In his examination answers for DeWolf’s History of Christian Doctrine, King succinctly sets forth some of the ideas that he expressed in more detail elsewhere. The second question asked him to “compare Schleiermacher’s and Ritschl's teachings on the person of Christ,” a topic he had pursued the previous May in an essay for DeWolf on the two theologians’ Christology. King also briefly states his opinions of Karl Barth. DeWolf gave this examination 97 points and commented, “Good!” King received an A for the semester.

1. Compare the theological methods of Thomas Aquinas, Wesley and Schleiermacher.3

1. Thomas Aquinas argues that there are two ways of gaining religious truth. The first way is that of philosophy. Here inferences are made from sense data. The movement is upward from particular things to God. The second way is that of theology. Here everything is revealed. The movement is downward from God to particular thing. In Thomas we get a synthesis of revealed theology and natural theology.

Wesley starts out affirming with the general reformation teachers that the Bible is authoritative. Indeed he affirms that the Bible is a sufficient source of religious truth. Yet he does not stop here. He makes it very clear that reason has a place in theological construction. Although reason is not the source of doctrine, it must be used to interpret doctrine. We need reason to infer and judge. So he concludes that we must use our finite reason as far as possible and then we must depend on revelation. Here we can see that Wesley has something in common with Thomas. Both find reason to be a valid instrument in theological construction and yet both are equally insistent that reason must be supplemented by revelation. It is probably true to say that Wesley places more emphasis on the authority of the Bible than Thomas. Thomas, following the Catholic emphasis, places a deal of importance and authority in the councils.

Schleiermacher starts out attempting to discover what is universal in religion. He discovers that it is a feeling of absolute dependence, rather

1. DeWolf refers to Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768–1834) and Albrecht Ritschl (1822–1889).
3. DeWolf refers to John Wesley (1703–1791).
than dogmas or ethical teachings. All theology is an attempt to explicate the teachings implied in this feeling of absolute dependence. In other words Schleiermacher's method is to describe didactically the religious consciousness, and state its implications regarding the attributes of God, the nature of the world and the relation of God and man.

Herein we see the difference between Scheiermacher, Wesley and Thomas. Wherein Thomas would begin with reason and revelation, and Wesley would begin with the Scripture and reason and revelation, Schleiermacher begins with something totally subjective, viz., the feeling of absolute dependence.4

[2. Compare Schleiermacher's and Ritschl's teachings on the person of Christ.]

2. Both Schleiermacher and Ritschl opposed the orthodox doctrines concerning the person of Christ. Both doubted the orthodox doctrine of the trinity. Both rejected the two nature doctrine of Christ. Both insisted that if Christ was divine it was not due to any substantial unity with God. For Schleiermacher the essence of Christ person was found in his unique God consciousness. The feeling of absolute dependence ruled in Christ supreme. Every action and attitude in his life was determine by this absolute God consciousness. So dominant was this God consciousness that Christ had the slightest inclination for sin. He was never even tempted. Schleiermacher was convinced that Christ was unique and could be replaced by non other. But his uniqueness was found in the complete God consciousness that ruled in him rather than in any substantial unity with God.

Ritschl made it very clear that that Christianity was of such nature as to provide a necessary place for its historical founder. Ritschl affirmed that "Jesus is God." But this does not mean that Jesus is God in any ontological sense. Jesus is God in the sense the he has the worth of God to us. (This is in line with Ritschl general epistemological position, viz., that religious knowledge is composed of value judgements, in contrast to Scientific and philosophical knowledge which is composed of factual and causal judgements as well as value judgements.) Ritschl makes it clear that to affirm that Jesus is God is not to affirm that he has any substantial unity with God. He, like Schleiermacher, emphatically denies this. Jesus unity with God is a unity of will and purpose.

Ritschl, like Schleiermacher, affirmed that Jesus is unique and replaceable by no other. God worked in him as he worked through no other human being. But this does not mean that Christ possesses a different nature from other men. Both Ritschl and Schleiermacher would affirm that Christ possessed the same nature as other men.5

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4. DeWolf gave this answer 10 points.
5. DeWolf gave this answer 10 points.
3. Duns Scotus used philosophy to some degree in his theological construction, accepting basically the Christian Aristoteleanism of Aquinas. But he restricted the domain of philosophy quite a bit in theological thinking. For an instance, he held that immortality couldn’t be proved philosophically. Moreover, the existence of God could not be proved philosophical. At best philosophical arguments for God prove only a first cause, but not the Personal Father of Christianity.

Edwards found philosophy to be quite a useful tool in relation to theology. His whole doctrine of the world is based on a personalistic metaphysics. When he comes to refute free will he uses all of the tools of philosophical naturalism. His argument for the existence is based on the philosophical view of the ideality of matter.

Ritschl excluded, or rather attempted to exclude, philosophy almost completely from theological construction. His watchword could have well been: theology without metaphysics. Following the Kantian epistemology, he insisted that all knowledge is of phenomena. One can never get to the Ding an sich through reason. He goes on to argue that all religious knowledge consist of independent value judgments, in contrast to scientific and philosophical knowledge which is based on causal and factual judgments. So religion does not have to wait on philosophical proof to operate.

Kierkegaard had no use for philosophy. System making was at best a game. Philosophy is based on the false premise that one can be objective. But in the realm of Christianity one is called upon to make a choice which has ultimate significance. To make such a choice the individual must give his whole self to God or reality rather than wait for all the answers. Knowledge of existence is individual subjective and existential. Universals do not give us knowledge because universals do not exist. So Kierkegaard ends up affirming that the chief instrument of philosophy, viz., reason must be crucified.

[4. How appropriate is the designation of Barth’s theology as a “new orthodoxy?” Discuss as fully as possible within the available time.]

4. It seems that the designation of Barth’s theology as the “new orthodoxy” is quite appropriate at some points and quite inappropriate at other point. It is appropriate in the sense that it calls us back to make many teachings which are basic in reformation teachings and in orthodoxy

7. DeWolf gave this answer 9+ points.
generally viz., the centrality of the Bible, the importance of the divinity of Christ, the sovereignty of God, the sinfulness of man, and the absolute necessity for faith. But there are other points in Barth which are quite unorthodox. For an instance his insistence on the unknowability and the incomprehensibility of God is not only unorthodox, but also unbiblical. His affirmation that God is the “Wholly Other” is much more Kierkegaardian than Biblical. His scorn for history seems to me to be also a quite unorthodox position. In fact Barth whole doctrine of God is much more unorthodox and radical that he thinks it is. His God who is so transcendent that he can never come in touch with the [strikeout illegible] without a mediator is much more Greek than Christian orthodox.

[5. Summarize the characteristic theological teachings of Channing.]

5. Theological teachings of Channing
   I Concerning God
      (1) God is known through nature, the Bible and human experience. The supreme proof of God is human moral experience.
      (2) God is One person. The doctrine of the Trinity is affirmed nowhere in the scripture.
   II Concerning Man
      (1) Man is God’s most noble creation. We can learn more about God by looking at ourselves than by looking at the stars.
      (2) Man is not totally depraved. Man and his institutions are quite affected11 with sin, but not to the degree that man can’t turn to God.
      (3) Man is an immortal being. All of the traditional argument for hell are based on mistranslations of the Bible or misunderstandings of the particular passages.
      (5) All persons are of infinite worth. For this reason slavery and war are supremely evil.
   III Concerning Christ
      (1) The life and teachings of Christ are to incongruous with his age as not to attest to his divine origin.
      (2) However Christ is not of the same substance as God.
      (3) Christ was preexistent (In this sense Channing is an Arian)
      (4) The scripture gives us accurate accounts of the life and teachings of Jesus.12

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8. DeWolf commented in the margin, "yet cf. Luther."
9. DeWolf gave this answer 9 points.
11. DeWolf circled the ε, inserted an a, and commented: “Be sure to know the two verbs, affect and effect.”
12. DeWolf gave this answer 10 points.
6. Fisher’s treatment of late medieval and modern Christian thought is presented quite objectively and in a lucid style. He never seems to be bias toward a particular view because it isn’t in line with his religious tradition. This is especially true of Catholicism’s analysis of Catholic thought in the late medieval period. For instance, his interpretation of Thomas Aquinas I think is as good as any and his thought is made very meaningful to any Protestant thinker. When Fisher comes to his treatment of the early modern period he continues his objective treatment. His analysis of the theology of Luther and Calvin is very good. Other minor movements of the early modern period are discussed with clearness and vividness. Although the treatment is often condensed it never fails to give the major points and teachings of these movements. His discussion of Schleiermacher and Ritschl is good as far as it goes. But it seems that the importance of these two figures in the whole development of modern theology would command a little more extensive treatment. Again his treatment of Wesley is somewhat too brief.

His treatment of the influence of philosophy on Christian thought in this period is very good, and shows a real understanding of philosophical trends.¹⁴

AHDS. MLKP-MBU: Box 115.


¹⁴. DeWolf gave this answer 9+ points.

"An Exposition of the First Triad of Categories of the Hegelian Logic—Being, Non-Being, Becoming"

[4 February–22 May 1953]
[Boston, Mass.]

This is the last of six essays that King wrote for a two-semester seminar on Hegel taught by Brightman and Peter A. Bertocci.¹ Brightman became ill after the second

¹. For the other four extant essays, see King, "The Development of Hegel’s Thought as Revealed in His Early Theological Writings," 1 October 1952; "The Transition from Sense-Certainty..."