

Autosoterism

by B. B. Warfield <https://www.monergism.com/autosoterism>

THERE ARE fundamentally only two doctrines of salvation: that salvation is from God, and that salvation is from ourselves. The former is the doctrine of common Christianity; the latter is the doctrine of universal heathenism. "The principle of heathenism," remarks Dr. Herman Bavinek, "is, negatively, the denial of the true God, and of the gift of his grace; and, positively, the notion that salvation can be secured by man's own power and wisdom. 'Come, let us build us a city, and a tower, whose top may reach unto heaven, and let us make us a name.' Gen. 11:4. Whether the works through which heathenism seeks the way of salvation bear a more ritual or a more ethical characteristic, whether they are of a more positive or of a more negative nature, in any case man remains his own saviour; all religions except the Christian are autosoteric. . . And philosophy has made no advance upon this: even Kant and Schopenhauer, who, with their eye on the inborn sinfulness of man recognize the necessity of a regeneration, come in the end to an appeal to the will, the wisdom and the power of man."