

SPECTRUM

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autumn 1969

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CONTENTS

3

5	JOHN A. HUTCHISON	Three Meanings of Faith
13	HEROLD D. WEISS	The Theological Task
23	BEN JACQUES	Hair Like Eagles
24	REO M. CHRISTENSON	A Layman and the New Theology
35	DIRK K. KOOPMANS	In the Hollow of His Hand
44	FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE	Lonesomeness

REVIEWS:

45	LOYED R. SIMMONS	Federal Support Is Intrusive
53	CHARLES FLEMING, JR.	Federal Support Is Not Coercive

GOVERNMENT AID TO EDUCATION:

61	IAN M. FRASER	Problems of Creation and Science
66	DONALD E. HALL	To Live or To Die?
69	RAY HEFFERLIN	A Physicist and Religion
71	ARTHUR HAUCK	Faith Today?
73		Notes on Contributors

Three Meanings of Faith

5

JOHN A. HUTCHISON

One of the basic strategies of the currently popular philosophic movement known as linguistic analysis is to refer key terms and key statements of philosophical (and theological) discourse back to the ordinary language of everyday life. If an utterance has some basis in common experience, it is presumed to have meaning; if not, it is judged incoherent or nonsensical — or, what is worse, the artificial creation of philosophers or theologians.

I make this observation as a preface to undertaking briefly to analyze the term *faith* as it occurs in common language and common experience. I propose to identify three meanings, or clusters of meanings, all of which occur widely in common English and all of which have important philosophical and theological implications. The identification of these meanings and their relation to each other may help to clear the ground of some age-long misconceptions and may also identify some significant issues for subsequent reflection.

I

Of the three clusters of meanings, the first (let us call it *faith*₁) may be characterized most generally as *a state of conviction, allegiance, or trust leading to action*. William James defined *faith*₁ behaviorally as “a tendency to action.” We refer to this meaning when we speak of men of little faith or of great faith. Bob Gibson is said to have professed great faith in his fast ball. With reference to the more subjective aspects of faith, we speak of acting in good faith or in bad faith, referring to the kind of motive or intention that underlies action.

One need not go beyond any good Hebrew or Greek lexicon to discover

that faith₁ is the basic meaning of the Old Testament Hebrew term *emunah* and the Greek *pistis*. Both have to do basically with the state of the heart, will, or intention that leads to action. Martin Buber's *Two Types of Faith*¹ argues this for the Hebrew *emunah* but mistakes the New Testament Greek *pistis* for what we shall call faith₃. To correct this mistake one need only go to a Greek lexicon and from there to the text of the New Testament.

It is of very considerable importance for religious experience generally to understand the distinction between faith₁, on the one hand, and what we shall call faith₂ and faith₃, on the other hand, and then to realize that at the foundation of religious experience lies faith₁. This is a distinction often blurred by both friends and critics of religious experience.

6

Concerning faith₁ as the most basic and most general meaning of the term, several implications follow. Because all men are active, functioning selves, all may be said to have faith in this sense, though not necessarily in other senses. Equally, it must immediately be added that not all faith₁ is religious faith. Bob Gibson's attitude toward his fast ball has no obvious relation to religion — at least in the institutional sense of the word.

Perhaps it may be said that underlying any personal action lies some assumption of faith₁, some axiom or postulate that motivates and guides the action. If, then, one digs into the structure of such assumptions (for either a person or a culture), one comes at bottom to the deepest level of such assumptions, which may be judged religious faith.

II

A second common use of the term faith (let us call it faith₂) occurs frequently as a synonym for *traditional religion*. Men speak of the Christian religion or of the Christian faith, and analogously of the Jewish faith or the Buddhist or Hindu faith. Sometimes the analogy is pushed even further to the Marxist faith or the Humanist faith. Although this use of the term may stir up a whole host of serious issues for the student of the world's religions, it is nonetheless a widely recurring usage. For example, the Supreme Court of the United States appears to give its sanction to this wide use of the term faith in its decision in *United States versus Seeger*.²

Both words, faith and religion, have been subjected to extensive critical analysis in recent and current writing. For example, against faith₂ it is often charged that it is a Judeo-Christian term with no proper extension to Hinduism or Buddhism, that one ought rather to speak of the Buddhist or Hindu vision. This extension of the term faith continues, it is charged, the age-old practice of reading our experience into other men. Yet, it may be replied, if

we limit the term faith to faith₁, it is surely less objectionable than the term religion.

The term *religion* has been attacked by theologians from Karl Barth to Reinhold Niebuhr, who have seen with great realism how often the word has been a vehicle of human arrogance — “the working capital of sin,” as Barth puts it, or “egotism,” as Niebuhr charges. This attack has been extended and generalized by such writers as Bonhoeffer and the death-of-God theologians. It has been supplemented by historians of religion, who point out that most of the world’s languages, from classical Greek and Hebrew to Sanskrit and Chinese, have no word which may fairly be translated as religion. In his *Meaning and End of Religion*, W. C. Smith argues persuasively for the abolition of the term as inherently pejorative.³ Other men have “religion,” but we or I have “faith”! Religion, then, is a highly problematic word in danger of distorting the forms of experience it seeks to express. Yet presently I shall argue that, problematic as it is, the word is unavoidable.

On the surface, faith₁ contrasts sharply with faith₂; yet let us explore possible relations. If we begin with faith₁ as the set of convictions by which a man lives and acts, we may observe several important features. For this form of human experience Tillich coined the celebrated and much disputed phrase *ultimate concern*.

The word *concern* designates the active, volitional, or motor-affective region of human experience. Other terms suggested range from interest to loyalty, allegiance, value, or conviction. (I would prefer the term *value*, for the reason that it establishes useful relations with the value theory in philosophy and also in the social sciences. Hence my paraphrase for “ultimate concern” as a definition of religious experience is “ultimate valuation.”) But whatever the term, we find here in interest or valuation the human raw material out of which all faiths or religions are made.

But what of the vexing term *ultimate*? Tillich has assured us that his use of it is adjectival or adverbial rather than substantive. It is a synonym for “unqualified” or “absolute” as a quality of human concern. We speak of a person as unqualifiedly committed to a cause, or we say that so-and-so is absolutely honest. Thus “ultimate” has no primary reference to an object or a realm of being.

Ultimate concerns exhibit several observable properties that will help greatly in understanding their nature. First is what may be termed a claim to top priority in the system of concerns constituting a self. It is a concern to which in a pinch I would sacrifice every other concern — even life itself.

More affirmatively stated, it is that master concern which establishes order among all my other concerns.

A second property is that an ultimate concern is deployed in all of experience rather than in just part of it. The readiest illustration of this phenomenon is political allegiance, as construed respectively by totalitarian and free societies. Members of Communist parties are required to pledge themselves to guide *all* their activities by the directives of the party. The word *all* is the key to the often observed but seldom understood religious quality of Communism. So it is, too, for other forms of totalitarianism. In sharpest contrast, members of free political parties have at least some non-political interests. In a word, ultimate concerns are total, embracing the whole lives of their adherents; nonultimate concerns lack this total reference.

8

A third important feature of ultimate concern is its affective or emotive accompaniment, namely, the unique emotion we call the holy. Like all unique entities, the holy cannot be defined but only indicated or pointed to. So Rudolph Otto in *The Idea of the Holy* points to the holy by saying it is like fear, awe, wonder, mystery, and the like.⁴ However, perhaps an even better way of getting at the holy is to show its correlation with ultimate concern. Wherever men commit themselves ultimately or absolutely, there this emotion shows itself. This correlation is also reversible; thus wherever the holy occurs, we may presume that a response of ultimate concern and commitment has taken place.

For students of religion this is an extremely useful correlation, for, like the mercury column of a barometer or a thermometer, it is an excellent indicator of the presence or absence of ultimate concern or religious response. For example, Zeus appears no longer to elicit this response; therefore the religion of which Zeus is an element may be presumed dead. On the other hand, the American flag and the rites of Memorial Day and July Fourth do evoke an observably holy response. Hence we may conclude that there is a genuinely religious quality in these activities, even though they are not officially labeled religion. Other examples of such officially non-religious allegiances, which nonetheless elicit religious response, ranging from alma mater to science of humanity, come readily to mind.

A fourth and final feature of ultimate concern may be approached by means of a distinction in language. To this whole region of experience two approaches are possible, that of the observer and that of the participant. Each approach has its uses and its limits. Each has a contribution — in understanding the game that takes place and the respective viewpoints of

the playing field and the grandstand — that the other cannot make. The point that is pertinent here is: for the understanding of faith or ultimate concern, the languages of observer and participant differ fundamentally.

Thus, for example, the language of this article is that of the observer and student. If I become a participant in faith, I cease to use such terms as ultimate concern and use the language of powerful expressive symbols of the community in which I participate. From the participant's viewpoint, an all-important feature of ultimate concern is that it demands and receives symbolic expression. Men do not say, "Let us experience the holy," or "Let us have an ultimate concern." Rather they speak a language of powerful symbols. It has been sagely observed that men do not live and die for "values" but rather "for God, for country, and for Yale."

9

So it is that the holy identifies itself with the symbolic forms through which the holy is expressed. From this relation several conclusions follow. One is a simple definition of a religion as an existing system of holy forms. Each religion has its own particular system of symbolic forms, unique and different from every other religion. But it is the presence of the holy, as characterized in previous paragraphs, which distinguishes the religious from nonreligious areas of human experience. These symbolic forms that serve as the vehicle of ultimate concern are forms of feeling, thought, and practice, or all three combined. They embrace both individual and social experience. In the wide world and the long course of history, they exhibit infinite variety. No object or activity, no thought or feeling, is so strange or so commonplace but that somewhere and "somewhen" men have made of it a holy symbol through which religious experience is expressed.

In passing, I note that this definition of a religion as a system of holy forms is strictly descriptive, making no claims to validity or invalidity. It simply points to religion as an aspect of human experience.

The distinctions made also point to a distinction between faith and religion. Faith, or ultimate concern, generates and sustains religion. It is at once the heart and the growing point of religion. But once a religion comes into being, it is a larger and more variegated phenomenon than faith. Many human interests — artistic, political, philosophical, and even at times scientific — have found expression within historical religions. Also, without exception, all historical religions have cast a dark shadow of magic and superstition. Viewed objectively, religions are houses of many rooms, only one of which is the chapel.

With the emergence of holy forms, faith₁ is successfully linked to faith₂. Beginning with faith₁ as an attitude of ultimate concern, I have pointed

successively to the holy as the emotive accompaniment of ultimate concern, then to symbolic expression as a feature of the whole experience. Once such a system of holy forms has emerged, the adjective *religious* has become the noun *religion*.

One consequence of this line of thought is that the historical religions of the world may be approached fruitfully as so many symbolic systems for the expression of ultimate concern. Although here I cannot undertake the project of showing that this is so, I have tried to do so in my book *Paths of Faith*.⁵ Thus faiths₂ are mankind's historical vehicles for the expression of faith₁.

III

10

But there is still a third use of the term faith (let us call it faith₃) which may be characterized as *belief*, or faith become propositional. Often it is added that it is belief beyond or against factual or rational evidence. The Sunday school boy who defined faith as "believing what you know isn't so" gave accurate expression to precisely this combination of elements. No less a figure than Thomas Aquinas offered his basic definition of faith as (propositional) belief on the basis of good authority, i.e., the church. Examples of the interpretation of faith as belief beyond or against reasonable evidence abound in every religious tradition of which records exist. Taken together they go far in explaining the view many have of polar opposition between faith and reason, with the accompanying characterization of faith as inherently irrational or antirational.

In the light of our analyses of faith here, what can we say to this view? First, let us say plainly of faith₃ that it is frequently irrational (though, we shall presently argue, not necessarily so). Faith₁ and faith₂ are forms of experience that vary independently with rationality, combining in a wide variety of ways with reason and/or unreason. Hence, it is clear that there can be reasonable and unreasonable expressions both of ultimate concern and of its symbolic expression in historical religions.

The central question concerning faith₃ is how it comes to be. How is it and why is it that faith₁ and faith₂ become propositional? What necessity of their nature requires expression in the form of statements claiming to be true? In most general form the answer to these questions is that the man who commits himself in allegiance and action is also the same man who is forever exploring the nature of his actions and commitments. Man as such not only has faith but seeks to understand it. *Fides quaerens intellectum* describes a general human direction of experience. This is so, I believe, be-

cause of the reciprocal nature of the human mind and the self. In a word, the mind is the self in reflection or cognition; the self is the mind in action. So it is that faith_1 and faith_2 become faith_3 — the content of which is a series of statements seeking to characterize and to justify the contents of faith_1 and faith_2 .

When faith_3 is thus generally stated, there is nothing inherently irrational about it. However, the historical fact is that it has often been and is so characterized. The reasons for this are several. First, faith_1 and faith_2 constitute a very intense form of experience. Although they do not necessarily involve fanaticism and intolerance, these vices readily spring from faith_1 and faith_2 . Such attitudes easily generate conflict and controversy. So it is that the kind of cognitive quest involved in faith_3 very frequently takes place in an atmosphere of wrangling controversy. Some individual of bold and original view propagates his findings concerning the nature of faith. Others rise to contend against him. Making their views normative for the community, they declare him a heretic and seek to impose their views by fiat on the community. It is not hard to see how obscurantism, anathemas, and persecution follow close behind.

I have no desire to question these facts; indeed there is good reason to keep them continually in mind. But if this analysis is correct, there is nothing inherently irrational about the enterprise of faith_3 , which is the rational exploration and testing of the two previous aspects of the total experience of faith. Quite the contrary, there is every good reason to pursue it unremittingly, for it is too important an area of experience to go unexamined. We may paraphrase the Socratic maxim that "the unexamined life is not worth living" to read "the unexamined faith is not worth holding."

If some men have reasoned badly, and failing in argument have resorted to anathema and then to fire, rack, and thumbscrew, how much more important it is to pursue this enterprise freely, openly, and reasonably. As we do so, let us underscore the postulate that the rules of argument and inquiry that prevail in other areas of the mind's life are the guide and standard for theological study — as we may well designate the activity of faith_3 .

Historically, faith_3 has been an important source of philosophical thinking, particularly of metaphysics. It is precisely the ultimacy of ultimate concern which has generated those very general concepts that cover the whole of experience. Reflecting on ultimate concern, men have been led to push its implications to the widest circle of totality which their minds are capable of envisaging. At this moment metaphysics, or ontology, is

born. True, there are other sources of philosophy; and once philosophy is launched, it pursues its own varied concerns. Yet among these the critical appraisal of religious experience continues as a hardy perennial.

Much else might be added concerning the relation of the three meanings for faith. For example, the significance of faith₃ is to illuminate and guide faith₁ and faith₂. Taken in itself, apart from the other aspects of the whole experience of faith, faith₃ is powerless and empty of meaning. It is of this faith that the Letter of James in the New Testament says the devils also believe and tremble. In the language of traditional theology, it has no saving efficacy.

We can summarize by saying that faith₁ and faith₂ without faith₃ are blind. But faith₃ without faith₁ and faith₂ is meaningless and ultimately trivial, because by itself it has no basis in the common experience of man.

12

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The Theological Task

HEROLD D. WEISS

13

Most things in life — and it is comfortable to recognize this — are understood by all to be legitimate, useful, indispensable. Their place in society is well assured. Cultural instruments usually belong in this category. There may be some of them, however, that are considered legitimate and even useful (if useful is given a rather broad connotation) but that would not be considered indispensable.

Professional roles may fare quite differently when thus evaluated. Today no one questions the legitimacy, usefulness, and indispensability of the medical profession. But some years ago there was a feeling that law was definitely not a legitimate profession for a Seventh-day Adventist. I think that today probably many would question the legitimacy of a Seventh-day Adventist's being a ballet dancer. And part of the reason would be that ballet dancing is not considered to be indispensable, nor primarily useful, to the proclamation of the advent message.

It is no secret that on more than one occasion theologians have been considered quite dispensable, useless, and embarrassingly illegitimate children of the church. A theologian may perform as a servant, a prophet, a guru, or a demagogue, and accordingly he may be considered the pride and joy of a medieval prince (or of his university), public enemy number one, or simply an innocent charlatan. Still, theology once was considered the queen of the sciences, and today it seems to be regaining stature. Moreover, theologians have left their impact on the cultural heritage of Christianity.

But the presence of the theologian in the church has not always been welcome. Complaints about him are not unusual from those not versed in theology. Their understanding is that Christianity is essentially simple and

that the theologian is the one who comes in to disturb their quiet picture of things. The theologian is suspect because he introduces complicated clarifications and fine distinctions that in reality are only distracting and that sometimes even detract from the purity of the gospel. At times those poorly introduced to theology make a pun on the name of a famous theologian and classify all theologians as "veil makers" (Schleiermacher).

Thus the theologian has been looked on as one who declares things to be gray. He lacks conviction. He is caught in the study of ancient history and languages. He delights in complicated arguments. But one does not need history and languages and arguments to grasp Christ and hold him dear unto salvation. As a result, the theologian is considered a hindrance rather than a help for faith. By wishing to question every affirmation from every conceivable perspective, the theologian is in fact undoing the work of the Holy Spirit. He raises questions, and human questionings only lead to doubt. Thus the legitimacy, usefulness, and indispensability of theology are seriously doubted.

But if this matter is to be considered openly, one soon discovers that everyone who has faith also has a theology. To the believer the question is not whether or not to have a theology. If he believes, he has given to his faith some verbal explication, in one way or another. He has integrated his faith with the rest of his life. He sees himself and speaks about himself in terms of his faith. One may question whether the believer is fully aware of the implications of his theology or whether he is aware that in actuality he has one. But there is no question that he has one.

There is real danger, therefore, that a theology adopted uncritically and operating in life without its user's awareness may not reflect true Christianity. A particular believer's situation in life may introduce into his theology elements that are contrary to Christianity, or at least foreign to it. Theology is the possession of all believers, but not all believers exercise their critical judgment to make sure that what they believe is what the church teaches.

This much should serve to point out that theology is not the private possession of an eclectic group to whom the mysteries of God have been revealed. Theologians are not Gnostics: fortunate ones who through knowledge have acquired possession and dominion over the keys of the kingdom. Theology may have an appeal to the intellectual dilettante who, like a butterfly, wishes to taste the delicacies of every flower. The intellectually curious who may wish to feel at home within the inner theological circle may indeed find in theology a delicious intellectual exercise. But in reality, the-

ology is not an academic exercise which people with the right intellectual disposition may find worthwhile.

I

What is theology?

Probably the simplest way to define theology would be to compare it with religion. Religion, in a word, is *experience*. Religion is what we have. Religion is what moves us. Religion is action, feeling, ritual. Religion is the exercise of faith. Religion is a way of life.

Theology, on the other hand, is *words*. Theology is not what we have but what we say about what we have. Theology is what we want others to know about our experience. It is one thing to feel something; to verbalize our feelings is another thing. Theology is a way of talking.

15

The classic definition is that given by Anselm. Theology is faith seeking understanding. Faith may exist without ever inquiring about itself. Faith may exist without ever drawing out the implications of its outlook in a particular world of thought. Faith may exist without ever considering the change it has produced in a life and what are the implications of this change in all the departments of life. Theology, then, is an attempt to clarify the revelation of God as this has become known in the experience of the believer. But the clarification of the experience ought to be in language that is not only meaningful to the believer but open to the believer's contemporaries.

The believer cannot escape the world he lives in because he has faith. He cannot negate it either. Therefore when faith begins to express itself in words, these words must make sense not only in the context of faith but also in the world of unfaith. Theology may choose to speak in terms which those who have faith understand, because they have first-hand knowledge of what theology talks about as a basic experience of the believing community. A theologian may choose to explain what are the implications, rewards, responsibilities, and privileges of belonging to the community of faith to those who are already members of the community. Or he may choose to speak more directly to those who do not belong to the community of faith. Whatever choice he makes, however, the theologian cannot overlook the fact that the church is in the world, and that basically it is when he is doing his work for the church, when he is seeking to understand himself as a member of the believing community, that he is presenting the faith to unbelievers.

The theologian is not one who looks over the world to calculate how

much of the faith the world will be willing or able to swallow, and who then reaches inside the gospel in order to bring out just however much the world will take. Rather, the theologian is one who lives in the church that is in the world. He lives among men, and in that context he seeks to understand the faith of the church which he also confesses. It is reported that William Temple of Oxford once remarked that a theologian does not ask himself, "How much will Jones swallow?" Instead the theologian says, "I am Jones, and I want to eat."¹

The selection of a language by a theologian determines considerably the nature of his audience. The intellectual and the cultural framework within which a theologian chooses to give expression to the faith of the church mark the limits of his influence. Thus a theologian sees himself performing a task for a particular audience. He is not only a child of his age who needs to understand the faith in terms of the age, but he is also a child of a particular segment of his age. Two very influential theologians of this century may serve as examples of this fact.

II

Karl Barth, in a biographical note in the preface of his groundbreaking work, *The Epistles to the Romans*, gives a candid insight into the motivation behind his decision to become a theologian.² As a pastor he was required every week to speak from the pulpit to a congregation that had just experienced World War I. To these people he was supposed to explain the faith and to show them how their faith provided them with strength for their everyday living. But at the university Barth had been told by his professors that one understood the faith when one had understood its history. The starting point for an understanding of the faith was to stand in "awe in the presence of history." This starting point was no longer meaningful. To be able to place the events faith confesses within a solid historical framework did not mean to Barth that he had grasped the significance of the events. After all, history is a human enterprise; only men write history.

That awe in the presence of history that his teachers instilled in the young Barth he now began to see as "historicism" or "positivistic history." Thus, finding that an appeal to manmade history could not give the faith a true foundation, Barth searched for another. He found it meaningful, and his meaning found a responsive chord in a generation of believers, to stand in awe not in the presence of history but rather in the presence of the word of God. This word is not the word that history authenticates, but the word that is authenticated by the Holy Spirit.

From that starting point his new theology of the word moved on to explain the faith in terms of the transcendence of God. This new approach to the faith had a power of its own to those who had been bound by history to the processes within the world. But it must be said that Barth did not come to this approach by examining his contemporaries. Rather, as a believer and as a man living after World War I, he saw in this approach more justice being done to the nature of the faith. Moreover, Barth spoke primarily to those who were already within the church, who had firsthand experience of the power of the transcendent word. In part, this approach was also determined by Barth's choice of a language. He chose to use the biblical vocabulary already well known by church members. But when used by him, the well-worn words of the Bible carried new meanings. As a result, Barth communicated most effectively to those who have penetrated the biblical terminology adopted by Barth for his own purposes.

Consider, now, Rudolf Bultmann. At the beginning of his career, Bultmann was attracted by Barth's new way of doing theology, but soon afterward he found it necessary to make clear his own understanding of the faith. It has been a rather common misunderstanding of Bultmann to suggest that he examined his contemporaries and decided to make the gospel palatable for them and that, therefore, his "demythologizing" theology is a way of taking away from the gospel the supernaturalism that leaves a bad taste in modern mouths. But even Barth, who on several counts disagreed quite thoroughly with Bultmann, recognized that Bultmann is not an apologist trying to make the gospel acceptable to modern man.³

In terms of the anecdote from Temple, he is not asking himself, "Let me see how much modern man is willing to swallow." Rather, he is really saying, "I am modern man, and I believe. Now let me tell you how I relate my faith to my modernity." In order to carry on this task of relating his faith to his modernity, Bultmann had to make two decisions. One was of the language to be used; the other was of the starting point for theology. On the first issue Bultmann chose what he considered the best language for this purpose — that is, the language of Heidegger's existentialist philosophy. He believed that this language deals with the same issues dealt with in the Bible, and that it does not have some of the drawbacks that biblical language now has because of the difference between biblical and modern conceptions of the world. So he used existentialist language to bring biblical faith to the modern world.

Bultmann chose as a starting point the hiddenness of the human self — again, not because of a concern for relevancy (even though in the process

he became relevant to man), but because of what he considered basic for a true understanding of the faith. He insisted that God must never be thought of as an object. God is only a subject; and when man thinks of God as if God were an object, he is destroying that which allows God to be God. But theology wishes to speak about God. The only way to do it, Bultmann affirmed, is by speaking about myself, since I too am a subject.⁴ When speaking about human existence, by analogy one is speaking about God, because there is a hiddenness about God that is analogous to the hiddenness of the human self. For operating in this way Bultmann has been charged with reducing theology to anthropology.

It is not our purpose here to judge the merits of the case, but only to point out how a theologian goes about his task. Bultmann launched his theological program not out of a desire to accommodate modern man but as an attempt to understand his faith as a Christian *and* as a modern man. Because he took his modernity more seriously than Barth did, and because he spoke in a language understood by more people outside the Christian fold, there is reason to think that Bultmann may have exercised a more pervasive influence in the general temper of our times.

III

These illustrations should suffice to demonstrate why modern theology is painfully aware of the dialectical or paradoxical relation between the revelation of God and the "forms" which that revelation takes within different cultures. The content of theology is religion, the experience of the living God who breaks through to human consciousness. But the expression given to that religious experience, the form assumed for its expression, the theological language used to verbalize and to preserve and transmit that religion, so that others may experience it and be able to identify the genuineness of their own experience, is subject to change, is subject to evaluation as to its adequacy. In this sense the Bible is *a* theology. It is the verbalization of the experience of the living God: the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Now, the expression of the faith given in the Bible is considered normative, because that was indeed its original expression and because it was in this form that the battle against false gods was fought and won.

To illustrate in very simple terms what I mean, let me say that we in a Western cultural background, well aware of biblical images, speak rather blandly of the Lamb of God that takes away the sin of the world. I am told, however, that in New Guinea that form of revelation is meaningless; there-

fore, Christians speak there of the pig of God that takes away the sin of the world. We may argue, because of our own cultural bias, whether the form "pig" does really contain the same theological content as the form "lamb." The discussion will soon make clear that theology is an attempt at culture translation; it is an attempt to take the faith and make it live in the culture where the believer lives.

In this sense the God-is-dead theologians are involved in a legitimate task: that is, to translate the gospel to a culture in which God is actually dead. We may wonder whether Christians should live in such a culture. We may wonder whether the gospel is translatable into that language. We may wonder whether the translation is adequate or not. But in principle we must admit the legitimacy of the task, just as we admit the legitimacy of translating the New Testament into the language of the Auca Indians of Ecuador.

There have been those who have tried to bind theology to one theological mold, insisting that the task of theology is not to translate into another cultural language but rather to retain the eternal verities in their pristine purity by recovering the real meaning of the original language. But modern theology is insistent on the fact that to establish the meaning of the original language is not equal to establishing the thought patterns of God. For a time it was believed that if one could just peel away the Greek mold which theology got into during the second through the fifth centuries of our era, and one could recover the original Hebraic modes of thought, in recovering the Hebraic mentality one was taking hold of the thought of God.

But modern theology takes seriously the words of Isaiah 55:9: "For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Modern theology takes seriously the words of Ecclesiastes 5:2: "God is in heaven and you upon earth; therefore, let your words be few." Modern theology has experienced the frustration reflected in the rhetorical question of Ecclesiastes 7:24: "That which is, is far off and deep, very deep; who can find it out?"

Within the limitations of human understanding and of cultural situations, it must be accepted that, in fact, at times Hebraic modes of thought did not serve well the faith that it was seeking to understand. The mentality of the Hebrews centuries before the Christian era was not given to closely secured definitions, and the mentality of first-century Christians, formed as it was by Old Testament patterns, did not sense the necessity for them either. But as Christianity moved out into a more hellenized world, it had to adapt itself to, and express itself in this new cultural mold. For example, the relationships of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit with each other

within the pages of the Bible remain rather loosely defined. Greek theology did a great service to Christianity, therefore, by providing the faith with a more defined understanding of what it means to believe in One God who is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Today some are finding the orthodox concept of the Trinity meaningless, because it was couched in terms of static essences, substances, and natures. But this does not take away the fact that when the faith needed to understand what it meant when it confessed God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, Greek theology had to do the job, and it did it well enough to win the battles against polytheism while maintaining the divinity of the Son and the Holy Spirit.

One may legitimately ask whether in its attempt at verbalization, in its attempt at definitions, theology does not run the risk of distorting and in some cases even negating the faith. Could it not have been the case that the Council of Chalcedon ended up giving to the church a concept of the Trinity which is not true? Indeed, it could have been the case. But the church has continued to find that particular expression of her experience of God satisfying, even if somewhat complicated. To understand the faith in every age and in every culture, as indeed it must be understood, does imply taking a risk.

To do theology is to run a risk. As my colleague E. W. H. Vick has put it: "Whenever we put our brain into theological gear or open our homiletic mouths, we are taking a risk."⁵ Men talking theologically have said any amount of nonsense. They have defended their cause in war. They have defended slavery. They have argued that the universe is geocentric. They have imposed on the Bible scientific authority. They have banned blood transfusions. They have proclaimed the cross of Christ as a demonstration of God's wrath. They have proclaimed the uninterrupted progress of the human race. They have claimed chronological knowledge of the future. They have confused the American way of life with life in Christ. But precisely because this is the result of some theology, it is necessary that theology be done, so that those things which belong to the faith may be clearly set forth and those things which have come in through the back door may be openly exposed.

In doing this, theology runs a second type of risk. To do theology may mean having to ask people who have uncritically adopted some position as an expression of Christianity to abandon it because it does not belong to

the faith. Asking people to give up cherished misconceptions is risky indeed. Taking a hard, critical look at one's faith in order to understand it may let things come to light that do not belong there. But things which have been kept for some time acquire sentimental value. It can be discomforting, therefore, to realize that some concepts that have been cherished do not stand the test of critical questioning by an enlightened theology.

In matters theological, people at times "like to think" in one way or another. But when confronted with the facts of the case, one may have to give up what one "likes to think" because it does not belong to the particular framework within which his faith lives. Just as taking a termite inspector to look at a house involves the risk of being told that some pillars supporting the house need to be replaced, so also doing theology involves the risk concomitant to all serious questioning. But the theologian must face his task and run the risk of questioning again what it is that faith means.

In the performance of this task the theologian serves himself of the methodology and the cultural symbols developed by the philosopher. But he is not a philosopher. He is a theologian. Paul Tillich, who probably more than anyone else in this century tried to bring together philosophy and theology by showing their "profound interdependence," insisted on distinguishing the basic postures of the philosopher and the theologian. The theologian keeps his doubts in tension in the face of his basic certainty. The philosopher keeps his certainties in tension in the face of his basic doubt. Tillich stated it in this formula: "The philosopher has not and has; the believer has and has not."⁶

The philosopher has radical doubts and goes out looking for certainties. The believer has radical certainties and goes out to face the world of doubt. To quote Tillich again: "Faith says 'Yes' in spite of the anxiety of 'No.' It does not remove the 'No' of doubt and the anxiety of doubt; it does not build a castle of doubt-free security — only a neurotically distorted faith does that — but it takes the 'No' of doubt and the anxiety of insecurity into itself. Faith embraces itself and the doubt about itself."⁷

If faith were to stand in a vacuum, no one would be impressed. No one in this age of space exploration needs to be told that objects left in a vacuum stand by themselves. Faith must stand in the face of doubt.

We return to our original question: Is theology necessary? Is it useful? Is it indispensable? Must the theologian continue at his task, or should his work better be left undone?

Indeed, theology is all these three things, and the theologian must keep on at his task. This is so because faith must assert itself over against unbelief, because the church must be sure of the purity of her faith, because those who belong to the community of faith must have a means by which to evaluate their own religious experience, and because those who do not have faith must know what faith means to those who have it.

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Hair Like Eagles

Seven times I roam in soft-breathing fields,
Drinking sweet morning moistness,
Tasting herbs, berries the dank loam yields,

Pausing, sleeping in smoldering grass, leaves,
Mosses from barkbase of sparse trees,
Feeling slow warmth of deadwood burning into earth.

My fingers claw into the birth
Of my existence
And touch small roots of flowers.

Seven times I am knowing of all kingdoms kneeling.

Ben Jacques

A Layman and the New Theology

REO M. CHRISTENSON

24

Christianity is on the defensive throughout the Western world. Church attendance has fallen sharply in Western Europe and is declining in America. As the college population nears seven million, the atmosphere of most colleges is hostile to religious faith. (G. K. Chesterton rightly observed that "religious prejudice is the anti-Semitism of the intellectual.") The Gallup poll finds that most Americans believe religion is fading in this country. Everywhere we hear charges that the church is becoming "irrelevant." Our era is spoken of as the "post-Christian" era.

Many developments account for the falling prestige of the Christian church. Some of the most important are clearly connected with the growth of science and technology; growing affluence has something to do with the trend; there may be a cyclical factor at work; thoroughly secularized educational systems have made a contribution.

My concern is with the tendency of modern theologians to abandon central aspects of the Christian faith — partly because the theologians are the products of their age and partly in a desperate effort to rejuvenate that faith and increase its appeal to modern man.

Perhaps it is presumptuous of a layman to advise theologians about the practice of their profession. But if war is too important to leave to generals, Christianity may be too important to leave to religious professionals. I am emboldened by the knowledge that there are no "experts" on God — there are only those who are learned concerning the speculations and theories of other nonexperts. So although I am a political scientist rather than a theologian, I would like to comment on certain aspects of modern theology that strike me as rather remarkable. (After all, it *was* a child who observed that the emperor had no clothes on.)

In using the words "modern theology," I am aware that the term is most inexact. Since there are innumerable schools of contemporary theology, let me clarify by the explanation that I use the expression to refer to theologians who reject Christian supernaturalism, deny the traditional Christian view of a personal God, and instead call for church activism in pursuit of social justice.

I

The modern theologians seemingly yield to none in their admiration of Jesus. His life supposedly exemplifies the best that man has achieved. His example and insights are a continuing source of inspiration and guidance to us. In an almost mystical sense, something almost Divine flashed through him — and continues to speak to us through him. He was indeed the matchless historical figure, the One upon which their faith (what remains of their faith) is based. He is central to their theology, and they insist that they are, if not traditional Christians, Christians nonetheless.

But even as they eulogize Christ and make him the pivotal figure in their religious structure, they regard his major theological premises as essentially crude, primitive, and simplistically naive compared with their own. They would never think of putting it so bluntly. They just imply it.

For example, Jesus believed in a personal, approachable God who creates life, hears prayer, forgives sins, asks our obedience, and offers us eternal life. Anyone who chooses to read the Four Gospels can confirm this for himself. But the modern theologian dismisses the idea of a personal God, who of necessity would have to be in some sense "out there." This, they say, is a rather childlike conception which was all right for an earlier day but will hardly pass muster with the more sophisticated intellects of today.

Modern man must categorically discard the supernatural. The supernatural derived from superstition and ignorance in the first place, and it does not mesh with the scientifically oriented modern mind. The inexplicable, the seemingly miraculous, awaits only the further revelation of scientific progress.

With the supernatural ruled out, one can dispose of miracles, challenge the literal resurrection of Jesus, and brush aside belief in life beyond death. It may be hard for us to abandon these treasured sentimentalities, but we are assured that the time has come for a realistic reexamination of our religious heritage. Supernaturalism in any form is no longer salable to educated modern man. It has run its course and is ready for the intellectual junkheap, and we must have the courage and honesty to cast it aside.

Perhaps modern man can believe in God as Being (rather than as *a* Being), or as the Ground of our Being, or as some form of Ultimate Reality, or as the Unconditional. But this is as far as we can hope to go unless we are prepared to lose touch with twentieth century man.

For the modern theologians, the acid test of any belief seems to be: is it hard for modern man to accept? If it is, scrap it and construct a new theory that is easier to believe. Above all, construct a theory that unbelieving intellectuals will view as progressive. Their accolade is the most coveted mark of success. This flexibility will ensure the intellectual respectability of modern theology and enable a staggering church to survive the twentieth century rather than waste away as an irrelevant relic of another era. Thus the modern theologians are rendering a great service by refashioning an old-fashioned Christianity into a model that even modern man may believe — or if not believe, at least speculate about as if it just *might* contain a partially valid approach to truth.

Perhaps. But a series of questions keep recurring. They are uncomfortable questions, questions that the modern theologians do not want asked but that for this very reason need asking.

Why do they admire Jesus so extravagantly, even regard him with near adoration, while looking on his core beliefs as hopelessly outmoded? Most of us would find it a bit difficult to make a hero out of someone who, in the area in which he should have spoken with the most authority, was as abysmally wrong as was Jesus in his conception of God, his acceptance of the supernatural, and his belief in life after death. If Jesus was so grossly mistaken in his central theological premises, why regard him as such an incomparable religious figure?

Let us take, for example, the nature of God. I believe no one can closely examine the Four Gospels and conclude that the misty God of modern theology is the same God Jesus believed in, preached about, and prayed to. His God *was* real, personal, concerned, and “out there.” Of course there are many aspects of Jesus’ life and teachings that are subject to a variety of differing interpretations by honest, reasonable, and thoughtful men. But on some aspects of his message — surely including this one — there is clarity enough for those who care to read.

It will not do, as some theologians have done, to regard Jesus’ primary message as having been garbled by his overzealous followers. For if this be the case, why trust those other New Testament passages that cause even the modern theologians to characterize him as a singular and peerless religious figure?

If the account of Christ's teachings about God and man's relation to God has been subject to the erosions and distortions of time and wishful thinking and faulty memory, perhaps the Sermon on the Mount wasn't a faithful reflection of his teaching either. Or his famous parables. Or his exhortations to the Pharisees. And maybe his idolizing biographers chose to conceal some rather unpleasant features of his life in an effort to place him in the best possible light. Don't disciples have a way of doing these things? Perhaps his alleged victoriousness over sin is just another myth — an inspiring one, but a myth nonetheless.

These are serious questions, for if the Great Teacher was misquoted or misinterpreted or misremembered on the most vital points of his message, what confidence can be placed in the account of less important aspects of his life and ministry? Or is it convenient to attribute to him those statements and actions that suit our fancy but ignore or dismiss as unreliable those we find distasteful?

II

Let us suppose, however, for argument's sake, that we reject Christ's perception of God and of His own divinity while continuing to believe that he lived a sacrificial and dedicated life and taught an admirable system of ethics. This will not make him a sufficiently unique figure to merit our religious devotion. Others have advanced ethics as admirable as his; others have lived noble lives and died martyrs' deaths. No, if Jesus is worthy of being singled out from other men to become the cornerstone of a great religious faith, it is only because his portrayal of God, of his relationship to God, and of God's will for man was essentially authentic. If this portrayal is not fundamentally accurate, then Jesus was an admirable man — no more — whose faith was flawed by the fallacies of his age.

This is why the matter of Christ's resurrection is of supreme importance. Either Christ was resurrected in some special way, or he died like our fathers and is dead today. There is no way to evade this central proposition honestly. It *is* a Yes-or-No question, when faced squarely. If Christ lives on only through recorded memories and through the inspiration we receive from his life and example, he plays no essentially different role from that of others who lived inspiring lives. Only if Christ is alive today, alive as a conscious, thinking, loving, communicating Being, is Christianity a valid religious faith.

It is interesting to observe the verbal footwork of the modern theologians as they slide away from this question. A flood of erudite rhetorical jargon

pours forth; circumlocutions, evasions, and double-talk fill the air; every effort is made to becloud the issue, talk around it, philosophize about it, and do everything but meet it head on. For they shrink from admitting that Jesus is dead — dead as all men in their graves are dead — because modern theologians, too, are not quite satisfied with a dead Christ. But to concede his literal resurrection is to concede the supernatural — an even more distressing thought. Some try to wriggle out by saying, "Something happened which we can't quite explain, something truly remarkable, which galvanized Jesus' followers into a community of faith and produced the vision and dynamism of the early church." What was that something? Well, they don't know — but it was a most solemn occasion, and terribly significant.

Furthermore, some modern theologians believe that the Divine (whatever that may be) did speak through Christ in a special way. If this were true, of course, it would be just as much a manifestation of the supernatural as miracles and the resurrection. But if the rhetoric is sufficiently blurred, they can still maintain that indispensable posture of modernity by stoutly denying that they really believe in the supernatural.

III

Let us analyze some of these elements of the Christian faith that modern theologians find so intellectually disreputable.

Miracles? If God spoke through Christ in some special sense, this act surely partook of the miraculous. It cannot be explained any more than can the healing of a leper. And if Christ lived a sinless life (as many modern theologians still seem to believe), was this not as truly miraculous as the loaves and fishes?

No miracle is more incredible than the miracle of life itself. The intricacies, the complexities, the interrelationships within the human body, the synchronization of the myriad cunning forces that produce and sustain life, the creative capacities of man, the astonishing diversities of life on this planet — all of these involve enough mystery to make us cautious about denying other mysteries. Modern man can believe that the information coded into chromosomes one-millionth the size of a pinhead is the equivalent of the information in a thousand volumes of *Encyclopaedia Britannica* — but he will balk at believing the Son of God could perform a less spectacular miracle!¹

We are admonished not to assume that the Divine is a Being with characteristics like a person, or we drag the Divine down toward the level of man, thus sapping its mystery and transcendence. If dogs could think, we

are told, they would construct a god who was like a very superior dog; and if fishes could think, they would conceive a godly fish embodying every quality of fishy excellence. Let us be done with this anthropomorphic nonsense and reckon with the Divine as that which so far transcends our mortal concepts that it is essentially inconceivable.

This sounds very profound, but actually it is very sophomoric. Few thoughtful Christians think God has the same physical characteristics as man — that is, that he has a navel, tonsils, kidneys to screen out impurities, adrenal glands to help him meet emergencies, and a thyroid to regulate growth. But most Christians do agree with Jesus that God has *some* of the characteristics of man — albeit possessed in an infinitely more advanced form. That is, we believe God thinks, experiences compassion, appreciates beauty, loves truth, seeks justice, has a sense of humor, and is concerned with the fate of man. Does this pull God down toward man's level and shrink his stature? Would it not, on the contrary, dwarf the Divine if we were to deny that It possesses these qualities? Only because man shares some of God's nature, although in rudimentary form, is man able to conceive of God, worship him, and feel a kinship with him.

Another question comes to mind. Jesus said, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment. And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. There is none other commandment greater than these" (Mark 12:30, 31).

If God is only Being, or the Ground of our Being, or some shadowy entity or nonentity wholly removed from human experience, how are we supposed to love him with all of our heart and mind and soul? How does one love a non-being? It is quite possible to love a Supreme Being who so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son. But how do we love the species of God conceived by modern theologians? Will they deny that Jesus' exhortation to love God was of the most vital importance to him? Or was Jesus, alas, wrong here too?

IV

As I suggested to begin with, scientific developments seem to have contributed to the crisis of Christianity. Ours is an Age of Science, leading many to conclude that as science advances, disrobing the mysterious and probing ever deeper into the secrets of the universe, God fades a bit further with each new discovery. And if man should actually discover how to create life — not an impossibility — where then would God be?

Yet there is not the slightest valid reason for concluding that because man understands more about his world, and discerns more clearly the laws of life and process which Someone established, that this diminishes the Creator. To better understand God's ways of ordering the universe, to think God's thoughts after him, is not to diminish but to *reveal* him. Scientific discoveries ought to lead to an enhanced appreciation of the awesome Intellect which has conceived the grand drama of this planet and this universe.

Even if man should create simple forms of life, it would be an ultimate tribute to the power of God who could develop a creature with that fabulous network of nerve combinations that constitutes the brain of man. The supreme tribute to the Master Creator would be a created being that could use God's raw materials to produce life itself.²

We can agree with those who say we ought not to accept as true — theologically or otherwise — that which science can prove to be untrue. But this is not the question today. The hypotheses that modern theology attacks are neither provable nor disprovable. They are in a realm beyond the reach of science. We can neither prove nor disprove that God exists or is a Person or that Jesus is Divine or that he was resurrected. Evidence and logic can be adduced to support or challenge these propositions, but ultimate proof or disproof cannot be found. Both belief and unbelief are acts of faith. So let us be clear: the issue is not now, and never will be, the acceptance or rejection of the indisputable findings of science.³

For modern man there is also the problem of authority. We are loath these days to accept anything on "authority." From early adolescence, we are warned against accepting a theory or a value judgment just because so-and-so said it. In general, this is a sound and necessary caveat. Even in religion, intelligent Christians do not ask that confidence in their faith should rest, unexamined, on "the church says so," or "Saint Augustine said so," or "Father and Mother say so." It should rest on the most searching study that can be made of the matter, plus such insights as may come to us from the whole range of human experience.

The freedom to believe or not to believe in Christianity must be conceded, of course, if the concept of a just God seeking the uncoerced loyalty of men is maintained. But once one concludes that Jesus *was* the divine Son of God, one is no longer free to be selective about the teachings of Jesus. Where Jesus is unclear, or where he has not spoken, the Christian can decide for himself. But on such questions as the nature of God, the presence of sin, the need for prayer, Christ's mission on earth, life beyond death, et

cetera, where his message can hardly be misunderstood, the Christian is not free to substitute his own opinions for the knowledge of Christ. For a Christian to assume the right to determine the truth or falsity of Christ's words is a startling form of presumptuousness. It implicitly rejects the premise that Christ was a trustworthy spokesman for God. Even where Christ's teachings are hardest to believe, there the Christian has no choice but to accept them. In plain words, Christianity *is* an authoritarian religion. Christ *is* the authority, and his followers are not privileged to place their private judgment above his words.

It will not do to hedge, to say the challenge is not to the truth of Christ but only to the accuracy of the historical record — because no one (repeat, *no one*) can prove that a single sentence attributed to Jesus was actually spoken by him, or was not spoken by him. If one accepts the authenticity of a single phrase or idea, one does so on faith. To accept some of his statements, then, as valid and to reject others is a form either of pure capriciousness or an assertion of one's own ultimate wisdom. The only honest alternatives are to acknowledge the gospel accounts as reliable or test them, like the views of all men, by their intrinsic appeal to the individual judgment. In the latter case, the individual remains the highest authority on truth, a role presumably assigned to God.

This is a hard doctrine for modern man to accept, but it is the inescapable conclusion that must be drawn from the implicit and explicit premises of Christianity. Yet one will never, never find modern theologians quoting a statement or a series of statements of Christ as authority for anything. Jesus' recorded statements are to be weighed, dissected, evaluated, accepted, or rejected just as are those of your nextdoor neighbor. Well, almost! Except, of course, that few new theologians are uncouth enough to say plainly that on this or that point Christ was wrong. They can always find a way to reinterpret him to mean what they think he *should* mean.

V

Another factor in the current crisis, alas, has been brought on by the churches themselves. The traditional church has properly emphasized the primacy of its mission to kindle and strengthen the individual's faith in Christ and his words. However, it has often failed to impress on its members the necessity of acting as Christians when they confront the whole of life — in their business, racial relations, the affairs of their community, the problems of their nation, and the dilemmas of their planet. It was always shortsighted to limit Christianity's scope to the domain of private affairs.

If Christ's teachings were as bold and far-reaching as Christians have every right to regard them, they cannot be excluded from the ever-expanding political realm.

Harvey Cox is surely right, though hardly original, when he wrote: "To say that speaking of God must be political means that it must engage people at particular points, not just 'in general.' It must be a word about their own lives — their children, their job, their hopes or disappointments. It must be a word to the bewildering crises within which our personal troubles arise — a word which builds peace in a nuclear world, which hastens the day of freedom in a society stifled by segregation."⁴

In belaboring the church and churchmen for their myopia and timidity in applying the Christian vision to race discrimination, to the existence of needless poverty, to the frustrations and futilities of life in the central city, to the scandals of nationalism, modern theologians have performed a valuable service. But in heaven's name, why must they combine these insights with an insistence on gutting Christianity of those very truths which give the church its greatest vitality and its deepest meaning?

In their desire to "make Christianity relevant" they do not see man truly and see him whole. For men seek not only secular justice and material well-being; they hunger for that glimpse of the transcendent which modern theology so conspicuously lacks. It may be today that many men can know God as a living reality *only as they accept Christ's knowledge of him*. And the modern theologians reject that knowledge. They may be offering some intellectuals a half-loaf that appeals to their intellects (though hardly to their hearts), but it is a cold-crust for most men — especially for the common people "who heard him gladly" when Jesus was on the earth.

If the modern theologians preach traditional Christian doctrines which they disbelieve, their words will carry no conviction. On the other hand, if they preach what they do believe, their hearers, asking bread but given stones, will go unfed. The church may survive awhile as a social agency. But without a risen Christ and a living God, it becomes no more than a hybridized Red Cross/Community Chest/Civil Rights/Willing Worker society. We need societies like these. We need also a church. Above all, we need a faith — a faith that does not stutter when it confronts the central concerns of existence.

The hope of saving Christianity by emasculating it is the most tragic of delusions. Christianity has provided hope and faith and strength throughout the centuries because it has taught a living Christ, an accessible God, and a life after death. If you rob the church of these, you cut its heart away.

Sociologists Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark of the University of California at Berkeley completed a massive study of church activities and beliefs several years ago. Noting that "the leaders of today's challenge to traditional beliefs are principally theologians," they declare that "a demythologized modernism is overwhelming the traditional Christ-centered, mystical faith." But they observe that the great majority of those who accept the new theology "have stopped attending church, stopped participating in church activities, stopped contributing funds and stopped praying." They are either humanists or on the way to becoming humanists. Only those who hold to the traditional Christian views retain an active interest in the church. On the basis of solid empirical data, the sociologists predict the modern churches cannot survive, as viable organizations, the widespread adoption of a theology that rejects supernaturalism and rests its appeal solely on Christian ethics.⁵

I wish the custodians of the faith, now so busily engaged in altering that faith, would be more — a lot more — "honest to God." Let them frankly say: "Jesus was a great guy but a product of his primitive times. His ethics were fine but his theology faulty. He needs updating, and we are the ones to do the job. Accordingly, we have tested the winds which blow and used them to winnow the wheat from the chaff. From the medley of truth, error, superstition, and insight which Christ originally taught, this remains that might be true."

If they would openly say this, we could respect their candor if not their wisdom. But when they accept the Christian label while denying its major premises, they invite the indignation so many of us feel.

If Christianity is to survive, it must survive as its Founder framed it.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

- 1 To Christians — and many non-Christians — it seems more reasonable to believe that life appeared and developed because of the direction of a conscious, reasoning, willing, creative Being than as the result of blindly groping elements which somehow stumbled into a formula culminating in that dazzling symphony of life which sobers and humbles those who study it most.
- 2 If it takes intelligence to create life, what intelligence then produced God? No one has ever answered this question, of course, but it is as easy to believe that God always existed as to believe that matter always existed. If *something* always had to be present, it could as well be God as matter — particularly when matter contains the astonishing electrical properties and chemical combinations that we know atoms possess. Where did *they* come from?
- 3 Many persons today, particularly college students, seem to believe that faith in a personal God who guides and strengthens those who call on him is a crutch for those not strong enough to rely on their own resources, who need an escapist

illusion, who haven't the courage and independence and honesty to face the challenge of life, or who lack the nerve to face the bleak reality of death. Man hypothesizes the existence of a loving God to provide him with a comforting cocoon into which he can retreat when faced with the dilemmas of life and the prospect of annihilation.

I find the implication interesting that Jesus was a weak personality who needed faith because he lacked the courage to face life. I find the assumption interesting, too, when applied to the Apostles and numberless towering historic figures who held to a God-centered faith.

There is nothing weak about acknowledging man's imperfections, his fallibility, his limited insights, the frailties of his mind and spirit. This acknowledgment does not represent a shameful confession of weakness but only an elementary admission of the undeniable facts of life. Man really *is* pretty fragile, he really *cannot* know very much, he *is* frighteningly dependent on forces beyond his control, and he has no way of coping with the prospect of eternal extinction. That man, confronted with his limitations, should feel the need for faith in and help from a Supreme Being is evidence of a modicum of humility and an honest facing up to his precarious condition.

Furthermore, the conditions that lead to the construction of a hypothesis tell us nothing about the truth or falsity of that hypothesis. It may be true, regardless of what caused man to pose it. Asserting man's need for faith is not enough to discredit a hypothesis growing out of that need.

- 4 Harvey Cox, *The Secular City* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 256.
- 5 Charles Y. Glock and Rodney Stark, The Changing Church: Will Ethics Kill Christianity? *Current* 99, 33-40 (1968).

in the hollow of his hand

A portfolio by DIRK KERST KOOPMANS



Art has in its nature a religious essence. In the field of painting this is transmitted by what the eye sees and by the hand which directs the artist's brush. Thus an encounter with the transcendental is possible. The closer this becomes, consciously or unconsciously, the more the meaning of art is fulfilled.

This applies to all areas of life. In every sphere of the expanding human spirit, in thought and action, man's existence is interwoven with a desire for union with that which is above all things.

In everyday living, through relationship with his fellow men and with the world which continually clamors for attention, each person searches out his own possibilities for making this union a reality. Art has a catalyzing action, vitalizing every area of human endeavor. □ DK

protection

Bescherming



god's magicians

God's goochelaartjes



thirst is all that remains

En Dorst is alles wat men overhoudt



he who holds life in the hollow of his hand

Hij die het leven draagt in de holte van zijn hand



IN LONESOMENESS

The cawing crows
Townwards on whirring pinions roam;
Soon come the snows —
Thrice happy now who hath a home!

Fast-rooted there,
Thou gazest backwards — oh, how long!
Thou fool, why dare,
Ere winter come, this world of wrong?

This world — a gate
To myriad deserts dumb and hoar!
Who lost through fate
What thou hast lost shall rest no more.

Now stand'st thou pale,
A frozen pilgrimage thy doom,
Like smoke whose trail
Cold and still colder skies consume.

Fly, bird, and screech,
Like desert-fowl, thy song apart!
Hide out of reach,
Fool, in grim ice thy bleeding heart.

The cawing crows
Townwards on whirring pinions roam;
Soon come the snows —
Woe unto him who hath no home!

FRIEDRICH NIETZSCHE

From *Ecce Homo*, Nietzsche's last work,
written in 1888. In January 1889
Friedrich Nietzsche became insane.
He died on August 25, 1900.

GOVERNMENT AID TO EDUCATION 1

Federal Support Is Intrusive

LOYED R. SIMMONS

45

History surely affords no clearer lesson than this: that through the facile and liberal use of money, the centralization and power of government is advanced; and, with such advancement, freedom of thought, conscience, and action within the body politic may be proportionately shackled and ultimately destroyed.

The progressive intrusion of the government into the field of religion (protected from such violation, until recently, by the First Amendment) is aided by some denominational spokesmen who call for "cooperation" between church and state. Because large sums of tax funds are said to be available for certain denominational projects through such "cooperation," these spokesmen join in the attack on the doctrine of church and state separation as a "shibboleth of doctrinaire provincialism." This attack has been successful to such extent that the entire structure of the wall of separation is threatened with collapse.

Are there sufficient reasons to resist such attacks? What should be the attitude of concerned Americans who value freedom as a whole? What should be the position of a church that values religious freedom and at the same time aspires to maintain church-related schools that are loyal to Christian principles and that are of high academic excellence?

The answers to these questions, in my opinion, are to be found in the recognition of at least eight postulates.

1. *Religious freedom and the separation of church and state are basic biblical doctrines.*

Speakers and writers on the subject of church and state relations commonly treat religious liberty and the separation of church and state as

different and distinguishable concepts. Although theoretically it is possible to distinguish between these two ideas biblically, they seem inseparable historically and practically. Complete religious freedom, as distinguished from mere toleration, has never existed apart from the separation of church and state. To destroy or alter religious liberty, therefore, one must first destroy the doctrine of church and state separation. "Cooperation" is a first step in that direction.

Those who question the essential identity of religious liberty and the separation of church and state assert that the former is a biblical or religious concept, whereas the latter is a purely political device. Since space does not permit an exhaustive study of the abundance of biblical thought demonstrating the irreconcilable natures of the church and the state, I refer the reader to *The State in the New Testament*, a book by Oscar Cullman, the noted Swiss theologian.¹

In the Bible, as in experience, the child of God finds himself in tension between two worlds, the physical and temporal on one hand and the spiritual and eternal on the other. He is a citizen of both and has responsibilities to both. In the Old Testament, the Jewish commonwealth tended to merge the two in the concept of its original theocracy. Even there, however, the ever-present conflict flared into the open in the demand of the people for an earthly king. Also, in the history of the northern kingdom, after the division of the nation on Solomon's death, the revealed religion was discarded and replaced with false priests, false prophets, and centers of worship competitive to the temple at Jerusalem.

Civil government is regarded in the New Testament as a valid, divinely ordained system (Romans 13:12) but only as a temporary expedient. Over against this temporal order stands the eternal kingdom of Christ. The Christian has inescapable obligations to both. He is to be obedient to the civil powers (Romans 13:1; Titus 3:1), but only as long as such obligation does not contravene his higher responsibility to God (Acts 5:29).

This relationship is carefully observed by Christ in both instances in which he deals with "tribute" or taxation. In Matthew 17:24-27 Jesus raises the question as to who should pay tribute, and in Matthew 22:21 ("Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's"), he stresses the legitimate claims of both realms, at the same time clearly distinguishing between the two.

Far more irreconcilable than oil and water are these two elements, the spiritual and the physical. The irreconcilable juxtaposition of church and state as dramatized in the crucifixion of Christ by the Roman state is for-

ever fixed and focused in that supreme conflict. The cross, therefore, is far more than a historic event; it is an eternal truth that the essential natures of church and state are mutually exclusive, the former being that of a redeemed and transformed society and the latter that of a temporal expedient geared to the condition of fallen man. This divergence is basic in Paul's instructions forbidding the use of civil courts to settle differences between Christians (1 Corinthians 6:1-8) and in Jesus' renunciation of the use of force in the achievement of his objectives.

Unless it be war itself, nothing is backed by all the power of the state more than taxation. Let one neglect to pay his taxes if he doubts this! To coerce a citizen to pay taxes to support the work of a church or denomination, even his own, is contrary to Christian doctrine, therefore, as well as to our American principles.

2. *Since complete religious liberty has never been achieved apart from the separation of church and state, it is imperative that the strictest observance of the latter be maintained.*

The greatest struggle of the human race across its long history has not been the struggle of one economic class against another, as Karl Marx asserted, but the far mightier conflict of the masses of mankind in their effort to achieve freedom from all forms of tyranny. As Thomas Jefferson said, "Uniformity of conscience is coercion, and coercion is the greatest of all tyrannies over the mind of man."²

The most dismal chapters of man's history have been written in the centuries-long struggle, first, of the state to dominate the church and, then, of the church to dominate and control the state for its own purposes. The concept of union became a reality shortly after the close of the third century A.D., when the Roman emperor Constantine, in political expedience, "legalized" Christianity as the official religion of the Roman empire.

A study of man's struggle for liberation would take one through the events surrounding such milestones of freedom as the Magna Charta, the Protestant Reformation, the Acts of Toleration of England and Virginia, the colonization of the new world, and the enormous effort in America to achieve disestablishment and religious liberty. Such a study would reveal that man's tortuous upward climb toward the light of freedom found its culmination in the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States, which erected a "wall of separation between Church and State."

The unparalleled progress and prosperity of all denominations, including the Roman Catholic, across the intervening centuries attest to the

wisdom and superiority of this American system. And across those intervening centuries also comes the warning of those glorious champions who won this freedom at such fearful cost to resist mightily the slightest encroachments of either church or state on the territory that separates the two.

3. *Just as man's complete freedom was not won until religious freedom and the separation of church and state became a reality, so the loss of all freedoms is threatened when religious liberty and the separation of church and state are jeopardized.*

The separation of church and state, therefore, is the keystone of all other freedoms. To quote Jefferson: "I know of no example in history in which a priest-ridden people has been able to maintain a free civil government."³

4. *A grant or contribution to a church-related school is a contribution to the church or denomination that owns or sponsors that school.*

There are those who point out that the curriculum of any church-related college contains secular elements, that such schools thus perform a public service, and that therefore such secular curricular programs can be subsidized by tax funds without violation of the principle of church and state separation.

Of course there is a public service performed by the church-related college, and even by a parochial school, just as there is by such services as funerals and weddings. No less important to the public weal is the emphasis of the church on honesty, good citizenship, social service, and justice. Should government therefore subsidize the church and the minister?

Actually, it is impossible to separate the "secular" programs of a truly church-related college from its "religious" programs to the extent that support may benefit one without at the same time benefiting the other. This was the position taken by the Maryland Court of Appeals in the now famous Horace Mann League Case and upheld in principle by the United States Supreme Court when it refused to review the Maryland court's decision. It is well to listen to Justice William O. Douglas, who said in his concurring opinion in the 1963 Supreme Court ruling:

Financing a church either in its strictly religious activities or in its other activities is equally unconstitutional, as I understand the Establishment Clause. Budgets for one activity may be technically separable from budgets for others. But the institution is an inseparable whole, a living organism, which is strengthened in proselytizing when it is strengthened in any department by contributions from other than its own members. What may not be done directly may not be done indirectly lest the Establishment Clause become a mockery.⁴

5. *The acceptance of tax support would bring with it inevitably such a measure of governmental control and influence as would alter radically the basic concept of Christian higher education.*

Good stewardship of public funds requires that some type of governmental control be exercised. "This money is not simply handed out in the pious hope that it will be put to good use. Each of the education laws — the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, the Higher Education Act, and the rest, old and new — is quite specific. Categories and conditions of aid have been established to insure that these funds are spent in an efficient and prudent manner."⁵

Much more specific, however, are the provisions for overt control that are written into the law governing federal grants under the Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963. Although there is a disclaimer against any attempt on the part of the government to exercise control over an institution that accepts such funds, the control provisions are nevertheless numerous and rigid:

a. The institution cannot charge admission fees to any event scheduled in a facility constructed with these funds.

b. No facility thus constructed can be used for athletic or recreational activities.

c. Extreme restrictions are placed on the use of such facilities by schools of medicine, nursing, or health.

The greatest threat to a Christian college, however, is the restriction that reads: "The term 'academic facilities' shall not include any facility used or to be used for sectarian instruction or as a place for religious worship or any facility which is used or to be used primarily in connection with any part of the program of a school or department of divinity."⁶

This provision in effect places the school that accepts such funds under the same provisions that govern public tax-supported institutions, at least with respect to those facilities constructed with such funds. It is quite evident that the government has no choice, since it must be neutral in matters of religion; but the point is that this is a control of the most serious character for a church-related school. Such an institution must decide whether it chooses to introduce into its academic philosophy and program a dichotomy that results in the construction of some facilities on its campus where religion may be taught and others where religion may not be taught.

That the government is serious about enforcing this provision was made clear in the case of Ohio Valley College, Parkersburg, West Virginia. This junior college affiliated with the Church of Christ had constructed a new

auditorium with funds that included a federal grant of \$76,000. When federal auditors visited the campus for a routine financial check-up, they were cordially invited to attend daily chapel services. When they discovered that such services, and apparently also some Bible classes, were conducted in the new auditorium, the college was faced with a government ultimatum that it must either discontinue using the building for chapel services, Bible teaching, and any other type of religious service, or refund the \$76,000 to the government. Greatly embarrassed, the college chose to do the latter and to conduct an extremely difficult fundraising campaign.⁷

6. *The acceptance of federal aid would not solve the financial problems of church-related schools.*

50

The law limits government aid to not more than one-third of the cost of any facility to be constructed, the balance to be provided from other sources. In attempting to qualify for such a grant, many a college has impoverished some departments in order to provide the matching funds for a facility for one particular department, thus producing both a general financial crisis and an unbalanced academic program.

Those who oppose federal aid within the supporting denomination are inevitably offended at the institution for accepting tax funds. Several denominational schools that have had this experience have suffered serious loss of financial and other support from church and denominational sources.

That federal aid is not the panacea some seem to think it to be is demonstrated by the fact that the actual amounts available for the average church school are much less than imagined. Even under the Johnson administration, when the federal government was reported to spend more money in higher education than all of the fifty state governments combined, the picture was not as rosy as it seemed.⁸ "Life Without Uncle," an article published by La Salle College of Philadelphia, points out these facts of life: "Uncle Sam's 'educational gusher' has not, however, meant proportionate royalties to all institutional relatives. One hundred of the larger universities receive about 90% of the federal money available."

7. *Church-related schools that have tried federal aid have found that it brings havoc on both the spiritual and the general liberal arts emphasis.*

My friend teaches in the arts at a denominational school. When asked if I would like to look around the campus, I replied airily: "Take me to the towering temple where science is taught, then to the quonset huts where you people work." I was so right it hurt! There was an entirely new concept on that campus. Federal aid was responsible for it.

Government officials had not moved in with hostile tread. All they did was build one building. That is something like the way it happens. Watch the religious distinctives dissolve on any campus as the government moves in.⁹

The robbing of various departmental budgets in order to bolster one, as I have already mentioned, renders the institution vulnerable to interdepartmental and interdisciplinary jealousies and strife and to serious loss of faculty morale. Ultimately a radical alteration in institutional philosophy and policy results.

8. *To accept grants of tax funds would place both a church-related school and its supporting denomination in legal jeopardy.*

51

This jeopardy has now been dramatically demonstrated in both state and federal fields. On November 14, 1966, the Supreme Court of the United States declined to review the decision of the Maryland Court of Appeals in the Horace Mann League Case. The Horace Mann League, champion of the public schools, had filed a suit in a lower court against the state of Maryland for granting tax funds to four private colleges, all originally church-related. The contention of the League was that these grants violated the church establishment clause of the First Amendment to the Constitution.

The lower court ruled against the League and in favor of the state, whereupon the League appealed to the highest court in Maryland, the Court of Appeals. In this case, the judge set up six criteria by which to decide whether the four colleges involved were truly church-related. Three of them, two Catholic and one Methodist, were adjudged to be so closely church-related that a gift to them was equivalent to a gift to their supporting churches. The fourth was found to have moved so far away from its original religious ties and program that it was now, in effect, a secular school. The three, therefore, were required to refund the grants, and the one was allowed to retain the grant. The three colleges thereupon appealed the decision to the United States Supreme Court, which, as noted, refused to review.

The case involving a grant of federal funds, that of Ohio Valley College, has already been examined.

Perhaps a concluding word should be added about possible alternatives to federal aid for church schools. These alternatives involve the development of a two-way street.

1. On the part of the schools, there should be a reevaluation of their educational programs, a reaffirmation of their spiritual objectives, and a

determined process of readjustment to the legitimate needs and aims of the denominations that own and support them. At the same time, such schools should devise, intensify, and vigorously prosecute the most extensive development programs of which they are capable.

2. On the part of the supporting denominations, there should be a renewed recognition of the indispensable nature of these schools in supplying trained church and spiritual leadership both for denominational objectives and for society at large. Then, recognizing the indispensable nature of their schools, these denominations should increase their subsidies so that their institutions will be in a financial position to compete successfully with tax-supported and tax-assisted schools.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

- 1 Oscar Cullmann, *The State in the New Testament* (New York: Scribner and Sons, 1956).
- 2 Engraved on the Jefferson Memorial in Washington, D. C.
- 3 Joseph M. Dawson, *Baptists and the American Republic* (Nashville, Tennessee: Boardman Press, 1956), p. 36.
- 4 William O. Douglas, in his concurring opinion in a ruling of the United States Supreme Court.
- 5 Harold Howe II, *Education '65; a Report to the Profession* (Washington, D. C.: Office of Education, United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1966), p. 3.
- 6 Higher Education Facilities Act of 1963, Title IV, Section 401, (a) (2).
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- 8 Life with Uncle, *The 1967 Moonshooter Report* (Baltimore, Maryland: Editorial Projects for Education, American Alumni Council, November 1966), p. 1.
- 9 C. Stanley Lowell, *The Changing Climate in Church and State* (Washington, D. C.: Americans United, 1968), p. 7.

GOVERNMENT AID TO EDUCATION 2

Federal Support Is Not Coercive

CHARLES FLEMING, JR.

53

Most Americans have espoused the separation of church and state principle which has done much to lift this nation to world eminence. Seventh-day Adventist Americans have been active in promoting this principle — and perhaps logically so, for we are a minority group whose position, religiously and economically, is enhanced by the separation.

Unfortunately, however, many Adventists have been unable to differentiate between church doctrine and national philosophy. This confusion has been abetted by the fact that our national philosophy of separation of church and state, nailed down in the Bill of Rights, has been adopted as policy by the Adventist church in America. An attempt to dispel some of the confusion that exists on the controversial subject of federal aid to Adventist colleges best begins, therefore, with some clarifications.

Church *doctrine* is based on the word of God; and since the word of God doesn't change, neither does basic church doctrine. Church *policy* is based on what seems most reasonable and expedient to the church as a course of action at a given time; this may change from time to time, inasmuch as that which is expedient today may not be expedient under different circumstances in the future. The decision not to accept federal aid for Adventist colleges is not church doctrine but current church policy. And not only is this policy subject to change, but, in the first place, it lacks even clear definition in the minds of many, with the result that in numerous instances Adventist practice differs from Adventist policy.

Again, there seems to be confusion between federal aid to churches and federal aid to education. The federal government has no disposition to aid churches in their ecclesiastical functions; but in recent years it has taken an increasing financial responsibility in the education and health care of its

citizens and has offered limited financial aid to liberal arts colleges operated under the auspices of church bodies. In this situation it is very easy to declare that any matter — whether of religion, education, or health care — is “church” if it is operated by a church. Is this correct? Does a separation of church and state mean a separation of education and state? In practice at least, the United States Congress does not believe this to be the case.

A lead article in the *Review and Herald* last year,¹ setting forth (in the form of a panel discussion) divergent views on the current policy of non-acceptance of federal aid to Adventist schools, is evidence that the church leadership believes in an open discussion of this policy and wants to determine through dialogue whether a policy believed to be effective in past years is still relevant in today’s society and economy.

All Adventists believe in the principle of religious liberty, and particularly in the protection of the rights of minorities to worship (or not worship) according to their consciences. We believe in the principle of separation of church and state when by “church” we refer to the religious functions of the church. The question here is whether the national philosophy of separation of church and state is undermined when the Congress decides that it can best help the nation meet its higher education needs — that is, provide the most in education at the least cost to the taxpayers — by granting limited financial aid to liberal arts colleges operated by religious organizations.

Do the Scriptures give us any light on this question?

Very little, except as we may wrest certain passages to support a position we wish to hold. Throughout biblical history there was little separation of church and state, for in most instances the state was also the ecclesiastical power. This was actually the plan originally set forth by God for his people, who were ruled by judges and prophets. The first separation of church and state was not initiated by God but by Israelites, who desired to be like the nations around them and accordingly asked to have a king appointed. Saul then ruled over the social, political, and economic affairs of the nation, and Samuel, the prophet, continued as God’s religious representative. Even so, the people accepted for religious purposes any aid proffered by local or foreign government.

There are those who try to support the traditional Adventist policy from the New Testament; but as I read the quotations presented, I have great difficulty in arriving at the desired conclusion. The statement “Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers” (2 Corinthians 6:14) might

be applicable if the church were to go into actual educational partnership with the government. But I know of no one who believes in accepting from the government anything which has restrictions that limit the freedom of the church to carry out its own educational program.

What has Ellen G. White said about the acceptance of federal aid?

In the time of Mrs. White federal aid was never available to private colleges, and it is probably for this reason that we find no references to this question. However, she did say much about accepting gifts to the church and about the tax-exempt status of the church.

55 An 1893 move by Adventist churchmen in Battle Creek to pay property taxes on the sanitarium and the church (called "the tabernacle") resulted in the following resolution at the General Conference session that year: "Whereas, in view of the separation which we believe should exist between the church and the state, it is inconsistent for the church to receive from the state pecuniary gifts, favors, exemptions, on religious grounds; therefore, resolved that we repudiate the doctrine that church or other ecclesiastical properties should be exempt from taxation; and further, resolved, that we use our influence in securing the repeal of such legislation as grants and exemptions."²

Mrs. White later commented: "Our brethren in Battle Creek are not looking at everything in the right light. The movements they have made to pay taxes on the property of the sanitarium and tabernacle have manifested a zeal and conscientiousness that in all respects is not wise or correct. Their ideas of religious liberty are being woven with suggestions that do not come from the Holy Spirit, and the religious liberty cause is sickening, and its sickness can only be healed by the grace and gentleness of Christ."³

Especially apropos to our topic here is the Solusi Mission experience. In the latter part of 1893, when land was needed for a mission station, H. E. Robinson, who was heading the work of the church in South Africa, arranged an interview with Cecil Rhodes, who was both premier of the Cape Colony and head of the British South Africa Company. As a result of the meeting, a tract of 12,000 acres was presented to the church.

This became the site of the Solusi Mission, the first one operated by the denomination among non-Christian peoples. A knowledge of this gift created considerable concern among certain leading brethren at Battle Creek, who feared that to accept it would be a violation of the principle of separation of church and state. As the matter was discussed at the General Conference Session of 1895, action was taken: "That we ought not as a denomination either to seek or to accept from any civil government, chief, ruler, or royal chartered company . . . any gift, or donation . . . to

which we are not in common with all others justly entitled as men without any reference to our religious profession or religious work." Later another action was taken by the General Conference Committee as follows: "That in harmony with this resolution that the General Conference Association be instructed to pay an appropriate amount for all government land that may be secured in Africa or elsewhere."⁴

Adventist leaders were then far more solidly united on a policy of non-acceptance of government aid than they are today — and yet before this action could be implemented, Mrs. White wrote from Australia: "With respect to the propriety of receiving gifts from Gentiles or the heathen . . . what they would give, we should be privileged to receive."⁵ The following day she wrote further:

56

Just as long as we are in this world, and the Spirit of God is striving with the world, we are to receive as well as to impart favors. We are to give to the world the light of truth as presented in the Sacred Scriptures, and we are to receive from the world that which God moves upon them to do in behalf of His cause. The Lord still moves upon the hearts of kings and rulers in behalf of His people, and it becomes those who are so deeply interested in the religious liberty question not to cut off any favors, or withdraw themselves from the help that God has moved men to give for the advancement of His cause. . . .

It is very strange that some of our brethren should feel that it is their duty to bring about a condition of things that would bind up the means that God would have set free. God has not laid upon them the responsibility of coming in conflict with the authorities and powers of the world in this matter.⁶

It is sometimes suggested that Cecil Rhodes was acting as an individual or as a company executive and not as a government official when he gave the land for the Solusi Mission. But at that time Cecil Rhodes was the government and the government was Cecil Rhodes.

In regard to the similar case of the Persian king Cyrus, some claim that he gave to Nehemiah from his own funds and not from government funds; again, however, Cyrus was the government. Where did his funds come from if not from the people? Whether the government is representative or monarchical, the funds come from the work and services of the people under the ruling power. It has been argued that this experience in Nehemiah's time, to which Ellen White explicitly refers, is not applicable to the situation today, inasmuch as there is a difference between instances where God influences rulers to assist his chosen people alone and a plan whereby federal aid is made available to any religious group, no matter how far it is removed from genuine Christian truth. But in fact Cyrus also helped groups with divergent religious views:

It must not be supposed . . . that Cyrus was a pious worshiper of Jehovah simply because he is called God's "anointed" and His "shepherd" in Scripture. . . . Nor is his

kindliness toward the Jews an indication of his religious convictions, for at the outset of his reign he committed himself to a policy which called for returning captive gods to their temples and captive peoples to their homes. In his inscriptions he speaks of sending the gods of various peoples back to their shrines, and a line from the Cyrus Cylinder states specifically, "I gathered together all their populations and restored [them to] their dwelling places."⁷

Will the acceptance of federal aid eventually mean government control?

Many say Yes, citing the government takeover of certain institutions which has occurred, it is said, because of the acceptance of federal aid. But these references to isolated instances seem less impressive than the following report by Richard Hammill: "When I went overseas . . . I discovered that in many lands Seventh-day Adventist schools were taking government grants and that as a result of these favors, which enabled us to operate hundreds of schools that we could not operate out of our own resources, literally tens of thousands of people rejoice in our message because they learned it in these schools."⁸

In 1946-47, at the close of World War II, all Adventist colleges in the United States received much surplus equipment from the government. Southern Missionary College, for example, received equipment to operate a new laundry and to set up a central heating plant, trailers for students to live in, beds and mattresses, chairs and desks, and innumerable other items — all from a government interested only in supplying colleges with the necessary facilities to accommodate an exploding college enrollment. SMC doubled its student population in one year, and I don't know what it would have done without this aid. But there was a strong conviction on the part of some that we were not only using poor judgment but that we were sinfully ignoring the traditions of the church and would soon be completely controlled by federal power.

That was more than twenty years ago. Most of the equipment is worn out and gone. So are some of the men who viewed the situation with such alarm. (Others, however, have taken their places and evidently would have us now take a stand similar to that of the General Conference in 1893 and 1895, which was opposed by Ellen White.) Yet there has been no attempt by the federal government to control SMC's actions in any way because of any gift of equipment.

When I say "control SMC's actions" I mean control its actions in a way that would be contrary to Adventist convictions and objectives. It is true that the government may wish to regulate to a certain extent what it

subsidizes. If we were to take money for a new home economics building, we could expect the government to have something to say about the plans for that building — to make sure that it met certain requirements. But the fact that the government would have something to say about the building it subsidized does not imply that it would try to tell an Adventist college how to run its religion program, which the government is not subsidizing.

The majority of Congressmen, then and now, have voted to provide facilities to schools and colleges not with the purpose of gaining control (for this is farthest from their minds) but in the firm belief that this procedure would improve higher education in America. The goal has been to provide the most education for the least cost, with no thought of dictating an instructional program. Whether or not government control is to be the end result of federal aid depends on the purpose behind the gifts.

The experience of Southern Missionary College is not unique. Many government donations of land and equipment have been received by Adventist schools. According to Drew Pearson: "During the first fiscal year after Kennedy became President, July 1, 1961, through June 30, 1962, discount gifts to Catholic institutions numbered 21, while those to other denominations totaled 11. Of the Protestants, the Seventh-day Adventists got the most — ranging from five buildings for a Navajo mission school in the Kingman Air Force Base in Arizona, to property from the Fairchild Air Force Base in California to other buildings at the Nebraska Ordnance Plant, the John Day Lock and Dam in Oregon, and the Ellsworth Air Force Base in South Dakota."⁹

Is federal aid to parochial schools constitutional?

Frankly, I don't know; and, for practical purposes, neither does anyone else. No one will know officially until the question is tested in the United States Supreme Court. In the meantime, however, this question is beside the point of our discussion. Today federal aid is available. If the Supreme Court rules it unconstitutional, it will not be available. As of now, we are concerned as to what Adventist policy should be in regard to its acceptance.

Can acceptance of federal aid be justified on the basis of current national policy?

Definitely so. And here I believe there are few who will disagree, because within the last few years the federal government has committed itself to substantial support of education and the health care of individuals.

Legislators know that funds granted to a private college in partial support of its instructional facilities will enable that college to continue to exist and enroll more students. The alternative facing the government (and the taxpayer) is to create additional tax-supported colleges in which practically the entire cost of a student's education is borne by the public. The latter course is considerably more expensive. The federal government recognizes that funds supplied to private colleges save the taxpayer money rather than increase his taxes. For this reason there is a great difference between the state's supporting a church in its ecclesiastical function and giving assistance to or cooperation with a church-affiliated liberal arts college to make higher education available to more citizens at less cost to the public.

One of the greatest obstacles in the government's program to provide adequate health care to its citizens is the acute shortage of nurses. Country-wide there are 315 nurses for every 100,000 people — a supply far short of the need. In Tennessee there are only 175 nurses per 100,000 residents. Therefore both the state and the federal governments tell us they need help in providing more nurses, and they will assist us financially to enable us to cooperate with them to fill this need.

Shall we cooperate by accepting the aid and doing a better job? Or shall we refuse "to receive from the world that which God moves upon them to do in behalf of His cause"? What is the task of the church — to do the work of Christ and provide healing and knowledge, or to build fences between itself and the needs of the world? When we cooperate with the government on such projects as these, are we not aiding it and the public as much as they are aiding us?

Adventists have always expected to be the object of persecution. Perhaps this expectation is so profound that we look on the Congress as a group of men who are trying to lure us into a position in which Adventist institutions can be taken over by the government. I seriously question the present prevalence of such a legislative motive.

On the other hand, God has endowed each of us with reason and judgment, and he expects us to use our powers of discernment to the best of our ability to do everything that we can to help ourselves. Christ never performed a miracle to accomplish that which someone could do for himself. Does not this principle apply in this matter of accepting the help that is available to church-related colleges today? In accordance with what Ellen White wrote in 1895, we should take the funds which the Holy Spirit prompts the "powers that be" to provide for us. If we refuse to accept the gift thus

offered, we can hardly expect a miracle to be performed in our behalf to make up the difference.

How has it come about in this land — to which emigrants fled for freedom to worship God, where we have been abundantly blessed, where Christian principles and national philosophy have often been practically synonymous — that many believe that the taxes we pay may be used to instruct young people in a wholly secular, even God-ridiculing atmosphere, but that not one cent may be used to educate them in a Christian environment? I doubt that this should be classified as American philosophy. Did the authors of the Constitution have this in mind? Have we gone so far in promoting what we believe to be the principle of the separation of church and state that we have relegated American youth to an education devoid of any knowledge of God?

60

Federal coercion in private higher education is not a certainty, nor a probability, nor even a trend. Furthermore, does anyone suppose that the government, should our nation fall into some form of tyranny, would *need* the fact of tax support of private schools to justify a takeover (any more than Castro needed it to take over Adventist schools in Cuba)?

On the contrary, the best means of preventing tyranny is a healthy and growing system of Christian-oriented colleges, made possible by improved and expanded facilities and feeding into American society graduates who know what they believe and who know why private education is worthy of assistance and why it should be kept free from government control.

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REVIEWS

Problems of Creation and Science

IAN M. FRASER

61

CREATION — ACCIDENT OR DESIGN

By Harold G. Coffin

with chapters by Ernest S. Booth, Harold W. Clark, Robert H. Brown,
Ariel A. Roth, and Edward E. White

Review and Herald Publishing Association, Washington, D. C., 1969

512 pp illustrations \$7.95

This volume in defense of the conservative creationist position is in the tradition of Price,¹ Clark,² and Marsh³ but introduces many significantly untraditional features. Written as a text for courses in science and religion in Adventist colleges, it covers a wider range of topics than any of its predecessors. The discussion is concise and rather simply presented; in fact, at times the level of presentation seems to fall short of the college level. This criticism does not apply to the chapters on radioactive dating techniques written by Robert H. Brown; contrary to the advertising blurbs, these chapters will not be easily understood by the "intelligent layman"! In most other areas, however, the volume is probably quite readable for the average minister or informed layman. The heavy reliance on Scripture and Ellen G. White's writings as sources of scientific information of equal or even greater authority than observational or experimental findings will undoubtedly please many in this group of readers.

Although few of the significant ideas or arguments are entirely novel, the approach is fresh in many ways. The tone is relatively free of the scorn and vitriol for the evolutionist which so characterized the writings of Price. The appeal is rather that the creationist's viewpoint is at least a reasonable alternative to the evolutionary one. Considerable emphasis, particularly in the last chapter, is placed on the concept that the differences between the creationist and the evolutionist viewpoints are due to differences in what is referred to as "faith." Coffin writes: "The creationist readily recognizes the role of faith in his beliefs. . . . Thus compulsive evidence for creationism cannot be claimed. Faith must be called upon to bridge the gap between the evidence and proof. . . . By faith the creationist accepts the Biblical account as a correct history of the earth. By faith men receive the evolutionary theory as a true basis for understanding prehistoric times" (pp. 461, 463).

Another departure from the practices of some other church authors in this field is the relatively sparing use of direct quotations from books and journal articles by

evolutionary scientists. All too often in the past, an Adventist author has lifted a quotation out of its scientific context, thereby conveying the impression that the evolutionist author holds views which he almost certainly does not. In cases where direct quotations are used, Coffin rather carefully avoids opportunities to convey such false impressions.

On several topics Coffin presents more than one viewpoint, a practice again not usually followed by his predecessors. For example, he presents arguments pro and con the existence of the inorganic matter of the earth before a creation week about 6,000 years ago, without adopting a definite position on either side.

In other areas he presents newer viewpoints that have gained some, but by no means universal, acceptance among us. For example, his interpretation of "after his kind," clearly not quite that of Marsh, owes much to views of Coffin's associates at Andrews University. His ready acceptance and affirmative presentation of evidence for extensive glaciation during the earth's history is a dramatic departure from the classical views of Price and Marsh. Clark and Booth have advocated the acceptance of the evidence for glaciation, of course, for the past twenty-five years, as Coffin indicates.

The author also frankly presents and discusses many of the major problems that face the creationist viewpoint of this volume. Some of these are (p. 460):

1. Speciation rates required in the short span of postflood time;
2. Radioactive dating results;
3. Supposed growth positions of plants and animals in sedimentary beds;
4. The stratification of the fossils in the earth;
5. Et cetera.

It is not clear what the author has in mind under the last category, but one might suggest geographical distribution of plants and animals as a problem not discussed to any extent in this volume. The discussion of the four listed problem areas is helpful and illuminating but certainly leaves it clear that serious difficulties for the creationist viewpoint are raised by the known scientific facts in these areas.

The section on the formation of new species covers fifty pages but scarcely addresses itself to the problem of the phenomenal rates of speciation required by a 6,000-year chronology. Even with the more conservative viewpoint of Marsh on the created kind, very extensive and rapid postflood speciation would seem to be required. Coffin appears willing to admit even more variation, since he does not adopt such a restrictive view on the genesis kind. Little scientific data are presented to account for this variation. Perhaps Coffin should have consulted Ryckman, an Adventist biologist who has ably studied speciation phenomena in certain groups of insects and has published extensively in the field.⁴

Brown's two chapters on radioactive dating are among the best written in the book. The background and problems are well presented, and the case for the existence of the matter of the earth before a creation week 6,000 years ago is seriously considered. Curiously, no mention is made of the opposing work of Gentry.⁵ Because of the wide publicity and frequency of Gentry's presentations in Adventist circles and his attempts to provide published experimental data and to gain scientific recognition for a 6,000-year date for the origin of the earth's matter, disregard of his work seems unfortunate.

Whether the comments be pro or con or neutral, at least reference should have been made, so that readers would have some perspective from which to view Gentry's presentations.

Brown proposes a solution to the problem of the radioactive dating of fossils by use of associated volcanic or other minerals containing radioactive isotopes. It is the familiar one of incomplete removal of previously accumulated daughter products. Attractive as this solution is in a general way, it seems to run into problems in detailed application, as Brown admits. Furthermore, his presentation hardly does justice to the problems presented by the impressive argon-potassium dating of the Tertiary deposits of the western United States by Evernden and associates.⁶ As Brown states, "Much patient investigation may be required before a fully satisfactory understanding of the radiogenic content of volcanic material is developed." As far as I am aware, no geochemist with a conservative creationist viewpoint is currently attacking the problems of argon-potassium dating at a direct experimental level.

The chapter on radiocarbon dating is well done but, again, is unsatisfying. On the basis of the scientific evidence, Brown adopts the usual Adventist posture that back to about 2000 B.C. the radiocarbon dates are probably accurate. Several of the theories popular in Adventist circles to account for radiocarbon dates earlier than 4000 B.C. are rather abruptly dismissed by Brown. This is probably appropriate, but he will be in trouble with some people! Brown's own solutions are ingenious but incomplete, and I believe his peat-bog data have been rather carefully selected and may not be representative of the literature.

Inasmuch as radiocarbon dating equipment and procedures are commercially readily available, it is amazing that no conservative creationist scientist has addressed himself seriously to an experimental attack on the problems of this area. If all the man-hours of theoretical discussion among us had been channeled into experimental activity and analysis, would our position be any different? Hare's attempts to approach radiocarbon and other dating problems through analysis of amino acid degradation should have been discussed in this connection.⁷

The problems posed by supposed growth positions of plants and animals in sedimentary beds have become well known to Adventists in the last ten years since Ritland started his summer vacation tours for Adventist theologians and biologists to study the fossil forests of Yellowstone and other geological phenomena. Although Coffin discusses the problems of Yellowstone only briefly, he analyzes a somewhat parallel situation in Nova Scotia in detail, attempting to build a plausible case, with some experimental evidence, for rapid marine deposition of the successive forest layers in the Nova Scotia coal deposits. Classically these have been interpreted by geologists as a case of *in situ* fossilization. Coffin actually cites them as evidences of the flood! Can he convince the geologists? If he can, no doubt they will direct his attention to the fossil reefs, which he also discusses but with less success. (Roth's current attempt to attack the fossil reef problem experimentally is a welcome change among us.)

Coffin is at his best dealing with the fossil record and the flood, although he views the subject from a perspective which Price no doubt would have regarded as downright heretical. Price and Marsh to the contrary, Coffin argues that there is a genuine

sequence in the fossil record. Clark, the first in Adventist circles to expose this view publicly, contributes a chapter on his "ecological zonation" theory. Attractive as this theory is in general terms, it too has its problems, as Coffin admits.

In another chapter Coffin presents his own ideas of a modified form of ecological zonation. The Cambrian through Silurian strata are attributed at least in part to pre-flood fossilization. Major flood activity is held to account for the Devonian through Cretaceous strata. The Tertiary is regarded as largely postflood. These innovative and stimulating ideas open new possibilities in creationistic thought — in fact they may represent the major contribution of the Geoscience Institute to date.

Although this interpretation of the geologic column may solve certain problems, it raises others or leaves them unresolved. Restricting the activity of the flood to only a portion of the column reduces the number of physical events required of the flood but requires those that do occur during these epochs to take place much more rapidly than those that do not. Unfortunately, Coffin has little to say about the detailed problems of uplift, folding, erosion, invasion by the sea, et cetera, so effectively portrayed in most textbooks of historical geology. He does not fully exploit the significant problems that are apparent if these events are spread over many millions of years. On the other hand, he does not make any real attempt to deal in detail with the problems presented by his ultrashort chronology attributing Devonian through Cretaceous strata to a worldwide catastrophe of a year or so in duration.

Coffin's view partially solves the problem of fossil and living species limited to certain geographic areas in Tertiary and recent times. However, identification of the Tertiary as postflood seems to require an even more rapid rate of speciation. Also it presents a serious time problem to account for all or most of the Tertiary geologic record in a period of 4,500 years or less. The apparently *in situ* fossil forests of Yellowstone can be compressed only with great difficulty into this time period. Curiously, Coffin's discussion is not always consistent with his own theory. For example, Tertiary Miocene beds in the San Joaquin hills of Southern California are apparently attributed to the flood (p. 66).

The sections of the book devoted to the arguments against and the difficulties of the evolutionary theory are not so convincing as they might be. The chapter entitled "Can Man Create Life?" is particularly unsatisfactory in that it fails to present some excellent scientific data; Coffin prefers to appeal to theological authority. (A much superior discussion can be found in the article by Gish.⁸) Coffin also fails to capitalize on the inadequacies of the fossil record as a support of evolution. (Ritland does a better job in this book *Meaning in Nature* for academy students.⁹) Kerkut's book¹⁰ is mentioned, but much greater use could have been made of some of his arguments regarding the inadequacies of current evolutionary theories of the origin of major groups.

In the section on lack of evidence for plant evolution, the classic problem of the origin of the Angiosperms is not even mentioned. Since the conservative creationist faces many problems of chronology and time, it is surprising that these and many other sound scientific arguments against the evolutionary viewpoint are neglected. Coffin should not assume that all readers will be convinced creationists whose only concerns are the details of the flood and a 6,000-year chronology!

Roth has contributed an excellent chapter on the limitations of the scientific method. The points he makes are worthy of careful consideration by all who would worship uncritically at this shrine which we scientists have erected to our gods. Unfortunately, no comparable chapter on the limitations of the theological method is included. Coffin assumes that all his readers will accept conservative Adventist theological interpretations as a basis for scientific information. The book would have been greatly strengthened and its effectiveness for a much wider range of readers markedly increased if a careful and thorough analysis and defense of its theological presuppositions had been included, particularly in terms of their use as basis for scientific conclusions. At the very least, in view of the many unanswered problems that revolve around the 6,000-year date for creation of organic materials, a more extended discussion than that on pages 271-272 would have been helpful.

All in all, this volume is a significant advance over its predecessors and fills a real need. Some areas, unfortunately, do not make the most of the available arguments. Better solutions are not available, understandably but still regrettably, for the many problems honestly raised. Clearly, a major effort by Adventist scholars at the Geoscience Institute and elsewhere is required to bring illumination to the church in these areas.

Perhaps interested scholars, ranging from conservative to liberal, should arrange a symposium. Free but restrained and respectful discussion by such a group could be most helpful. Subsequent publication of the symposium might at least partially meet some of the needs left unfilled by Coffin's volume, which is clearly inadequate for the problems confronting Adventist graduate students in the biological and geological sciences in the universities of the land. Analysis of the symposium at meetings of the Adventist Forums might stimulate further thought and experimentation by members. Coffin's attempt to bring together many new viewpoints and interpretations of old truths is surely a welcome inaugural for further efforts in this direction.

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To Live or To Die?

DONALD E. HALL

POPULATION, EVOLUTION, AND BIRTH CONTROL: A COLLAGE OF CONTROVERSIAL IDEAS

Assembled by Garrett Hardin

W. H. Freeman and Company, San Francisco, second edition 1969 404 pp

\$6.00 cloth \$2.95 paper

Are we justified in doing good when the foreseeable consequence is evil? This inversion of the usual question of means-and-end is suggested by A. V. Hill as the present ethical dilemma of science, and it makes for some disquieting meditation when its full implications are realized.

Consider the experience of Gerald Winfield, who was a medical missionary in China for many years. He wrote later of being haunted by the dying cries of a tubercular beggar to whom he had several times given money. He had felt ashamed to do so, "ashamed because I know that I was powerless to give enough to do anything more than prolong the slow pain of his dying — yet ashamed not to make some gesture of sympathy."

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These wrenching feelings have surely been shared by many missionaries in undeveloped countries — and perhaps in a small way by a large number of us who have seen pockets of poverty and disease without leaving the United States. What results should we really expect in the long run from our attempts to do “humanitarian” work?

Winfield had certainly “helped” many individuals. But finally he was forced to doubt whether he had really done any favor for the human race as a whole. Sadly he concluded that “existing checks on population growth must not be removed until the controls exerted by direct family limitation and industrialization are well established. . . . The death rate must not be reduced too quickly. . . . The first objective of the medical-health program must *not* be the simple, natural one of saving lives.”

This seeming callousness must be understood in the light of the Utterly Dismal Theorem propounded by Kenneth Boulding: If there is no deterrent to population growth but starvation and misery, then any technological improvement or simple reduction in death rate can only have “the ultimate effect of increasing the sum of human misery, as it permits a larger population to live in precisely the same state of misery and starvation as before the change.”

One might at first suggest that we attack starvation itself through crash programs in agricultural technology. Indeed, we find a review in this journal saying: “Perhaps the day is at hand when those trained in agriculture will have at least as much to contribute [to the humanitarian work of the church] as those trained in public health or medicine.”¹ But this kind of improvement is not exempt from the Utterly Dismal Theorem either — since any increase in food supply will only *temporarily* raise nutritional standards; this will raise birth rates and life expectancies; and ultimately the additional food will only make it possible for *more* people to starve. Shall we, then, withhold our approval from the agricultural experts as well as from the physician?

Such is the stimulation of thought to be found in these readings collected by Garrett Hardin. There are 123, ranging from single sentences to a few essays exceeding ten pages. The variety makes the book much more interesting and readable than a book of equal size written by a single author. Hardin has provided occasional paragraphs of background and transition to give unity to the readings, and he succeeds in establishing a total effect that strongly mirrors his own opinions. Not being a social scientist, I cannot pretend to pass judgment on the technical aspects of the book, but I can report my enjoyment as a nonspecialist.

The main emphasis is on the problem of exploding population and the solution of birth control. (This, almost by definition, is the only solution in the human domain, unless one considers it acceptable to plan on continuing famines, epidemics, or wars indefinitely, and, in fact, at an increased level.) The middle section of the book, on evolution, is relatively brief and in a supporting role.

Probably the most outstanding essays in the book are Hardin’s own. One of these, “The Ghost of Authority,” is addressed to the difficult relation that exists between the Roman Catholic Church, as an organization, and its thinking adherents. But much in the essay could be true, on a smaller scale, of Seventh-day Adventists. Many of us would do well to learn something from it about the individual’s responsibility for his acceptance of authority.

A tremendous (yet potentially joyful) burden devolves on every person, in spite of any efforts he may make to escape it, to ensure that his beliefs are really his own and are held for valid reasons. Hardin strikingly warns of one of the difficulties of this task: "Every cluster of human beliefs is a homeostatic system with immense powers of repair in the face of logical attack. Put another way, each truth that is contrary to a well established system has to be discovered over and over, each new statement of it being speedily transmuted into innocuous intellectual isotopes by the internal forces of Freudian denial."

A similar thought is brought out in his explanation of some of the processes involved in the acceptance a century ago of "Darwinism." Our world view ordinarily includes a number of beliefs that are more inherited than thought out, and these, through familiarity if nothing else, come to have not only security value but even "beauty" at a subconscious level. Says Hardin: "We may be unaware of this beauty until a new myth is offered as an alternative — and then we squeal like stuck pigs. No matter how great the intellectual vigor of a new idea, it doesn't have a chance of acceptance until it too has been invested with beauty." There may be a lesson here for the young and educated who see points of Seventh-day Adventist theology and working policy that they would like to improve.

What could we responsibly conclude with regard to population control measures, in the light of moral concepts we now consider beautiful?

First, we might feel rather encouraged about upholding our historical standards of sexual morality by reading Ely Van de Warker's study of the Oneida Community. It is not at all prejudiced against the free love practices of this unique group, and it is in fact preceded by an apologia from John Humphrey Noyes, the community's founder. But the most eloquent voice is that of an unnamed woman who had lived a number of years at Oneida and who gave frank and lengthy answers to some questions asked by Doctor Van de Warker. She reveals — seemingly with no ill intent, almost unconsciously — that, notwithstanding Noyes' theories, the practical outworking of the plan involved a great deal of jealousy, favoritism, and intrigue. Those who outwardly subscribed to equal sexual sharing found that their inward feelings soon ran in very unequal channels.

Second, we might reexamine our wonted devotion to individual freedom. Can we expect by timid moves here and there to solve our population problems while retaining as an axiom full freedom of choice? We are warned by Lord Morley that "small reforms are the worst enemies of great reforms." Hardin's application of this idea is to the effect that the present programs carried on by Planned Parenthood are only timid half-measures, since they do not aggressively attempt to change the minds of those who think they want more children when they already have enough.

We might add that even the rich need to have drilled into them that mere "ability to provide" is no excuse for breeding to the limit of their desires in an overpopulated world. It is quite dangerous to be lulled into thinking that we will have success in controlling population growth without measures far more radical than Planned Parenthood clinics.

Hardin discusses this problem in his concluding essay, "The Tragedy of the Commons," which must be read in its entirety to be fully appreciated. He is convinced that

births must be controlled by nothing less than outright coercion, though hopefully "mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon." A more attractive solution might be the development of such widespread Christian love that each individual would refrain from full use of his procreative ability out of regard for the well-being of his fellow men.

But neither we nor Hardin (although for different reasons) are such optimists as to take this possibility seriously, and we are back to coercion. If we wait too long, this coercion will be imposed without regard to our wishes. We would best get busy on voluntarily relinquishing the freedom to breed.

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69

A Physicist and Religion

RAY HEFFERLIN

ISSUES IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION

By Ian G. Barbour

Prentice-Hall, Inc., Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey, 1966 470 pp \$5.85

This book was written by a professor of physics, who is the chairman of a religion department, as a textbook to be used both in state universities and in theological seminaries.¹ It has four parts: (A) a historical part; (B) a brief summary of relevant religious views in the present century; (C) a section on method, wherein the methods of science, of the humanities, and of religion are portrayed as adjacent colors of a spectrum; and (D) a portion on the religious implications of the theories of science, particularly implications for our view of the role of God in nature.

My interest in this book began long before it was written, during my fourteen years of teaching physics at Southern Missionary College and (during a leave of absence) at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga. It has been a constant pleasure to feel my students' curiosity — about the ethics of professional science (weapons research, funding of science in parochial schools), cosmology ("big bang" theory, "heat death" of the universe), changes in the stellar universe (slowing of rotation of the earth, novae), the nature of the spiritual world (fourth or other dimension?), to mention a few specifics.

I have also shared the pain of some of these same students who, without the support of sincere, consistent friends of like faith, found themselves unprepared to meet the sophisticated, predominantly irreligious atmosphere of the graduate school. I asked

AUTUMN 1969

births must be controlled by nothing less than outright coercion, though hopefully "mutual coercion, mutually agreed upon." A more attractive solution might be the development of such widespread Christian love that each individual would refrain from full use of his procreative ability out of regard for the well-being of his fellow men.

But neither we nor Hardin (although for different reasons) are such optimists as to take this possibility seriously, and we are back to coercion. If we wait too long, this coercion will be imposed without regard to our wishes. We would best get busy on voluntarily relinquishing the freedom to breed.

REFERENCE

- 1 Bruce T. Trumbo, A Matter of Fertility, *Spectrum* 1, 59-63 (winter 1969).

69

A Physicist and Religion

RAY HEFFERLIN

ISSUES IN SCIENCE AND RELIGION

By Ian G. Barbour

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This book was written by a professor of physics, who is the chairman of a religion department, as a textbook to be used both in state universities and in theological seminaries.¹ It has four parts: (A) a historical part; (B) a brief summary of relevant religious views in the present century; (C) a section on method, wherein the methods of science, of the humanities, and of religion are portrayed as adjacent colors of a spectrum; and (D) a portion on the religious implications of the theories of science, particularly implications for our view of the role of God in nature.

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AUTUMN 1969

similar questions while I was in college and had similar pain on arrival at graduate school. Since that time, I have been profoundly influenced by C. S. Lewis, particularly in my attitudes toward prayer, the nature of the spiritual world, determinism, and arguments on the existence of God. It was natural, then, that materials accumulated and began to surface in lecture and invited presentations. Eventually these became the course *Issues in Physical Science and Religion*, a three-semester-hour general-education offering in the physics department.

Barbour's book contributed the title to the course, and the course follows the book closely, but in A, D, B, C order. It is in this same order that some comments about the book follow.

The historical part of the book is generally cautious; for example, the trial of Galileo is quite played down. My students' reaction to the descriptions of the contributions of Hume and Kant often has been, "Why doesn't he criticize or approve?" On the other hand, the evolutionary theory is called a fact, and scriptural interpretation to the contrary is criticized (pp. 83, 96, 99-100).

The last part of the book begins with the admission that this discussion of the theories of science will reach certain conclusions: the universe should not be viewed with naive realism nor naive idealism; the universe does not admit to pure reductionism; the universe is dynamic, a process. In other pages the author concludes that indeterminacy is an intrinsic phenomenon of nature rather than a state of mind or a reflection of present scientific knowledge, and that theology must come from revelation and experience rather than from science (p. 414).

The challenge to reductionism is based, first, on the Pauli exclusion principle (pp. 295-296). The analogy to crystal motions is weak in that it implies that the non-reducible part of the universe is mere boundary conditions. By far the greater challenge to reductionism is Barbour's second one, based on *Life and Mind*. This chapter has a discourse on the nature of man (pp. 361-363) which could well improve some "Bible studies" on the mortality of the soul.

There are only two pages on cosmology (pp. 336-337). Pair creation, relativity, and other topics, unfortunately, are not treated.

The section on methodology shows a keen perception of how various philosophies begin with a commitment: logical positivism (pp. 241-242), Freud's world view (p. 257), and J. Huxley's "evolutionary vision" (later, on p. 413). Then Barbour argues at length (pp. 239-252) that religion is a respectable discipline. The argument includes an interesting page on falsifiability and is followed by an unsuccessful attempt to specify criteria for evaluating religions. He suggests that both one's science and one's religion are evaluated by one's metaphysics. The next question, "How does one evaluate his metaphysics?" is left unasked.² Unaccountably the section omits Gödel's immensely important theorem entirely. (This theorem, and others like it, prove the hopelessness of constructing self-consistent closed systems of thought at least as complicated as arithmetic).

There is some risk in presenting such material to the college student, and in asking him, for instance, whether his beliefs are based on rational propositions, and, if so, on which ones. There is often pain — the pain of finding oneself unprepared to meet the sophisticated, predominantly irreligious atmosphere of the graduate school. Here,

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."

71

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

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.

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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."

72

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 cliches, 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."

NOTES ON CONTRIBUTORS

JOHN A. HUTCHISON (*Three Meanings of Faith*) is professor of philosophy of religion at Claremont Graduate School. He holds the bachelor of science degree from Lafayette College (1932), the bachelor of divinity from Union Seminary (1935), and the doctor of philosophy (in philosophy of religion) from Columbia University (1941). He is the author of three books: *Paths of Faith*, *The Two Cities*, and *Language and Faith*.

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IAN M. FRASER (*Problems of Creation and Science*) was born in Australia and earned his bachelor of science degree (chemistry, biology) at the University of

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74

CONTRIBUTORS whose work appeared in SPECTRUM earlier this year are: DONALD E. HALL (*To Live or To Die?*), assistant professor of physics at Walla Walla College (winter, summer); ARTHUR HAUCK (*Faith Today?*), chairman of the department of speech at Union College (summer); BEN JACQUES (*Hair Like Eagles*), senior student at San Bernardino State College (winter); and DIRK K. KOOPMANS (*In the Hollow of His Hand*, a portfolio), an artist in The Netherlands (spring, summer).