record of what God has done.^11

We must, however, think very carefully what we mean when we say that revelation is given in the form of events or historical happenings. For it is not as if all who experience these events and happenings find in them a revelation of God. The question thus arises as to whether even such events as are in themselves "mighty acts of God" can properly be spoken of as revelation if, in fact, there should be nobody to whom they reveal anything. To take the human analogy, do all my efforts to make myself plain amount to a real self-disclosure, if no one succeeds in grasping what is in my mind? Surely not. We must therefore say that the receiving is as necessary to a completed act of revelation as the giving. It is only so far as the action of God in history is understood as God means it to be understood that revelation has place at all. The illumination of the receiving mind is a necessary condition of the divine self-disclosure.^12

The prophets and apostles all believed that only by God's own aid they were enabled to interpret His mighty acts. "Surely," says Amos, "the Lord God will do nothing, but He revealeth His secret unto His servants the prophets." This enablement, this illumination, is what is meant by inspiration. The concept of inspiration is thus the necessary counterpart of the concept of revelation.^13

Our study has thus led us to the conclusion that revelation is always given us through events; yet not through all events, but only through such as appear as God's mighty works; and through no event in its bare character as occurrence, but only as men are enabled by the Spirit of God to apprehend and receive its revelatory power.^14

From a conservative point of view, I believe it is meaningful to ask this question: If God has disclosed true knowledge of Himself, can this knowledge properly be called revelation unless a person who is capable of receiving and understanding this knowledge actually receives and understands it? That is, we can see how there can be such a thing as