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The presence of the kingdom represents the Word of God; it can be expressed as divine discourse. Generally, divine speech is regarded as divine revelation (Mackey 2000:287). For Barth (1936:162), divine discourse is God in revelatory action, and revelation means the unveiling of what is veiled

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<sup>35</sup> I have selected Wolterstorff's notion of divine discourse because it serves as a good conceptual resource for the main argument of this thesis. It shows how speech act philosophy might strengthen an understanding of the performance of the ethics of kingdom with which to engage the divine discourse in biblical passages, which can be understood not as God's revelation but rather as a Divine speech act. According to Vanhoozer, (2002:163) Wolterstorff's concept of divine discourse is philosophically necessary in biblical interpretation and also necessary as a theological concept. In Wolterstorff's book, *Divine Discourse: Philosophical Reflection on the Claim that God Speaks* (New York: Cambridge University, 1995), his method is based on speech act theory following the work of JL Austin. This book's main aim is to discover "how to go about reading a text to find out what God might have said or be saying with that text" (Wolterstorff 1995:38). This entails the idea that God is a participant in human discourse. Similarly, Alston (1985:5-20) argues that to understand God's action or the Word of God in the Bible, one must conceptually elaborate the manner in which God enters into interpersonal communication with human beings. This is contrary to the claims of Barth (1936:140-141) who resists conceding that human speech may be appropriated for divine discourse: "As readers of Scripture and hearers of proclamation we can and must, of course, work with certain general conceptual materials, apparently repeating or anticipating what God has said to this or that man... But in doing so we have always to bear in mind that these materials are our own work and are not to be confused with the concrete fullness of the Word of God itself which we recall and for which we wait, but only point to it. What God said and what God will say is always quite different from what we can and must say to ourselves and others about its content. Not only the word of preaching... but even the word of Scripture through which God speaks to us becomes in fact quite different when it passes from God's lips to our ears and our lips." If the Bible is seen as a divine discourse in normative words, an account needs to be offered of how the words of the Bible are to be read if we want to discern what God says with them. Thus, Wolterstorff (1995:132) suggests "authorial-discourse" interpretation for it. In this sense, Wolterstorff (1995:130-170) is opposed to the textual-sense interpretation defended by Paul Ricoeur, as well as to the performance-interpretation elaborated in rather different ways by Jacques Derrida. In addition, if God speaks to us through the Bible, then God is performing certain illocutionary acts such as promising, warning, and exhorting, and therefore reading or interpreting the Bible means finding out what God means in saying what he says. This entails "testimonial knowledge" which is knowledge gained from the spoken or written word; it indicates that Logos has communicated himself in human language as God's own speech (Wahlberg 2004:1-19).





















































