

however, he has the support of his friends. But there have been some real rewards from these sessions, quite aside from the possible prevention of future pain. Students find themselves able to communicate fearlessly on a level deeper, or perhaps one should say a higher level, than before.

For such a course, *Issues in Science and Religion* is an excellent textbook. Synopses and summaries are numerous. Some subjects, such as linguistic analysis, appear again and again to tie new material together. The documentation is excellent. The major flaw is that the index of selected topics is almost useless. (The table of contents is more useful.) Perhaps a good index can be prepared for a later edition — of which I hope that there will be several.

NOTES

- 1 This information was noted in a personal communication from Doctor Barbour December 16, 1968.
- 2 Correspondence with Doctor Barbour yielded no further enlightenment except that of working on a book that "gives more attention to my own viewpoint."

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Faith Today?

ARTHUR HAUCK

THE DILEMMA OF MODERN BELIEF

By Samuel H. Miller

Harper and Row, New York, 1963 109 pp \$3.00

During the height of the God-is-dead dialogue, many a self-styled theological private eye returned from his verbal sleuthing with the pious assertion that, despite the atheistic proclamations, God must still be alive, since no one seemed to have found the body. Some have declared that God has merely disappeared, is hidden, or has been eclipsed.

Miller, the dean of Harvard Divinity School, added a touch of excitement to the rampant speculations by publishing the "killer's" confession replete with the requisite motive:

I suppose, after we get over the first refusal to admit it, that we shall have to confess finally that we killed God. By 'we' I mean most explicitly We Christians. We domesticated God, stripped Him of awe and majesty, trapped Him in nets of ideas, meticulously knotted in a thousand logical crisscrosses, cornered Him ecclesiastically, taught Him our rules, dressed Him in our vanity and trained Him to acknowledge our tricks and bow to our ceremonial expectations.

After some time, it was difficult to see any difference between God and what we believed, what we did, what we said or what we were. God and *our* church, God and

our morals, God and *our* belief, God and *our* class, God and *our* feelings, God and *our* scruples, and God and *our* vanities — all were one. So much so that it seemed plain after a while that we were deceiving ourselves. God of the *mysterium tremendum*, the God of holiness and of wrath, had vanished — God was not really there. We had effectively done away with Him; somewhere, we did not know quite where, we, the worshipers of God, the Christians, had buried Him. And the tragedy of it is we still act as if God were present.

This acting as if or living “as though” seems to characterize the actions and reactions of a large number of persons who still like to think that they have God safely and comfortably housed in their own little boxes. Miller contends that “atheism usually appears in the world as the void left by inadequate representations of God. When religion fails to give an adequate image of ultimate reality in the symbol of God, then men, by reason of their honesty in the light of truth, must become atheistic and often in their atheism will affirm realities that are religious.”

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Many who are unthinkingly condemning the death-of-God theologians are in a sense condemning themselves, for it may have been their own irrelevant pious utterings of the empty anciently sanctioned vocables that helped to create the miasma which spawned the very atheists whom they now censure. All irresponsible religious word vendors are atheists of another ilk. “Something more complicated has happened,” Miller declares. “To a large degree atheism has come to be, if not the theoretical position of many, the practical condition of multitudes who accept God in a verbal sense, but do not know what to do with Him in any existential reality.”

The crux of the matter, as Miller sees it, lies in the condition of man as shaped by the age in which he lives. On the one hand, those busy playing with their own little gods or playing at being gods are not really “there” to respond to God, let alone sensitize others to heaven’s authentic voice. On the other hand, “the cult of objectivity [so vividly analyzed by Nietzsche], the emptying of inwardness, the depersonalization of man, the externalization of his life in a technological age, his degradation by the technics of the modern era, all point in the same direction. God may be there, but *man is not*.”

Culture’s loss of the human center and man’s loss of life’s inner resonance precipitated his consequent loss of identity, meaning, and God. The last thing that today’s lost man needs is to be verbally buffeted and bullied by pious religious bigots. Man needs to be loved by authentic Christians who are really there, to whom God can speak, and through whom God can live and be heard. According to Miller, “God is that to which a man appeals when he gives himself to any single event or passing circumstance or humble passer-by so totally, so fully, so wisely that the moment is brought to fullness, its destiny completed, its glory revealed.”

For the sincere pilgrim who has grown weary walking the treadmill of old clichés, Miller provides some refreshing and revealing perspectives of the contemporary secular and religious worlds, calling for a pervasive faith in God and a belief “in the limitless possibilities of becoming, in the kind of becoming that transfigures men and transforms the world.”