

of Christ, Reformed theology generally names only five, namely: (1) incarnation, (2) suffering, (3) death, (4) burial, and (5) descent into Hades."

"Reformed theology, . . . regards the person of the Mediator, that is, the God-man, as the subject of the exaltation, but stresses the fact that it was, of course, the human nature in which the exaltation took place. The divine nature is not capable of humiliation or exaltation. In the exaltation the God-man, Jesus Christ, (a) passed from under the law in its federal and penal aspects, and consequently from under the burden of the law as the condition of the covenant of works, and from under the curse of the law; (b) exchanged the penal for the righteous relation to the law, and as Mediator entered into possession of the blessings of salvation which He merited for sinners; and (c) was crowned with a corresponding honor and glory. It had to appear also in His condition that the curse of sin was lifted. His exaltation was also His glorification."

"Reformed theology distinguishes four stages in the exaltation of Christ:

1. The Resurrection
2. The Ascension
3. The Session at the Right Hand of God
4. The Physical Return of Christ"

-- Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, Fourth Revised Edition (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1959), pp. 331, 332, 344, 346-353.

2. Development of the Doctrine

a. General development of the doctrine

Both Lutheran theology and Reformed theology speak of two states of Christ. Lutheran theology does not include the incarnation as part of the State of Humiliation, whereas Reformed theology does include it. However, Lutheran theology justifies this exclusion by referring the states to the human nature of Christ only, and not to the Person of the Mediator, the God-man, as does Reformed theology. This raises an interesting point. If the states refer (in Reformed theology) to the God-man, and if the first stage in His humiliation is the incarnation itself, then how can the states be said to be only two in number, and not three? Berkhof does not mention the fact that there is a difference of opinion as to the number of states, and refers to McPherson's *Christian Dogmatics* (1898) and Valentine's *Christian Theology* (1906) for proponents of three states; and he concedes that "strict logic requires that we speak of three states or modes of existence." However, "since we can speak of the humiliation and exaltation of the person of Christ only in connection with Him as the God-man, it is best to speak of only two states." (p. 332)

This is not one of Berkhof's better inferences, since it appears to be saying that "since we can speak of the states of Christ during His incarnation only, and since there are only two states of Christ during His incarnation, therefore there are only two states of Christ." This inference is a non sequitur! By ruling out one of three possible components at the outset, the conclusion is drawn that only two Components are possible! But Berkhof himself refers to a third possible state, which he refers to as "the pre-existent state of eternal divine being." (p. 332) But he prefers to rule out this possibility.