformed tradition, he has needed to depart from certain doctrines held by the Reformed Church and does so without apology. It would be impossible for Schuller to hold to a doctrine of Total Depravity of Man and still comment that,

Perfectionism finds something wrong with every idea, something wrong with every position. There are problems, yes, with the so-called self-esteem theology. But the alternative is more dangerous. If there are people who feel so smug, so contented that they have no sense of guilt, that is a potential problem. But the alternative of coming down heavy on them and preaching a doctrine of Total Depravity and Total Wickedness is absolutely unacceptable.^{40.}

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In working through this question of the depravity of man, Schuller expresses his gratitude to a Dr John R. Mulder who certainly influenced his thinking.

I am so grateful that in seminary I had a professor, Dr John R. Mulder who said that the human being is not totally depraved. Never believe in total depravity. Never preach total depravity. Preach instead the doctrine of total inability. That is the distinction!⁴¹.

For Schuller a doctrine that holds to an individual being totally sinful and totally decadent is not scriptural.

The real Scripture is that we are totally unable to save ourselves; we are totally dependent upon the grace of God; we are totally dependent upon Jesus Christ. That's scriptural. (Eph. 2:8-9)⁴².

In making these statements Schuller has moved away from the doctrine of Total Depravity. He has redefined Total Depravity to suit his doctrine of Man. It is at this point that he and Barth would definitely differ and we need to take cognisance of this. Schuller centres more on inability than depravity. For him the individual is inherently good in the sight of God but is unable to save him or herself.⁴³ This /...

position is very far from the Reformed position which holds to an absolute total depravity. Barth would agree very strongly with Schuller that individuals are unable to save themselves, but would quickly point out that every part of humanity is tainted as a result of the fall.⁴⁴ In the final chapter more will be said concerning Total Depravity. The point to note now is the similarity in thinking concerning the individual and works.

In the same way that Schuller emphasizes one's inability to save oneself, Barth also strongly makes this point in his Church Dogmatics where he states that,

Man can be righteous before God, the child of God and heir of eternal life, only by the pardon which he can grasp in faith alone and not in any work, and which is that of the grace of the God active and revealed in Jesus Christ. A grace which consists in the unmerited forgiveness of sins.⁴⁵

We see in the above quotes that both Barth and Schuller move right away from individuals being capable of doing anything to save themselves. For both the focal point is Jesus Christ Himself.

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One of the strong objections to Schuller's theology is that it is said that Schuller points us toward ourselves in order to discover our salvation. This is not so. Schuller points us directly to the cross of Jesus Christ along with Karl Barth and many other evangelical theologians.

The writer of this thesis firmly believes that Schuller does have a biblical basis for his concept of human self-esteem. For those critical of Schuller this biblical basis may seem shallow and non-theological. It should be apparent in the preceding section that Schuller's doctrine of Soteriology and Barth's doctrine of Soteriology definitely have a common denominator. This denominator involves persons, having acknowledged the work of Christ on the cross as being applicable to themselves personally, are complete in Christ. To say that Schuller applies Barth's full Soteriology in his thinking would be an oversimplification of Barth. Schuller's claim is that we are complete in Christ and this applied to our self-esteem enhances a positive attitude toward life.^{46.} For Barth every aspect of our Christian thinking is centred in Christ. Christ's finished work on the cross is the central theme to which we must constantly return, irrespective what the doctrine under discussion may be.^{47.}

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Schuller's positive approach to life would be found in his Sanctification. That we are totally Sanctified and therefore are liberated.⁴⁸ Although similar to Barth's view it is not nearly as thorough. Barth clearly defines the role of the Holy Spirit in constantly reminding us of the responsibilities of the Holy Life because of our new found, complete position in Christ.⁴⁹

Having considered Schuller's self-esteem and how this has positively affected his life and ministry, and having suggested that both he and Barth have something in common, let us now develop Barth's thinking in order to substantiate the claims made. Doing so in isolation of other views pertaining to the doctrine of Justification and Sanctification would present one with an unbalanced perspective. In order to prevent this we will briefly consider the views of Rudolf Bultmann, G.C. Berkouwer and Hans Küng together with Barth. The reason for choosing these particular theologians for a comparison with Barth will be stated in the following chapter.

Throughout this next chapter we need to bear in mind at all times that Schuller and Barth are the objects of our
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investigation and that the other views considered will help us in substantiating any claims made pertaining to Schuller and Barth in the closing chapter.

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END NOTES

1. Barth, K. pgs. 94-95 Evangelical Theology.
2. Schuller, R. pg. 30 Your Church Has A Fantastic Future.
3. Peale, N.V. pg. 14 You Can If You Think You Can.
4. Foreman, E. Laughing Loving & Living
Cassette Series.
5. Waitely, E. The Psychology of Winning
Cassette Series.
6. Dyer, W. How to be a No-Limit Person
Cassette Series.
7. Brothers, J. Success is a State of Mind
Cassette Series.
8. Nightingale, E. Lead The Field Cassette
Series.
9. Schuller, R. Possibility Thinking Cassette
Series.
10. Hunt, D. &
McMahon, T.A. pg. 13 The Seduction of Christianity
11. Ibid pg. 12
12. Ibid pg. 13

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13. Hunt, D. &
McMahon, T.A. pg. 15 The Seduction of Christianity
14. Schuller, R. pg. 75 Your Church Has A Fantastic Future.
15. Schuller, R. pgs. 42-43 Self-Love.
16. Schuller, R. pg. 46 Self-Esteem The New Reformation.
17. Schuller, R. pg. 105 Your Church Has a Fantastic Future. In Schuller's chapt. on Self-Esteem this pattern is clearly pointed out.
18. Ibid pg. 107
19. Ibid pg. 15 In Schuller's book Peter Wagner writes the Foreword and compliments Schuller for what has taken place at the Crystal Cathedral.
20. Ibid pg. 19
21. Ibid pgs. 25-53 Summary of the Garden Grove Story.
22. Ibid pg. 26
23. Ibid pg. 29
24. Ibid pg. 30
25. Ibid pg. 50
26. Ibid pgs. 89-90
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27. Schuller, R.H. Possibility Thinking Cassette Series. This statement appears on the cover under the title. 28. Schuller, R. pgs. 44-45 Self-Esteem The New Reformation.
29. Schuller, R.H. World Books. U.S.A., 1982.
30. Schuller, R. pgs. 11-12 Self-Esteem The New Reformation.
31. Ibid pg. 12
32. Ibid pg. 15
33. Ibid pg. 19
34. Ibid pgs. 20-21
35. Schuller, R. pg. 105 Your Church Has A Fantastic Future.
36. Ibid pg. 129 This quote is from Schuller's end notes. It is however his own quote.
37. Ibid Regal Books. A division of G.L. Publications Ventura, California, U.S.A., 1986.
38. Ibid pgs. 107-108

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39. Roy Roux who is at present a PhD student at Tubigen University, Germany, mentioned this to me in a telephone conversation about 2 months ago. Roy Roux attended one of Schuller's Church Growth Seminars in the early 80's.

40. Schuller, R. pg. 118 Your Church Has A Fantastic Future.

41. Ibid pg. 118

42. Ibid pg. 118

43. Schuller, R. pgs. 45-46 Self-Esteem The New Reformation.

44. Barth, K. pgs. 478-480 Church Dogmatics IV. The Doctrine of Reconciliation 1.

In this section on the fall of man, Barth points out that in man's fall a gulf has appeared separating him from God. Not putting man out of reach of God, but rather affecting man's relationship with God.

45. Ibid pg. 635

46. Schuller, R. pg. 84 Self-Love.

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47. Barth, K. pg. 499 Church Dogmatics IV. The
Doctrine of Reconciliation 2.
48. Schuller, R. pg. 53 God's Way To The Good Life.
49. Barth, K. pg. 740 Church Dogmatics IV. The
Doctrine of Reconciliation 1.

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CHAPTER THREETHE DOCTRINES OF JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION
IN THE THINKING OF KARL BARTH; RUDDOLF BULTMANN;
G.C. BERKOUWER AND HANS KÜNG

As one considers the title to this chapter it is immediately apparent that Justification is now considered along with Sanctification. This is not only necessary for the purpose of this chapter but as will later be pointed out, is imperative for considering Schuller and his view of the individual in the sight of God.

It has been necessary in order for us to understand Schuller to look at the man himself in the light of his background and his ministry. We will now consider the abovementioned men, their backgrounds and theological positions pertaining to doctrines in question in order to understand them, how they relate to each other theologically and then how they relate to Schuller.

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Schuller's emphasis, as has been noted, is on human self-esteem. It is important that individuals develop a positive self-esteem in order to be everything and achieve everything that God intended for them. This positive attitude concentrates very much on that which we already are, and not on that which we are striving to become.

Karl Barth emphasizes our completeness in Jesus Christ. The major thrust of his Sanctification being that there is no process involved. We are completely Sanctified.

In considering the other three men in question it will be apparent that this is where the basic difference lies. For them there is not a distinctive finished work of Christ on the cross which enables one to confidently recognise one's position pertaining to one's Sanctification.

In discussing these men in comparison to Barth will then enable us to see why it is Barth and the Neo-Orthodox view that has similarities to the thinking of Robert Schuller and not one of the other men in question.

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Part One - The Neo-Orthodox Theologian - Karl Barth

As we come to consider Karl Barth and the other men in question, it will be useful for us to be aware of the fact that we are now entering the theological arena, an arena in which Schuller has not placed himself. At the same time to claim that Schuller does not have a particular theology or that he is unsure of his theological persuasion would be just as erroneous. The point that needs to be recognised is that Schuller's unstated, unlabelled theology is rooted in the very heart of theological thinking and we need to unveil this theology in order to draw the parallel.

Once again the term neo-orthodox will be used in referring to Barth simply because it is a term widely used by other theologians to describe him, and for lack of a better term. His approach to theology has also been referred to as "dialectical theology", or "a theology of crisis".¹ From the outset in his dual roles as a pastor and as a theologian, Barth was concerned about the ethical bankruptcy of liberal Protestant theology. He strongly opposed the Nazi movement in Bonn and allied himself with the "Confessing Church". This conflict with the Nazi movement resulted in the /...

publishing of the Barmen Declaration which was mainly his work, and this publication actually led to him being expelled from Germany.²

Before considering Barth's view of Justification and Sanctification let us pause briefly and consider some key beliefs of neo-orthodoxy, which in turn, is to a degree a reflection of Barth's position and will give us some idea as to where he is coming from and how he relates to Schuller in our comparison in a later chapter.

Totally Free, Sovereign God

This area of the doctrine is an attempt to show God in His relation to His creation, as to how it is controlled and how He chooses to reveal Himself to it.³

God's Self-Revelation

This would be seen as a dynamic act of grace to which humanity's response is to listen. This revelation is the Word of God in a threefold sense:

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- (1) Jesus as Word made Flesh.
- (2) Scripture which points to the Word made Flesh.
- (3) The Sermon which is the vehicle for the proclamation of the Word made Flesh.^{4.}

In the first sense it is not a concern for the historical Jesus, as in Protestant liberalism, but a concern for the Christ of faith, the risen Christ testified to and proclaimed by the apostles experienced in existential encounter.^{5.}

In the second sense, Word referring to Jesus Christ and Word as Scripture, it is not intended that they be seen as one. The Scripture becomes the Word but is not the Word. It is the only vehicle that points to God's Word which is Jesus Christ, the Word made Flesh.^{6.}

Thirdly, the Word is proclaimed and witnessed to, in and through the body of Christ through the work of the Holy Spirit.^{7.}

Humanity's Sinfulness

The Sovereign, free God who reveals himself does so to

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sinful, fallen humanity and creation. There is a vast chasm between the Sovereign God and non-christians and there is no way that they can bridge that chasm. All of humanity's efforts to do so in its religious, moral and ethical thoughts and actions are as nothing. This is partly why Barth rejects Catholicism and puts so much emphasis on Jesus Christ. The only possible way for the chasm to be traversed is by God, this He has done in Christ. The system now presents a paradox and a crisis: when the paradox of the word's "No" against humanity's sin is given along with the "Yes" of the word of Grace and Mercy, the crisis mankind faces is to decide either Yes or No. The turning point has been reached as eternal God reveals Himself in mankind's time and existence.

With the above thinking in mind let us now consider Barth's views of Justification and Sanctification.

In Christ

Barth centres his theology in Jesus Christ. Whatever he says concerning one being brought into fellowship with God is based on the fact that one's election to freedom before God, /...

is in Christ and in Christ alone. God now considers His creation, of which individuals are a part and, to their sin He says "No", but to individuals now in the shadow of the cross He says "Yes, it is good".^{8.}

Reacting to the determination of Schleiermacher to develop a one-sided theology which believed it might venture with the Holy Spirit alone, we see Barth's strong Christocentric theology. In this reaction he brings his readers back to Jesus Christ and Him alone. In this same chapter which he entitles, Jesus Christ, he establishes his platform with the statement:

The heart of the object of Christian faith is the word of the act in which God from all eternity willed to become man in Jesus Christ for our good, did become man in time for our good, and will be and remain man in eternity for our good. This work of the Son of God includes in itself the work of the Father as its presupposition and the work of the Holy Spirit as its consequence.^{9.}

Looking at both the work of God the Father and the work of the Holy Spirit we see then the one pointing towards Christ and the other leading from Him. In Barth's Dogmatics in Outline,^{10.} Barth referring to himself, a Professor of

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Systematic Theology, and with a student-audience in mind, strongly emphasises the point of a Christocentric theology by saying:

Look! This is the point now! Either knowledge or the greatest folly! Here I am in front of you like a teacher in Sunday School facing his kiddies, who has something to say which a mere four year old can really understand. The world was lost, but Christ was born, rejoice O Christendom! This centre is the Word of the act or the act of the Word. I greatly desire to make it clear to you, that in this centre of Christian faith the whole contrast, so current among us, between word and work, between knowing and living, ceases to have any meaning. But the Word, the Logos, is actually the word, the ergon, as well: the verbum also the opus. Where God and this centre of our faith are involved, those differences which seem so interesting and important to us, become not just superfluous but silly. It is the truth of the real or the reality of the truth which here enters the field: God speaks, God acts, God is in the midst. The very Word with which we are concerned here is an act, this act, which as such is the Word, is Revelation.¹¹

The point made at the outset of this section, that for Barth, theology centres in Christ, need be elaborated no longer and one can now begin to appreciate why Barth reacts so strongly to any suggestion which may hint at a means of being reconciled to God outside of Christ and His finished Work on the Cross.

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Works

In the light of his Christocentric theology and the fact that man cannot do anything to better his position the question is now asked: Is there any good human action for man to perform?¹² Barth emphasises that man in determining his actions needs to see the Word of God as the Command of God and these commands God gives in a definite historical form, Jesus Christ. This form may be found in the mandates which are work, marriage, government and the church. They concern man and all men. These mandates are not derived from below but from above. They are the deputies and representatives of God, and it is from the Holy Scriptures that we learn of mandates which give concrete form to the command since they do not emerge from reality but descend into it. It is from the Word that we learnt what must be done and Jesus Christ is the Word which speaks through these mandates to us.¹³ Man therefore offers himself in service to perform these mandates through forgiveness in Jesus Christ.

This view of Barth's comes through very clearly when, in O'Grady's book The Church in Catholic Theology (see end note 12) we see Barth rejecting the Roman Catholic doctrine of /...

man's co-operation for two reasons. Firstly, he points out that this doctrine of co-operation (synergism) presupposes a false doctrine of the man of sin, of man's status corruptionis. Barth acknowledges that Roman Catholic doctrine teaches the necessity of a prevenient grace and of the grace of baptism in man's Justification. But it also teaches, he says, the necessity of man's free assent to, and co-operation with, these graces. This presupposes that man's liberum arbitrium is not completely prevented by original sin.¹⁴ Secondly, Barth rejects the Roman Catholic doctrine of co-operation because it presupposes a false doctrine of Grace. It divides Grace, he he says, and in so doing denies it as God's or Christ's one, ever-new, sovereign and free act.¹⁵

In the light of the above we need to simply summarise and clarify what has been said regarding Barth's view of Total Depravity.

Total Depravity

In Barth's doctrine of Sanctification he takes the doctrine of Man's Total Depravity very seriously. For Barth this does /...

not mean that man is as bad as he makes himself or that all men are equally bad. What he does see is that as a result of the fall of man every part of man is tainted and as a result he is out of fellowship with God. This sin can never be eliminated, even to a lesser degree, it can only be forgiven. Agreeing with Calvin, Barth says that there never was any action performed by a pious man which, if examined by the scrutinising eye of Divine Justice, would not deserve condemnation. 16.

In the previous chapter while considering Schuller's biblical basis for his human self-esteem, it was noted that Schuller holds to a doctrine which does not claim the individual to be totally depraved in sin but totally incapable of self-salvation. This would be in line with Barth's thinking pertaining to the individual's relationship with his Creator but we are going to need to elaborate on this in the closing chapter where Schuller and Barth's views are linked and differentiated.

In the light of this it is also important for us to consider Barth's views concerning the doctrine of Infused Grace.

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Gratia Infusia (Infused Grace)

Barth rejects strongly the whole concept of infused grace simply because it implies that as a result of God's grace now infused in the individual, now becomes the action and moves closer to God by his or her efforts. In his reaction to Lutheranism, Barth points out this shortfall in as much that Luther adopted Augustine's concept of infusion of love (which is not surprising as he was an Augustinian Monk), and then developed his own concept of infusion of Grace.^{17.}

For Calvin, infused grace led to his doctrine on the Testimonium Spiritus Sancti Internum which brought the individual into a whole new understanding of the Scriptures.^{18.} For Wesley and the Pentecostals, the Holy Spirit was the Sanctifier.^{19.} Barth rejected all of these as saying that they were in line with the Church in Rome which claimed that the individual was nearly pure as a result of the progression, then all it required was a final pass through purgatory in order to be 100 percent purified.^{20.}

We shall now proceed to take these issues of Barth's concerning Justification and Sanctification and initially /...

examine some of the problems they present for some of the other theologians already mentioned. The main contention against Barth is that he confuses Justification and Sanctification and that he leaves little room for good works. In allowing Barth to defend this claim we need to consult the man himself in his Church Dogmatics Volume IV, Part 1, p2 entitled The Doctrine of Reconciliation.

Particular attention is given to pages 514 to 598 in Volume IV, Part 2. Because our intention is to deal mainly with Sanctification, Barth's view of Justification is summarised below but Sanctification is enlarged upon.

Justification and Sanctification

Karl Barth centres his theology in Jesus Christ. If the individual has any merits before God, it is only in relationship to Jesus Christ. In formulating his thought he has been forced to refuse any Roman Catholic terminology. For Barth there is no such thing as infused grace, which means that we in ourselves can of ourselves have no standing before God. Barth will have nothing to do with perfectionism in any form, whether it be Roman Catholic or Wesleyan /...

Methodist. In Sanctification we are dealing with the qualifications of the whole man. Sin, Grace, Justification and Sanctification can therefore never be mere "quanta" with say, Grace increasing and sin decreasing. For Barth this is where the Reformation failed to dislodge itself completely from Catholicism. Rather our situation is this, our works are perfectly disobedient. There is no quanta which gives rise to a gradual purification. If this were so our need for forgiveness would diminish. He agrees with Calvin in saying that there never was any action performed by a pious man which, if examined by the scrutinizing eye of Divine Justice would not deserve condemnation.²¹ O'Grady points out that in Sanctification Barth takes man's total depravity seriously. Sin can never be eliminated, even to a lesser degree, sin can only be forgiven. Man as man never evolves into another kind of man. The new man is still man, always as man in hostility to God. Throughout Barth's theology, there is an echo of Calvin's opposition to the erroneous notion of a partial righteousness. Since our works are never, not even in the best part, the ground of our salvation.²²

Barth will not tolerate grace in any form which does not rest on the free favour of God, in which He forgives our sins, it /...

is not a quality injected into man by which he shares to some extent the divine nature.

Berkhof says that for Barth, "sanctification does not engender a holy disposition and does not gradually purify man".²³ It does not put him in possession of any personal holiness, does not make him a saint, but leaves him a sinner. It is a declarative act therefore just like Justification. In Justification God pardons the sinner and in Sanctification declares the sinner holy. Berkhof feels that Barth fails to separate Justification and Sanctification and points out that Barth sees Justification and Sanctification as not being separated. To define Barth's Justification is to say that "God declares the sinner righteous, right with Himself, through Jesus Christ".²⁴ This declaration is forensic and does not involve the individual's action in any way. This is a passive action performed by God in Jesus Christ. Barth's argument against this thought as to a man's gradual purification and his final purification at death, is a strong one, particularly where he asks if it is then necessary for a man to rely less and less on forgiveness. He will not tolerate this holy seed which gets "bigger and bigger" in the life of a believer. G.C. Berkouwer also /...

feels that Barth has overstated the case and his criticism is that Barth has failed to understand that "these are not the believer's work, but the works of the Holy Spirit in the life of the believer".²⁵ It would appear that what some of the earlier theologians find difficult to accept is that Barth sees no change in man's constitution, after Justification and Sanctification, but that he is the same man under a new orientation, the orientation of the Spirit.

Barth's doctrines of Justification and Sanctification exalt the Man Christ Jesus and centre in the Man Christ Jesus.

Both Justification and Sanctification are only in relationship to Him. God's declaration to his human creation that He will be its God is the Justification of mankind. God's further claim that His human creation shall then become His people is the Sanctification of mankind. Barth states:

Pardon, by God and therefore unconditionally pronounced and unconditionally valid, that is man's justification. In the judgment of God, according to His election and rejection, there is made in the midst of time, and as the central event of all human history, referring to all the men who live both before and after, a decision, a divisive sentence. Its result, expressed in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, is the pardon of man. And this as such is man's justification, this alone, but

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with unconditional truth and efficacy, so that apart from it there is no justification, but in it there is the total justification of man. Whether man hears it, whether he accepts it and lives as one who is pardoned is another question. Where men do hear it and accept it and dare to live as those who are pardoned, it is realised that its power is total and not partial, and there will be no refusal to give to it a total and not a partial honour.²⁶

Barth insists that we have not taken seriously the fact that Christ took our place and acted for us. We may not claim that sanctification is as a result of our imitation, but rather as a direct result of our association with that which Christ has done on the Cross. In dealing with the pardon of sinners Barth emphasizes three points which are summarised as follows:

1. Man declared righteous is the divisive and pardoning sentence of God passed in God's judgement. This pardon can only be God's sentence on man. The division between the man of sin and man himself, the opening up of a gulf between them, the separation of the past and the future, the locking up of the old man and free emergence of a new man, cannot be a human but only a divine work. If he is pardoned then it is God who has done it. God who has made him a righteous instead of an unrighteous man. This is what God has done in Jesus Christ.
2. The fact that he is pardoned by God is not his truth but God's truth. He cannot, therefore, reveal and tell it to himself.

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He can only let himself be told it as it is revealed to him by God.

3. God's pardon has an authority and force and validity which are not partial but total, not relative but absolute. When this sentence was passed concerning us, something took place which cannot be reversed. This pardon does not mean only that something is said concerning us, or, as it were, pasted on us, but that a fact is created, a human situation which is basically altered. We are, in fact, those who are pardoned by God. We have peace with God. And our corresponding self-knowledge, if it is really a self-knowledge in which we repeat what is told us by His Word concerning us, cannot possibly be exposed to any legitimate doubt or genuine problems. The only legitimate and genuine answer to the unconditional Yes in which God pardons man is an equally unconditional human Yes, a confession in which there are no ifs or buts. Any question marks which we may try to put, and reasons enough can be found for them, can only be a rejection of God's judgement and sentence and Word, a basically impudent and a correspondingly dangerous presumption, for all the subjectively well-founded and sincere humility with which we may put them. The divine pardon which has taken place in Jesus Christ has a binding force. It speaks of a being and possession of the man to whom it applies.²⁷

Barth continually returns to the fact that Sanctification is a declaratory act. This does not mean that Barth has no place for good works, but his main emphasis is to see the whole of the Christian life in relationship to The Sanctified One, who is Jesus Christ.²⁸ Barth wants to make this point

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quite clear that the saints are those whose existence is affected, radically altered, and re-determined by the fact that they receive direction in a particular address of the one who alone is Holy.²⁹ The saints are still sinners but they are disturbed sinners, whereas the unreconciled individual is an undisturbed sinner, one who has no limits. The saints are limited by the fact that they are not merely called out but called in, called into a fellowship of their existence with His existence and therefore are sanctified by the one who is sanctified by the Father and sanctifies Himself; thus their limitation is freedom. They are saints only in virtue of the sanctity of the one who calls them.

The call is a call to discipleship, to the denying of one's self, i.e., for Barth the withdrawal and annulment of an existing relationship of obedience and loyalty and taking up another relationship that of following Him. This Grace which commands to follow Him demands trust and obedience to Himself, and since it is Jesus who commands there can be no self-selection on the part of those who follow. And the freedom given to follow Jesus is in itself Sanctification.

We must now briefly insure the nature of this Sanctification.

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It does not appear from Barth's dogmatics that he confuses Justification and Sanctification as Berkhof asserts, for he emphatically states that "when we speak of Justification and Sanctification we have to do with two different aspects of the one event of salvation".³⁰ The distinction between them has its basis in the fact that we have in this event two genuinely different moments. Thus although the two belong indissolubly together, the one cannot be explained by the other. It is one thing that God turns in free grace to sinful man, and quite another that in the same free grace, He converts man to Himself. Barth teaches that to allow Justification and Sanctification to merge is to confuse soteriology,³¹ and it is on this point that he differs from Bultmann.

This is due to the fact that, for Bultmann, Sanctification is merely the outcome and the correct understanding of one's Justification, it is not a declarative act as is Justification.³² Barth does not appear to confuse the two, but has taken seriously the believer's complete dependence on Jesus Christ for everything. Even though he puts the emphasis upon the declarative nature of Sanctification, in that they are saints only in virtue of the sanctity of the one who calls /...

them, and on whom their gaze is not very well directed, yet these men are saints as they lift up themselves in obedience to the call which comes to them.

This leads us to the problem of special ethics. In the problem of special ethics we come onto the question of what is good human action, for a man is called to follow. Our problem is here to understand the Word of God as the command of God. "The hearing and obeying of which is man's Sanctification".^{33.}

It is the freeing of sinner for eternal life by God's judging grace human action set free by the command of God. One's action is always concrete, i.e., one's action is related to the sequence of events in which this concrete person, living in a definite place at a definite time, is faced with a concrete condition to which he or she must give an answer. The command of God naturally follows them into that action which is distinctively human, i.e., into the related sequence of events which man meets existentially. At this point how we are to understand the command of God? From here onwards Barth leans very heavily upon Bonhoeffer in rejecting casuistry in every form.^{34.}

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The voice of God must meet a man not in proof texts nor in laws or anything related for this is the road to Justification and Sanctification via the Pharisee. This, for Barth, is the downfall of the Roman Catholic system, in that it legislates for every concrete circumstance, but what this does is that it excludes God from the circumstances in that He is replaced by law.

Another downfall of this situation is that it can set up one human conscience as the norm for another, forgetting that God meets man individually and differently. There is a prophetic ethos in which individuals guide one another in discussion and assist one another concerning matters pertaining to God, but even the final judgement upon this venture rests with God, and not with them. Barth points out that casuistry is untenable because it dethrones God, replacing Him by the moralist or by accepting the commandment of God as a universal rule, whereas it is rather the individual command of God for this man at this moment, in this situation.

The outcome of casuistical ethics then is that man is not free to obey God, for he adheres to a decision which is not the divine command and is consequently not free to hear the /...

voice of God. We must now ask ourselves the question of how God's will becomes concrete. God desires that His will should voluntarily be in line with that of the person, and that the individual takes God's will making it a matter of his or her own choice and decision.

It is not just that one carries out what God wishes, but that in the carrying out of God's wish, one continually offers himself to God in so doing. God's commandment does not allow us room for interpretation, but only for obedience or disobedience. It is not just a mystical finding out of God's will in quiet time or similar exercises. It is not casus conscientiae. It is a single, clear, unitary command, not a number of disconnected individual demands.

Concrete human action therefore proceeds under a single divine order which persists in all the differentiation of individual cases, the insoluble link between divine command and human action or the horizontal and the vertical. The problem of special ethics is to ascertain the divine command which never can be abstracted from actual existence. From here onwards Barth once again leans heavily on Bonhoeffer, who maintains that God's command is given in a definite /...

historical form, Jesus Christ. This form may be found in the mandates, which are work, marriage, government and the church. They concern man and all men.

These mandates are not derived from below but from above. They are the deputies and representatives of God, and it is from the Holy Scriptures that we learn of these mandates which give concrete form to the command since they do not emerge from reality but descend into it. It is from the WORD that we learnt what must be done, and Jesus Christ is the WORD which speaks through these mandates to us.³⁵

It has already been stated that Schuller avoids entering the theological arena in the same way as Barth, Berkouwer, Bultmann or Küng would enter it. It was also added though, that everything that Schuller says within the Christian realm, is based on a theological concept.

Nowhere in Schuller's vocabulary does he use the term special ethics or refer to the mandates which are derived from above, as Bonhoeffer and Barth do. There is, however, a continual reminder from Schuller that we are not directed by earthly principles and human directives, but need to acknowledge the /...

divine commands which are derived from the Word of God.^{36.}

The point then, in working through this issue of special ethics, is to show that Schuller is equally frustrated as Barth, in as much as, that for both of them there has been far too many human directives given pertaining to Christianity, which have detracted from Jesus Christ. Schuller emphasizes that the church, generally speaking, has not brought the individual to a point of liberation in Christ, but has continued to condemn the individual by emphasizing its own mandates.^{37.}

If we are to ask the question who is the God and what right has He to command in this way? we would have to answer that He is the Triune God, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. He is not only Creator but our Reconciler and Redeemer. Wherever His command encounters us it is determined by the fact that He is God and the person who responds is the sinner to whom God in His freedom is gracious. Ethics always deals with the mystery of this encounter. For it is here as one is reconciled to God, in this Man that he or she becomes free to live for God. Therefore Barth makes a valid point when he says that the whole truth of God is not known only as we meet /...

Him as Creator but also Reconciler and Redeemer. His will cannot simply be read off from these truths or else we have another form of casuistry; yet God's command can never be abstracted from a personal encounter with the Reconciler and Redeemer. They are not universal ethical truths but the truths of the one command as it meets man in these spheres. We must never feel that man is completely able to interpret this truth of encountering Jesus Christ to the uttermost and our knowledge of these spheres pertaining to the truth can never actually be full, yet we know the command is still genuinely dictated by the Word of God to us, and ethics gives a well-founded and legitimate witness to the light of revelation.

To sum up we can say that the task of special ethics is to ascertain the will of God for man in special circumstances apart from casuistry which works from below to above. This can only be known in the God-man Jesus Christ, as He reveals Himself in the mandates and as Creator redeems and reconciles.³⁹

This above point is the very thing that separates Schuller from the secular humanists. For them every-thing begins with /...

individuals efforts and ends with a self-satisfaction that the "I" has succeeded. Schuller affirms that the "I" can succeed, but adds that this complete success is founded in a true and meaningful relationship with Jesus Christ.⁴⁰ When humanity stands condemned as the direct result of the negative demands placed upon it by those who are attempting to reform it, Schuller points this same humanity to the Christ who ultimately restores broken lives.

We must now look at the next aspect which involves God the Creator as Commander. As has been said before concerning God's command, we must realise that it is the one whole command of the one whole God, and it is in the fulfilment of obedience to this command that man is free for God and for eternal life. We must now decide what this means in relationship to one's Sanctification by His command. It must be remembered that the God who meets us and in His commandment, is the God who is gracious to us in Jesus Christ, the Creator who is Lord of all that is. Where and how do we know of the commandment of God, in His particular form as Creator and of a Sanctification of the creature action? This is known only in Jesus Christ. For it is only in Him that we know for certain what creation is and who the creator is /...

confronting men and women, and implicit within creation is the command of God.^{41.}

It is only by faith that we can understand the creation and if we have the faith to understand creation this presupposes that we have a knowledge of the creative work of Christ. Therefore we are already Sanctified because of our knowledge of the Creator which is a knowledge derived from faith.^{42.} The decree which makes creation possible is also the gracious election of the individual in Jesus Christ. It is in relation to the election of Jesus Christ that God created the universe in Christ. Jesus then gives meaning and purpose to His creation of the universe.

Creation in itself is God's "yes" to all His works of which man is part, and since this yes takes place in Jesus Christ and includes men and women, it is also their Sanctification. Therefore the command given to the individual by His creator is the command which is directed to the individual to whom God is gracious in Jesus Christ.^{43.}

It would appear that all that Barth is saying is that God's decree of creation had in view the individual's election in /...

Sanctification. Since in God's sight the elect Man represents humanity, we are already Sanctified. For the command is that of the One who has elected men and women in Christ.^{46.}

The witness of Scripture respecting God the Creator is a witness to Christ, the only ground and meaning of creation. Darkness and chaos have a place in this witness only as rejected realities, but the individual stands as accepted in Christ; thus Barth can speak of the triumph of creation, a completely Christ-centred theology.^{47.}

In the light of the above then, it is no wonder that this man has affected the thinking of the world of theology to the same degree that Einstein and Newton affected the thinking of the world of physics, and Kant, Hegel and Kierkegaard the thinking of the world of philosophy. But together with Barth there were other thinkers who also made their mark on the theological thinking of their day and we now move on to consider Rudolf Bultmann. There will be sections of Bultmann's thinking that will tie up with Schuller and Barth, but we need to see by comparison how Schuller and Barth keep bringing us back to our completeness in Christ Jesus in a way /...

which has similarities to Bultmann, but also differentiates from him.

Up to this point in the thesis our consideration of Barth and Schuller has certainly centred on the person and work of Jesus Christ. In our developing Barth and Schuller's Christology and Soteriology we need to pause briefly to see whether Bultmann can contribute to this process. Bultmann has presented what he believes to be a very clear and definite picture of the work of Christ and we need to develop this and apply it to Schuller and Barth. Bultmann's doctrine of Justification and what he says concerning Sanctification is of particular interest to us in our study.

Part Two - Rudolf Bultmann

Bultmann has often been referred to as one of the 20th century's most influential theologians. Although referred to as a radical by some of the more conservative evangelicals, he was at heart a churchman, seeking by his scholarship to make the Christian message live for his contemporaries. In order to do this, Bultmann claimed that it was necessary to recognise in the Bible that which was myth and then
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demythologise it in order for it to be comprehensible.

He was greatly influenced by the existentialist, Martin Heidegger and spent virtually his entire career reading the New Testament as a Heideggerian document using historical - critical methods to eliminate from the text elements resistive to existentialism.⁴⁸ Bultmann saw the individual as being inauthentic (not oneself) and when the New Testament speaks of one as a sinner and under the sway of death, this inauthenticity is what it has in mind. Salvation then, for Bultmann, is radical openness to the future, which is the same as the individual's full acknowledgement that he or she is the decision maker.⁴⁹ Bultmann parted company with the secular theologians when they insisted the individual can become authentic by forthrightly confronting his or her own death, insecurity and meaninglessness, but for Bultmann, being a Christian means that one is in need of a saviour, and he even goes as far as to say that authenticity can be achieved only through Jesus Christ.⁵⁰ It is in the light of this then that we consider the views of Rudolf Bultmann pertaining to the doctrine of Justification and Sanctification.

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Justification by faith means for Bultmann in the first place, (and here he follows the line of Lutheran Theology), forgiveness of sin as a historic event, real in Jesus Christ.^{51.}

Bultmann points out that to speak of God means at the same time to speak of man as being claimed by God. He sees God's judging Word both convicting man of sin, and offering forgiveness at the same time. Thus for Bultmann man before God is "sinner and just at the same time".^{52.} He points out that it is the paradox of the Christian faith that there is no progress from one to the other since in God's judgement the justified man remains the sinful creature forever.^{53.} He now echoes Barth and points out that Justification does not alter man's moral structure, and justice is no supernatural quality to be demonstrated in good works.^{54.}

Bultmann also sees the forensic use of the term, "made righteous" which he equates with Justification.^{55.} He goes to great lengths to show that the Old Testament had the individual striving after righteousness because this led to life. Strictly speaking he says, righteousness is the condition for receiving salvation or "life".^{56.} This condition of life in the New Testament is to be found only in Christ.

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In developing his relationship between humanity and God, frequently uses the term righteous or righteousness. In considering the contrast between Pauline and Jewish conception of this term, he points out that it must be clearly recognised that there is complete agreement between them as to the formal meaning of righteousness or being reckoned righteous. Both see it as a forensic - eschatological term.⁵⁷

For Bultmann the doctrine of Justification is the all important doctrine. When one considers all the other doctrines pertaining to man's relationship with God, one must end up at the doctrine of Justification. There is no place for a doctrine of Sanctification in his doctrine as he claims that this teaching of a sanctifying experience is out of place. If there is such a thing as a Holy Life, it can only stem from one place and that is the doctrine of Justification. Bultmann points out that the fact that you are a Christian is in the indicative (justification). In order to show that Bultmann does not see any Justification/ Sanctification progression, he affirms that now that one is a Christian one must therefore act like one, which is in the imperative.⁵⁸ Strictly speaking then Bultmann would simply

combine the two. This makes Sanctification simply an ethical command based on Justification.

Both Schuller and Barth would need to object to this almost over simplification of one's Sanctification. Sanctification for both Schuller and Barth is an all important doctrine because of the idea of completeness that surrounds it in their thinking. They would, however, be in agreement with the absolute position one has in Christ, having being declared righteous by the Holy God in one's Justification.

For both Barth and Schuller the reconciling process goes further than simply a question of God no longer letting his wrath prevail. The process is made complete in Jesus Christ and then the Holy Spirit continues to work in the life of the individual reminding them of their call to a holy life because of the absolute victory in Christ.

Schuller does not develop a pneumatology concerning the position of completeness that he holds so dearly to. Barth develops a doctrine which considers the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of the individual pointing out that the Spirit does not make one more complete but constantly reminds /....

us of our completeness and convicts us to live up to that completeness. This will be developed in the last chapter.

Part Three - The Reformed Theologian - G.C. Berkouwer

The main objective in considering Berkouwer in this thesis is to show how he differs in his thinking concerning Sanctification to the thinking of that of Schuller and Barth. The point has been stressed over and over again in this study that at the centre of both Schuller and Barth's thinking is a success story. This term is used selectively and implies that we are assured of a total victory in life because of the finished work of Christ on the cross. What we have in both Barth and Schuller is a fully applied doctrine of Sanctification for the here and the now. Berkouwer places much emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit who is at present bringing about this Sanctification of the believer. For both Barth and Schuller this approach would be unacceptable. For Barth it would imply an incomplete work of Christ on the cross and for Schuller this incomplete state would radically affect individual's self-esteem because of the continued emphasis on one's shortcomings.

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Let us then move on to examine Berkouwer to see whether or not this is so and to consider any similarities that might occur in his thinking and that of Barth and Schuller.

G.C. Berkouwer, a Dutch theologian in the Reformed tradition, is often considered as a "Neo-Calvinist" (for lack of a better term!) He repudiated the typical God in a box type of Neo-Platonism into which Dutch Calvinism had fallen at the turn of the century. He felt that Reformed theology was sympathetic toward the metaphysical debate and that there needed to be a complete break away from the Greek mysticism that had crept into Dutch thinking.⁵⁹

In looking at Berkouwer and his theological system, it is not surprising that it has been said that Barth feels that Berkouwer is the only theologian that can criticise him intelligently. It would seem that this was so because Barth took Calvin to his logical conclusion in his view of the Sovereignty of God and Berkouwer being a Calvinist could understand this. Barth aligns himself with Berkouwer's book Faith and Sanctification and comments that he is particularly happy to record his general agreement with it.⁶⁰ Let us consider briefly then a summary of Berkouwer's view of /...

Justification and Sanctification to establish how his thinking aligns itself with that of Schuller and Barth.

A New Beginning

For Berkouwer the individual experiences a new beginning in the Christian life. This new beginning is a direct result of the Power of the Holy Spirit working through and in the individual. The question asked by Berkouwer is whether this individual is now a new person or does he or she simply have a new perspective on life. Berkouwer points out that there can be no Christian life without God and the new life in Christ involves both a new perspective and a new person. In his book Faith and Justification⁶¹. Berkouwer points out that the ordo salutis cannot simply be answered by a process of proof texting.⁶² In looking at this new beginning he addresses the question of ordo salutis and points out that salvation has everything to do with human life down to its most subjective facets. The point Berkouwer is making has to do with sola fide and sola gratia. Should one within oneself see two distinct salvations, one subjective in faith and one objective in the work of Christ, then one would be falling into the same error as the Roman Catholic concept of the /...

For Berkouwer faith in the new beginning possesses no unique functional value; it rests wholly in God's grace. He points out that in order to avoid the heresy which always invades the ordo salutis at the point of sola fide it is necessary to realise that the entire way of salvation is only meant to illuminate sola fide and sola gratia because only then can it be confessed that Christ is the way.⁶⁵

Along with Barth, Berkouwer rejects the view of infused grace. He does however put a lot of emphasis on the work of the Holy Spirit in making the individual aware of his sonship. The infused grace which Berkouwer opposes is the Roman Catholic view that in every individual there is a "Divine Spark" growing better and better.

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Schuller would also reject this concept of infused grace. For him the whole idea of striving to improve one's position in Christ needs to be rejected. This would mean that the individual in a sense has failed and therefore a self improvement programme is embarked upon. What Schuller continually emphasizes is that we are complete in Christ and therefore let us recognise the completeness in order to realise the inherent potential within us.

Let us now develop Berkouwer's thinking concerning infused grace as we relate it to that of Barth and Schuller.

Awareness

Berkouwer in looking at the question of infused grace asks the question concerning the awareness of the individual in his relationship to Christ. Is there not a growing awareness that would hint at a progression within the life of the individual in his or her relationship with Jesus Christ? Berkouwer points out that it is this awareness that the Holy Spirit gives one that makes one aware that Justification has taken place. For Berkouwer, this then is the first step; next, comes the individual's Sanctification; this is the /...

Holy Spirit working within a person's life, making one aware and bringing the conviction to live a Holy life. It is also the Holy Spirit that brings the gratitude within the individual as to what Father and Son have done. It can therefore be said that it is the work of the Holy Spirit to sanctify one by working in and through one.^{66.}

In showing his rejection of this infused grace and in order to give clarity on the question of one's progression, Berkouwer points out that the progress of Sanctification is a process comparable with no other process. Progress in Sanctification never meant working out one's own salvation under one's own auspices; on the contrary, it meant working out one's own salvation with a rising dependence on God's Grace.^{67.}

In the light of this concept of working out one's own salvation, it is vitally important that we also consider the question of biblical language in order to understand Berkouwer and his view pertaining to the process of being built up. This will also enable us to grasp more fully the fundamental differences in this type of thinking compared to that of Barth and Schuller.

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Biblical Language

Berkouwer takes note of the Biblical language which seems to indicate a progression in the Christian life. An example of this is the whole analogy of the seed and its being planted and the growth that takes place. Obviously this is closely linked to the whole doctrine of infused grace and that is why Berkouwer states that the Reformed tradition, of which he is part, rejects the concept of infused grace, but does however see progression in the life of the believer. Berkouwer says it is something happening in the believer whereas Barth would say it is something happening through the believer.

Berkouwer's emphasis would be on the Holy Spirit working in the believer, convicting him or her of sin. Barth would emphasize the Holy Spirit reminding the believer of his or her position in Christ and therefore it would be a reflection of the finished work at Calvary displayed through the believer and not something strived for. For Berkouwer this action of the Spirit in the believer reveals itself in the evidence of the fruit of the Holy Spirit.

Schuller states that as a result of that which has happened in me and as a result of that which is happening through me I /...

can now be the achiever that I ought to be.⁶⁸ By this he simply means that we are a new creation in Christ and the Holy Spirit continues to work through me reminding me of this fact. As a direct result of this knowledge of one's completeness in Christ, one can now face life boldly and attempt those things never thought possible before.

Let us now move on to consider Hans Küng, the Roman Catholic theologian. It has been the thought of the Roman Catholic Church that we are continuously in need of striving for perfection that has brought strong opposition from both Schuller and Barth. Barth has approached it theologically and Schuller has approached it humanistically. Both conclude that the striving should not be toward becoming like Christ but rather a striving toward a realisation of who we are in Christ.

Part Four - The Roman Catholic Theologian - Hans Küng

Before considering Küng's contribution to the doctrines in question, let us briefly consider the man himself and the influence that he has had on current theological thinking. This will help us to understand why Küng is considered to be /...

important in the discussion pertaining to Schuller and Barth and the individual's relationship to a Holy God.

Küng has been regarded as a progressive thinker who has certainly influenced Roman Catholic thinking over the years. He helped to promote many of the reforms at the Second Vatican Council, pushing Roman Catholicism to its doctrinal limits as his book Council, Reform and Reunion (1961) shows. In his work Justification (1964) he even advanced the startling thesis that the Calvinist and the Roman Catholic views of Justification are substantially the same, with the Council of Trent's teaching being an extreme which is defensible only as a necessary answer to the opposite extreme of Luther.⁶⁹ Küng did not think that this compromised Trent's irreformability, since its presentation remained true in context, even if it needed to be supplemented to achieve the total picture. His reservations about the papacy as a true pastorate, along with his publication Humane Vitae on birth control, launched him into a fuller investigation of authority in his book Infallible. If Küng was moving toward a reformation position on Justification and the Petrine office, it seemed to the conservatives that he was in actual fact going beyond it to liberal Protestantism with his denial /...

of Scriptural infallibility. The implications of this denial came out in his apologetic work On being a Christian (1971) in which while stressing Christ's centrality, he called many New Testament stories uncertain, contradictory and legendary. In this writing Küng also weakened God's transcendence in favour of Christ's humanity and seemed to present Christ more as an example to follow than a "Divine Saviour in whom to trust".⁷⁰ It can be seen then that this man certainly has, and still is, influencing theology within the Roman Catholic Church although he is no longer recognised as a Roman Catholic theologian. In the light of this we now consider briefly his doctrine of Justification and Sanctification. Kung points out that before the topic can be discussed it needs to be realised that there is a process of Justification which really is not Justification, and a process of Sanctification which is Sanctification in appearance only. Justification and Sanctification of sinful people are found in every religion. In some it is accomplished through nature-magic, in others through piety which expresses itself in ritual worship or through a morality which emphasises active fulfilment of duty. But in dealing with the topic Küng says:

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what we are speaking of here is not just any sanctification, and certainly least of all man's autonomous self-justification and self-sanctification as they are understood in the Scriptures, which, for the Christian, are binding.⁷¹

For Küng Justification and Sanctification is God's work and must therefore be seen as Christ working in our lives. These two are a Divine movement, not just one's response, but God's act. This act is twofold, God's declaration is one's Justification and God setting man apart is one's Sanctification.

This declaration also has legal character and we need to develop Küng's thinking on this before moving on.

Justification has a legal character

For Küng the whole concept of Justification is forensic. He makes the point that the root word for dikaion (to justify) and dikaiosis (justification) is dike (punishment). This occurs only three times in the New Testament and is always understood as criminal justice and punishment (Acts 28:4; 2 Thess. 1:9; Jude 7). Küng then sees this action as God dealing with sinful man in the setting of a courtroom scene /...

where man is either legally declared free or legally declared condemned. Küng regards the legal aspect of Justification in the synagogue teaching as significant where Paul for his own terminology has drawn extensively upon the "juridical language of the Pharisees".⁷²

This concept of Küng certainly makes the point clear that one is Justified as a direct result of God's Grace. Barth, as has already been pointed out, holds very much to the legal aspect of the individual's Justification as it is declared by the Righteous God in Christ. What would present a problem for Barth would be Küng's approach to the individual's Sanctification within the context of the group or the church. Küng would be more in line with G.C. Berkouwer and this approach does open itself up to the idea that upon examination the individual finds himself unworthy because of a position that is yet to be achieved but in fact never will be achieved while out of the presence of the Lord.

This unworthiness for Schuller would be a problem because it would lead to a detraction from the individual's positive self-esteem and hence result in self-condemnation as apposed to a positive realisation as to who we really are or can be /...

in Christ Jesus. Let us now consider Kung's thinking pertaining to the individual being set apart prior to our consideration of his view on the individual's part in the events of Justification and Sanctification.⁷³

Set Apart

For Kung the terms Sanctified (verb) or Sanctification (noun) are inseparable from the terms Justified (verb) or Justification (noun). He stresses very clearly that although the two are inseparable they must not be confused. He would see this setting apart as being the work of the Holy Spirit in the life of one who has already been justified by the Father in Christ. We see then for Kung this doctrine involves the work of all the members of the trinity. In looking at the work of the trinity it must be understood says Kung that the work of Christ is more than His standing in my stead (forensic), rather my righteousness is based on the fact that Christ has been Justified and Sanctified.

This section of Kung's we are about to consider is of prime importance to the central theme. We need to remind ourselves that for both Barth and Schuller the role that individuals /...

play or do not play in relation to their Sanctification is crucial. For Barth the central thought emphasizes the role Christ took as Man. For Schuller the central theme concentrates on the part the individual can now have as a direct result of the role taken by the Man, Christ Himself.

We consider then:

Man's part in Justification and Sanctification

Based on his strong forensic approach to Justification, Küng points out that it is impossible for any person to be Justified by works, even if these works are prescribed by the holy law of Israel. No one can stand before God in his own strength. We are Justified through God's grace, and thereby every human achievement is excluded when Justification is in question. Küng also differentiated between works and acts. He does this by showing that the individual cannot be saved by works, but one's act of faith in Jesus Christ saves Him.

Justification through faith alone bespeaks the complete incapacity and incompetence of man for any sort of self-justification. In justification the sinner cannot give anything which he does not receive from grace.

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The attitude of simple trusting submission under God's gracious judgement is faith which does not even appeal to its own self, its deed or its attitude, which would only be the craftiest kind of glorifying (1 Cor. 4:7; Rom. 4:20). Thus no work not even a work of love justifies man, but only faith, justified through God Himself.⁷⁴

In the book Theologians Today, pages 41 and 42, Küng summarises his view pertaining to the part the Christian plays in his or her Sanctification. This is a very comprehensive section and an attempt to express Küng's view in other words would be doing him an injustice. What follows then is a quote from the abovementioned book showing Kung's views on this matter.

Now with sanctification the case is different. God's sanctification impels man to sanctify his own self. 'Just as he who calls you is holy, so also ought you to become holy in all your dealings. For it is written: Be holy, for I am holy' (1 Pet. 1:15f; cf. Lev. 11:44). This 'self-sanctifying' of man can be very easily misunderstood. It is God who sanctifies we saw that. God in Jesus Christ. On the Cross, the Holy One of God, rejected by man, sacrificed himself for our sanctification, to be given back to us in the Resurrection: Christ is our sanctification (1 Cor. 1:30); his Holy Spirit makes this holiness fruitful in external works (2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 2:2). Holiness thus means the state of belonging to God and being dedicated to God, in which man, sharing as a member of the Church in the Holy Spirit, has been called to holy service and holy sacrifice - in Christ. Up to

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this point, then, there is no self-sanctification of man: no sanctification of man himself, but only by the unmerited grace of God in Jesus Christ through his Holy Spirit.

But there is a 'self-sanctification' of man insofar as man himself - not by himself, but he himself - has to sanctify himself. 'This is the will of God, your sanctification' (1 Thess. 4:3). God's will is the basis and goal of our continued sanctification. This sanctification means behaviour pleasing to God (4:1), which consists in the observance of the commandments (4:2), especially purity of bodily life in refraining from unchastity (4:3), so that even the marriage relationship is fulfilled with sanctification and honour (4:4), 'For God has not called us to unchastity, but to sanctification' (4:7). We ought then to dedicate our members to the service of justice for sanctification (Rom. 6:19). Thus the fruit of purity is sanctification (Rom. 6:22); with modesty we must persevere in it (1 Tim. 2:15). We must actively pursue sanctification. Without it, no one will see the Lord (Heb. 12:14).⁷⁵

Barth, Schuller and Berkouwer would support Küng in the above quote on his view pertaining to the concept of self-justification. For all of them it is only God who can Justify. They are in agreement that strong emphasis is placed on the forensic aspects of the person's Justification as he or she is declared righteous by the Holy God.

The quote indicates that the individual is involved in his or her Sanctification. This involvement requires an observance /...

of the commandments of God which will lead to a holy life. Berkouwer would place more emphasis on the Holy Spirit's involvement in this process but would generally agree with Küng. Barth and Schuller on the other hand would have a problem with this concept of Sanctification. For Barth Sanctification is not something worked at. It is a completed act in Christ. The individual is declared both Justified and Sanctified in Christ. For Schuller the very basis of being in a position to develop a positive self-esteem is because of the completeness of oneself in Christ. Küng's pursuing Sanctification would lead to all sorts of problems for Schuller because of the concept of failure. i.e. What would happen to the individual if he or she failed in his or her pursuit? This would lead to a sense of not having achieved. For Schuller the achieving has been done by Christ and now the individual's responsibility is to acknowledge that achievement and apply it to one's lifestyle.

Having examined these various men, we conclude then, that irrespective of their particular theological positions, they are all primarily concerned with the individual's relationship to a Holy God. The purpose in doing this comparison is not simply to show the differences in their /...

thinking, but rather to show why Schuller and Barth have formed the basis of this study and not Schuller and one of the other men under discussion.

Having formulated some pattern of thought then concerning our Sanctification it is now of prime importance for us to establish whether or not Schuller and Barth's thinking would fit into a contemporary evangelical theology of Justification and Sanctification. If their contributions to the theological world in their consideration of who the individual is, or at least who he thinks he is, are not firstly contemporary and secondly evangelical, then alas this thesis is nothing else but another theological exercise. Schuller's major thrust in his ministry is to meet people at their point of need. Barth's views on Sanctification were intended to do just this. Barth saw the church as locked into a sense of failure because of its poor views on the finished work of Christ. For both Schuller and Barth a message of hope was of prime importance. Not one of struggling and pursuing and possibly achieving, but one of having the positive self-esteem and the assurance of a completeness in Christ.

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Let us then move on to establish what could be regarded as a contemporary evangelical theology of Justification and Sanctification and then in the light of our discovery move on to evaluate the thinking of the two men in question, Schuller and Barth.

It will now become apparent that Berkouwer, Kung and Bultmann no longer take a significant role in the development of this thesis. They were introduced as a means of comparison to show that besides Barth who is compatible with Schuller, there are other leading theologians who would not necessarily be compatible with Schuller's thinking.

The point has been made that Schuller's human self-esteem can only be compatible with a doctrine that holds to an absolute Sanctification and this is found in the thinking of Karl Barth.

Berkouwer, Bultmann and Kung certainly have similarities, but having seen Barth and Schuller in the light of some other leading thinkers in this field, it is now necessary to move on and concentrate on the two centre figures of our study, namely, Barth and Schuller.

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CHAPTER FOUR

BARTH AND SCHULLER IN THE LIGHT OF A CONTEMPORARY EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY OF JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

The closing section of the previous chapter pointed out that both Schuller and Barth could be regarded as being contemporary. If what Schuller and Barth are saying is to be taken seriously then it needs to be evaluated in the light of contemporary evangelical views on Justification and Sanctification.

It is important to stress that Berkouwer, Bultmann and Küng are now excluded from the study, not because their thinking on Justification and Sanctification could not be referred to as contemporary and evangelical, but, rather they highlight the proximity of Schuller to Barth. They have served their purpose for this study, as has been pointed out in the previous chapter, and now the time has come to turn our attention toward Schuller and Barth.

Whenever one comes to an evaluation of any particular

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doctrine it is essential that a norm be first established. This norm would then serve as a comparative tool against which the doctrine or doctrines in question could be tested. In this particular case we have come to consider Schuller's concept of human self-esteem and how it relates to the doctrine of Sanctification in Neo-Orthodoxy, or more specifically, Karl Barth.

As we find ourselves reaching a point of evaluation we need to determine certain criteria which will ultimately affect both Schuller and Barth. It is essential that these criteria are not derived from our own thoughts or standards but rather from Scripture itself.

Let us then move on and establish what the writer of this thesis regards as an evangelical basis and interpretation for the doctrines of Sanctification and Justification. We need to remember that we have considered Schuller's biblical basis for his doctrine of self-esteem and now we consider Justification and Sanctification.

If the evangelicals are rejecting Schuller and more specifically Barth in this instance, then we need to
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establish why. In the light of that which has already been examined in chapters 2 and 3, it will now become clear that evangelicals agree with Barth and Schuller on the doctrine of Justification, but differ with them on the doctrine of Sanctification. It will be pointed out that even on the doctrine of Sanctification there are similarities between neo-orthodox and evangelical thinking concerning Sanctification.

We move on then to determine an evangelical base and, in doing so, will discuss how Schuller and Barth compare with these points of view.

Justification (δικαιωσις); to Justify (δικαιοῦν);

Evangelical theology defines Justification as that act of God by which the sinner, who is responsible for his guilt and is under condemnation but believes in Christ, is pronounced just and righteous, or acquitted, by God the Judge.¹ (Rom. 3:28; 4:25; 5:16, 18; 8:28-34). In the Scriptures we see that God justifies by grace, for Christ's sake, through faith.

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Part One - Terminology

The noun Justification is not frequently used in the Bible. It is used only twice by Paul in his letter to the Romans. The Biblical writers are prone to speak of Justification in dynamic terms of the verb Justify which is also found in the LXX. "Righteousness is a pregnant dynamic term of action describing God's act of pronouncing righteous, making righteous or even doing righteousness."²

James Packer refers to it as a forensic term, denoting a judicial act of administering the law, in this case, by declaring a verdict of acquittal, and so excluding all possibility of condemnation. Justification thus settles the legal status of the person Justified.³

This is the point that both Schuller and Barth have displayed in all their thinking. The individual, in order to live a life of completeness in Christ, needs to take seriously the fact that he or she has legally been declared free.

The Apostle Paul makes this point very clear and we pause briefly to examine what he says in order to underline that
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which both Barth and Schuller are in full agreement with.

Part Two - The Apostle Paul and Justification

A characteristic of Paul's usage of the term Justification is that he never goes to great length to explain the term when he uses it. He assumes that his readers are aware of the forensic meaning.

Paul with his Jewish background and his awareness of the Old Testament concept of righteousness and judgement also makes use of the term eschatologically. We say according to Paul that Justification has two sides. On the one hand, it means the pardon, remission and non-imputation of all sins, reconciliation to God, and the end of His enmity and wrath. (Acts 13:39; Rom. 4:6, 7; 2 Cor. 5:19; Rom. 5:9ff). On the other hand, it means the bestowal of a righteous man's status and a title to all the blessings promised to the just: a thought which Paul amplifies by linking Justification with the adoption of believers as God's sons and heirs.

(Rom. 8:14ff; Gal. 4:4ff).⁴

Paul's deliberate paradoxical reference to God as justifying
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the ungodly (Rom. 4:5), the same Greek phrase as is used by the LXX in Exod. 23:7; Isa. 5:23 of the corrupt judgement that God will not tolerate, reflects his awareness that this is a startling doctrine.

Even in this brief study of the Apostle Paul's doctrine of Justification it is clear that both Schuller and Barth could be said to have a Pauline doctrine of Justification. The emphasis being on the definite declaration of righteousness for the redeemed sinner.

It is just as important to establish whether or not Barth and Schuller's thinking would be compatible to a evangelical doctrine of Sanctification. We move on then to consider this doctrine.

Part Three - Sanctification

The significance of the doctrine of Sanctification is not a doctrine that was founded in the Christ of the New Testament, but right from the earliest times in the Old Testament writings we find reference to it. Sanctification is seen by evangelical scholars as one of the most important concepts in /...

Biblical and historical theology and the term Sanctification and terms referring to it appear more than a thousand times in the Scriptures.⁵

For some evangelicals Sanctification may be defined as the process of acquiring sanctity or holiness as a result of association with deity. The problem for some scholars with this definition would be the word process. Barth for instance would immediately oppose such a definition and would point out that one's holiness is complete in Christ. The process has already been completed and it is now our responsibility to acknowledge that completeness and to live up to it as the Holy Spirit convinces us of this fact and our now new found moral obligation.

Although the doctrine of Sanctification originates in the Old Testament, for the purpose of this thesis and an evangelical approach to this doctrine we are going to concentrate more on the New Testament application of it. The reason for this being that we are majoring on the finished work of Christ on the cross and its significance in the doctrines of Self-Esteem and Sanctification.

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As already mentioned concerning the Greek root, it can be assumed that the most important Greek term for Sanctification is hagiasmos, which denotes the state of grace or sanctity not inherent in its subject, but the result of an outside action.⁶ In the New Testament we have three definite meanings of sanctification which emerge. The first two deal with the Sanctification of the Father and the Son. The point to note regarding these two instances and Schuller and Barth's thinking is the emphasis on that which is an accomplished fact. Both the Father and the Son are completely Sanctified. This is a clear biblical point. We need to note then that the Sanctified Father has declared us Sanctified in and through the action of the Sanctified Son.

Let us note briefly the Scriptural evidence which underscores this before moving on to discuss the Sanctification of the believer.

The Sanctification of God the Father⁷.

When Jesus prayed, He acknowledged the holiness or sanctity of His Father (John 17:11). In the model prayer believers are taught to pray for the hallowing (sanctifying) of the /...

Father's name. (Matt. 6:9; Luke 11:2).

The Sanctification of the Son⁸.

The Son was Sanctified by the Father (John 10:36) at the Incarnation, and the Son Sanctified or dedicated Himself for the sake of His disciples (John 17:19). In these instances the meaning is separation, it designates a relationship rather than inner moral renewal.

The Sanctification of the believer⁹.

There are generally three approaches to the believer's Sanctification, namely that the believer is Sanctified positionally. An example of this is the Corinthian believers where they were Sanctified yet remained carnal.

Sanctification in this sense is attributive or imputational; it designates one's status, position or relationship, and not necessarily one's nature or spiritual condition.

Secondly, we have an approach to Sanctification whereby the believer is Sanctified progressively. We saw this definition with G.C. Berkouwer and Hans Küng in the previous section.

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This begins the moment the individual comes into a relationship with Christ. It designates imparted righteousness and occurs when one becomes a partaker of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:4), a new creation in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17), or is born anew (John 3:5-8). It involves not only a changed relationship to God but a changed nature, a real as well as a relative change.

Thirdly, we have a Sanctification where the believer is Sanctified entirely. Of all the views of Sanctification this one is the most debated and yet seems to make the most sense as will be seen in the next chapter.

It needs to be stressed at this point that neither Barth nor Schuller claim a sinless life while still in the flesh. The point is made though by both men that in a progressive view of Sanctification the individual is still working towards completeness in Christ and full recognition is not made of the position we already have in Christ because of the finished work on the cross.

To summarise then, we could say that in moving towards a contemporary evangelical theology of Justification and /...

Sanctification we affirm that:

Justification is an act whereby man is declared righteous by a Holy God through the work of Jesus Christ on the cross, and;

Sanctification is that work of God made complete in Jesus Christ and affirmed by the Holy Spirit whereby man is now set apart, as a result of his being declared righteous by the Holy God.

Those theologians such as Berkouwer and Küng who see Sanctification as being a process cannot simply be discarded. They have made an invaluable contribution to the theologically thinking world and even in this thesis cognisance is taken of their principles pertaining to Justification and Sanctification.

To oversimplify Barth could result in a complacent attitude towards one's holy life. We can say then, yes one is involved, one has a responsibility. Paul emphasizes this, but at the same time we need to read what Paul is saying in Philipians in conjunction with what he says to the /...

Christians in Rome. The individual's efforts unless founded in Christ are worthless and the believer's attitude toward his or her Sanctification is that of perfection, and that we are involved with a Holy God who will not tolerate a complacent attitude toward our position in Christ, but that the believer's position in Christ is not dependent on his or her action but rather the completed work of Christ at Calvary.

The time has now come for us now to evaluate Schuller's position regarding his concept of human self-esteem. This will be done in the light of what we have achieved in a comparative study of the views pertaining to the individual's Sanctification.

The above exercise has revealed to us that both the thinking of Barth and Schuller, regarding one's Sanctification, may certainly be considered as being evangelical.

We move on then to draw to conclusion our comparative study of Robert Schuller's concept of human self-esteem in relation to specific aspects of the doctrine of Sanctification in Neo-Orthodoxy.

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CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

The question has been asked throughout this thesis as to whether or not Schuller's concept of the individual's self-esteem and Barth's doctrine of Sanctification do in fact have anything in common.

It would be of tremendous value to us if in the deliberation that follows we keep in mind all that has been said regarding Schuller, his life, ministry and how he perceives a lost world reconciled to a Holy God.

The same must then apply to Karl Barth. Let us recapitulate very briefly to refresh our thinking concerning these two men.

Part One - Robert Schuller

Schuller's association with some of the leading positive thinkers of our age has branded him a positive thinker rather /...

than a theologian/evangelical churchman. As we considered his biblical basis for his human self-esteem it became clear that he had worked through his concepts from a Scriptural basis. The point that Schuller makes, and will now form the basis of our conclusion, is that the individual is in fact a worthy being.

Part Two - Karl Barth

If we are to be strictly evangelical then we need to acknowledge that everything that this exceptional theologian has had to say cannot be accepted at face value. If we pause for a moment and recapitulate on his doctrine of Sanctification relating to the revelation of the Word of God, we find Barth to be anything but the conservative evangelical. On the other hand when we come to his Soteriology and his Christology we find a man who presents some absolutely brilliant concepts.

Barth's central theme throughout his doctrine of Justification and Sanctification is Jesus Christ. We cannot even attempt to consider the individual's relationship to a Holy God without beginning and ending with Jesus Christ in /...

Barth's thinking. The point which we are now going to pursue in the light of Schuller is the individual's completeness in Christ. A completeness which brings with it a confidence, an assurance, an absolute realisation of that which we are and should be in Christ Jesus.

Having refreshed our thinking as to the central theme in the thesis and in the thinking of Schuller and Barth, it is necessary to now consider the question of humanism which is significant in the study of Schuller and particularly his concept of self-esteem. This brief consideration will also be useful in determining a link between the individual's self-worth and the completeness in Christ as defined by Barth.

In introducing Schuller in the earlier part of the thesis it was pointed out that he has often been referred to as a humanist rather than a theologian and churchman. This point was made again in the summary of Schuller in this chapter. The point to consider is whether or not those critical of Schuller have ever differentiated between secular humanism and Christian humanism.

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The Christian humanist values culture but confesses that man is fully developed only as he comes into a right relationship with Christ. When this happens, a person can begin to experience growth in all areas of life as the new creation of revelation.¹

The Christian humanists can also be described as those who believe that Christian revelation has a humanistic emphasis pointing to the fact that man was made in the image of God, that Jesus Christ became man through the incarnation, and that the worth of the individual is a consistent theme in the teaching of Jesus. Now the difference in emphasis between Christian and secular humanists needs to be noted and can be seen in the definition of secularism.

"Secularism or secular humanism is a way of life and thought that is pursued without reference to God or religion. It is a non religious approach to individual and social life."²

In the light of the above it is then possible that Schuller could be described as a Christian humanist, but to classify him as a secular humanist would be ridiculous and erroneous. Schuller continuously refers to the individual's relationship with Christ and the need to recognise one's new found position in Him.

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If Schuller is a Christian humanist, what then is his relationship to Barth, theologically speaking? The writer of this thesis is of the firm belief that there is indeed a very real and dynamic relationship between Schuller's concept of human self-esteem and specific aspects of the doctrine of Sanctification in Neo-Orthodoxy and in particular in Karl Barth.

In bringing these two concepts together, it is of prime importance that we realise that with self-esteem we are dealing primarily with an attitude of the mind that ultimately affects the attitude of the heart. With Sanctification we are dealing with an attitude of the heart that ultimately affects the attitude of the mind. This statement requires clarification but the understanding of it proves the thrust of this thesis. Let us therefore elaborate on it in order to formulate a definite conclusion.

Part Three - Schuller and Self-Esteem

To say that self-esteem is an attitude of the mind that affects the attitude of the heart certainly sounds like secularism or secular positive thinking. It is not /...

surprising that Schuller has been misunderstood and misquoted over the years. Having studied him and his human self-esteem, there is reason enough to believe that he has been misrepresented and in fact, presents a very acceptable evangelical approach to the Christian life.

The problem for most conservative evangelicals is the emphasis Schuller places on the mind and the psychological realm. They have interpreted this to mean that Schuller claims that one can convince oneself of one's goodness to the point of acquiring salvation and pardon from God. This is not so. Schuller continuously reminds us that humanity is incapable of saving itself and is in desperate need of a Saviour.³ Why then a beginning with the mind in order to affect the heart?

The point was made earlier in the study that Schuller considers the issue of men and women being created in the image of a Holy God as an established fact. A fact that was established in the Garden of Eden with the creation account. Schuller's thrust is therefore to bring the individual to a position within his or her cognitive realm where they can now consider their worth as individual men and women. The point /...

that Schuller makes is that we will continue to fail in reaching sinners just so long as we continue to address them at a level which deals with the negatives in their lives.

The transition from the head to the heart comes when we, having recognised our self-worth, now see that worth in the sight of God in the light of the fact that this God sent His perfect Son to die in our stead to redeem us. It is at this point that Schuller is probably the furthest from the doctrinal position that he claims to hold, namely, that of being Reformed. In the above thinking there would be no accommodating total depravity, irresistible grace or limited atonement. The emphasis would be on bringing individuals to that place of recognising that they are worthy and not worthless, irrespective of how bad they may think they are.

The point that Schuller makes is that the church either convinces people that they are so sinful that they are beyond redemption or that they will never be anything because of the inherent sinful nature within them. It is now that Schuller offers hope, assurance and success in contradiction to this. Having shown the individual his self-worth (the mind), this is consolidated in one's position in Christ (the heart), then /...

a position is displayed which reflects completeness in Christ that moves away from the continual need of reminding oneself of just how sinful one is. Schuller points the individual in the direction of achievement and success because the One who has liberated us, namely Christ, has Himself been the ultimate achiever and successor in His conquering death in coming forth triumphant from the grave.

In his book Self-Esteem The New Reformation⁴. Schuller points out that the time is long overdue that individuals take cognisance of the fact that they do not have to earn self-esteem, but rather that it has been earned for them in the person Jesus Christ.⁵

It is this concluding statement of Schuller's that now brings us to briefly consider Sanctification in Barth and then an attempt will be made in bringing the two of them together.

Part Four - Barth and Sanctification

It was stated that in Sanctification we are dealing with an attitude of the heart that affects the mind. The implication of this is that one does not begin by establishing certain /...

facts pertaining to one's position in Christ. The fact that Christ exists establishes this concept once and for all.

In the same way that Schuller stresses the accomplished fact of one being created in the image of God, so Barth stresses the accomplished fact of one being Sanctified in Christ. It is this very attempt by oneself to prove one's Sanctification that leads to futile works. On the other hand, as the individual is exposed to the completed work of Christ on the cross, it brings about a changed life, a renewed heart.

This absolute assurance the sinner has of being declared righteous (Justified) and made complete in Christ (Sanctified) leads to a positive knowledge (cognitive) which then affects every aspect of one's lifestyle positively.

Let us now conclude by bringing these two dynamic concepts together.

Part Five - Self-Esteem and Sanctification

Throughout the thesis reference has been made to the possible common denominator that exists between Schuller's self-esteem /...

and Barth's Sanctification. The time has now come to identify that common denominator.

In Schuller's book Your Church Has a Fantastic Future,⁶ he defines what we termed earlier on in the study as a biblical basis for self-esteem. There is one central figure which Schuller refers to constantly. It is not the "I" of self that the secular humanists refer to but the Son of God, Jesus Christ.⁷ For Barth, everything in theology points to Jesus Christ, both His person and His works. There cannot be a Christian theology outside the realm of Christology.⁸

Jesus Christ then is the common denominator in both the thinking of Barth and Schuller. The Christ who experienced no failure allows us to be successful in Him and through Him. Both Barth and Schuller would be quick to add that hardship and failure will still be a reality in our everyday lives. For Schuller it would mean a reaffirmation of one's self-worth in Christ. A self-esteem that is not earned and therefore cannot be lost. It is a self-esteem that is ours in the finished work of Christ. For Barth it would simply affirm that we cannot determine our measure of Sanctification as reflected by our lifestyles, but rather that our Sancti-
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fication is complete in Christ and the knowledge of this accomplished fact will lead us into a lifestyle that is pleasing to a Holy God.

In conclusion, can we come to any other point other than to reaffirm that in Christ we are complete. In Him there is no failure and because of Him we can take Schuller seriously where he defines The Secret of Success.

Find a need and fill it.
Find a hurt and heal it.
Find a problem and solve it.
Find a chasm and bridge it.
Find somebody who's sick and
 lead him to healing love.
Find somebody who's suffering from sin
 and show him how he can be saved.⁹

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S U M M A R Y

A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF ROBERT SCHULLER'S CONCEPT OF HUMAN SELF-ESTEEM IN RELATION TO SPECIFIC ASPECTS OF THE DOCTRINE OF SANCTIFICATION IN NEO-ORTHODOXY

NOTE: This summary is included to form an integral part of the thesis in terms of rule G41 of the 1989 General Prospectus.

CHAPTER ONE - INTRODUCTION

This chapter introduces the thesis indicating that the title implies a relationship between Dr Schuller's concept of human self-esteem and specific aspects of the doctrine of Sanctification in Neo-Orthodoxy.

The objective of the thesis is to examine self-esteem and Sanctification in the light of the above in order to determine just how closely linked they are and to what degree they influence each other.

Reference is made to the fact that both Schuller and Barth

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have been misunderstood and misinterpreted and that what they have to say is relevant to the evangelical church today.

CHAPTER TWO - THE CONCEPT OF HUMAN SELF-ESTEEM IN RELATION TO SANCTIFICATION

This chapter introduces the concept of positive thinking showing the link between this realm of thought and Schuller's self-esteem. Schuller has associated himself with some of the great positive thinkers of his time, i.e., Norman Vincent Peale, Ed Foreman, Dennis Waitley, Wayne Dyer, Joyce Brothers and Earl Nightingale. The influence that they have had on his life and ministry is illustrated in the next section entitled, Robert Schuller : His Life and Ministry.

In considering Schuller, his concept of possibility thinking is developed showing how he has moved away from a pure humanistic approach to positive thinking. This area of possibility thinking then leads us into a further development of Schuller's where we consider the importance of a positive self-esteem.

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CHAPTER THREE - JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

This chapter introduces the link between Schuller's self-esteem and a theological approach to Sanctification and Justification. Along with Karl Barth another three theologians are also considered, namely, G.C. Berkouwer, Hans Kung and Rudolf Bultmann.

The purpose of discussing these three men in comparison to Barth will enable us to see why Barth and the Neo-Orthodox view of Sanctification have similarities to Schuller and not views of Berkouwer, Kung and Bultmann.

CHAPTER FOUR - BARTH AND SCHULLER IN THE LIGHT OF A CONTEMPORARY EVANGELICAL THEOLOGY OF JUSTIFICATION AND SANCTIFICATION

Throughout the thesis it is emphasized that Schuller and Barth are relevant for the thinking of the church today. This chapter examines whether that is in fact true and also compares them with a contemporary evangelical theology of Justification and Sanctification.

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CHAPTER FIVE - CONCLUSION

In conclusion we determine the common denominator between Schuller and Barth and emphasize the fact that ultimately, both of these men are leading us to a fuller and deeper understanding of the complete work of Christ on the cross and how this work affects our daily lives.