

The Interrogation

Annemieke Schrijver interviews Bob Goudzwaard

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Ballarat

AUSTRALIA

Het Vermoeden The Interrogation¹

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In her television series *Het Vermoeden* - for Dutch television IKON -, Annemieke Schrijver met with guests from various religious traditions. She conducted probing conversations with them about their lives and motivations.

This is a translation of her meeting with Bob Goudzwaard. It is being made available for English-speaking students from the All of Life Redeemed site. The TV programme is in Dutch, but with this document one can read the English translation as it continues. In the interview, we see and hear Bob discuss the crises that confront the planet. In a whimsical way, he helps us appreciate how his work in economics has been part of his developing appreciation for how life is hollowed out by the idols of our time. Annemieke probes her guest so that he decisively conveys his Christian vision of hopefulness, countering any impatient “doomsaying.” The tasks of creation’s stewards of creation retain their meaning in the coming of the Kingdom of God. From an artful journalistic depiction, we learn about what Bob has been busy with over many decades.

The captions given with the IKON video (see link above) were the basis of my initial translation. With the help of others - Sander Griffioen and Chris Gousmett - I have transliterated the text with occasional added footnotes to emphasize points that may still need clarification. I have noted places where words and phrases in the dialogue have not been captured by the screened captions. My translation involves some interpolation. Readers who have questions or suggestions for improving the text are cordially invited to send them on to me.

Annemieke Schrijver’s probing questions frame a helpful and insightful exchange. It may inspire students, whoever they are, at whatever level and whatever they have been studying. This interview raises some key points about Goudzwaard’s “caring economy of sufficiency” and may serve to assist in the development of economic science as an investigation of subject to normative requirements.

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BCW 4.8.26

¹ I have interpreted the Dutch term **vermoeden** as interrogation. It has the sense of suspicion, of doubting.

0:51

AS:

Oh, how beautiful this is. What do we see here?

BG: This is a painting by Rembrandt. Mary Magdalene sits there. And upon seeing the gardener she is startled. And she wonders: where is Jesus now? And then the confusion is complete, because it turns out not to be the gardener, but the Lord himself.



1:12

AS:

Do you find the painting or the story beautiful? Or both?

BG: Oh, both equally. I find the painting beautiful, but also the poem about it by Ida Gerhardt. That's what we're going to talk about.

1:21

AS:

That's what we're going to talk about, right? Yes. And now [moving to another painting] what does this one here have to say?

BG: It hangs in our hallway. It's neat! It is from the time I was a doomsayer. At that time I received this as a gift. It pictures Noah worrying deeply. You see the ark and it's already starting to rain. Yes! And then two of those annoying turtles, they're not making any progress.

(Anna-Mieke laughs)

He is annoyed by the speed of those turtles. But the question is: are we going to let it teach us to stop thinking that everything depends on our speed?

1:55

AS:

No!

BG: And of that which has to be done, so I find this very enjoyable.

AS:

And educational

BG: His impatience is pointless. Totally pointless. That is the gist of it.

2:06

AS:

Great. Yes, shall we begin?

BG: Sure.

2:14

AS:

Welcome, Bob Goudzwaard. You are an economist and Professor Emeritus at the VU. You were instrumental in the founding of the CDA.² And you are the architect of the economy of sufficiency. It is a pleasure to have you here. Especially at the beginning of this new year. How are we doing, in your opinion? Anno 2012.

BG: Yes, this raises mixed feelings for me. I've been abroad for a large part of the year, in Canada and South Africa. So I haven't been following current Dutch news very closely.

2:50

AS:

No?

² Christen-Democratisch Appél - a political party formed in 1980 combining 3 major Christian political parties

BG: But what I do see in the Netherlands is that many people are struggling from the onset of a crisis.³ I also notice that this commercialization continues to be quite extensive. You can sense the increasing influence of money-driven thinking.

AS:

Yes.

BG: Thinking, in such terms ...

3:11

AS:

I enjoy talking to you because you have such an intriguing view on what money actually is. Last month you gave a lecture in Northern Ireland. It was about money, magic, greed, and the power of illusions.⁴ The view was obviously inspired by drawing upon your view about what money has become for us. Could you tell me something about the inter-connections of this development?

BG: When thinking about money we recall the reliable classical view that money should serve society.

3:40

AS:

Yes

BG: That was the view that the economy needs to be supplied with a lubricant, a sufficient supply of money. But over the past five to ten years, it is as if money has been playing tricks on us. The financial aspect is considered by us to be of such importance that it now seems that there is something magical about using the word “money”. Such is its influence... Think of paper money for example. It is actually a piece of paper that has been given a stamp that allows you to give it to others in trust.

³ The wording of this comment seems vague but the interviewee and interviewer share in the developing anxiety that has characterised the 21st century and in 2012, when this was conducted, there is still the ongoing impact of the global financial crisis. Goudzwaard may be indicating fresh realisation of this having been abroad.

⁴ See <https://allofliferedeemed.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2024/06/bg2012collection.pdf> pp.57-67. Sir Fred Catherwood Lecture, Belfast, December 1, 2011.

AS:

Money is an agreement.

BG: Money is a kind of agreement. But... there is now a magical side to it. If we did not collectively believe in the value of money, whether via a bank or a piece of paper, the meaning of money would disappear from society.

AS:

Yes

BG: And that foundation is faltering. We no longer handle money in such a trustworthy manner.



AS:

Why did that happen? How did we get so carried away?

BG: I think to discuss this properly we need a word like illusion. If you think of the American economy, where the crisis⁵ originated - there was a virulent belief, that particularly infected the banking world, that the economy could simply keep running - and so it has been a basic trust that has fed the illusion that the economic process could go on endlessly. Always moving, always on the increase.

AS:

Yes

BG: And then suddenly that balloon begins to deflate. And then it becomes apparent that distrust is emerging and that a crisis is setting in, as it did ... starting in the housing market. But then it seems to be the economy that is in crisis, when actually it is changes to our entire culture. It is about

⁵ The reference here is to the so-called Global Financial Crisis of 2008.

the degree of optimism people hold. And it is also about their superstitious views of the future, what holds for whatever is delivered to them by the economy.

5:38

AS:

You also speak of a whirlwind of a severe hurricane of desires in which we egg each other on.

BG: That is an image from René Girard, a French Christian thinker. He said that it seems as if a whirlwind of desire is sweeping across the world. This whirlwind also consists of imitation, of looking around ourselves, looking at one another. And from that, we derive standards for how we should move forward ourselves. Yes, countries do that as well, but you and I can also look at our neighbours to check up on what they have in their lives.

6:08

AS:

Was that different in the past, then?

BG: I think it⁶ has intensified. The imitation whirlwind has become very strong. Girard connects it to the fact that there used to be class distinctions, but that now everyone can imitate everyone else.

AS:

Oh indeed.

BG: And that can then become what you could call a global whirlwind of desire. It has to involve coveting. After all, there are also shortages of all the raw materials, limits to their availability, that contribute to make that whirlwind of desire possible.

AS:

Yes

⁶ i.e what Girard refers to as the whirlwind of desire

BG: I find it intriguing that, in that in comparison with the whirlwind, he suddenly points out the role of a silent centre in it. This is just like what you might encounter in a cyclone.

6:54

AS:

In the heart of a erupting volcano

BG: When we are there, in the eye of the storm, the sky above is blue. It is quiet there. And then he asks himself the question. Amidst the whirlwind of economies chasing one another and people chasing one another in consumption, could there be a possibility of escape?

7:13

AS:

And?

BG: Two words, two key notions, are needed to diagnose what is needed in this situation.⁷ The first is love. Is it not telling that Girard mentions love. Love means wishing. It means wishing with generosity for the other person... wishing for what a neighbour, he or she, or even the entire nation needs. So that is what stands between you and anything that stands in the way, *that prevents solidarity with your neighbour and so is what divides you so much. That then is the connection*, of what is ascribed to the other.

7:38

AS:

So if you have a beautiful car, I may feel joy for you as well?

BG: Yes, that you also feel joy, so to speak, and on a global scale, too; the poor countries need a country for their own growth such that, as a consequence, they too can be *content*, happy⁸ ... and that could make us happy too, to some extent.

AS:

⁷ i.e. in Girard's analysis

⁸ Joy and happiness are here discussed as consequences of love, wishing generously for the other person. The sense here is that happiness and contentment do not lead; they follow.

Yes

BG: The second word is typically religious: *discipleship*.⁹ You wouldn't expect that in economics.

AS:

In the economy

BG: But of course, discipleship stands in contrast¹⁰ to imitation. So imitation: that other person is my model, my example. But following is much more focused on a path or way that you embark upon. And it has to do with norms such as justice and mercy. For Girard, that is the only way out of the vortex of endless desire.¹¹

8:28

AS:

What I find so fascinating is that a comparison can also be made with the fact that a person grows through affirmation.¹²

BG: Yes

AS:

And that applies to the economy as well. How does that work?

BG: Yes indeed. The word affirmation comes from Anna Terruwe, a Christian psychiatrist. She has done a lot of analysis and seen many people who suffered from "frustration neurosis". People who had never been given the feeling of being valuable in themselves, because parents always made that conditional.

9:07

AS:

⁹ *navolging*

¹⁰ *tegenover*

¹¹ Here, it would seem, that "imitation" has gained a status within economic analysis as a process that helps to generate supply and demand, but iGirard's second word "navolging" is alien to economic analysis. How is Girard's view of "imitation", *mimesis*, related to discipleship? Is the sense of "following", implied by Jesus' demand that his disciple with "take up the cross and follow" a *mimetic* requirement? Reference to Girard's insights suggests further critical investigation of his scholarship.

¹² *bevestiging*

As if to say: "If you don't do this, I don't want anything more from you."

BG: And she said: People need affirmation, the recognition that they have inherent value. You are allowed to exist. You are allowed to exist just as you are. And you are allowed to become what you would most like to be. And that is part of being human. And our culture - now it's about economics again - is to a large extent a culture of self-affirmation. You have to stand up for yourself assertively and you have to try to secure for yourself what you want to have and what you want to get. She questions this because it often does not make people happy.

9:52

AS:

But perhaps it actually makes people more greedy, more needy.

BG: Yes. You are then in that whirlwind. But you will have more room to move if those elements in the economy find a place for love of neighbour and granting others what they need. And also if you build in an element of 'enough' yourself. Enough and contentment are completely different words, but in practice, they are closely related.

10:18

AS:

Will it ever come to the point that we feel there is enough and we are content?

BG: That depends on the role of illusions in society. Books are being written that point out the role of illusions. They cause us to partially believe advertising messages, for example, and then expect happiness through increased consumption.

AS:

Yes. Go on.

BG: But on the other hand, every act of consumption requires a portion of the time we have at hand; we have to

reckon with the fact that it requires time. And in the scarcity of time that we have, we notice that time for good things slips away from us. There really is a limit to what we, as a society, can have in terms of material things ... and in combination with happiness ...

11:06

AS:

So that suggests we are just wearing ourselves out.¹³

BG: By decidedly choosing that consumption path, the quality of life is beginning to erode. Meanwhile other countries also need those raw materials and energy ... for them it is just to make a start on building a materially more prosperous society.

11:24

AS:

Is a crisis necessary then to bring on a *cultural* change?

BG: I think so. A crisis always has two sides. The crisis can bring you down. But a crisis also offers an opening to what, in particular ways, may become possible. Perhaps the example of England during World War II can illustrate this. Churchill had to fight against Nazi Germany. And what did he do? He made an appeal to the British population saying: "We must now learn to prioritize certain investments... certain expenditures that we must make to protect our country. Can you accept that your consumption is temporarily suspended? It cannot now grow as before." The British supported him in this. So, such an appeal is possible. And we now have new enemies. And the enemies are unlike Nazism. Consider what is happening to the environment, to climate change, to the poor in the world. With climate

¹³ The interviewer seems to have caught on to what Bob was writing in **Capitalism and Progress** (1979) on "Scarcity of Time" pp.148-149, with respect to S B Linder **The Harried Leisure Class** (1970)

change you then have to dare to address a society in terms of its maturity.

AS:

Yes exactly.

BG: In politics, too, we always act as if everyone is childish and is always out for more and more.

AS:

Indeed.

BG: That is an anthropological view, an outlook of humanity that is far removed from what is written in the Bible.

12:45

AS:

What do you think of the Occupy Movement?

BG: Two things make Occupy fascinating. First, they realize that the role of money in society is completely overextended and overstretched. It is as if society waits with reverent awe to see what the financial markets will do next. Money sits there as if on a throne. *We call it by its name: Mammon.* We must have done with a way of life in which money dictates to us what we must do ... and so the young people of Occupy are quite right. And this power really is a power that is not democratically controlled. We are talking about democracy in politics. But the uncontrolled power of Mammon is actually something we should not accept. That is why we must believe in forms of democratic control regarding the major banks and financial institutions.

13:42

AS:

Just a moment: Didn't you just say we have often be raised as if we are conditioned? If you don't mind me asking, how were you raised to fulfill your potential? You come from a Reformed family, don't you? What was that like?

BG: I think I was raised unconditionally.¹⁴ And it was never said: 'We will love you when you do this.' That kind of conditional upbringing makes people frustrated. My parents accepted me fully and gave me the space to do what I wanted to do. And that was not a given for them. My father would have loved to continue his education, as they used to refer to it back then. But his family was so poor he could not afford to attend secondary school even with fees provided by the school's headmaster. There was deep poverty in those days. And he said to himself: "I must give my children the opportunity to study. Even if I find it difficult to do so."

And my parents did that, and that is why I was able to study economics. And yet, it has had a definite influence upon me. My parents made sacrifices for it and they later saw that what they did bore fruit.¹⁵ But it is a meaningful attitude when parents set you on the path in that way and expect you to develop... according to standards that are not harsh, but standards such as loving the other, seeking justice for others.

15:14

AS:

And would you also accept the fact that it was a religious family?

BG: I think so. Of course, that was all the more intense during wartime. You can imagine ... Well, my father printed underground literature. He was a printer. As a little boy of ten, I was allowed to deliver it. So I was involved in what

¹⁴ The conversation here seems disjointed until we realize Anna-Mieke is referring back to Bob's reference to Anna Terruwe and the problems of *frustrationneurosis* that arise from an upbringing that is **conditional** (voorwaardelijk) which with Anna-Mieke's perceptive comments will lead into discussion of possible societal healing. (16:13) 13:42, 8:28, 13:42

¹⁵ When read in relation to what is later discussed, when Bob refers to his worries about his children and grand-children, we are at a profound depth about the way in which social life and responsibility unfolds **creationally** in generation to generation disclosure of fruitfulness.

was going on during the war. But at the same time, in the local congregation where we were, Delft, two ministers were being deported to Germany. Nevertheless they had been standing in the pulpit and affirming that there was a deep denial of truth lurking in Nazism.

15:59

AS:

That's brave too

BG: And then, as a child - how old must I have been, 10 years old! - you become deeply moved. You think: that is really very brave what they are doing. And I want to have that courage in my life too.¹⁶

16:13

AS:

You see a connection between unconditional love and religion.

In that sense, could religion also heal our society?

BG: You really have to, um, be careful with that. Because I say, yes, but there is an added element: you cannot simply say that from any religious perspective. Let me put it this way: in politics, you see how very strongly it is that goals predominate. For example goals, in the European Union and in the Netherlands, such as: we must have a certain amount of economic growth next year.

So we must... but those are goals. And that means that you reason backward from your goals to the methods of how you will achieve them. To the instruments you use so that you can then realize the goal.

But in the Gospel, very remarkably, the initial focus is upon a way-orientation. The oldest name for Christians is

¹⁶ The subtlety in Bob's discussion here concerns, maybe thanks to Girard's prompting, how his own desire was formed by mimicking the bravery he witnessed from the two ministers.

also found in the Book of Acts.¹⁷ It so happened that those who had followed the Way came to be called Christians.

A way-orientation means that you prioritize questions related to justice, mercy, and love of neighbour. And those should then determine how you choose your goals. They must be colored by that. And they also have a breadth. When justice demands things from you that are different, from what you initially thought, you will then change course. And I believe that is important for the current crisis. The global monetary system is deeply unjust.

It sets tough priorities for the rich countries which then, as a consequence, leave the poor countries behind. They will simply have to try to obtain money through exports, while we prefer to keep it for ourselves. So, the question of justice is the primary question, even when you talk about poverty reduction. And also like, for example, climate change.

When you see that the environment is deteriorating rapidly, that various species are becoming extinct, the first question is not “let’s try to fit that into our goals”, but rather you say: that is a path, a norm, that is coming our way and that requires us to take care of the environment and our children and grandchildren, and then our consumption, our economy, simply has to adapt.

18:46

AS:

Now it almost sounds as if the unjust goal of this moment will nearly be overcome by a more merciful way.

¹⁷ Acts 9:2; 18:25. Acts 11:26 refers to the positive results of walking the “way”. The actual Dutch is ambiguous at this point. *De oudste naam van Christenen dat staat ook ergens in het Handelingen-boek. Toen gebeurde het dat degenen die van de weg waren christenen wonden genoemd.* Bob is here referring to religion as *wegorientatie*. The first Christians he seems to be saying were straying from the old way to a new (Christian) way.

BG: In the past, the term *principles* was used to refer to the precedence that ‘way orientation guidelines’ should have.¹⁸

AS:

Indeed

BG: If you choose that path, it might initially seem like idealism. But now you’re in a phase where, based on the reality that nature is at stake – as well as the fate of poor countries – you’re compelled, as it were, to do what Groen van Prinsterer said: to refrain from acting based on certain principles. Otherwise, you won’t be able to emerge from this crisis. It will just keep spinning over your head. And the brightest minds are constantly coming up with new tools – usually in the form of cash injections. But the question is whether the standards of justice, charity, and stewardship have a place in the economy. It is these that renew my hope.¹⁹

19:52

AS:

¹⁸ The implication here is that Goudzwaard suggests “principle-talk” has departed from “way oriented guidelines” and become pragmatized, has become part of achieving goals in a means-to-end way of orienting social life.

¹⁹ Was Bob is pointing out that Groen was reckoning with a limit to the appeal to principles in a time of crisis of such destructive development that meant the appeal deepens the historical problem as one thereby *refrains* from action. Or might it be that he was referring to the conclusions to Lecture 5 of Unbelief and Revolution: ‘De waarheid van een beginsel blijkt ook in het rekbare van de toepassing’ [“it is a sign of the truth of a general principle when it shows great flexibility in its application”]: (Harry van Dyke, Groen van Prinsterer's Lectures on Unbelief and Revolution, Jordan Station 1989,, p. 422] As well, appeal to ‘principles’ can involve ‘doomsaying’, which, as indicated above, he has learned to lay aside. There is a consistent issue here that requires constant attention and it can be detected in Bob’s writings about the Bible and politics. (see contributions in *AntiRevolutionaire Staatskunde* April 1964 and *Nederlandse gedachten* June 1964.) The Dutch here reads:

Als je dat dan kiest dat betekenden dat dan lijkt dat aanvankelijk idealisme te zijn. Maar nu zit je in de fase dat vanuit het realisme waarin de natuur op het spel staat, ook het lot van arme landen zodat je wel genoodzaakt bent om als het ware, wat Groen van Prinsterer zei dat je genoodzaakt bent om vanuit bepaalde principes niet to handelen. Anders kom je ook niet uit deze crisis. Die blijft dan ook maar over je heen tellen. En de knapste koppen verzinnen steeds nieuwe instrumenten meestal vond geldinspuiting. Maar de vraag is of de normen van gerechtigheid en naastenliefde en rentmeester zijn toegang hebben tot de economie. Dan heb ik weer hoop.

Great, I would really like to go to your gardener. Would you like that too?

BG: Yes. No problem at all!

20:03

AS:

Why did I choose this poem by Ida Gerhardt? With the beautiful painting.

BG: Yes. That painting and that poem belong together. And Ida captures something of a sense of life in it that I can relate to very strongly. Shall I just read it aloud?

AS:

Go ahead please.

20:20

BG:

Eén Rembrandt kende als kind ik goed:

de Christus met de grote hoed
wandeland in de ochtendstond.

En, naar erbij geschreven stond:

Hij was de hovenier.

En nòg laat ik mijn tranen

gaan als in de gaarde ik Hem zie staan,
en - wat terzijde - in stille schrik die éne,
zij die dacht als ik:

Het was de hovenier.

O kinderdroom van groen en goud --
géén die ontnam wat ik behoud.

De laatste hoven naderen schier
en ijler wordt de ochtend hier.

Hij is de hovenier.

[One Rembrandt I knew well as a child:

Christ with the big hat
walking in the morning light.

And, as was written beside it:

He was the gardener.

And still I let my tears flow
when I see Him standing in the garden,
and – as an aside – in silent terror that one,
she who thought as I did: It was the gardener.

O childhood dream of green and gold –
no one who took away what I hold.
The last gardens are drawing near,
the morning here grows thinner.
He is the gardener.]

A beautiful poem. A girl staring at that painting. And then she sees the fear in Mary Magdalene's eyes as she thinks: 'I am expecting to meet the Lord, and it turns out to be nothing more than the gardener' – and then she asks the gardener, 'Have you perhaps taken Jesus' body away?' And another inevitable thought. Is that when the recognition takes place? And that is of Jesus in the role of someone who also watches over the course of time.

He was the gardener, but he is also the gardener.²⁰ And since He is the gardener He still bears responsibility for what is to happen to the world. He yet, even now, carries that responsibility with him, as, as it were, the mornings grow more ethereal, and so he remains the one who maintains care for creation. That strikes me in this poem.

AS:

What exactly do you mean?

BG: Well, I learned from Dietrich Bonhoeffer that you actually have to think the other way around. You know by living towards the future, and that is threatening too, but you also know by living from the future. That may not be possible for everyone. Perhaps it is conceivable. That is something Mahalia Jackson sings about: "He has the whole world in his hands." That there is a concern somewhere, because the world is a beautiful whole that goes deeper than we ourselves can comprehend.

AS:

Indeed

²⁰ There is spoken emphasis relating what Mary saw to who Jesus continues to be for her.

BG: And that you can have faith in that, and that absolutely does not mean sitting idly by. But that you have faith that if you commit together with others, there will be a future for the world. Living from the future, not just towards the future.

23:00

AS:

Beautiful. And that puts your own situation into perspective too. Because you also spoke about worries; that you had worries at that time as well.²¹ And well, that was true, but there is no point in looking at it that way. Yes.

BG: There is a relaxed element to it, isn't there? Walter Benjamin - a philosopher who was Adorno's predecessor - put it this way: the day is the gate through which the Messiah rides into history.²² We always talk about the future in the sense that it will happen someday, but for him, from his Jewish understanding of life, the day is the gate through which the Messiah rides into history. And that means, then, that relativity comes into play.

AS:

Yes

BG: I don't need to pretend that I have to save the world ... together with a few other believers. The world is, in principle, saved and in safe hands. What is expected of us, however, is that we respond to this and recognise what the times demand.

24:01

AS:

And do you also acquire that more relaxed attitude as the years go by? That the air also becomes thinner in your own *curriculum vitae*? One would certainly hope so....

²¹ ref the Noah wall hanging.

²² https://www.sfu.ca/~andrewf/books/Concept_History_Benjamin.pdf. Walter Benjamin (1892-1940) https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Walter_Benjamin older colleague of Theodor Adorno (1903-1969) among those identified as the Frankfurt School of Neo-Marxism.

BG: I hope what I say hasn't become too vague, but rather that there is something there... trust. Let's say, trust grows during your life. And that you think: 'Why should I lie awake worrying about my children and grandchildren?' After all there will be a way. That is where the word 'way' comes to the fore. A way like the one René Girard points out. A way that is indeed contained within the Gospel. Yes.

24:39

AS:

And what does that gardener mean to you personally?

BG: At my honorary doctorate presentation in Kampen, I had a piece of paper with me on which I had delivered a thank-you speech, but I then added something to it. And that had to do with the fact that, on such a day, you are also grateful with all your loved ones for what is given to you, but also a gratitude that is directed towards Jesus, because to me, Jesus is more than an example - someone who led the way and accepted the consequences of that.

And where you also say of the Bach cantata: *Nun Komm der Heiden Heiland*. Christians so desperately want Jesus to be their Saviour, but He is the Saviour of the Gentiles, who is the Saviour of the whole world. And then in that context you can say: Well, personally, He is also my Lord and my Redeemer. So, yes, He gives me energy. It also means that I can interact with students in a more relaxed way.

25:49

AS:

Howso

BG: I can also discuss environmental and poverty issues with students in the same way I learned from Jan Tinbergen: in an engaged manner.²³ That this task must not be taken away from us and that we have this task. But at the same

²³ And here Bob attests to his recognition of his need as a student to find an example to follow.

time, I will not entangle myself with my students in certain goals that I am pursuing at all costs... and which I formulate for the sake of saving the world, because time and again it turns out there are ways that relate directly to those questions and that make me increasingly see the people in the South as my neighbors with whom I must also find a path. Not finding a path *for* them, but finding a path *with* them that also resonates with them....

26:39

AS:

So the saviour of pagans makes us world citizens?

BG: That's a good way to put it. And that even has to do with an Occupy Movement. Starting from the 'gut feeling'. It can't be any other way, this magnet is like this. But it tries to find a way to the centers of power and influence... to seize them for what justice now demands of us!

27:02

AS:

Beautiful. And um... Another image I find so beautiful of yours: seeing world problems as the evening - or as the morning star.

So: we know how to choose. And what do we choose between?

BG: Yes, that goes back to a very profound experience I had when I was sent out by the Free University to see if I could do something against apartheid in South Africa. And there you are, sitting alone on a plane, and you think: 'This is a desperate undertaking.'

When you then look into the darkness in the middle of the night – a small point of light, insignificant compared to that enormous blackness which, for me, was symbolic of the hunger and misery in the world when you fly over the Sahel. And then you think: This isn't twinkling, this must be a planet. That could very well be Venus. And then you think: How is that the image of the morning star? But what

does that mean to me? Because I'm in a mess, I see nothing but blackness around me. But then you have that other way of looking. And that is when you say: How, when that star shines, it announces the morning. You can even use an image that when the morning star shines, the night is actually defeated. Then he is already dragging the morning behind him, as it were, like a bridal party following a bride. Yes, that image, I found that fascinating.

Well, that is an image I found fascinating. Back then in Alexandra, in South Africa, when the minister asked me if I wanted to say something, I used that image. And it was then also recognized by those who were there. "This is the faith from which we live." At the end of this tunnel of apartheid and deep oppression, the light is in fact already there ... And you can live from the light now. That is the... in the neighbourhood, so unlike a doomsayer in the past, I have become someone who has faith towards the future.

29:12

AS:

Wow. And what message would you like to give us regarding the load-bearing wall?

BG: I think I'll just write down living from the future after all. That is closest to the core of what it's all about. OK?

AS:

Lovely. Thank you so much.

29:30

BG: You are most welcome. And now we go to the wall
Thanks.

