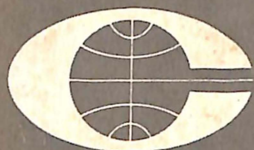
AS203

95¢

Patterns of Faith in America Today

Edited by F. Ernest Johnson

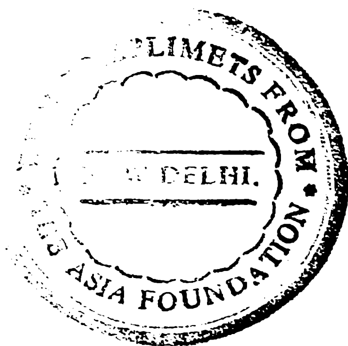


How Protestantism, Catholicism, Judaism and Humanism view the major spiritual issues that concern mankind

291.0973
J59
291
J631;1P

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY SIMLA

Patterns of Faith
In America Today

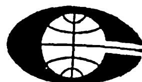

...LIMETS FROM
...DELHI.
...ASIA FOUNDATION

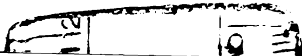
DATA ENTERED

CATALOGUED

F. ERNEST JOHNSON
PROFESSOR EMERITUS OF EDUCATION
TEACHERS COLLEGE, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

PATTERNS





OF FAITH

In America Today

COLLIER BOOKS
NEW YORK, N.Y.

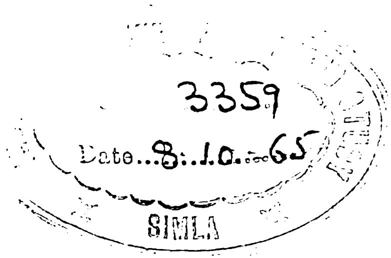
This Collier Books edition is published
by arrangement with Harper & Brothers

Collier Books is a division of The Crowell-
Collier Publishing Company

First Collier Books Edition 1962

Library IIAS, Shimla

00003359



Copyright ©, 1957 by The Institute for Religious
and Social Studies
All rights reserved including the right of reproduction
in whole or in part in any form.
Hecho en los E.E.U.U.
Printed in the United States of America

To the Memory of

EDWIN E. AUBREY

THIS VOLUME, TO WHICH

HE MADE A NOTABLE

CONTRIBUTION, IS GRATEFULLY

DEDICATED.

This book is a symposium based on lectures given at The Institute for Religious and Social Studies of The Jewish Theological Seminary of America during the winter of 1954-1955. The writers have been free to revise and expand their lectures as originally prepared. The purpose and plan of the series are explained in the Introduction.

Dr. Georges Florovsky, Adjunct Professor of Religion, Columbia University, generously gave a lecture on Eastern Orthodoxy in the series, but unfortunately the manuscript is not available for publication here.

Each chapter represents solely the individual opinions of the writer. Neither the Institute nor the editor assumes responsibility for the views expressed. The contributors were invited to address the Institute because of the special contribution each could make to general knowledge of the subject.

This is a Jacob Ziskind Memorial publication.

Introduction

THIS VOLUME is in some respects unique among publications of the Institute. The course of lectures which it embodies was undertaken because of a growing urge on the editor's part to bring into direct confrontation divergent beliefs and convictions fostered by the major religious faiths represented in America with respect to the ultimate—and perennial—spiritual concerns of mankind.To this end we submitted to the several participants in the symposium a number of questions such as these: What does the religious body or movement which you are undertaking to interpret teach concerning the nature and destiny of man? What is its conception of God? What does it have to say about sin and salvation? What philosophy of history does it hold? Does it foster a belief in progress? How does it conceive authority and freedom?

The several carefully chosen writers accepted this general framework, but enjoyed entire freedom as to organization of subject matter, emphasis, and manner of treatment. Each writer was accorded two successive lecture periods, but the two presentations have been combined here. Care has been taken to preserve individual style. We have even avoided "standardizing" in the matter of capitalization—which obviously has special significance in a religious publication.

I have to record, with a sense of grievous personal loss, the death of one of the participants, Professor Edwin E. Aubrey, before the manuscripts were assembled for publication.

We agreed at the outset that the purpose of the series was to be interpretive rather than polemic. The several writers were seeking neither to convert nor to confound one another. Nor was the purpose in any sense "syncretistic"—not an effort to show the extent of "common ground" among the several faiths, in order to prove "how much alike we all are." Our approach was far removed from what is sometimes called religious "indifferentism." We have been as much concerned with differences as with common elements.

It may be remarked, in passing, that a grievous defect in our

pluralist culture is the tendency to reduce religious differences to the category of individual idiosyncrasies, matters of no real consequence. To minimize religious differences that are real and important for the sake of reducing group tensions that are largely artificial is an ill-conceived stratagem. In contrast, this project is well characterized by Dr. Donahue in his chapter —in words that Dr. Greenberg felt constrained to repeat: "a sympathetic but noncommittal incursion into other people's patterns of conviction." This seems to me an admirable formula. Dr. Donahue also uses an apt term, one familiar to social psychologists—"empathy"—to define the attitude appropriate to such an exercise.

We assumed that this kind of project in communication would be worthwhile for its own sake. It was also hoped, however, that the interchange would contribute something to our cooperative efforts to increase the impact of religion upon the secular order in which we live. A pluralist culture like ours presents a paradox in that it stresses both individuation—the unhampered, spontaneous expression of what is unique—and cooperation in pursuit of universal values. A difficult problem in such a culture is to keep these reciprocal processes in balance. The attempt to do this presupposes that along with authentic—even momentous—differences, our several "faith groups" have in common certain overarching ends. For our present purposes these common ends find expression in the great basic concepts around which these lectures were organized.

We are fully aware, of course, that to discuss "contemporary patterns of faith" in America under only five categories is to invite the charge of unwarranted exclusiveness. Many clearly distinct and significant religious groups and movements fall outside this classification. For the most part, to be sure, these account for but small segments of our population, and we are here concerned chiefly with the religious elements found in the "main stream" of our culture. The fact remains, however, that the omission of the Anglican and Eastern Orthodox traditions, on the one hand, and of some of the most characteristic expressions of the "dissenting" tradition in American Protestantism, on the other hand, leaves the picture far from complete.

There is, however, the counterbalancing consideration that

with respect to major concepts, concerns, and preoccupations the chapters that follow actually cut across many confessional boundaries and give a perspective on the principal patterns of religious thought and belief in America. If it be objected that Biblical literalism, or "fundamentalism," has a much larger following than this book takes account of, I can only say that for the participants in this exercise in communication the only possible frame of reference is one that embodies a scientific outlook on life and a respect for historical scholarship.

The seemingly disproportionate amount of space given to Protestantism will, I hope, be understood. For good or ill, the religious bodies that claim to be Protestant present such sharply contrasting theological outlooks that to bring them within a single conspectus would be artificial in the extreme. The fact that the contrast is almost as conspicuous *within as between* many denominations only serves to accentuate it. On the other hand, the reader can scarcely fail to be impressed with the extent to which what we have called classical and liberal Protestantism, as here expounded, actually interpenetrate. Indeed, Dr. Brown expresses the opinion that the agreements among Protestants are rather more extensive, on the whole, than the disagreements. That depends, perhaps, upon what elements one is most impressed by. In any case, our two Protestant categories seem to be a minimum for significant classification.

Without doubt, many readers will cavil at the inclusion of "naturalistic humanism" in an admittedly limited and selective treatment of religious systems. Why go so far off the reservation? The answer is to be found in the actual situation that we are seeking to portray and interpret. Nothing is to be gained for religion by refusing to recognize that in our day some of the most authentic expressions of religious feeling and aspiration come from men and women who have great difficulty with the forms and symbols of traditional religion. Indeed, Dr. Randall, our chosen interpreter of naturalistic humanism, is the author of one of the most perceptive and reverent interpretations of the role of religion in human life of which I have any knowledge.[1] And Dr. Randall, the reader will note, bears testimony

[1] Part IV, "The Meaning of Religion for Man," in *Preface to Philosophy*, Macmillan, New York, 1947.

in his chapter to intellectual kinship with Paul Tillich, whose contributions to philosophical theology are among the most influential writings of this generation in that field.

Obviously, our several writers would not fully agree as to the precise value of the very enterprise in which they are here engaged. For what is expected and hoped for in any such exchange depends upon the degree of finality that one attributes to his own beliefs and his own heritage. However, I seem to see running through all these chapters a remarkable combination of firm conviction and intellectual hospitality.

Specifically, in the chapter on Catholicism—a religious system in which there is a high concentration of authority—many readers will doubtless find an unexpected flexibility of thought and a corresponding receptivity toward non-Catholic ways of thinking and feeling, in which Dr. Donahue finds a certain support for his own position and enrichment of his own experience. Close students of current Catholic thought are, to be sure, quite prepared for such a disclosure. There is, for example, the relatively recent repudiation by Rome of the doctrine, widely disseminated at lower levels of authority, that salvation is only for those who are in actual communion with the Roman Church. There is also the gradual formulation of a distinctively American Catholic attitude toward relations between church and state. Dr. Donahue's categorical statement on this subject brought to my mind a conversation many years ago with the late Monsignor John A. Ryan. I asked him why American Catholics could not immediately repel, by reference to unquestioned authority, the charge that election of a Catholic to high office would subject our political institutions to a dangerous degree of ecclesiastical intrusion. He replied without hesitation that the reason was simply that a Catholic position with respect to the relation of the Church to a *secular state* had never been formulated.

There are two issues here, one theological and the other political, on which Dr. Donahue's chapter throws a welcome light.

The presentation of Judaism has startling features from a conventional Christian viewpoint. Here again I have found myself assimilating the interpretation to personal experiences ref-

erence to which, by way of "pointing up," may not be out of order. As Dr. Greenberg explained the almost complete absence of theistic dogma in Judaism, I recalled my discomfiture over the result of an assignment I once gave in a graduate course in religion. It called for a paper setting forth the students' basic religious beliefs. The Catholics and Protestants had no trouble with that, but I was gently reproved by a Jewish rabbi in the class who said, "I never attempted such a thing. Judaism is not a set of propositions beginning 'I believe'; it is an entire way of life." This and subsequent similar experiences have greatly influenced my thinking. I would like to invite the readers of this book to test my own impression that the symposium as a whole indicates a trend away from rational verification to what one may call experiential validation as an ultimate religious resource.

The occasional references to the "supernatural" may be instructive. I think it safe to say that this word, continually recurring in Catholic theology, has all but faded from Protestant usage, because it seems to connote a "bifurcation" of reality. But Dr. Donahue gives the word a different flavor. I hope I am not forcing a comparison in suggesting that his interpretation has something in common with Dr. Randall's concern to find "a natural place for the supernatural in the universe that men experience." The root problem here, as Reinhold Neibuhr's writings have shown, is the relative importance assigned to continuity and discontinuity, as complementary aspects of reality and of experience. It is an interesting fact that theologians and physical scientists alike are currently—and inconclusively—wrestling with this problem. In Protestant theology the crux of the matter seems to be the confrontation between two conceptions of history—the one, held by Dr. Aubrey's "liberal" school, a developmental view; the other, to which the classical Protestantism of Dr. Brown tends to hold, an eschatological view.

Part and parcel of this issue is the continually debated question of "progress"—whether we look for the achievement of divine purpose, the fulfilment of man's "hope," *within* history, or *beyond* history. Here, again, the reader may find rewarding a careful pondering of these essays. By and large, Catholic

thinking seems to be "above the battle" in this particular sector, and Jewish thinking unperturbed by it. Moreover, Dr. Brown strongly suggests that the negative attitude toward the idea of progress, so much emphasized in "neo-orthodox" literature, is gradually abating. It seems to be characteristic of doctrinal controversies that, as the late Dr. McGiffert said, they tend, not to be resolved, but to be relegated. This is presumably because they serve their essential purpose in redressing the balance between neglected aspects and overemphasized aspects in human life and human affairs.

In this connection Dr. Randall's comment on the possible relation between the theological vogue and the historical situation is in point. He notes that the realistic—and, in its view of man, pessimistic—theology which has been highly influential since the First World War may be a reaction to turmoil and struggle, just as the "liberal" social gospel movement is said to have reflected the peace, stability, and social promise of an earlier period. The degree to which any cultural trend or dominant mood may be "situation-determined" can never be assessed, but the existence of such a causative factor can hardly be questioned.

The bearing of these essays on the nature of man himself is instructive. Classical Protestantism clings to the conception of original sin as a heritage of the individual, though without any fringe of fable. Judaism will have none of it: each person starts life with a clean moral slate. Catholicism accepts the historic doctrine but is not depressed by it. Liberal Protestantism interprets the idea of original sin to the point where Calvin would have thought it quite denatured. Naturalistic humanism, of course, has no framework that could accommodate such a concept. Yet all recognize sin as a fact, and none questions the reality of guilt.

Here, it seems to me, something of especial significance emerges. I refer particularly to the passage in Dr. Brown's chapter concerning "self-acceptance." Implicitly, he indicates the difference between the secular psychiatrist's concept of self-acceptance and that which inheres in the Biblical account of human conduct. The former often seems to be saying, Accept yourself, period. The Biblical view is that man's fitness to ac-

cept himself is conditioned upon Divine grace—upon *God's acceptance of him*. The sense of guilt, like physiological pain, has its uses. From both the individual and the societal viewpoints the secular approach to the treatment of guilt needs a religious corrective.

The same is true of current notions of freedom which make it synonymous with the absence of restraint. There could hardly be a greater error than to identify the Biblical conception of spiritual freedom with the political ideal of immunity from coercion or the economic ideal of free enterprise, however important they may be. I will confine myself here, however, to pointing out that it happens to be Dr. Randall, not Dr. Donahue, who writes: ". . . The very essence of the moral life is bondage, renunciation of certain 'freedoms' and possibilities. . . . Obligation is a curtailment of the 'freedom' to do wrong."

An urgent need, it seems to me, is shown in these pages for a reexamination of the concept of immortality. The idea that souls are inherently immortal is repudiated in the name of Judaism and of liberal Protestantism, and replaced by the concept of immortality as a moral and spiritual achievement. Classical Protestantism seems to leave a place for individual immortality only in relation to the Pauline doctrine of the Resurrection. It is hardly too much to say that in our time most of the preaching and writing devoted to this theme is a strange mixture of ancient philosophy and rather ill-defined Christian ideas.

One more suggestion to the reader who has borne with me thus far. The idea of community, which is prominent in this symposium, and inevitably so, is suffering violence in our day. Through a sort of "guilt by association" the words "community," "collective," "corporate," and even "social" seem to be tainted, in many minds, with the evil genius of totalitarianism. This is a grievous perversion, as is made abundantly clear by all the contributors to this volume. The idea and the fact of community are central in the Judeo-Christian tradition and in the democratic movement which our religious institutions both support and are supported by. Christian Church, Jewish Synagogue, and Ethical Culture Society, sharply differing as they do in ways that are fundamental to the faith of their members,

share the basic purpose of actualizing community, in the sense of creative fellowship. For those of us who are Christians, the unique element of whose faith is the person and work of its Founder, it is of profound significance that his ministry was climaxed in observance of a communal institution, the Passover, and the establishment of a new communal institution, the Holy Communion.

It has often been pointed out that the menace of totalitarianism is in its "demonic" character—not in its enshrinement of what is wholly evil but in its perversion of what is essentially good. The clear inference is that the most effective attack on this common foe of all our faiths is to wrest the sacred principle of community from hands that seek to pervert and desecrate it and to build it into enduring structures that hold aloft our ideal of the Kingdom of God.

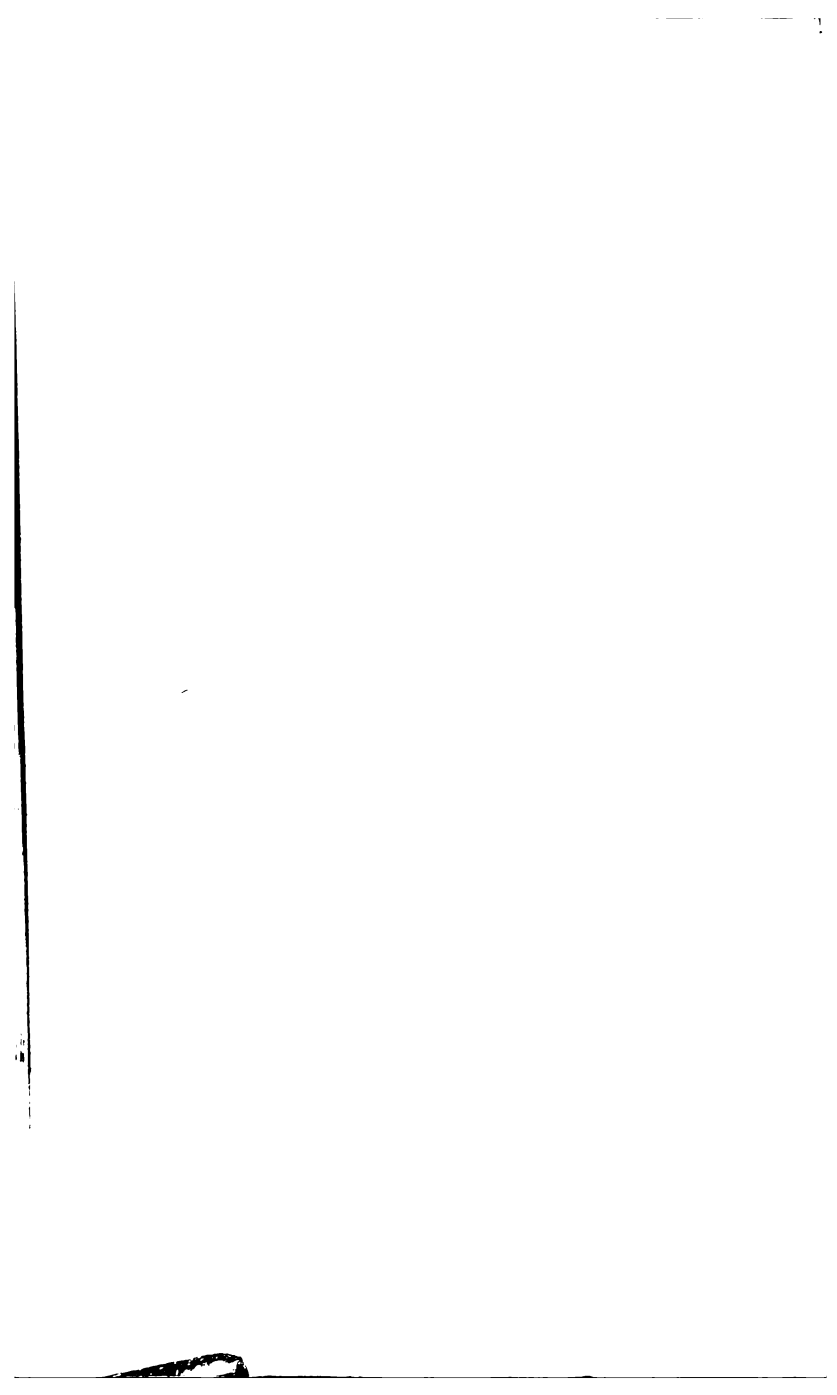
THE EDITOR

April, 1957

Contents

	Introduction		7
1.	Classical Protestantism	*Robert McAfee Brown*	19
2.	Liberal Protestantism	*Edwin E. Aubrey*	60
3.	Roman Catholicism	*Charles Donahue*	83
4.	Judaism	*Simon Greenberg*	128
5.	Naturalistic Humanism	*John Herman Randall, Jr.*	156
	Index		185

Patterns of Faith In America Today



Chapter 1

Classical Protestantism

By ROBERT McAFEE BROWN

Auburn Associate Professor
of Systematic Theology and Philosophy of Religion,
Union Theological Seminary

PROTESTANTISM IS the religion of free grace.

Such a statement may not convey very much at the beginning of a chapter. The purpose of the chapter, therefore, must be to transform what sounds like a "simply incomprehensible" statement into what actually is a simple descriptive statement.

What Is a "Classical Protestant"?

It will serve our purposes best to get down to fundamentals right at the start. In briefest terms, the classical protestant sees human life as a response—a response to a seeking God. He sees this seeking and reconciling God most clearly present and most healingly active in the events clustered around the life, death, and resurrection of one Jesus, the son of Joseph the carpenter, who lived at a specific time, "under Pontius Pilate." He finds that it is never enough just to describe Jesus in those terms, and he also affirms (though nobody has ever put it very well or very logically) that God himself was and is present and active in this Jesus, seeking out, transforming and renewing men right where they are, in their own situation of sin and despair and death. Those who share such beliefs live in a community of faith which is called the church.

Now that may sound vaguely reminiscent. It may sound like "the faith of our fathers," or more probably the faith of our *grand*fathers, rather than the sort of thing that anyone would believe today. But this faith is not merely a museum piece, and the fact that people believed it in the past does not make it irrelevant for the present. As a matter of fact, its historical

rootage has been a source of its vigor, rather than a ball and chain rendering it immobile.

Thus classical protestantism is a live option for people today, with a heritage in the past which it must constantly reinterpret in terms that speak to the needs of the present. It finds a significant historical locus in the Protestant Reformation, and it looks upon that movement as a genuine and significant recovery of the gospel. But it looks back *behind* the Reformation, as the Reformers themselves did, to those events which are constitutive of all true Christian faith, namely, the shattering and renewing impact which Jesus Christ had upon the lives of men and which he has continued to have in the church ever since.

The Importance of the Reformation

It is important to see what this historic constellation of events in the sixteenth century—the Protestant Reformation—was all about, particularly since it is so easily misunderstood. It is a perversion of the Reformers' intent, for example, to charge them with trying to invent a new religion, or to do away with the need for authority, or to inaugurate an "era of private judgment." Their concern, on the contrary, was to purify and revitalize an "old" religion, the old but ever living and ever new gospel which they discovered at the heart and center of the New Testament.

We have been told many times that the word "protestant" means not "being against something," such as the pope or parochial schools; rather, "*pro-testari*" means to testify *on behalf of* something, to assert positive convictions. And what the Reformers tried to testify on behalf of, to assert positively, was the apostolic witness to Jesus Christ which they found in the New Testament. This they tried to re-introduce into the church of their own day, from which they felt it was tragically lacking, so that they might bring all else into conformity with this freshly rediscovered understanding of God's dealings with men. For this reason they did not look upon themselves as people splitting off from the church, but as loyal sons of the true church. Calvin, for example, spoke in tones of greatest abhorrence of the notion of schism ("splits" in the church); he be-

lieved that it was the late medieval church which was in schism from Jesus Christ, and that Christ's church in Geneva stood in the true succession of the gospel, as measured by fidelity to the apostolic witness. The significance of the Reformation, then, was its rediscovery of the old faith, and its attempt to make that faith speak with new power to men.

And it is thus clear that the Reformation, so conceived, has not ended—since making the faith speak with new power to men is the perennial task of the Christian—and it is indeed the necessary cry of all true protestants that "the Reformation must continue." The church must *always* be in the midst of reformation, lest it substitute its own ways for the ways of God, and fail to keep all that it does subject to the divine scrutiny, the divine judgment, and the divine renewal.

Thus a "classical protestant" is one who aligns himself with the point of view that what happened at the Reformation was fundamentally right—that is, that the essentials of the faith were rediscovered and made normative once again in the life of the church. This does not mean that he flails himself until he has had an "experience" identical with the anguish of Martin Luther, or that he checks every statement he makes against Calvin's *Institutes*. It *does* mean that through Luther or Calvin he may find himself once more inescapably confronted by the gospel and thereby quickened, renewed, and made whole once again. The classical protestant thus has tremendous respect for heritage and tradition, not as ends in themselves, but as indications that there is an on-goingness about God's activity in the world, and that men may understand that on-goingness more fully as they are related to the ways in which other men have understood it in the past. Protestants today are not committed to the Reformers' formulas and statements as final truth,[1] but they do find that those things to which the Reformers' formulas and statements point coincide with something which they have found true for themselves. The resurgence of Reformation studies in contemporary theology is thus not a desperate harking for a dead past, or a way of avoiding the issues of a live present,

[1] It must be admitted that Presbyterians sometimes act as though Calvin's *Institutes* were an extension of the canon of Holy Scripture, in much the same way as Episcopalians occasionally give the impression that the prayer book is a more nearly adequate articulation of the Word of God than Scripture itself.

3359

but an attempt to see more clearly how the central experience of Christian faith—the transformation of life by the very Son of God himself—*has* evoked a response of faith, and how it *can* evoke a similar response in us.

Now the minute one is pressed for a more precise definition of classical protestantism, he gets into difficulties. For it is a matter of tragic fact, that there has not been one protestantism; there have been many protestantisms, and the trick of subsuming these varieties under an all-inclusive description would would be a very neat trick indeed. It needs to be said, therefore, that while there are something like 272 protestant sects and insects (as they have been called) in America today, well over eighty percent of protestants are found within a dozen or so denominations, and among those denominations the points of agreement as to doctrine, belief, and witness far outweigh the points of disagreement. There is a greater consensus, then, than appears on the surface. The differences arise chiefly over the significance of ordination to the ministry, and the resultant meaning and significance of the sacraments which are administered by those so ordained. The present chapter will not elaborate these difficulties, strong though the temptation is, but will try rather to state *the central positive convictions* which classical protestants hold—recognizing that there may be occasional agonizing wails from the Episcopalians on the right and the Baptists on the left (or *vice versa,* depending on who is doing the wailing and who is doing the evaluating).

The Place of Theology

Classical protestantism has had a lot of these convictions. It is long on theology, if the truth be told, and any discussion of classical protestantism immediately involves us in theology. But this formidable word should not become more formidable than is absolutely necessary. In simplest terms, theology involves loving God with one's *mind,* as well as with one's heart, soul, and strength. It is man's attempt to think through the implications of what he believes. Theology can thus be described as both necessary and impossible. It is *necessary* in the sense that if there is to be any communication, any "passing on" or proclaiming of the faith to others, then one is forced to talk

about and describe what he has experienced, or what his community of faith (the church) has experienced. Words are necessary and it is important to use them as clearly and articulately and as systematically as possible. Thus the moment the believer, whether layman or minister, starts to talk about his belief, he is, for better or for worse, a theologian. The question is never, "Will he be a theologian or not?" The question is always, "Will he be a good theologian or a bad theologian?" Theology is necessary.

But it is also true that theology is *impossible,* in the sense that no attempt to describe God is ever adequate. To whatever degree it is helpful, it will also be misleading; to whatever degree it clarifies, it will also corrupt. This is inevitably so simply because we are men and not God, and do not know the God of whom we speak in all his fullness. If we "see through a glass," it is always "darkly." If we "know," it is always "in part" (I Corinthians, 13:12). All that we see we see with fractured vision. All that we know we know with hearts that are less than pure. Christian faith asserts that men are both finite and sinful, and therefore their theology will also be finite and sinful—and if it does not recognize this fact it will be a poor theology. Thus we must never claim too much for theology, as many protestants have done, but at the same time we must never give up the attempt to speak theologically, for in that case our only option will be to remain mute.[a]

The Problem of Authority

Perhaps the most vexing problem for the classical protestant is the location of that which is ultimately authoritative for him. Finally, of course, this is the authority of God. But how does God's authority over human life "come home," or authenticate itself, in the life of the believer? This is in some ways a peculiarly "classical protestant" problem. The locus of authority for the Roman Catholic, for example, is easily defined—it is found in the authority of Christ's vicar on earth, the pope, who can speak infallibly on matters of faith and morals for the final

[a] Anyone who feels that the theological task can be accomplished without difficulty, or that final accuracy and coherence and precision are possible, is invited to engage in a careful study of the Chalcedonian Creed, from which it is predicted he will emerge a chastened and a shaken man.

assurance of the faithful. For many Jews, the locus is the law or *Torah,* enshrined in the Old Testament. For many liberal protestants, the final authority is located in personal experience.

What, then, is finally authoritative for the classical protestant? The traditional answer to the question has been the Bible, and "the final authority of Scripture" has stood as one of the most distinctive Reformation principles. But there is need for "a continuing Reformation" at this point, since most protestants can no longer accept the rather mechanical view of Scriptural inspiration on the basis of which the original Reformers framed their answer. Furthermore, there is the problem of discriminating between portions of the Bible itself, on the basis, apparently, of a yet more ultimate authority. For how does one decide that "Love your enemy" is more authoritative than "Slay every man, woman and child of the Amalakites," when both are in the Bible?

We can work toward a reformulation of the classical protestant answer by approaching the problem in a slightly different perspective. Historically, Scripture and tradition have been the two basic sources of final authority which have vied for supremacy in Christendom.[8] The upholders of "tradition" argue that the Holy Spirit did not cease to be active about 150 A.D. (the probable date of Second Peter, the latest book in the New Testament), and that therefore to place authority finally within the Biblical writings is a quite arbitrary limiting of God's activity. They claim that God continues to speak and act authoritatively in the life of the Spirit-filled community which is the church.

No classical protestant would have difficulty at this point in the formulation. His difficulty would begin at the point where the formulation begins to be spelled out more specifically, and it becomes clear that the "tradition" has to be the "authentic" tradition, as opposed to all the other traditions, presumably not authentic. This authentic tradition is claimed by a bewildering variety of groups. It is equated with certain marks of the Spirit, in various sectarian groups; or with assent to certain dogmatic formulations, in Roman Catholic and certain

[8] There has also been a third source, personal experience, which has been normative for many of the sect groups.

Lutheran and Reformed groups; or with beliefs which are the property of a divinely instituted apostolic succession, in Anglo- and Roman Catholicism. Thus there are competing traditions. Which one is really authoritative? In answering this question, *liberal* protestants by and large have tended to say, "We will appropriate those elements from any tradition which strikes a responsive chord in our own experience." There is an important truth enshrined in this answer, namely, the repudiation of sterile protestant scholasticism, of "wooden" orthodoxy, in favor of a faith which is warm and alive and (if the liberals will permit a somewhat controversial word) existential. But there is a danger in the answer, too, in that the appeal to experience may be no more than an appeal to experiences, experiences of such a diverse sort that Christian faith on these terms can scarcely be more than "what makes an appeal to me." And if something else makes an appeal to *you,* that is all there is to it; there is no more ultimate criterion by which a further judgment can be made. To the classical protestant this misses (if another controversial word may be permitted) the "objectivity," or the givenness, of something which has *happened,* and to which a response must be made.

The Centrality and Authority of Scripture

What, then, does the classical protestant do with this dilemma? There is no "party line" answer to the question, but there is an *approach* to an answer which can be sketched briefly. The classical protestant takes his stand somewhere close, at least, to the Bible. He can no longer, as has been suggested, go to proof texts, or assume the verbal inerrancy and historical accuracy of every single statement in the record. He must thus, in a sense, not point to the Bible, as such, as his authority, but rather to that to which the Bible itself points, namely, the "mighty acts of God" which are transmitted to each age through the Bible. Thus when one is faced with the familiar chicken-and-egg problem, "Which came first, the Bible or the tradition?" the reply must be, "Neither; both arose out of the gospel." And that which must be ultimately authoritative in the life of the believer is the gospel itself, the good news, the central claim of Scripture, which is a message about the living God

making himself known to men in Jesus Christ. The classical protestant thus affirms that rather than leaving a hierarchical chain of spiritual descendants, the apostles of Jesus Christ left us an account of the transforming, life-giving event which had remade them, and that we find this account in Holy Scripture. Thus it is through Scripture that we are confronted by the God revealed in Jesus Christ, to whom ultimate authority must be given.[4]

However, such a claim gives rise to a whole nest of problems. Which picture of Jesus in the Scriptures is the right one, and thus authoritative for us? Why are *these* events decisive for our faith rather than *those?* What happens if the historicity of a given event is questioned by the Biblical critics? To these and a host of other questions, the classical protestant must attempt an answer along the following lines: As the believer tries to live with his Bible, to study it honestly and critically, to use it devotionally, tries to feel himself a participant in the whole Biblical drama of God's concern for man, he discovers that a kind of corporate testimony emerges, witnessing to the centrality for faith of God's redemptive activity in Jesus Christ. Somehow *this* is what is crucial. The Old Testament is a necessary preparation and forthtelling of what God is doing and will do; the New Testament tells the story of what God in fact did and is doing in Jesus Christ, and these decisive events, clustered around his life, death, and resurrection, assume final authority over the life of the believer.

Notice how this approach to an answer is related to the other answers suggested earlier. If our final authority is found in God's redemptive act in Christ, then the *Bible* is of central significance since it witnesses to that act and tells us all that we know of it. The *traditions* and on-going life of the church are important to the extent that they, too, witness to that act, illumine it, and give it contemporary meaning. The sacrament of the Lord's Supper, for example, becomes a re-enactment, a "making alive" in our immediate experience, of what it means that once and for all a body was broken and blood was shed on Calvary. And likewise, all of this must "come

[4] Jenkins, *The Nature of Catholicity* (Faber, London, 1942) elaborates this very important point, in convincing fashion, in Chapter II, "The Apostolic Succession."

home" to *experience,* as something which speaks *to* our experience, and as something to which we respond *in* our experience. Thus, Bible, tradition, and experience are all components of a full answer to the problem of authority, but all are important only as they witness to the good news of the gospel which they exist to serve.

These comments should indicate why the Holy Scriptures have been so central for classical protestantism, and also why most contemporary classical protestants feel compelled to disavow "fundamentalism" as an adequate understanding of how God reveals himself in Scripture. Fundamentalism, as a matter of fact, is a relatively recent phenomenon and not truly typical of the classical approach. Luther, the first great Reformer, had at most times a very free approach to Scripture. "Scripture," he said, "is the cradle in which Christ lies." He would have been quite willing to excise the book of Revelation from the New Testament, and referred to the book of James as "an epistle of straw." But at the same time, Scripture was for him normative and central, for there he found the assurance of the "gracious God," coming to men in their need, with his forgiving love, and Luther's own experience of need and forgiveness was reinforced and underlined by what he found in the Bible.[5]

The point to be made about contemporary protestant fundamentalism is that it must be rejected, not because it is too orthodox, but because it is not orthodox enough. The fundamentalist says, in the final analysis, that God reveals himself through statements; these statements are recorded on the printed pages of the Bible, and since God spoke them they cannot be tampered with by us, without our being guilty of great impiety and blasphemy. The classical protestant, on the contrary, would affirm that God reveals himself in his *acts,* in what he does, and that as we respond to his activity we enter into creative relationship with him. The Bible is the account of these acts. Now one can have a personal relationship with a living, acting, personal God, but scarcely with an impersonal statement. The statements in the Bible are important only as they put the be-

[5] Not quite as much can be said for Calvin. He certainly approaches closer to what we would call "fundamentalism" today, but even he is trying merely to be faithful to the central Biblical witness, rather than lining up an impressive batch of proof texts. Calvin is much maligned on this point.

liever in touch with the One to whom they point, namely, the living God himself. Fundamentalism errs in assuming that God gives *information* about himself. The classical protestant counters by asserting that God gives *himself*, and that this is precisely what the Bible is trying to tell us. The point of the Bible is not that we may believe in the Bible, but that we may believe in the God to whom the Bible witnesses.

Perhaps an analogy can clarify this important distinction. Imagine that you are standing in front of a brick wall. You can see beyond it only if there is a window in it. But do you look *at* the window? If you do, you may see the details of the sash very clearly, and perhaps a few thumb prints on the panes themselves, but as long as you look just *at* the window, the scene beyond will be blurred and fuzzy. No, you must look *through* the window, at what is going on outside. If you focus on the activity beyond, an occasional thumb print on the pane isn't going to blur your vision too drastically. So with the Bible. To look *at* it, at the statements, is to fail to perceive God's activity with clarity. But to look *through* it is to make use of it as a "window" by means of which we can see God at work, and make our active response to what he is doing.[6]

How Do We "Know God"?

These comments make possible a transition to the doctrine of God, as this belief is formulated in classical protestantism. First of all, how do we know God? It has already been suggested that classical protestantism is best described as a religion of response to the prior activity of God. God seeks—men respond, by accepting him, or rejecting him, or remaining indifferent (which is probably the most insidious form of rejection). God seeks men in many places: in the events of history in which his hand can be discerned by eyes of faith; in the utterances of those whom he calls forth as his spokesmen, the prophets; in the activity of Jesus Christ; in the life of the community of faith which grew up in response to God's activity in Jesus Christ, the Christian church; in the Bible, which tells us of God's activity and becomes itself a further means of his

[6] This analogy is elaborated from a suggestion in Emil Brunner's *Revelation and Reason* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1946).

reaching out toward us; and in numerous other ways. And it is the witness of classical protestants that when they have gone "seeking God" and have found him, they have had to revise their estimate of the whole situation. For what they discover afterwards is that it was God who was first of all seeking them, and they have done no more than respond to his initiative.

This means that classical protestantism has by and large taken a dim view of attempts to "prove the existence of God." Not only are the proofs usually suspect on grounds of logical or philosophical analysis, but even if valid their cumulative effect is no more than to suggest that the evidence points toward a "Something Somewhere," that appears to have a slightly better than fifty-fifty chance of existing. This a far cry from the outgoing, seeking God of the Bible.

More significant, however, is a further fact about the approach to God through proofs. While not all classical protestants are as vigorous in their denunciation of "natural theology" as Karl Barth has been, many of them would agree with him that if God has, in fact, sought us out in Jesus Christ, then there is something almost perverse in our refusal to recognize this fact, and to seek for him everywhere else but the very place in which he has sought us.

Lest this sound too obscurantist and stubborn, it must immediately be said that one who *does* see God at work in Christ finds that his whole vision, his whole mind, is liberated, so that in the light of that central conviction, he can indeed see God at work in many other ways. Thus the approach which is being suggested here is close to the one historically developed by Augustine and Anselm, of *faith seeking understanding.* "I believe in order that I may understand," is not scholastic nonsense, but a proper description of the situation which exists in man's relationship to God. It is not a denial of reason, but a setting of reason in its proper context. For *as* one believes, *as* one stands committed, he is then obliged to use his mind just as honestly and rigorously as he possibly can, in clarifying his understanding of what has happened and of the one in whom he has come to believe. As Anselm himself put it, in full recognition of this fact, "Just as the right order of going requires that we should believe the deep things of God before we

presume to discuss them by reason, so it seems to me negligence if, after we have been confirmed in the faith, we do not study to understand what we believe."[7] Exactly.

To put the same point another way, where the Roman Catholic Thomist and perhaps the liberal protestant would say, "Start with reason and let that take you as far as it can, before you rely on faith," the classical protestant is more inclined to say that the starting point is God's revelation of himself, to whom we respond by committing ourselves in trust. In this situation, reason is liberated by faith to do its proper task, which is "to think God's thoughts after him."[8]

The Doctrine of God: Affirmations and Problems

Many of the insights of classical protestantism about God are shared with Roman Catholicism and Judaism. With Judaism the stress is Biblical, as against what is usually a more philosophically-oriented approach to God in Catholicism.[9] With Catholicism, the affinities lie at the point of common allegiance to Jesus Christ.

It would be possible to write many pages about the God of Biblical faith by whom the classical protestant claims to have been touched, in terms of his love, mercy, holiness, justice, grace, and so on. But among many things which could be singled out, two things have been particularly stressed in classical protestantism's understanding of God, and these are really only two ways of saying the same thing.

The first is the acknowledgment in classical protestantism of *God as gracious.* "Grace" is one of those Christian words that classical protestantism has rediscovered. It stands for God's active, outgoing love, by means of which he seeks men even when men repudiate him, takes the initiative in trying to call them back into fellowship with him, identifies himself with them in their sin, so that he can thereby redeem them from their sin.

[7] *Cur Deus Homo,* Chapter II.

[8] A good discussion of the relationship of faith and reason is contained in A. Richardson's *Christian Apologetics* (Harpers, New York, 1947), Chapter 10, "Faith and Reason."

[9] Thomas Aquinas, the "official" Roman Catholic philosopher, proves "the existence of God" on the basis of Greek philosophical categories, with no dependence upon Biblical faith until much later in the development of his system.

The initiative is his. And this is the "good news," which remains not merely a pious hope but a concrete fact, as it is enacted for men (and not merely talked about) right where they are, in human history, in the activity of Jesus Christ. To be sure, God is a judge, who judges men and finds them wanting, and we shall comment later on the "wrath" of God. But God does not forsake men at the point of condemnation. Rather than being vindictive and making them pay to the last penny for their wrongdoing, in Jesus Christ he takes the consequences of their wrongdoing *upon himself,* suffers for them, and so redeems their situation. The Christian sees this in forecast in the "Suffering Servant" passages in Isaiah;[10] the Christian sees this as concrete fact in the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Here is God in an act of outgoing, suffering love, identifying himself with mankind.

The second distinctive emphasis in classical protestantism's doctrine of God is suggested by the phrase, *the sovereignty of God.* This is a stress which is found in the Bible, in Augustine, in Aquinas, in Luther, but which is most forcefully associated, historically, with the name of John Calvin. The significant thing about God, for Calvin, is that he is *God*—all-powerful, all-controlling, all-knowing. All that happens is referable ultimately back to him, for he is no second-rate deity trying to "realize himself" in the moral struggle. The notion of the sovereignty of God thus safeguards all that has been stressed so far—the emphasis on God's initiative, his capacity to redeem and save men from lostness. All this is the work of God—the sovereign God —and not of man.

Now this is a majestic and powerful conception of God. It also, however, brings with it its own attendant problems. For when you press the logic of this position, as Augustine and Calvin did, and as Aquinas did,[11] you arrive at a position usually known as predestination, and usually referred to in tones of biting sarcasm. It goes like this: Since God is sovereign, since everything is ultimately to be referred back to his sovereign

[10] *Cf.* especially Isaiah, 52:13-53:12.

[11] Against the Roman Catholic polemicists who inveigh against Calvin's "barbaric God" it needs to be said that Aquinas likewise has a very rigorous doctrine of predestination. See, for example, his *Summa Contra Gentiles,* Book III, Chapter CLXIV.

will, it is clear that he has ordained *all* that takes place, including the way in which men respond to him. I accept him as the Lord of my life, let us say. Why? Obviously because he willed that I should. Suppose, however, that I reject him, and take the consequence of being forever cut off from his love. Why did I do this? Obviously because he willed that, too. So the outcome of this line of reasoning seems monstrous: God decides to save a few people, but he also deliberately decides to damn some people (usually most people as it works out), and this is done to show his sovereign majesty!

How does the contemporary classical protestant try to deal with this difficult aspect of his heritage? The following comments, at least are in order:

1. It is important to defend what the doctrine is trying to safeguard on the positive side, namely, the stress upon the initiatory activity of God, the recognition upon the part of the believer that his salvation is a gift, and not something he has procured through his own resources. We do not become "worthy" of God's love; he gives it to us precisely in the midst of our unworthiness. Our salvation is his work, and not our own.

2. Also on the positive side, it is worth noting that the doctrine was stressed by the Reformers not as a device for scaring people with the threats of God's vindictive justice; it was stressed as an instance of God's love and graciousness, as a reminder that even though no man deserved salvation, God was pleased in his infinite mercy to elect men to that status. The point of it all was to assure believers, not to terrify non-believers. This had important practical consequences. It meant that the believer did not need to sit around in constant gloomy introspection. His salvation was assured! And rather than taking his own spiritual pulse continually, he could go out and live as one for whom Christ had died. And his job as one of the elect was clear. It was to help transform the world into the Kingdom of Christ. Thus the doctrine of election led to strenuous activism rather than (as might have been supposed) to lassitude and passivism.[12]

[12] Troeltsch puts it, in a discussion of the Calvinist ethic: "The Calvinist knows that his calling and election are sure, and that therefore he is free to give all his attention to the effort to mould the world and society according to the Will of God." *Social Teachings of the Christian Churches* (Allen and Unwin, and Macmillan, New York, 1950), Volume II, p. 589.

3. It also needs to be pointed out that election is to be understood in the sense of election to *responsibility*, and not election to special privilege. In the Old Testament, for example, the Israelite nation, in understanding itself as the "chosen people," came to realize that this did not mean having special privileges, but rather having the special responsibility of being "a light unto the Gentiles," *i.e.*, witnessing to the rest of the world of God's steadfast love. So, too, the individual, if he feels, for example, that God has "called" him, or elected him, must not allow this to produce a feeling of smugness and self-satisfaction on his part over the fact that he has made the team while somebody else is sure to fry in hell. It means, if he understands his calling aright, that he now has a responsibility to the rest of mankind, and must offer himself as a means through whom God can call others.

4. With regard to the negative implications of the doctrine (What about those who are not called, but are rejected, by God?) it seems clear that the contemporary Christian must exercise a greater degree of "reverent agnosticism" than has sometimes characterized Christians in the past. He may feel sure of his own calling, but he has no right to be sure of anybody else's rejection. There is a frightful snobbery and pride in the outlook of a person who has a very clear idea about who are the saved and who are the damned. (Those who make the apportionment always seem to end up on the side of the "saved.") Furthermore, the suggestions (a) that God's resources are so limited that he cannot win all men to him in his own good time, or (b) that he would ever finally "give up" a child of his own creation, are suggestions which cannot be lightly adopted. Is the implication, then, that everyone is "saved"? There does not exist clear agreement among contemporary protestants on this point, though the position is now more widely held than it once was.[13] On the other hand, the integrity of human freedom must not be jeopardized by an easy view that "everybody makes the team" regardless. We must retain for the individual his right, if he so chooses, to say "no" to God. But we must also allow for a

[13] A clear treatment of the pros and cons of this problem is found in H. H. Farmer's *God and Man* (Nisbet, London, 1946), pp. 143-151, and in his *The World and God* (Nisbet, London, 1947), pp. 253-259.

limitless love on God's part which can reach out to those desolate of his love or even of the desire for his love, recognizing the possibility that he may have ways beyond our understanding for bringing men to free acceptance of him.

Thus it is only when the doctrine of predestination and election is pushed in pitiless fashion that it becomes the kind of monstrous thing that its critics always claim it to be. It is essentially a positive affirmation about God's outgoing concern to win men to himself, and as such is an absolutely integral part of classical protestant faith.

But a further attendant problem is raised for those who affirm the classical stress upon God's sovereignty. *Does not this make God directly responsible for all evil?* Some protestants have not boggled at answering this question in the affirmative, though for many more it remains a real difficulty. Without launching into a full-scale discussion of the problem of evil, we must attempt to indicate how from a viewpoint which takes the claim of God's sovereignty seriously, the problem of evil can be approached.[14]

Even the most rigorous predestinarian still stoutly affirms that men are to be held responsible for their wrongdoing and sin. They cannot escape from responsibility for this by blaming God. God must be given the credit for whatever good man does, but man must take the blame for the evil which he perpetrates. This may seem grossly unfair, but actually it is descriptive of what almost all Christians have found true when they have examined themselves with sensitive consciences. They cannot hold God responsible for their sin; nor have they the arrogance to attribute their goodness to anything but the grace of God. This may be logically difficult, but it is descriptively true.[15]

The question for the classical protestant thus becomes: Does

[14] It must be stressed that the following paragraphs are not an attempt to treat the problem of evil comprehensively, but only that aspect of it which is of particular significance for classical protestant faith. For a brief but rewarding grappling with the problem in its entirety, see J. S. Whale, *The Christian Answer to the Problem of Evil* (Abingdon Press, New York, 1936). Also, H. W. Robinson, *Suffering, Human and Divine* (Macmillan, New York, 1939).

[15] The best discussion of this fact in recent protestant writing is in D. M. Baillie, *God Was In Christ* (Scribners, New York, 1948), Chapter V, the sections on "The Paradoxes of Faith" and "The Central Paradox."

God "do" anything about this situation of sin and evil in which man has gotten himself involved? Does God have resources for meeting man in this situation and transforming both man and the situation? And the heart of the classical protestant attempt to come to grips with the question would be developed along these lines: God, rather than ignoring man in his plight of evil and sin, *has* taken steps to cope with the situation and meet it right where man is. The classical protestant sees the cross of Christ not merely as a great martyrdom and example of suffering love, which it is, but also as in a very important sense the victory of God over evil. Here is God, in Jesus Christ, coming to grips with evil at the point where it makes its greatest challenge to God, in its attempt to annihilate the very Son of God himself where he is most "exposed" and vulnerable, which is in the humiliation and weakness of the incarnation. If *evil* can conquer at this point, then the battle has been won and God has been defeated. But if *God* can conquer at this point, then his victory over evil is assured, for no greater challenge can ever be thrust at him than this one.

And the Christian claim, of course, is that God *did* triumph at this point. In the total event of crucifixion-resurrection the Christian sees the power of *sin* at work, man's sin against God, epitomized in man's crucifixion of Christ; and he also sees the power of *death* at work, since Christ on the cross gives up his very life. But more than that, he sees these powers overcome, and God's power vindicated, by the fact that God raised this same Jesus from the dead. Without the resurrection, the crucifixion is, of course, stark tragedy. But with the resurrection, the Christian sees the final verification of the fact that God is at work, wrestling with evil, and conquering it. And it is by this faith that the Christian can live in a world which so often seems devoid of God's power and goodness. He knows that the final victory is God's and that it has already been won, and that it is this fact which transforms the last word about life from "despair" to "victory."

Now this is heavy going. This is not a view that will easily commend itself to those "on the outside" of faith, nor, for that matter, is it one that is easy to grasp "from the inside" of faith. But it is certainly clear that this is the point at which the

Christian faith either becomes the good news supremely and powerfully, or the bad news supremely and shatteringly.[16]

The Centrality of Jesus Christ

These comments already presuppose the convictions to which we must now turn, namely, the convictions which are held by classical protestants about Jesus Christ. Here we come to the heart and center of all Christian faith. It will be discovered that what contemporary classical protestantism affirms about Jesus Christ is similar to what the New Testament affirms, what the early church affirmed, and what is found in the affirmations of the creeds and councils of the church throughout its history. Without pursuing the matter in detail (which in itself would take an entire book) it can be noted that classical protestantism's distinctive emphasis has been on what is usually called the *work* of Christ (or the doctrine of the atonement). That is to say, the normative thing is found in the fact that in Christ God *did* something. What he did can be described in many ways, both traditional and non-traditional. The most familiar formulation would perhaps be the Pauline summary of the faith that "in Christ, God was reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Corinthians, 5:19). And protestantism could almost be described as an attempt to make men conscious of what that claim implies, and what they must do because of it. Somehow, the classical protestant affirms, in the life and death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God achieved "the redemption of the world" unto himself—in Christ, God gave himself to men, bridging the gulf between men and God which men's sin had created, coming to men right where they were, offering his love, and even when his love was rejected, continuing to love through suffering. The Christian sees in this activity of God in history, a picture of the activity of God above and beyond and also throughout all history. This is what God is like. This is what God has done and is always doing. This is the very heart of the matter. This is the work of Christ.

16 These paragraphs have covertly been stating a doctrine of atonement, that is, how God "at-one's" himself with us and asserts his Lordship over life. The theme is restated in the next section, in another perspective. An important treatment of this doctrine is Aulen's *Christus Victor* (Macmillan, New York, 1951). Henry Sloane Coffin's *The Meaning of the Cross* (Scribners, New York, 1932) is a simpler approach to the same problem, from a different viewpoint.

When this has been grasped, when the Christian has been confronted by this kind of shattering love, which can (if he will let it) break through his defenses and transform him, he is then forced to ask some such question as, "What must I affirm about the one who has done this for me?" The answer to this question is treated systematically as a discussion of the *person* of Christ (the doctrine of the incarnation, *i.e.*, that God was incarnate, or "in the flesh" in Jesus Christ). And it is in trying to answer this question that the greatest theological difficulties and perplexities (and therefore the greatest theological fights) have been waged.[17] For what happens always turns out to be something like this: it never does justice to the situation to describe Jesus in terms which are merely human *or* merely divine. Christian faith does not feel that it has exhausted the meaning of Christ when it has said that he is the greatest moral example, or the greatest teacher, or the greatest prophet. Such answers do not take into account the full activity of *God* which the believer finds confronting him in Jesus Christ. Nor, by the same token, is it an adequate description merely to say that Jesus was God, that he was divine—for this does not do justice to the fact that God has related himself totally and fully to men, that he has shared in, participated in, been a partner in, man's struggle.

So, confronted by this situation, the classical protestant has discovered that no answer to the question "Who is Jesus Christ?" has ever been adequate unless it has included both of these elements. He is on the one hand "the Word made flesh," the creative power of God which has been at work from all eternity, fully indwelling a life on earth; he is on the other hand "tempted at all points like as we are," not a pretend person or a phantom, but a real human being who gets hungry, suffers, cries, sleeps, and jokes. The identification is complete. So the full affirmation must insist that Jesus Christ is both God and man.

Now this is an accurate description of what the classical

[17] This is the point of the "creedal controversies" in the early centuries of the Christian church, which were attempts to safeguard both the divinity and the humanity of Jesus. A convenient brief treatment of this period is in A. Richardson's *Creeds in the Making* (S.C.M. Press, London, 1935). A fuller study is Bethune-Baker's *An Introduction to the Early History of Christian Doctrine* (Methuen, London, 1951).

protestant finds to be true for him about Jesus Christ. But as for reducing this statement to something which "makes sense," and is easily understood, there is simply no way in which it can be done. How can one be both God and man? It is impossible to give a cold logical answer to the question. (It is also, incidentally, impossible to give a coldly logical answer to most other important questions, such as, "What is it like to be in love?" "Why would you be willing to die for your country?" "Why would you bear pain for someone else?") And all through the centuries, Christian theology has struggled with attempts to find more, rather than less, nearly adequate ways of making this affirmation.[18]

In the last analysis, the only language which will do here is liturgical language, the language of faith at worship, the language of the community of believers appropriating the best that it can from the past, seeking to make that its own, and yet finally bowing down in adoration before a mystery which defies full rational explanation. This will always remain the central paradox of the faith, both the glory of its profundity and the despair of its attempts to dispel the mystery. And if Christian faith has sometimes seemed to vacillate between one affirmation and the other it has never finally found a point at which it could be satisfied without both.

"The Nature and Destiny of Man"[19]

It may seem that thus far we have been making a number of illicit assumptions. We have talked about a "gracious God," who visits man in his situation of despair and sin. We have talked about the "work of Christ" as something which transforms man's situation and "saves" him. It is therefore time to look a little more carefully at classical protestantism's estimate of the human situation. Is it as desperate as the remedies it calls forth would seem to indicate? Can't man tidy up his own life without such exaggerated stress on God's intervention?

[18] Perhaps the best contemporary attempt is the book by D. M. Baillie previously referred to, *God Was In Christ.*

[19] This heading is consciously designed to draw attention to Reinhold Niebuhr's classic work of the same title, which deals with the protestant doctrine of man with a relevance and profundity which the following pages will not even attempt to imitate. Anyone who wants to grapple with the Christian faith at this point must sooner or later expose himself to Dr. Niebuhr's analysis.

In the recent resurgence of interest in classical protestantism there has been a tremendous emphasis on the doctrine of man. In this whole discussion, classical protestantism is not saying anything particularly new, but simply re-saying, in contemporary idiom, things which were prominent in the thought of Luther, Calvin, Augustine, St. Paul, and Jesus himself—who, incidentally, had a much more somber view of man than we usually remember.[20]

Much of the recent discussion has centered around the notion of sin, and it cannot be denied that classical protestantism has been long on sin. But sin must be set in its proper context, and this can best be done by making three affirmations which are part of a total protestant doctrine of man.[21]

The first of these is that *God has created us for fellowship with him.* This is our destiny. We were created that we might give ourselves fully to God. As Augustine put it in words addressed to God (which are so overly familiar as almost to lose their significance) "Thou hast made us for thyself, and our hearts are restless until they rest in thee" (*Confessions* I:1). This is what some writers would call our "essential" manhood, our uncorrupted situation. This is also part of what classical theology has meant by the "image of God" in man. God has breathed his spirit into man, so that man is somehow a "reflection" of the divine. (The analogy of the mirror is often used by the Reformers.) We are created, then, by God, with a very high destiny, we are given the opportunity of freely choosing to return God's love toward us, "by giving up ourselves and our lives to his service," and it is as we thus love God that we love our neighbors—two sides of the divine commandment which Jesus reminded us were precisely the same thing.

That is the first affirmation. Unfortunately, it is not the whole story. For we have immediately to go on to make a second affirmation, which goes like this: *we have spurned God's offer of fellowship with him, and have rebelled against this destiny.* God creates us with freedom to give him our love—but this very choice, if it is to be real, opens up the possibility that we

[20] See, for example, his strictures on the Pharisees (Matthew 23), or the statement in Mark, 7:21-22.

[21] The following analysis has been developed more fully in the writer's *The Bible Speaks to You* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1955), Chapters 13 and 14.

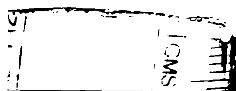
may choose *not* to give him our love, since love, if it is to be real must be freely given. We may rebel, we may separate ourselves from God, we may choose to organize life around ourselves instead of around him, and all of these statements are merely circumlocutions for that crucial word "sin." For sin is not exhausted in describing individual acts which aren't very nice. "Sin" is fundamentally a description of our entire situation, one of separation from God, alienation from him, arising out of our rebellion, our refusal to do his will, our insistence upon following our own wills. Sin, in short, involves trying to "play God" ourselves, pretending that we are "the masters of our fates and the captains of our souls," and refusing to acknowledge that there is a God who asks our allegiance. It involves succumbing to the temptation to "be like god" (Genesis, 3:5).

Now this carries consequences with it. We are not, as a matter of fact, God, and if we try to usurp his place this act of rebellion cannot just be ignored. And it is at this point that we can best refer to the notion of God's judgment, or his "wrath," which has carried so much weight in classical protestantism. As Luther and others have said, God's "wrath" is the negative side of his love. It is the way his love expresses itself toward wrongdoing. When men refuse to live under the conditions God offers, then life simply goes to pieces. When men do not love God, and do not love their fellow men, but simply love themselves, then conflicts arise, clashes become inevitable, "nation takes up sword against nation," and we have a situation which is adequately described on the front page of any morning newspaper.[22] This is, in a very real sense, God's judgment upon our sin. He cannot simply pass over, or "wink" at, our sin and wrongdoing. If this is a moral universe, if God is a holy God, there must be a divine reaction to sin.

But—as we find the Old Testament, the New Testament and

[22] Most newspaper headlines are more effective examples of man's sin writ large than any book on theology can ever hope to be. D. R. Davies describes the necessity for, and the resistance to, the concept of sin, as follows:

Surveying the ruins of a house in a badly-blitzed town in the west of England, I remarked to the owner, who was a gracious lady of really fine character, that here was original sin in operation. She turned to me with a look of pained surprise and said: "But surely, Mr. Davies, you don't believe in that dreadful doctrine?" To which I replied: "Such dreadful happenings as these"—pointing to the ruins—"demand some sort of dreadful doctrine in explanation." *Down Peacock's Feathers* (Macmillan, New York, 1946), pp. 45-46.



the testimony of the church through the centuries insisting—God's judgment is not divine spitefulness, it is judgment *to save*. His punishment is punishment not merely to punish, but to redeem. It is a kind of divine "shock treatment" to bring us to our senses, to help us see the folly of our ways, to enable us to realize that life lived apart from God is hell, and that our hope lies in repentance and turning once again to him. The Bible abounds in illustrations of this. Take the Exile. The Israelites (the "people of God," no less!) are uprooted and dragged out of their own land, to be slaves in faraway Babylon. Here surely is an indication that God has forsaken them forever. But no—certain of them have the insight to see that this, too, is punishment to *redeem*; there can be a restoration; they can interpret their exile as a means of bringing them to their senses; they can see that even through this God is calling them back to himself.

Another thing that classical protestantism has stressed is the depth and pervasiveness of human sin. Sin is not, for example, the drag of the physical upon the spiritual, as though there were "lower" impulses in us—animal "instincts" such as the sexual urge—at war with our "higher" impulses and corrupting the "spiritual" side of us. On the contrary, the tragic thing about sin is that it corrupts our highest impulses. It is precisely that which sets us *above* the animals, our ability to live freely and responsibly, to give ourselves in surrender to God, which is the source of the trouble. Of course, our sin can express itself in many "sins" of a physical, even animal, nature, but these are merely symptoms of a more basic disorder. Sin is thus something which extends throughout our whole being—in this sense, our "corruption" is "total," that is, there is no part of us which is exempt from this desire to put self before God, no part which is "pure" and "undefiled." Thus when protestants acknowledge, in the words of the General Confession, that "there is no health in us" (a phrase often omitted in the services of "liberal" churches), they are not indulging in morbid gloom, but simply making an accurate appraisal of the situation. We *have* no remaining center of total health—sin has vitiated and entered into every area of our life and experience, from the lowest to the highest.

This sounds pretty depressing. This doesn't sound like the "gospel," the good news, at all. This is bad news, if there ever was any. And, indeed, if this were the whole story, such an appraisal would be exactly right. So we must go on to our third affirmation about man. This affirmation insists that although we have been created for fellowship with God and have spurned that offer, *God has created conditions under which our fellowship with him can be restored.* From our situation of disruptedness and need, we can be restored to wholeness and health (which is what the word "salvation" originally meant).

How is this accomplished? It clearly cannot be done by ourselves, for this would simply be a further feeding of our pride, which is the root of all the trouble to start with. "Aha!" we would say, "we're not so bad after all. We've saved ourselves. We've achieved our own salvation."[23] No, it has been the emphasis of classical protestantism that our salvation is the *gift of God.* It is not our own doing; we are not saved by our "works" but by God's "grace." That is to say, although we do not deserve this gift of love, God gives it to us anyhow, not when we have finally made ourselves worthy, but in the very midst of our unworthiness—this is what makes it such a tremendous gift of love. We are never worthy, we never "do enough" to earn God's love, but God loves us anyhow, and continues to love us, even if we do not love him in return. *"While we were yet sinners,"* Paul writes in amazement, "Christ died for us" (Romans, 5:8). This is just what the Christian sees etched out in bold relief in the event of the crucifixion. Here in Christ God is dramatizing his love for us, coming to us in our situation of human sin and struggle, sharing in the struggle, loving us when we do not love him, continuing to love even when we put him to death. Here we are *shown* (and not merely told about) the extent of God's redeeming love. And we are asked merely to believe that this is true. Two lines from Paul Tillich sum up this side of the situation perfectly: "You are accepted. All you need to do is to accept the fact that you are accepted." God accepts you now. He does not wait for you to "prove"

[23] For a telling description of "Why We Cannot Put Ourselves Right," see the chapter with that title in John Baillie's *Invitation to Pilgrimage* (Scribners, New York, 1942).

yourself; he does not demand that you become good before he will deign to love you. He accepts you right now. And what are you to do? You are to accept his acceptance. And once you know that you are accepted, you can accept yourself, and then you can begin to accept other people, and thus a new situation of health (salvation) has been created—not by you, but by God.

This—expressed in language borrowed from psychoanalysis —is very close to what the Reformers meant when they talked about "justification by faith." How are we "justified" (or set right) with God? Once again, not by what *we* do—that could never be enough, and even if it could be, it would make us proud. No, we are justified by what *God* has done, in coming to us in suffering love in the person of Jesus Christ. He has set us right, he has restored the relationship, and we merely accept this in faith, *i.e.*, live in the conviction that this is so. We are justified by faith in what God has done in Christ. This is what the Reformers meant, too, when they stressed the term *sola gratia,* by grace alone. This is God's active, outgoing love, his grace—reaching us at the point of our need, without regard for our merit, and redeeming our situation. This, and this alone, can restore health, or salvation. It is by grace alone.

And this emphasis, of course, is not something that the Reformers invented. It is something they found throughout the New Testament, from Jesus' parable about the workers in the vineyard (Matthew, 20:1-16) to Paul's claim, "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God—not because of works, lest any man should boast" (Ephesians, 2:8-9). It is a gift; here, more than anywhere else perhaps, can be underlined the statement with which this chapter began—Protestantism is the religion of free grace.

The Inescapability of the Church

All of this sounds suspiciously like "individualistic religion," and this charge has often been leveled at protestantism. But the charge is a distortion which can best be corrected by looking at the central place which the church occupies in classical protestant thought. For it is basic to the Reformers, as it is cer-

tainly basic to the Biblical writers, that man is not truly man in isolation, but only as man-in-community. There are no "individual" Christians in the book of the Acts of the Apostles, for example. There are only Christians getting together, sharing, doing things in community. Their love of God impels them to love one another and to look out for one another. A later New Testament writer puts the same point the other way around when he says, "He who does not love his brother whom he has seen, cannot love God whom he has not seen" (I John 4:20). Exactly. Love of God and "love of the brethren," commitment and community, always go together.

From the perspective of classical protestantism where do we find the origins of the church? One might be inclined to reply "In the Reformation." But this would be inaccurate. The Reformation, as has been stressed repeatedly above, is not the invention of something new, but the rediscovery of something old, a recapturing of the apostolic witness to Christ found in the New Testament. The classical protestant will thus affirm as his own those elements in the medieval heritage which are consistent with the apostolic witness; he claims to stand in a continuity with the whole of Christendom. St. Augustine, for example, is at least as great a fountainhead of classical protestantism, as he is of Roman Catholicism. The protestant traces his lineage back to the group of disciples gathered around Jesus, and sees there the roots of the Christian community. But he must push back even farther. The disciples all came out of the Hebraic heritage, and with this heritage the Christian feels a profound sense of continuity, so that he has to push back through the history of the Jewish people in the Old Testament, realizing that this is also *his* history, and he goes back at least as far as the call of Abraham (Genesis, 12), and in that event sees the real beginning of the "people of God." And everything subsequent to that event is part of his own heritage.

In many ways the most normative event in this heritage is the establishment of the *covenant* (or agreement) by which God enters into special relationship with his chosen people, and maintains that relationship even when the chosen people forsake him. This is perhaps the main theme of the Bible: the faithfulness of God in spite of the faithlessness of his people. It is

the "steadfast love" of God, God's covenant love, of which the Old Testament sings, and which the New Testament describes by pointing to the person who incarnates it. This is the very charter of the church. For the church is the community of those who are "called out," as the people of God, and to whom God's "steadfast love" is ever offered. When Jeremiah described the possibility of a "*new* covenant," written not on tablets of stone but within the hearts of men (Jeremiah, 31:31-34), he based this hope on the possibility of God's forgiveness. And when, at the last supper, Jesus said to his disciples, "This cup is the *new* covenant in my blood" (I Corinthians, 12:25), he was, so protestants feel, re-establishing the people of God on the basis of a new covenant which was no longer a hope for the future, but a reality for the present. And the little band of people who became the Christian church felt that their whole existence was tied to this fact, that in Jesus Christ the decisive thing had been done which sealed the old promises and brought the new covenant into being.

Another event impelled them to their witness. This was the event of Christ's resurrection. It is clear that the early followers of Jesus were really "thrown" by his death, and that, as a matter of historic fact, what actually got them started as proclaimers of the "good news" was their faith that God had triumphed over sin and death in raising Christ from the dead. Their testimony was the positive testimony that they were once again in fellowship and communion with Jesus Christ, and that they must now go forth and proclaim this world-shattering fact —which is precisely what they did. So the early Christians were "the community of the resurrection," and they were the "new Israel," or, as they sometimes called themselves, "the true Israel of God," witnessing to God's ongoing activity and mighty acts through the history of the old Israel, and now through *them,* as they went forth to proclaim the fulness of the gospel as it had come alive in Jesus Christ.

What was it that sustained and empowered them in this undertaking? To be sure, Jesus had risen from the dead and they were conscious of his presence, but soon he no longer appeared with the directness that the apostles felt a while after the resurrection. Shortly thereafter, however, they begin to

talk about a mysterious power which they call "holy," and they demonstrate an unfaltering assurance that God is now working through them in a new way, undergirding them, empowering them, in all that they do. This they call the Holy Spirit—God in action, God present with them, God as power filling them in such a way that they are vessels of his will. And it is this that the classical protestant claims has sustained the church ever since—the power of the Holy Spirit. In this sense at least, the church is never just "another group," but a channel for the creative, active energy of God as it is unleashed in the world.

This, then, is the community of faith to which the classical protestant belongs. It is a description that many Christians would be willing to acknowledge as close to what they, too, believe about the church. What, then, is the particular contribution of classical protestantism to an understanding of the church? The two distinctive marks of the church in classical protestantism have been *the Word* and, *the Sacraments.* Calvin's statement is typical:

> Wherever we find the word of God purely preached and heard, and the sacraments administered according to the institution of Christ, there, it is not to be doubted, is a Church of God (*Institutes,* IV, I, ix).

This means, first, that where there is a sense of responsible fidelity to the Biblical witness, where the word is read and shared, where an attempt is made to understand it and make it relevant through preaching, there is fulfilled one of the conditions which make the church really the church. The church is to be a group of people who live close to the Bible and seek to make its message their message. Everyone has a responsibility for this, not just the minister. The true meaning of the Reformation phrase, "the priesthood of all believers," is not that everybody is his own priest, so that no community is necessary, but rather that everybody must be a priest to everybody else, so that community is a necessity.[24] As Luther put it in a

[24] So Luther, who has been stubbornly and persistently misunderstood on this point: "Christ has so operated on us that we are able spiritually to act and pray on behalf of one another, just as the priest acts and prays bodily on behalf of the people." Cited in Rupp, *The Righteousness of God* (Hodder and Stoughton, London, 1953), p. 316. This is the best recent book on Luther's thought.

bold phrase, "You must be a Christ to your neighbor." This is all part of what it means that the Word of God is preached—and heard.

But there is a second emphasis—the sacramental life of the church, in the acts of baptism and the Lord's Supper. This is central to all the Reformers, and it is due to a perverse misreading of their concerns that so many later generations of protestants have minimized this emphasis, and tended quite wrongly to equate sacramentalism with "rags of popery." For it is the classical protestant witness that the gospel is not just words; it is a *drama* which is enacted, with Christ as the chief actor. And in the Reformation period, the high point of worship together was always the enactment of the gospel, the dramatization of God's infinite love for man, as bread was broken and wine was poured, and worshippers were visibly reminded that Christ gave his body to be broken, and his blood to be shed, on behalf of them and of all men.

It was the intention of Calvin and Knox, for example, that this drama should be enacted every Sunday at morning worship. Thus all present could participate in the fact that Christ had died for them, and they could also, by taking the elements into their very bodies, dramatize publicly their desire that Christ should "dwell in their hearts by faith with thanksgiving." Thus the sacrament should always be a public re-affirmation of the central meaning for the Christian community, of the drama of Calvary. Here, at this point, classical protestants believe, Christ is *truly present* in their midst, with all of his forgiving and healing power.[25]

We can thus say that the life of the church is centered around the *Word of God*—the Word of God made flesh in *Jesus Christ*, who is the very head and cornerstone of the church; the Word of God in the *Bible*, as the Bible witnesses to God's redemptive activity in Christ; the *preached Word*, by

[25] It is a canard to say, as certain polemicists have said, that Roman Catholics believe in the "real presence" of Christ in the sacrament, while protestants believe in the "real absence." A perusal of almost any writings of Luther on the subject, or Calvin's treatment of the Lord's Supper in Book IV of the *Institutes*, should effectively dispel this notion. There is this difference, that while Roman Catholic apologists "spell out" the presence of Christ by means of Aristotelian metaphysics, protestants have been more content to leave the matter ultimately a mystery.

which the church attempts to keep the Word always releva
and alive and present, and not merely a Word from the pa
and the *enacted Word,* in which the drama of God's encount
with men is re-lived so that men at all times may be participan
in God's saving acts, and not merely view them at arm
length.

These elements all come together in the worshipping life o
the community, as the "people of God" gather together i
praise of him. The proper place for the conduct of worshi
in the Reformed tradition, for example, is behind the com
munion table, so that all the people, minister and laymen, ar
thus gathered together around the table of their Lord. The fa
of congregational singing—a Reformation introduction in
worship which has not been killed even by the bad hymns o
the nineteenth century—likewise stresses the communal aspe
of the faith. The recitation by *all* of the creeds or confessio
of the particular denominations, the open invitation to all wh
"put their trust in Christ," and do "truly and earnestly repe
of their sins" to partake at the Lord's Table, the significance o
the *open* Bible—all of these things are visible and tangibl
reminders of God's gift of love and salvation to all men, and i
is to proclaim this, and witness to this, and invite others t
share in this, that the protestant church finds the reason for it
existence.

In the twentieth century, the most significant fact in the protestant understanding of the church has been the rise of the *ecumenical movement,*[20] called by William Temple "the great new fact of our time." Rather than remaining fissiparous, protestant churches in the past fifty years have shown a determination to come closer to one another. This has resulted in a significant number of mergers between specific denominational groups, but more significant perhaps even than that has been the emergence of the World Council of Churches. This is not a new "super-church," but a means through which churches can meet together for discussion and worship, for consideration of their common problems and common failings, for a chance to explore more fully than has ever been possible

[20] From the Greek *oikumene,* meaning "the inhabited world," hence, the church throughout the world.

before the things which keep them apart. It is recognized now that "our unhappy divisions," as the phrase goes, stand clearly contrary to the expressed will of Christ for his children, "that they may be one" (John, 17:11). In the ecumenical movement lies one sign of potential hope for the future of Christendom.[27]

The Ultimate Dimension of Life

One of the values of the use of creeds in worship is their constant reminder of emphases which are otherwise likely to be forgotten. Such a phrase as, "I believe in . . . the communion of saints," is a reminder that the church is not merely a temporal institution; those who die do not leave it but in some very real sense live in it more fully than ever before. And when protestants pray that they may live "in fellowship with the faithful both in heaven and on earth,"[28] they are reminding themselves, and being reminded, that the meaning of life is not exhausted by a few decades of life on earth, but that there is a more ultimate dimension to life, and that in some sense this dimension is experienced within the corporate life of the fellowship of believers, the "communion of saints," which is not only in time but also transcends time. And it is to this dimension of classical protestantism's understanding of life that we must now turn. It is summed up in such phrases as "the meaning of history," "the life everlasting," "eternal life," and more recently (and more difficultly) "eschatology," or the "last things."

The whole discussion of "eschatology" which preceded and has followed the 1954 conference of the World Council of Churches at Evanston, Illinois, has served to point up some very important things about Christian faith, even though much of the discussion has seemed strange to American protestants. In negative terms first, this whole dimension of Christian faith serves as a reminder that history does not complete itself, that

[27] Literature on the ecumenical movement is rapidly becoming inexhaustible. Fullest and most authoritative is Rouse and Neill, editors, *A History of the Ecumenical Movement, 1517-1948* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1954). Popular presentations include Horton, *Toward A Reborn Church* (Harpers, New York, 1949), Van Dusen, *World Christianity* (Abingdon, Nashville, Tennessee, 1947), and Bell, *The Kingship of Christ* (Penguin, Harmonsworth, Middlesex, England, 1954).

[28] A phrase from the prayer of consecration in the service of Holy Communion in *The Book of Common Worship* of the Presbyterian Church.

life on earth is always fragmentary and unfulfilled, and that never in itself does it contain final meaning. For example, human *sin* always defeats the possibility for final fulfilment in a human life, and human *death* seems to witness that every life, no matter how splendid, is being swept toward nothingness. On these terms alone, if there is a final word to be written above the human scene, it must be such a word as death, annihilation or extinction.

This is one reason why classical protestantism has been so cool to theories of progress. For although there can be genuine "progressions," and areas of life can be made better and better, the facts of sin and death stand over the whole enterprise, placing it in constant jeopardy. Things can get better, but the very things which make them better can also be the means for making them worse. The airplane, to take a hackneyed example, can rid a fever-infested area of disease by delivering serum, but it can also destroy a whole city with a single bomb. And no matter how much we may improve things, the final fact of death stands as an ultimate negative over all our strivings. In the inelegant but apt language of James Thurber, "The claw of the sea-puss gets us all in the end." [29] So all this apparently confusing "eschatological emphasis" is pretty much to the point after all, and drives home the desperateness of our situation if our whole story is told in terms of the "three score years and ten" allotted to us.

But there are positive things to be said as well. Surely the Biblical witness, and the witness that classical protestantism has tried to bear, is that God is able to complete our incompleteness, and that the hope of the world is not our own striving, but that Christ is the hope of the world; that we are strangers and pilgrims on earth, who seek another better country, that is an heavenly, a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God (see Hebrews, 11), All the symbols we use to characterize this dimension are inadequate, because they describe things which transcend the bounds of time, and events in time are all we know how to describe. But this does not excuse us from making an attempt. When the classical protestant talks about the "second coming of Christ," for example, he is

[29] Thurber, *My Life and Hard Times* (Harpers, New York, 1933), preface.

not usually, in our day, setting a date when the skies will open and a man on a white horse will descend; rather, he is saying that just as history has its beginning in God, so it has its end in Christ; that history is moving in a direction, that it does have meaning and purpose, and that its meaning and purpose are not found merely in human striving, but in all that Christ means and is. *He* stands at the end—not confusion or chaos or the devil.

All this eschatological emphasis means, then, that God has ways and means, past our imagining or understanding, of picking up, transforming, renewing, refashioning, what we have done with our lives. The classical protestant, trying to apply this to the destiny of the *individual,* for example, does not talk about immortality of the soul, as though somehow an indestructible part of the individual had the right to some kind of eternal bliss; no, he talks about the resurrection of the body (the body standing for the "total personality" of the individual) which is raised up, not by its own inherent worth but by the power of God. *All* of the individual, in other words, is of concern to God—not just a part of him, his soul, while all that pertained to his body is thrown on a celestial scrapheap and junked. The classical protestant thus claims that all of life, as represented by the *total* person, can be redeemed and used by God for his eternal purposes, and that the project which God has started in man's lifetime, namely, the reclaiming of man for himself, is something that God can continue and complete beyond the boundaries of time and space.

This is clearly an affirmation of faith, and there is absolutely no way in which it can be "proved" to the skeptic. But notice at least that it is an affirmation of faith in *God* and his power, rather than an affirmation of faith in *man* and his power. Here again, the note of free grace enters in—our ultimate salvation, eternal fellowship withh God, is not earned or deserved; it is the gift of God's gracious love, and it is because the classical protestant believes in a God of gracious love that he can make positive affirmations about the life everlasting.

Human history (returning now to man's collective situation) will presumably continue for a long time, unless we blow the whole business to bits ourselves. But history will continue to

have its ups and downs, to remain precarious, and no "utopia" at the end of this historical chain of events can ever "justify" the suffering of the thousands of generations who died before its arrival and would thus be denied participation in it. To place ultimate meaning and fulfilment there would be a decidedly "immoral" resolution of the problem.[30] The ultimate fulfilment must thus be "beyond history," rather than at some dateable point in the future. This does not, however, negate the significance of historical striving. Everything we do in history can have an ultimate significance, because at any point in history we can be as close to God as at any other point, and also because the historical scene has been invested with ultimate significance due to the fact that God in Christ has deigned to live within it, to participate in it, and to conquer within it. Thus history is filled with meaning, not just in itself, but precisely because it is related to that which is beyond it. It is for this reason that the Christian can never turn his back on history and refuse to be concerned with the state of the world. He must always live out his faith right where he is.

The Heart of Protestant Ethics

It is only from this perspective that we can engage in a proper and fruitful discussion of the place of ethical concern in classical protestantism. Protestant ethics can best be described by some such term as "gratitude ethics" or "response ethics." It is because God has been pleased to grant new life to the believer when there was no reason for him to do so, because God has visited man in his need, that man must respond in acts of love and gratitude. Thus "trying to live the good life" is not for the protestant an attempt to *earn* God's love; it is a response given in gratitude *for* God's love. This is beautifully expressed in a statement in the Heidelberg Catechism, in answer to the question, "Why must we do good works?"

> Because Christ, having redeemed us by his blood, renews us also by his Holy Spirit after his own image, that with our whole life we may show ourselves thankful to God for his blessing, and that he

[30] On this point see Berdyaev, *The Meaning of History* (Scribners, New York, 1936), Chapter X, "The Doctrine of Progress and the Goal of History."

may be glorified through us; then, also, that we ourselves may be assured of our faith by the fruits thereof, and by our godly walk may win our neighbors also to Christ.[31]

Significantly, this approach to ethics comes under that part of the catechism called "On Gratitude."

To whatever extent, then, "justification by faith," or "salvation by grace alone," is real for the believer, and not just a string of words, the believer out of thankfulness and gratitude to God must try to live out this life of response. This means that religion and ethics can never be separated; it is always because of God that man must be concerned for man. Calvin makes the point in stately fashion in the *Institutes:*

This is a very important consideration, that we are consecrated and dedicated to God; that we may not hereafter think, speak, meditate, or do anything but with a view to his glory . . . If we are not our own, but the Lord's, it is manifest both what error we must avoid, and to what end all the actions of our lives are to be directed. We are not our own; therefore neither our reason nor our will should predominate in our deliberations and actions. We are not our own; therefore let us not propose it as our end, to seek what may be expedient for us according to the flesh. We are not our own; therefore let us, as far as possible, forget ourselves and all things that are ours. On the contrary, we are God's; to him, therefore, let us live and die. We are God's; therefore let his wisdom and will preside in all our actions. We are God's; towards him, therefore, as our only legitimate end, let every part of our lives be directed (III, VII, 1).

And Luther, with typical spontaneity and enthusiasm, makes the same point. Describing the way in which the Christian man has been freed from bondage, and can now serve his neighbor, Luther comments:

"Well now! my God has given to me, unworthy and lost man, without any merit, absolutely for nothing and out of pure mercy, through and in Christ, the full riches of all godliness and blessedness, so that I henceforth need nothing more than to believe it is so. *Well, then, for such a Father, who has so prodigally lavished upon me His blessings, I will in return freely, joyously and for nothing do what is well-pleasing to Him, and also be a Christian towards my neighbor, as Christ has been to me;* and I will do nothing except only what I

[31] Answer to Question 86, cited in Schaff, *Creeds of Christendom* (Harpers, New York, 1931), Volume III, p. 338.

see to be needful, useful and blessed for him, because I inde-
through my faith have enough of everything in Christ. See, th
there flows from faith love and delight in God, and from love a fre
willing, joyous life to serve our neighbor for nothing. For just a
our neighbor suffers want and is in need of our superabundance, s
have we suffered want before God and been in need of His grac
*Therefore, as God through Christ has helped us for nothing, s
ought we through the body and its works to do nothing but he
our neighbor.*"[32]

How does this tie in with the eschatological stress which wa
described in the preceding section? In this sense, that the im
pelling motive for ethics is the doing of God's will, whether th
has "results" or not. The fact that there may not be an unlimite
future on earth for men does not mean that the whole ente
prise is hopeless, but rather that one tries to fulfill God's wi
right where he is, and in a very real sense leaves the outcom
to God, confident that he can make use of our successes an
even of our failures in the fulfilment of his ultimate purposes. I
one is sure that the future is safe in God's hands, that histor
moves toward Christ rather than chaos, then he can, if he
chooses, live in a more daring fashion than would otherwise be
possible.

This is the faith, for example, which undergirded the early
Calvinists. They were sure that the ultimate issues were in God's
hands, and that they were God's instruments. Of what then was
there to be afraid? Kings? Soldiers? Magistrates? No. And the
result: as one seventeenth century writer put it, "I had rather
see coming toward me a whole regiment with drawn swords,
than one lone Calvinist, convinced that he is doing the will of
God."[33]

Let us conclude by looking at two typical areas of classical
protestant ethical concern. One of the most distinctive protes-
tant emphases has been in the area of *vocation*. During the
medieval period a distinction had grown up between "sacred"
and "secular" callings. The highest calling, the greatest service
to God, was to be a monk, to give oneself totally to God, and

[32] Cited in Nygren, *Agape and Eros* (Macmillan, New York, 1939), Part II, Volume II, p. 509, italics added.

[33] This attitude is clearly open to abuse: it is far too easy to be sure that what *I* want to do is also God's will. With all of its dangers, however, the attitude represents a real source of power for ethical action.

to the life of prayer and devotion, withdrawn from the evil and seductive world of men (and women). Ordinary run-of-the-mill Christians might remain within the common, sinful world, and work as butchers, bakers, and candlestick makers, but this was a distinctly second-rate kind of Christian calling.

What the Reformers did was to cut through that distinction and assert that one's calling could be fulfilled in any kind of occupation, and not just in a specifically "sacred" one. As Luther put it, the shoemaker can serve God at his bench just as fully as the priest does at the altar. Calvin's way of putting it was that instead of retiring to the monastery to serve God, the Christian should see the whole world as God's monastery, and serve God right where he was in the midst of the life of men.[34] Thus the "sacredness of the secular," if the phrase may be allowed, was reaffirmed. One's response to God in love could be carried out wherever one was. All of life was invested with meaning, and all work was invested with dignity.

This view has had a long and complex history. It has raised difficulties; sometimes *all* kinds of work have been too uncritically sanctified, and sometimes protestantism has become a little too chummy with the worst forms of capitalist expansion. But as a general principle, granted the need for constant redefinition in the light of differing cultural situations, the emphasis on Christian vocation is an important contribution to the ordering of man's total life under God.

Another dimension of protestant ethics can be subsumed under the phrase "the protestant principle." [35] The "protestant principle" is an insistence that no partial object of loyalty may be made into an ultimate object of loyalty; that is, nothing which is manmade, or less than divine, may be treated as though it were divine, and thus beyond the necessity of criticism. This is really another way of stating the first command-

[34] Troeltsch describes this attitude as "intramundane asceticism" (*op. cit.*, p. 607). His exhaustive work, previously referred to, *The Social Teachings of the Christian Churches*, 2 volumes, should be consulted in this regard. A corrective to some of the "dated" material in Troeltsch is provided in Bainton, "Ernst Troeltsch—Thirty Years Later," "*Theology Today,*" Volume VII, Number 1 (April, 1951), pp. 70-96.

[35] Paul Tillich has been particularly responsible for stressing this point in recent Protestant thought. See his *The Protestant Era* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1953), Chapter XI, "The Protestant Principle and the Proletarian Situation."

ment, "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exodus 20:3). It is a way of underlining the Biblical stress upon the dangers of idolatry—for we are always tempted to worship false gods, to give our allegiance to something less than the true god.

This means, for example, that the protestant must never give his final allegiance to the *state*. Nothing a nation does can rightly receive uncritical and absolute loyalty, but must always stand under the judgment of a higher loyalty. Nor may final allegiance be given to a *church*, since a church is composed of human beings who err and whose judgments are always something less than divine truth.[30]

One may never say, "My country, may she be right, but right or wrong, my country." Nor may one say, "My labor union right or wrong," "My corporation, right or wrong," or even "My theology, right or wrong." It is only to God himself that the protestant may commit himself with total and absolute devotion. As Reinhold Niebuhr admirably puts it, summarizing the task of the protestant, "We must fight their falsehood with our truth, but we must also fight the falsehood in our truth."

It is both the glory and the problem of the protestant ethic that it is, in effect, an ethic without rules—anti-legalism. It is the result of an attempt to take seriously the statement, "Stand fast therefore in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free" (Galatians, 5:1). But to be honest, one must immediately acknowledge that historically protestantism is shot full of denials of this fact. There is scarcely anything less lovely than self-righteous protestant moralism, displayed under a set of rules by which everybody is condemned except the self-appointed enunciator of the rules. And yet it is a further part of the glory of the protestant position that it has correctives within itself. There are few things more glorious than the way in which the protestant principle can assert itself even in this kind of situation, and insist that it is not in allegiance to rules that God is served, but in allegiance to *God*—and that the love

[30] One of the basic differences between protestantism and Roman Catholicism can be located right at this point, since Roman Catholicism exempts the *ex cathedra* statements of the pope from this kind of criticism.

which "seeks the good of the neighbor" cannot always be neatly known, or derived from a series of general principles.[37]

The classical protestant, when he is true to his heritage, is thus not entitled to sit on the sidelines contemplating heaven. Precisely because he feels himself to be the object of God's unceasing love he must respond to that love by living out a life of love right where God has placed him, in immediate involvement with his fellow men in time and history.

And so it is true in the end, as in the beginning, that protestantism is the religion of free grace.

Bibliography

Note: Numerous books have been mentioned in footnotes, to give the reader direction for further illumination on matters which the present chapter may leave obscure. The following list is meant to supplement books already referred to, although a few titles are repeated.

Historical materials: The writings of Luther best exemplify the protestant spirit in the first flush of its new discovery of the gospel. A convenient English edition is *Works of Martin Luther,* 6 volumes (Muhlenberg Press, Philadelphia, 1936-1943). See especially Volume 2, with the well-known tracts of 1520, especially "The Liberty of the Christian Man." Bainton's *Here I Stand* (Abingdon, New York, 1950) is a fascinating account of Luther's life, times and thought. In addition to Rupp, *The Righteousness of God,* cited above, Watson's *Let God Be God!* (Muhlenberg, Philadelphia, 1949) is a good treatment of Luther's theology. The most systematic statement of classical protestant theology remains John Calvin's

[37] This is one of the reasons why protestantism has always had a lesser place in its ethics for the appeal to "natural law," which is so prominent in Roman Catholic ethics. The protestant feels that a natural law ethic, which claims that reason can discover self-evident truths of conduct to apply to specific situations, is suspect on at least two counts. (1) It claims too much for man's reason, which has a greater ability to corrupt the understanding of what is the "self-evident good" than most natural law theories recognize. (2) The protestant feels that contingent elements in man's situation tend to be elevated in natural theories to a place of absolute value in the ethical hierarchy.

Such conclusions have the disadvantage for the protestant that he cannot speak so confidently as can the Roman Catholic about "what the Christian should do" in a given situation. But the protestant would also insist that this may be a very necessary part of the total protestant principle, which must never claim too much for any human judgment in any given situation. See further on this point Niebuhr, *Faith and History* (Scribners, New York, 1949), Chapter 11, "Beyond Law and Relativity," from which the above comments have in part been drawn. There is also helpful material in Bennett, *Christian Ethics and Social Policy* (Scribners, New York, 1946), pp. 116-124.

Institutes, 2 volumes (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1936). The forthcoming translation by John T. McNeill, in the *Library of Christian Classics* (Westminster Press), will surely supersede all others. A brief introduction to the essentials of Calvin's position is his own *Instruction in Faith* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1947). On these and other protestant writings see also, McNeill, *Books of Faith and Power* (Harpers, New York, 1949).

For a readable introduction to the events of the Reformation itself, see Bainton, *The Reformation of the Sixteenth Century* (Beacon Press, Boston, 1942), H. T. Kerr, Jr., *Positive Protestantism* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1950), gives an interpretation of what was at stake in the Reformation.

An able history and interpretation of protestantism from the Reformation to the present is Dillenberger and Welch, *Protestant Christianity* (Scribners, New York, 1954).

The best expositions of *contemporary classical protestantism* will be found in such works as the following:

Karl Barth, *Dogmatics in Outline* (Philosophical Library, New York, 1954) for a brief introduction to Barth's thought. Barth's major work, *Church Dogmatics* (Scribners, New York, 1936-1956) now eight volumes strong with several still to be written, is gradually being translated into English by a team of Scottish translators (T. & T. Clark).

Emil Brunner, *Our Faith* (Scribners, New York, 1936) is a brief and moving statement of his own faith. Two volumes of his "dogmatics" have been published, *The Christian Doctrine of God* and *The Christian Doctrine of Creation and Redemption* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1950, 1952).

Reinhold Niebuhr, *Beyond Tragedy* (Scribners, New York, 1937) is a series of "sermonic essays" which introduce his thought as a whole. His major work is *The Nature and Destiny of Man*, 2 volumes (Scribners, New York, 1943). See also *Faith and History*, and *The Self and the Dramas of History* (Scribners, New York, 1955).

Paul Tillich, *The Shaking of the Foundations* (Scribners, New York, 1948), is a collection of sermons. The volumes of his definitive *Systematic Theology* are being gradually published by the University of Chicago Press. An important book of essays is *The Protestant Era* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1948). His little book *Dynamics of Faith* (Harpers, New York, 1957) is very readable.

Volumes on the thought of the four theologians noted above are planned by Macmillan, in the series "The Library of Living Theology," edited by Kegley and Bretall. The volumes on Tillich and Niebuhr have already appeared.

Good books on the contemporary protestant attitude toward Scripture are B. Anderson, *Rediscovering the Bible* (Association Press, New York, 1951); C. H. Dodd, *The Bible Today* (Cam-

bridge University Press, Cambridge, England, 1956); A. Richardson, editor, *A Theological Word Book of the Bible* (Macmillan, New York, 1953). See also the Introductory Articles in *The Interpreter's Bible,* Volumes 1 and 7 (Abingdon, New York, 1951-1956). This twelve-volume work stands as a testimony to the centrality of the Bible in contemporary protestant thought.

Probably the best brief book on the classical protestant heritage is J. S. Whale, *Christian Doctrine* (Macmillan, New York, 1947). His later work, *The Protestant Tradition* (Macmillan, New York, 1955), contains valuable historical material. W. M. Horton, *Christian Theology: An Ecumenical Approach* (Harpers, New York, 1955) is a treatment of the various types of theological thought which are being articulated at the present time in Christendom. "The Layman's Theological Library," a series of twelve small books (ninety-six pages), published by Westminster Press, indicates the importance of theology to protestant laymen.

For a comprehensive view of the protestant approach to ethics today, see Hutchison, editor, *Christian Faith and Social Action* (Scribners, New York, 1953). Still widely used is Brunner, *The Divine Imperative* (Westminster Press, Philadelphia, 1947).

Chapter 2

Liberal Protestantism *

By EDWIN E. AUBREY

Professor of Religious Thought and Chairman of the Department, University of Pennsylvania

THE LATE Dean Inge of St. Paul's Cathedral once said that all labels are libels, and this is true of theological tags. In recent discussion the term "liberal" has become almost an epithet associated with an outmoded nineteenth century outlook characterized by an unwarranted optimism and by a naive faith in inevitable human progress, cut off from its roots in biblical faith, and too confident of its ability to solve all problems by reason. I do not propose to debate these characterizations, but I hope that the ensuing discussion will serve to clarify the liberal position, and to show that the agreements with what has been called "classical Protestantism" are such that a fruitful interchange can be continued.

Certainly liberal Protestant thought has benefited from some of the corrections offered by "neo-orthodox" theology. But this is just the point. Liberalism has tried to remain open to light from any quarter, and can thus share sincerely in such a symposium as this volume represents. At the same time, I must make clear that, since there is no one official liberal theology, but a great diversity of views among liberals on particular doctrines, I speak as one liberal Protestant; and while I think that most of my colleagues in the field would agree with most of what I have to say, I would not want them to be convicted of guilt by association. This should be borne in mind in connection with the bibliographical notes attached to this chapter.

* Preliminary editing of this chapter was done by Professor Aubrey, but he did not live to see the final version.

I. The Starting Point

The liberal starts with the proposition that experience precedes theological formulas. In other words, religious experience is more fundamental than theology. Therefore, in order to understand the theology we must go to the experience behind it.

Now, there is a great variety of forms of the religious experience, and the liberal's attitude toward all of them is one of respect and of willingness to investigate. Some years ago William Ernest Hocking defined the liberal attitude as one of reverence for reverence, and in a very deep sense this is a fair statement of the fundamental attitude which the liberal takes in his thinking in the field of religion. And so, in encountering a number of faiths, he tries to understand them.

A person's religious experience may be the experience of a fellowship of faith, in a church or synagogue, and the sense of belonging to a group which has given him a recognition of his own meaning and worth, a group which seems to him to be guided by an attitude toward life and one's fellow men that gives him greater security and confidence. This may be the kind of religious experience to which he refers when he tries to explain what it is that he believes, theologically speaking.

Or it may be that one's religious faith has come to him through a personal struggle with frustration and despair. At the end of his wits, in the exhaustion of his own resources, confronted by an insoluble problem, a person has very often been driven to a sense of the need for something beyond himself to lift him out of his desperate condition. And testifying to such an experience he may say that he was driven to God.

Again it may be that a person comes to his religious experience through the striving for wholeness of life and for some organization of life's meaning. There is nothing necessarily very exciting about this. He may just be trying to "figure it all out." And in this effort he may, therefore, be drawing together all the various kinds of experience he has had in order to make some sort of coherent interpretation of them. And yet there is also along with this a feeling that he does belong, as an

integral part, to something much greater than himself, a
what this whole is to which he belongs he tries to state for him-
self as best he may.

There are other people who come to this conviction through
some overwhelming experience of the nearness of God. They
cannot describe it for you too well. They halt and stutter when
they make the effort, and yet to them it is a quite clear and vivid
experience which they not only can never forget but will never
give up.

I recall a passage in Horace Bridges' essay in *My Idea of God*, a symposium published a number of years ago, in which
he told of being a boy in London and feeling, in a vague way in
which children will sense it, a great oppressive cloud hanging
over the home. He didn't know what it was, whether someone
had died or someone was very ill, but he went out into the
backyard. Seeing a glorious sunset, he said, it seemed to him as
though some voice said to him, "Never mind! Underneath are
the everlasting arms." And Bridges went on to say that he did
not care how the psychologists might pigeonhole this, or what
questions the philosophers might ask about it, for he was willing
to think further about it; but that ever since then he had never
doubted the reality of God.

Yet again, a person might come to his experience of religion
through the pursuit of ethical values—the dedication of his
own life to the best he knows, breeding thereby a sense of duty
and a dogged determination to do his duty. This may have
brought to him a sense of contact somehow or other with the
deep stream of existence which for his present activity is best
expressed in the form of a moral enterprise.

When the theologian tries to determine what is meant by
religious faith he continually reminds himself that people, when
they talk about religious faith, may be talking of any one or
more of all these things; and with his reverence for the spiritual
experience of other people, he tries to keep all of these in mind.
He is, therefore, somewhat distrustful of glib theological for-
mulas that rest upon one of these experiences to the exclusion
of the others. And he would insist also that this penetration
through theological formulas to the experience behind them
is relevant not merely to the religion of individual persons, but

also to our understanding of the creeds and of the Bible. Only as we go back into the tense situation where Christianity faced the threat of reabsorption into Roman polytheism, shall we understand the true significance of the Nicene Creed. Whether we can accept all of its propositions or not, we shall never be able to laugh it off when we realize what a serious crisis created it.

Any formulation of the meaning of religious experience is in terms of the age and the culture in which the believer finds himself, and the vocabulary of one's experience or culture may not convey the experience adequately to another age or another culture. This is one of our great problems today. The traditional theological formulas do not seem to be vital, at least to the younger generation. We cannot count on any comprehension of what they stand for, and the language in them, like the language of the Scripture, and the language of our hymns, is very often simply unintelligible to young people.

The language of one culture may fail to express adequately a given meaning to persons reared in another. I remember hearing about a Christian missionary to the Eskimos who, explaining the Christian doctrine of salvation, spoke of the sacrifice of "the Lamb of God." Then he caught himself and realized that these people had never seen any sheep and, therefore, the term "the Lamb of God" simply would mean nothing to them. It wasn't a word in their vocabulary. And so like a sensible man—though it may sound shocking to those of us more familiar with the traditional terminology—he spoke about Jesus as the Seal of God. Eskimos do sacrifice seals and for the purpose of explaining the significance of Jesus for the religious experience of men the change in language was essential.

We should therefore take for granted a perpetual process of trying to find new and more nearly adequate vehicles in our language for conveying the essentials of the experience connoted by the historical and biblical formulations. But if we are going to do this, then it means that the scholar is also required, in any study of the Bible or of the creeds, to use a historical method coupled with imaginative insight in order to get behind the great theological affirmations of the past. This is why the liberal insists upon the historical criticism of the Bible and of

the creeds, not in order to establish their relativity, but rather to establish their relation to fundamental and dynamic human experience, so that we may get a fresh sense of their relevance and of their vitality. And at the same time the scholar will recognize that in other religions expression is also given to the fundamental human spiritual quest.

II. Authority in Religion[1]

If we go on from this to the problem of authority in religion, we may say that the seat of authority is found not in a book or in a creed or in an organized religious institution, but in the experiences behind these. This is in part individual personal experience. And in so far as the individual looking at the experience of the members of a group can say, "I know; I have been through it, too," then he is willing to listen to what these other individuals have to offer by way of insights and possible lines of solution which have come to them as a result of that experience.

But it is also in part corporate experience. Judaism has always held that these two are inseparable. The individual Jew is unidentifiable apart from the Jewish community and the Jewish community came to see during the biblical period the fact that the responsibility of the community is shared also by all its members. And so the use of experience in both its individual and its corporate sense is stressed.

Our experience, however, does presuppose some objective stimulus, if we may speak in psychological terms for the moment—some objective stimulus that arouses the response. I say this because liberalism has often been criticized for seeking to spin out its religious faith from its own experiences. But the liberal, like any other sensible person, realizes that we do not spin our experience from inside ourselves in the manner of a cocoon. We develop experience in our interactions with objective reality. It comes from beyond us and touches us at the depths of our own selves. And so the liberal is willing to accept

[1] For further reading on this section the reader is referred to the following: Fosdick, H. E., *A Guide to the Understanding of the Bible* (Harper, New York, 1938); Leonard Hodgson, *Towards a Christian Philosophy* (Nisbet, London, 1943); Auguste Sabatier, *Religions of Authority and the Religion of the Spirit* (Williams & Norgate, London, 1910); Strachan, R. H., *The Authority of Christian Experience* (Cokesbury, Nashville, Tennessee, 1931).

the neo-orthodox insistence on what is called "the divine initiative." It is God who stimulates man through various media to respond to him, and in this response and this search man comes to the formulation of his religious experience.

The test of the validity of this experience is its coherence with the general body of human experience. This may be reflected in the corporate life of the religious community, which has corrective values. And in this sense we may speak of the authority of the church as the authority of a precipitate of corporate experience down through the ages. And the individual who tries to set this aside and say it has no value for him, or can pass no judgment upon him, is becoming dangerously individualistic, to the point where there is no way of validating or testing his experience at all.

But this is not only a matter of the church. The wide range of biblical experience as it is found in a period of about a thousand years during which the Bible was being written, also conveys a sense of comprehensive human experience, and to the extent that we can read the Bible and say, as Coleridge said, "It finds me," we are suggesting that what the Bible has to say comports with general human experience at its deepest level in such fashion that we say, "This is true to experience."

At the same time the generality of human experience is best represented to us in the modern world by science and philosophy. It is the task of science to subject to the bar of corporate judgment the experiences of the many members of the scientific fraternity, and it is the task of philosophy to provide a systematized body of experience or of formulations based upon the experience of mankind. And by these general propositions the claims of the individuals are tested.

This is where theology plays its role in religion. It is trying to inquire whether a given religious experience is simply some vagary or personal oddity, or whether it can truly be said that this person has had an authentic human experience. In order to answer this question one is bound to bring to the test a body of conclusions about general human experience, so that he can identify this particular individual experience as properly belonging to it and being coherent with it.

But this presents us with a difficult problem because we can

never fully accommodate the unique within the general categories of history or of language. Historical explanation, for example, is based upon the notion that human beings at all times and places behave according to certain fundamental patterns—certain laws, if you like—of human behavior. But laws can be formulated only on the basis of repetitious behavior. They cannot be generalized from the single case. We often say that we can generalize only from repeated instances, but if an experience is unique, then how can we apply to it a standard of judgment that has been framed on the basis of repeated occurrences? The distinctively unique simply cannot be tested as to its validity. All you can say is that it just *is*.

Personal experience furthermore can be expressed only through language, including communication through art or music, but this again is a distillation of general experience. The concepts of the language are general concepts. If I were to try to tell you about my mother, I would have to speak in terms of the general idea of motherhood, and to that extent I could convey to you certain important aspects of my relations with my mother, the one who bore me, who cared for me, who loved me, who had faith in me, and so on. But the peculiar nature of *my* relation to *my* mother is extremely difficult to convey. This uniqueness of the relationship baffles us at the point where we try to express it, because we must always express it in the generalized concepts derived from human experience as a whole.

But the trouble here again is that religion as represented by the Western religions has the character of a fellowship—in the Judeo-Christian tradition. We sometimes forget that one of the striking features of Western religion is its corporate worship, in which the group participates in public prayers, in hymns, and perhaps even in common affirmations of faith. This is not found in Hinduism or in Confucianism or, except in limited degree, in Buddhism, though the latter is introducing some reforms in this direction. But with us communication is essential, and we therefore face a baffling problem.

At this point the liberal would say that we have to do the best we can to communicate the faith in order first to share it and secondly to validate it. But we are also keenly aware of the inadequacy of words in which it is communicated and therefore

we refuse to be bulldozed by anyone who tells us we must accept any one particular formulation. We insist that this particular formulation has limitations, and that there may be other ways of formulating it more effectively in relation to our experience.

I am saying, then, that no human authority can be absolute, that intimate private experience cannot of itself become a religious law; yet the individual has a right to cling to his private experience. But since Judaism and Christianity are religions of fellowship, corporate experience can be both suggestive and corrective, and this rests upon the assumption of some common humanity found in all men.

III. Man[2]

This brings us at once to our conception of man. When we talk about man from the standpoint of religion, we are asking some rather definite questions. We are glad to hear from the physiological psychologists about the mechanisms of human behavior, and we want to acquire all the information we can about the neuro-muscular-glandular organism. On the other hand, we may listen with interest to the philosophers' discussions of the body-mind problem. But these are not the questions that religion raises. Religion poses the question: Where did I come from and whither am I going? Am I to live purposefully beyond the present moment? How much freedom have I to decide my fate and fortune? How much responsibility do I bear for what I do? Am I simply part of nature, or is there some factor in my experience that transcends it perpetually and lures me on beyond the natural world in which I find myself? What is there about me that creates tensions between my aspirations and my lower inclinations? And why am I doomed to this incessant inner strife? And at the last, will all there is of me go down in death or have I some hope of eternal life? If so, what is the basis of that hope?

These are not simply questions about man. They are ques-

[2] For further reading see:
Aubrey, E. E., *Man's Search for Himself* (Abingdon-Cokesbury, Nashville, Tennessee, 1940); Calhoun, R. L., *What is Man?* (Association Press, New York, 1939); Robinson, H. W., *The Christian Doctrine of Man* (Clark, Edinburgh, 1911).

tions the asking of which *makes* man. Man is, to be sure, a part of nature. He is subject to the same physical laws of gravitation and motion as other physical bodies. If you have any uncertainty about this, step out of a tenth floor window and see. We know also that man is responsive in chemical fashion to synthetic drugs, and this would not be possible unless he were in one aspect at least a chemical phenomenon. His digestive processes are largely vegetative in character. He shares the reflexes and many of his other physiological functions with the animals. Man unquestionably is a part of nature. God, we are told, made him "of the dust of the earth."

But we are also told that God breathed into man the breath that made him a living soul. He has another, a spiritual dimension. And if man is a part of nature, he is also a unique form of nature. In him the higher levels of organization exert an influence upon the lower. He can worry so much that he gets indigestion. Or he can by resolute will overcome fatigue and pain and get on with his work. His vision of the ideal may determine his response to the actual situation about him.

When my daughter was about twelve years old she came home from Sunday School one day, and while we were sitting around the table, said, "We had a funny man there today. He tried to tell us that God made man out of some dirt," She had been educated in a progressive school and this was rank heresy to her. I asked "What did you say?" She said, "We tried to tell him that man came from the lower animals, but he wouldn't believe it. In fact, he wouldn't believe that man was an animal." So I said, "Well, does it matter so much whether man is an animal or not as it matters what kind of an animal he is?" And I went on to suggest to her that man is the kind of animal who can think about things that aren't there, and govern his present behavior in terms of them. And as children sometimes will, she picked this up and said, "Oh, what you mean is that man is the only animal that has 'if' in his vocabulary." And speaking as a theologian I do not know a better definition of man. He is the animal that has "if" in his vocabulary.

It is from this bifurcation represented by the word "if" that man comes to his religious experience. He is aware of a distinction between what is in front of him and what might be

there. He can think about the invisible, and this faith in the invisible enables him to act beyond the present and in that sense gives him freedom. He is aware that the contrast between what actually is and what might be, "if"—the contrast between the actual and the ideal—gives rise to conscience, by which he compares his actual conduct unfavorably with what it might and should be.

When man does this, there are two possible lines of response for him. He can either escape the ideal and immerse himself in the immediate, which in the last analysis is sensualism; or he can evade the actual and live in his daydreams of the ideal, pretending to live as though he had achieved the ideal. This is what we call the sin of pride.

He can accept these antipodes of human experience and have his freedom, because he is aware that in every situation another possible situation is implicit. The man in the lynching mob is a victim of the mob violence and excitement until he asks himself, still in the midst of the mob, "What will my colleagues think of me when they hear about this tomorrow?" This is an "if," and he considers another possible eventuality. At the moment when he asks himself such a question he begins to be free from the mob hysteria.

IV. Natural Religion and Faith[3]

Natural religion is not to be understood as a set of self-evident propositions. This was the meaning attached to it by the seventeenth and eighteenth century thinkers. They listed five such propositions which came to be known as "the pillars of deism." Interestingly enough, every one of these self-evident truths is questioned today, and this is the fate of such "final" propositions in human life. But natural religion is not identical with these propositions. It is, rather, the basic fact that man struggles to be safe in the present while he is aware that he cannot live in the present alone; so he is searching for some reality behind what is seen to bind the seen and unseen to-

[3] For further reading see:
Cotton, J. H., *Christian Knowledge of God* (Macmillan, New York, 1951); Ferré, N. F. S., *Faith and Reason* (Harper, New York, 1946); Jones, R. M., *Pathways to the Reality of God* (Macmillan, New York, 1931); Trueblood, D. E., *The Logic of Belief* (Harper, New York, 1942).

gether, so that in this sense faith is living beyond the present.

There are two aspects of faith which are not always distinguished. One is that by virtue of which, having reached the best possible conclusion for our thinking, we are ready and have the courage to act upon that conclusion for the future. The other aspect of faith is evidenced when we embark upon our examination of life, having already taken something for granted, and going on this basic assumption we proceed to the business of living and thinking.

Natural religion is therefore that which arises out of man's sense of insecurity and leads him to look for that which holds together the actual and the possible. This gives rise to faith.

At the same time the one inevitable common lot of all men is death. This raises for me—it seems to have been raised for man from the beginning—the question, "Is this brief span of life the whole story of my meaning, and is what Koheleth said true, that 'the days of darkness are many, and that everything thereafter is nothingness' "?

To answer that question we shall have to make clear our conception of God, because the idea of immortality is inseparable from the conception of God.

V. God[4]

What then do we mean by God? One of the most striking facts is that there is no argument in the Bible for the existence of God. The only reference to atheism is to a different kind of atheism such as we sometimes find in the Christian churches themselves, that is, man acts as though God weren't "on the job."

"The fool has said in his heart, There is no God." In the Jewish context this does not mean a theoretical proposition, it means that the godless man tries to live as though he were not answerable to God. Many theologians and atheists alike believe that unless you start with belief in God's existence, you will

[4] For further reading see:
Baillie, J., *Our Knowledge of God* (Scribners, New York, 1939); Brightman, E. S., *A Philosophy of Religion* (Prentice-Hall, New York, 1940); Ferré, N. F. S., *The Christian Understanding of God* (Harper, New York, 1951); Hartshorne, C. S., *Beyond Humanism* (Willet, Clarke, New York, 1937); Hocking, W. E., *The Meaning of God in Human Experience* (Yale, New Haven, Connecticut, 1912).

never attain it by rationalization. It is a curious thing that the two extremes of theological conservatism and humanistic atheism will very often meet here.

The Roman Catholic Church declared very vigorously against this in the Vatican Council of 1870, by saying that if any man believes that it is not possible by natural reason to arrive at the existence of God, he shall be anathema. But we must be clear when we question this, in the light of what I have just said, that God's existence does not depend upon our proving it.

The existence of God may be argued from the natural world itself. This is one of the most familiar lines of argument. We look about us and we see order, order combined with complexity, order combined with complexity and development. If you have something wrong with one of the organs of the body you very quickly discover how poor a substitute some mechanical device is for doing the things that organ does. Consider the delicate structure of the eye, its adjustability for bifocal depth-perception, for near and far vision. We have no substitute for it if a person has something radically wrong with his vision.

Evolution shows us order not merely in the static, geometric pattern, but in the time sequence, the fact of many events flowing into a single event which they "cause." When we ask how we can explain that, then we have to look around for an analogy in human experience. Our best analogy seems to be found in our own purposeful activity. We set in motion a variety of trains of activity that conspire to produce a given result at a given time. For example, I have a lecture engagement. I prepare my notes. I get a train schedule. I order a taxi. I send my laundry to be washed and have it returned, and pack it. All of these different kinds of activity, with all of the people involved in them, are here coordinated in terms of conspiring for the event of my getting my foot on the right train at the right time.

Human purpose provides us with an analogy, but it is not merely an analogy. Such purpose is also an intrinsic part of the natural world. And this is important. We are not constructing an analogy from man's experience in the spiritual world, to

apply to nature. This purposeful activity of man is expressed within nature, and that fact raises questions for us about the relation of theism to humanism. Why should a human being assume that the ideals can be realized, unless he is assuming that they fit somewhere into the structure of reality which is independent of his own projection? This purpose is both immanent and transcendent. It acts within us as a guiding light. It is also something which is not yet realized and, therefore transcends the present.

I have spoken of four approaches to belief in God. Some come to it by observing with wonder the order in the world and seeking some adequate explanation of it. Some gain an awareness of God through their sense of wholeness, of being part of something greater than themselves. Others reach out for God at the point of their own extremity and feel His hand touching theirs in the dark. And some are led by their own moral struggles or their strenuous efforts in pursuit of the good of society to an awareness of a transcendent element active within themselves—a "power not ourselves that makes for righteousness."

These four approaches tend to bring into relief their own several interpretations of the nature of God. If God is seen through the order of events in causal sequences in a time series, stress is apt to be placed on the creative activity of God—not only at the beginning, as the purpose in terms of which the universe was brought into being, but also as continuing creativity in the realization of that purpose in nature and in history. The mystic finds God all about him as the embracing unity within which every man stands—the God whose greatness "flows around our incompleteness," and whose splendor shines "deep below the deeps of conscious being." This sense of the mystical presence is, despite recent attacks upon it, a part of religious testimony—a part that is far from dead, and points to the immanence of God within His world. And again, when a man walks out to the circumference of the circle of life and, facing away from his fellow men toward the eternities, encounters God; or when, driven into the solitude of his own soul, he wrestles with his own insufficiency and need, and feels a sudden certitude of power from beyond, it is the love

and mercy of God of which he will speak. But when the man of acute conscience and moral earnestness devotes himself to his fellow men, whether in prophetic criticism or in redemptive social work, it is the judgment of God as the ultimate guaranty of life's values in divine purpose that comes to the fore.

In all of these experiences God is the beyond that is within. And the manifold working of God is expressed in the doctrine of the Trinity: the creation and control of the world by the Father, the entrance of the divine into human life in the Son, and the abiding activity of God in the soul of man and in the Christian community through the Holy Spirit. But this is a trinity in unity, for God is one. This unity of God is essential to the creative activity in the universe, working through many causes toward the realization of any new event; to the integrity of the human personality as an expression of the divine purpose; and to the communion of human beings at their deepest levels, through the common presence of the Spirit. These are three ways of acting on the part of the same One, three masks (*personae*) worn by the same actor; and they are all true and perpetual expressions of the same God.

VI. Christ[5]

To the Christian, God is manifest, not exclusively but most vividly, in Jesus Christ. The Christian Church has never said that God is found solely in the Son; but it has tried, under the limitations of language, to express its conviction that God is revealed under the aspect of human life itself in Jesus of Nazareth. My own feeling is that the first disciples saw in Jesus Christ the concrete, living embodiment of the divine purpose within the dynamic process of a personal life.

To the Jew—and we must remember that the earliest Christians were Jews—the power of God in man is found through obedience to, and ardent pursuit of, God's purpose for the world within a historical process that is full of significance as the drama of the redemptive activity of God.

But the Greeks, perplexed by the metaphysics of history

[5] For further reading see:
Baillie, D. M., *God Was in Christ* (Scribners, New York, 1948); Horton, W. M., *Our Eternal Contemporary* (Harper, New York, 1942); Temple, W., *Christ the Truth* (Macmillan, New York, 1924).

and never able to develop a philosophy of history, despite th
genius in other philosophic matters, did not "have a word
it." Limited by their insistence that the divine dwelt beyond
the vicissitudes and imperfections of the historical scene, th
had no way of expressing what men found in Jesus Christ.

The result was an effort to accommodate the dynamic pr
ence of God in Christ within the category of being, or,
they said, *ousia*. But *ousia* was a term for something bey
the process of becoming; and this led to the debates about t
unity of the substance, or being, of Christ with that of G
himself. But Greek philosophy had another term through wh
it tried to conserve the truth that there is something const
within the process of change: the term *logos*. With sound insi
the Greeks within the Christian fellowship used this word to d
scribe Christ: he was the *Logos*, the Word, the cosmic prin
ple of order and dependability. But this left in the backgrou
the earlier idea of a consonance of the human purpose of Jes
with the divine purpose of God.

The difficulty grew when the question arose as to how Jes
could be at one and the same time human and divine. Th
problem of the "two natures in Christ" was insoluble in term
of the Greek concepts, and the church simply grasped bot
horns of the dilemma. Had the category of purpose been em
ployed, the problem might not have been so difficult; for the
the oneness of the purpose of Jesus' life with that of God th
creator and redeemer would have been asserted in a form tha
we could better comprehend. For the key to the personality of
anyone is the purpose that dominates his life and lends con
sistency and power to it. By living out the purpose of God
within the limits of his own life, Jesus bodied forth the meaning
of that purpose. By virtue of the power that is resident in the
purpose of God, Jesus—if one may use the expression—
tapped the resources of God and impressed men with his pe
culiar powers, since the power of God was now able to flow
through him. By the identification of his own life with the
purpose of God, Jesus apprehended immediately the direction
of that purpose and went behind the Law of Judaism to the
basic intent of that Law, so that he is said to have spoken "as
one having authority and not as the Scribes"—that is, out of

the depth of his identification with God and not through the secondary medium of the legal teachings which sought to convey and interpret that purpose.

In this sense Jesus was a living revelation of the purpose of God. He and the Father were at one. Through him God spoke for the instruction and redemption of men. It was as though one might say, "If God were here in this situation this is what God himself would have done." From this, men learned what God means in terms of human life, and what human life means in relation to God. The term Christ, "the anointed one," connotes this metaphysical relation of the historical Jesus to God; and since every historical happening occurs in a metaphysical frame of reference, there is a two-way flow of meaning; the historical points to metaphysical reality, and the metaphysical gives meaning to the historical. The Greeks understood the latter, but they failed to grasp the full implications of history as an avenue to the understanding of the metaphysical. Judaism had seen this, and Christianity rested its case on that insight.

But the purpose of God does not move merely toward the redemption of individual lives. It seeks also the redemption of the whole historical process of the human race, and even, as the New Testament puts it, of "the whole creation." In so far as Jesus caught and embodied that aim of God, he became the Savior: the one who showed the way in his teaching, and introduced the power through his own life, which Christians believe to be the way and the power of salvation. Because this is power that transcends the historical scene, his followers asserted that Christ had triumphed over death and become a living presence and power in his church. Whether the body was revivified in the resurrection, or whether we are talking of a spiritual resurrection, is to me a secondary matter; for if the core of personality is purpose, then the ongoing purpose and power of Christ in his community are the reality with which we are dealing, and which was stated in the form of the resurrection stories.

Through Jesus we see the meaning of the unity and love that characterize the purpose of God. Paul made it the key to the life of what he called "the spiritual man": not a disembodied

soul, but a life in the body shaped and directed by the spirit of Christ. And Paul saw this, too, as the secret of the fellowship of the Christian church, the *koinonia*, the shared life of very human folk who found in their community a level and power of life they had never experienced before. Hence he called even the Corinthians, with whom he had so much trouble because of dissension and immorality, "the body of Christ." Even in such as they, the spirit of Christ was at work to elevate and redeem human existence. But this was not merely a promise—it was also a challenge, and he laid ethical obligations upon them.

VII. Human Destiny[6]

It is in the light of these considerations that we must understand the Christian view of human destiny. First, let me return to the problem of the destiny of the individual which was postponed when I was dealing with the doctrine of man. If the clue to the nature of personality is found in the purpose that integrates and guides the activity of the individual, then the problem of immortality is one of the relation between that individual purpose and the purpose of God. We have seen how the consonance of Jesus' purpose with God's meant that the power of God flowed through his life and made that life a part of the eternal life and purpose of God himself. If the future of the universe is directed by that purpose, then the life of obedience is caught up into God's eternal activity and persists eternally. But that divine purpose also transcends each moment of history (as we sought to show in discussing the transcendence of God), and is in principle a transcendence of history as such. Accordingly, the immortality of man is a conditional immortality dependent on one's participation in, and subordination to, that transcendent purpose. The fact of sin is the turning away from that purpose and the alienation from God, so that the activity of man passes out of relevance to the eternal into what the Bible calls "outer darkness." Alienated from God in this fashion man cannot think in terms of God's purpose, or he rebels against

[6] For further reading see:
Aubrey, E. E., "Immortality and Purpose," *Harvard Divinity School Register*, April, 1950, pp. 5-21; Baillie, J., *And the Life Everlasting* (Scribners, New York, 1933); Baillie, J., *The Belief in Progress* (Scribners, New York, 1951); Fosdick, H. E., *Christianity and Progress* (Macmillan, New York, 1920); Robinson, H. W., *Redemption and Revelation* (Harper, New York, 1942).

its disciplines and demands. The saving power of Christ is available for us only if and when we surrender our own purposes to God's will. When this is done we can enter into eternal life, not as something that awaits us at some distant time but as another dimension of our daily life that rises above the moment and attains the eternal.

This is not merely an immersion in God whereby we lose our identity (as in Indian thought *atman* is lost in *Brahman*), but has an individual quality. Such a hope is based on the doctrine of love which in all situations conserves the meaning and possibilities of the individual. The Christian doctrine that God is love assures us that in the eternal purpose of God the individual somehow comes into his own, though it is impossible for us to know how.

Here we have also the clue to the meaning of history. The eternal is present both as a purpose that broods over history and brings its moments into unity, and as the intrinsic value that is present in every moment [illegible] (God [illegible] tion in "that one far-off divine event [illegible] creation moves." The Kingdom of God [illegible] and is moving toward realization of all things, as the primordial relatedness which is the basis of all historical relations; it is present as partially realized in the here and now; and it is the final reality which acts upon the present, drawing history up into the final consummation which spells the meaning of the whole process. In such a view the meaning of history is not found in history itself, but in the eternal. But this is not to say that progress is an illusion, or to deny that the passage of history sees any gains in relation to the eternal purpose of God. On the contrary, the New Testament idea of "the fullness of time" refers to historical time, and treats certain historical events themselves as culminations of meaning, even though the fullness of time also implies some divine intention to which it is referred.

The present attack in Protestant circles on the idea of progress is directed against the old Spencerian doctrine of *inevitable* progress and against the optimistic interpretation of social evolution which it contained. The grave possibility that man can retrogress spiritually has been made clear to us—if we needed to be told—by the events of the past half-century; but

this does not require us to abandon the idea of progress altogether. Progress can be understood to refer to the fact that in some areas of the human adventure real gains have been made in the realization of God's will among men. Without spiritual pride we may point to the fact that in our day, for the first time in history, the victorious nation has used its power and wealth to lift up the defeated, without seeking new territory for itself. Even the cynics at home and abroad, who claim that this was all due to our self-interest, have served to remind us of a new sense of mutual dependence abroad in the world, and of a new awareness of international public opinion as a bar of moral judgment. These may be only relative gains, but they *are* gains. To say that the final realization of that will of God is to be beyond history, does not nullify the genuineness of relative gains, nor does it deprive of all real significance the human effort to seek and do God's will. If there is any one belief that may be called the outstanding contribution of the Judeo-Christian tradition to human thought, it is the insistence that history is real and that God acts *in* history and not simply *above* it.

The so-called eschatological view of history, which stresses the Kingdom of God as beyond history, is a valuable corrective to pride in human achievement and it can be a source of assurance in the face of cynical despair; but it should not blind us to the reality of progress in human affairs, not should it be used to undermine the sense of personal and social responsibility which we all share for the improvement of the human lot. The practical, ethical strand in Christian thought is too firmly inwoven to be thus disentangled, as the vigorous moral concern of most of the eschatological theologians clearly shows.

VIII. Ethics and Corporate Religion[7]

Christianity inherited from Judaism a powerful ethical thrust, along with its eschatological hope. Whether we start

[7] For further reading see:
Bennett, J. C., *Social Salvation* (Scribners, New York, 1935); Rauschenbusch, W., *A Theology for the Social Gospel* (Macmillan, New York, 1918); Raven, C. E., *The Church and the Kingdom* (Scribners, New York, 1940); Temple, W., *Christianity and the Social Order* (Penguin, Harmonsworth, Middlesex, England, 1942).

from the idea of God as Lord of history or from the Christian doctrine of the Incarnation, we are still faced with the responsibility for bringing our personal and social life more into line with God's purpose. The Hebrew prophets taught us that justice and loving-kindness and humility are parts of the worship of God, and the early Christian writer who said that anyone who claimed to know God and yet hated his brother was a liar, confirmed this. And it is no accident that the doctrine of the Incarnation has led to the moral demand that the outward life of the individual and of society be a worthy vehicle of the inward, invisible grace of God. This is what Archbishop Temple called the sacramental principle in ethics, and it has led to quite radical social teachings in Anglican thought about social reform.

In so far as man can grasp anything of the eternal law of God by reason, we have what the classical discussions have called "natural law." This is not to be confused, of course, with the scientific concept of natural laws like those of thermo-dynamics; yet it refers to conditions that are basic to all effective human action. Thus whatever we can learn of the rational structure of our world is a contribution to Christian ethics and social policy. In this way ethics has need for all the knowledge science can give us. Sometimes science disposes of old ethical requirements by disclosing misunderstandings of causal connections on which they rested. At the same time science is continually creating new ethical obligations—based, for example, on knowledge of bacteriology which shows threats to human welfare from milking cows with dirty hands. Hence the liberal Christian welcomes science as an ally.

I have repeatedly spoken of individual and social life, and the social gospel of liberalism is based on the essential unity of the person and society. Not only must the fundamental attitudes of the individual be redeemed if society is to be rescued from the morass that threatens it, but social conditions must also be reconstructed if the individual is to have a chance to be his best possible self. There is therefore no real conflict between the individual and the social gospel, so-called. And the fact of community requires that our ethics should provide maximum

freedom, both for the moral salvation of the individual himself and for the creative growth of society itself.

Freedom is not a privilege extended by society to the individual and subject to recall at any moment. It is an obligation which society owes to itself, for we live in a world in which novelty is real. This is a corollary of the Judeo-Christian insistence on the real significance of history, for without novelty there would be no history to record. But since we are continually faced with novelty and with genuinely individual experience, it behooves society to encourage its individual members to bring to the common fund of experience their special insights. In order to make available this variety of experience, by which the common store is enriched and a broader and firmer base of judgment secured, freedom must be allowed to the individual to reach his own conclusions and testify to his own experience. Freedom is thus the very basis of security.

Finally, what is the nature and role of churches in relation to the religious life? A church is a worshipping community. Its members gather as a group of sinners before the Most High God in penitence and rededication, and there become more keenly aware of their failures as their consciences are sensitized. But they are also standing in God's presence as men and women to whom He has promised good things. The reminder of the Gospel (*i.e.*, the good news) is elevating and encouraging in the midst of the stresses and strains of daily life. The beauty of holiness, whether in music or architecture, or in the spoken word of the Bible or of the minister, raises us above the level of our ordinary life. The tragedy in much contemporary worship is its tawdriness and mediocrity, which belie its high aim. But whether in the sublime beauty of a rich liturgy or in the equally sublime simplicity of a Friends' meeting, there is made accessible to men the presence of God. And in the personal solicitude of church members for each other is conveyed a sense of the significance of each individual person.

But the church must also crusade. It is God's harbinger of the Kingdom. It must be prophetic in its denunciation of the evils to which our society is prone, and must encourage the forces of good in its immediate environment even at great

sacrifice. To do less is to forsake its task as an instrument of divine grace. But while it may thunder forth its condemnations of evil, it must also be a seedbed of Christian motives, seeking in the intimate fellowship of its members the actual expression of those attitudes and sensitivities which cleanse and ennoble the life of man.

This, then, is the liberal Protestant faith. It shares most of its convictions with other branches of Christianity and many with Judaism; and it welcomes further fellowship with them all.

Bibliography

1. Bennett, John C., *Christian Realism* (Scribners, New York, 1941)
2. Bixler, J. Seelye, *Religion for Free Minds* (Harper, New York, 1940)
3. De Wolf, L. Harold, *A Theology of the Living Church* (Harper, New York, 1950)
4. Ferré, Nels F. S., *The Christian Faith* (Harper, New York, 1942)
5. Jones, Rufus M., *The Eternal Gospel* (Macmillan, New York, 1938)
6. Knudson, Albert C., *Basic Issues in Christian Thought* (Abingdon-Cokesbury, Nashville, Tennessee, 1950)
7. Lyman, Eugene W., *The Meaning and Truth of Religion* (Scribners, New York, 1933)
8. Macintosh, Douglas C., *Social Religion* (Scribners, New York, 1939)
9. ———, *Personal Religion* (Scribners, New York, 1942)
10. ——— and Others, *Religious Realism* (Macmillan, New York, 1931)
11. Myers, Edward D. (editor), *Christianity and Reason* (Oxford Press, New York, 1951)
12. Oldham, Joseph H., *Life and Its Commitment* (Harper, New York, 1953)
13. Oman, John, *Honest Religion* (Macmillan, New York, 1941)
14. Rall, Harris F., *Christianity: An Inquiry into its Nature and Truth* (Scribners, New York, 1940)
15. Ramsdell, Edward T., *The Christian Perspective* (Abingdon-Cokesbury, Nashville, Tennessee, 1950)
16. Roberts, David E., and Van Dusen, Henry P. (editors), *Liberal Theology* (Harper, New York, 1942)

17. Shaw, John M., *Christian Doctrine* (Philosophical Library, New York, 1954)
18. Temple, William, *Nature, Man and God* (Macmillan, New York, 1934)
19. Thompson, Samuel M., *A Modern Philosophy of Religion* (Regnery, Chicago, 1955)
20. Van Dusen, Henry P., *Life's Meaning* (Association Press, New York, 1951)

Chapter 3

Roman Catholicism

By CHARLES DONAHUE

Professor of English,
Fordham University

IN PRESENTING Roman Catholicism as a contemporary pattern of faith, I cannot let myself forget that my professional interest in theology is only incidental and accounted for by the fact that I deal with literature. There are points where the matter of literature is so closely bound up with the development of religious thought and sensibility that a serious interest in the one demands some acquaintance with the other. No doubt my professional interests and habits color my notion of the purpose of such a book as this and of my own function as a contributor. Part of the professional equipment of any literary scholar is an ability to make sympathetic but uncommitted incursions into other people's patterns of conviction. Such a sympathetic incursion demands not only an understanding of the logical coherence of the foreign pattern but the power to feel without commitment the attitudes and affective values the pattern contains.

The power to feel without commitment, to see as amiable things other people love even though one may not love them himself, I shall call, with some straining of a psychological term, the power of empathy. Empathy is, in a way, a cognitive power. The literary scholar who really knows his Virgil has a knowledge of the mind of the pagan and imperial Roman, how he thought and felt when he was at his best, such as the historian of social, political, or economic institutions cannot attain to. Let us note that this knowledge of the literary man has no direct connection with his convictions about the value of paganism or of Rome.

All this supplies, I hope, a vocabulary in terms of which I

can define the purpose of the present paper. I am interested here neither in apologetics nor in polemics. My purpose is simply to offer a few hints for the guidance of fellow citizens who would like to develop some empathetic understanding of Roman Catholicism. To serious people this approach may seem dilettante. I hope that is not the case. On whatever terms we accept it and whether we like it or not, we live in a pluralist society. The common temporal good of that society depends on our ability to make pluralism work. We have no real choice. The better we understand each others' convictions, the better chance we have of attaining that civic fraternity necessary for our common temporal good.

At what point, then, should one break in if he wants to arrive at an empathetic appreciation of Roman Catholicism?

America was once, Burke thought, characterized by "the protest of Protestantism and the dissidence of dissent." The opinion that Roman Catholicism is a sinister and alien force is still fairly widespread in the United States and by no means wholly among the uneducated and the illiberal. The first signs of a willingness to move from suspicion to understanding are likely to take the form of questions about the relation of the Church to the political order. Do you propose, if you could muster a majority, to establish the Roman Catholic Church? Where do you really stand on the First Amendment? I shall return to these genuinely important questions at the end of my paper. Very briefly, we think we can be good Americans and good Roman Catholics at the same time, and to be a good American, I take it, means to give wholehearted support to the present Constitution, including the Bill of Rights. But we are not Catholics *because* we can combine Catholicism with the wholehearted acceptance of American methods. Such approaches do not lead to the heart of the matter, which is the interior life of the Church.

Many Catholics would recommend neo-Thomism as an ideal study for one who wanted to get an understanding of the Catholic way. Doubtless, the neo-Thomists can be studied to advantage, but a warning is perhaps necessary. The Catholic Church is not a philosophers' association. It is, we hold, a supernatural society professing a supernatural wisdom. Philosophy

by definition is a purely human search for wisdom, and its function within the Church is to assist man in understanding revelation. It is the *ancilla theologiae,* in the well-known phrase, "the handmaiden of theology." Neo-Thomism and Roman Catholicism are by no means convertible terms. Any philosophy is at most a threshold to an understanding of the Church.

A second possible approach would be by way of Catholic dogma and doctrine as officially explicated. It can be found stated in very precise formulas and systematically presented in a number of handbooks of theology and advanced catechisms. Unlike philosophy, which is a threshold, dogma and doctrine are indubitably intrinsic and essential, but too exclusive a consideration of systems of abstract statements may very well prove a barrier to a just grasp of the life of the Church. The skeleton is doubtless essential to the human form, but the artist who studied only X-ray photographs of his subject would end with a very odd portrait. What is in catechisms and handbooks is fully meaningful only as it comes to life in persons, in their meditations and prayers, their speculations and their actions.

Perhaps it is fair to say that what is in the handbooks is essential but not central. If one begins there, one is in danger of missing the typical Catholic situation. Our handbooks, whether philosophical or theological, can easily lead the reader unacquainted with the lived religious life behind them to the impression that the assent of the individual to abstract propositions is the primary Catholic fact. Were this true, my task in this paper would be much easier, since it would consist merely in outlining doctrinal differences between Roman Catholicism and the other patterns of faith we are considering. Whatever impression our handbooks may convey, however, our liturgy makes one important fact abundantly clear: the *Ecclesia* regards herself as the descendant of Israel. Roman Catholicism is Judaic religion, and Judaic religion cannot begin with abstractions, for Judaic religion is a religion of existence: "I am who am." The God of Israel is not an idea.

Nor can He be worshipped by abstractions, and "individuals," human beings considered merely as separate instances of the species *homo sapiens* are abstractions. In Martin Buber's very

helpful language, the individual belongs to the world of "it" not to the world of "thou." He can be regarded entirely apart from society, and if we confuse the abstract individual so regarded with existent man, we are in danger of developing an inhuman "*laissez-faire*" ideal of man and society. Or, if one remembers with the Greeks that *homo sapiens* is a political animal, one can regard the human individual as solely a member of society, a cog in a social machine whose whole value and meaning are exhausted by his function within the machine. Such a way of thinking can bring us very close to Orwell's *1984*. In place of the abstract individual, the Judaic tradition places before our consciousness the concrete existent, the historical and unique human person, *hic homo*. The person is social. Indeed, the human infant, the potential person, comes into act only by relation with other persons, considered precisely as persons, through what Buber calls the "I-thou" relationship. But, necessary as society is to the life of the person, he has a value which can never be exhausted by his function within society. His value is unique as a conscious created being capable of an "I-Thou" relationship with his Creator. The person needs society but he does not exist for society. He exists for his relationship to God and society exists for him.

Personalist conviction is not uniquely Roman Catholic. It is Jewish in origin and characteristic of all Judaic religions in so far as they have been true to their traditions. But, as we trace the emergence of the personalist sense into religious praxis and consciousness, we do arrive at a point where the Roman Catholic method and tone diverges from that of at least some forms of Protestantism. The phrase *gratia supponit naturam* is a commonplace of Roman Catholic Theology. It is sometimes translated "grace builds upon (or supposes) nature," and may be paraphrased by saying that one cannot divide the human person into religious and secular compartments. The person who earns his living, has a family, and is a citizen is the same person who worships God. If society is necessary for the other activities of the person, it is necessary also, so Catholics feel and very strongly, for his religious activities. The "I-Thou" relationship at the basis of Catholic life is, like the relationship in Judaism, inseparable from a "we-Thou" relationship in which

the sacral society, Israel or the *Ecclesia,* confronts God. In this view, human religion cannot be a flight of the alone to the Alone.

For one seeking an understanding of Roman Catholicism, therefore, the approach through the sacral society, the *Ecclesia,* leads perhaps closer to the heart of the matter than any of the approaches so far considered. Yet an approach by way of ecclesiology can be as misleading as approaches by way of politics, philosophy, or dogma. The Visible Church with her hierarchy and her juridical structure is a perfectly apparent fact wherever there are a considerable number of Catholics. Many non-Catholics viewing this juridical structure from the outside see it not only as a path to the meaning of Catholicism but as the meaning itself. Of those who make this mistake, some are appalled at what they regard as an authoritarian system and never try to arrive at an empathetic understanding of the Church and her life. Others are charmed by what seems a notable example of a successful and long-lived organization which has in the main kept up standards of popular morality. With the first group I feel some sympathy. If I saw in the Church only what they see, I suspect I should feel as they do. From the second group, those who mistake the juridical structure of the Church for her essence, some of the maddest notions of what the Church means have emerged. It is noteworthy that Pius XII at the outset of his great ecclesiological encyclical, that on the Mystical Body, warns against the error of those who see and want to see in the Church *nothing but* a juridical structure. That structure, like the doctrinal structure, is essential but not central. What is central, from a theological point of view, the same Encyclical explains at length and in theological terms. Perhaps if one had to suggest to a theologically schooled person the one document which would bring him closest to the core of contemporary Roman Catholic thinking, one would suggest the *Mystici Corporis.* Here, where we are trying to approach Roman Catholicism from a cultural and personal, rather than an abstractly doctrinal point of view, it may be mentioned that the Holy Father lays considerable emphasis on the relation between the person and the supernatural Society which is the Church. Like a just natural society, the Church exists to help persons

bring their personalities more fully into act. "That they may have life and have it more abundantly."

The Catholic attitude is personalist, and perhaps the best way to make the acquaintance of a personalist way of life is to come to know persons at least as the historian and the literary scholar come to know them. Come in, at least by way of documents, and meet the family. It is an old family and a large one. One who comes looking for skeletons can be promised in advance a choice collection. The stern moralist who comes looking for pious mediocrity, or imperfection, or sin, will find what he is looking for. (The German theologian Karl Rahner has published a widely quoted article which he called "The Church of Sinners.") But it is only fair, too, to get acquainted with the persons whom the family itself regards as embodiments of its ideals, the persons we call saints. It is not beside the point, either, to look at the poets, because the ideal the saint is attaining in fact the poet often seizes imaginatively and presents in more readily comprehensible form. Nor should the guest interested in getting an empathetic understanding neglect the family prayers, the liturgy of the Church. There is our doctrine, in a more concrete and more nuanced form than in handbooks or catechisms.

If one adopts the approach by way of persons, it will appear immediately that Catholic life is very far from showing the kind of monolithic uniformity one associates with authoritarian regimes. Catholic sanctity is not a cutting to a pattern. It embraces a wide variety, from avid scholars like the Venerable Bede to St. Francis, who neglected to become learned so that he might be more like the poor, from notable intellectuals like St. Thomas More to St. Bernadette, part of whose notability is precisely that she was in no sense an intellectual. And a similar diversity exists among Catholic thinkers. If one approaches St. Thomas as a person rather than as a philosophical system, one gets a view of Catholic thinking in action. One sees a highly gifted human being wrestling with the problem of the relation of his religious convictions to the intellectual ferment of his time. He is in company with a large number of other persons who faced similar problems and often with somewhat different strategies. One cannot forget Thomas's predecessors, the

Fathers of the Church and particularly St. Augustine; nor his contemporaries, the great Franciscans such as St. Bonaventure and the Blessed Duns Scotus; nor followers in different climates of opinion, the Renaissance Scholastics, such as St. Robert Bellarmine and Suarez; nor non-scholastic thinkers such as the author of the *Imitation* or Pascal or Newman or any of a number of contemporaries. These differ in weight, in *auctoritas*, but they are all clearly within the family, within the Roman Catholic tradition. They serve to remind us that the intellectual life of the Church is, like her spiritual life, protean. Doctrine and dogma assign certain limits, but within these limits there is possibility for an almost infinite variation, a whole spectrum of attitude and opinion between impossible divergences in the one direction or the other, between infra-red, as it were, and ultra-violet.

This is admittedly a long prologue to a tale. I am supposed to deal with a number of most weighty topics in the light of the Roman Catholic faith. These topics can, I believe, be considered under three main heads: God; man, considered as a moral being in relation to God; and the world of time, history, in relation to both God and man. Undoubtedly Catholic doctrine and dogma supply material which bears on these topics, but what the long prologue means is this: the Roman Catholic has no ready, "canned" answers to the many problems which a symposium like the present one raises. If he did it would mean that Catholic theology and Catholic religious life were static things, museum pieces incapable of development. On the contrary, the Roman Catholic Church presents herself precisely as a living Society, developing the revealed truths entrusted to her (the *depositum fidei*), developing the application of those truths to constantly changing historical situations, arriving at deeper understanding of them as human consciousness is enriched by human experience, including, of course, intellectual experience, in time. The present volume deals, as I understand it, not so much with patterns of faith, doctrinal structures, as with *living* patterns of faith, doctrinal structures in movement, in action. When the problem is thus posed, the personalist and dynamic character of Roman Catholicism makes the presentation of the Catholic point of view a difficult matter. At

any period of time, such as the present, there is inevitably a large variety of opinions and attitudes to be found within the visible unity of the Church and within the bounds of the strictest orthodoxy. If one extends his view to include the whole tradition, past as well as present, the variety within the still visible unity becomes bewildering. Yet any presentation must somehow keep in view not only present complexities but the past complexities with which the present ones are organically bound up in the unity of the Church's life in time.

I. The Approach to God: a Poet's View

The primary concern of Roman Catholicism is a confrontation of the human person with God. This confrontation is derived, as I have said, from Judaism, and here Catholicism does not differ from the other faiths of the Judeo-Christian tradition. But there are differences in the shade of meaning one gives to the phrase "to confront God." The Judeo-Christian tradition is a tradition of revelation. The ground of all being, the force that makes the universe which man faces a mystery and not a muddle, is beyond all human concept. He is a Name which cannot be named. But He has spoken to our fathers, to Abraham and the prophets. He has revealed Himself and His law and thus established in the contemplation of the inspired records of that revelation a basis for familiarity in the "I-Thou" relationship which, in the absence of revelation, would be utterly impossible. To accept that, in one form or another, I take it, is to belong to the Judeo-Christian tradition.

But it remains true that without revelation, without a sacral tradition or its inspired books, the sages of the Gentiles, confronted with the same mysterious universe, had seen at least that a ground of being was there and that man could and should admire it. Plato and the poets speak of "God" as well as of "the gods." Aristotle reasons up to an Unmoved Mover. The Stoics knew of a Supreme Reason, *Deus Optimus Maximus*, which man approached by means of rational conduct, a following of what they called the law of nature, *lex naturae*.

Pascal insists that he wishes to know the God of Abraham, of Isaac, and of Jacob, not the God of the philosophers. I am not sure Pascal's insistence expresses the most typical and gen-

eral Catholic attitude. Perhaps it should be regarded as an example of an atypical approach still clearly within the tradition, but it does state the terms of the problem. The relation between the two ways of knowing about God, between what school theology calls natural knowledge, that of the Gentiles, and supernatural knowledge by way of revelation accepted by faith, seems to be a crux in all the religions of the Judeo-Christian tradition. The problem engaged Maimonides; it engaged the Christian Fathers and is central to Thomas's handling of theology. It seems to be one of the problems dividing the neo-orthodox, or conservative, and liberal wings of Protestantism today. The difference between a typically Catholic way of working and a typically Protestant one can perhaps be illustrated by a contrast between the imaginative presentation of divinity in two great poets, one of them, Milton, a Protestant; the other, Dante, a Catholic.

It will be recalled that after his magnificent invocation to Holy Light in the third book of *Paradise Lost,* Milton presents his first theophany in the following words:

> Now had the Almighty Father from above,
> From the pure empyrean where he sits
> High throned above all highth, bent down his eye,
> His own works and their works at once to view.
> About him all the sanctities of Heaven
> Stood thick as stars, and from his sight received
> Beatitude past utterance; on his right
> The radiant image of his glory sat,
> His only Son (ll. 56-64).

In presenting God to the imagination, Milton uses anthropomorphic imagery with some support from the imagery of light. The Father and the Son appear in human form. They talk to one another and to the angels. Milton's poetic tact in using this method has been questioned, but the poetic effectiveness of the scenes in heaven—it could certainly be defended—need not concern us. Milton knew exactly what he was doing and why. He knew enough surely, about the God of the philosophers to have made poetic use of that approach if he wished. But he felt, as did his contemporary Pascal, that the God of the philosophers and the God of Abraham were the poles of a dichotomy. They excluded

one another. It was necessary to choose, either the one or the other. Milton agreed with Pascal that God speaks well of God. Consequently, he felt bound to use not only the ideals and attitudes but the very imagery of the sacred writings. Outside the light of revelation there was only darkness, paganism, idolatry. This way of working by means of dichotomy and exclusive choice of one alternative, I call the univocal way. I believe it is not unjust to suggest that this way, while not universal, is fairly general among thinkers in the Protestant tradition. I find it at least significant that one of the most notable of modern Protestant thinkers should call one of his works, *Either/Or*. The univocal mind is precisely the mind that says, "either . . . or."

Faced with the same problem, that of presenting God to the human imagination, the Catholic Dante works in a different fashion. The thirty-third and last canto of his *Paradiso* is given over to the theophany which brings the *Divine Comedy* to a close. Shortly before, in Canto XXXI, St. Bernard, the representative of the mystical way to God, the approach by direct "sight," has replaced Beatrice as Dante's guide. Canto XXXIII opens with Bernard's prayer to the Blessed Virgin. He asks that she obtain for Dante the grace of a direct glimpse of God, the Beatific Vision (ll. 1-39). Mary turns her eyes from Bernard to the "Eternal Light." "And I," Dante writes, "who was approaching the goal of all desires, arrived, as was right, at the pinnacle of my yearning" (ll. 46-48). Dante is speaking the language of the philosophers. The God of Israel is at the same time the *telos* of Christianized Aristotelianism, the goal towards which all creation yearns, blindly and unconsciously in the case of things and brutes, consciously in man when he has come—by reason, or faith, or both—to an awareness of God's existence.

St. Bernard nods to Dante that his prayer has been granted, but Dante's eyes are already turned to the Light. "My sight, becoming limpid, entered more and more into the ray of the high Light whose truth is in itself" (ll. 52-54). The light imagery is scriptural—we recall Milton's use of it—and is firmly imbedded also in ecclesiastical tradition, but the symbol still points to the God of the philosophers, God as the principle of intelligibility, Uncreated Being and hence the only Being whose intelligibility, whose truth, is wholly within Himself.

What he saw in the light, Dante does not really tell us. Here, he is following St. Bernard and the language of Western mysticism. The Beatific Vision, God viewed in Himself, is strictly ineffable. Language is wholly inadequate to describe what one sees who sees God (ll. 55-56). Memory is inadequate and retains no images. All that remains is the recollection of the affective overtones of an unspeakable experience. "As one who sees while asleep, and after his dream the emotion it evoked remains but what he saw does not return, such am I" (ll. 58-61).

After warning the reader that both the language and the symbols offered are wholly inadequate to the vision itself, Dante remarks that in the profundity of the Eternal Light he seemed to see "substances and accidents and their modes of operation" (l. 88) not separated, however, as we see them in the world but united in a perfect unity. This, of course, is philosphy in the very language of philosophy. But then, after another warning as to the almost total disparity between what he has seen and what he is able to remember and describe, Dante, launching his last image, enters the realm of theology, hence of faith and revelation. But there is no discontinuity: the same light which was the God of the philosophers is the God of faith, of the theologians, of Christian tradition. "In the profound and radiant subsistence of the high Light appeared to me three circles, of three colors and of one extent, and one seemed reflected from the other, as rainbow from rainbow; and the third seemed fire, breathed equally from the one and the other" (ll. 115-120). In our three-dimensional universe we cannot imagine three co-extensive circles which are yet separately visible. Dante is reminding us that we are in the realm of theology, of mysteries which the human mind cannot completely grasp. But a greater mystery remained; the second circle seemed stamped with a human image (ll. 127-133). The ardent desire of the poet for a full intellectual understanding of the mystery of the Incarnation was attained, he tells us, in a flash of lightning. At this point the divinely given power to sustain the Beatific Vision ended, and with it the poem. "To the high vision here power failed, but already my impulses and my will were revolved, even as parts of a wheel move together, by Love that moves the sun and the other stars" (ll. 142-145).

Dante's last canto has been handled at some length because a great deal in it throws light on what is to be said in this section. Our immediate concern, however, is the difference between the working of Dante's imagination and Milton's. Milton excludes and simplifies. He returns, even in his imagery, to revelation in what he regarded as its pure and original form. For Dante, revelation is something in a constant process of unfolding and development. The Trinitarian and Christological definitions, notable moments in that development, have obviously affected his whole imaginative presentation. Further, Dante brings to bear on his understanding of revelation the records of the personal religious experiences of mystics such as St. Bernard. He has brought to bear, too, in a very decisive manner, the intellectual experiences of his own period, a period of intellectual ferment when the new Aristotelianism came into contact with the older Platonism of the Fathers and the interpretation of Christian doctrine was shifted from a Platonic to an Aristotelian key. Dante's imagination is synthetic, combining in a single image the God of the philosophers, the God of the Christian mystics, and the God of Revelation and of ecclesiastical tradition. The single image symbolizes Dante's conviction that in the approach to the ineffable Reality which is God, no path can be neglected. His imagination rejects dichotomies and prefers "both . . . and" to "either . . . or." The result is complex, but it is an ordered complexity, not a hodgepodge. The ordering element in Dante's complexity is indubitably religious faith, revelation, which is decisive but not exclusive. In Milton's presentation of God, revelation, as Milton understood it, tends to be exclusive.

The "both . . . and" approach to reality, which I shall call the analogical as contrasted to the univocal approach is, I believe, typical of the Roman Catholic tradition. Most of us today, I believe, dislike dichotomies as much as Dante did. For example, the opposition which is being set up today in the English-speaking world between "humanism" and "theism" is almost incomprehensible from the point of view of the Roman Catholic. Of course, the Catholic rejects any so-called humanism which excludes God. But he rejects also a theism which attempts—most mistakenly, we hold—to give glory to God by debasing man. The pre-Christian classical humanist said, "Know thyself."

St. Augustine supplies a necessary supplement but does not contradict him when he writes, "*Noverim me, noverim Te*—that I may know myself, that I may know Thee." The Roman Catholic tradition insists that man understands himself only when he knows God and, conversely, that his knowledge of God must, in general, be based upon an understanding and just appreciation of the human. *Gratia supponit naturam.* It rejects emphatically any dichotomy between humanism and theism and proposes what we can call a humanistic theism or a theistic humanism. In short, both . . . and.

II. Mystic, Philosopher, and Theologian

Despite the humanist character of Catholic theism, most Catholic thinkers dealing with "approaches to God" would speak, in an eminent place, either first or last, of mystical experience. Roman Catholics hold that some persons have in this life known God directly, by an immediate intuition, which is quite a different experience from knowing *about* God by means of concepts. St. Bernard is one of the great teachers of this way to God. Others are St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila. The experience of the mystic is, as Dante saw, ineffable. He can only convey indirectly and analogically by means of poetic symbols something of what he has "seen." Dante's last canto gives as clear an idea as a brief space will permit of what the Catholic understands by a "mystical experience." But it should be recalled that to this experience Dante devotes only half a canto of the thirty-three cantos of the *Paradiso*. The rest is devoted to encounters with human beings. St. Bernard, representative of the mystical way, figures only at the end of the poem. Throughout the rest of the *Paradiso* Beatrice, who symbolizes among other things the human way to God, but the human way touched by grace, is Dante's guide. But the *Purgatorio,* too, is part of Dante's way to God and there the guide is Virgil, representative of purely human reason and moral insight. This apportionment of poetic space is significant. Catholic theologians differ as to how frequent genuine mystical experiences are. They are, I believe, unanimous in holding that they do not constitute the normal Catholic way of knowing and confronting God in this world. They come as special gifts

Dante's last canto has been handled at some length because a great deal in it throws light on what is to be said in this section. Our immediate concern, however, is the difference between the working of Dante's imagination and Milton's. Milton excludes and simplifies. He returns, even in his imagery, to revelation in what he regarded as its pure and original form. For Dante, revelation is something in a constant process of unfolding and development. The Trinitarian and Christological definitions, notable moments in that development, have obviously affected his whole imaginative presentation. Further, Dante brings to bear on his understanding of revelation the records of the personal religious experiences of mystics such as St. Bernard. He has brought to bear, too, in a very decisive manner, the intellectual experiences of his own period, a period of intellectual ferment when the new Aristotelianism came into contact with the older Platonism of the Fathers and the interpretation of Christian doctrine was shifted from a Platonic to an Aristotelian key. Dante's imagination is synthetic, combining in a single image the God of the philosophers, the God of the Christian mystics, and the God of Revelation and of ecclesiastical tradition. The single image symbolizes Dante's conviction that in the approach to the ineffable Reality which is God, no path can be neglected. His imagination rejects dichotomies and prefers "both . . . and" to "either . . . or." The result is complex, but it is an ordered complexity, not a hodgepodge. The ordering element in Dante's complexity is indubitably religious faith, revelation, which is decisive but not exclusive. In Milton's presentation of God, revelation, as Milton understood it, tends to be exclusive.

The "both . . . and" approach to reality, which I shall call the analogical as contrasted to the univocal approach is, I believe, typical of the Roman Catholic tradition. Most of us today, I believe, dislike dichotomies as much as Dante did. For example, the opposition which is being set up today in the English-speaking world between "humanism" and "theism" is almost incomprehensible from the point of view of the Roman Catholic. Of course, the Catholic rejects any so-called humanism which excludes God. But he rejects also a theism which attempts—most mistakenly, we hold—to give glory to God by debasing man. The pre-Christian classical humanist said, "Know thyself."

St. Augustine supplies a necessary supplement but does not contradict him when he writes, "*Noverim me, noverim Te*—that I may know myself, that I may know Thee." The Roman Catholic tradition insists that man understands himself only when he knows God and, conversely, that his knowledge of God must, in general, be based upon an understanding and just appreciation of the human. *Gratia supponit naturam.* It rejects emphatically any dichotomy between humanism and theism and proposes what we can call a humanistic theism or a theistic humanism. In short, both . . . and.

II. Mystic, Philosopher, and Theologian

Despite the humanist character of Catholic theism, most Catholic thinkers dealing with "approaches to God" would speak, in an eminent place, either first or last, of mystical experience. Roman Catholics hold that some persons have in this life known God directly, by an immediate intuition, which is quite a different experience from knowing *about* God by means of concepts. St. Bernard is one of the great teachers of this way to God. Others are St. John of the Cross and St. Teresa of Avila. The experience of the mystic is, as Dante saw, ineffable. He can only convey indirectly and analogically by means of poetic symbols something of what he has "seen." Dante's last canto gives as clear an idea as a brief space will permit of what the Catholic understands by a "mystical experience." But it should be recalled that to this experience Dante devotes only half a canto of the thirty-three cantos of the *Paradiso*. The rest is devoted to encounters with human beings. St. Bernard, representative of the mystical way, figures only at the end of the poem. Throughout the rest of the *Paradiso* Beatrice, who symbolizes among other things the human way to God, but the human way touched by grace, is Dante's guide. But the *Purgatorio*, too, is part of Dante's way to God and there the guide is Virgil, representative of purely human reason and moral insight. This apportionment of poetic space is significant. Catholic theologians differ as to how frequent genuine mystical experiences are. They are, I believe, unanimous in holding that they do not constitute the normal Catholic way of knowing and confronting God in this world. They come as special gifts

to special persons and usually only to those who have prepared themselves by particularly strenuous exercise in the ordinary human means of approaching God, by sacrament, by prayer, by meditation on revealed truth in Scripture and in spiritual writers, by methodical self-denial and loving regard for others, in short, by the approach to God through creatures, particularly human beings.

Some Catholic thinkers would say that apart from the relatively rare cases of genuine mysticism there is no such thing as a "pure" religious experience. We are humans and our sight and sense of the divine must be achieved in and through the human. Since man is a rational being—the most human thing about him being his mind—it would seem, from the Catholic point of view, that there should be an approach to God through the human mind and through the human mind unaided by any special divine intervention. The attempt to approach God in this fashion, Catholics, like some Protestants, call natural theology. The thinkers of classical antiquity, quite apart from revelation, did arrive at the conviction that a Supreme Being exists. And what are we to say of the religious speculation of the East, India particularly, but also China, Tibet, Japan? In general, the Catholic tradition has been inclined to take such speculation seriously. We do not view religious speculation in terms of a complete dichotomy between Christian light and pagan darkness. Apart from Judeo-Christian revelation, humanity can know some truth about God. Apart from that revelation, it is possible to demonstrate the existence of a Supreme Being, author of man and of the moral order, who can then, in the light of revelation, be identified with the God of Israel.

But, in the modern climate of opinion, the term "to demonstrate" needs examination. Since the appearance of Leo XIII's encyclical on the restoration of Christian philosophy in 1879, three generations have given serious attention to the Scholastic philosophers and particularly to St. Thomas. At first, these philosophers were necessarily read in terms of modern ways of thinking, dominated by a love of mathematical clarity descending from Descartes. It was an uncompromisingly univocal way of thinking. Most modern Thomists are convinced that Thomas is misread if he is read through Cartesian spec-

tacles. Thomas's is not a univocal but an analogical way of thinking. This distinction can be briefly illustrated somewhat as follows: If I say, "Peter exists," and Peter is in the room, I have made a meaningful statement. I can point to him. He is a person and I know by experience what it means to exist as a person. If I say, "Peter exists; John exists," I have made a meaningful pair of statements even though John is not present in the room. Peter and John are both human persons; both exist as human persons exist. If the existence of the absent John is questioned, it can be demonstrated either by producing John or by showing, let us say, a document with his signature. The statement "John exists" can be discussed, because it is meaningful. But suppose I say, "Peter exists; God exists." By hypothesis, God does not exist in the way in which Peter exists. He is infinite; Peter is finite. He is the Creator; Peter, a creature. He is pure spirit; Peter is perceptible to the senses. At this point the univocal mind insists that things are either the same or different, either . . . or. If God's existence is different from Peter's, the "exists" in the pair "God exists; Peter exists" means two different things. We learn nothing about God's existence from our admitted knowledge of Peter's existence. The predication is equivocal.

Pushing the univocal approach to its limits, some contemporary philosophers insist that the statement "God exists" is wholly meaningless, so that it is senseless to discuss whether it is true or not. If we are committed to this way of thinking, we must say that God must be known directly in a kind of mystical experience or He is not known at all. It is significant, perhaps, that the spread of the uncompromising univocity of the "analytical" philosophies in the English-speaking world has been accompanied by an increased interest in mystical experience. "Pure" religion, in short, such as has nothing to do with philosophy or reason is set up as the opposite pole to a philosophy which has nothing to do with religion. Thus we arrive at the kind of dichotomy which the typical Catholic thinker almost instinctively avoids.

The neo-Thomists deny that a predication must be *either* univocal *or* equivocal. That is true in mathematics, but in mathematics the mind works by means of a purely methodological

over-simplification in order to get results that are perfectly clear, that is, univocal. This is of course a legitimate procedure, but the methods of mathematics cannot be extended to metaphysics where an attempt is being made to deal not only with mathematical reality but with reality in general. If one tries to approach metaphysical questions with mathematical methods one will inevitably draw a blank. A science of God, or of moral values, for that matter, becomes impossible. To re-establish that science, one must sacrifice the perfect univocal clarity of mathematics and admit the possibility of a predication which is neither univocal nor equivocal but analogical, a predication where one thing is understood in and through another which is dissimilar but proportionate. The mode of Peter's existence is, indeed, different from God's, but the one existence is an analogue of the other, related to it as the finite to the infinite, and one can come to some knowledge of the second by one's knowledge of the first. "God exists," is therefore a meaningful statement. It can be discussed and, the neo-Thomists hold, rationally demonstrated. Once demonstrated, it becomes knowledge, but a kind of knowledge in which the higher reality is seen in and through the lower—God's existence through Peter's. But analogical knowledge, while certain, is not wholly clear. God remains a hidden God, even after the Thomist philosopher has had his say. He is *both* known *and* unknown.

I shall not rehearse the classical Thomistic ways to God through the intellect. Discussion of them usually centers not on the arguments themselves but on the framework of "realist" criteriology in terms of which they have their demonstrative force. Such discussion leads into the apparently bottomless pit of modern criteriological dispute. In short, we live in a climate of opinion where, before we can discuss philosophical demonstrations of God's existence, we must confront such questions as "What is philosophy?" or "Is philosophy possible?" Obviously, in a brief treatment of the Catholic *faith,* to which the philosophy of Catholics is, after all, only a threshold, a "propaedeutic," such questions cannot be aired at length. Some Catholics feel that modern thinking has inverted an error of medieval thinking. Many medieval thinkers indubitably tended to absorb the separate sciences into philosophy and to handle

questions which we would regard today as belonging to chemistry, physics, or biology, as though they were philosophical questions. Thus handled, such questions were badly handled. A Catholic specialist in the late medieval period has recently written that much of what passed for philosophy in the late Middle Ages was merely bad science.

The establishment of the physical sciences as separate disciplines was indubitably a great and liberating advance in human thinking. Their achievement is so impressive that there is a danger that the human mind may be hypnotized by them into the conviction that human knowledge is limited to what can be known by the method of controlled experiment. Obviously, if we work in a climate of opinion where "to demonstrate" means "to demonstrate by controlled experiment," we shall have to say that the existence of God cannot be "demonstrated." An unseen being whose existence could be demonstrated by controlled experiment could not be identified with the God of Israel. Such a being would not be free; he would not be hidden; he would be mocked.

Neo-Thomists question the necessity of holding that the methodological assumptions of the natural sciences, necessary as they are for the appropriate areas of human knowledge, set the limits of the human mind's capacity for attaining demonstrable truth. Is it not possible that a discipline can be establised based on a broader view of human intellectual experience, a view that will include the scientist's laboratory (and the mathematician's desk) without excluding other ways of knowing? If one is ready to answer "yes" or even "perhaps" to that question, one is ready to follow the neo-Thomist in his critical examination of human intellectual experience and his development from that experience of a purely human study of God and moral values, in which he rises from knowledge of what is seen to knowledge of things unseen. If one answers "no," perhaps one must accept the conclusion that a certain human knowledge of God and of moral values is impossible. Catholic thinkers accept, not grudgingly but enthusiastically, the methods and conclusions of the physical sciences. Most Catholic thinkers—perhaps I should say all—do feel, however, that attempts to base conclusions about human and moral

values *solely* on the methods and data of the physical sciences simply inverts the medieval error. It absorbs philosophy into the separate sciences, so that what is really bad philosophy is promulgated in the name of science—ordinarily not by scientists. *Both* science *and* philosophy, by all means, but let us beware of harming either by trying to make the one do the work of the other.

On such a matter as this, the private conviction of one whose studies are mainly literary and not philosophical are of no public importance. Personally, I am convinced that the neo-Thomists are right and that anyone who can free himself from the prejudices he absorbs, unconsciously perhaps, from the extremely nominalistic contemporary climate of opinion, can follow their demonstration of the existence of God and the objectivity of moral values. But no Roman Catholic, and, I think, no adherent of the Judeo-Christian tradition, could possibly question Edwin E. Aubrey's perfectly just observation that God's existence does not depend upon our proving it. If one does not go along even with the modest analogical rationalism of the neo-Thomists, however, how does he know of God's existence? The answer can only be "by faith."

Here we come to another approach to God, and in a rather thorny area. The relation of faith both to reason and to works was one of the principal issues between the Church and the Reformers. The resulting polemics have sometimes tended to obscure the fact that the basis of the Christian religious life, in Roman Catholic teaching also, is faith. Even though the existence of God is metaphysically demonstrable it is, at the same time, St. Thomas insists, a matter of faith, and in the case of many people it may be solely a matter of faith. The private Catholic need not be able to demonstrate the existence of God nor need he be impressed by the demonstrative force of any arguments he may know. Some people, says St. Thomas, are too lazy to follow the arguments of metaphysicians; some are too stupid; some are too busy; and some, we may add, get caught in climates of opinion where it is very difficult to come to an understanding of what metaphysicians are talking about. But a Catholic holds a great deal more than the existence of God and the objectivity of a moral law. Such central doctrines

as the Trinity and the Incarnation are not metaphysically demonstrable. They are matters of faith, not only for the metaphysically underprivileged Catholic, but for all.

The Catholic faith, however, does not necessarily or perhaps usually manifest itself in consciousness in the first place as assent to doctrinal formulations. Its primary manifestation is rather a personal commitment in depth, the object of the commitment being not an abstraction or a formula but a Person. The personal object of the Catholic commitment can best be described in the Patristic phrase as the *Totus Christus*, the "whole Christ": the Teacher in Galilee in the reign of Tiberius, the risen and glorified Lord at the right hand of the Father, and the Christ who, as Head of the Mystical Body, dwells in the Visible Church as it journeys through time. One fully and consciously committed to the *Totus Christus* will, of course, accept the doctrinal formulations of the Church but as a result of his commitment as person to Person rather than by way of direct assent to formulas. (St. Thomas taught that doctrinal formulations, in any case, since they are attempts to put superhuman truth into human language, do not exhaust the truths to which they point.) In short, if we look at Roman Catholic faith from the point of view of consciousness, it obviously involves a personal relation, something of what Buber calls *emunah*, personal trust, as well as *pistis*, assent to doctrinal formulation. Even those most concerned to present a solid rational case for Roman Catholicism are perfectly ready to admit that reason alone will never bring one to a Catholic commitment. However that commitment manifests itself in consciousness, whether as personal loyalty or rational conviction (and typically both elements are present), its ultimate basis is a power given by God to the person, the gift of faith in the strict sense. That power cannot be obtained by syllogisms.

Granted all this, there are still considerable differences between typical Catholic attitudes toward faith and reason and typical non-Catholic ones. The concept of the act of faith as a dramatic plunge into the abyss of the apparently absurd, popular today in some circles, is not typically Catholic. At most, it could be regarded as a description of how faith works in some persons and in a philosophic climate where no other working is

possible. Typically, the Roman Catholic thinks of reason as a God-given natural power which may lead a man to the act of faith, although it can never, in itself, cause that act; or, to put it in another way, it may remove impediments which prevent an implicit faith from becoming explicit, exact, and fully conscious. In any case, the life of faith does not blot out the life of reason. In theology human reason is brought to bear directly upon the data of faith for clarification, development, more profound understanding. In the human sciences, the data of faith are not directly relevant. The biologist who is a Catholic, for example, has no concern *qua* biologist with the Book of Genesis. He uses the methods and data agreed upon by the community of biologists, which are, presumably, purely rational. But even in the human sciences, Catholics feel, faith should serve as a stimulus to the use of reason. The abstractions of the mathematician, the physical scientist, and the philosopher contain truth, and all truth is of God. Without prematurely confusing the data of faith with the data of reason, the mind enlightened by faith can, nevertheless, confront analogues of the divine in any rational activity. Finally, the truths of faith are of God, and so are the truths discovered by human reason. In the last analysis, therefore, the truths of faith and the truths discovered by reason, while they may supplement each other, clarify each other, can never be, once both are properly understood, contradictory. The typical Catholic attitude, in short, says *both* faith *and* reason.

There are, then, in the Roman Catholic view, approaches to God through the human intelligence, some less and some more direct. All intellectual activity, which is a search for truth, is directed, whether consciously or not, to God Who is Truth and discovers analogues of Him in the particular arts and sciences. Still working entirely by its own light, the human intellect can discover at least one important truth about God, His existence. Using the data of faith as well as his reason, the theologian can arrive by intellectual means at further knowledge about God. But even when he approaches God through the intellect and hence by way of abstraction, the theologian uses a creaturely kind of knowledge. Man is a creature living among creatures in a spatio-temporal world. His intellectual knowledge is

primarily of creatures. The human intellect cannot speculate about God directly, but can see Him only in the analogical mirror of creation—*per speculum in aenigmate,* as St. Paul says, and Paul doubtless had in mind the polished metal mirror of classical antiquity, not the clear image of a modern crystal mirror.

III. "Existential" Ways

St. Thomas and those who think as he did recognize two kinds of knowledge. One knows a thing when the mind has grasped its essence and can classify it in a species. In this sense, one knows a man when one knows he is a rational animal. This kind of knowledge is theoretical, philosophic, or scientific. Since it is a knowledge through essences, it might be called essentialist. But there is another kind of knowledge, darker, less purely intellectual, but more intense and mixed with the affections. A theologian, for example, might make many useful observations about sorrow for sins, defining and evaluating different kinds. His knowledge about the subject, useful as it is, does not have the directness, the intensity, of the experience of one who has actually felt sorrow for his sins. The physician, surely, knows about human pain, and that knowledge is both scientific and useful. But it is not the same thing as the knowledge of pain his patient has. Even those who never speculate about what man is and never think of him as a rational animal still know man, in a different sense of the word "know," simply because they are men. They have the experience of being human beings. Similarly, it would be nonsense to say that all we know of those we love, our parents and friends, wives and children, is that they are rational animals. Through love and intimate association, we know them in their individual being, concretely, as persons, as existences, in addition to knowing them as essences. We know them, we say, as well as we know ourselves. This is not the knowledge of the theologian or the philosopher, the mathematician or the scientist, but of the lover and the poet. St. Thomas recognizes it as knowledge and calls it "knowledge by connaturality." Inaccurately but more briefly, we may call it existential knowledge.

Existential knowledge is, of course, a very different thing from mystical knowledge. It is knowledge of creatures, not of

God. But like mystical knowledge, it is knowledge *of* not knowledge *about*. The ordinary person's direct experience of creatures, like the mystic's knowledge of God, is inexpressible in its totality. It can only be hinted at, more or less inadequately, by poetic expression or expression in the other arts. Unlike intellectual experience, it is not manageable in ordinary rational discourse. It cannot be used for purposes of demonstration. A view of human experience based *solely* on existential knowledge would necessarily be a radically anti-rationalist view. Roman Catholic tradition has consistently rejected such a view and rejects today existentialist philosophies which dogmatically exclude the possibility of demonstrable rational knowledge through essences. On the other hand, a purely rationalist view of human experience, one which regarded existential knowledge as unimportant, chimerical, or even subhuman, would result in an arid academic rationalism which had no place for vast expanses of human experience. Roman Catholic tradition rejects equally such exclusive rationalist essentialism. That rejection has been consistently evident in Roman Catholic pastoral theology, in the central place which the liturgy, a more poetic approach to religion and to God, has always held in the life of the Church, and in the high esteem traditionally accorded the ecclesiastical arts. It is worth noting that the present Pope, who has warned against the anti-intellectualist tendencies of some existentialist thinking, has given the most vigorous support to the modern liturgical movement. The Roman Catholic tradition has consistently searched for a balance which will include *both* essentialist *and* existentialist approaches to God.

In the lives of most people, people who are not philosophers or mathematicians or scientists, existential knowledge doubtless plays a larger role than essentialist knowledge. It plays some part in the life of everyone who has solid relationships with other persons. Only a pathologically academic recluse could spend his entire life in a world of ideas. Existentialist knowledge can be used as well as essentialist knowledge for an approach to God through creatures. A basic text for the approach through existential human experience is in the First Epistle of St. John where the Evangelist asks with devastating simplicity, "He that loveth not his brother whom he seeth, how can he love God

Whom he seeth not?" In short, if one does not know the human experience of loving, how can he attach a concrete meaning to the first and greatest commandment? On the basis of human experience, one can attain by a kind of existential analogy something more than a merely intellectual understanding of what that commandment means. That is enough, for a start at least.

Dante, we recall, chose St. Bernard as the symbol of the direct confrontation of God in mystical experience. St. Bernard is the great master of the Cistercian way, and the Cistercians are one of the most austere orders in the Church. Those who speak of the world-scorning, anti-humanistic medieval monk, if they have anything concrete in mind, are likely to be thinking of St. Bernard. And there is no doubt that in the Catholic spectrum he belongs far over toward the other-worldly, ultra-violet side. Yet this same St. Bernard begins his search for God—a search which interests us here because existential knowledge plays so large a part in it—on an even more modestly human level than that suggested by St. John. At the start, one may not even love other people. But one has an awareness of his own existence and, presumably, a regard for himself. That, at least, is an experience, and one can begin with it. Add to that experience the knowledge of faith that God exists and that He commands us to love our neighbor as ourselves, and self-regard can be guided to self-abnegation and regard for others and hence to love for them. The searcher begins to learn in experience the meaning of unselfish love and to understand on a deeper level what St. Augustine meant when he said that the City of God is characterized by the love of God, "even to contempt of self." Beyond the unselfish and hence Christlike love of others, there is still the possibility that God will grant the searcher on this path while still in this world the privilege of knowing and loving Him directly, as He ought to be loved—"beyond measure." But the conclusion in divinity would be very unlikely without the start in humanity. St. Bernard is a theist, "*Gottbetrunken*," if ever theist was. Yet his theism is still humanist and firmly grounded in ordinary human experience. A modern disciple of Bernard has written that before we can believe God exists, we must believe we exist ourselves. Through abstractions we learn only

our essence. Our existence we must catch in more concrete and total experiences, in "I-thou" relationships. Basically, I think, Dante is on the side of St. Bernard. He had indubitably read St. Thomas, and he makes extensive use of that reading in his work. Yet, we do not read Dante correctly, I think, if we read him as though his poem were an allegorical description of the philosopher's way to God through intellectual knowledge of creatures. He is rather talking about the way through direct experience, through what we have called existential knowledge, that kind of dark knowledge which is mixed with love.

The *Commedia* does not begin when Dante awoke in his thirty-fifth year to find himself in the dark wood confronted with the lion, the leopard, and the wolf. The *Vita Nuova* is a necessary prelude. Things began much earlier, in Florence, with a very human episode which, like many human episodes, was more than a little silly. When he was near the end of his ninth year, the boy Dante saw in Florence a girl just turned nine, "decently and humbly" dressed in a red dress. It was Beatrice, she who makes blessed. The boy trembled; his pulse beat "horribly"; the god of love had come to dominate him. It was a ridiculous episode, the pre-adolescent love of an oversensitive nine-year-old. But, at the same time, it was experience, very real and very human. Dante had struck one note, the highest, the tinniest *C* on the keyboard, if you will; but when one strikes that *C*, the other *C*'s on the instrument, even the most profound, vibrate. One can hear them, if he listens carefully.

Dante did not actually strike the deepest and richest note until the end of the *Commedia,* and that note was, as we have seen, the love that moves the sun and the other stars. But, in a sense, he had known it all along, ever since he had first seen Beatrice in Florence. He had known it because, despite the infinite difference between the ridiculous love of the nine-year-old Florentine and the sublime love the mature poet experienced in the Empyrean, they were both in a sense the same. The note is the same, though the difference in pitch is infinite. The first love is an analogue of the second, and, in a sense, one begins to know the second in the first. That is why only half a canto of the *Paradiso* is directly devoted to God. The rest of the poem

deals with human beings and human love directed to God, from the imperfect charity of Piccarda dei Donati to the perfect charity of the Mother of God. It is only after passing through the analogues of human love that Dante confronts God.

When it is abstracted from Medieval poetry and stated in the broadest terms, theistic humanism can, I believe, be seen to consist in a sanctification of the human consciousness so that it becomes aware of the sacral overtones of all human experience, whether intellectual or what we have called existential. Even the humblest things exist. They stand outside of nothingness, and that existence is an analogue of the divine existence. Properly seen and properly used they point to God. In esthetic experience we meet not the Divine Beauty directly but an analogue of It, something like It through which we can understand It. Through human mercy and justice, we get some dim apprehension of God's mercy and justice. Above all, in the Catholic view, all human acts—sin is an inhuman act and that is precisely why it is sin—have been divinized in a special way by the Incarnation. To live humanly, to be implicated in the human situation, is to be Christlike. The awareness of this is a Christian humanist consciousness.

Obviously, if all positive human experience is part of man's approach to God, there can be no dichotomy between the secular and the religious elements in the life of the human person. They are inextricably involved with one another, separable in idea but not in fact. The health of secular activity is reflected in the religious consciousness, and the religious consciousness in turn affects secular activity. Dante's conscious relationship to God is involved with his relationship to Beatrice. Even the religious life of a mystic like St. Bernard is inseparable from his love for the monks of his community.

The same principle underlies the contemporary social thinking of Catholics and the best in contemporary Catholic pastoral practice. Only persons can approach God. To be a person means to enter into relationships of intimacy, love, and friendship with other persons, to be a member of society. It means to exercise responsibility, to have some meaningful relationship to that society. When the development of modern industry threatened the economy of the most basic of human societies, the family,

Roman Catholic social theory insisted on a just wage for workers. It did so in the name of human justice, but also because a healthy family life is, normally, the basis for a healthy religious life. Starved and overworked parents cannot make of their homes a community of persons which will become for the children educated there the symbol, the analogue, of all other communities, the Church included.

At the present moment—and if we look only to the more advanced industrial societies—the problem of distribution seems to be, at least here and there and for the time being, on the way to solution. It is perhaps possible for mankind to look forward to a time when modern techniques of production, used with intelligence and goodwill, can assure a sound material basis for human existence. In the few spots where the economic problem is, for the time being at least, no longer of the greatest urgency, it is becoming increasingly apparent that the human and religious problems arising in modern industrial society do not end when goods are justly distributed and the worker and his family possess the necessary economic basis for a fully human existence. A great deal in modern industrial society tends to restrict the activity of man as a person and hence to dehumanize him. Big government, big industry, big unionism are all too big to be human. Workers, on all levels, are needed as a mass. They are not needed as persons. If one is ill or dies, the proper punches are made on the proper cards, and the work goes on anyway. The canned joviality and afterwork fun and games of "good personnel relationship" may increase production, but they hardly restore a sense of personality which is a human and at times a tragic sense. Nor can it be said that the commercial mass entertainment of industrial societies helps to keep alive a tragic sense of human dignity.

Modern Roman Catholic pastoral practice aims at strengthening the family as the society which affords the surest basis for a personalist life in the modern world. There human persons can still act as persons, related not by abstract functions but by love and obvious responsibilities. The society is small. The need for personal contribution is apparent. There, absence, illness, death, are not holes punched on cards. They are human facts, dignified and tragic. Granted a firm juridical and economic

basis for the life of the family, that life can be used for the development of a personalist consciousness which will enable modern man to resist the depersonalizing tendencies of industrial society. The home, in the Roman Catholic view, is a religious fact, an *ecclesiola,* a little church. In their love for one another husband and wife re-enact analogously the love of Christ for the Church and the Church for Christ. In their care for the spiritual and material needs of their children, parents are bringing into being an analogue of the priesthood and kingship of Christ.

A consciousness of the sacral overtones of personal experience is, obviously, not an easy thing to develop or maintain in a climate of opinion committed in general to an uncompromisingly univocal way of thinking. As an aid to the formation of a Catholic consciousness, the teaching Church has consistently during the present century urged lay people to a more active interest in the liturgy and a more active and conscious participation in liturgical worship. In this body of prayer centering on the daily Eucharistic Sacrifice, communal in its very essence, full of reminders of the sacral character of ordinary things and ordinary exprience, the Church is finding her surest means of holding alive the personalist consciousness among forces that threaten it. Modern Roman Catholic pastoral practice, when it most consciously follows the recommendations of recent Popes, particularly St. Pius X, Pius XI, and Pius XII centers upon Eucharist and liturgy.

The whole Catholic tendency to approach God in and through creatures, the analogical or symbolic tendency, has its primary doctrinal basis in the Judeo-Christian view of creation and in the Christological definitions. These definitions, however, are accepted wholly or in part by many Protestants, so that one seeking a more distinctive expression of the analogical attitude at the heart of Roman Catholic theistic humanism might look rather to Mariological doctrine. Dante, we recall, devoting the final canto of his *Paradiso* to the Beatific Vision, begins that canto with St. Bernard's prayer to the *Theotokos.* Dante's arrangement of his material reflects accurately the eminent position which Mary occupies in Catholic meditation, devotion, and doctrine.

Catholics do not worship Mary. She is a creature, and like all other creatures would be nothing without God. Like all creatures, she is a symbol of God, a mirror in which the divine is reflected. Of all material creatures, human persons are of the highest values since they are made in the image and likeness of God and hence eminently suited to reflect the divine. Of persons, some are dimmer and some brighter mirrors according to the zeal with which they participate in the I-Thou relationship which God offers to all rational creatures. (That relationship, I need hardly add, includes not only prayer and meditation but all moral and hence human action.) Roman Catholics hold that in the case of Mary the divine initiative was most decisive. She was chosen to become the mother of the Incarnate Word. The human response to that initiative was wholehearted. "Be it done unto me according to Thy word." Hence, Mary, "full of grace," is the brightest mirror in which the divine is reflected, the summit of the human path to God through creatures. The recent Marian definitions are emphatic re-assertions of the humanist element in Roman Catholic humanistic theism.

IV. Man

From the point of view of theistic humanism, one has necessarily handled the main points of the problem of man when he has touched upon the question of ways to God. When the psalmist asks, "What is man?" he adds immediately, "that Thou art mindful of him." Man grasps himself, becomes interesting to himself, as one term of an I-Thou relationship of which the other term is God. This personalist intuition, obviously Judaic in origin, is basic to the Roman Catholic view of man.

In keeping with the "both . . . and" tendency, the speculation of Roman Catholics about man has centered on the problem of relating the basic Judaic intuition to theories about man developed outside Judeo-Christianity. Viewed from a philosophic standpoint, man, as the Roman Catholic sees him, is a rational animal, the animality and rationality being united in the unity which is the human person, *per se una*. If, in man, animality becomes rational, it can do so because it has been stamped with the light of the divine countenance. That stamp, the assurance of man's immortality, manifests itself empirically

in human consciousness as the power of thought and the power of free moral choice. It is man's "nature" to be a speculative and moral being. There is no human society which does not show at least the rudiments of speculative thought in the form of myths about the universe and which does not hold that some actions are evil and to be avoided and others good and to be performed. Thinkers in more advanced societies, but quite apart from the Judeo-Christian tradition, Greco-Roman, Indian, Chinese, for example, have arrived at the idea of a transcendent Good, the God of what we call "natural religion"—"natural" because man attains to it by the use of his innate power of reason. Further—and again without Judeo-Christian aid—Gentile thinkers saw that the traditional mores of their societies could be purified and what we can call a higher conscience formed by rational reflection. The mores thus purified by reflection—a reflection unaided by revelation—is what the Catholic means when he talks about the "natural moral law."

But the moral and religious discoveries of the Gentiles, even in the developed form in which we find them in the Hindu sages, in Plato, or in the Stoics, are radically different from the religion of Israel. Judeo-Christianity, as both Christians and Jews understand it, is a religion of revelation, and revelation, if I may again borrow Buber's words, is precisely that I-thou relationship in which God is the "I" speaking and the sacral community, the "thou." Judaic religion offers to man the possibility of a personal relationship to God such as Aristotle with his Unmoved Mover could never have envisaged. A personal relationship is a particular relationship and involves free acts. God chose to speak to Israel through Moses and the prophets, to Israel, not to Greece or to China. Acting freely through the persons constituting the community, Israel chose to hear. Unlike the Gentiles, Israel did not discover God as a necessary hypothesis by using natural human speculative powers. Judaic religion involves the divine initiative and the free response to that initiative by the human person. The initiative comes from God, not from man's nature. The free human response is possible, in Roman Catholic doctrine, not by virtue of the natural freedom of man but because the person responding has been touched, as a person, by the hand of God. He has been given, in theologi-

cal language, the grace to respond freely. In contrast to the natural religion of the Gentiles, Catholics speak of Judaic religion, founded upon the divine initiative and the divinely motivated but still free human response as "supernatural." It is above the grasp of unaided human nature.

In popular speech, the word "supernatural" has come to have quite a different meaning. It means the miraculous, the obviously astonishing. According to Catholic teaching that is not *the* usual way in which the divine initiative, the "supernatural," manifests itself in human affairs. It works rather through persons strengthening their faith and at times making possible heroic and selfless moral action which goes far beyond the demands of the natural law. Perhaps without seeming invidious I can illustrate the Catholic use of the word by pointing out that most Catholic theologians hold that the Protestantism of many of the Reformers and of some modern Protestants such as Kierkegaard and Karl Barth is too exclusively concerned with the supernatural. When the act of faith, for example, is presented as a blind leap into the abyss, human nature, man's rational powers, are annihilated to prepare the way for grace, the supernatural. Latitudinarian and Liberal Protestants, on the other hand, appear to us to stress too exclusively the purely human and rational, the "natural" side of the Christian tradition. We like to think of our own as a middle position between two extremes. We say, as usual, "both . . . and," both the natural and the supernatural, both human nature and the grace of God.

In the Roman Catholic view, then, the human person is a complex being in whose unity three worlds meet. Man is material, specifically, moving material, an animal, and as such belongs to the world investigated by the biologist. Man's consciousness, reason, and power of moral choice, however, bring his animality onto a different plane of being. In the exact language of the schools, man is "virtually" an animal. He can do what other animals do, but because of his mind and moral freedom, he can do much more. The rational animal, considered purely in himself, is a magnificent creature. The humanist enthusiasm of periods like the Renaissance—for understandable reasons very much out of fashion today—owes much to Roman

Catholic tradition. Affected as he may be by contemporary pessimism, the modern Roman Catholic is protected by the same tradition against complete despair of man's natural possibilities. Increasingly, man controls matter. Within limits, he has some control of himself and of his own destiny. His thoughts do "wander through eternity." There is something godlike about him.

Yet, as man becomes more conscious of his godlike qualities, his moral freedom, and his reason, he tends to become dissatisfied with himself. It was a pagan poet who wrote, "I see the better and approve it; I follow the worse." The avowedly positivist ethics of Irving Babbitt were based on an empirically observed duality in man. There is something in man which both needs and resists restraint and something else which wants to restrain and direct. Whether we look at man's history or into ourselves we notice a tendency in man to use his moral freedom in a way which his reason does not approve. Magnificent creature that he is, the rational animal seems often divided against himself. Traditionally, Roman Catholic theologians have explained the gap between "is" and "ought" in human affairs as the result of the fall of man. On this point, however, they have tended to take a middle position between what we regard as the extreme pessimism of some classical Protestantism and the extreme optimism of some liberal Protestants. Within the Catholic tradition itself, there have been considerable differences in emphasis. The tone, if not the doctrine, of St. Thomas is here, perhaps, somewhat different from that of St. Augustine.

In general, Roman Catholics do not interpret the doctrine of the fall as an *a priori* excuse for taking an extremely pessimistic view of human possibilities. Wounded as he may be by the fall, man is still rather splendid. We entertain a sober hope that the human lot in this world can be steadily improved by the constant and determined effort of the human intelligence. For this purpose, full use should obviously be made of the new knowledge of human behavior now being accumulated by the human sciences such as sociology, economics, experimental and analytical psychology. On the other hand, while it may be of the greatest assistance in helping man attain morally desirable goals, scientific knowledge can never envisage or define

these goals. Our theories of human rights do not derive from the human sciences but from philosophic speculation. Our sense for the sanctity and dignity of the human person derives from the Judeo-Christian religious tradition. Useful as they are, the human sciences are not substitutes for moral philosophy or for religion. Scientific knowledge, whether of man or of things, brings power which may be used for good or for ill. That fact is sufficiently demonstrated by experience. But, if experience is insufficient, the Roman Catholic can find in the doctrine of the fall theological grounds for suspicion of any way of thinking which holds forth a cheap and easy hope for attaining a brave new world in a hurry by abandoning moral philosophy and religion and attempting to create a new society solely on the basis of data furnished by the human sciences.

In the typical Roman Catholic view, however, the fall is not primarily a principle of judgment (or pre-judgment) of human potentialities. It figures rather as a theme of meditation. It is one moment in the development of man's I-Thou relationship with God, a moment to be followed by the Incarnation and the Redemption. One cannot rejoice in the fall, for the fall involves sin; but without the fall it might not have been made known that "God so loved the world that He sent His only-begotten Son, and in the liturgy for the Easter Vigil the Church does exclaim, *O felix culpa*—"O happy fault that deserved to have such a Redeemer." The doctrine of the fall, then, gives an added poignancy to the Roman Catholic's apprehension of the third world to which man belongs, a world which he may enter by his free response to the divine initiative, or, in terms commonly used by Catholics, by the acceptance of the grace God offers. To this world, the world of personal relationship with his Creator, the rational animal, as such, has no right. It is a gift of something above the requirements of his nature. But, because of the fall, man has need of this gift even to follow consistently a course of conduct worthy of a rational animal. By fuller cooperation with it, some persons can rise to a much higher moral level, the level of the self-sacrificing devotion of the suffering servant, the level of heroic charity.

The rational animal, in short, "natural man," is a philosopher's abstraction. Every human existent, every person, is offered

God's grace, the opportunity for a life above nature, supernatural. In the light of Roman Catholic doctrine, then, the most important fact about existent man is that he is invited to enter an I-thou relationship with God and to become, by God's help, something more than his natural self. The supernatural, therefore, the religious in the biblical sense, is the determining element in the lives of human persons and human societies. Contemporary Jewish and Protestant exponents of "biblical faith" have a strong hold of this point.

But the Roman Catholic insists that, while the supernatural is the most important element in human affairs, it is not the only element which need be considered. "Grace supposes nature." If man is more than an automaton—and we hold he is—there must be something of his own with which he can respond to the divine initiative, and that something is his free and rational nature. Further, the acceptance of grace surely does not make man less human, less free, or less rational. "Grace," in the phrase of the schools, "does not take nature away." The determination to live well makes more urgent the problem of what "to live well" means in the case of a rational being or a society of rational beings. On such points, the Roman Catholic is ready to enter into a colloquy with those outside the Judeo-Christian tradition who think only in terms of natural man, the rational animal.

V. History and Now

Nice theological points such as the distinction between natural and supernatural would be out of place in an exposition of this sort were it not for the fact that they are decisive in developing Roman Catholic attitudes toward human history and toward present realities, including the realities of our own pluralistic society. In the Judaic view, human history is a line which does not return upon itself. Change is real and time meaningful. This view contrasts markedly with that of the Greco-Roman world which saw life as cyclic, repetitive, and hence essentially meaningless. Abraham's I-Thou relationship with God, for example, moves history forward to a new position, the history of Abraham as a person, of his descendants, and ultimately of all mankind. The crossing of the Red Sea,

the revelation of the Law are unique events in a we-Thou relationship. They change decisively the course of a society and of human history.

The Fathers of the Church saw in the Incarnation the archetype of the decisive historical event, one foreshadowed by the decisive historical events of the Old Testament. Eternity had intersected time, and time could not be regarded as meaningless. The patristic sense for history, for the meaningfulness of time, has remained very strong in thinkers of the Roman Catholic tradition. Discussion has gained complexity and flexibility because the problem of history, like problems about man, can be considered from both the natural and the supernatural point of view. The Fathers saw in human events primarily a supernatural progress. Throughout the Old Testament, the I-Thou relationship gained in intensity until, "in the fullness of time," the Word became Flesh. Further progress involved the spread to all mankind of the good news that a supernatural relationship to the divine was possible through the Incarnate Word. On this point, contemporary Roman Catholic thought has not departed from the Fathers. Human history is meaningful primarily because it is the matrix in which the Redemption works itself out in time.

But what of natural man, the rational animal, and his efforts to establish a juster society here and now, *in hoc mundo?* On this point, one can easily divide thinkers within the tradition into a pessimistic and an optimistic group. Pascal, for example, is a spokesman for the pessimistic party. Typical contemporary attitudes are more optimistic, deriving from St. Thomas and owing much to the Jesuit theologians of the Renaissance. The optimistic view starts with the unity of the human person, in which the supernatural life and the life of the rational animal are inextricably bound up together. If there has been decisive progress in the supernatural order, it is only reasonable to suppose that there can be improvement in man's natural life also. Man's secular hopes for a juster society in this world are not necessarily fatuous. The religiously committed person is, indeed, obliged, according to his capacity and opportunities, to forward these hopes. The Roman Catholic, then, finds it difficult to see a dichotomy between "the social Gospel" and

"Eschatological Christianity." With differences in emphasis, most Catholic thinkers will say "both . . . and."

Man moves through time, then, on two planes, the natural and the supernatural. The planes are interlocked, and in the lives of both persons and societies the development of one necessarily affects the development of the other. To speak strictly, there is no such thing as a person who is just a Catholic and nothing else. The Catholic person is always, at the same time and in the same act, a natural man, and natural man exists at a particular time, in a particular place, and as a member of a particular civil society. The formation of his character and attitudes is, in part, the result of that time, place, and society. The human person is composite, *idem civis et Catholicus,* the same person, citizen and Catholic. There are consequently many ways of being Catholic. In a real sense, every person has to find his own way, since no person is exactly like any other person. Societies of persons, too, develop their own modes of being Catholic. This is, in a way, true even of small societies like families. It is also true of nations where various cultural and political traditions develop different points of view. It makes very good sense to speak of an Italian, French, or Irish mode of Catholicism. Or of a Greek, Russian, Syriac, Chinese, Japanese, Indian, or American mode. (It may be noted in passing that some of these modes, such as the Greek, Russian, Syriac, and, in part, the Indian, have their own rites.) Thinking as he does analogically rather than univocally, the Roman Catholic does not see this very real diversity of mode as compromising in any way the spiritual, doctrinal, or juridical unity of the Church. Rather, unity is enriched by variety, by diverse actualizations of the same ideal.

We are now in a position to return to the question I raised and brushed aside at the very outset of this paper, the question of the First Amendment, of Church and State. Behind this question is the broader one of Roman Catholic attitudes toward pluralistic societies such as our own. Obviously, these are questions to which civil and political tradition is relevant as well as ecclesiastical tradition and doctrine. They are then questions with which only the person, *idem civis et Catholicus,* can deal in depth. And the answer may well differ according

to the city of which the person is a citizen. Where there is clear doctrine, of course, the doctrine will not be different, but the attitude resulting from the doctrine may be differently nuanced according to the civic formation of the person.

The best way to throw some light on this problem in a brief space is simply to give some indication of my own convictions as one who is both a Catholic and an American pluralist. I trust that what I shall say is in accord with the doctrine of the Church. I believe it is fairly representative of the way the majority of American Catholics think and feel on the subject. I am by no means sure that Catholics of different political formations would agree with me at all points.

In the first place, like all Roman Catholics and many who are not Catholics, I reject the easy and, in my opinion, flabby way of adjusting oneself to a pluralist society by holding that anyone's particular religious commitment is of no importance, provided he is a good fellow and behaves himself. In common with all Roman Catholics, I hold that the right religious commitment is what I have called faith in the Whole Christ, and that, for its integrity, this faith demands membership in an Apostolic Church in full communion with the See of Peter. This membership is open to all mankind, and it can only be a source of profound regret to a Catholic that all mankind are not members. Neither I nor any other Catholic can regard a pluralist situation as an ideal situation. We share the concern of Protestant ecumenicists that all of the Judeo-Christian tradition are not in communion and that all the world has not accepted the Gospel. Our pluralistic situation, implying as it does irreconciliated religious diversity, is a tragic fact.

But perhaps it can be said that an important part of the art of living consists in finding civilized and ethical policies with which one can confront tragic facts. This is true of the lives of nations as well as of persons. With regard to the tragic fact of religious disunity, a policy involving coercion, I am sure we will all agree, is neither civilized nor ethical. That is true not because religion is an indifferent or unimportant matter but precisely because it is supremely important. It demands nothing less than the total assent of the human person, and that assent cannot be coerced. Here, I am not stating the private opinion of an

American Catholic. This is Catholic doctrine, vigorously restated by Pius XII:

> Whenever it happens despite the invariable teaching of this Apostolic See, that anyone against his will is compelled to embrace the Catholic Faith, Our sense of duty demands that We condemn the act.

The Roman Catholic Church, in short, while it is doubtless authoritative is not authoritarian. That term implies coercion, and the Church cannot accept coerced assent. If, in a country with a large Catholic majority, a regime of authoritarian tendencies attempted to solidify national unity by compelling a non-Catholic minority to enter the Church, the regime would not be acting in a commendably zealous Catholic fashion. It would be acting in direct opposition to the express injunction of the Holy See.

Papal teaching on coercion clearly implies that where religious diversity exists within a nation, some form of toleration is absolutely imperative. In countries Catholic by tradition and where a large majority of the population is Catholic, Leo XIII held that the Catholic Church should be recognized by the State. Leo, however, had in mind not an authoritarian but a tolerant establishment where dissenting minorities enjoyed civil rights, worshiped unmolested, and were free to educate their children in the family faith. The Pope was writing in late nineteenth-century Europe where, as a result of Renaissance political developments, it was taken for granted that nations would look to their states for ideological guidance. Establishment of a religion was an accepted fact. Where separation of Church and State was introduced, it tended to result in an anti-religious state. The state remained the ideological guide, now leading the people away from traditional religious affiliations toward some kind of state philosophy more or less overtly proposed as a substitute for religion. The choice was between established religion with toleration of dissent and established state ideology. One development of the second choice can be observed today in the Soviet Union.

Meanwhile, in the United States, a new way of relating the national religious life to the power of the state was being de-

veloped under the First Amendment. The authors of the development were, many of them, descendants of those who had fled from absolutist Renaissance princes. They were no admirers of that grandeur of the state which had so impressed the imagination of Europe. They established a state intended to be the servant of a free nation, not its master and not—at least not in the highest matters—its teacher. The First Amendment puts the state in an attitude of humble and friendly neutrality toward the free religious life of the nation. While it protects all religions, it recommends no particular one. It offers no ideology as a substitute for religion either, and, withdrawing from the sacral order, places itself in a position of dependence upon the moral dynamism provided by the freely developing religious life of the nation. Separation of Church and State in its American form has been neither in intention nor effect anti-religious. The organized religions of the Judeo-Christian traditions have flourished among us according to the zeal of their adherents. Those adherents together with the unchurched theists have kept alive that faith in a Supreme Being which our institutions pre-suppose.

The American arrangement has received considerable attention from Catholic thinkers during the past generation. We Catholics like to remind ourselves that the founders of our constitutions were, many of them, formed in the English common law which embodied medieval and hence Catholic attitudes toward political questions and that they were familiar with English Whig thinkers who had drawn upon the anti-absolutist political theory of Renaissance Thomists. In general, study of our present way of conducting our religious affairs has increased American Catholic admiration for it. All Catholic thinkers accept our present arrangements under the First Amendment at least as the most civilized and ethical solution possible at present and for the foreseeable future.

Father J. Courtney Murray, S.J., whose studies have contributed so much to American Catholics' appreciation of the relation between their political and religious traditions, goes somewhat further. He suggests that no one arrangement of State-Church relationships need be regarded as ideal from a Catholic point of view. Pope Leo's directives may not have been

intended to set up an ideal. They may apply directly only to a particular kind of state (that familiar to nineteenth century Europe) and a particular climate of opinion. Given our kind of state and our climate of opinion, the arrangement under the First Amendment can perhaps be regarded as an equally satisfactory alternative. It meets, Father Murray suggests, the general requirements for sound Church-State relationships found in official doctrine from Pope Gelasius to the present.

Father Murray's suggestions have met with opposition on the part of some American theologians who suggest an interpretation of Catholic doctrine on the subject similar to the one associated with the name of the late Monsignor George Ryan. The crux of the discussion is the interpretation of Pope Leo's doctrine of tolerant establishment. Father Murray's opponents hold that this doctrine is to be taken as something more than a recommendation for a particular time and place. It sets forth the ideal situation, the "thesis." Other arrangements, even our own, while they may be the best under particular circumstances and eminently satisfactory for indefinite periods of time, can, nevertheless, not be absolutely and abstractly regarded as alternatives having equal status with the thesis. They are "hypotheses," arrangements something short of the ideal.

This interpretation of Catholic doctrine has provided ammunition to some who have felt moved to warn the American public that the existence of a large Catholic body here is a danger to our institutions. What is more important, it has caused serious concern to some pluralistically minded Protestants who do not want to regard their Catholic fellow citizens as potentially subversive. Non-Catholic Americans of goodwill can, I believe, be asked to consider that this interpretation is an effort to describe Catholic doctrine on a very high level of abstraction. It is not, and is not intended to be, a program of action for the American Catholic body. The practical consequences for American Catholic policy are by no means what they might seem to be to one accustomed to a more univocal way of thinking than ours. To call an arrangement an "hypothesis" is not to say that it is an evil which must be eliminated at all costs at the earliest possible moment. The Ryan view does not mean that if Roman Catholics became a small or even a substantial

majority, that majority would be obliged to form a political faction aiming at modification of the First Amendment. Such a move would jeopardize civic peace, which is a very great good; it would arouse bitter hostility against the Church on the part of the non-Catholic minority; it would perplex Catholics taught in Catholic schools, as well as by their pluralistic experience as Americans, to value our institutions. Fears that a future Catholic majority, if there should ever be one, would conduct itself with such colossal imprudence seem to me, frankly, to be based in nightmares rather than in a sober sense of practical possibilities.

However great the theoretical differences between Father Murray's view and that of his opponents may seem to be at the moment, they are not relevant for American Catholic policy at present, nor, as far as I can see, could they be relevant at any time except perhaps in a future which is, in present seeming, so remote that to discuss it would be fantastic. My strictly amateur opinion of the theological value of Father Murray's formulations is not worth stating. But any literary student can see behind Father Murray's efforts at formulation his basic conviction, as citizen and Catholic, that the historical drive toward the free integrity of the human person exemplified on the natural level in our civil institutions and incorporated on a supernatural level in the Mystical Body is, in a way, a single drive and that the two levels cannot really be at variance. With this basic conviction, I am in enthusiastic agreement. My enthusiasm, I believe, is shared by the vast majority of American Catholics. We can spare ourselves speculation about a remote future where we can foresee neither the problems nor the theological formulations and, perhaps, doctrinal developments in terms of which those problems will be faced. It is better to conclude with a word on the attitudes of at least one Catholic toward the pluralistic world and the pluralistic American society under the First Amendment which, whether as legitimate and necessary "hypothesis" or appropriate alternative solution to the problem of Church and State, all American Catholics accept.

The Roman Catholic is necessarily an ecumenicist, a one-worlder. He is member of a Church which he firmly holds is

the Father's House, the spiritual home of all mankind. If the Catholic prays—and he does—that all mankind may be together in that House, he does not do so because he holds that all those not visibly and formally joined to the Church are in complete darkness, either religious or moral or intellectual. An "either/or" contrast between light within and darkness without is precisely such a harsh dichotomy as Catholic thinkers avoid. When the Catholic prays for unity, he prays that the light of those without may lead them to their home where, surely, their light will not be extinguished.

Consequently, while the Catholic is acutely conscious of the tragedy of religious disunity, Catholic doctrine holds forth the possibility of mitigating that tragedy somewhat through personal cooperation between Catholics and non-Catholics, between, let us say, the light within and the light without. Men, in Catholic doctrine, are brothers in a twofold fashion: supernaturally, since all are members, actual or potential, of the Mystical Body; naturally, since all are rational animals, the noblest beings of the material creation. An ecumenicism of nature is possible and worth striving for. We share all the natural things that bring men together: the arts and the sciences, all good social enterprises from the amenities of neighborhoods to affairs of state. The Catholic should not act as though the Mystical Body were an in-group in the sociological sense, something to keep men apart in natural human concerns. That would be to misrepresent the spirit of the Church. And what is true of the unity of fellow citizens within a nation such as ours is equally true internationally. The tragic fact of world religious disunity is no excuse for standing cynically aside from efforts to bring international peace and well-being by natural means and by cooperation on a natural level.

But natural man, we have said, is a philosopher's abstraction. Interpersonal relationships, even though they may be concerned exclusively with natural things, necessarily have a supernatural, a religious, dimension. In his relationships with non-Catholic fellow citizens, neighbors, and friends, the Catholic is, of course, aware of this dimension. Agreement to disagree is the basis of any pluralist arrangement, and disagreement, even on the highest matters, need be no barrier to civic cooper-

ation or deep friendship. Yet even cooperation and certainly friendship would be difficult if one party viewed the religious life of the other, the most profound stratum of his personality, with loathing and contempt. No such attitude toward religion outside the Church is suggested to the Catholic by Catholic doctrine. The Church teaches authoritatively that the incidence of God's grace is not confined to those within the Church. The supernatural life is, at least to a degree, open to all mankind. Catholic theologians hold that those who through no fault of their own cannot see the Church as Catholics see her may nevertheless lead valid religious lives by sincere following of the truth they do see. They are men of goodwill and their resolute pursuit of the good they see relates them in desire to the Church, a supernatural good which, though visible, they cannot see. The Catholic, therefore, can only look with reverence on the religious lives of his non-Catholic friends and neighbors. They, too, are working out their I-Thou relationship with God. He sees their truth as uncompleted, but it is nonetheless truth, and he may often admire the zeal with which they live by it.

One could almost speak of an ecumenicism of goodwill, a supernatural fact, which unites with the ecumenicism of nature to mitigate the tragic fact of religious disunity. For the present, the ecumenicism of goodwill serves principally to make possible the sound personal fellowship necessary for cooperation on a natural level. Cooperation on a religious level, as for example, by participation in non-Catholic religious services is impossible for a Catholic. This does not mean, however, that the Catholic regards the prayers of non-Catholics as valueless. Protestants of goodwill who are pained by what they regard as our aloofness in this matter should consider that a Catholic who participated in a non-Catholic service would be violating his profoundest convictions on the Visible Church. He would be enacting a lie and mocking his sincere Protestant friends with the simulacrum of a religious communion.[1]

[1] I speak here of Protestants rather than of Protestants and Jews because, as far as I can judge from my own experience, Jews understand our attitude on this matter better than Protestants. Perhaps the reason for this is, in part, the fact that for Jews as for Roman Catholics the visible and juridically organized

Nevertheless, the ecumenicism of goodwill can sometimes express itself on a religious level. As an archetype of the fruitful cooperation possible between branches of the Judeo-Christian tradition, I like to think of St. Thomas's respectful reading of Moses Maimonides and of the fruitfulness of that reading to St. Thomas's intellectual life as a Catholic. This kind of cooperation seems to be increasing today. Interested and equipped Catholics are reading Jewish and Protestant thinkers such as Buber, Barth, Tillich, and Niebuhr, and reading them with profit to their Catholicism. Jews and Protestants know the work of Maritain and Courtney Murray. They read Papal statements with respect, often with admiration. On a more strictly personal level, there are Catholics—*experto crede*—who have been edified as Catholics by the character of Protestant and Jewish friends and enlightened as Catholics by their learning. I hope there have been cases where Catholics have been able to reciprocate.

Under our institutions, the least fruit one can expect from this activity is an increase of mutual empathetic understanding and consequently a more enthusiastic personal cooperation in all good natural works. The sectarian fierceness which harmed the cause of all religion is abating. This is happening without loss of intense religious conviction, without blurring of doctrinal differences at present irreconcilable, and without appeals to Caesar to give us a substitute for religion which will unite us. That is a considerable accomplishment. The rest can only be left to goodwill, prayer, and the grace of the God of Israel.

Bibliographical Notes

Perhaps the best way for the interested non-Catholic to make the acquaintance of living Catholic thought is through following periodical literature. The following are likely to prove helpful: "*The Catholic Mind,*" a monthly which prints regularly official statements of the American Hierarchy and translations of Roman statements; "*Cross Currents,*" a quarterly survey of religious and philosophical

community is an important religious fact. It is perhaps needless to add that Catholics may and sometimes do attend non-Catholic services where the circumstances make it clear that attendance does not imply participation.

literature of interest to Catholics, with reprints and translations of articles of particular importance; *"Theology Digest,"* issued three times yearly and presenting condensations of articles from theological journals; *"America"* and *"Commonweal,"* the first a Jesuit, the second a lay publication, with weekly comments on current affairs.

The works cited below may be helpful to the reader who wishes to pursue further topics suggested in the text:

For the Introductory Remarks

Thomism: Perhaps the best introduction to St. Thomas for English speaking and hence presumably nominalistic students is F. C. Copleston, *Aquinas* (Penguin Books, Harmonsworth, Middlesex, England, 1955). The book contains a useful brief bibliography.

Dogma: Francis J. Sheed, *Theology and Sanity* (Sheed and Ward, New York, 1946) offers a readable introduction to the central Catholic dogmatic positions.

Mystici Corporis may be conveniently consulted in translation in Anton C. Pegis, *The Wisdom of Catholicism* (Random House, New York, 1949), pp. 767-815.

Liturgy: The monthly, *"Worship,"* a publication addressed principally to lay readers, is the best introduction to the liturgical movement in the United States.

For Section II

The work of Thomas Merton, a Trappist priest, is a good introduction to Catholic ascetic theology and its relation to mysticism. A Merton bibliography by Frank dell'Isola will be found in *"Thought,"* XXIX (1955), 574-596.

Leo XIII's Encyclical on Christian Philosophy (*Aeterni Patris*) is translated in Pegis, *op. cit.*, pp. 694-714.

On the Thomistic ways to God see Jacques Maritain, *Approaches to God* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1954. Also published by Collier Books, AS154V).

For Section III

For a Catholic philosopher's speculations based on what I am calling "existential knowledge" see the Gifford Lectures of Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, I, *Reflection and Mystery* (Regnery, Chicago, 1950) and II, *Faith and Reality* (Regnery, Chicago, 1951). See also James Collins, *The Existentialists* (Regnery, Chicago, 1952).

Pius XII's warning against anti-intellectualist existentialism is to be found in the Encyclical *Humani Generis, "The Catholic Mind,"* XLVIII (1950), 688-700. His most notable statement in support of the liturgical movement is the Encyclical *Mediator Dei, ibid.*, XLVI (1948), 321-388.

On St. Bernard, see Étienne Gilson, *The Mystical Theology of St. Bernard* (Sheed and Ward, New York, 1940) and Thomas Merton, *The Last of the Fathers* (Harcourt, Brace, New York, 1954).

My remarks on the Christological basis of Catholic humanism owe a great deal to the articles of William F. Lynch, "Theology and the Imagination," "*Thought,*" XXIX (1945), 59-86, 529-554, XXX (1955), 18-36.

For Section V

History: See Charles P. Loughran, "Theology and History, a Bibliography," "*Thought,*" XXIX (1954), 101-115.

On Catholic influences on the American Constitution see Moorhouse F. X. Millar's chapters (IV, VI, VII) in the first edition of John A. Ryan's *The State and the Church* (Macmillan, New York, 1922).

A convenient survey of Father John Courtney Murray's views will be found in Victor R. Yanitelli, "A Church-State Anthology," "*Thought,*" XXVII (1952), 6-42. For the Ryan view, see John A. Ryan and Francis J. Boland, *Catholic Principles of Politics* (Macmillan, New York, 1940). The issues between Father Murray and his opponents are discussed by Gustave Weigel, "The Church and the Democratic State," "*Thought,*" XXVII (1952), 165-184.

Authoritative statements on the incidence of grace to those not visibly within the Church are cited and discussed in Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism* (Longmans, Green, New York, 1950).

For recent Catholic works on Protestantism see George Henri Tavard, *The Catholic Approach to Protestantism* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1955), in which the Ecumenical Movement is discussed, and Louis Bouyer, *The Spirit and Forms of Protestantism* (Newman Press, Westminster, Maryland, 1956).

Chapter 4

Judaism

By SIMON GREENBERG

Vice-Chancellor and Professor of Homiletics and Education The Jewish Theological Seminary of America

I CONSIDER it a privilege to participate in this series which Professor Donahue has so aptly characterized as a "sympathetic but uncommitted incursion into other people's convictions." I have benefited greatly by the lucid and informative papers presented by the other participants. I hope that I shall be as helpful to them and others as they have been to me. I join them in thanking Dr. Johnson for outlining our assignments so clearly. Obviously, our answers cannot match his questions in comprehensiveness. The title of this series refers to "patterns of faith." I understand "pattern" in this context to denote the dominant characteristics or the main strands, rather than the fine details, of the total tradition. Faith, as used in this context, I understand to refer to those aspects of the total tradition regarding which one would be inclined to say, "I believe," rather than "I know" or "I do."

Indeterminacy and Conscious Ambiguity in Judaism

Since the days of Moses Mendelssohn, there has been considerable controversy over whether one could rightly refer to Judaism as a faith. It was Mendelssohn's contention that Judaism was a system of revealed law. Observance of the law was obligatory, but one was free to believe almost anything. Extreme as this position obviously is, it had some historic justification in the fact that Judaism never had a creed beginning with the words, "I believe," recitation and acceptance of which was incumbent upon the pious Jew.

This fact becomes the more striking when we realize that

Judaism at a comparatively early period in its history obligated its followers to recite twice daily a number of Biblical passages which together constitute the *Shema.* There are three such passages. The first opens with the well-known "Hear O Israel: the Lord our God, the Lord is one" (Deuteronomy, 6:4). The second passage begins with the words, "And it shall come to pass if you shall hearken diligently unto my commandments" (Deuteronomy, 11:13). The third passage contains the law regarding the fringes to be placed on the four corners of the garments, and includes a reference to the emancipation from Egyptian slavery (Numbers, 15:37-41).

As we read these passages, we are inclined to interpret them as confessions of faith—the first, in the unity of God, the second, in the doctrine of reward and punishment. In the third, we find no reference to any doctrine requiring faith.

But the Rabbis do not speak of these passages as confessions of faith. Nor, in explaining the selection of them, do the Rabbis refer to what we would consider to be their doctrinal content. They designate the recitation of the first of these passages as "*Kabalat Ol Malchut Shamayim,*" "the acceptance of the yoke of the Kingdom of Heaven." It is not a confession of belief in God's existence, His unity, or His incorporeality, but rather an expression of our allegiance to God and our readiness to obey Him.

The recitation of the second paragraph the Rabbis designate as "*Kabalat Ol Mitzvot,*" "the acceptance of the yoke of the commandments." The Jew must declare daily his readiness to assume the obligation to observe the commandments of the Torah.

The third paragraph, which refers to the emancipation from Egypt, serves to remind us that, as a people, we owe our existence to God's mercy in redeeming us. Therefore we are especially obligated to accept His sovereignty and obey His laws. The Rabbis thus studiously or intuitively avoid the introduction into their discussion of the *Shema* of the concept of dogma or belief.

Equally striking and instructive is the fact that in the best known passage in the *Mishna,* in which anything that can be clearly identified as dogma is discussed, the statements are cast

in the negative rather than in the affirmative. The first *Mishna* of the tenth chapter of the tractate *Sanhedrin,* after declaring that "All Israelites have a share in the world to come," goes on to say: "And these are they who have no share in the world to come: he that says that there is no resurrection of the dead prescribed in the Law,[1] and he that says that the Law is not from Heaven, and an Epicurean."[2] One may of course infer the positive from the negative and thus draw the conclusion that it is incumbent upon a Jew to believe that the Pentateuch does contain references to the resurrection of the dead, and that the Torah is from Heaven. These are not, however, logically necessary inferences. At any rate, at no time is a Jew required to confess faith in these or in any other doctrines by the recitation of any such affirmatively formulated statements.

The specific forms in which the Rabbinic discussion of the *Shema,* and the statements in the *Mishna* in *Sanhedrin* were cast, reflect a pattern of thinking characteristic of the great spiritual founders of Judaism. Thus Dr. Max Kadushin speaks of "indeterminacy" as "a characteristic . . . of rabbinic theology,"[3] and Dr. Louis Finkelstein has in conversation referred to the apparently "conscious ambiguity" that is often encountered in Rabbinic thought.

There is significant difference between making it obligatory to state categorically that one believes in the resurrection of the dead, or that the Pentateuch refers to it, and forbidding him to declare categorically that he does not believe either the one or the other to be true. In between these two opposite poles there is a considerable area for intellectual maneuverability. It is interesting to note how this characteristic of Rabbinic thought persists down through the generations. We meet it in

[1] Some texts omit "prescribed in the Law."

[2] A frequent epithet applied to both Gentiles and Jews opposed to the rabbinical teachings. It is in no way associated with teachings supposed by the Jews to emanate from the philosopher Epicurus; to Jewish ears it conveys the sense of the root *pakar,* "be free from restraint," and so licentious and skeptical. (The quotation from the *Mishna* and the two comments upon it in this and the preceding note are from *The Mishna,* by Herbert Danby, Oxford University Press, New York, 1933, p. 397.)

[3] Kadushin, Max, *Organic Thinking,* The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1938, p. 13, and *The Rabbinic Mind,* The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1952, pp. 131-138, etc.

one of the essays of Solomon Schechter on the dogmas of Judaism:

> The Bible itself hardly contains a command bidding us *to believe.* We are hardly ordered, *e.g.*, to believe in the existence of God. I say hardly, but I do not altogether deny the existence of such a command. It is true that we do not find in the Scripture such words as: "You are commanded to believe in the existence of God." Nor is any punishment assigned as awaiting him who denies it. Notwithstanding these facts, many Jewish authorities—among them such important men as Maimonides, R. Judah Hallevi, Nachmanides—perceive, in the first words of the Ten Commandments, "I am the Lord thy God," the command to believe in His existence."[4]

Much of the intellectual freedom enjoyed within the framework of Judaism is due to this "indeterminacy" and "ambiguity." The absence of affirmative formulations of doctrine is responsible also for the failure of all attempts to fit Rabbinic Judaism into the strait-jacket of the syllogism, the form of thought which has proved so great a boon to science and philosophy and so barren in all areas touching upon ethical or esthetic values.

But if stubborn resistance to the syllogism, indeterminacy of belief, and conscious ambiguity are among the fundamental characteristics of Judaism, what has held the tradition together and succeeded in giving to it distinctive character and form? The fullest, and to my mind the most persuasive, answer given to that question is found in Dr. Kadushin's volumes to which I have already referred. While formal confession of faith is not indigenous to Judaism and never became an important aspect of its practice, value concepts implying faith are of its very essence and substance. They permeate the whole body of its authoritative literature, and give it an identifiable organic unity, despite the inconsistencies and the oft-bewildering variety of opinions which inevitably abound in a literature that stretches over so long a period of time and reflects so many different historic circumstances and cultural settings.

The number of such concepts is large, but there are three which are the most nearly ubiquitous, and constitute the main

[4] Schechter, Solomon, *Studies in Judaism, First Series,* Jewish Publication Society of America, Philadelphia, 1911, pp. 151-152.

strands of the pattern. They are God, Torah, and Israel. Parties, sects, schools of thought within Judaism are based upon differences in emphasis or meaning given to one or the other of these three concepts in the weaving of the overall design. No party or sect remains within the pattern of traditional Judaism at all if it excludes any one of these three concepts or introduces into the overall design another concept as equal in importance to any of these three, or gives to any one of them a meaning that is in essence at variance with that given to it in the main body of the authoritative literature of Judaism—namely, the Bible and the Talmud.

This discussion will be limited to a brief exposition of these three concepts. I hope it may be a helpful introduction to what America's greatest non-Jewish student of the subject, George Foote Moore, has called Normative Judaism,[5] and thus also aid us in understanding the basis for the many present-day divisions within Judaism.

The Concept of God

It is unversally acknowledged that Judaism's greatest gift to civilization was its concept of God. The problem of the existence of God is never seriously discussed in the Bible, nor in later Rabbinic literature up to the tenth century. The Jewish theologians who discussed the question did not contribute to its solution anything which was significant or uniquely Jewish. The existence of God was, if you will, an *a priori* category of the Jewish mind. That mind could not function at all without the concept of God. His objective existence was as self-evident to the Jew as the objective existence of space and time was to pre-Kantian philosophy. This was true of all peoples of antiquity. As Schechter so well puts it, "It is as absurd to say that the ancient world believed in God as for a future historian to assert of the nineteenth century that it believed in the effects of electricity." But this remained true in Judaism long after the existence of God became a very important theological question in Christianity and Mohammedanism. Hence Jewish medieval theologians felt the need to defend their activity by adducing

[5] Moore, George F., *Judaism*, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1927, 3 volumes.

Biblical and Rabbinic statements that would indicate one's obligation "to know" God, that is, to be able to prove His existence logically and to grasp His essence intellectually. But the pursuit of anything approaching systematic theology did not, until very recent times, become an integral part of the curriculum of any school of higher Jewish learning. Indeed, to this day the more traditional Rabbinic academies do not include such a study in their curricula. None of them, not even the most modern, gives central or even major prominence to it.

While the existence of God was not a crucial problem to the Jewish religious mind, His relationship to the world and man was. On that subject Biblical and Rabbinic literature is prolific and clear and undisturbed by logical inconsistencies. Judaism apprehended the relationship of God to the world and man in terms of three basic concepts—Creation, Justice, and Mercy.

Until comparatively recently the uniqueness and the significance of Judaism's God concept were associated with the doctrine of ethical monotheism. Students of the Bible, particularly since the middle of the nineteenth century, applying the principles of evolution to their account of the history of the God idea in Israel, believed that they found in the Bible evidence of a development starting with a parochial, whimsical, desert war God and ending with the universal God of Justice and of Love.

More recent studies have suggested a radically different point of view. Ezekiel Kaufman in his monumental eight-volume Hebrew work on the history of the religion of Israel, summarizes his findings on the nature of the God concept in Israel during the Biblical period as follows:

> The Biblical religion even of the earliest period, reflects a concept of God as supreme above all laws, fate, and events. He carries on no wars for supremacy with other divine powers. He has absolutely no association with evil spirits. He practices no divination, brings no offerings. He neither sins nor repents, nor does He celebrate any events in His own life. A divine will absolutely supreme above all other phenomena, that is the essence of Biblical religion, and in that it differs from all other religions upon the earth.[6]

[6] Kaufman, Ezekiel, *Toldot Haemunah Ha Yisraelit*, Duir, Jerusalem, 1956, Volume I, Book II, p. 588.

The definitive formulation of the concept of God as the sole and unchallenged Creator of all that exists, is found in the majestic cadences of the first chapter of the Book of Genesis and in the impassioned pronouncements of Deutero-Isaiah. The Bible opens with the unequivocal statement: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth. . . . And the heavens and the earth and all their hosts having been created . . . God rested on the seventh day" (Genesis, Chapters 1-2). And Deutero-Isaiah, undoubtedly having Zoroastrian dualism in mind, proclaims: "I am the Lord, and there is none else; I form the light and create darkness; I make peace and create evil; I am the Lord, that doeth all those things" (Isaiah, 45:5-7).

The God of Judaism is not the unmoved mover, but the uncreated creator of everything and so there is absolutely nothing independent of His will. Hence any belief or practice which would imply that there is anything independent of God in the universe, whether it be Satan or fate, or eternal matter, or irrevocable eternal natural laws, is foreign to Judaism.

Equally foreign to Normative Judaism is any and every form of monistic thought. There is nothing in the universe which we can identify with God or His essence. God as creator is absolutely transcendent, differing in essence from anything which He has created. The human soul is no more a spark of the divine in us, which upon death returns to reunite with God as the original source of its being, than is the body. He has created all out of nothing, and all our efforts to know the essence of this creative act will be of no avail, for to know that is to know God. And man cannot know God, "For no man can see Me and live" (Exodus, 33:20).

But while the Biblical absolutely supreme, uncreated creator of the universe remains the God of Judaism throughout the ages, He would not have become the God of history and the intimate friend, shepherd, and comforter of the individual had He been envisaged merely in these transcendental terms. Judaism bridged the chasm between God the transcendent creator and the universe which He created, by positing in the first place that the created universe never became independent of its creator. The daily morning service reminds us that "God in His goodness renews every day continuously His creative act."

Bearing in mind the inadequacies and dangers of all analogies, one might venture to suggest that God is immanent in the universe as the poet in his poem while the poem is being composed, the artist in his painting while the picture is being painted. But the poem eventually becomes independent of the poet. The world never becomes independent of God. God is constantly sustaining, indeed constantly recreating it.

God's transcendence is further counterpoised by His awareness of and concern for what goes on in the universe. "For though the Lord be high, yet regardeth He the lowly. And the haughty He knoweth from afar" (Psalms, 138:6). The wicked are not those who deny the existence of God. They may very well affirm His existence. They deny, however, that He is aware of their acts or that He is in any way concerned with them. The Psalmist repeatedly gives expression to this attitude of the wicked and reacts to it with what only the believer would consider to be an irrefutable argument. He says, "All the workers of iniquity bear themselves haughtily. . . . They slay the widow and the stranger, and murder the fatherless." And they say: "The Lord doth not see, neither doth the God of Jacob give heed. . . . He that planteth the ear, shall He not hear? He that formed the eye, shall He not see?" And having seen and having heard, God gives heed. For He is the Just and the Merciful Ruler of all that He created (Psalms, 94:3-10, 16-23).

By conceiving of God as both just and merciful, Judaism posits a logically unresolved and unresolvable paradox at the very core of God's relationship to the world. For justice and mercy are themselves inherently incompatible; yet Judaism finds both of them indispensable to the existence of the universe. The *Midrash* relates that originally it was God's purpose to create the world with His attribute of justice only. But He realized that the world could not endure upon justice alone. Hence "in creating, He rose from the Throne of Justice and sat upon the Throne of Mercy."

This paradox is "the way of the Lord in which the just walk and the transgressors stumble" (Hosea, 14:10). For out of this paradox arises the most troublesome of all religious problems stated so poignantly by Jeremiah. "Right wouldst Thou be, O Lord, were I to contend with Thee. Yet will I reason with Thee.

Wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper? Wherefore are all they secure that deal very treacherously?" (Jeremiah, 12:1). One who does not believe in God's justice and mercy is not tormented by these questions. But neither does he have any ground for hope for the future. It is this paradox which enabled Judaism to look to the future with an *unwavering* but *sober* optimism, shunning both the pit of despair and a Pollyannish confidence.

Judaism's Unwavering but Sober Optimism

The world was created as an act of Divine Love. God was not compelled to create it, nor was there any one whom He was obligated to reward. He can destroy it *in toto* or annihilate every living creature upon it. It was Divine Love which after the flood moved God to "say in His heart that He would not again destroy every living thing" (Genesis, 8:22). The prophet reassures his despairing generation that God in creating the world did not create it to be *"Tohu,"* a waste, but He formed it *"Loshevet"*—that it may be inhabited (Isaiah, 45:18).

Judaism's optimistic faith in the future reaches its climax in the ecstatic prophetic visions of the "end of days" when "Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, Neither shall they learn war any more" (Isaiah, 2:4), when none "shall hurt or destroy . . . for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, as the waters cover the sea" (Isaiah, 11:9).

Judaism has never faltered in its conviction that the "end of days" is destined to arrive and that mankind will be here to experience its bliss. But it is a tempered optimism. Except during periods of great suffering when sanguine expectation offered some immediate surcease from pain and despair, no authoritative teacher of Judaism would venture to predict the coming of the end of days. That coming was neither automatic nor predetermined for some fixed moment in history. Since that coming is not altogether dependent upon man, but ultimate upon God's love for His creation, man need not despair of the future altogether, because of his sense of his own inadequacies. He may, however, find courage and hope in the faith that he can hasten that coming. Therein lies his privilege, opportunity, and duty.

This sober but confident optimism is reflected in a Rabbinic comment on the last two (Hebrew) words of the sixtieth chapter of Isaiah. The prophet, speaking on behalf of God, promises: "The small shall be as a thousand, and the youngest as a mighty people. I am the Lord. *B'itah,* in its time, *Achishena,* will I hasten it." Understood literally, these two words, *B'itah,* "in its time," and *Achishena,* "I will hasten it," are contradictory. If it is to come in its due time, what can God's promise to hasten it mean? The Rabbis interpret the verse, therefore, as follows: "God said to the people of Israel, if you are worthy, I will hasten it–if not, it will come in its time." Judaism posits a world that was created perfect, that therefore has the potentialities of perfection within it. These potentialities will "in the end of days" become realities. The "end of days" will surely come "in its time." But man has the power through his acts to hasten the coming of "the end of days," or to postpone it, to *"itah"*—to its time.

The nature of "the end of days" has always been a matter of legitimate difference of opinion among the interpreters of Judaism. For some, "the end of days" is to be identified with the *"yemot hamashiach"*—the coming of the Messiah—when men will continue to be essentially human, will eat, drink, reproduce, and die, except that they will have complete control over all of their evil inclinations so that none will harm or hurt anyone else. The "end of days" will be wholly within history.

Others identify the "end of days" with the *"Olam Habah,"* "the world to come," which is beyond history. About its nature the tradition speaks in most restrained terms applying to it the words of the prophet (Midrashically interpreted) "No eye but Thine, O Lord, hath seen it" (Isaiah, 64:3).[7]

Are all men destined to a share in the world to come? To that question also Judaism responds with a qualified optimism. Judaism's faith that man is destined to partake of life in "the world to come" is not rooted primarily in its conception of the nature of the human soul, but rather in its conception of the relationship of God to His creatures.

Divine goodness creates the good. Scripture identifies the good with life, and the evil with death (Deuteronomy, 30:15).

[7] Babylonian Talmud *Shabbat,* 63a.

God, being merciful, is the God of life Who does not desire the death of any of His creatures (Ezekiel, 18:23,32). Hence man can have a portion in the world to come, not because his soul *per se* is immortal any more than his body is immortal, but rather because God's justice and His mercy permit human beings to *achieve* immortality. Not every one achieves it. The tenth chapter of the *Mishna* of *Sanhedrin*, from which I previously quoted, lists a goodly number who will not have a share in the world to come, nor even be permitted "to stand in judgment." Among them are three kings, Jeroboam, Ahab, and Menasseh; four commoners, Balaam, Doeg, Ahitophel, and Gehazi, the generation of the Flood, the generation of the Dispersion—the men of Sodom, and others. Immortality is a blessing to be earned and the only place one can earn it is in this world. Hence Rabbi Jacob, one of the great teachers of the second century, makes what at first sight seems to be a rather startling statement, namely, that "one hour of repentance and good deeds in this world is better than the whole life of the world to come."[8] Neither the nature of the soul nor God's mercy make immortality an automatic eventuality for all. Only God is inherently immortal. God's mercy sets immortality within the reach of every one of His children. His justice relates immortality to the conduct of the individual.

Nor does He in bestowing immortality distinguish between Jew and non-Jew. Each is judged on the basis of his own merit. Rabbi Eliezer (first half of second century C.E.) taught: "The Gentiles have no share in the world to come for it is written 'The wicked shall return to the nether-world, Even all the nations' (Psalms, 9:18). The words 'the wicked' refer to the wicked Israelites (who also have no share in the world to come). Whereupon, Rabbi Joshua said to him, 'Had the verse ended with the words "all the nations" I would have agreed with you, but since it continues with the words "that forget God," obviously it means to say that there are righteous among the Gentiles who have a share in the world to come'" (*Tosefta Sanhedrin*, Chapter 13, in the beginning).

Because God is just and therefore also punishes, and is not merely merciful, Judaism does not conceive of man's progress

[8] *Ethics of the Fathers*, Chapter 4, Paragraph 22.

toward his ultimate destiny, whether that destiny be identified with the "Days of the Messiah" or the *"Olam Habah,"* as moving forward uninterruptedly in a straight line.

Sin and Evil

From time to time man loses his grip, so to speak, and inevitably brings God's judgment upon himself. Why that happens is one of the eternal mysteries, for surely God does not demand too much from man. Judaism constantly stresses the thought that obedience to God does not require a superhuman effort. In the Garden of Eden all was permitted to man except the fruit "of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil" (Genesis, 2:17). Of the Law later revealed to Israel, Scripture says: "For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not too hard for thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven, that thou shouldest say: 'Who shall go up for us to heaven and bring it unto us, and make us to hear it, that we may do it?' Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldest say: 'Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, and make us hear it, that we may do it?' But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it" (Deuteronomy, 30:11-14).

Judaism does not attribute man's constant backsliding to original sin. Every child is born completely untainted. Every morning we say in our prayers: "O Lord, the soul Thou gavest me is pure. Thou didst create it. Thou didst form it. Thou didst bestow it upon me. Thou dost preserve it within me. Thou wilt take it from me, and return it again to me in days to come." Adam was certainly created pure. But he was endowed with the power to choose between alternatives. That power made him uniquely man, set him above all other creatures and made him, as the psalmist puts it *"me-at me-elohim,"* only a little lower than the angels (Psalms, 8:6). Man fails, not because he is born tainted, but because he is a little lower than the angels.

I often think—what may be a heretical thought—that God's infinite power has but one limitation. He cannot create another God, and only in God are free will, power, and knowledge so related that the free choice always produces the good. Since man is not God, his freedom of choice is not determined by

either adequate knowledge or adequate power to result always in the right choice and the good act. He therefore enjoys his freedom at the price of making mistakes and committing faults.

But while man, not being God, cannot possibly progress uninterruptedly toward his highest attainable goal, God in His mercy sustains him in his efforts to achieve his ultimate destiny. For "*Midah Tovah meruba mimidat hapuranut*"—God's generosity in rewarding far exceeds His severity in punishment. The Rabbis find this principle clearly enunciated in the very passage which is so often quoted to prove the severity and harshness of God's justice. The second commandment which describes God as a "jealous God," Who visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children unto the third and fourth generations, also assures us that God rewards those that love Him and obey His commandments unto the thousandth generation. The accumulation of the good in the world thus proceeds in geometric ratio, while evil grows only arithmetically. God has so ordered the universe that it favors the right and the good.[9]

Moreover, man who was created "in the image of God" has been endowed with the capacity "to know the difference between good and evil." Man's intellectual capacity enables him not only to be conscious of his experiences but also to retain them in memory, to classify them in different categories, and on the basis of these remembered experiences to draw correct conclusions regarding the actions most likely to result in his highest welfare and happiness. It is this capacity that we have in mind when we pray thrice daily: "Thou favorest man with knowledge, and teachest mortals understanding. O grant us knowledge, understanding, and insight. Blessed art Thou, O Lord, gracious Giver of knowledge." Man's mental capacities, themselves a gift of God, never become independent of God. Their proper functioning is dependent continuously upon His favor. Hence whatever blessings come to us through the medium of our mental endowments are blessings that are very directly bestowed upon us by God. Just as man is repeatedly warned against the temptation to say, "my strength," so also must he be on guard against the temptation to say, "my wisdom, my reason and insight have themselves discovered this truth for me."

[9] *Tosefta, Sota,* Chapter 4. See also *Sota* 11a, *Sanhedrin* 100b.

In addition, God in His goodness has through the Torah revealed to man, directly and without the mediation of reason, other truths which are indispensable to his welfare. These truths man could not have arrived at by the powers inherent in his mind.

The Torah

What is the Torah? The best brief, authoritative answer to this question is found in a Rabbinic comment on the Biblical passage which states that God renewed with Isaac the Covenant He had made with Abraham: "because Abraham hearkened unto My voice, and kept My charge; *Mitzvotai*—My commandments, *Hukotai*—My statutes, and *Torotai*—My laws."

Mitzvotai (My commandments) is interpreted as referring to those laws of the Torah which, even had they not been directly revealed at Sinai, reason would have enjoined upon us, such as the laws against theft and murder.

Hukotai (My statutes) is interpreted as referring to laws in the Torah which cannot be adequately explained by reason, such as the dietary laws.

Torotai (My laws) is interpreted as referring to the two main divisions of the Torah, the written Torah and the oral Torah.[10]

The written Torah is very easily identified. It is the Hebrew Bible. The oral Torah cannot so easily be identified because it is the living, growing tradition. Originally it was forbidden to commit the *oral* law to writing. But it could not continue in that state indefinitely. At the end of the second century, the vast amount of material accumulated in the oral tradition was for the first time officially codified and became known as the *Mishna*. Whether or not it was actually put into writing at the time is still one of the debatable questions. But there can be no doubt that it was memorized as codified under the editorship of Judah the Prince (c. 135-200), so that even if it were not commited to writing, it was to all intents and purposes equivalent to a written text."[11] The study of the *Mishna* during

[10] Rashi, *ad loc.*

[11] Lieberman, Saul, *Hellenism in Jewish Palestine*, The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1950, pp. 83-100.

the ensuing centuries in the schools of Babylonia resulted in the Talmud of Babylon, and study of the *Mishna* in the schools of Palestine resulted in the Talmud of Jerusalem. It was the Babylonian Talmud that was destined to become authoritative among Jews.

But Judaism did not end its development with the Babylonian Talmud. The schools of Spain, Northern Africa, Germany, and Eastern Europe, the needs of new situations, the contacts with new cultures, all left their marks in the commentaries upon the Talmud, in the new codes that were formulated, and in the new legal, theological, moralistic, and liturgical literature that developed. This process, which has continued down through the ages with varying degrees of vitality in different countries and eras, is still functioning within Judaism. The oral Torah thus continues to grow and within limits to change.

While the tradition unequivocally declares the truths revealed in the Torah to be far more precious than, and superior to, the truths arrived at by the human mind, the relationship between reason and revelation in Judaism is not as unequivocal as it may at first appear to be. It partakes somewhat of the paradoxical character which we noted in the relationship between justice and mercy. At times the one seems to dominate, and at times the other. The two are constantly interpenetrating and it is impossible to draw a sharp line between them.

Thus in addition to the division between the oral and the written Torah to which we shall have occasion to refer again, the teachings of the Torah are divided by the Rabbis into two main categories, *Mitzvot Shebain Adam le-Chavero*—teachings that concern man's relations with his fellowman; and *Mitzvot Shebain Adam la-makom*—teachings that concern man's relation to God.[12]

It is ordinarily assumed, both in Rabbinic and in medieval Jewish thought, that the first of these two categories, namely, the laws referring to man's relations with his fellows, could have been arrived at by man through the exercise of his reason. This assumption on the part of those who like Saadia Gaon (d. 942) believed that the whole of both the written and the oral Torah was revealed at Sinai, I have always found strange,

[12] *Mishna* of *Tractate Yoma*, Chapter 8, Paragraph 9, Danby, *op. cit.*, p. 172.

for it implies that in so far as half or more of the Sinaitic revelations is concerned, God was, as it were, bringing coals to Newcastle. He was telling man what he could have found out for himself through his mental endowments. Jewish medieval philosophers were rather hard put to it to explain why it should have been necessary for the Lord at Sinai to waste those precious moments of self-revelation by commanding the assembled multitude not to kill, or commit adultery, or steal, or bear false witness, as if He had not already equipped them with the mental powers necessary to formulate these laws.

To me it has always seemed that our theologians were crediting human reason with more than it deserved, because they were overly impressed by the achievements of philosophy in general and of Aristotle in particular. They had surrendered altogether too much to reason when they assumed that by itself it could give us our moral and ethical values. All morality, it seems to me, is ultimately dependent upon the concept of the sacredness and inviolability of the life of the individual. That basic premise reason alone cannot arrive at or establish. It is a historical fact that none of the ancient philosophers arrived at the conviction that war—the quintessence of all human evil—should and would eventually be abolished. Nor is there anything in reason *per se* that could validate beyond reasonable doubt the proposition that theft or adultery are intrinsically evil.

Plato tried valiantly in his *Republic* to establish logically the nature of justice and then to prove its superiority over injustice. But interesting as his effort is, few would call it successful.

Hence it seems to me that Jewish tradition, in including such prohibitions as those against killing, adultery, and stealing in the Ten Commandments revealed at Sinai, is essentially correct. For it implies that ethical values are not the product of human reason, that they are not deducible from observable facts nor from intellectually demonstrable first principles. Moral values are, and can only be, in their essence, revealed.

The Seven Noahide Laws

The Jewish tradition does not assume that God withheld the revelation of these fundamental moral laws until He spoke to

Israel at Mt. Sinai. Man had not been left completely to his own resources during the long period preceding Sinai. The Torah relates that after Noah and his family had left the Ark, God blessed them and enjoined them to obey a number of laws. Jewish tradition usually speaks of them as being seven in number, namely: prohibition of (1) idolatry, (2) adultery, (3) murder, (4) theft, (5) cruelty, (6) blasphemy, and the establishment of (7) courts of justice.[13] These seven laws represent what was probably the first attempt to formulate a code which might be regarded as universally applicable and as including the basic components of a civilized society.

They are sufficient to enable those who observe them to be called righteous, and to deserve a share in the world to come. But if the observance of these laws is sufficient to make one righteous and deserving of a share in the world to come, what need was there for the later Sinaitic revelation? This question involves the conception of Israel's role in history. We shall return to it later.

Reason and Revelation

Let us, however, now return to the question we raised before, in regard to the relationship of reason and revelation in Judaism. If we assume that reason alone could have discovered many of the laws now included in the Torah we may with some justification ask what is the ultimate sanction for these laws? Is it human reason, or is it Divine revelation?

In regard to the laws found in the Pentateuch, Jewish tradition is unanimous and unequivocal. They are authoritative, not because they conform to the requirements of human reason but because they are revealed. Hence even though in most instances reason can justify the law, and even though great teachers of Judaism in all generations did not hesitate to rationalize a given law, by and large there was a tendency to discourage preoccupation with the rational basis of the Law. It was not that the Rabbis feared that reason would invalidate it. They feared the use of reason even when reason would seem to support the Law. They were wary of the natural tendency

[13] *Tosefta Avodah Zarah*, end. See also the article "Noahide Laws" in *The Universal Jewish Encyclopedia.*

of man to say, "If I am to observe 'A' because of 'B,' then it stands to reason that if 'B' is not valid at least as far as I am concerned, I need not observe 'A.' "

The spiritual corruption of King Solomon, despite his great wisdom, is attributed by the Rabbis to his having made this mistake. The Rabbis note that in the law governing the behavior of the king, Scripture forbids him to marry too many wives and to acquire too many horses. Contrary to its usual practice, Scripture in both these instances states its reasons: "He shall not multiply horses unto himself," lest he "cause the people to return to Egypt." "Neither shall he multiply wives unto himself, that his heart turn not away" to idolatry (Deuteronomy, 17:16-17). Solomon, the Rabbis say, noting the reasons for the prohibitions, was quite sure that they would not apply to him. He, therefore, proceeded to violate both laws. The consequences are well known. Scripture relates that the many wives that he married caused him to introduce idolatry into Jerusalem, while his interest in horses led him back to Egypt ending in his marriage to an Egyptian princess and in an alliance between the two countries (I Kings, 9:16, 28-29, 11:1-11).

The debate between those who would seek to validate the law by reason and those who oppose or strongly discourage all such attempts has continued down the ages. There are by now ample precedents in the tradition to justify either the one or the other attitude. There is general agreement, however, that whether one observes the Law because he can validate it by his reason or because he believes it is revealed truth, is not nearly as important as the fact of his observing it. One of the most remarkable passages in all Rabbinic literature is that in which the Rabbis attribute to God the statement, "Would that they would leave Me but observe My Torah."[14]

Human experience has taught us that when one is armed with reason only, his chance of victory over his passions is none too bright. Nor is faith alone an adequate guide to life. It should be obvious to every one that, just as human life is not livable without a proper mixture of justice and mercy, though the two are in themselves irreconcilable, so are we as human beings

[14] Jerusalem Talmud, *Hagigah,* Chapter 1, Paragraph 7.

lost, if our lives are not properly related to both faith and reason. Judaism is as much beset by this problem as are all great patterns of faith.

At no time would a pious traditional Jew venture to question a law of the Pentateuch because it seemed to him to be contrary to reason. However, when a question arose regarding the application of any of its laws to a given situation, human reason was final and determinative. The circumstances under which this principle was established are related in one of the most dramatic and imaginative passages in the Talmud. The matter in dispute between Rabbi Eleazar and his colleagues was in itself of comparatively little moment. It involved the laws of purity as they affected a stove built in a given fashion. Rabbi Eleazar presented all his arguments. But his colleagues did not find them convincing. Whereupon he said: "If I am right, then let this carob tree testify to it." We are told that the carob tree was uprooted and carried away some hundred yards. But his opponents were not convinced. They said: "One does not appeal to a carob tree in an argument."

"If I am right," said Rabbi Eleazar, "then let this stream of water testify to it." The stream reversed its course, but his opponents said, "The action of a stream of water is not a convincing argument." Rabbi Eleazar then called upon the walls of the house of study to testify. The walls were about to fall, when Rabbi Joshua rebuked them with the words, "What affair is it of yours if scholars dispute a matter of law?" We are told that out of respect for Rabbi Joshua the walls did not fall. But out of respect for Rabbi Eleazar they did not right themselves completely and remained in their inclined position.

Finally Rabbi Eleazar called upon a voice from Heaven to testify in his behalf. The Voice responded that he was right. Whereupon Rabbi Joshua arose and quoted the Scriptural verse, "It [the Torah] is not in heaven (Deuteronomy, 30:12). We pay no heed to heavenly voices."

The Talmud then goes on to relate how some time thereafter Rabbi Nathan when visited by the prophet Elijah asked him, "What did the Lord do at the time when the Rabbis refused to accept the testimony of the heavenly voice?" Elijah answered,

"The Lord smiled and said, 'My children have prevailed over me. My children have prevailed over me.' "[15]

Unity and Diversity

This extraordinary Talmudic passage requires no elaboration. The great Rabbis throughout the centuries continued their disputations, as have all great interpreters of laws and traditions among all peoples. Some among them appealed primarily to precedent and faith. Others were bolder in their dependence upon their own opinions. Liberal and conservative schools of thought abound, so that today when one who is a stranger to this universe of discourse reads their conflicting opinions, he wonders how he can arrive at any conclusion.

A Rabbinic homily on a verse in Ecclesiastes reflects this mood: " 'The words of the wise are as goads, and as nails well fastened (lit., planted) are those that are composed in collections; they are given from one shepherd.' Why are the words of the Torah compared to a goad? To teach that just as the goad directs the cow into the proper furrow so that the world may have food, thus do the words of the Torah guide their students away from the paths of death into the paths of life. But lest you think that just as the goad is movable (and can be carried wherever one wishes) thus also the words of the Torah (can be made to mean whatever one wishes them to mean) the verse says of them that they are (fixed) like nails. But you might think that just as a nail diminishes the space it occupies (*i.e.*, it forms a hole in the area into which it is fixed) so do the words of the Torah diminish without adding. Therefore the verse says of them that they are '*netuim*'—planted. Just as a plant grows and increases, thus do the words of the Torah multiply. 'Composed in collections' (*baaley asufot*) refers to the scholars that study in groups. Some declare a thing impure, others pure. Some declare a thing forbidden, others declare it permissible. Some declare a thing unfit, others fit. If then one says, 'How can one then study Torah?' (Who can decide what is and what is not Torah?) The verse tells us that 'They are given from one shepherd.' The one God has given all of them, one leader taught them at the behest of the Lord of all

[15] Babylonian Talmud, *Baba Metzia* 59b.

creation, as it is written 'and the Lord spoke all these words' (Exodus, 20:1). Therefore set thine ear as a funnel and acquire thou an understanding heart to weigh the words of those who declare a thing impure and those who declare it pure, of those who forbid and those who permit, of those who declare a thing unfit and those who declare it fit." [16]

The homily seems to end in mid-air as if to imply that one can then make up his own mind. In the early, formative days of the tradition undoubtedly much more leeway was given to personal opinions. Unfortunately, the latitude for personal decision has narrowed with the passing of the centuries. But there is at present a great ferment both in the State of Israel and in America for the opening of new avenues of interpretation within the Law. There have always been those who rejected the authority either of the oral Torah or of both Torahs. But even within the ranks of those who accepted the authority of both the oral and the written Torah the differences between liberal and conservative interpretation were many and sharp, as they are today.

The Study of Torah, the Greatest of Mitzvohs

However, I would be giving an altogether wrong impression of the place of Torah in Judaism, if I were to conclude my remarks on the concept of Torah at this point, for Torah is far more than Law or ritual. Its study is declared to be the greatest of all the *mitzvot,* the good deeds; and the joy it brings to its students has been described by every superlative available to speech. The psalmist declares that the Torah refreshes the soul, bestows wisdom, gladdens the heart, and enlightens the eyes.[17] Rabbi Meir, a master of the second century, was wont to say: "He who studies Torah *lishma*—for its own sake, without hope of winning gain or fame thereby—acquires great merit. The whole world is indebted to him; he is called friend, beloved, a lover of the All-Present, a lover of mankind; it clothes him in meekness and reverence, it fits him to become just, pious, upright, faithful; it keeps him far from sin and brings him to virtue. He is made like a never-failing fountain, and like a

[16] Babylonian Talmud, *Hagigah* 3b.
[17] Psalms, 19:8-11. The whole of Psalm 119 is a paean to the Torah.

river that flows on with ever-sustained vigor; he becomes modest, patient and forgiving of insults; and it magnifies him and exalts him above all things."[18] Without an understanding of the passionate love and joy that the Torah, both written and oral, roused in the hearts of its students and followers, all of Jewish life is deprived of meaning.

A generation before the Christian era, Hillel summarized this vast literature for the would-be proselyte who wanted to learn the whole of it while standing upon one foot, by saying, "That which is hateful to you do not unto others. This is the whole of the Torah, all the rest is commentary, go and learn it."[19] Akiba pronounced its core to be the commandment, "love they neighbor as thyself,"[20] while his younger contemporary, Ben Azzai, saw the Torah's message epitomized in the verse: "This is the book of the generations of man."[21]

Never before had a whole people set its heart and hand with such exclusive, passionate devotion to applying the commandment, "Be ye holy, for I the Lord your God am holy" (Leviticus, 19:2), to every conceivable human act. Like the Psalmist, every Jew was "to set the Lord always before him" (Psalms, 16:8), and at all times to act as if he were in the very presence of God so that every deed might be permeated with divine sanctity. For the Torah, both written and oral, was that body of instruction that would bring every Jew into proper personal relationshp to God and would enable the whole people of Israel to fulfil its role in the unfolding drama of human history.

Israel

We turn now to a consideration of "Israel," the third of the concepts which are indispensable to any "pattern of faith" that could be included under the designation of Judaism. If the dynamic quality of Judaism's God-concept is imbedded in the paradox of His being both just and merciful, and that of the Torah-concept in the paradox of its being both reason and rev-

[18] *The Ethics of the Fathers,* Chapter 6, Paragraph 1.
[19] *Shabbat* 31a.
[20] Jerusalem Talmud, *Nedarim,* Chapter 7, Paragraph 4.
[21] *Ibid.*

elation, the dynamism of the concept of Israel may be said to reside in the paradox of Israel's being, as it were, both "prince" and "whipping boy," as being both "the beloved chosen" and "the suffering servant" of the Lord. Had Israel conceived of itself as being merely the one or the other, it would have long since disappeared from the annals of history. Had it conceived of itself only as "whipping boy," it might have lost the desire to live. Had it conceived of itself only as a "prince," it might have lost hope and heart in the face of the apparently endless unequal struggle. But through God's messengers, the prophets, Israel learned to think of itself as both "prince" and "whipping boy," both the "beloved chosen" and the "suffering servant," and in that paradox it could maintain both hope and self-respect in the midst of unprecedented suffering and himiliation.

How did Israel become the "chosen" of the Lord? Other peoples who viewed themselves as the favorites of a deity usually had some myth in which the people or its ruler were described as the actual progeny of the god. Still others would see themselves in the favored position because they inhabited the area over which the god was believed to rule. Gods had favorite cities, or countries, as well as favorite tribes or peoples. But nothing in the known tradition of Judaism even hints at such a relationship between God and Israel. Israel becomes a "chosen people" because of the merits of its ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob (Deuteronomy, 4:37, 7:7-8).

The Covenant People

The relationship between Israel and God is based on a covenant, a covenant that is entered into between them and God as a reward for the righteous and self-sacrificial action of their ancestor Abraham. "And it came to pass after these things that God tried Abraham . . ." When Abraham proved his readiness to sacrifice his own son, the Lord said, "I swear by Myself since you have done this, since you have not withheld your son, your only son, that I will indeed bless you, I will indeed make your descendants as numerous as the stars in the sky and the sand on the seashore. . . . And in your descendants shall all the nations of the earth be blessed, because you have obeyed My word" (Genesis, 22:1-18).

To follow this covenant concept down the corridors of history, to note how it steadily broadens and deepens in meaning, to observe how it decides the destiny of the people who live by it, is in itself spiritually and intellectually among the most fascinating of experiences. Obviously we cannot do more than glimpse some of the most decisive turning points in this long history. Let us start by inquiring who was to be included under the terms of this covenant.

There can be little doubt that in the beginning the covenant was understood to refer exclusively to the physical descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The sense of blood kinship was, however, not equally strong in all periods of Jewish history. It reached its highest pitch apparently in the middle of the fifth century B.C.E. when Ezra, the scribe, arrived in Jerusalem and found the small Jewish community on the verge of extinction because of physical and religious assimilation (Ezra, Chapters 9-10). But the very man who laid the greatest stress upon the racial purity of the group also laid the foundation for the ultimate subordination of what he appeared to prize so highly. For he, more than any other individual, was responsible for making the Torah the distinguishing mark of the people of Israel and thus made possible the implementation of the principle announced by Deutero-Isaiah. "Neither let the alien, that hath joined himself to the Lord, speak, saying: 'The Lord will surely separate me from His people'; Neither let the eunuch say: 'Behold, I am a dry tree!' For thus saith the Lord concerning the eunuchs that keep My Sabbaths, and choose the things that please Me, and hold fast by My covenant: Even unto them will I give in My house and within My walls a monument and memorial, better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting memorial, that shall not be cut off. Also the aliens, that join themselves to the Lord, to minister unto Him and to love the name of the Lord to be His servants, every one that keepeth the Sabbath from profaning it, and holdeth fast by My Covenant, even them will I bring to My holy mountain and make them joyful in My house of Prayer; their offerings and their sacrifices shall be acceptable upon Mine altar, for My house shall be called a house of prayer for all peoples" (Isaiah, 56:3-7).

Thus through the Torah the covenant was transformed from a covenant with an ethnic group into a covenant with servants of the Lord. Israel was transformed from a racial group into a spiritual fellowship. Because Ruth, the Moabite woman, had said, "Thy God shall be my God" (Ruth, 1:16), she became worthy of being the ancestress of David (Ruth, 4:22) and hence ultimately the ancestress of the Messiah.

The two strains that underlie the composition of the group called Israel, the ethnic and the spiritual, have not as yet completely made peace with each other. In particular instances the conflict between them is sharp and tragic. But the number of proselytes has been so great and many among them have been so distinguished, that none can any longer maintain that Israel is a racial fellowship only.

For various historical reasons Judaism during the Christian era has not been and is not today an actively proselytizing religion. It has never sought to make conversion to itself easy. The Rabbis give specific instruction to point out to a prospective convert all the difficulties and disadvantages that membership within the Jewish fellowship entails. The attitude of Judaism toward proselytism has often subjected Jews to accusations of clannishness and parochialism. Unquestionably the circumstances which made active proselytism impossible for Judaism also at times created a frame of mind which could well be designated as clannish. Now and then voices are raised within the Jewish fold urging positive proselytizing activity. But no responsible group or individual has sponsored such organized activity in more than eighteen hundred years. Nevertheless, it is true that the Israel of the Covenant is no longer an ethnic group, either in fact or in theory.

The merit of the Patriarchs which made them worthy of the covenant and made of their descendants a chosen people, bestowed precious privileges upon them. To be chosen by God as Abraham was chosen—"to the end that he may command his children and his household after him, that they may keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice" (Genesis, 18:19)—is indeed a privilege. To be chosen as the medium through whom God revealed the Torah to mankind, is to be privileged indeed.

But unfortunately not all the descendants of Abraham considered these to be the privileges they desired for themselves as the chosen of the Lord. They thought of privileges far more tangible and mundane. Not many pray to be "on God's side." Most of us, I am afraid, pray with the hope that God may be on our side. And while there have always been Jews who feared lest God would repudiate His covenant with them for their failure to fulfil their task in the world, there also always were others who of their own will repudiated it. They did not want to be "God's witnesses" upon this earth, nor to be charged with a responsibility greater than that of any other people "to keep the way of the Lord, to do righteousness and justice."

Since the days of the prophet Ezekiel it has been the firm conviction of Judaism that not only will God keep His covenant with Israel; He will not permit Israel to repudiate it. Individual Jews or even groups of them may successfully reject their divinely ordained destiny. The people as a whole never can or will. More than twenty-five hundred years ago, Ezekiel told the recalcitrant generation that was exiled to Babylonia, "And that which cometh into your mind shall not be at all; in that ye say 'we will be as the nations, as the families of the countries, to serve wood and stone.' 'As I live,' saith the Lord God, 'surely with a mighty hand and with an outstretched arm and with wrath poured out, will I be king over you' " (Ezekiel, 20:32-33). The covenant thus becomes the source of both eternal, unwavering hope, and of untold, unparalleled suffering. Israel cannot look to extinction as an escape from its suffering.

The Servant of the Lord

Nor can even obedience to God's law and complete selfless devotion redeem Israel from martyrdom. The conception of the suffering *"eved hashem"*—servant of the Lord—as portrayed in the matchless fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, and the conception of Israel as the "heart" among the nations suffering for the evil that infects any segment of mankind, as formulated by Yehuda Halevi in his philosophic work *The Kuzari,* raised the concept of the chosen people to the highest level of spiritual insight. To Amos, chosenness made punishment for transgression all the more certain (Amos, 3:2). To Isaiah, it came to

mean that the highest point of suffering comes precisely at the point of the noblest fulfilment of the mission. One suffers most when he is most obedient to the will of God. The suffering of Israel, the true "servant of God," will not cease until Israel fulfils its historic role of being the prime mover in bringing all of mankind to the service of the Lord.

The great physical tragedies that have repeatedly overtaken the Jewish people have frequently resulted in an intensification of the desire on the part of many "to be like all the nations" and to repudiate the special covenant with God. Nothing is further from the truth than the oft-repeated opinion that persecution has kept Israel alive. Every wave of persecution, including the one we have witnessed in our day, is followed by a wave of rejection of the covenant and the tradition. But in some mysterious manner not all are overwhelmed by the tragedy, and many are made stronger in their determination to remain within the covenant. They find hope and reassurance in it. Consciously or subconsciously they recall that in Egypt, when their forefathers were on the verge of utter annihilation under the yoke of Egyptian bondage, "God heard their moaning and God remembered His covenant with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" (Exodus, 2:24-25). They recall God's promise: "When they are in the land of their enemies, I will not spurn them, I will not abhor them, so as to destroy them entirely and so break My covenant with them; for I am the Lord their God. But I will for their sakes remember the covenant of their ancestors, whom I brought out of the land of Egypt in the sight of the nations, that I might be their God: I am the Lord" (Leviticus, 26:44-45).

The miraculous manner in which the Jewish people has been able to arise again and again out of its ruins, is climaxed in our day—after the loss of the most vigorous and devoted third of its members, and in the face of well-nigh universal opposition—by the establishment of an independent Jewish state. This achievement gives renewed courage to the believer and strengthens his faith that Israel is not merely an ethnic group, a racial entity, or some historically conditioned society, but is indeed a servant of God—destined, it may be, to much more

suffering, but destined also to live so that it may play its appointed role in establishing God's Kingdom upon this earth.

Bibliography

Agus, J., *Modern Philosophies of Judaism,* Behrman's Jewish Book House, New York, 1941.

Baeck, Leo, *The Essence of Judaism,* Macmillan, London, 1936.

Finkelstein, L., *The Briefs and Practices of Judaism,* Devin-Adair, New York, 1941.

Kadushin, Max, *The Rabbinic Mind,* The Jewish Theological Seminary of America, New York, 1952.

Kohler, K., *Jewish Theology,* Macmillan, New York, 1918.

Levinthal, Israel, *Judaism,* Funk & Wagnalls Company, New York, 1935.

Moore, G. F., *Judaism,* three volumes, Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1927.

Schechter, S., *Aspects of Rabbinic Theology,* Macmillan, New York, 1910.

Silver, A. H., *Where Judaism Differed,* Macmillan, New York, 1957.

Chapter 5

Naturalistic Humanism

By JOHN HERMAN RANDALL, JR.
F. J. E. Woodbridge Professor of Philosophy, Columbia University

I

At the outset I owe the reader an explanation. I am afraid that I am here in this galley under false pretenses. My colleagues in this series can all claim to "represent" something—a great tradition, a living faith with a discoverable "pattern of belief," with a recognized "system of thought." But I cannot myself claim to represent anything—except, I hope, the Truth, which I see in my way, while my colleagues, I gather, see it in God's.

Dr. Johnson has said that I at least represent a position. I suppose that is true, though I hope it is not a fixed point. I have of late been learning a great deal about religion, and I trust I can continue to learn. This position Dr. Johnson wants to call "naturalistic humanism." Many thoughtful men are today called by one or the other of those two terms. A rather smaller number are willing to apply both to themselves. This latter group I fear I cannot in any sense claim to "represent." I am not sure anybody could, for it is very difficult to find out what beliefs "naturalistic humanists" possess in common. Some ten years ago I tried to discover what ideas are shared by all philosophical "naturalists," and I found that a terrible job. Recently I have been making inquiries as to what tenets religious "humanists" may agree upon, and I must confess I have been making very little headway.

For this reason—among others—I have come myself to dislike both terms, especially the second—"humanism." They are sadly vague and lacking in that precision which all good students of philosophy are today bidden to cherish. My only

consolation in being called upon to speak in some sense for so ambiguous a position is this. If "naturalism" and "humanism" both cover a multitude of sins—and a considerable diversity of very different sinners—I am sometimes led to suspect that so do such terms as "Christianity," or "Judaism," or "Liberal Protestantism," or even "Roman Catholicism."

In any event, if I have a religious "position," and if that position may be said to be "naturalistic humanism," it remains true that in trying to reflect on the many very fundamental and central themes we have all been asked to consider here—the nature and destiny of man, the concept of God, the meaning of human history, and the rest–I do not think I ever myself start out from this "position." I doubt whether I have ever asked myself, "Now, what would a naturalistic humanist think about this problem?" This means, I suppose, that my controlling assumptions are all implicit. But I hope it means also that I try never to limit myself by them, that I try to use them for what they are worth, and am always seeking to enlarge them. In the light of this situation, however, it should be clear why the pattern of my remarks here is very difficult to fit in exactly with the pattern of what those representing the tenets of definite religious groups can state.

One further preliminary may be helpful. In these days of guilt by association, when a man is judged by the company he keeps, it would be wise to make clear my own religious affiliations. After growing up in a liberal Baptist church of which my father was minister–he had reacted strongly against the Calvinistic theology of his mother, who had married a Unitarian to rescue him from error—with my father I joined the Community Church of New York, and remained a member for some years. I am at present [1957] a member of the Society for Ethical Culture—Felix Adler taught me all there is to know about sin long before its recent rediscovery. I am a supporter of the Congregational Church of Peacham, Vermont, and of the Wider Quaker Fellowship. I was an original if very reluctant signer of the Humanist Manifesto, which I have since criticized in print. My theological position, I should say, after conducting a number of joint seminars with him for Columbia and Union Seminary students, is quite close to that of Paul Tillich. I cannot

claim to have his rooting in German Romanticism, to be sure, and I should of course like to subtract the Kierkegaardian strain from his thought. I am afraid that we don't sound too much alike, though. As Theodore M. Greene has pointed out, I seem to be, like the Apostle Paul, all things to all men.

This multiplicity and diversity of affiliations is on principle. For I am a religious pluralist. Metaphysical, philosophical, social, institutional and cultural pluralism is one of my strongest intellectual convictions. I judge that a man ought to be a practicing member of as many different religious institutions as he can possibly find time for. My own heritage of Christianity I have found far too narrow. And the exclusive claims of such religions as Roman Catholicism, or some forms of Judaism, are just what I find about them most uncongenial. In this respect Hinduism seems far closer to religious wisdom than have been most of the Western religions.

This religious pluralism can be stated briefly. Men need imaginative visions, such as the prophets and the poets in the great religious traditions have provided. It is to be hoped that men can realize what these visions are, and understand how they can clarify human experience, and hence not be bound by any exclusive vision. The more visions of God men can behold, the better. Above all, it is to be hoped that men will not be tempted to have "faith" in vision. God is something to be seen and known, but, to put it emphatically, God is the last thing in the world to have faith in. Such "faith" in one's own vision of God, to the exclusion of all others, is, it seems clear, the source of all the fanaticisms, of all the so-called "crimes of religion"—which we now know, alas! can be committed as easily in the name of some social vision or ideal as in the name of God. It is not "God," but the exclusive faith, that is the root of all religious evil.

Any intelligent criticism of religion today—either of its traditional techniques and arts, or of their modern social and secular forms—would recognize that faith in the adequacy of one's own vision and ideals is the chief obstacle to their performing their very necessary function, and would demand a religion without such faith in one's own vision of God or in ideals. By "faith" I mean here an exclusive reliance upon, or confidence in; I am

not ruling out devotion to, or commitment to. For as we all know, faith is a complex matter, and other problems would make further distinctions necessary. Such "faith" and reliance belong not to visions—of God, of ends, of ideals—but to human methods and instrumentalities—to means rather than to ends, or to things considered as means, methods, and ways of doing things. They belong above all to the chief means known to man—to man's intelligence, to human knowledge or "science," and to what human wisdom man has achieved.

Men sorely need visions of God–as many as they can possibly share. But their faith they should place in man himself–in man's infinite possibilities. This faith should of course be coupled with realistic recognition of man's finite limitations—of man's capacities for "sin," for falling short of the glory of God, whom he has seen. To put this emphatically and paradoxically: the true religious—and categorical—imperative would run: "Treat man never as an end merely"—that is the religious heresy of "perfectionism," and the metaphysical error of "fixed ends," castigated respectively by Reinhold Niebuhr and John Dewey, who as naturalists are usually in essential accord—"Treat man never as an end merely, but always as a means also." In other words, have visions of God, but have faith in human intelligence and human nature, as the indispensable means to every human goal.

This contrast has been dwelt upon, this double emphasis on vision and intelligence, to bring out the two strains that go to make up "naturalistic humanism." The visions of God are the religious implication of "naturalism"; the faith in intelligence and in man is the "humanism" of the position. To put it this way suggests at the outset that any adequate naturalism must find a natural place for what in the past men have called "the supernatural"—what might better be called, as my colleague Herbert W. Schneider has expressed it, "the superhuman," that in the world which man finds lies beyond man himself, which both inspires man and condemns his inadequacies. And likewise, any adequate humanism must have a place for what if not, alas! "the inhuman," is at least "the inhumane"—the evil that men do.

Of the two components of "naturalistic humanism," the "humanism" is a certain religious temper, a certain set of values to be consecrated and clarified by the techniques of religion,

involving an appraisal of, and an attitude toward, the nature and possibilities of man and his essential needs—what he requires to be saved. In Western religions it has involved also an attitude toward the significance of human history. In our tradition this humanistic temper has been normally expressed in religious form: in Christianity it is familiar as "Christian humanism." Thus it is the fashion today to call Thomas Aquinas, with some appropriateness, a "Christian humanist." There have also been, of course, especially since the beginning of the modern period, many secular forms of expression of this temper and set of values.

In our Western tradition this temper of humanism has been opposed to another religious temper—a temper of humility, often called by those who do not share it a temper of pessimism. Étienne Gilson, the great medievalist, indeed views the history of Western religion as a kind of alternation between the temper of humanism and the temper of humility. This is far too simple—M. Gilson has a fondness for these pendulum interpretations—but his view is nevertheless suggestive. This temper of humility or pessimism can also of course receive secular expression; an outstanding instance today is Heidegger.

In the sense of sharing to the full the humanistic temper, I am not at all sure whether I am myself a "humanist" or not. These values are certainly fundamental and essential, though their expression in the past has always been historically and intellectually, to say nothing of religiously, far too limited, and all past "humanisms" seem clearly inadequate for our present experience. The humanistic values, it might be said, are an essential component of any acceptable position today. But so are quite different values as well. The fact that our contemporary world displays these competing values, that on the whole no adequate adjustment has as yet been made between them, that indeed there has been recently a tendency to react rather violently against the humanistic values toward what seems to be an emotional expression of the values of the temper of humility—this is all notoriously a part of our cultural crisis today. But before pursuing the values of humanism, and the questions bound up with them as to the nature of man and of his relations

to his fellows, it will be well to examine first the other strain in "naturalistic humanism," the "naturalism" that provides the intellectual framework within which religious values are set.

2

In contrast to "humanism," which is here taken to be a certain religious temper and set of values, "naturalism" is something quite different. It is a philosophy—strictly speaking, a metaphysical position. It is focused on the status of man and all human experience in the universe. It recognizes that the world gave birth to man, a being subject to the conditions and limitations of other living beings, yet capable of acting in ways that are distinctive and unique. These ways—that distinctive human experience—are a response of the powers of this being, man, to the powers of the world in which he finds himself. Hence human experience is equally a revelation of the powers of man, and a revelation of the powers of the world he discovers himself in.

In giving human experience such a "natural" status, we open the way to all the illumination that can come from exploring its causes and conditions and its relations to the rest of the world. But we also open the way to all the illumination which human experience can bring to the nature of the world in which it takes place, to what that world contains, to the many different "dimensions" it discloses to man. The world and human experience mutually illuminate each other—our knowledge of both is of one piece. Hence the method of naturalism, since it is a way of understanding all human experience, is a way of understanding religion, and equally, a way of using man's religious experience, in a concrete and evident sense, to understand the nature of the universe.

Naturalism, that is, is a way of understanding, and hence it appeals to those whose interests are intellectual and philosophical. It belongs to the department of understatement to say that such men do not today form the majority. But they are important for they include many of the reflective and sensitive who are at present alienated unnecessarily from religion, and who might be effective agents in carrying it forward and in criticizing it. We all know how widespread such alienation is today. I might

say that in those young people I come in contact with myself—university students—I have found no recent evidence of any lessening of the failure to understand and sympathize with the enterprise of religion.

All the religions in America need the assistance of such sensitive men, in intellectual and moral leadership and criticism. This means that there is needed a way of understanding religion, as well as the world, that will permit them to grasp its significance, and to see how it fits in with men's other fundamental activities. Of course, a way of understanding—a philosophy—won't "convert" them to anything. Only experience can do that. As theology puts it, grace must be prevenient. But a way of understanding can remove obstacles; above all, it can show the reflective how the enjoyment of religious experience need not conflict with the intellectual integrity they prize.

This suggests that naturalism—at least the kind of "naturalism" I should be willing to represent—is not interested in combating "supernaturalism," but rather in understanding it—in finding a natural place for "the supernatural" in the universe that men experience. I sometimes think we might get on better if the so-called "supernaturalists" would reciprocate, if they were all as wise as Mr. Johnson, in trying to understand the genuinely religious values these men cherish who set such high store by intellectual integrity.

For both groups the real problem is posed by those who are indifferent to what religion is and does, who have no interest in the religious dimension of experience or of the world in which men enjoy that experience—those who are religiously blind. But their indifference is not only a blindness, shutting them off from so much that could enrich their lives. It is also highly dangerous. It used to be said that men could easily get along without any religion. That rather complacent attitude is now impossible for any intelligent man to take. Recent experience has made it clear that a society can hardly exist with a religious vacuum. If the familiar traditional religion breaks down, as for complicated reasons it has done in various lands across the seas, men will not merely continue to live without any religion. They will create for themselves a new one. And it will be much worse than the one they have abandoned, with all the worst

faults ever imputed to religion—fanaticism, intolerance, dogmatism, persecution, and a low moral ideal.

Religion, we have learned, is necessary. It is not necessary for every individual—multitudes have always managed to live without it. The indifferent are probably no more numerous today than they were when the pressure for social conformity concealed their existence. If there be a real change, it is that the indifferent now include so many of the best and most sensitive members of our society.

But religion is necessary for a society. It performs a socially indispensable function. Since it seems clear, therefore, that we can not escape having religions in our society, it is the responsibility of men of intelligence and moral sensitivity—to say nothing of whatever religious insight they may possess–to see to it that we have the best religion possible, and not one less good—to understand and interpret the ones we have inherited, and if possible to make them still better. Judged by any standard, a traditional religion is far better than a wholly new one that has broken continuity with the past. This is not to rule out reformations—a religion notoriously always stands in need of reforming. But a traditional religion is superior to a new one, because it is the heir to centuries of criticism through the insights of a long line of prophets and teachers, who have pruned away its early excesses, have enriched and deepened its sensitivity and significance, and have again and again recalled it from the letter to the spirit–always an unending task.

This criticism has been of two quite different kinds, moral and intellectual. The two can be well illustrated in the history of the concept of God, so central in the Western religious tradition.

Whatever else the idea of God has meant in the religious life, it has embodied and enshrined the highest moral ideals of men. It has stood for a system of values, the best good that men could conceive. The long history of the idea of God has been a slow achievement of growth in moral sensitivity and insight, from its beginnings in primitive religion, through the insights of the great prophets and the revelations of the saints, down to the prophets of our own industrial age. There has been in our time a genuine progress in insight and revelation, if scarcely in achievement. This moral deepening and enrichment of the way

in which men have conceived God has been due to a succession of religious geniuses who have brought to a focus the moral experience of their people through the lens of their own vision and receptivity, and thus revealed the possibility of a higher good.

Most of those who would today call themselves religious "humanists" would probably stop at this point. They would hold that the idea of God has been a symbol for men's moral ideals. They might say with John Dewey, for example, that the concept of God is the symbol for "inclusive ideal ends capable of a religious unification of the self." Or they might say with Paul Tillich, speaking from a very different background and philosophical position, that God is the symbol for "an ultimate concern that can grasp men." Back in the 1890s my father studied under Dewey, and as a young theological student asked him what was his conception of God. Dewey sat back in his chair, my father told me, looked thoughtfully up at the ceiling, and answered, "God is an equation of values." They taught a funny theology at Chicago, even in 1895.

This might well be the point at which the "humanist" in the narrower sense would stop. But the philosophical "naturalist"—and both Dewey and Tillich would of course agree with him—cannot identify God with a "mere ideal," in any sense that "mere ideal" might possess. For the naturalist sees religion as a cooperation of natural powers with human powers. For him, it is not merely men who carry on and sustain religious activities. Religious powers, that is, are not merely and exclusively human; in the religious life other powers in the world must cooperate with man's powers. Hence for the naturalist religious symbols must serve to evoke and organize these non-human or natural, or, as I have called them in Mr. Schneider's term, "superhuman" powers in the world, and not merely the powers of man. They must involve, that is, a "theology," or symbols for these extra-human and superhuman powers, and not merely an "anthropology," or symbols for human nature. A "humanism" that confines itself narrowly to man's activities and the human scene alone, without taking into account the broader context of the great universe with its challenges and its resources, is both philosophically and religiously truncated and inadequate.

The second type of criticism of the concept of God that has been worked out over the centuries, the intellectual rather than the moral, has come, not in the light of men's developing moral experience, but in the light of their growing knowledge and understanding of themselves and their world. It has been carried on not by prophets but by philosophers. Very early in every great religious tradition, reflective men have come to realize that the idea of God entertained by the unreflective, and used in the actual practice of the religious arts, in worship and prayer and communion, could not be "literally" true. God could not be "really" the imaginative image in which the average man conceived the Divine–not even the highest human image, the "Father," or the kind of "person" who in the present fashion is appropriately approached in terms of the "I-Thou" experience. Important and indeed indispensable in religious practice as were these ways of imagining the Divine, they were all, men came to realize, not adequate definitions or descriptions, but religious "symbols." They could not be taken as literal accounts. They were imaginative and symbolic ways of conceiving the relations of men and their ideals to the nature of things and its religious dimension—to the Divine.

The outcome of this long process of intellectual criticism, as expressed in the "naturalistic" way of understanding religion, is that all ideas of God without exception are religious symbols. This means that such ideas, like all religious beliefs, perform what is primarily a religious function. They are employed in religious experience, and serve to carry on the religious life. It was not without significance that a group of men teaching the philosophy of religion in our colleges—that is, concerned to interpret the meaning and value of religion to intelligent young people—who spoke recently in a symposium on "The Cognitive Status of Religious Doctrines," should have come almost without exception to take this position.

Not all conceptions of God are imaginative images drawn from men's experience of their fellows. There is a notorious difference between ideas of God whose primary function is to serve in religious practice, and which are employed in the actual conduct of religious techniques, worship, prayer and the rest—God as a loving Father, as a stern Judge, as the "Thou" of the

"I-Thou" relationship—and a quite different set of ideas of God worked out for very different purposes by philosophic theologians. The function of these latter ideas is not so much to serve in the practical living of the religious life as to introduce intellectual consistency between the different areas of men's experience. This philosophical enterprise has been a long history in the religious tradition. Men have tried to elaborate notions of God that would fit in with their own reflective understanding of the world and of their experience. They have tried to find conceptions of the Divine that would construe and interpret religious insight in terms of their particular philosophy and science, and adjust it to the rest of their experience in ways that would be consistent with their other beliefs. The intellectual record of the West reveals repeated attempts to work out such a rational or philosophical theology.

In this endeavor God has been conceived in terms of the ultimate intellectual ideal enshrined in the successive schemes of understanding, the changing philosophies, which our Western culture has developed. The highest object of knowledge in each scheme has been identified with the highest good; and thus has been achieved, for that philosophy, a harmony between men's moral and religious faith and their way of understanding the world, between "faith" and "reason." God has been thus identified successively with the ultimate conception of the Platonic science of the Hellenistic age, the *Logos* or objective rational structure of the cosmos; with the first principle of the Aristotelian science of the Middle Ages, the ultimate Final Cause or Prime Mover; with the mathematical order of nature of Cartesian science; with the original Force or Creator of Newtonian science, with the Absolute or Unconditioned of idealistic philosophy; with the first principle of creative evolution, with Alexander's "*nisus* toward Deity," or Whitehead's "principle of concretion. The intellectual and religious success of these rational theologies has depended upon the power of the particular scheme of science employed to understand and illuminate man and his various activities and values. The attempts have been least successful when, as with Newtonian science, there was provided no adequate way of understanding human life.

But broadly, experience makes clear that any philosopher

worth his salt can find an intellectual symbol for the Divine. Or rather, any philosophy that has not found such an intellectual symbol for the religious dimension of the world, is a truncated philosophy—and what such a philosophy is like can be observed in many widely professed at the present time. But with our deepened knowledge of how beliefs function in religion, we have come to realize today that these successive philosophical ideas of God, though they have all managed to play a useful and indeed an essential part in the different schemes of understanding by which men have organized their intellectual experience, are themselves all symbols, too. They are quite different from the images that have been employed in the religious arts, and would hardly serve in the actual practice of worship or prayer. They are intellectual symbols, rather than symbols of religious practice.

All ideas of God, indeed, are religious symbols. This is as true of the subtle and intellectualized conceptions of the philosophers as of the simple, concrete and familiar images the unreflective man borrows from his experience with his human fellows. It is not that the philosopher is right while the average man is wrong, that the former's conceptions are true while the latter's are false. It is not even that the thinker's ideas are more nearly adequate than the images of the practical man. The two sets of concepts of God we have been distinguishing both perform fundamental and necessary religious functions. But the two functions are very different, and they do not compete. The concrete images of religious practice are nowise discredited by the refined concepts of the philosophical theologian. They are indeed more fundamental in the religious life. For men could hardly worship or pray without them, while the great majority could—and do—easily dispense with the concepts which reflective men find necessary in the interest of intellectual consistency.

But different as their functions are, both sets of ideas serve as religious symbols. What this means negatively is clear: neither set is literally "true," neither gives exact knowledge, neither is "correct." To think that either set of ideas does function to produce knowledge and literal truth leads to muddles, mistakes, and confusion; above all, it generates that intolerance which leads men to judge that all ideas of God save their own are false and

blasphemous. But what religious symbols do not do is after all not so important as the functions they do perform; and that is a complex matter difficult to formulate and state satisfactorily. Since the naturalistic way of understanding religion holds that not only ideas of God but all religious ideas and beliefs are religious symbols, in clarifying this position it is important to dwell for a little on the positive functions of religious symbols. In this attempt to elucidate a very complicated matter, I shall state some of the conclusions to which I have been led as a result of the various seminars I have been privileged to conduct with Paul Tillich.

Just what is it that a religious symbol does? At the outset it is important to make a fundamental distinction. I shall make it between a "symbol" and a "sign." A "sign" I take to be always a sign *of* something: it represents or stands for something else, for which it serves as a kind of substitute. In contrast, a "symbol" is in no sense representative: it does not stand for anything other than itself. A symbol does not take the place of something else, it *does* something in its own right. The terminology here is not yet settled: it is the distinction that is fundamental, while the particular way of expressing it is arbitrary. What is important is to recognize that religious symbols belong with artistic and social symbols, in the group of non-representative and non-cognitive symbols. Such symbols can be said to "symbolize" not some external thing, but rather what they do, their functions.

What, then, are the functions of such non-representative symbols, including religious symbols? In the first place, they evoke an emotional response: in traditional terms, they act on the will rather than on the intellect. Secondly, they evoke in a group of men a common or shared response, although they would receive a different intellectual interpretation from different members of the group. They unite and organize the group's actions and commitments. Thirdly, they are able to communicate non-cognitive or "shared" experience, as is clear with artistic symbols. And, fourthly, religious symbols in particular can be said to disclose or "reveal" something about the world in which they function.

If we ask what it is that such symbols "reveal" or disclose about the world, it is clear that it is not what we should in the

ordinary sense call "knowledge." This revelation can be styled "knowledge" only equivocally or metaphorically. What such a symbol does disclose can be best approached by asking how we gain "insight" into the character and nature of another person, as contrasted with the "knowledge" we can learn by external observation of his behavior. When certain of his acts and words "reveal" to us what he really is, we often say that they are "symbols" of his true nature. If we ask just what this means, it seems, first, that they concentrate and sum up and unify a long experience we have enjoyed of him; and secondly, that they reveal his possibilities and powers. For what a man "really is" is not what he has done, his past behavior, but what he can do, the powers he has in him.

Generalizing from this example of human personality, which has always seemed the best clue to conceiving the Divine in the world, we may say that religious symbols, by unifying and bringing to a focus men's long experience of their universe, seem to reveal powers and possibilities inherent in the nature of things. They serve, not as instruments of knowledge of what the world has done, of the resources it has provided for men, but rather as instruments of vision, of what it could do, of what it might offer. Like Platonic ideas, they enable men to discern possibilities beyond the actual, powers not fully realized—they disclose what the nature of things "really is." That is why symbols are so closely connected with the power of imagination—if that be the organ of vision.

And so religious symbols, through concentrating the experience of mankind, seem to serve as an instrument of revelation—of vision—of powers and possibilities in the world. They lead to a vision of man in the world, of the human situation in its cosmic setting—to use Mr. Tillich's term, of man's "ultimate concern." Speaking most generally, they lead to a vision of the Divine.

It might be better to say that a symbol is functioning religiously, and the vision is genuinely religious, if the symbol does reveal man's ultimate concern, does disclose the Divine.

These powers and possibilities are very complex. In the vision they become unified–in a sense the disclosure is the revelation of their unification. Hence religious symbols serve as instru-

ments of unification. They unify men's experience in terms of their "organizing concern"; they unify the world in men's vision of the Divine. To reveal and unify the powers and possibilities inherent in the religious dimension man's experience of the world discloses—this seems to be the distinctive function of religious symbols.

We set out by distinguishing vision of ends and faith in means as the two fundamental poles of religion. On the one hand, there is the practical commitment to certain methods, reliance upon certain "ideals" of conduct. Religious symbols serve to strengthen that kind of religious commitment—to intensify and enhance and clarify a practical commitment to act in certain ways. On the other hand, there is the vision of the Divine such symbols also bring. Practical commitment and vision are in no sense to be divided or divorced from each other. But there does seem to be a kind of ultimacy and inclusiveness about the vision, entailing as it does also the commitment, which the practical commitment without the vision lacks. It is just this added penetration into a broader dimension that a naturalistic perspective brings to a commitment to the values of humanism.

3

I have been trying to speak here for those who might be called the "fellow-travelers of religion." These sensitive and thoughtful men share a concern with the part religion plays in human life, a devotion to what at its best it can do for men. But with most of its forms they can not do more than cooperate—they cannot participate actively and whole-heartedly themselves—unless they can find a way of understanding religion that will fit in with their way of understanding the world and human life, and a way of understanding the world and man's experience in it that will provide an intelligible place for the religious dimension that can be discovered in both. That is, they cannot rest content without a consistent philosophy; for them intellect integrity must form an essential part of any "pattern of religious faith." I have tried to suggest how the position that has here been called by the inadequate and perhaps misleading term philosophic "naturalism" can provide for many who are thus

incapable of sacrificing intellectual integrity just such ways of understanding the world that challenges men to practice and enjoy it.

This naturalistic way of understanding is a genuinely religious philosophy. For it finds in the world a "religious dimension" —what we have been calling "the Divine." It finds a greatness beyond man, powers and possibilities in the nature of things that are revealed and unified in religious vision. It finds what in the Western tradition men have called "visions of God."

Philosophic naturalism holds that all formulations of these visions, all ways of imagining and conceiving the Divine, all "ideas of God," whether those employed in the practice of the religious arts, like worship or prayer, or the refined and subtle concepts of the great philosophic theologians, are religious symbols. We can approach the Divine only through symbols; we cannot see God face to face. This latter is itself a symbolic statement.

It has been suggested also that there seem to be two poles of religious experience, practical commitment and vision of the Divine, poles which are intimately bound up with each other in mutual cooperation and interaction in the religious life. My own temper and experience lead me to take the vision as more ultimate than the practical commitment. I should be willing to say, again in terms of religious symbols, that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy him forever. I find I am not descended from a long line of Calvinists in vain. Men are saved by vision rather than by works—although works are the only test of vision, and for most men the vision seems to come only through works and in the midst of works—once more employing traditional symbols.

It should therefore be clear why I have doubts whether I can accurately be said to "represent" anything that could be called "humanism" in the present religious sense. I am certain I could not represent it in any exclusive way that would deny other values, the values associated with what we have taken as one fundamental pole of the religious life—the pole of vision.

But in considering "humanism," we are turning to the other pole of religious experience. We have pointed out that humanity is a certain religious temper, a certain set of values, to be con-

secrated and clarified through the techniques of religion. It involves an attitude toward and an appraisal of the nature and possibilities of man, and of his essential needs. This temper of humanism is in a sense opposed to, though certainly not wholly incompatible with, another religious temper—the temper of humility–the sense of unworthiness and impotence.

The humanist temper is very difficult to define satisfactorily. Let us start with a preliminary statement that would appear acceptable to many who are willing to call themselves religious "humanists" today. It would hardly, however, apply to other forms in which the humanist temper has expressed itself in earlier cultures, like that of the Greeks, or like certain strains of the Renaissance. For the humanism of the present is inevitably a "scientific" and a "democratic" humanism, because the humanist temper has felt so deeply the impact of those great spiritual movements in modern times. The first attempt at characterization runs: those sharing the humanist temper would view religion as primarily devotion to the ideals discoverable in human experience, and would rely on man's efforts, in cooperation with the natural resources he finds in his world, to bring them measurably into existence.

Such a statement would probably be accepted by most contemporary religious "humanists." But it is scarcely very satisfactory, since it hardly serves to distinguish the humanist temper from other tempers in the religious life. For among "the ideals discoverable in human experience" are surely those "revelations" of the Divine to the many prophets and saints in all the great cultures, who have brought them into human experience and embedded them there for us lesser mortals to "discover" afresh in our own lives. And among the "natural resources" man finds in his world—a world that displays a religious dimension—are the powers of religious vision, traditionally symbolized as "grace"—to say nothing of all the manifestations of what has been called "natural grace," and companionship and human institutions. Moreover, the humanist temper does indeed emphasize man's efforts, as opposed to the temper of impotence, which often holds that man can do nothing alone. But no man is alone; he cannot, even if he would, escape the support of his fellows. And mankind is in no significant sense

"alone"; man lives in a world which contains everything that human efforts can find to help and sustain his various enterprises.

Since this first attempt to delimit humanism, stated in the words of some of its contemporary adherents, turns out to be not too helpful, let us try again on a deeper and more universal level. Let us consider a very thoughtful and reflective statement made recently. This runs: "The humanist temper is man's awareness of a sense of human dignity and power, and of a sense of responsibility for cultivating and maintaining it, and for achieving an integrity and wholeness of human life." This definition has been summed up in slightly different terms as "man's need and power of self-control."

I take this statement as a text because I want to comment on certain of its aspects, to bring out the major factors in the humanist temper, the chief values involved, and the conception of the nature of man it implies. There is, in the first place, an emphasis on the power and dignity of man, on the worth of human personality. There is, secondly, an emphasis on the obligation to respect and cultivate that dignity and worth in oneself and in others. And, thirdly, there is an emphasis on responsibility, on self-control, on self-direction toward integrity and wholeness as the foundation on which the others rest.

Of these three factors, the underlying one, responsibility, implies that in some meaningful human sense man is "free." Man is not a slave to something outside himself. He is neither, as he has often been taken to be in the long tradition of religion, a slave to something "above" him, to a God conceived as wholly "other" and as inscrutable to man; nor, as he has frequently been portrayed in modern times, a slave to something "below" him, to a purely "mechanistic" order. The humanist temper has always protested against such "heteronomy," such subserviency to some law, whether religious or mechanical, imposed upon man from without.

But at the same time, "obligation" means that in so far as man recognizes that obligation, he is not wholly free. The very essence of the moral life is bondage, renunciation of certain "freedoms" and possibilities—certainly the renunciation of any "absolute" freedom—whatever that could mean. Obligation is a curtailment of the "freedom" to do wrong.

Both "freedom" and "obligation" are united in the notion of self-control. This idea has been the very core of the humanist temper from the Greeks down. It has always been conceived as something to be aimed at but as something man can never hope wholly to achieve. This tension between the aim and the failure to achieve complete success is the root of the "tragic sense of life," which has been associated with the humanist temper since the days of the Greeks and their tragic poets. Without the sense of human dignity and human greatness—without both freedom and obligation—there can be no genuine tragedy. Where human freedom is lacking—where a sense of unworthiness and impotence is very strong, and, again, where God's providence is felt to be all-controlling—there is little tragic sense of life, and little tragic poetry. Only because the awareness of human greatness is rarely wholly lost is this tragic sense kept alive in periods of despair and cynicism, like our own Age of Anxiety, or in periods of great religious confidence, like those two Ages of Reason in our Western tradition, the thirteenth and eighteenth centuries.

The reconciliation of "freedom" and "obligation," both intellectual and practical, is a complex, ever-shifting, never-"solved" problem, for it involves all that men have experienced and all that they have come to know about their life in the world. Since the intellectual reconciliation demands a way of understanding, since it is a philosophic task, it belongs to the "naturalistic" rather than to the "humanistic" aspect of naturalistic humanism. To be very brief, I judge a naturalist today would say that the old question, "Is the 'will' of man free?" is no longer meaningful. It is indeed essential to hold that "man" is in a humanly significant sense not wholly "unfree" or "enslaved." But "man" is free only in so far as what used to be called "reason" and has now been reconstructed into "intelligence" is free to discover truth—especially truth about what is good. In the measure that intelligence is "free"—and how small that measure is, historically, socially, and institutionally, is notorious—man can hope to determine his "will" by knowledge rather than by ignorance. The practical human problem is to increase this "freedom of reason" or of "intelligence"—the determination of intelligence by truth and good—and by so increasing it to

minimize "freedom of the will," the freedom to choose the wrong and the bad—what St. Augustine called the *posse peccare*.

The second factor in the humanist temper is the obligation to respect and cultivate the dignity and worth of human personality, in oneself and in others. This, too, has been a fundamental humanist value since Greek times. It is central in Greek humanism, in the poets, in Plato and in Aristotle, though it was not universalized, not made, as we say "egalitarian," till the days of the Stoics. Before then, such a universalizing insistence on the equality of man appears only in the Cynics, those heirs of the cosmopolitan thought of the Sophistic movement.

Men have always asked, "*Why* should we hold that human personality is inviolable?" We Westerners have come in fact to share this moral commitment, whatever the reasons we may assign for it, and whatever our actual practice may have been or may continue to be. Every great moral and social movement in the West has been inspired by some form of this conviction. It is a conviction deeply embedded in the Hebrew ethic of non-violation: men must not violate the holy thing in every man. It was reinforced by the Stoic teaching that all men are embodiments or instances of "reason." As Cicero put it, reason is what all men share with the gods. The Stoics held that in every man there is a divine spark of reason, which he must preserve intact and unsullied and carry back at death to the great ocean of fire which is the Divine in the world.

It is held by many today, Christians and Jews alike, that the inviolability of human personality is dependent on seeing all men as "children" of the same God. And certainly these two great religious traditions have come to consecrate and celebrate this fundamental conviction of value through religious symbols—the "Fatherhood" of God and the "brotherhood" of man. The humanist temper has always welcomed such symbols, and in its religious expression has always held that the Divine must be conceived in such a way as to make them seem appropriate.

But neither such religious symbols nor the many more intellectual and philosophical attempts to understand man and his relations to his fellow man and to the nature of things seem to have furnished the real ground for this abiding conviction.

None of the many "arguments" that have been variously advanced in support of it, though they have all seemed in a more or less adequate way to fit it in with men's other knowledge and beliefs, has ever carried the force of the conviction itself. The philosophic formulations of man's moral experience in the Western tradition have usually, like those of the Stoics or of Kant, emphasized the common possession by all men of at least the potentialities of "reason"—more recently, of "intelligence"—while other less intellectual views of human nature have turned rather to all men's common capacity for suffering, or to their common confrontation of "the human situation."

Such philosophic formulations, and still more such religious symbols as the universal Fatherhood of God, may well serve to strengthen this basic conviction. But alas! they are also quite compatible with its practical violation. And it would be hard indeed to show that that conviction is today any stronger in those who give it a religious expression and consecration, and support it by a theological "reason," than in many of those who do not.

Such a basic moral conviction seems to be rooted in man's long ethical experience. That experience is very complex. It certainly includes the deepening of moral insight which the Hebrews both owed to and expressed through their inspired prophets. If the prophet indeed speak with authority, he finds an awakened response in the hearts of men. His voice may be the voice of God; but if he be a true prophet he also speaks in the accents of a deepened experience. But ethical experience includes also the way in which that long embodiment of men's past encounters with life comes home to us—in that profund revulsion that occurs when we confront what comes to us as an instance of injustice and violation, when we cry out in vivid realization, "But that is wrong!"

The humanist temper tends to take such moral experience as primary and basic, and to see its religious expression and consecration as in some fashion derivative. It tends to conceive the Divine in terms imposed by moral experience, and to behold its visions of God largely as the fruit of such experience. The temper of humility, of self-abnegation, inclines to do the reverse. It takes the vision of God as primary, and moral conviction as an outcome and consequence of religious faith. It is indeed

not wholly without justification in thus claiming a religious source for moral wisdom. For if ethical experience be taken in an exclusive and self-sufficient sense, if all validity be denied to what is felt and expressed in the other pole of the religious life, in the temper of humility, then clearly such a complacent moralism is not adequate to men's deepest insights—it is lacking in a certain religious dimension.

But the humanist temper, while recognizing the intimate connections between ethical experience and religious vision, would insist on the autonomy of the moral life. That life is not "founded" on "faith in God," in the sense that it would be quite impossible without such faith. The moral life may involve, and it usually has involved, some vision of the Divine, conceived in ethical terms—the right, the just, the good. And such vision may well be the choicest fruit of ethical experience; my own judgment inclines that way. But the moral life is certainly not "founded" on any particular vision of God, or mediated by any particular set of religious symbols. Such visions and symbols may at their best strengthen ethical conviction. But equally, as history sadly records, they may blunt and obscure moral insight. And the course of religions does reveal a never-ending tension and recurrent conflicts between a deepened ethical sensitivity and older religious symbols.

There remains the factor in the humanist temper we listed first, "a sense of human dignity and power." Of the many powers of man exercised in cooperation with those of the world in which man finds himself, including all those Baconian powers of control over natural forces of which we Americans are so aware, I should like to make central here the power of self-criticism—a power equally exercised in cooperation with the powers of man's world, that is, of a world that displays to man an ethical and religious dimension.

Thinking of the patron saint of reason and philosophy, we might call this human power of self-criticism the Socratic power. It is man's power to examine his life in the light of those ideals which, as Socrates put it, are "deathless and divine." It is the power of using what the Greeks called "*nous,*" and what we today should call a combination of imagination, vision, and intelligence, to increase man's moral wisdom to deal with the

facts of wrong, injustice, and evil in his life. Thinking of the great religious geniuses of the Hebrew people, we might call this human power of self-criticism the prophetic power. It is man's power to use the vision of a God who condemns man's unrighteousness to achieve a moral perspective that will enable him to deal with and rise above the facts of evil and sin.

In this Age of Anxiety, evil has acquired, as Whitehead puts it, "great perceptive insistence." And our sensitive theologians have rehabilitated "sin," with telling effect in the religious life, if not in the affairs of men. It is doubtless true that the temper and the buffets of our age have made us realize more clearly certain of the less rosy aspects of moral experience—its enormous difficulties and complexities, its ultimately insoluble problems and its genuinely tragic choices. But after all, "sin" was not invented with the atomic bomb, nor did evil makes its entry into the world with the First World War.

The humanist temper has never been blind to these insistent facts of life; the bitter contrast between what at his best man might be and the spotted actuality has always impressed upon the humanist temper a tragic sense of life. Human nature is finite and limited, and these limits may indeed be viewed as "sin." For religious purposes, for the purposes of repentance, contrition, vision, perhaps above all for self-criticism, this is an excellent thing to do. It is in fact one of the major techniques of many forms of religion.

The humanist temper is not against "sin," though some of the stern prophets of the temper of humility often speak as though humanists had never heard of it. It is well to remember, to be sure, that useful as may be the conviction of sin for the purposes of the preacher, it is after all only the first stage in the larger economy of salvation. To stimulate the conviction of sin with no promise of saving grace, surely raises serious questions. But fundamental as is "sin" as a religious symbol, without further analysis it still remains a mere label. And as for understanding, and perhaps even doing something about these clear limits set to human nature, to stop with a label is to take the determinate outcome of a very complex cooperation of human and institutional factors as an unanalyzable and brute force. Even our very adolescent science of man has already taught us

much about the causes of various forms of sin, enough to suggest the possibility at least of an art of healing. Indeed there is at present a very real danger that many religious leaders may be tempted to reduce religion itself to the narrow compass of an art of amateur psychotherapy.

But it is clear that there will always be some limits to what human nature can become. There will always be "sin"—enough sin to satisfy any prophet or preacher to use for his very important religious purposes. At the same time, it is likewise clear that no specific limit can be found in human nature that is immutable and cannot be pushed back. So the prospect seems to be for bigger and better sins—or rather, if we are very optimistic, for more refined and, perhaps for that very reason, more corrosive sins. For the increasing complexity of our social organization involves multiplying opportunities for twisted and tangled relations between men.

Much that has been said here about the humanist temper has been close to Mr. Aubrey and the "Liberal Protestantism" for which he has spoken as a representative. On the matter of "sin," naturalistic humanism, I think—and certainly my own feelings—stand closer to the "Classical Protestantism" for which Mr. Brown speaks. It may be only the Calvinistic naturalism in me coming out, but I confess I have always felt Reinhold Niebuhr's profoundly moving vision of human life, in its aspirations for truth and goodness as well as in its bitter failures and self-frustrations, to be essentially just. This attitude belongs, I judge, to the "naturalism" rather than to the "humanism" of naturalistic humanism. I have always taken Mr. Niebuhr as a Christian naturalist—a "naturalist with vision," as he himself once put it. For he is surely naturalistic in emphasizing the double aspect of human nature: that aspect in which like other natural beings man is "limited" and "finite" and forever confined to the perspectives which his particular station makes possible; and that aspect in which man is distinguished from all other natural beings by capacities both for envisaging ideal possibilities beyond the actual, and for using those capacities in a fashion to shame the beasts. Above all, in his stern drive against all pretended absolutes, all "absolutizing of the relative," which he uses with consummate skill as a technique of

self-criticism—a criticism of our own so-called "Christian" and American shortcomings and sins—Mr. Niebuhr is the comrade of every naturalistic critic of ethical experience. He is a cardinal present-day example of the humanist power of self-criticism—self-criticism through prophetic vision.

I could only wish that Mr. Niebuhr would place his vision of "the persistence of sin in the lives of the redeemed"—which has always seemed to the unregenerate rather obvious, and at this late date is scarcely news—in a more balanced perspective. This vision claims to be "realistic." But it may well be as much the emotional expression of a current temper as was the earlier faith in man's potential "divinity." Disillusionment bred of revulsion from former "illusions" hardly affords a balanced judgment and appraisal of human nature, both its possibilities of greatness and its finite limitations—limitations which Mr. Niebuhr rightly points out are very active and dynamic. Theologically speaking, Mr. Niebuhr has always found the incarnation a hard doctrine to stomach.

Man's power of self-criticism, his power of seeing himself in a broader perspective, enables him to go beyond the Stoic attitude of sheer endurance in meeting and dealing with inevitable evil. It makes it possible for him to take that evil as a challenge to reveal his stature as a man, as a moral personality capable of using evil as an instrument to further growth of character and of insight and vision. Of the many forms of evil, the hardest for a sensitive man to bear are those he finds within his own breast. The most tragic problem of all is, how can a man live with himself? Only by achieving a "beatitude" or "blessedness" of soul, a serenity of spirit that has faced evil and risen above it, that has found deliverance from evil in the vision of a good that places evil—even the evil in one's own heart, the evil of "sin"—in a proper perspective.

Men need such a vision of a "spiritual" ideal that will transcend their finite ends. They need an end for living that can stand against outward frustration and failure, and serve as an incentive toward striving on to victory against insuperable odds—a victory that will not, like merely finite and temporal goals, turn to dust and ashes in the grasp. With such a vision, men can wrest victory out of the very jaws of defeat. For in disaster

finite ends are revealed as finite, and man sees himself in his true stature as what we call a "spiritual" being. Living as he must within the narrow limits of time and space, he can yet behold a vision that raises him above those limits, and above the petty conditions of existence, and reveals at once his weakness and his greatness. That revelation is the very essence of tragedy. Tragedy has always appeared as the supreme creative achievement of the human spirit, the supreme illustration of the human power of self-criticism.

I have been speaking of "the nature and destiny of man," of human freedom and human obligation and self-control, of ethical experience and spiritual vision—themes I was asked to touch upon. I have scarcely managed to "cover" them. But I hope I have at least suggested how men can give religious expression and consecration to these fundamental human concerns without sacrificing intellectual integrity.

I wish I could pursue these themes further, where they lead into other fundamental religious problems. But there is one final point I must make. It is the social necessity of an institutional embodiment of the humanist function of self-criticism in the religious organization, the church. The church can and must exercise this self-criticism as a "spiritual power," with both the right and the duty to criticize all "temporal" powers.

There has been here no attempt to state the social functions of religion; they are many and complex, and very difficult to sum up in any kind of brief description. But it has been pointed out that experience has now made it clear that a society cannot exist without religions, and without an institutional embodiment of these religions in churches. In our day and generation, it is of primary importance for a society to possess recognized organs of social self-criticism. On this point the American tradition is fortunately clear. American thought has always supported the contention that religious leaders have the right and the duty to criticize other institutions, including the acts of the political establishment, in the name of a higher spiritual insight. No American preacher—and all have on occasion fancied themselves prophets—has ever felt himself inhibited in his God-given right to tell the powers that be where to get off. This notion of an independent spiritual power—an independent

vantage-point immune to secular control—has always been central in the American religious tradition. It has been kept from the familiar historic dangers associated with the notion of a single and established "spiritual power," partly by the American principle of the separation of church and state, perhaps still more deeply by its roots in the fundamental religious pluralism of our country. In America "spiritual powers" must be plural; there can and must be no perilous monopoly.

But the churches, conceiving themselves in the historic rôle of independent spiritual powers, have served to keep American governments within bounds, to preserve them from the occupational disease of pretending to an absolute and sovereign authority. This recognized function has made possible the expression of a spiritual self-criticism, which has never hesitated to assert its independence of a reigning and often complacent secular opinion. This has increasingly come to appear as a very precious part of the American heritage, one of the most powerful factors in the American ethos. It is perhaps the basic reason behind our American conviction that "it can't happen here," that the American tradition will be strong enough to resist the tendencies making for a totalitarian state, and to withstand the insidious blandishments of the contemporary religion of nationalism.

But that power of self-criticism needs strong institutions, strong churches. On this point naturalistic humanism can cooperate wholeheartedly with all the forces in all the churches devoted to establishing conditions that will foster human dignity, and maintain the opportunities for achieving an integrity and wholeness of human life.

Bibliography

Naturalistic Humanism

Y. H. Krikorian, ed., *Naturalism and the Human Spirit* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1944), esp. Sterling P. Lamprecht, "Naturalism and Religion," and J. H. Randall, Jr., "The Nature of Naturalism."

Edwin A. Burtt, *Types of Religious Philosophy* (Harper, New York and London, 1939), ch. 9, "Humanism."

J. H. Randall, Jr., "The Meaning of Religion for Man," in W. E. Hocking and others, *Preface to Philosophy* (Macmillan Company, New York, 1946).

For a treatment of religious symbols: Paul Tillich, *The Dynamics of Faith* (Harper, New York, 1957).

Philosophical Foundations

George Santayana, *Reason in Religion* (C. Scribners, New York, 1905. Also published by Collier Books, AS172); *Interpretations of Poetry and Religion* (Scribner's Sons, New York, 1900).

Felix Adler, *An Ethical Philosophy of Life* (D. Appleton & Company, New York and London, 1918); *The Reconstruction of the Spiritual Ideal* (D. Appleton & Company, New York and London, 1924).

John Dewey, *Experience and Nature* (Open Court Publishing Company, Chicago and London, 1925); *A Common Faith* (Yale University Press, New Haven, 1934). For a fuller statement of Dewey's thought on religion, see J. H. Randall, Jr., "The Religion of Shared Experience," in Sidney Ratner, ed., *The Philosopher of the Common Man* (G. P. Putnam & Son, New York, 1940).

Max C. Otto, *Things and Ideals* (H. Holt & Company, New York, 1928); *The Human Enterprise* (F. S. Crofts & Company, New York, 1940).

Roy W. Sellars, *The Next Step in Religion* (Macmillan Company, New York, 1918), *Religion Coming of Age* (Macmillan, New York, 1928).

F. J. E. Woodbridge, *An Essay on Nature* (Columbia University Press, New York, 1940).

Varying Types of Religious Humanism

Julian S. Huxley, *Religion Without Revelation* (Harper & Brothers, New York and London, 1927).

Walter Lippmann, *Preface to Morals* (Macmillan Company, New York, 1929).

Edward Scribner Ames, *Religion* (H. Holt & Company, New York, 1929).

A. E. Haydon, *The Quest of the Ages* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1929); *Man's Search for the Good Life* (Harper & Brothers, New York and London, 1937).

Nathaniel Schmidt, *The Coming Religion* (Macmillan Company, New York, 1930).

Charles F. Potter, *Humanism, A New Religion* (Simon & Schuster, New York, 1930); *Humanizing Religion* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1933).

Curtis W. Reese, *Humanist Religion* (Macmillan Company, New York, 1931); *The Meaning of Humanism* (The Beacon Press, Boston, 1945).

J. A. C. F. Auer, *Humanism States its Case* (The Beacon Press, Boston, 1933).
Henry N. Wieman, *The Source of Human Good* (University of Chicago Press, Chicago, 1946).
Corliss Lamont, *Humanism as a Philosophy* (Philosophical Library, New York, 1949).
Sterling P. Lamprecht, *Our Religious Traditions* (Harvard University Press, Cambridge, 1950).
Philip H. Phenix, *Intelligible Religion* (Harper & Brothers, New York, 1954).
C. J. Ducasse, *A Philosophical Scrutiny of Religion* (Roland Press Company, New York, 1953).
Erwin R. Goodenough, *Toward a Mature Faith* (Prentice-Hall, New York, 1955).
Edwin A. Burtt, *Man Seeks the Divine* (Harper, New York, 1957).

Index

Abraham, 115
  covenant with, 141, 151
  God of, 90-92
Adler, Felix, 157
American Catholicism, *see* Roman Catholicism
American Protestantism, *see* Protestantism
Amos, 153
Anglicanism, 8, 79
Anselm, St., 29-30
Anti-legalism, 56
Apostolic succession, 25
Aquinas, St., *see* Thomas Aquinas, St.
Aristotelianism, Christianized, 92
Aristotle, 90, 111, 175
Atheism, 70-71
Atomic bomb, 178
Aubrey, Prof. Edwin E., 7, 11, 60-82, 100, 179
Augustine, St., 29, 31, 39, 44, 89, 95, 175
Authority, problem of:
  in classical Protestantism, 23-25
  in Judaism, 64
  in liberal Protestantism, 64-67
  in Roman Catholicism, 119-120

Babbitt, Irving, 113
Baillie, John, 42 *n.*, 70 *n.*
Baptism, sacrament of, 47
Baptists, 22
Barth, Karl, 29, 112, 125
Beatific Vision, 93
Beatrice, in *Divine Comedy,* 106
Bede (Baeda), St., 88
Bennett, J. C., 78 *n.*
Bernadette, St., 88
Bernard of Clairvaux, St., 92-93, 95, 105-106
Bible:
  absence of argument for existence of God in, 70-71, 131
  belief in, vs. belief in God, 27-28
  centrality and authority of, 25-28
  as final authority, in classical Protestantism, 23-24
  Hebrew, 141-142; *see also* Torah
  historical criticism of, 63-64
  human experience in, 64-65
  literalism and, 9
  "open," 48
  vs. tradition, 24-27
Bill of Rights, 84
Blessed Virgin:
  in Catholic doctrine, 109-110
  in *Divine Comedy,* 92
Body-mind problem, 67-68
Bridges, Horace, 62
Brightman, E. S., 70 *n.*
Brown, Robert McAfee, 9, 11-12, 19-57
Buber, Martin, 85-86, 111, 125

Calhoun, R. L., 67 *n.*
Calvin, John, 20-21, 31, 39, 46-47, 53, 54, 55
Calvinism, 31-32, 171
Calvinistic theology, 157
Catholic Church, *see* Roman Catholic Church; Roman Catholicism
Catholic person, defined, 117
Christ, *see* Jesus Christ
Christian humanism, 159-160
  see also Humanism
Christianity, as religion of fellowship, 66-67
Church:
  as community of faith, 19
  "inescapability" of, 43-49
  origins of, in perspective of classical Protestantism, 44
  role of, in liberal Protestantism, 80-81
  Roman Catholic, *see* Roman Catholic Church
Church and state:
  American tradition of, 181-182
  in Naturalistic Humanism, 181-182
  in Roman Catholicism, 117-118
Cicero, Marcus Tullius, 175

Classical Protestantism, 12-13, 19-57, 60
centrality and authority of Bible in, 25-28
defined, 19, 28-29
doctrine of God in, 30-36; *see also* God
inescapability of Church in, 43-49
nature and destiny of man in, 38-43
predestination and, 32-34
problem of authority in, 23-27
as religion of "free grace," 57
role of theology in, 22-23
see also Liberal Protestantism; Protestantism
Coffin, Henry Sloane, 36 *n.*
Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 65
Columbia University, 156
Commandments, yoke of, in Judaism, 129
Community, idea of, vs. totalitarianism, 13
Community Church of New York, 157
Confucianism, 66
Congregational singing, 48
Corinthians, 45, 76
Corporate religion, ethics and, 78-81
Cotton, J. H., 69 *n.*
Covenant:
establishment of, 44-45
significance of, in Judaism, 150-153
Crucifixion:
and conquest of evil, 35
and God's love, 42
Cynics, 175

Danby, Herbert, 130 *n.*
Dante Alighieri, 91-96, 105-109
Davies, D. R., 40 *n.*
Dead, resurrection of, in Judaism, 130-131
Descartes, René, 96
Deutero-Isaiah, 134, 151
Deuteronomy, 129, 137
Dewey, John, 164
Divine, vision of, and religious symbols, 168-170
Divine Beauty, 107
Divine Comedy, 92-95, 106-109
Divine Love, in Judaism, 136
Donahue, Prof. Charles, 8, 10, 83-125, 128
Duns Scotus, Blessed, 89

Eastern Orthodox tradition, 8
Ecclesia, in Roman Catholicism, 87
Ecumenical movement, 48
Ecumenicism, Roman Catholic, 124-125
Eleazar, Rabbi, 146
Eliezer, Rabbi, 138
Elijah, 146-147
Empathy, 8
defined, 83
Episcopalians, 22
Eschatology, 49, 78-79
free grace and, 54
in Roman Catholicism, 117
Essentialist knowledge, 104
Ethical Culture Society, 13, 157
Ethics:
and corporate religion, in liberal Protestantism, 78-81
heart of, in Protestantism, 52-57
Eucharist sacrifice, Roman Catholic, 109
Evil, God's responsibility for, 34-35
see also Sin
Evolution, theory of, 71
Existentialist philosophies, Catholic rejection of, 103-104
"Existential" knowledge, Roman Catholicism and, 103-110
Exodus, 56, 154
Ezekiel, 138, 153
Ezra, 151

Faith:
exclusive, as root of all religious evil, 158-159
justification by, 43
and natural religion, 69-70
vs. reason, 29-30
in Roman Catholicism, 100-101
"Faith of our fathers," vs. classical Protestantism, 19-20
Fall, doctrine of, in Roman Catholicism, 114
False gods, allegiance to, 56

Family, in Roman Catholic pastoral practice, 108-109
Fellowship, in Western religions, 66-67, 76
Ferré, N. F. S., 63 *n.*, 64 *n.*, 69 *n.*, 70 *n.*
Finkelstein, Dr. Louis, 130
First Amendment, U.S. Constitution, 84, 117, 120, 122
Fosdick, Harry Emerson, 64 *n.*
Francis of Assisi, St., 88
Freedom:
  in liberal Protestantism, 79-80
  vs. obligation, in Naturalistic Humanism, 173-175
Free grace, *see* Grace, free
Free will, 174-175
Fundamentalism, 9, 27
  reasons for rejection of, 27-28

Galatians, 56
Gelasius, Pope St., 121
God:
  as Absolute or Final Cause, 166-167
  activity of, in Jesus Christ, 28, 36, 76-77
  alienation from, 40
  allegiance to, 56-57, 129
  approaches to belief in, 70-72
  attempts to describe in theology, 23
  authority of, 23-24
  beginning of history in, 51
  concept of, in Judaism, 132-136; in liberal Protestantism, 70-73
  confrontation of human person with, in Roman Catholicism, 90-95
  covenant with, in Old Testament, 44-45, 150-153
  creative activity of, 72-73
  doctrine of, 28-29, 30-36
  eternal law of, 79
  existence of, in classical Protestantism, 28-29; in Judaism, 132-133; in liberal Protestantism, 70-71; in Roman Catholicism, 96-103
  "faith" in own vision of, 158
  Fatherhood of, 175-176
  feeling of nearness of, 62
  generosity of, 140
  gift of salvation from, 42
  "grace" of, 30; *see also* Grace
  immersion in, 77
  initiative of, 65
  "jealousy" of, 140
  Kingdom of, as foundation of all things, 77
  knowledge of, 28-30
  long history of idea of, 163-164
  as Love, 77
  love of, in theology, 22
  love for man, 30-31
  as loving Father, 165-166
  mystical presence of, 72
  offer of fellowship to man from, 39
  as religious symbol, 165-168
  and responsibility for evil, 34-35
  revelation of, through acts vs. through statements, 26-27
  Roman Catholic mysticism and, 95-100
  seeking and reconciling nature of, 19, 28-30
  sovereignty of, 31-32
  as "suffering servant" in Jesus Christ, 31
  as symbol for moral ideas, 163-164
  trinity of, 73
  visions of, vs. "faith" in, 158-159
  wrath of, 40
  see also Jesus Christ
Good works, reasons for doing, 52-53
Goodwill, ecumenicism of, 124-125
Grace:
  in classical Protestantism, 30-31
  "free," 43, 51
  natural, 172
  in Roman Catholicism, 86
  self-acceptance and, 43
Greek philosophy, 73-74
Greenberg, Dr. Simon, 8, 11, 128-155
Greene, Theodore M., 158

Halevi, Yehuda, 153
Hallevi, R. Judah, 131
Hartshorne, C. S., 70 *n.*

Heaven, Kingdom of, 129
Hebrews, 50
  see also Judaism
Heidelberg Catechism, 52-53
Hell, 41
Hillel, Rabbi, 149
Hinduism, 66, 158
Historical method, 63-64
History, meaning of, 51-52, 77, 80
Hocking, William Ernest, 61, 70 *n.*
Hodgson, Leonard, 64 *n.*
Holy Communion, as new communal institution, 14
Holy Scriptures, *see* Bible
Holy Spirit, 46
  community with, 73
"Hope," fulfilment of, 11
Hosea, 135
Hukotai, 141
Human destiny, *see* Man, nature and destiny of
Human dignity, 177
Human experience, God's stimulus in, 64-65
Human intelligence, faith in, vs. "faith" in God, 158-159
Human life, as response to a seeking God, 19
Human purpose, 71-72, 76-78
Humanism:
  delimiting of, 171-174
  meaning of, 156-157
  naturalistic, *see* Naturalistic Humanism
  as religious temper, 159-160, 171-172
Humanist Manifesto, 157
hymns, singing of, 48

Idolatry, 145
  dangers of, 56
Immortality:
  in Judaism, 138
  re-examination of concept of, 113
Incarnation:
  doctrine of, 79
  in Roman Catholic theology, 116
"Individualistic religion," 43
Individuation, 8
Industrial society, human and religious problems in, 107-109
Inge, Rev. Dean, 60
Institutes, The, 21, 53
Isaiah, 151, 153-154
Israel, covenant with, as concept of Judaism, 149-153
I-thou relationship:
  in Naturalistic Humanism, 165-166
  in Roman Catholicism, 86, 106, 110, 114-116

Jacob, Rabbi, 138
James, Book of, 27
Jeremiah, 45, 136
Jesus Christ:
  apostolic witness to, in New Testament, 20-21
  birth, death and resurrection of, 19, 26-27, 31
  and Catholic doctrine of God, 30-31
  centrality of, in classical Protestantism, 36-38
  divinity of, 26, 74-75
  dual nature of, 37-38, 74-75
  God's activity in, 28
  and God's victory over evil, 35
  in liberal Protestant view, 73-76
  as *Logos,* 74
  person of, 37
  presence of, and enacted Word, 47-48
  resurrection of, and origin of Christian Church, 45
  schism from, 20-21
  "second coming" of, 50-51
  as *Totus Christus* in Roman Catholicism, 101
  two natures of, 37-38, 74-75
  "work" of, 36
  see also God
Jewish Theological Seminary of America, 128
Jews, history of, in Old Testament, 44
John of the Cross, St., 95
John the Evangelist, St., 104-105
Johnson, Dr. F. Ernest, 7-14, 128, 156, 162
Jones, R. M., 69 *n.*
Joshua, Rabbi, 146

Judaism, 128-155
absence of theistic dogma in, 11
authority in, 64
concept of suffering in, 153-154
doctrine of God in, 30-31
"end of days" concept in, 136-138
God's transcendence in, 133-135
goodness and evil in, 137
immortality in, 138
indeterminacy and conscious ambiguity in, 128-132
intellectual freedom in, 131
Israel and, 149-150
Messiah concept and, 137
Noahide laws and, 143-144
optimism of, 136-139
proselytizing in, 152
reason and revelation in, 144-147
as religion of fellowship, 66-67
"servant of Lord" concept in, 153-155
sin and evil in, 139-141
study of Torah and, 141-143, 148-149
unity and diversity in, 147-148
value concepts in, 131-132
Judeo-Christian tradition, 78, 100, 114, 118, 120, 125
confrontation of God in, 90
role of man in, 110-112

Kadushin, Dr. Max, 130
Kant, Immanuel, 176
Kaufman, Ezekiel, 133 *n.*
Kierkegaard, Soren, 112, 158
Kingdom of Heaven, 129
Knowledge, essentialist and existentialist, 103-105
Knox, John, 47
Koinonia, 76
Kuzari, The, 153

Laissez faire, 86
Last things, doctrine of, 49, 78
Leo XIII, Pope, 96, 119, 120-121
Leviticus, 154
Liberal Protestantism, 12, 60-81
basic proposition of, 61
concept of man in, 67-69
fellowship idea in, 66-67, 76
freedom in, 80-81
human destiny in, 67-69, 71-72, 76-78
personal experience and, 64-76
role of Church in, 80-81
role of theology in, 65
"stimulus" and response in, 64-65
see also Classical Protestantism; Protestantism
Lieberman, Saul, 141 *n.*
Life, ultimate dimension of, in classical Protestantism, 49-52
see also Human life; Man
Liturgy, Roman Catholic interest in, 109
Logos, 74, 166
Lord's Supper, sacrament of, 26, 47
Loshevet, 136
Luther, Martin, 21, 27, 39-40, 46-47, 53, 55

Maimonides, Moses ben Maimon, 91, 125, 131
Man:
as animal, 68
concepts of, in liberal Protestantism, 67-69, 71-72, 76-78
freedom and obligation of, in Naturalistic Humanism, 173-175
as God's image, 39
godlike qualities of, 113
nature and destiny of: in classical Protestantism, 38-43; in liberal Protestantism, 76-78; in Naturalistic Humanism, 178-181; in Roman Catholicism, 110-115
problem of living with self, 180-181
Maritain, Jacques, 125
Mary, *see* Blessed Virgin
Matthew, 43
Medieval poetry, 107
Meir, Rabbi, 148
Mendelssohn, Moses, 128
Mergers, of protestant denominational groups, 48

Messiah, coming of, in Judaism, 137
Metaphysics, and Roman Catholicism, 100-101
Midrash, 135
Milton, John, 91, 94
Mishna, 129-130, 137-138, 141-142
Mitzvotai, 141
Moore, George F., 132 *n.*
Murray, Father J., Courtney, S. J., 120-121, 125
My Idea of God, 62
Mystical Body, in Roman Catholicism, 87, 122-123
Mystical presence, 72-73
Mysticism, in Roman Catholicism, 95 *ff.*

Nachmanides, 131
Nathan, Rabbi, 146-147
Natural religion, liberal Protestant view of, 69-70
Naturalism, vs. Humanism, 161
  as religious philosophy, 170-171
Naturalistic Humanism, 9, 12
  concept of sin in, 178-180
  human dignity in, 177
  moral life and, 177
  nature and destiny of man in, 178-181
  self-criticism in, 179-180
  see also Humanism; Man
Nature and Destiny of Man, The, 38
Neo-orthodox theology, 60
Neo-Thomism, 84-85, 97-100
Newman, John Henry, Cardinal, 89
New Testament:
  "community" of Christians and, 44
  emphasis of, on Christ's work, 36
  God as Redeemer in, 75
  Reformation and, 20
  as story of Jesus Christ, 26-27
Nicene Creed, 63
Niebuhr, Reinhold, 11, 38, 56, 125, 159
  appraisal of as Christian naturalist, 179-180
Noah, 143-144
Nous, 177
Numbers, 129

Old Testament:
  as history of Jews, 44
  as locus of authority, 24
  as preparation for Jesus Christ, 26
Optimism, in Judaism, 136-139
Original sin, 12
Orthodoxy, "wooden," 25
Orwell, George, 86
Ousia, concept of, 74

Paradise Lost, 91
Pascal, Blaise, 89, 90-91
Paul, St., 39, 42-43, 75-76, 103
Pentateuch, 130, 142, 144
Perfectionism, heresy of, 159
Personal experience, vs. corporate experience, 64
Personal struggle, religious faith and, 61
Personalist conviction, in Judaic religions, 86
Pessimism, 12
Philosophy:
  defined, 98-99
  human experience and, 65
Physical sciences, methodology of, and Roman Catholicism, 99-100
Pilate, Pontius, 19
Pius XII, 87
Plato, 111, 143, 175
Pluralism, religious, 158
Pope, as locus of authority, 23
Predestination, 31-33
Presbyterians, 21 *n.*
Progress, idea of, 11, 50, 77-78
Proselytism, in Judaism, 152
Protestant, meaning of, 20
Protestant ethics, heart of, 52-57
Protestantism:
  classical, *see* Classical Protestantism
  defined, 19
  "dissenting" tradition of, in America, 8
  liberal, *see* Liberal Protestantism
Protestant loyalty, 55-56
"Protestant principle," defined, 55

Protestant Reformation, *see* Reformation
Protestant scholasticism, 25
Protestant sects, number of, in U.S., 22
Psalms, 135
  as paean to Torah, 148 *n.*
Psychologists, and conception of man, 67
Punishment, divine, 41

Rabbinic theology, 130
Rahner, Karl, 88
Randall, John Herman, Jr., 9, 12, 156-182
Rationalism, Roman Catholic rejection of, 104
Rauschenbusch, W., 78 *n.*
Raven, C. E., 78 *n.*
Reason:
  vs. faith, in classical Protestantism, 29; in Roman Catholicism, 101-102
  vs. revelation, in Judaism, 144-147
Redemption, punishment as form of, 41
Reformation, Protestant, 20
  continuation of, 21, 24
  importance of, 20-22
  origins of Church in, 44
  vocation and, 54-55
Reformation studies, resurgence of, 21-22
Religion:
  authority in, *see* Authority, problem of
  crimes of, 158
  "fellow travelers" of, 170
  social functions of, 181
  social need for, 163, 181
  understanding of, 161-163, 171
Religious cooperation, interfaith, 125
Religious experience, vs. theological formulas, 61
Religious faith, meaning of, 62-63
Religious pluralism, 158
Religious symbols, 164
  functions of, 169-170
  and idea of God, 171
Responsibility, vs. salvation, 33
Resurrection:
  and conquest of evil, 35
  and origin of Church, 45
Revelation, Book of, 27
Richardson, A., 28, 30 *n.*, 37 *n.*
Robert Bellarmine, St., 89
Robinson, H. W., 67 *n.*
Roman Catholic:
  character and nature of, 122-123
  locus of authority for, 23
  non-participation of, in Protestant services, 124
  see also Roman Catholicism
Roman Catholic Church:
  authority vs. authoritarianism in, 119
  on existence of God, 71
  juridical structure of, 87
  as living society, 89
  as supernatural society, 84
Roman Catholicism, 83-125
  attitude toward church and state in America, 10, 120-123
  attitude toward political questions, 120
  church and state in, 117-125
  concentration of authority in, 10
  confrontation of human person with God in, 84-89, 90-95
  cooperation with Protestantism and Judaism, 125
  doctrine of God in, 30
  emphatic appreciation of, 84
  and "existential" knowledge, 103-110
  faith and, 100-101
  handbooks on, 85
  human history in, 115-125
  as Judaic religion, 85
  mysticism in, 95 *ff.*
  natural man in, 117
  nature and destiny of man in, 110-115
  personalist and dynamic character of, 89
  philosophical demonstrations in, 98
  philosophy and, 95 *ff.*
  reason vs. faith in, 101-102
  relation of, to "outside" religions, 123-125

role of Church in, 87-88
saints and scholars in, 88-89
social theory in, 107-108
"supernatural" in, 112-115
teaching of liturgy in, 109
theology and, 95 *ff*.
see also Roman Catholic
Ruth, 152
Ryan, Msgr. George, 121
Ryan, Msgr. John A., 10

Sabatier, Auguste, 64 *n*.
Saints, communion of, 49
Salvation:
initiatory action of God in, 32
meaning of, in classical Protestantism, 42
Sanhedrin, 130, 138
Schechter, Solomon, 131
Schism, Calvin's opposition to, 20-21
Schneider, Herbert W., 159, 164
Science, human experience and, 65
Scriptures, *see* Bible; New Testament; Old Testament
Self, problem of "living" with, 180-181
"Self-acceptance," 12-13
God's love and, 42-43
Self-criticism, 179-180
Shema, 129
Sin:
defined, 40
vs. final fulfilment of human life, 49-50
God's responsibility for, 34
in Judaism, 139-141
in Naturalistic Humanism, 178-179
Sinaitic revelations, 142-143
Society for Ethical Culture, *see* Ethical Culture Society
Socrates, 177
Solomon, King, 145
Soviet Union, state ideology in, 119
Stoics, 90, 111, 175-176, 180
Strachan, R. H., 64 *n*.
Suffering, concept of, in Judaism, 153-154
Supernatural, in Roman Catholicism, 11, 112, 114-115
Supernat[illegible] [illegible]anding of, via naturalism, 162

Talmud, Babylonian, 142
Temple, Archbishop William, 48, 78 *n*., 79
Ten Commandments, 130
Teresa of Avila, St., 95
Theism, 105-106
Theistic humanism, 110
Theological formulas, distrust of, 62-63
Theology:
in classical Protestantism, 22
in liberal Protestantism, 65
Thomas Aquinas, St., 31, 88, 91, 96-97, 101, 116, 125
Thomas More, St., 88
Thomism, 30
Thurber, James, 50
Tillich, Paul, 10, 42, 55 *n*., 125, 157, 164, 168, 169
Torah:
defined and described, 141-143
as locus of authority, 24
obligations to observe commandments of, 129
Psalms and, 148 *n*.
study of, 148-149
two main categories of, 142
Torotai, 141
Tradition, vs. Bible, in classical Protestantism, 24-26
Troeltsch, Ernest, 55 *n*.
Trueblood, D. E., 69 *n*.

Union Theological Seminary, 19
Universal values, cooperation in pursuit of, 8
University of Pennsylvania, 60

Virgil, 83
Virgin Mary, *see* Blessed Virgin
Vita Nuova, 106
Vocation, in classical Protestantism, 54-55

Whitehead, Alfred North, 178
Word, the, and presence of Christ, 47-48
World Council of Churches, 48

INDIAN INSTITUTE OF ADVANCED STUDY

Acc. No. 3359

Author : JOHNSON (F E).

Title : PAtterns of Faith in America Today .

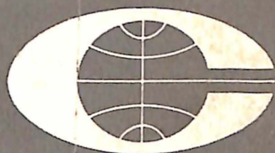
Borrower	Issued	Return

Patterns of Faith
in America Today

How do the major faiths view the nature and destiny of man? What are their concepts of God, of sin and salvation, of authority and freedom? Do they foster belief in progress?

These are some of the key spiritual issues that thread through the essays in this volume, illuminating the distinctive tenets of Protestantism, Roman Catholicism, Judaism and Humanism as well as their common ground. The result, penetrating and revealing, is a book that presents many valuable insights on everyday affairs and helps us to understand America's religious pluralism. This book is a fine companion volume to *Patterns of Ethics in America Today* (Collier Books AS201).

Where the major faiths agree and disagree on God, man, sin, freedom and other key questions – revealing and highly readable essays



COLLIER BOOKS

Printed in U.S.A.

Library IIAS, Shimla

00003359