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Nicholas P. Wolterstorff, Christian Philosopher

The central concern of the present study is Nicholas Wolterstorff's theory of situated rationality. In Wolterstorff's view, the traditional focus on the justification of true beliefs displays Cartesian heritage in that its conceptions of the subject and the subject's relation to its beliefs are treated as abstract and impersonal. Wolterstorff instead considers the subject within its full, individualized, social and moral context and argues that the chief epistemic merit—entitlement rather than justification—accrues to doxastic conduct that is morally defensible in a subject's particular situation.

Beliefs are not justified abstractly. Rather, subjects are entitled to their beliefs (or their believings are entitled) in so far as they manage their doxastic affairs so as to meet the ethico-doxastic norms of their concrete situations as far as can be reasonably expected of them. Epistemic merit, therefore, is normative, and has to do principally with the subject's proper doxastic conduct. This much is Cartesian. But for Wolterstorff the doxastic practices available to the subject and the relevant ethico-doxastic norms are situationally (rather than subjectively) constituted. Epistemic merit is normative but then also practical and situational.

In Wolterstorff's view, furthermore, the availability of doxastic practices includes a situationally given, ethically significant assumption regarding the truth-conduciveness of such practices. Actual truth-conduciveness is not the principal factor in the ethico-doxastic significance for the subject of available doxastic practices; situationality is. So, as Wolterstorff claims,

there are no specifically doxastic norms. Doxastic ethics are a refraction of the responsibilities and obligations bearing on a subject in terms of various relationships (to one's self, to God, to others). Belief entitlement thus raises a rather expansive question of moral value and ethics, without an answer to which situated rationality drifts unsecured. The obvious candidate in Wolterstorff's work for completing his theory of the ethics of belief is his notion of shalom. And so my thesis: Wolterstorff's theory of situated rationality is a *shalom doxastic ethic*.

Our entry point is decidedly epistemological, but my thesis will require us to bring into view the relevant biblical, theological, ethical, and historical philosophical material. This being a daunting task, it will help to know something of Wolterstorff's background and development. So we begin with a bit of intellectual biography.

1.1 NICHOLAS P. WOLTERSTORFF, CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHER

In 2002, Nicholas P. Wolterstorff added "emeritus" to his title as Noah Porter Professor of Philosophical Theology at Yale University. The list of titles Wolterstorff has held throughout his career is long and prestigious. It includes Fulbright and National Endowment for the Humanities fellowships, a senior fellowship at the American Academy of the Arts and Sciences, and, most recently, a senior fellowship at the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture at the University of Virginia. He has held endowed lectureships, among many others, at Oxford, the Free University of Amsterdam, Princeton, Yale, and St. Andrews, and teaching appointments at dozens of American universities. Wolterstorff has been awarded at least four honorary doctorates and has served as the president of the Society of Christian Philosophers and the American Philosophical Association's Central Division. His publications include some two dozen books, over one hundred and fifty peer-reviewed articles, and countless short pieces on a wide range of current issues. In recent years, several volumes of Wolterstorff's collected essays have been released, including one on epistemology, another on philosophical theology, another on justice and human dignity, and a fourth on liberal democracy, while the pace of production of new material remains steady.[1]

It is difficult to pinpoint Wolterstorff's most influential, most significant, or most acclaimed publications or lectures. At least one reason for this

1. The four collected volumes are Wolterstorff's *Inquiring about God*; *Practices of Belief*; *Hearing the Call*; and *Understanding Liberal Democracy*. Also recent are *Justice: Rights and Wrongs*; *Justice in Love*; *Mighty and the Almighty*; and *Journey toward Justice*.

is that he has made significant contributions in several different fields. The person interested in the arts would regard highly Wolterstorff's *Art in Action*, a text just as fresh and insightful but more accessible than his *Works and Worlds of Art*.[2] The philosophical theologian might argue that Wolterstorff's writings on the doctrines of eternity and aseity, on theological predication, and on divine speech, cannot, in any fair assessment of Wolterstorff's work, be overlooked.[3] The philosopher or historian of philosophy would certainly find Wolterstorff's work on Locke, including his *John Locke and the Ethics of Belief* and numerous articles, his work on Reid—again, a book, *Thomas Reid and the Story of Epistemology*, along with numerous shorter pieces—and indeed his incisive, critical writing on foundationalism, all deserving of mention.[4] Wolterstorff has also been prolific on the topic of education, writing extensively on a Christian and specifically Calvinist view of public and higher education.[5] He has written on political philosophy, engaging Robert Audi and Richard Rorty on the role of religion in public discourse,[6] and his recent publication *Justice: Rights and Wrongs* offers a carefully researched account of the history of the concepts that constitute what Wolterstorff calls our "moral subculture," including natural human rights and human dignity. And this is only a partial list.

Most crucial for the topic of this study is a connection I shall draw between two bodies of Wolterstorff's work: one on rationality and another on the biblical notion of shalom. Exposition of Wolterstorff's thought on these topics takes up much of the present work because together they constitute

2. Wolterstorff, *Art in Action*; ibid., *Works and Worlds of Art*. Wolterstorff has also published a number of articles in the *Journal of Aesthetics and Art Criticism* and in *Idealistic Studies*, and also lectured on art and aesthetics for, among others, the International Arts Movement (IAM) in New York and the C. S. Lewis Institute.

3. On eternity, see Wolterstorff, "God Everlasting." On aseity, see Wolterstorff's contributions to Ganssle and Helm, *God and Time*, and his comments on divine simplicity in Wolterstorff, "Is It Possible?," 37–42. Wolterstorff gave the Wilde Lectures at Oxford in 1993. Those lectures were later published as *Divine Discourse*.

4. Wolterstorff, *John Locke*; *Thomas Reid and the Story*. Still important for understanding Wolterstorff's critique of classical modern foundationalism is his essay, "Can Belief in God Be Rational If It Has No Foundations?" The piece was originally published in Plantinga and Wolterstorff, *Faith and Rationality* (1983) and was republished in Wolterstorff, *Practices of Belief*. There are a few, but no significant, changes in the 2010 republication. Subsequent references to this essay are to the republication in *Practices of Belief* unless otherwise noted.

5. See especially Wolterstorff, *Educating for Life*; and *Educating for Shalom*.

6. Audi and Wolterstorff, *Religion in the Public Square*. Wolterstorff wrote an uncharacteristically polemical piece targeting Rorty's views on this topic, "Engagement with Rorty," which was published alongside Rorty's "Religion in the Public Square" in the *Journal of Religious Ethics*.

the proper framework for my thesis. The connection between them is, briefly, as follows.

For Wolterstorff, rationality has to do with the ethical significance of believing, and believing should be understood not as a stale, removed, purely intellectual disposition, but as a behavior embedded in a web of practices that are socially and culturally significant. Rationality addresses the moral significance of believing when believing is woven into the moral fabric of social living. And shalom, as we will see, is a grand, perhaps even eschatological, ethical vision, drawn from Christian sources, that conditions the full scope of human moral situationality and accountability.

This connection is essential to my thesis, but an additional benefit of clarifying the organic relation between Wolterstorff's work in specifically these two areas is a glimpse into the structural unity of Wolterstorff's thinking and writing as a whole. Over the course of my time producing the present study, I have come to understand Wolterstorff as a systematic and remarkably self-consistent thinker.[7] I have also noted that many of his readers, who might benefit from one area of his work or another, show little appreciation for the substructure which unifies his diverse and varied work. A brief intellectual biographical sketch will help us begin to appreciate this, and begin even at this early stage to clarify my claim that there is an intimate connection between Wolterstorff's theory of rationality and his notion of shalom.

Wolterstorff was born to Dutch immigrants during the Great Depression, in "a tiny farming village in the prairies of southwest Minnesota, Bigelow."[8] "We did not take means of sustenance for granted," he recounts, ". . . my family was poor."[9] If they may have lacked materially, it seems the Wolterstorffs and their community were rich in tradition. Wolterstorff recounts in delightful detail the intense, resolute, even austere piety and the unshaken reverence for the Scriptures which permeated his childhood church and home.[10] And he recalls with wonder and nostalgia the

7. Wolterstorff has dropped some clues to the contrary: "I have written a good deal about art over the course of my career, not because philosophy of art was a chapter in some system that I was developing but because art intruded itself, begging for attention. And I have written a good deal about liturgy, because liturgy intruded itself." (Wolterstorff, "How My Mind Has Changed," in ibid., *Hearing the Call*, 437). However, I trust that this study proves without a doubt that Wolterstorff is a systematic and, indeed, a global thinker, and that his vast and varied output reflects a limited number of core concerns.

8. Wolterstorff, "Grace That Shaped," in *Hearing the Call*, 1. This essay was originally published in Clark, *Philosophers Who Believe*, 259–75.

9. Ibid.

10. "The piety in which I was reared was a piety centered on the Bible, Old Testament

tough-minded and tough-spirited atmosphere of Bigelow and Edgerton, Minnesota.

It is equally remarkable that his early intellectual role models were almost to a person farmers and laborers as it is that their faith and tradition, looking back, thrived immune to, because either unaware of or uninterested in, the theological crises of modernity—critical threats to the trustworthiness of Scripture, scientific challenges to the theistic worldview, and so on. Years later, Wolterstorff would continue to reflect on the strangeness of simply claiming for oneself the right to 'just talk about God.'[11] Without a doubt, the Dutch Reformed tradition has been deeply formative in Wolterstorff's thinking: "If you ask who I am, I reply: I am one who was bequeathed the Reformed tradition of Christianity."[12]

Wolterstorff went on to undergraduate studies at Calvin College where he studied the intellectual legacy of both the Dutch Reformed tradition and of the wider Western world. At Calvin, Wolterstorff encountered a thriving Dutch neo-Calvinism.[13] He also formed a few personal relationships there,

and New Testament together. Centered not on experience, and not on the liturgy, but on the Bible; fsor those themselves were seen as shaped by the Bible" (ibid., 5).

11. This is a theme that runs deep in Wolterstorff's theory of rationality, as we will see, and he reflects on it in many of his critical writings on classical foundationalism. For example, see Wolterstorff, "Is It Possible?," 35–55.

12. Wolterstorff, "Grace That Shaped," 268.

13. The term "neo-Calvinism" may be used to refer to two distinguishable but related emphases. The two emphases include the theological and the cultural, both aspects of a movement that emerged from within the Dutch Reformed churches in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Vos provides a concise analysis in a review of the first volume of Herman Bavinck's *Gereformeerde Dogmatiek* (Vos, *Redemptive History*, 475–84; originally published in *The Presbyterian Review* 7 [1896] 356–63). Vos explains Bavinck's view that although a "Calvinistic type of theology never died out entirely, not even in the darkest period of the history of his country," it "lacked for a long time the scientific impulse" of that "purely theological interest" distinctive of historic Calvinism, particularly of the post-Reformation Reformed scholastics (Vos, *Redemptive History*, 475). It was particularly the work of Abraham Kuyper, whose *Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology* Vos calls "the first mature fruit of this movement," which evoked renewed theological rigor within Reformed circles (ibid.). Bavinck's first volume stands "next to this comprehensive work," and gives "the center and heart of theological science," Vos says, its "adequate treatment" (ibid., 475–76). Vos also distinguishes two aspects of this revival of Calvinist theology in the Netherlands: "In the first place it has displayed a high degree of historic sense," a feature of Bavinck's *Dogmatiek* for which Vos expresses appreciation (ibid., 475). "In the second place . . . [t]here has been a conscious effort to develop further the Calvinistic principles, and to shape the Reformed dogma to a form suitable and congenial to the consciousness of the present age" (ibid.). Thus the two aspects mentioned, recognized by Vos already in 1896, one of theological and doctrinal rigor, the other an interest in Calvinism for the modern age. Kuyper and Bavinck both display—even embody—that dual interest, and as we will see, Wolterstorff does as well. This duality and the question of the consistency between doctrinal and cultural

such as a lasting friendship with Alvin Plantinga, that would become, over the years, considerable influences in the direction of his thought and career.

When reflecting on the intellectual forebears of Calvin College, Wolterstorff mentions Abraham Kuyper and Herman Dooyeweerd, in that order. What little Wolterstorff has written on Dooyeweerd has not been terribly appreciative; it might be fair to say that Wolterstorff will follow Dooyeweerd only as far as Dooyeweerd has followed Kuyper, but no further.[14]

Kuyper bequeathed to the North American Dutch Reformed world a sense of Christian Reformed identity which emphasized coordinately the integrity and totalism of Christian truth and life and the idea of the antithetical clash of religious ("regenerate" and "unregenerate") presuppositions. A soteriological antithesis between the elect and non-elect, and the attendant antithesis between the cultural activity of the regenerate and the unregenerate—categories exhaustive of the human species—were determinative for Kuyper.[15]

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interests are hallmarks of neo-Calvinism. For a brief, if critical, study of the history of the cultural and socio-political emphases of neo-Calvinism, see Dennison, "Dutch Neo-Calvinism."

14. Wolterstorff's unpublished short piece, "Herman Dooyeweerd: An Appreciation," is in fact not very appreciative at all. It was originally written sometime in the 1960s and delivered at a Calvin College Faculty Forum.

15. The Kuyperian antithesis is fundamentally a soteriological one between sinners who have been "regenerated" by the Spirit of Christ and sinners who remain "unregenerate," and its cultural implications feature prominently in Kuyper's view of science: "This regeneration breaks humanity in two, and repeals the unity of human consciousness" (Kuyper, *Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology*, 152). See also Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, particularly chapter 4, "Calvinism and Science." There, Kuyper says that "[f]ree investigation leads to collisions. One draws the lines on the map of life differently from his neighbor. The result is the origin of schools and tendencies. Optimists and pessimists. A school of Kant, and a school of Hegel . . . Everywhere contention, conflict, struggle, sometimes vehement and keen, not seldom mixed with personal asperity. And yet, although the energy of the difference of principle lies at the root of all these disputes, these subordinate conflicts are entirely put in the shade by the *principal conflict*, which in *all* countries perplexes the mind most vehemently, the powerful conflict between those who cling to the confession of the Triune God and His Word, and those who seek the solution of the world-problem in Deism, Pantheism, and Naturalism" (ibid., 130–31). Kuyper does not see this as a conflict between faith and science, but between competing faiths: "Notice that I do not speak of a conflict between faith and science. Such a conflict does not exist. Every science in a certain degree starts *from faith*" (ibid., 131). Elsewhere, Kuyper says that "faith in this connection is taken formally, and hence considered quite apart from all content. By 'faith,' here, then, we do not mean the 'faith in Christ Jesus' in its saving efficacy for the sinner, nor yet the 'faith in God' which is fundamental to all religion, but that formal function of the life of our soul which is fundamental to every fact in our human consciousness" (ibid., *Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology*, 125). See ibid., §43–51. Helpful secondary resources include Klapwijk, "Antithesis and Common Grace"; van Woudenberg, "Abraham Kuyper"; Mouw, *Challenges of Cultural Discipleship*.

By contrast, modern thought, Wolterstorff often explains, is captivated by the idea of an ultimate, platonic unity of humanity, accessible only by transcending (or perhaps by wishing away) the frailties and weaknesses of individuality and historical situatedness and arriving at the human being itself. Modern thought is, consequently, devoted to constructing, through the impersonal powers of abstract reason, an ideal, pristine body of independent and self-verifying scientific knowledge. In practical terms, this modern, secular view meant that the Western academy was to pursue the sciences *simpliciter*, or even science *simpliciter*, and Western intellectuals were to be *just intellectuals*, leaving their religion, personalities, personal histories, and cultural baggage at the door.[16]

Kuyper found this vision not only untenable but dangerous. Dangerous because, as a kind of religious view itself, it threatened to relegate Christian thought to both theoretical and practical irrelevance, and consequently, with speed and resolve, to the dusty annals of history.[17] It was also dangerous because of the political realities to which, Kuyper foresaw, it was conducive: various forms of political totalitarianism.[18] Standing his ground against the accelerating secularization of a post-Christian Europe, Kuyper embraced the antithesis between Christian and secular culture as a kind of eschatological battle line between, as he saw it, Trinitarian Christian theism and various forms of pantheism and atheism.[19] Furthermore, he found the modern theory of science untenable because, as Wolterstorff himself would later argue, there simply is no such thing as the ideal or platonic human being itself—the claim itself is rather eerily religious—and therefore no such thing as science *per se*, in platonic abstraction from individual, religiously committed scientists. Kuyper argued, at the end of the day, that

16. Wolterstorff writes, "[I]n my days as a graduate student at Harvard there were no such things as feminist studies, African-American studies, or any such perspectival studies. Had anyone at the time proposed any such study, they would have been greeted with blank incomprehension . . . the response would have been that any such study would be a biased study, and hence had no place in the academy" ("Postscript: A Life in Philosophy," in Wolterstorff, *Practices of Belief*, 415).

17. Kuyper says, for example, that "[t]o believe that an absolute science in the above-given sense can ever decide the question between truth and falsehood is nothing but a criminal self-deception. He who affirms this, always takes science as it proceeds from his own subjective premises and as it appears to him, and therefore *eo ipso* stigmatizes every scientific development which goes out from other premises as pseudo-science, serviceable to the lie" (Kuyper, *Encyclopedia of Sacred Theology*, 118).

18. Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 85. He names two: "[*p*]*opular-sovereignty*, as it has been anti-theistically proclaimed in Paris in 1789; and that of *State-sovereignty*, as it has of late been developed by the historicopantheistic school of Germany. Both these theories are at heart identical" (ibid.).

19. See Kuyper, "Pantheism's Destruction of Boundaries."

a religious-like faith rendered 'life-systems'[20] and modes of doing science irreconcilable at a basic level, shattering the modern hope for a superhuman *scientia*.[21]

Thus, a basic plurality of worldviews and religious presuppositions is a staple of the Kuyperian legacy. Without a doubt, this principle is operative in Wolterstorff's work as well, as this study seeks to demonstrate.[22]

When reflecting on his student days at Calvin, Wolterstorff invariably mentions two personal relationships: a lasting friendship struck with Alvin Plantinga and the influence of his professor of philosophy, William Harry Jellema. While at Calvin Wolterstorff was instilled with a sense of duty to capture and fortify a Christian perspective, specifically on issues philosophical, and to forge a self-consciously Christian presence in the world. He recounts having been persistently encouraged to view the intellectual history of the West from a Christian point of view, as a critical, Christian observer, but also to actively pursue the growth and fortification of the kingdom of God in the world. "'There are two cities,' said one of our teachers, Henry Jellema, with gripping charisma . . . 'the *civitas Dei* and the *civitas mundi*. Your calling is to build the *civitas Dei*.'"[23] Later collaborations with Plantinga would put Wolterstorff at center stage in the Christian intellectual world, in

20. The awkward term "life-system" is synonymous with "worldview." It represents the leading concept in Kuyper's *Lectures on Calvinism* (the first lecture is entitled, "Calvinism as a Life-system"), and it is a central theme in Dutch neo-Calvinism. See Wolters, "On the Idea of Worldview and its Relation to Philosophy."

21. Ultimately, says Kuyper, "the conflict is not between faith and science, but between the assertion that the cosmos, as it exists today, is either in a normal or an abnormal condition. If it is normal, then it moves by means of an eternal evolution from its potencies to its ideal. But if the cosmos in its present condition is abnormal, then a disturbance has taken place in the past, and only a regenerating power can warrant it the final attainment of its goal. This, and no other is the principal antithesis, which separates the thinking minds in the domain of Science into two opposite battle-arrays" (Kuyper, *Lectures on Calvinism*, 131–32). In the unpublished essay "Herman Dooyeweerd: An Appreciation," Wolterstorff explains Dooyeweerd's pointed critique of the Kantian ideal of a uniform, non-religious body of scientific knowledge, also indicating Dooyeweerd's agreement with Kuyper on the role of religious presuppositions in science. Wolterstorff writes, "By contrast, one of Dooyeweerd's fundamental theses is that we must live in the expectation that over and over, in the academic disciplines, disagreements will arise of so fundamental a nature that there is and can be no agreed-on method for settlement. That at least is what we must expect in a religiously pluralistic society and tradition. For Dooyeweerd's contention is that we must expect divergence in *religious* commitment to lead to such disputes. Thus, Dooyeweerd took the radical position of holding that there are no *scientiae* on the traditional concept" (Wolterstorff, "Herman Dooyeweerd: An Appreciation," 3).

22. Particularly in chapter 6.

23. Wolterstorff, "Grace That Shaped," 268.

the world of Reformed thought, and indeed in the Anglo-American philosophical scene, Jellema's charge being realized through the production of, by most accounts, the most influential Christian philosophy of the twentieth century.

Wolterstorff went on to study philosophy at Harvard, where he graduated with his Ph.D. in 1956. As Wolterstorff remembers,

> There were, as I recall, twenty-one of us who were admitted as first year grad students in philosophy that year . . . A requirement of the program was that one take written prelims at the end of the first year, four in two days. The results were posted about a week after the exams were concluded. Four of us were allowed to continue to the Ph.D. . . . The rest were sent packing, a few with master's degrees, most without.[24]

Wolterstorff finished his course work in two years and wrote his dissertation, "Whitehead's Theory of Individuation," in a single year. "I have not looked at the dissertation since turning it in," he said in 2007.[25]

We should also mention Wolterstorff's contribution to what has come to be called Reformed Epistemology. In retrospect, Plantinga's *God and Other Minds*, published in 1967, represents a charter moment for Reformed Epistemology, though the term did not appear until 1983.[26] In that text, Plantinga argues that no more defense is needed for the rationality of belief in the existence of God than for the rationality of belief in the existence of other minds, or rather, that a defense is no more possible for the one than for the other, and that, therefore, the demand imposed on theists to provide such a defense, the default charge of irrationality, and the insistence that religious beliefs may be rational only by providing such a defense, is groundless and self-defeating. We are forced to choose between classical foundationalism and the rational permissibility not only of religious beliefs but of a great swath of basic beliefs such as belief in the existence of other minds and belief that the world is more than a few moments old. Reformed Epistemology says, 'so much the worse for classical foundationalism.'

Plantinga adopted, if incipiently, what Wolterstorff later called an "innocent until proved guilty"[27] approach to the rationality of theistic belief, a

24. "Postscript," 409–10.

25. Ibid., 411–12.

26. In the introduction to *Faith and Rationality*, Wolterstorff writes, "a third theme which weaves in and out of these essays is what might be called, admittedly not very felicitously, 'Calvinist epistemology,' or 'Reformed epistemology'" (Plantinga and Wolterstorff, *Faith and Rationality*, 7).

27. Wolterstorff says, for example, "The deliverances of our credulity disposition

theme largely consistent with Plantinga's later approach to warrant.[28] The fullest statements of Reformed Epistemology, of both its critique of classical foundationalist rationality—what Wolterstorff in places calls the "regnant" rationality of our time—and indications of viable alternative theories of rationality, appeared in the acclaimed *Faith and Rationality*, published in 1983.

Plantinga later proposed a theory of properly basic belief in two texts on warrant, *Warrant: The Current Debate* and *Warrant and Proper Function*. He then argued that Christian belief may qualify as one of these properly basic beliefs in his *Warranted Christian Belief*. Plantinga's notion of properly basic belief is a more fully developed "innocent until proved guilty" approach to rationality than anything that had come from the Reformed epistemologists up to that point, and it is heavily Reidian in its common sense response to skepticism and its approach to rationality. While Plantinga's work is characterized by penetrating critiques of classical foundationalism, Wolterstorff's work developed more broadly through his search for a historical account of the pervasive influence of it, despite its painfully obvious internal problems. Plantinga's work tended to maintain the a-historical tenor of analytic philosophy, while Wolterstorff's work developed more historically. Wolterstorff's own proposals also followed Reid, who he found to have been not only unjustly neglected by historians of philosophy, but also to be a most effective critic of classical foundationalism and modern skepticism. Wolterstorff's appreciation of Reid goes beyond Plantinga's, not only historically but also in terms of his development of an account of the doxastic self.

As we will see in some detail, Wolterstorff rejects modern epistemological anthropology as an unilluminating and unhelpful abstraction. He replaces it with a heavily Reidian, mobile, historically conditioned, and socially accountable doxastic subject, one upon whose every moment, every

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are innocent until proved guilty, not guilty until proved innocent" (Wolterstorff, "Can Belief in God Be Rational," in *Practices of Belief*, 247).

28. The same basic position enjoys theological precedent, according to Wolterstorff. See "Herman Bavinck." Of the "innocent until proven guilty" principle of belief entitlement, Wolterstorff writes, "This, so I have argued, is the right approach" (ibid., 143). Bavinck's realism has been widely debated, particularly in terms of its theological merits and consistency with Bavinck's take on relevant theological doctrines. A section of Bavinck's *Prolegomena* entitled "Realism," and the entirety of the seventh chapter, "Scientific Foundations," has received a great deal of critical attention. It caught the attention of Vos, who gave it special mention in his review (mentioned above). Van Til, though much indebted to Bavinck otherwise, brought additional critical attention to this material. See Van Til, *Introduction to Systematic Theology*, 93–98. See also Oliphint, "Bavinck's Realism."

thought and action, weigh the ethical components of his personal, social, and historical situation. This doxastic anthropology leads Wolterstorff to his theory of *situated rationality*.[29] As we will see, the theory is explicitly Reidian, but it also retains elements of Kuyper's thought, and it stands in an intimate and organic relation to Wolterstorff's notion of shalom, his own version of Kuyperian neo-Calvinism.

Already in this brief introduction we have seen many of the traditions, personalities, and themes that have influenced and informed Wolterstorff's thinking in relevant ways—Kuyper and neo-Calvinism as well as Reformed Epistemology's critique of foundationalism and its constructive use of Thomas Reid. This provides us with the necessary background against which I will begin to develop a defense of my thesis, that Wolterstorff's theory of rationality is essentially a shalom doxastic ethic. We turn now to an exposition my claim and its relevance.

1.2 THE TOPIC AND ITS RELEVANCE

The claim that situated rationality is a shalom doxastic ethic suggests a profound relationship between Wolterstorff's theory of rationality and his own Christian belief. So it is worth noting at the outset that Wolterstorff's work on epistemology and rationality is not explicitly Christian. What I mean is that a defense exclusively of Christian belief or a presentation of a distinctly Christian point of view are rarely, if ever, his express intention. His writing on these topics is decidedly philosophical; it is intended for the philosophical reader, sensitive to the history of philosophy, and forged in philosophical categories.[30] Wolterstorff's epistemologically focused readers are unlikely to

29. The term "situated rationality" does not figure prominently in Wolterstorff's work, but it appears consistently over time. In his seminal essay, "Can Belief in God Be Rational If It Has No Foundations?," he says pointedly, "Rationality is always *situated rationality*" (Wolterstorff, Can Belief in God Be Rational," in *Practices of Belief*, 239), by which he means, "[o]ur noetic obligations arise from the whole diversity of obligations that we have in our concrete situations" (ibid., 231). In "Entitlement to Believe and Practices of Inquiry," written some twenty years later, he writes, "Obligations to employ practices of inquiry are *personally situated* obligations" (111). See also 238–39, 262–63; Wolsterstorff, *Divine Discourse*, 272–73. Sloane uses the phrase in *On Being a Christian* (his third chapter is titled "Wolterstorff's Situated Rationality"), as does Coyle in "Nicholas Wolterstorff's Reformed Epistemology." Wolterstorff says of Reid's theory of rationality, "Reid very clearly gives what may be called a theory of *situated rationality*" (Wolterstorff, "Thomas Reid on Rationality," 65).

30. As he says of Reformed Epistemology, "Its discussion partners have been philosophers, not theologians; it employs the conceptuality of philosophy" (Wolsterstorff, "Herman Bavinck," 146).

get the impression that he understands his work as related in any significant way to a Christian worldview, to the kingdom of God, to the Christian faith, biblical ethics or a biblical view of history. Even his writing on religious epistemology, one notices, bears none of the marks of a positive articulation of a distinctively Christian view, and may just as well have come from the pen of a follower of another religion, or even an epistemologist without religious commitment. Some might count this along the foremost merits of Wolterstorff's work, even from an apologetic point of view. I include myself here. But the fact is, Wolterstorff's work appears to be somewhat of an anomaly in this sense: while the success of his work toward upsetting the presumptive bias against religious or specifically Christian believing in much of twentieth century philosophy, if not in Anglo-American academia more broadly, is uncontested, he has not, to my knowledge, produced a single argument for the existence of God, much less the truth of Christianity, nor does he anywhere in publication, again, to my knowledge, directly engage an atheist or a critic of one kind or another on the question of the ationality of specifically Christian belief, that is, on the unique (epistemic) merits of the faith he calls his own.[31]

31. Wolterstorff's introduction to *Faith and Rationality* offers some insight here. He describes the first three of the four themes of the volume as follows: First, he says, "Perhaps the most basic theme is that of the collapse of *classical foundationalism*" (*Faith and Rationality*, 1). "A second theme which weaves in and out of these essays is that of the evidentialist challenge to religious belief, a challenge first issued decisively in the European Enlightenment . . . the fundamental contentions of the Enlightenment still prove persuasive to many" (5). Third, notice, "Characteristic of the Continental Calvinistic tradition has been a revulsion against arguments in favor of theism or Christianity . . . that this tradition has characteristically viewed in a dim light the project of offering evidence for theism and for Christianity is clear" (7–8). In other words, historically speaking, stopping short of offering evidence for Christian belief is a distinctly Reformed habit. Wolterstorff continues, "[M]ost often the position taken was that such arguments are unnecessary for putting a person in the position where he is within his rights in being a Christian" (8). In sum, "The third theme that weaves in and out of these essays, then, is that of the antievidentialist impulses of the Reformed tradition. Of course, by taking up an antievidentialist position in their response to the Enlightenment, these essays *perforce* ally themselves with that impulse in the Reformed tradition" (7–8). In other words, this antievidentialist commitment, as Wolterstorff sees it, is a large part of the Reformed pedigree of Reformed Epistemology. Wolterstorff's claim that Calvinism of the European continent is characterized by a "revulsion" to positive arguments for Christian theism is, however, not entirely accurate. Even if there is some ambiguity here between apologetics and natural theology, there are notable advocates of both within the Reformed tradition. On the Reformed tradition and natural theology, see the recent study by Sudduth, *The Reformed Objection to Natural Theology*. Even though the Reformed objection to natural theology has a noble history, the philosophico-theological influence of Thomas Aquinas, particularly with reference to the doctrine of simplicity, is pervasive in the history of Reformed thought. See, for example, Bavinck, *God and Creation*, 118–77. Regarding apologetics, even Kuyper was not decidedly against it, as

The fact that no such arguments have come from Wolterstorff's pen is due to the particular nature of his apologetic methodology, if we may call it that, or to his view of epistemic merit and doxastic ethics, which include, as we have already seen to some extent, important aspects of the work Thomas Reid and of the thought of Dutch theologians Abraham Kuyper and Herman Bavinck, and even the public and social concerns of John Locke. Wolterstorff is committed to a common sense, "innocent until proven guilty" principle of belief entitlement. A given belief (believing) is innocent—rational, justified, permissible, or entitled, for Wolterstorff—until and unless the believer is permissibly aware of a compelling reason that the belief in question represents some kind of epistemic malpractice or dereliction of epistemic duty. Simple enough. As I seek to demonstrate here, however, this formulation has a rich theological pedigree.[32]

Just as in Wolterstorff's own work on epistemology and rationality, where the theoretical influence of Christian commitments is not immediately apparent, much of the initial, formative work of Reformed Epistemology is decidedly neither an argument for the irrationality of unbelief nor a positive argument for the unique or particular epistemic credentials of Christian belief *per se* nor a defense of any distinctly Christian theological claims. Reformed Epistemology has consistently affirmed a different goal, that of rebuffing the regnant assumption that religious belief as a class is *prima facie* non- or irrational, or that for a religious belief to be rational it

one recent study argues: "Kuyper's role for apologetics was not to abolish it, but to give it a role of little importance" (Anderson, *Reason and Worldviews*, 49). Warfield wrote that Kuyper had demoted apologetics to "a subdivision of a subdivision," and that, on Kuyper's method, Christianity remained "the great assumption" (Warfield, "Introduction to Beattie's *Apologetics*," in *Selected Shorter Writings*, 95). If Kuyper was not a great advocate of apologetics, certainly he did not express revulsion to it. See also Edgar and Oliphint, *Christian Apologetics*, 331–35, on Kuyper, and 453–56 on apologist Van Til, who considered himself a Kuyperian in many respects.

32. See Wolterstorff, "Herman Bavinck," 143. The basic thesis of this article is that Reformed Epistemology came about by capitalizing on an important shift in philosophy (the emergence of metaepistemology) as an opportunity to give voice to the philosophical implications of themes in Reformed theology going at least as far back as Dutch neo-Calvinism. That yield is precisely this "innocent until proven guilty" approach to belief entitlement. It is also telling that, from an early age, Wolterstorff understood his faith as bequeathed, received, and held on non-foundationalist bases: "My induction into the tradition, through words and silences, ritual and architecture, implanted in me an interpretation of reality—a fundamental hermeneutic. Nobody offered 'evidences' for the truth of the Christian gospel; nobody offered 'proofs' for the inspiration of the Scriptures; nobody suggested that Christianity was the best explanation of one thing or another. Evidentialists were nowhere in sight! The gospel was report, not explanation. And nobody reflected on how we as 'modern men' can and should believe all this" ("Grace That Shaped," 263).

must be supported by inference from self-evident beliefs or beliefs immediately evident to the senses. The methodology of Reformed Epistemology is, consistently, to defend an "innocent until proved guilty" rationality of believing, just believing—Christian believing receives no special attention. This is not to say that Christian belief does not benefit from this work; it does, but neither directly nor uniquely. Reformed Epistemology frees Christian belief—and religious belief generally, along with a broader class of basic beliefs—from the constraints of classical foundationalism indirectly.

Much of *Faith and Rationality* confirms this. The arguments there are directed against the purported irrationality of Christian belief only as a species of religious belief as a species of belief-in-general, defending the rationality of generic religious belief or of belief-in-general by undercutting the demands of classical foundationalism and the evidentialist requirement, by demonstrating decisive internal inconsistencies in foundationalism itself. Consequently, *Faith and Rationality*, and much of the relevant writing of Reformed epistemologists since, treats religious belief as a doxastic category without particular theological content or significance. The object of religious doxastic intentionality remains unspecified; or, the referent of the term 'God' in religious propositions is inconsequential, and anyway never defined. The anti-foundationalist and anti-evidentialist arguments presented in *Faith and Rationality* make no claim at all about the unique nature of religious beliefs, much less Christian belief in particular.[33]

Wolterstorff makes this clear when he writes, "[c]entral to Christianity, Judaism, and Islam, is the conviction that we as human beings are called to believe in God . . . Presumably it is rational for a person to believe *in* God only if it is rational for him to believe various propositions *about* God—in particular, that there is such a being as God."[34] Here, however, a problem emerges: is it really the case that Jewish, Christian, and Islamic faiths are largely interchangeable as far as the cognitive aspect of faith is concerned? Does not the Christian mean something significantly different by "belief

33. Exemplifying this approach is Wolterstorff's essay "Can Belief in God Be Rational" and also his "Epistemology of Religion." The latter was originally published in *The Blackwell Guide to Epistemology* and was republished in *Practices of Belief*, 144–72. I offer some critical reflections on the theological implications of this methodology in Shannon, "Believe and Confess."

34. Wolterstorff, "Can Belief in God be Rational," in *Practices of Belief*, 217. Note also the following statement, which appears in the piece on Bavinck: "This leaves open the possibility that [foundationalism] nonetheless holds for beliefs about God, but defending that possibility requires that one find a relevant difference among perceptual beliefs, memorial beliefs, and the like, on the one hand, and beliefs about God, on the other hand . . . Here I have to call it off and declare that no one has yet succeeded in pinpointing a relevant difference" (Wolterstorff, "Herman Bavinck," 137).

in God" than the Muslim does? And what might this imply in terms of Wolterstorff's approach to the epistemic status of Christian belief? Even setting aside the question of the referent of the term "God," does not the cognitive side of faith itself enjoy theological attention within each of these traditions? So there is a sense in which Wolterstorff's work on these topics, and the work of Reformed Epistemology in general, obviously stands to be of service to the church, but also a sense in which it proves to be somewhat of a conundrum, particularly for the Christian theologian and the apologist interested in defending the unique merits of Christian faith.

So the theologian might be somewhat irked to find that theistic believing, as Wolterstorff tends to treat it, is not itself essentially theological. What I mean is that it is clear that Wolterstorff approaches the topic of the rationality of religious belief from a philosophical point of view, as though there was, first, believing, generically speaking, within which, second, we find religious believing, distinguished from other species of belief by the uniqueness of its (unspecified) grounds (revelation or religious experience of the divine, a supernatural something or someone), and then, third, by finer, (unarticulated) distinctions separating Jewish, Christian, and Muslim believings. And so these finer distinctions bear little or no weight in terms of the epistemic features of religious believings. What we find then is no substantive role for religious beliefs themselves, much less for their content—for the specific Christian-ness of Christian belief—in the formulation of a theory of rationality.

Religious beliefs are just as uninvolved in the process of drawing up norms for believing as they are treated unexceptionally by those norms once clarified. Religious belief is subject to the same standards of rationality as any other belief in Wolterstorff's theory of rationality no less than in the modern theories he rejects. Viewing religious belief from the philosophical side of things leaves us with the impression that there is a pre- or non-theological way to think about religious believing, so that we can say "certain attributes of God" (beginning with existence) or "religious propositions" are the objects of religious belief without concerning ourselves with the actual referents of such beliefs (i.e., "which god?" or "what does 'god' mean?"), with whether the true God is relevantly similar to the abstract attribute in question, or with the redemptive categories relevant to one's confession or rejection of religious claims. The implication of all this appears to be that our discussions of religious believing will be generally uninterested in theological specifics. But one might expect that an approach which grows out of a theological atmosphere, such as Wolterstorff's Kuyperian background, instead of a modern philosophical one, might come at things the other way

around, finding the generic "religious believing" somewhat confusing, theoretically unfruitful, if not flatly objectionable.

The Christian theologian or apologist may not be as eager to speak of religious belief in this generic way. His starting point will be a Christian theological one: belief in the triune God of Scripture and in Christ as lord and savior, perhaps commitment to "the faith that was once for all delivered to the saints," or to the apostolic "pattern of sound words."[35] The theoretical difference is this: belief is theologically defined, it is a theologically constituted category, and it is ethically significant ultimately for theological reasons: the Bible enjoins us to believe. Belief in this case is an aspect, the cognitive aspect, of Christian faith; but here it is inseparable from the content of that faith. So the theologian may not be so easily discouraged from using even trinitarian categories to define Christian faith and the relevant doxastic attitudes. If, as in a classical Reformed perspective, one's soteriology begins in the eternal counsel of peace and the triune economies of both the *historia* and the *ordo* of salvation, belief will always and everywhere be a function of the sinner's status as either in Adam or in Christ, a context in which saving faith is a gift of God by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. And other religions will understand belief through distinct categories of their own. So from a theological point of view, the parity among religious believings that is implied when we speak about religious belief as a generic epistemological category is somewhat of an oddity.

Wolterstorff's theory of situated rationality offers a fresh perspective on belief entitlement and rationality, one which, in my view, is distinctly Christian but also philosophically informed.[36] And any attempt at achieving this balance invites a number of questions, especially from the Christian point of view: is it rational to hold Christian beliefs? And if it is, is it irrational *not* to hold Christian beliefs, or to reject Christian theism? In what sense it is rational to be a believing Jew or Muslim, or to be an agnostic, a skeptic, or an atheist—again, from a Christian point of view, or from Wolterstorff's own Christian vantage point? More broadly, what is the relationship between Wolterstorff's theologically informed theory of rationality, the theology which informs it, and the rational status of Christian belief according to it? And so, the research question of this study is: *how are we to understand*

35. 2 Tim 1:13; Jude 1:3.

36. So, for example, in my view, for Wolterstorff the parity between various religious believings is implied by a logically prior commitment to the unique merits of the Christian faith. In other words, in Wolterstorff's view, Christian belief itself commends a view of rationality in which various religious beliefs enjoy, *prima facie*, equal footing. Religious diversity is a Christian (epistemic) value.

the relationship between Wolterstorff's theory of rationality and his theological commitments?

My response comprises two main components. The first is situationality. Wolterstorff insists that rationality is always and everywhere a function of a person's situation. The second is shalom. Wolterstorff appears to understand all moral significance to be reducible to the biblical notion of shalom. So he rejects the abstract, de-personalized epistemology of modern tradition and replaces it with a situated, personally conditioned reconfiguration of doxastic and practical responsibility, and that responsibility is permeated through and through with moral accountability ultimately given in the Christian vision of shalom. As will be clear later on, situated rationality is not merely consistent with shalom, it is the theory of rationality commended by shalom. The connection is necessary. But is Christian belief rational? There is no generic answer; it 'all depends.' It all depends upon a person's situation. The implication is this: Wolterstorff's theory of rationality is a shalom doxastic ethic within which Christian belief itself is situationally entitled.

1.3 APPROACHING THE QUESTION

In order to understand situated rationality as a shalom doxastic ethic, one might examine those publications in which Wolterstorff directly addresses the question of the epistemological credentials and the rational merits of religious believings. And a number of Wolterstorff's best-known works speak directly to this way of approaching the question.[37]

The principal disadvantage of this procedure is that, as a direct approach to the *what* question, it promises nothing in terms of *why*.[38] We may learn from numerous publications directly and efficiently how Wolterstorff goes about defending the rationality of religious belief, so directly and efficiently that phrasing a research program this way impugns the need for an extended secondary study. But more importantly, this approach fails to engage the issue with the requisite breadth, since interaction with the primary (philosophical) literature alone offers no opportunity to ask those outstanding questions about theological motivation, and no opportunity to address the concerns of the Christian theologian or apologist, who benefit I think a great deal from the apologetic achievements of Reformed Epistemology.

So if our goal is to clarify the relationship between situated rationality and shalom, certainly Wolterstorff's epistemological work is indispensable,

37. For example, Wolterstorff, *Reason within the Bounds*.

38. And anyway, such a study has been done: Sloane, *On Being a Christian*.

but on its own it is insufficient. In order to defend my claim that Wolterstorff's theory of rationality is borne by theological ideas, by shalom in particular, I must clarify the connections between the relevant bodies of his work, between Wolterstorff's work on epistemology and rationality and his work on shalom and related ethical topics (education, scholarship and theorizing, justice, human dignity, etc.). As noted, this connection is essential to the descriptive proposal I offer here. So my approach to the relationship between shalom and situated rationality is as follows. I begin with Wolterstorff's epistemological work and then argue for a point of fundamental dependence of his contributions in this area upon his notion of shalom. I then explore the particular ways in which a shalom ethic informs theorizing and the ethics of belief. Finally, I examine the theological distinctives which are in my view constitutive of Wolterstorff's approach to situationality and doxastic ethics.

Epistemology and the ethics of belief have been the focus of a great deal of Wolterstorff's writing, teaching, and public lecturing throughout his career. He has written extensively on related topics toward historical, analytical, and more creative goals, and he has made significant contributions of all three kinds. And while his thought on these issues continues to develop, with some of his latest creative work appearing in print only very recently, a sustained, theologically informed analysis of this material still waits for an author.[39] It is my hope that the present study will begin to answer that need.

1.4 OUTLINE AND PROCEDURE

After a short introduction, I take a moment to define Wolterstorff's notions of rationality, justification, and entitlement (§2.1). The core of chapter 2 begins with an analysis of Wolterstorff's critique of the abstractness characteristic of the Western epistemological tradition (§2.2). In Wolterstorff's estimation, modern and contemporary epistemologists have tended to work with a notion of the epistemological or doxastic subject that is noticeably de-historicized, and which has very little to do with the living, moving, and socially engaged sorts of thinkers and believers we actually are. Wolterstorff rejects this starting point and adopts a Reidian view of the doxastic self and of belief-forming dispositions. We treat his doxastic anthropology next

39. The only book-length studies of Wolterstorff's work I know of are Sloane's *On Being a Christian* and Coyle's "Nicholas Wolterstorff's Reformed Epistemology," mentioned above. Both attempt to synthesize Wolterstorff's work to some degree, but neither attempts to incorporate theological categories of Wolterstorff's own Dutch Reformed tradition as a unifying or integrating substructure, as I do here.

(§2.3). We are able to view some of the features of Reid's thought which are appealing to Wolterstorff in further detail through an analysis of what Wolterstorff refers to as Reid's "credulity disposition" and Reid's psychological account of belief in testimony, as Wolterstorff has understood them (§2.4). Reid's theories of belief and knowledge depend in large part on a doxastic optimism which is really quite peculiar in the modern context.[40] Since Wolterstorff benefits from Reid's doxastic optimism so much, and because it proves to be theologically significant, I devote some time to Wolterstorff's adoption of Reidian doxastic optimism (§2.5). This attention to Reidian optimism reveals some points of continuity and some of discontinuity between Wolterstorff and Plantinga in terms of doxastic anthropology (§2.6).

Wolterstorff views rationality in terms of a normative notion of doxastic permissibility which he calls "entitlement." Because it is normative, rationality thus understood requires some notion of intentional action in the order of the formation of beliefs, since one cannot be held accountable for something over which one has no control. Wolterstorff rejects strong doxastic voluntarism, the idea that we can, by sheer force of will, determine to believe or to not believe something, even, perhaps, against the evidence; but he affirms that there are many ways in which we may "govern" our belief-forming faculties. So, a person can only be accountable for beliefs (or believings) over which he is able to exercise some control—"eluctable" beliefs, Wolterstorff calls these; and we have within our power many means of responsible doxastic action.[41] Thus resting rationality, in terms of entitlement, on intentional action locates believing and belief-governing practices within a broader web of actions and a more general moral context. Rationality is always both practical and moral. I turn to these issues in the third chapter.

Wolterstorff's understanding of rational permissibility and accountability in terms of situationality is the first topic covered in chapter 3 (§3.1). Next I examine situationality itself in terms of the availability of beliefs and doxastically significant actions, actions Wolterstorff calls "practices of inquiry" and "ways of finding out," and relevant social, historical, and

40. One recent study, De Bary, *Thomas Reid and Scepticism*, argues for a reliabilist understanding of Reid's response to skepticism, an approach to Reid that is, at least broadly, not unlike the one Wolterstorff takes. I understand Wolterstorff as holding that Reidian doxastic optimism is a close philosophical relative of Herman Bavinck's positions on belief in God and the foundation of theology, again, as Wolterstorff has interpreted Bavinck. He says, for example, that there are "some astoundingly Reidian-sounding passages in Bavinck's *Reformed Dogmatics*" (Wolterstorff, "Herman Bavinck," 146).

41. Wolsterstorff, "Can Belief in God Be Rational," in *Practices of Belief*, 246.

personal delineations (§3.2). The closing section of chapter 3 introduces the question of moral value (§3.3).

Jointly, chapters 2 and 3 comprise an analysis of situated rationality, of rationality as practical, situational, and deontological. Focusing in chapter 2 on the doxastic subject and in chapter 3 on the subject's (doxastic and moral) situation will provide us with an account of Wolterstorff's theory of rationality in terms of entitlement sufficient for articulating the relevance of shalom.[42]

I proceed in chapter 4 with an analysis of shalom, an ethical vision in many ways of Kuyperian, neo-Calvinist pedigree. My intention in the fourth chapter is to demonstrate that shalom is of the background for situated rationality, most notably its moral foundation. After a brief introduction, I seek a definition of shalom (§4.1). I then introduce its biblical and theological roots, as Wolterstorff has articulated them (§4.2), and next discuss Wolterstorff's interaction with contemporary representatives of neo-Calvinism (§4.3–5). I also bring a wider range of issues into the discussion—worship, liturgy, biblical anthropology, biblical theology and eschatology—in order to fill out shalom as Wolterstorff's governing ethical vision. I give special attention to Wolterstorff's thought on shalom and liturgy (§4.5), a theme which draws together the theological and ethical concerns of the chapter.

Chapter 5 presents a more detailed analysis of the practical implications of shalom, specifically, how Wolterstorff envisions a shalom-guided Christian presence in the academy. Wolterstorff has put much of what he has to say on this issue in terms of the theory versus praxis question relative specifically to academic work. I introduce Wolterstorff's thought on that question (§5.2) and then, in order to demonstrate the practical potential of the ethic of shalom, I retrace Wolterstorff's shalom-based treatment of it (§5.3). Wolterstorff has analyzed the potential role of shalom in scholarly activities in terms of various levels of theorizing and scholarly self-consciousness. After introducing these categories (§5.3), I turn very briefly to point out the odd fact that shalom, on the one hand, is a biblical concept, but, on the other, provides a pluralistic doxastic ethical context. Wolterstorff embraces this fact and defends what he calls "dialogic pluralism." We then revisit neo-Calvinism, since, in light of an enhanced view of shalom, we are able to view in greater detail Wolterstorff's interaction with this tradition (§5.4). Chapter 5 concludes as we bring into view a point Wolterstorff makes with particular clarity in *Reason within the Bounds of Religion*: that theorizing is not by any means a strictly academic endeavor, but is in fact a basically human activity. In other words, however Wolterstorff has shown

42. Sloane offers a more detailed analysis. See *On Being a Christian*, 79–110, 165–79.

shalom to bear on the scholarly life, it bears *mutatis mutandis* on the daily life of every person, and it thus relates directly to a general theory of rationality (§5.5).

The analysis of shalom in the fourth and fifth chapters serves our overall interest by demonstrating the fact that Wolterstorff sees shalom as an expansive ethical vision: all people, if Christians most self-consciously, are always and everywhere accountable to shalom. Shalom is our duty. A Christian scholar is a shalom-scholar, and the value of his work and accomplishments are weighed against shalom, and the direction and focus of his scholarship should serve shalom. This means, alternatively, that believing, indeed all doxastic activity, is always and everywhere shalom-believing and shalom-doxastic-activity, doxastic activity, that is, forged through humanity's existential accountability to the creating and redeeming God. Rationality itself then stands wholly under the governance of shalom, and the ethical vision conspicuously absent at the close of chapter 3, the moral grounding of situated rationality, is now before us.

If chapters 2 and 3 comprise an analysis of situated rationality, and chapters 4 and 5 of shalom, it would appear that we have done things the wrong way around. We began with what turned out to be the effect—situated rationality—and traced it back to the cause: shalom and Christian belief. But we have discovered, in sum, that Wolterstorff's theory of situated rationality is implicit, in his view, in his understanding of the Bible's teaching on redemptive history, on creation, fall, and redemption. And yet, as we will note at several points, situated rationality is itself a happily pluralistic doxastic framework.

I begin chapter 6 with a survey of the evidence from each of the preceding chapters for a connection between shalom and rationality (§6.1). The goal here is to bring into view a coherent narrative unifying chapters 1 through 5 that demonstrates my thesis. I then focus narrowly on the question of the epistemic status of Christian belief, since it appears both as Wolterstorff's actually entitled belief in the shalom of the Christian God and as situationally rational. The relationship between the theoretical function of shalom in Wolterstorff's approach to the ethics of belief and the status of Christian belief downstream, under the theory of situated rationality, is pivotal for my interpretation of situated rationality. In order to clarify and defend the connection between them, I propose a few interpretive concepts, including 'redemptive-historical epistemic humility' and a 'Wolterstorffian' theology of situationality (§6.2). I consider two potential objections to the interpretation I propose (§6.3), and in the final section of chapter 6, I articulate a line of theological inquiry directed toward Wolterstorff's notion

of situationality (§6.4). A few summary remarks bring the sixth and final chapter to a close.

Throughout this study, I attempt to track Wolterstorff's interaction with two closely related traditions. As we have seen, Wolterstorff understands himself as having inherited the tradition of historic Dutch Calvinism, and he is consistently appreciative of its theology, intellectual rigor, expansiveness of vision, and even its distinctive doctrinal emphases. But Wolterstorff is also an established authority on the Western philosophical tradition, and his engagement with it is an important part of this study.

I have attempted to trace the implications of a single question, the question of the relationship between belief entitlement and theological commitment, through the deep structures of Wolterstorff's vast oeuvres, and the substructure of Wolterstorff's work is rich both theologically and philosophically. Because Wolterstorff's thought, in my assessment of it, is proven to be systematic at its core, and related organically at every point to the same basic themes, in theory we could begin our inquiry anywhere. I have elected to begin where any Calvinist might happily begin, with iconoclasm: the smashing of an idol of the secular tradition.