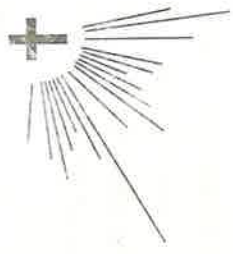


and publication of the lectures in English was not an incident, not an enterprise that almost exceeded Kuyper's powers, but one that was well organized and intrinsically related to the nature of neo-Calvinism as an international movement. The Stone Lectures have not become the most famous and most dispersed book of this tradition by accident. Apart from the topic (a general introduction to neo-Calvinism) and apart from the timing (though Kuyper was the foremost Dutch politician at the time), he preferred lecturing in Princeton over attending the invitation of Queen Wilhelmina. Kuyper's careful preparation of the English text underlines that the lectures were meant to be the international introduction to neo-Calvinism from its inception.



CONCLUSION

JESSICA R. JOUSTRA

WHEN I FIRST ENCOUNTERED Kuyper's *Lectures on Calvinism*, there was a sense of grandiosity to them. These were the lectures that outlined the kind of robust, Calvinistic worldview that gives a comprehensive vision for life that provides the way for Christians to extend their faithful following of Jesus Christ into every area of society and culture. The lore of Kuyper's personality, bold claims, and important ideas surrounded his lectures, as my own friends and mentors received them with great acclaim. We've heard, throughout these chapters, of the importance of Kuyper's lectures, which provided "much needed oxygen" for the pursuit of faithful cultural and political engagement (alongside, as we've seen, deeply troubling claims of Kuyper's).¹ Richard Mouw has similarly reflected, in his own introduction to Abraham Kuyper, that in Kuyper's Stone Lectures he "discovered what [he] had been looking for: a vision of active involvement in public life that would allow me to steer my way between a privatized evangelicalism on the one hand and the liberal Protestant or Catholic approaches to public discipleship on the other hand."²

Such a vision, as Jonathan Chaplin and Richard Mouw describe in their chapters, provided the fodder for multiple institutions, including

¹See Vincent Bacote, "Kuyper and Race," in *Calvinism for a Secular Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021), 148. Each chapter has, in its own way, touched on both the aspects of the Stone Lectures that are life-giving and transformative and the aspects that are deeply problematic, damaging, and without excuse. This is clearly explored in Bacote's chapter, which is specifically devoted to how we engage Kuyperian thought, given his statements on race, but can be seen throughout the rest of the volume as well.

²Richard Mouw, *Abraham Kuyper: A Short and Personal Introduction* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2011), ix.

educational and political organizations that have loomed large in my own communities: the Christian Labor Association (CLAC), Cardus, the Center for Public Justice (CPI), the Institute for Christian Studies (ICS), and Calvin University—my own alma mater.

RECEIVING KUYPER'S LECTURES: THEN

You can imagine my surprise, then, when I discovered that these lectures—important and foundational as they were—were initially attended by only three or four dozen individuals.³ Such humble beginnings do not, of course, negate the importance of Kuyper's lectures, but they do begin to paint a picture of the reception of Kuyper's words, both immediately and as their influence trickled through generations of Christians.

As James Bratt recalls in the preface, how one defines Calvinism is important for the story of the reception and influence of Kuyper's words. The original, small Princeton crowd that gathered to hear Kuyper was undoubtedly friendly to Calvinism. Important thinkers like B. B. Warfield left Kuyper's lectures impressed with, and edified by, the "passion, faith, and energy" of Kuyper.⁴ On the one hand, the two spoke the same language: an affirmation of Calvinism's doctrine and ecclesial polity. But, as Bratt points out, Kuyper meant *more* by Calvinism than those at Princeton. Calvinism, Kuyper contended, "did not stop at a church order, but expanded into a *life-system*, and did not exhaust its energy in a dogmatical construction, but created a *life- and world-view*."⁵ In short, as we've seen throughout this short volume, Kuyper's Calvinism was a worldview.

Although those in the crowd at Princeton were not the ones, in the end, to take up the call to champion a worldviewing Calvinism that Kuyper issued in these Stone Lectures, Kuyper's vision was not lost on American soil. For those who know these lectures of Kuyper's, we

³James D. Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper: Modern Calvinist, Christian Democrat* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2013), 262.
⁴Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper: Modern Calvinist*, 264.
⁵Abraham Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism* (1931; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1999), 171 (emphasis original).

quickly—and rightly—associate them with Princeton Theological Seminary, where he delivered them. But it is often forgotten that Kuyper's 1898 journey to America did not *end* in Princeton.⁶ Kuyper continued on, stopping next in Michigan, where many Dutch Americans had settled (and remain to this day). During this leg of his journey, some of the familiar text of these Stone Lectures was revisited. Among other lectures and meetings, Kuyper once again delivered one of these Stone Lectures, his final lecture on Calvinism and the future. In this Dutch American crowd, and throughout the rest of his visits to Dutch American settlements, Kuyper met those "who would take up [his] charge."⁷ These Dutch Americans, scattered throughout the United States in Michigan, Iowa, Illinois, and beyond, would take up Kuyper's call to proclaim and apply the Calvinistic worldview. They formed school systems, political think tanks, farming federations, labor unions, and more, all rooted in the distinctives of a Calvinistic worldview.

Kuyper's own reflections on a Calvinistic worldview in these lectures, as we've seen, take on several different tones. Some are deeply optimistic for the future and the possibilities of Calvinism. Calvinism, after all, is the worldview that "effectually secured" a "love for science,"⁸ "restored to science its *domain*,"⁹ and "emancipated" music, allowing for "its so splendid modern development."¹⁰ Each of Kuyper's grand, optimistic claims about the Calvinistic worldview underscores his assertion that Calvinism "fit[s] itself to every stage of human development . . . every department of life!"¹¹ Alongside these claims, ringing with optimism and promise, he strikes a different tone, one that is ominous about

⁶For a thorough outline of Kuyper's 1898 journey, see Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper: Modern Calvinist*, 261–79.
⁷Bratt, *Abraham Kuyper: Modern Calvinist*, 264. Warfield "never comprehended the epistemological revolution Kuyper had suggested," writes Bratt. "Nor did the next several generations of American evangelicals and Fundamentalists who followed in Warfield's train."
⁸Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 113.
⁹Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 117 (emphasis original).
¹⁰Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 168.
¹¹Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 171.

impending threats to Christianity. In the face of such danger, Calvinism is needed because it is the "only decisive, lawful, and consistent defense for Protestant nations against encroaching, and overwhelming Modernism;"¹² Modernism "now confronts Christianity; and against this deadly danger, ye, Christians, cannot successfully defend your sanctuary, but by placing in opposition to all this, a *life- and world-view of your own*. . . . *And this is equivalent to a return to Calvinism*."¹³ Indeed, argues Kuyper, the "*Calvinistic principle*" is the "sole trustworthy foundation on which to build."¹⁴

Both the Princeton crowd (who did not end up being a primary conduit of Kuyper's Calvinism in America) and the Holland, Michigan, crowd (who heard only Kuyper's address "Calvinism and the Future") heard the breadth of Kuyper's tones, ominous and optimistic. Surely, given Kuyper's optimism, he understands Calvinism as a Christian tradition that remains faithful to scriptural witness, to have an inherent worth and value. It is the Christian tradition that "embod[ies] the Christian idea more purely and accurately"¹⁵ than other Christian traditions and "vindicates for religion its full universal character, and its complete universal application."¹⁶

But Calvinism also has a *particular* import in the face of the challenges of his day, Kuyper argues. There is something about the threat of modernity that could draw people toward Calvinism—necessitates an adherence to a Calvinist worldview—and something about Calvinism that can help counter these problems. In the face of modernism's challenges that Bruce Ashford helpfully describes in his chapter on Kuyper and the future, one must return to the Calvinistic life and worldview, which confesses the sovereignty of God and proclaims the means by which God's sovereignty—and

¹²Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 12.

¹³Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 90 (emphasis original).

¹⁴Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 191 (emphasis original).

¹⁵Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 17.

¹⁶Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 52.

call to discipleship—extends into every square inch of life: philosophy, psychology, art, law, literature, medicine, science, and more.

RECEIVING KUYPER'S LECTURES: NOW

But what does this mean for us today?

Near the one-hundredth anniversary of Kuyper's delivery of his Stone Lectures, Peter Heslam penned a book on these lectures, *Creating a Christian Worldview*. Heslam referred to Kuyper's Stone Lectures as a "manifesto of Kuyperian Calvinism"¹⁷ and contended that Kuyper's lectures remain relevant to, and important for, Heslam's own, late twentieth-century, primarily American readership. For such a claim, Heslam gave four reasons: first, these lectures summarize key aspects of Kuyper's thought; second, these lectures occurred at "the high point" of Kuyper's career;¹⁸ third, unlike other works of Kuyper's that have been translated, his Stone Lectures were *intended* for a foreign, English-speaking audience; and fourth, by the time of Heslam's writing, these lectures were the work of Kuyper's that had traveled furthest, so to speak, and were "central to the transmission of Kuyper's influence abroad."¹⁹

Now, nearly two decades later, near the centennial of Kuyper's death, Heslam's rationale for attending to these lectures remains important. While the century has changed, these lectures remain works that were intended for an English-speaking, North American audience. They are a clear, comprehensive introduction to a Reformed, Calvinistic worldview that are self-consciously written for an audience that neither shares Kuyper's native tongue nor knows his home country. As a central voice in the second generation of Kuyperian scholarship, Herman Dooyeweerd, argued, these lectures are "the best example" of Kuyper's "reformational principles."²⁰

¹⁷Peter Heslam, *Creating a Christian Worldview: Abraham Kuyper's Lectures on Calvinism* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 11.

¹⁸Heslam, *Creating a Christian Worldview*, 10.

¹⁹Heslam, *Creating a Christian Worldview*, 11.

²⁰Herman Dooyeweerd, "Kuyper's wetenschapsleer," *Philosophia reformata: orgaan van de vereniging voor calvinistische wijsbegeerte* 4 (1939): 197, translated by Peter Heslam in *Creating a Christian Worldview*, 10.

What we have tried to do in this little volume is not unlike Kuyper's original intention. Throughout these pages, we have sought to introduce—or reintroduce, as the case may be—these same Stone Lectures and Kuyper's basic principles of a Christian worldview to a primarily English-speaking, predominantly North American readership. In each chapter, we've taken the time to reflect on what Kuyper himself said in these lectures, attempting to mine the deep, important worldview insights that Kuyper grants us within them. But given the time that has passed between Kuyper's original writing and our own day, we've also attended to those who took up Kuyper's charge. "What did Kuyperians do?" these chapters have asked. In other words, what did those who heard Kuyper's message and took it to heart do with these principles; what difference does a Calvinistic worldview make in the real lives of people and their institutions? And finally we've asked, What should *we* do?

Where Kuyper's time felt the crisis of modernity, our time—in some ways—hardly feels different. As Richard Mouw observed, "The modernist project clearly remains a major challenge to the Christian faith in the twenty-first century."²¹ The "state of *malaise*"²² and waning religiosity of the Western world that Kuyper identified in 1898 is ongoing. In the West, we continue to grapple with the reality, as Bruce Ashford identifies, of "living within an 'immanent frame' of reference" where Christianity—theism, even!—is no longer a default worldview position and an "explosion of ideological options rush in to fill the void."²³ Kuyper's critique of modernism, in our own day, rings prophetic. What struck Kuyper as ideological fracture is in our day a seismic event: we are

²¹See Richard Mouw, "Kuyper and Life-Systems," in *Calvinism for a Secular Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021), 17.

²²Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 173 (emphasis original). By this Kuyper means that there is some kind of ongoing discontent in the modern world. The root cause? The waning of spirituality and thus the waning of morality. This can be seen, he argues, in the upper echelons of academia (Schopenhauer, Nietzsche, etc.) but also in the masses: those resorting to anarchy or even nihilism. These many people, Kuyper argues, "would rather demolish and annihilate everything, than continue to bear the burden of present conditions."

²³Bruce Ashford, "Kuyper and the Future," in *Calvinism for a Secular Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021), 128.

"coming apart,"²⁴ as one prominent sociologist puts it; even in Kuyper's idealized America the republic has "fractured."²⁵

But while the challenges of modernism that Kuyper identified in 1898 still seem true today, all has not remained unchanged. Kuyper's time is not our time. As Deborah Haarsma reminds us, "Many things in the science and faith arena have changed since Abraham Kuyper lectured in 1898."²⁶ Such a claim would certainly hold true in other spheres of life as well. "Scientific findings," she writes, "have exploded. The portrayal of science as an atheistic endeavor has become widespread."²⁷ There is, in our day, a seemingly irresolvable tension between science and faith that Christians must navigate. In such challenges, Kuyper's insistence on the importance of the Calvinist worldview remains an instructive guide in its offering of a "rich, compelling alternative: a full-bodied Christian faith, centered on Christ and Scripture, that encompasses all of life, including science"²⁸ and, of course, every other sphere of life.

But it is important to remember, as Vince Bacote rightly draws our attention to, that Kuyper himself does not apply Calvinism in an uncritical way. With a keen eye to the dangers of repristination and the depravity of humanity, he argues that we ought not "copy the past, as if Calvinism were a petrification, but go back to the living root of the Calvinist plant, to clean and to water it, and so to cause it to bud and to blossom once more."²⁹ In these final sections, we've tried to model a kind of Calvinistic pruning, taking what is good, right, and true of these lectures and the way they've been lived out by generations past and applying it to the challenges and questions of our own day.³⁰

²⁴Charles Murray, *Coming Apart: The State of White America, 1960–2010* (New York: Crown Forum, 2012).

²⁵Yuval Levin, *The Fractured Republic: Renewing America's Social Contract in the Age of Individualism* (New York: Basic Books, 2016).

²⁶Deborah B. Haarsma, "Kuyper and Science," in *Calvinism for a Secular Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021), 103.

²⁷Haarsma, "Kuyper and Science," 103n27.

²⁸Haarsma, "Kuyper and Science," 104n28.

²⁹Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 171.

³⁰This, of course, also includes naming and rooting out the problematic, troubling, and sometimes deeply damaging aspects of Kuyper's work. As we've seen in this volume, Kuyper's treatment of

THEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES FOR KUYPERIAN WORLDVIEWING

In moments of optimism where we might look with excitement and promise at the way Calvinism can guide and develop our engagement in every sphere of life *and* in those ominous times of crisis where Calvinism can speak an important word of assurance and corrective, Kuyper contended that the Calvinistic worldview *matters*. As Richard Mouw explained, Calvinism spells out the “big picture” of the world, setting forth “a life-system that highlights the inescapable reality of our living every moment before the face of God.”³¹

But what is it about Calvinism that allows it to speak in this way, to “every department”—and, we could add, every time and season—“of life”? For Kuyper, at least three connected theological principles are woven throughout these Stone Lectures: Calvinism’s claims of the sovereignty of God; its worldview that reintegrates the spheres of life; and its insistence on the full catholicity of the church, proclaiming a gospel that touches all of life.

First and foremost, as we’ve seen time and time again throughout these chapters, Calvinism has an overarching commitment to the sovereignty of God. In his lecture on Calvinism and religion, Kuyper insists again and again that “the confession of the absolute Sovereignty of the Triune God” remains primary, for “of Him, through Him, and unto Him are all things.”³² The “dominating principle” of Calvinism is God’s sovereignty over all.³³ The confession of God’s sovereignty is where the Calvinist worldview begins.

race is one of these aspects. In this volume, we’ve sought to clearly name Kuyper’s strengths and weaknesses (even failures!) in his Stone Lectures, shining a light on the fullness of his work so that we can do the work of Calvinistic pruning well.

³¹Mouw, “Kuyper and Life-Systems,” 19.

³²Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 46, cf. 58.

³³Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 79, cf. 22. Kuyper maintains the primacy of God’s sovereignty in Calvinism. This is the “dominating principle,” not—as many in his day, and in our own, would affirm—soteriology. While a consistent affirmation of God’s sovereignty leads to important soteriological claims, these claims are not the *starting* point of Calvinism. For a helpful discussion on Calvinism’s insistence on God’s sovereignty—and its relation to soteriology—see Richard Mouw,

The confession of God’s sovereignty has widescale implications. When Kuyper speaks of God’s sovereignty, he is affirming “the *Sovereignty of the Triune God over the whole Cosmos*, in all its spheres and kingdoms, visible and invisible.”³⁴ God is sovereign over not just our hearts and worship but over every aspect of life.³⁵ This foundational, primary point of Kuyper’s is at the heart of his claims in the Stone Lectures and, unsurprisingly, comes through with force in the rest of his work as well. Those who know one thing of Kuyper often know his famous line at the founding of the Free University: “There is not a square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is sovereign over all, does not cry: ‘Mine!’”³⁶ Here too we hear a bold assertion of God’s sovereignty.

Any claims of human authority and sovereignty must be understood, then, in the light of God’s sovereignty. God is God—and we are not. But this does not leave humanity without agency. Rather, our agency and authority is *delegated* authority. In the case of politics, for example, Kuyper argues that “all authority of governments on earth originates from the Sovereignty of God alone.”³⁷ Because all authority stems from God alone, we are also accountable to him for how we use this authority. We ought to use the authority God has granted to us in his way, for his purposes. Thankfully, we’ve also been left with clear patterns and signposts for how we ought to steward this authority; God has given us his Word, the good gift of his law, and even Jesus Christ as a living pattern and example so that we know how to carry out this authority properly, as God would have it—on earth, as it is in heaven. God’s sovereign authority then extends over all of our lives; all

Calvinism in the Las Vegas Airport: Making Connections in Today’s World (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2004), 27–28.

³⁴Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 79 (emphasis original).

³⁵See, for example, Kuyper’s discussion on Calvinism, politics, and God’s sovereignty in Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 85, 98.

³⁶Abraham Kuyper, “Sphere Sovereignty,” in *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader*, ed. James D. Bratt (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1998), 488.

³⁷Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 82. Importantly, this authority is *given* and it is also limited. God alone is sovereign. For more on this, see Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 96–97.

cultural spheres and all of human activity are *coram Deo*, before the face of God.³⁸

Second, a worldview that begins with the affirmation of God's sovereignty is a worldview that reintegrates the spheres of life. God exercises his sovereignty over all of creation in a way that *must* form the guiding principle of every aspect of life: dogmatics, church, and piety, yes—but God's sovereignty extends beyond these to all of life, including politics, art, economics, science, and family life.³⁹

This, Kuyper insists, is the genius of the Reformed worldview. It takes God's sovereignty so seriously that it insists it must affect our practice of law and medicine; it must undergird the way we pursue familial life; it animates and guides our art and philosophy. A sovereign God, as Kuyper says, "exercises its influence upon life in all its ramifications."⁴⁰ If we truly believe God is sovereign, and are rightly reading that Scripture proclaims this fact, we must produce a worldview that encompasses all of life—and Calvinism does this. Calvinism provides a reintegration of spheres (under the sovereign reign and rule of God) that have been disintegrated by the modern moral order. In a time where worldviews have been "thin[n]ed-out . . . and slic[ed]-up," stressing individuality and autonomy, the Calvinist worldview brings all things together under God's rule.⁴¹ As Bratt affirms, Kuyper attends to the "interconnectedness of things," grounded in the sovereignty of God's rule and reign.⁴²

Finally, a Calvinist worldview, built on the foundation of God's sovereignty, is one that insists on the full catholicity of the church, proclaiming a gospel that touches all of life. In these lectures, we've seen very clearly the "every square inch" nature of Kuyper's theology. Christ

is King over "every department of human life."⁴³ There is nothing material or spiritual, personal or public that the gospel does not transform.

Kuyper's contemporary, Herman Bavinck, provided important theological reflection on, and language for, this important concept that is so evident in Kuyper's thinking: catholicity. In Kuyper's lectures, the language of catholicity does not occur, but Bavinck gave a rectoral address on the topic in 1888. In this address, he reminds his audience that the church fathers understood catholicity in three basic ways: (1) the local church is catholic (small *c*) because it "attaches itself to the universal church"; (2) the catholic church unites believers in all times and places; and (3) the church and the gospel it proclaims "embraces the whole of human existence."⁴⁴

This third aspect of catholicity is where, Bavinck argued, the church has faltered. The church has failed to be catholic and thus has also failed to take God's sovereignty seriously when it proclaims a gospel that does *not* touch every aspect of our world and life. Again, Bavinck argues, this is the importance of Calvinism. Calvinism insists that the phrase "I believe in God the Father, Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth"⁴⁵ means that God is sovereign over all the things he has created, and the gospel is a story of God's redemption and restoration of those things.⁴⁶ In such an insistence, the church and the gospel it proclaims is not antagonistic to the things of the world, nor simply equivalent with the ways of the world, nor even takes the things of the world and elevates them to a new level.⁴⁷ Instead, it comes in and, like yeast in bread dough, leavens the whole thing.⁴⁸ The gospel matters in business. It matters in law. It matters in the household. It matters in the church. There certainly is self-denial, cross-bearing, and longsuffering inherent in following

⁴³Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 23.

⁴⁴Herman Bavinck, "The Catholicity of Christianity and the Church," trans. John Bolt, *Calvin Theological Journal* 27 (1992): 221.

⁴⁵Bavinck cites this line from the Apostles' Creed in Bavinck, "Catholicity," 236, cf. 237-38.

⁴⁶This insistence that the Reformed tradition champions is not a *new* development, Bavinck argues—it is a *restoration* of how it was originally understood (Bavinck, "Catholicity," 236).

⁴⁷Bavinck, "Catholicity," 228-31.

⁴⁸Bavinck, "Catholicity," 231, 236.

³⁸Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 90.

³⁹Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 78, 171.

⁴⁰Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 194.

⁴¹Richard Mouw, "Mine! Kuyper for a New Century," in *Comment Magazine*, June 1, 2007, www.cardus.ca/comment/article/mine-kuyper-for-a-new-century/.

⁴²James Bratt, "Preface," in *Calvinism for a Secular Age* (Downers Grove, IL: IVP Academic, 2021), xvii.

Jesus. But there is also the “renewal of human beings” and then “by means of the Gospel [renewal of] the whole of life, state, society, and world.”⁴⁹ The gospel demands that we pick up our cross and follow Jesus, but it also promises that this same Jesus is in the business of redeeming, renewing, and restoring all areas of life.

For Calvin, Bavinck argues, God’s sovereignty, and thus the catholicity of the church, demands that the Bible be the “norm for all of life.”⁵⁰ Such an approach to the Bible and its teaching is, in a nutshell, the importance of Calvinism. Calvinism thus presents the most coherent, all-encompassing, and most importantly, scriptural world- and life-view. Thus, we hear Kuyper’s optimism (Calvinism transforms our lives and our world in line with God’s creational intent) and his ominous need for a counter to the threats of his day (Calvinism is *the* robust worldview that can meet the challenges of modernity). For, as Kuyper and Bavinck both say, Calvinism proclaims the lordship of Christ over all the spheres of his creation and anticipates with eagerness the return of our King, so that all may know how wide, deep, and high is God’s love—and his sovereign rule.

A KUYPERIAN ADDENDUM: WORLDVIEW AND PIETY

Kuyper ends his lectures, however, with neither world-engaging optimism nor ominous tones of the battle with modernism. Instead, in full keeping with his insistence on the sovereignty of our God, who is the one who calls and equips us for engagement in every sphere, he reminds his listeners—and us today—that it is only through the Spirit of God that hearts will be awakened to hear this good news. We then, as Kuyper argues, ought to anticipate being used by God to proclaim this message of his all-encompassing reign and to participate with him in his work of renewing and restoring every square inch, in every sphere. Calvinism

⁴⁹Bavinck, “Catholicity,” 237.

⁵⁰Bavinck, “Catholicity,” 238.

is but an “Aeolian Harp” that needs the “quickenening Spirit of God” to make melodious music. Thus, we stand “ready in the window of God’s Holy Zion, awaiting the breath of the Spirit.”⁵¹

There are a few moments like this throughout the Stone Lectures where we see glimmers of Kuyper’s piety. He writes that “our prayer remains the deepest expression of all religious life”⁵² and that “a Christianity that neglects the mystic elements grows frigid and congeals.”⁵³ But such sentiments are not the bulk of these lectures. In them he focuses on the worldviewing, world-engaging nature of Calvinism. And, as a little volume that has sought to introduce not *all* of Kuyper’s thought, but a particular work of Kuyper’s, his Stone Lectures, we’ve focused here, too, on this aspect of his thought. We’ve tried to be honest in our introduction to it, not sugarcoating Kuyper’s glaring faults, nor glossing over them, but letting the fullness of this text shine through, for better or worse. Alongside the “worse,” we’ve also recognized what is good, right, and true in these lectures.

I think it would be a disservice to Kuyper’s thought, however, not to include a small addendum to what we’ve compiled in these chapters. Al Wolters, a neo-Calvinist philosopher, has noted that the generations which followed after Kuyper were quick to pick up on his worldviewing, world-engaging themes. “Generally speaking,” he writes, “neocalvinists are more noted for their intellectual ability and culture-transforming zeal than for their personal godliness or their living relationship with Jesus Christ.”⁵⁴ Whatever the cause,⁵⁵ such an emphasis has, at times, failed to accentuate that Kuyper was not only an important guide for the pursuit

⁵¹Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 199.

⁵²Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 46.

⁵³Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 188.

⁵⁴Al Wolters, “What Is to Be Done . . . Toward a Neocalvinist Agenda?,” in *Comment Magazine*, December 1, 2005, www.cardus.ca/comment/article/what-is-to-be-done-toward-a-neocalvinist-agenda/.

⁵⁵Perhaps some of this has to do with the fact that these Stone Lectures were much of what was accessible for English-speaking Kuyperians for quite some time. Only in the past few decades has much more of Kuyper’s work been available in English. As Bratt notes in his preface, there have been multiple Kuyper volumes translated into English in just the past decade, including the Lexham Press series *Abraham Kuyper Collected Works in Public Theology*, eds. Melvin Flikema and Jordan J. Ballor, 12 vols. (Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press), accessed April 20, 2020, <https://lexhampress.com/product/55067/abraham-kuyper-collected-works-in-public-theology>.

of faithful cultural and political engagement but also a man of deep piety and strong devotional life who wrote many meditations on the spiritual life, including *Near unto God*.

Kuyper's nightly routine can, perhaps, begin to shed a little bit of light on this aspect of his life and work. Each night, Kuyper would face the cross on his bedroom wall and confess that—yet again—he had not done enough to share in the sufferings of Jesus throughout his day.⁵⁶ This is, perhaps, a different picture of Kuyper than we might conjure up by simply reading the Stone Lectures, but it is nonetheless an important part of his life and thought.

For Kuyper, piety and practice, worldviewing and spiritual meditations were not antagonistic, but necessarily fed into one another. Kuyper's insistence that we must understand God's call for "every square inch" of our work and public life was paired with his equally strong insistence that we must be "near unto God" in piety, prayer, and worship.

In the end, the world-engaging, worldviewing nature of Kuyperian thought that loudly affirms God's call on every aspect of our lives is deeply tied to personal piety and intimacy with God. Kuyper himself weaves the two together in a meditation on Mark 12:30 in *Near unto God*. He writes:

Everyone has some sort of view of the world, some ethical or moral and religious porch from which to look out at all that we can see and know of God's creation. What is of utmost importance is that God Almighty does not stay in the kitchen or the study or the family room when we view the world from that porch. . . .

But our mind's capacity is not limited to our personal concept of God. To *think* Christianly—and to do so deeply—requires a comprehensive understanding of history, of doctrine, of science, of what is known in many, many areas. History itself is a blessing.

In addition to these works, a new volume of Kuyper's meditations, *Honey from the Rock* (Bellevue, WA: Lexham Press, 2018) has been translated. This volume, alongside Kuyper's well-known meditations, *Near unto God*, begins to give us a wonderful picture of Kuyper's piety.

⁵⁶Richard J. Mouw, *All That God Cares About: Common Grace and Divine Delight* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2020), 7.

And yet, loving God with the mind is more than imbibing academic knowledge. We *do* far more than *read* on any given day. What we eat, how we choose to spend our leisure time, how we behave when working—these things are the work of the mind at a very personal level, and they too need to be considered in our understanding of loving God. Our time is Christ's time, after all. . . .

One doesn't put on Christianity. Pushing and yearning will get us nowhere. Coming near unto God is a matter of knowing deeply how much he loves us and then giving him our lives in thanksgiving.

Love for God that comes from the heart and the soul is very much a matter of his planting. He is the source of our own devotion to him. But the mind is slightly different. We can train ourselves to think about him deeply, to work at accomplishing his will, to structure our lives in such a way that praise is in our every step. That process itself will bring us ever closer to God.⁵⁷

In this brief meditation, Kuyper conveys his conviction that the gospel is not *either* public *or* private. It touches every aspect of our life: our public life and our personal devotion.

The message that Kuyper gives us within these lectures is an exciting one. For me, and many others, it has helped to orient the way in which the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ matters in science, politics, art, and economics—and even in the work of neighborhood associations and school boards, cooking dinner and childcare, playing basketball and plucking weeds, and a host of other seemingly mundane tasks. But as we engage this vision of public, cultural discipleship, let us not forget Kuyper's insistence on the importance of being near unto God. After all, we are but an "Aeolian Harp—absolutely powerless, as it is, without the quickening of the Spirit of God."⁵⁸

In steadfast trust and hope that our God is indeed sovereign, may we offer our full selves to his service, in every sphere of life.

⁵⁷Abraham Kuyper, "With All Thy Mind," in *Near unto God*, trans. James C. Schaap (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 1997), 95 (emphasis original).

⁵⁸Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 199.