



VAN TILLIAN Apologetics

April 17th, 2022 - Part 2

Jon Kaus

1 History of Van Tillian apologetics.

2 Contrasted Van Til's epistemology with the history of philosophy.

3 Surveyed verses relating to apologetics. Defined 'apologetics'.

4 Centrality of making inferences in doing apologetics.

5 Avoid the Un-man in reasoning.

Apologetics

Setting forth the truth of Christianity
over against all contrary propositions

Fideism

Believing faith commitments to be
“blind” in that there is no evidence to
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Apologetics

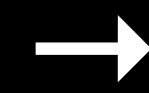
Setting forth the truth of Christianity
over against all contrary propositions

Apologetics

Setting forth the truth of Christianity
over against all **contrary propositions**

**1. Defensive - Neutralizing
an objection to Christianity
Internal/External**

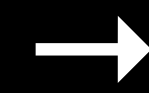
Christianity is true



Internal

CONTRADICTION

Christianity is true



External

CONTRADICTION

Genesis 1 & 2 contradict

The resurrection accounts in the Gospels contradict

The existence of evil contradicts God's attributes

The OT God contradicts the NT God

The concept of the Trinity is illogical

Bible is inconsistent with archeological evidence

Geological evidence is contrary to a worldwide flood

DNA contradicts Bible's claim of man being unique

Distant starlight undermines Genesis 1

An Einsteinian view of physics undermines the Bible

Apologetics

Setting forth the truth of Christianity
over against all contrary propositions

1. Defensive

2. Offensive - Proving
Christianity to be true.

Evidential Apologetics

Setting forth the truth of Christianity
over against all contrary propositions
through the use of probability
start with man
neutrality

Cosmological Argument

1. Everything that begins to exist has a cause.
 2. The universe began to exist.
- ∴ The universe has a cause.

Teleological Argument

1. If the universe exhibits design, then a designer exists.
 2. The universe exhibits design.
- ∴ A designer exists.

Resurrection Argument

1. If the Bible is reliable, then Jesus was resurrected.
 2. The Bible is reliable.
- ∴ Jesus was resurrected.

Ontological Argument

Evidential Argument

Start with some aspect ϕ of our experience.

Argue that ϕ is best explained by generic theism.

The hidden commitment is that man's experience is solely our standard in evaluating the truth of the premises.

Evidential Argument

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What being is the most beyond our experience?

God

Evidential Argument

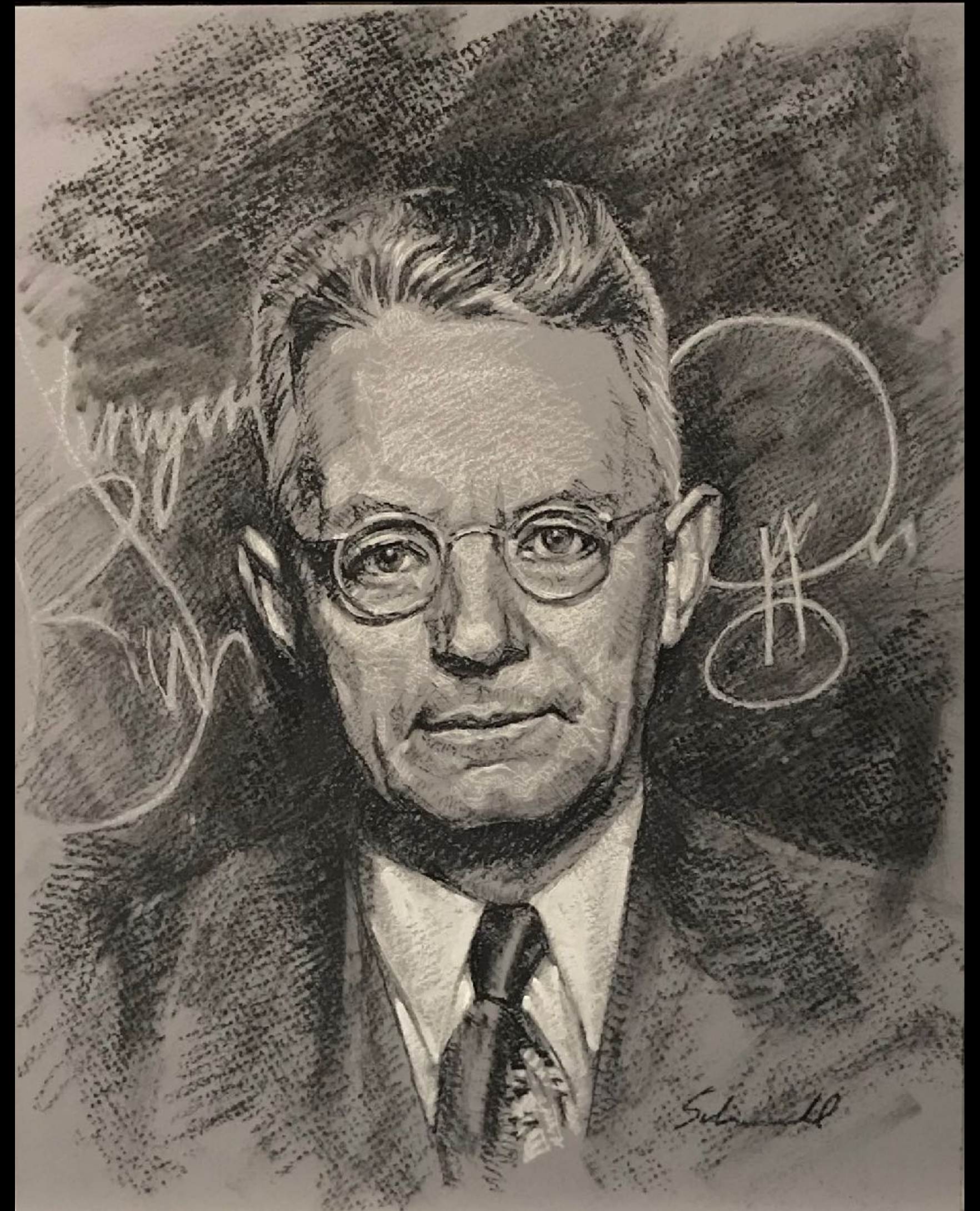
The hidden commitment is that man's experience is solely our standard in evaluating the truth of the premises.

God then is always the least likely explanation

so long as I can make up a materialistic explanation.

If modern man is right in his assumption with respect to his own autonomy then he cannot even for a moment logically consider evidence for the fact of the supernatural in any form as appearing to man.

Cornelius Van Til
Apologetics, 92



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∴ The universe has a **cause**.

Eternal Matter (EM)

Teleological Argument

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Teleological Argument

1. If the universe exhibits design, then a designer exists or EM exists.
 2. The universe exhibits design.
- ∴ A designer exists or EM exists.

Resurrection Argument

1. If the Bible is reliable, then Jesus was resurrected.

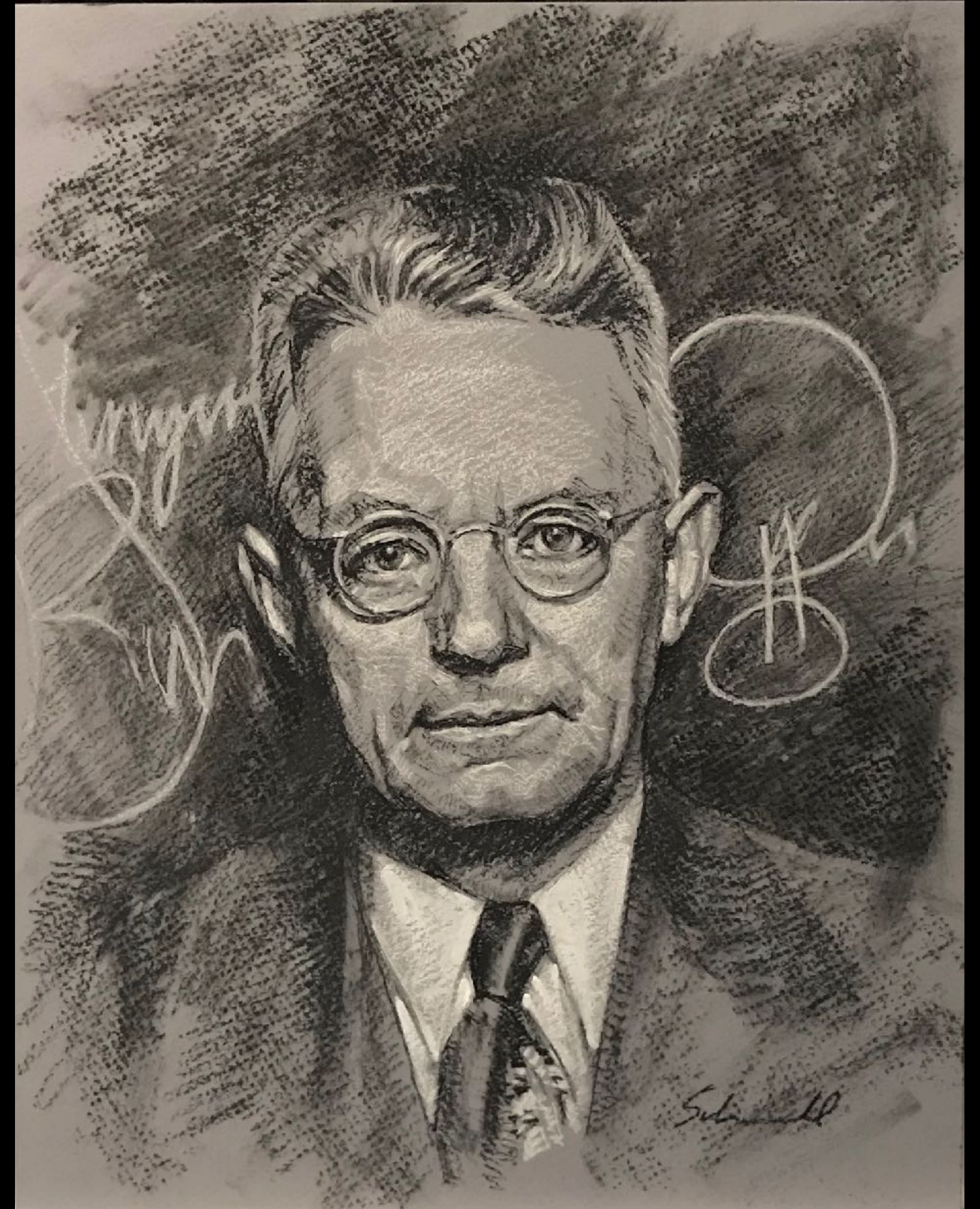
2. The Bible is reliable.

∴ Jesus was resurrected.

Jesus is the Son of God?

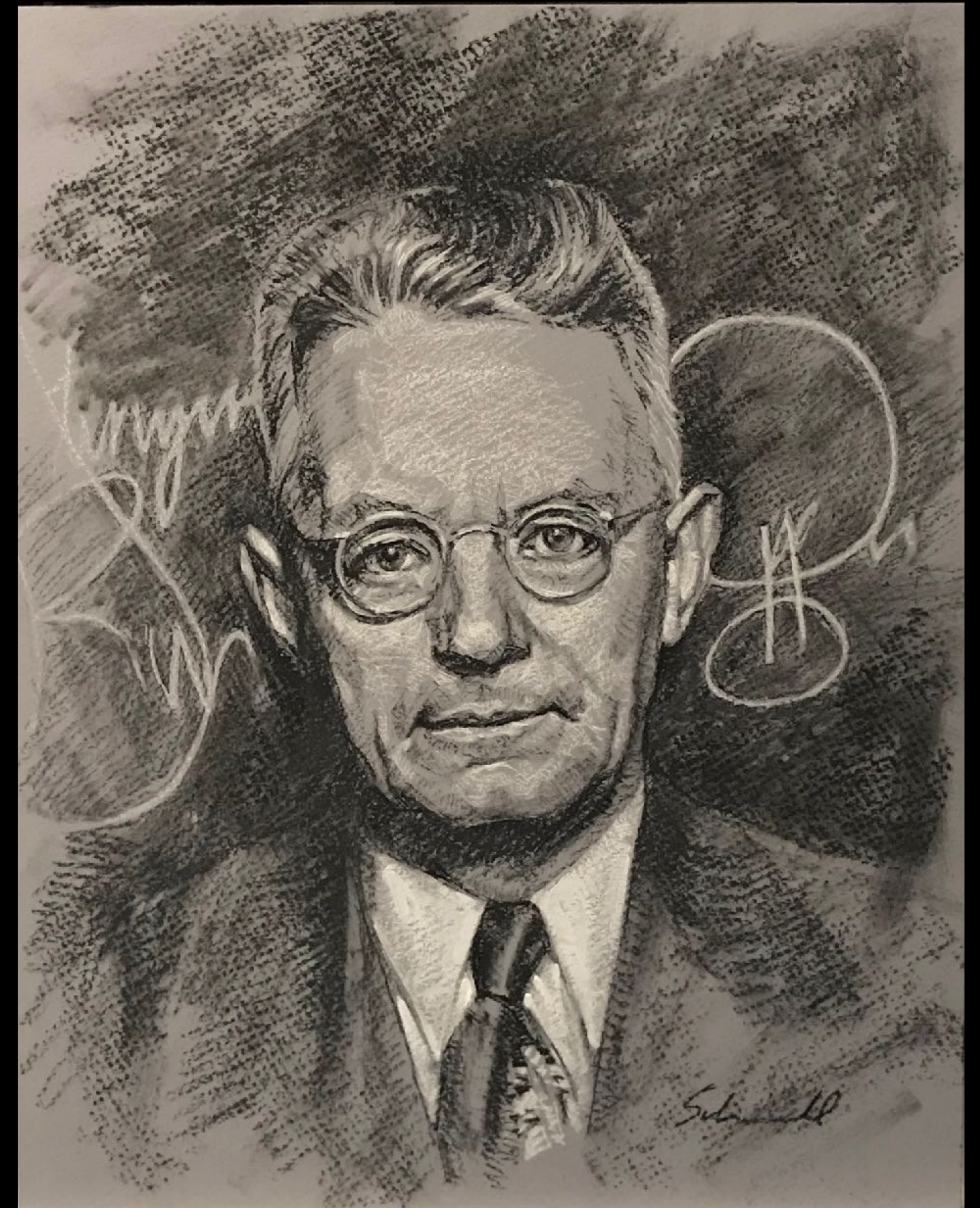
Yet a pragmatic philosopher will refuse to follow this line of reasoning. Granted he allows that Christ actually arose from the grave, he will say that this proves nothing more than that something very unusual took place in the case of “that man Jesus.”

Cornelius Van Til
Apologetics, 2



He need not hesitate, on his principles,
to accept the **fact of the resurrection**
at all. But **for him** that fact is a
different sort of fact from what it is
for the Christian. It is not the same
fact at all. It is in vain to speak about
the fact without speaking of the
meaning of the fact.

Cornelius Van Til
Apologetics, 95



Ontological Argument

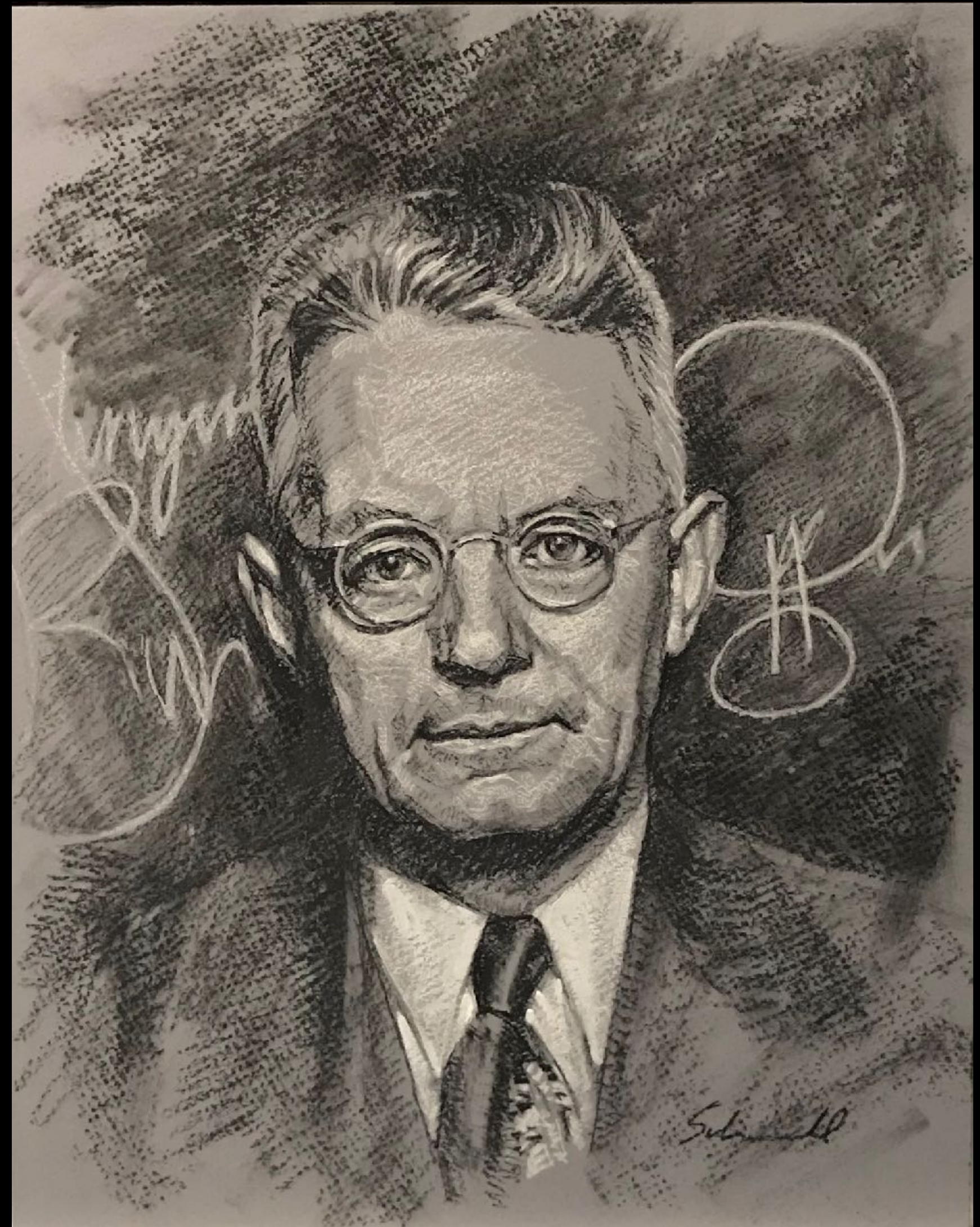
1. Is there consensus on what attributes are good for a being to have?

Better to die after conception or be a literary character?

2. Are the attributes in man's language game God's attributes?

But thus to **make assertions about being in general** constitutes, by implication at least, an **attack** upon the self-contained and therefore **unique nature of God's being**. . . . And the doctrine of God's being as **qualitatively distinct from every other form of being** is characteristic of Christianity alone.

Cornelius Van Til
Apologetics, 2



Being

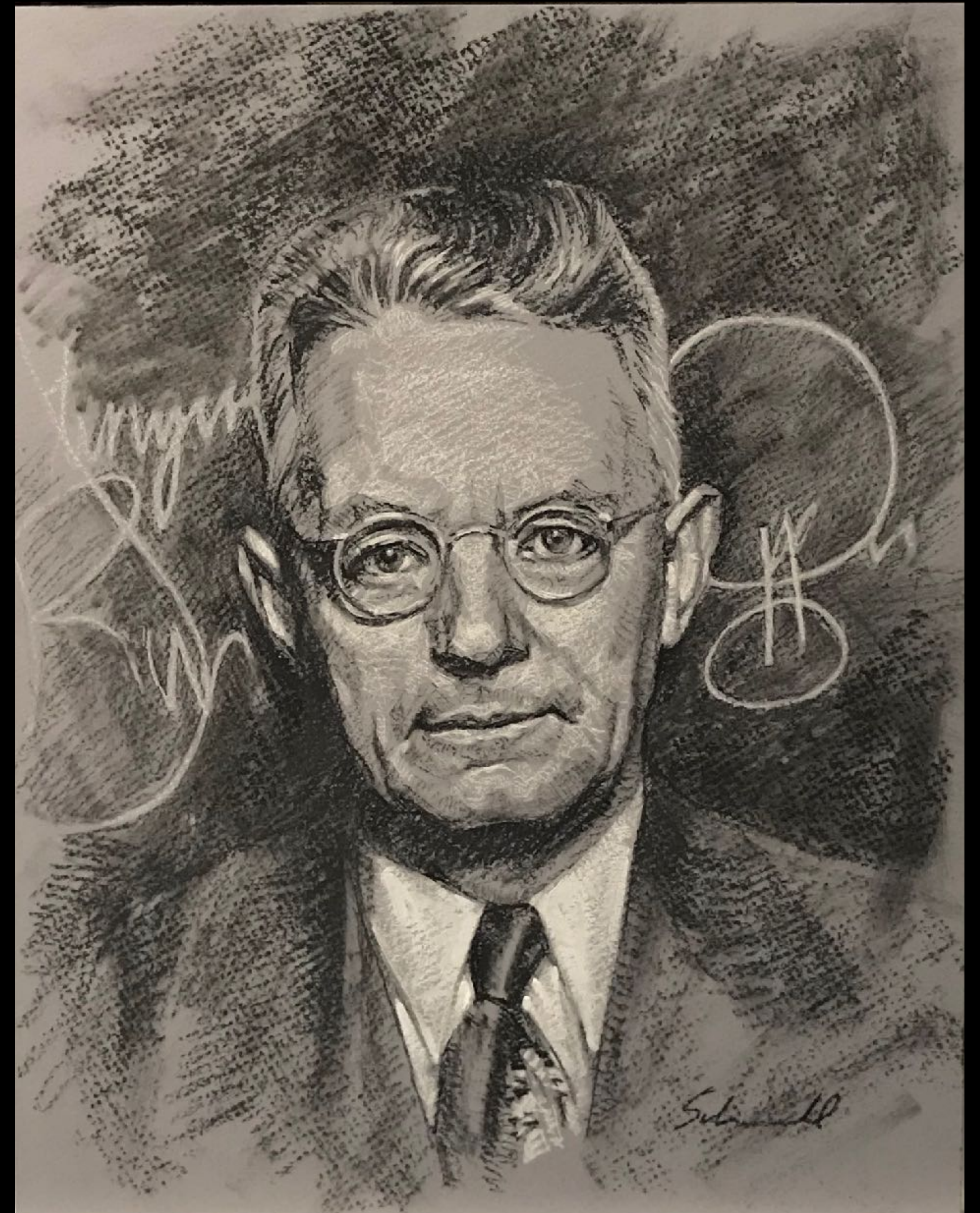
God

Man

For this reason we should be careful when we say that God is **the being than whom none higher can be thought**. If we take the **highest being of which we can think**, in the sense of have a concept of, and **attribute to it actual existence**, we do not have the biblical notion of God.

Cornelius Van Til

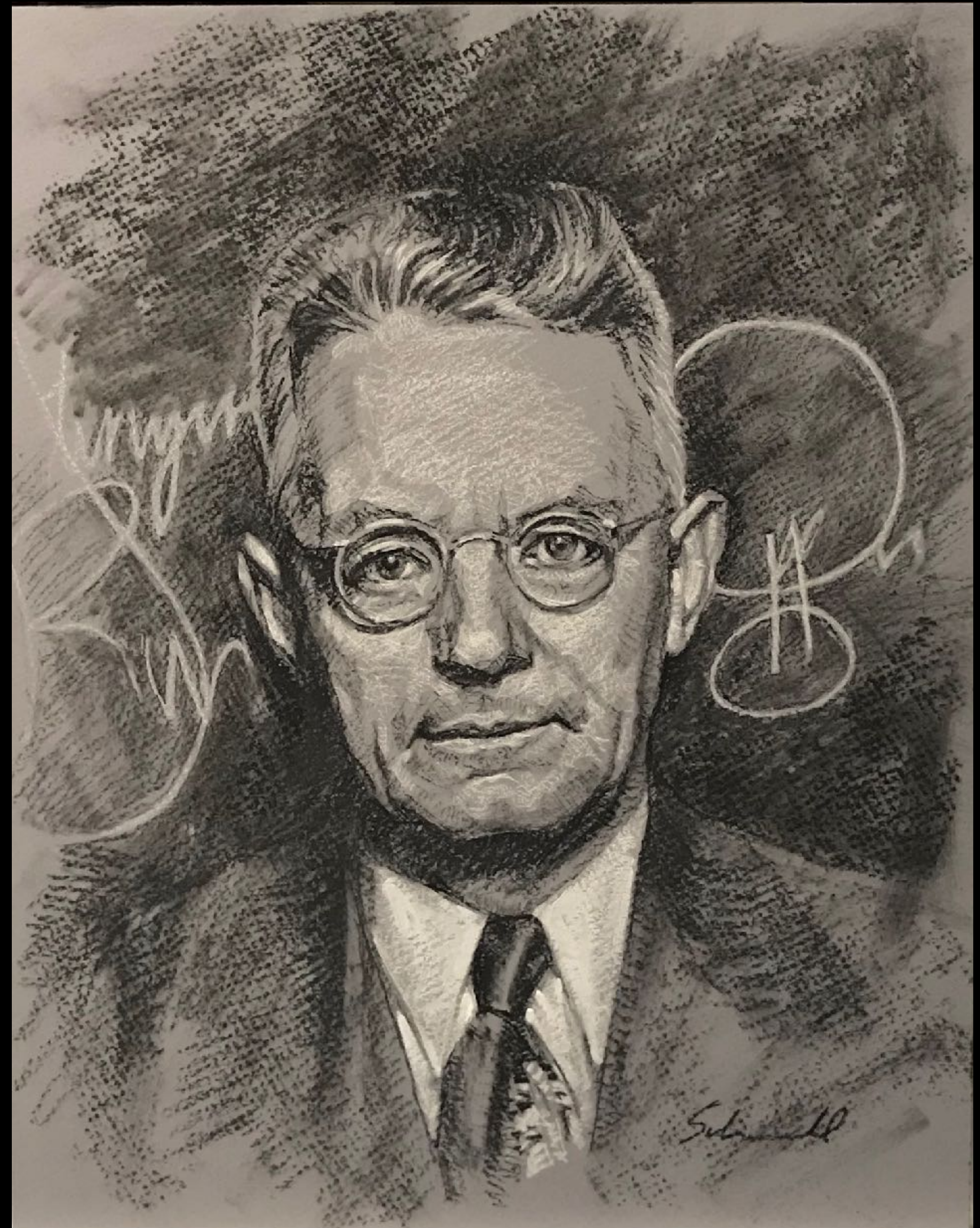
An Introduction to Systematic Theology, 328



God is not the reality that corresponds to the highest concept that man, considered as an independent being, can think. **Man cannot think an absolute self-contained being;** that is, he cannot have a concept of it in the ordinary sense of the term. **God is infinitely higher than the highest being of which man can form a concept.**

Cornelius Van Til

An Introduction to Systematic Theology, 328



Ontological Argument

1. Is there consensus on what attributes are good for a being to have?

Better to die after conception or be a literary character?

2. Are the attributes in man's language game God's attributes?

God does not possess the attributes from man's language game.