

MR. SMOOTH-MAN: I tell the truth and nothing but the truth.

PROFESSOR: I've heard it said that only children and drunken folk speak the truth, and you seem to be neither.

S.-MAN: I have too much sense to get drunk; I am grown up.

PROF: You tell nothing but the truth?

S.-MAN: So far as in me is possible.

PROF: Quite different from your original claim.

S.-MAN: I'm not God, so I have to make some modification.

PROF: Quite right. I agree.

S.-MAN: According to my light, I speak the truth.

PROF: Honest Injun?

S.-MAN: It's God's truth.

PROF: You just said it isn't God's; it is your own.

S.-MAN: Speaking in metaphors.

PROF: God's truth a metaphor?

S.-MAN: As my virtuous wife, Lady Feigning's daughter says, "Tell the truth and shame the devil."

PROF: So now we have the devil mixed into this discussion of truth. Do you think the devil is shamed by the truth that loves to walk about

only when the sun shines, or which travels in a shiny new Jaguar?

S.-MAN: It is nicer if the truth is respectable, isn't it?

PROF: Nicer?

S.-MAN: Why should the truth be disreputable? Why sit in a joint of some kind or other if it can live on the boulevard?

PROF: The point is not where the truth resides, but is it the truth?

S.-MAN: I find it profitable, and harmless, to search out the truth in lovely circumstances. In fact, I find truth in rags somewhat disgusting.

PROF: So must the devil. He always seems to ride along with the truth when it is pleasant sailing. So how can you shame the devil by not sticking to truth in rags also?

S.-MAN: Only a metaphor.

PROF: I see. Even at my most charitable interpretation of your notion of truth, it is something to come to, but not to live as.

S.-MAN: I don't get what you mean.

PROF: It seems to me that you look upon truth as a pleasant kind of company, like a cheerful teaching.

S.-MAN: Well, isn't the truth like a teaching? Don't we point ourselves to it as a goal, whether or not agreeable? Although, as I said, I prefer to stick to the more comfortable brands of truth.

PROF: Now we're getting to the point of this discussion. Truth, you say, is a teaching. As a teaching, or knowledge in any realm, truth could come in many styles; so you are at least consistent in commenting on some brand of truth as distinguished from another brand.

S.-MAN: Surely.

PROF: But I would say that truth is not a teaching. It isn't even knowledge. It just is.

S.-MAN: Of course it is, it is a teaching.

PROF: No, it is not. It is a life, a certain life. Did you ever hear it said, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life"?

S.-MAN: The Bible, isn't it? But come now, no intelligent person takes

stock in biblical myths any longer, do they?

PROF: You may question my intelligence, but I do.

S.-MAN: Well, well. . . . O.K. You accept the teachings of Jesus as truth, I . . .

PROF: You don't understand. Yes, I accept the teachings of Jesus, but not as truth. I accept Jesus as truth.

S.-MAN: How can a man be true? Only knowledge, or teachings, or experiments are true.

PROF: Quite the contrary. The teachings of Jesus are only true because he is the truth. But for him, what he taught would be only notions and they would have to take their chances with all contrary opinions in the market place. He is truth. His teachings only point to truth.

S.-MAN: You're quibbling.

PROF: No, no. To quibble is to evade the truth. I say confront it. You confront the truth in a person, not a teaching.

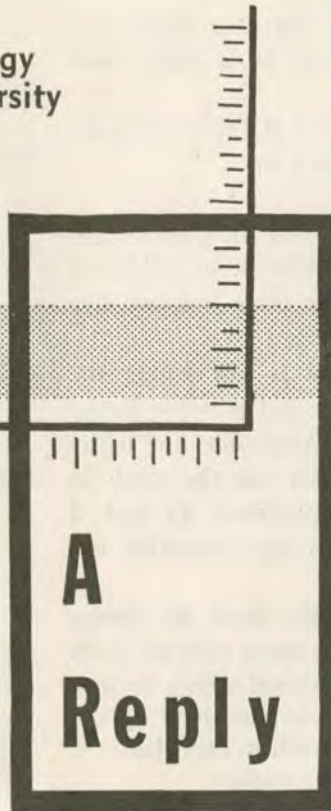
S.-MAN: Not to equivocate, I . . .

PROF: That's it. Not to equivocate!

## The Truth?

## Editorial:

by Edward C. Hobbs  
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## to Pilate's Question

A question asked with no time for an answer. It seemed merely academic anyway, for the questioner had more pressing things to consider such as the charge of conspiracy and one of a kingship.

Dr. Hobbs takes time out to give what is to him the answer to "What is Truth?"

**I**N the Fourth Evangelist's dramatic retelling of the story which was Good News, a curious conversation takes place during Jesus' trial. Pilate inquires concerning the charges made against Jesus, and Jesus mysteriously replies that his kingship is not of this world. Pilate says (perhaps a little amused?), "So you are a king?" And Jesus answers in the oblique Fourth Gospel style, "You say that I am a king. For this I was born, and for this I have come into the world, to bear

witness to the truth. Every one who is of the truth hears my voice." What more fitting query could a cultivated Roman make at this point than, "What is truth?" Waiting for no reply, he goes on about the business of the trial.

The Evangelist knew that a biblical reply to this question would make no sense to Pilate. The reply would be, "The Word of God is truth" (17:17); or even "I am the truth" (14:6). Such expressions are so familiar to most of us that we scarcely realize what strange—almost ridiculous—notions they are. The Bible is distressingly unphilosophical and even quite unreasonable (may we say "un-Greek"?) in the way it talks about truth. Without being very philosophical ourselves, we might say that we usually mean by truth something like conformity to reality, the "state of affairs" or "just the facts, ma'am"—which truth can be found out by the proper sort of investigation. Common to most of our ideas about truth is the belief that it is something we can find out for our-

selves. The Bible, however, tends to present truth as something that *God is*, or *says*; or, more characteristically, something that *God does*.

The Fourth Gospel brings these ways of thinking together and summarizes them by asserting that Jesus Christ is the truth. He is presented as *the act of God*; Jesus Christ is what God does, his deed among men. I suspect that the Fourth Evangelist would be hard put to it to "demonstrate" this truth. Perhaps we should try to understand how he got that way.

**S**UPPOSE we have decided to measure the length of something, and want to be extremely accurate. We propose to use a good yardstick, and discard the cheap ones around the house. We go to a shop and ask for a good yardstick; but how shall we be sure it is *really* exactly a yard long? Ultimately, there is no sure way except checking with the platinum bar in the National Bureau of Standards.

Suppose we do this—but then the question occurs to us, “But how can we be sure that *this* bar is *truly* a yard long?” The reply is that when we say “yard” we *mean* nothing more nor less than the length of this bar. It is a yard, because yard means the length of this bar.

In a way, Jesus is regarded by the New Testament writers as an official “yardstick” by which other things are measured, or by which the meaning of all other things is discovered. They seem to say, “Here is our criterion of truth; when we wish to see whether something else is ‘true’ or not, we shall measure it by Christ. He is our Bureau of Standards.”

This unusual approach is exemplified quite well in the way they proceeded to talk about God. When they called Jesus “the Son of God” we might suppose they meant that Jesus was so much like what they knew God to be that they could not avoid calling him God’s Son. However, the reverse is more nearly the case. They said, instead, that God is like Jesus. To describe what they meant by God, they called him “the Father of Jesus Christ.” They did not use some external criterion to measure Jesus’ divinity; rather, they used Jesus as a criterion for what divinity is. Hence, God is like Jesus; they knew what Jesus was like, and so they could be sure that his Father was God. The most characteristic name for God in the New Testament is “the God and Father of Jesus Christ.”

They measured God by Jesus! Apparently they meant it quite seriously when they called Jesus “the Truth.” This measurement of the “correspondence of something with reality” meant they considered that Jesus had shown them, supremely in his death and resurrection, what reality actually was. And they proceeded to make Jesus the “measure of all things.”

This looks like a tremendous “leap of faith,” and no doubt it is; it is the “Resurrection faith” which asserted that henceforth not even death could disprove or nullify the truth they now acknowledged and trusted—the truth about what the world is all about and about God’s activity in the world, which they found in Jesus Christ.

Nothing in the world could prove such a faith; rather, this faith “proved” the world, and revealed it as the arena of God’s redemptive activity on behalf of men.

**T**HE leap of faith does not appear as being so very odd when we recall that we took a similar one regarding our yardstick; that is, we finally recognized that we had to start somewhere. Any system or creed or philosophy which knows a “truth” starts somewhere; it has a beginning which is not gotten to from somewhere else, a “first premise” which is not the conclusion to some previous syllogism. We do not usually characterize this initial assumption about things as a “leap of faith”—except in religion. We call it a “basic presupposition” or “self-evident truth” or “axiom” or something dignified of the sort. Still, we have a starting point, a “truth” which tests all other truths.

The oddity about the Bible and the Christian community is not that they have such a “truth.” The oddity is that they say this truth is to be discerned in God’s acts among men, in his visiting and redeeming his people, in his raising up a Horn of Salvation for us—to be brief, in Jesus Christ. To call Jesus “the Christ” is to assert that he is this act of God; it is to acknowledge him as the Truth above all truths, the Truth which tests all that would be called true.

Thomas Aquinas (of all people) is credited with the authorship of an exceptionally beautiful hymn, *Adoro devote, latens veritas*—“I adore thee faithfully, hidden Truth.” In its best-known English translation, the second stanza reads:

Taste, and touch, and vision, to  
discern thee fail;  
Faith, that comes by hearing,  
pierces through the veil.  
I believe whatever the Son of God  
hath told;  
What the Truth hath spoken, that  
for truth I hold.

The last line might be translated more accurately, though less beautifully, as: “Nothing is truer than the Word of Truth.”

And nothing is.

## Source

The passion for truth is silenced by answers which have the weight of undisputed authority.

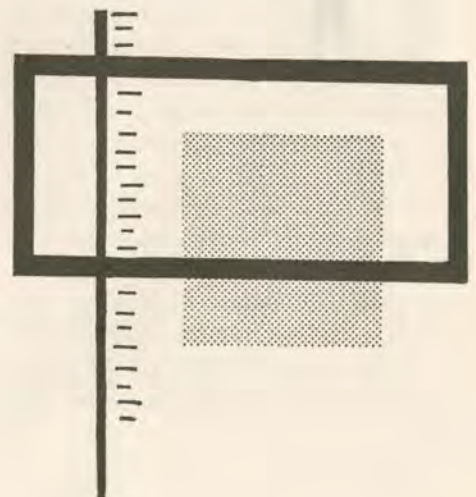
In all of us, open or hidden, admitted or repressed, the despair of truth is a permanent threat.

Let me do something unusual from a Christian standpoint, namely, to express praise of Pilate—not the unjust judge, but the cynic and skeptic; and of all those amongst us in whom Pilate’s question is alive. For in the depth of every serious doubt and every work of despair of truth, the passion for truth is still at work.

The truth which liberates is the truth in which we participate, which is a part of us and we a part of it.

It is the dignity and the danger of Protestantism that it exposes its adherents to the insecurity of asking the question of truth for themselves and that it throws them into the freedom and responsibility of personal decisions, of the right to choose between the ways of the skeptics, and those who are orthodox, of the indifferent masses, and Him who is the truth that liberates.

—Paul Tillich, *The New Being*



# LANGUAGE

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by

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THE study of the uses of language is close to being the most synoptic and yet intellectually worthy enterprise one can undertake today. Most people who are entranced even a little by learning certainly have harbored the wish for a synoptic point of view, from which everything could be judged and to which everything could be referred. Like Plato who spoke about being a spectator of all time and of all existence, we too have probably wished for an all-purpose generalization, a kind of master view into which everything would somehow fit. The way to get such a view has seemed to many to be a matter of compounding what is known, increasing, so to speak, the girth of cognition. But as time has gone by, numerous difficulties have arisen. Most notable is the simple one; there is too much to be known, too many truths about matters of fact to be learned and understood. Thus, no one seems any longer psychologically capable of doing what seems so plausible and attractive. In fact, it is usually romanticism untested by effort which supports an enthusiasm for this kind of synoptic view.

There is nothing logically wrong with the notion of a synoptic view. I mean by this that the idea of putting all our knowledge together, weaving a kind of magnificent overview, is not contradictory. In principle it can be done. When the quantity of knowledge was considerably less, there were those who tried and, in a sense, even succeeded. The difficulty lies not in the idea but, rather, in its execution. Furthermore, the undeniable fact that the world is full of everything, good and evil, ideas and things, sinners and saints, means that all numbers and kinds do coexist in the present hour. The possibility that a perspective view might include all that can be known and which does coexist anyway seems, therefore, quite reasonable.

A tinge of religiosity has always hung over the prospect too. Most religious people know God is not just another person, not another thing; and whatever else God might be, he is not an object to be described like other objects. There is no cognition of God

as there is of either past or present existing persons. God does not necessarily become more apparent when the cognitive sweep is large than he is apparent when the knowledge is more limited in extent. For God is never apparent and it seems to be true as a writer of one of the Gospels says: "No man hath seen God at any time; . . ." (John 1:18). But still the synoptic grasp always seems attractive to erstwhile religious men. The reason for this appears to be the point of view itself, i.e., being a spectator to all time and all existence must be something like God's point of view.

There is an exaltation reserved for the knowers which the ignorant perhaps cannot match. Much of that sense of grandeur which has been engendered by humanists and scholars, and one must not forget to say, too, many scientists, arises from this sense of authority and greatness which must be like that of the gods. Anyone reading Goethe cannot help noting how much status and affluence he gives to the chosen ones, those who ascend the Olympian heights and hence approximate dignity. What competence the synoptic view promises is not so much a matter of knowing God as it is becoming divine. Even Emerson reflects this kind of passion for knowledge and he, too, exults in the near divinity that truth promises.

Some such rationale as this is probably responsible for the much too heavy investment that pursuing the truth is made to carry. The great humanists of the Renaissance, among others, gave the pursuit of the truth a kind of religious pathos which it has not quite lost to this day. Much of philosophical and theological cognition, particularly those kinds which are called "metaphysica," seems to promise something, if not divine, at least wonderful, in addition to the truth. For various reasons this pathos is disappearing. Not only because it is becoming difficult to climb Mount Olympus, but also because our synoptic views are rapidly becoming pedestrian and human. Piecing the learning of the world together has become a matter of first analyzing the constituent parts and determining if any of

motive

them are common to all. Some common elements have been discovered. But to know about these is not the same as to synthesize all the knowledge and all the culture of the world. Once it was plausible to aver that any scientific truth claim could not be properly understood unless it were fitted into a master view of which science, poetry, history, etc., were contributing parts. Even if feelings and emotions, motives and purposes, were untouched by the parts, it seemed assured that true humility, sublimity, humanity, and surely godliness, would be begotten by the totality.

Today we have apparently lost our right to make cognitive syntheses. With this we have seemingly lost the cognitive source for pathos and religiosity. James B. Conant's *On Understanding Science* suggests an exciting prospect, a higher truth within which science itself is better understood, until you read the book! Then you discover that the sciences do not add up to a bigger view; instead, he gives you a description of the tactics and strategy of scientists. In a way his book is the admission that there is a truth to be had about science which is neither another bit of science nor God's point of view. There are many books written today about other books and learning. Most of them concern methods, structures of argument, formal principles and problems. Some draw attention to the differences between the languages of science, of poetry, of morals and of religion. The point of similarity between all such endeavors is that they do not compound conclusions and blend differences; rather do they find the similarities to be matters of structure and form demanding the talents of analysis and definition.

## II

Every shift in intellectual perspective sharpens awareness in one area or another. The interest we have just noted has brought about all kinds of studies concerning the differences and similarities in the functions and purposes served by language. Amid all of this has grown a more acute apprecia-

tion of the truth function of language. To say that words convey truth is to say a remarkable thing. Words do not "mean" only noises or shapes, even though they are that to our senses. Words have other kinds of functions besides their truth function. They may incite behavior, convey feelings, and even do one or more of these simultaneously. The possibility that "true" words might arouse feelings and induce morality is an extraordinary sanguine hope, dear to intellectuals. But, the point to be noted here is that words in sentence form become meaningful under certain conditions so that they begin to make a claim upon all who understand them. When they ask for our assent to the description they provide, we say the sentence seems to be true. Sentences (which physically, at least, are groupings of words) are called propositions when it is significant to say about them that they are true or false.

In the long history of Western civilization and culture, there is remarkable testimony to the view that the word "true" and its correlative, "false," are applicable primarily to sentences and only derivatively to anything else. One might almost say that the entirety of Western education has pivoted around the view that education is the pursuit and conveyance of truth and that truth is a quality of language units called sentences.

The obvious advantage in saying all of this is that it puts truth into the locus of that which is communicable. Words and language are social phenomena. Words do develop their utility in virtue of being used as symbols for the same thing or things. Words are not useful if they are only idiosyncratic in reference or in time. If they can be used only once or only by a single person they lose their very existence. Words by themselves do not have a truth value. They may have a substantive value—they may, e.g., substitute for things. A man's name can be used in the man's absence to call up the presence of the man. But the truth of words is primarily a function of a group of words and not of a single word. In some cases, of course, a single word can be used instead of a

group of words but then the group of words or sentence is understood even if not uttered.

Drawing attention to this is done only to point out that the truth function of language is not an automatic matter. Men put words together intentionally and with care and precision in order to get them to become the bearers of the truth. The fact that it has to be done so painstakingly is often overlooked. Sentences and formulae have to be constructed and then they begin to say something as a unit which is more and different than they say in their respective parts. Sentences are not always natural. Most sentences that convey truth are in fact contrived. This does not mean that truth is thus manufactured. Again the point to be noted is that words may have unpremeditated origins and functions—they may seem to have natural origins; but sentences which communicate truth are most often the consequence of strenuous voluntary effort.

The number of truths which are conceivably available is of course staggering. There are things to be discovered and events and relations to be performed and noted, but, in addition, all of these must find their linguistic expression in order that the truth quality is finally known. A state of affairs is neither true nor false—it simply is. We get truth or falsity when some words about a state of affairs are given a kind of status and are, in some way or another, made an account or a description of that state of affairs. Actually, sentences are not so difficult to formulate. The great trick is to make them true of whatever they name and describe rather than false of the same. This is a major intellectual enterprise. The number of sentences in circulation is so much larger than the number of true sentences that everyone who is educated at all must also be prepared to discuss in some degree what it means to have true sentences rather than false ones.

This latter process is called verification or, to use a word with religious connotation, justification. Words do not by their existence as symbols provide the warrant for a truth claim.

Words do, to be sure, exist as physical things. They have appearances and sounds when written and spoken. But neither of these attributes is a direct or immediate occasion for discovering their truth claim. Words and sentences which sound attractive and look impressive can be the compounding of nonsense and very frequently are so. To ascertain when language is true rather than false is a large part of the scientific and intellectual endeavor. Verification of a truth claim is a highly complex matter. One does not verify by collecting more sentences or by looking at the thing that is being described. Of course, there is the occasion demanding the latter. But it is rather infrequent, at least in instances where verification is itself the problem. Most of the time verification is not a matter of comparing words and things; for the truth of a sentence is not always a reflection of the thing in a single word. The truth of a sentence is not, either, a compound of the meanings of the single words within the sentence. Furthermore, the fact of the matter is many states of affairs about which we speak, e.g., the past, the structure of atoms, the law of gravity, are themselves not open to simple inspection.

From all of this it is important to remember that scholars and scientists, whatever their objects of interest, be those objects Plato or Jesus, the causes of cancer or of war, are in business to find the truth. They are, as cognitive agents, trying to find both a state of affairs and a linguistic expression, the first which warrants the second, the second which expresses the first. In addition, there is the responsibility of communicating some of the truths to others. The latter demands that one use the intellectual coin of the realm.

There may be some emotions which are appropriate to possession of the truth but at this date it is a little difficult to say categorically what they ought to be. Even a certain Old Testament author thought that knowledge and its increase might make one sad. Much of education is carried on under a moderate system of duress where, if the gladness of learning is not sufficient to get students to learn, then the

possibility of a good grade or the shame of a bad one is added as an incentive. It is more difficult to say whether any conduct, or even any moral persuasion, actually accompanies the possession of the truth. Socrates tried to argue that knowledge really was virtue. However, with progress in learning, both in the extent of truths known and the number of those who know them, we are perhaps able to see that at least there is no necessary and immediate connection between the knowledge of truths and what we call moral character.

But this is all the more reason for thinking about religion, and the Christian religion particularly, from another vantage point. Let it be noted, however, I have not denied that there can be truths about religious objects and people too. Nonetheless, the same generalizations hold, namely, that to possess truths about anything, that is to say, to have language which is warrantable, is not to be a different kind of person. This is, then to find a kind of limit as well as a perfection in all that learning provides. If sentences are true, they have their truth quality independently of the persons who discovered the truth or those who speak or write the sentences. Truth is, in other words, an objective quality, a quality of the words called a sentence, not the person. When this is admitted, the possession of the truth does not make one a different person, at least not directly or in virtue of knowing that the sentence is true. This is indeed fortunate; for not all of the truths in the world are pleasant or even repeatable. Their objectivity is their limit indeed, but a welcome one; for it means that a cognitive subject may know the tragic and the comic without being either, may know good and evil without sharing them in his own person. But, the fact that truth is not a quality of personality gives us good reason to examine the moral and religious uses of the word "truth."

### III

This brings us then to another consideration. Jesus Christ is spoken of as the truth. Religious people talk about

the truth as a power to change men, as a model for human duplication, as something to become. Without spelling out the detail (which I have tried to do in other places) it seems wise to remark that it is only lately that persons who have thought assiduously about the religious life exploited the differences between uses of the word "truth" in cognitive and religious and/or moral discourse. These are extremely difficult matters which can only be lightly adumbrated here. But it does appear clear enough now that "to become the truth" and "to be the truth" mean something different than "that sentence is true." The first do, in fact, express the purport of moral and religious striving and, yet, clearly do not imply that knowing the truth of sentences or knowing the truth of all sentences is the fulfillment of that striving. Even if God knows everything, as terribly intellectual people have insisted, still the religious responsibility is badly described if it enjoins persons to become omniscient. Religious pathos, which is engendered by the hope of being like God by knowing everything, seems to be possible only if one forgets that nothing moral or behavioral follows from knowing the truth. Perhaps one could with equal cogency argue that both God and the Devil are all-knowing and that their differences are not measured by degrees of knowing.

This is a way, then, of questioning the thesis that religious and moral truth are really a quality of language. To go further, this is to question the propriety of applying the rather general and widespread categories of the world of learning to the definitive matters of faith and morals. The New Testament tells us in several ways, too, that even if people say, "Lord, Lord," etc., their language, however accurate, is not the satisfaction of the religious aim. Nor is the Christian aim a matter of doing what the sentences say. True sentences tell one, not what to do, but what is the case about something or other. If sentences tell you to do something, then they are not either true or false; instead they are probably commands. The only appropriate response to propositional truth

is an assent to the truth claim therein. Commands demand behavior, truth claims demand assent. If people speak about commands being true, they must mean to use the word "true" in a qualitatively different sense than it is used of descriptive sentences. If Christianity is the truth, if Jesus is the truth, and if both are appropriated and manifested by something different than an act of assent, then it must also be the case that the word "truth" is here being used considerably differently.

This does not deny that there are truths to be had, which in turn are also communicable in sentence form, about Christianity and Jesus. What these are is the burden of kinds of historical and theological scholarship. But it also seems to follow that knowing these is not to be a Christian, not at least in virtue of the act of knowing them and this alone. It may be necessary to know some of them in order to be a Christian but it is not sufficient to know them in order to be a Christian. When it is said that Christ is the Truth, does this mean that he knew all possible truths about anything you please? Does it mean also that I must know all possible truths in order to be like him? This might serve one well as a platform from which to launch a campaign for the support of Christian education, but one cannot help wonder if this pragmatic justification is really enough.

Instead, it seems plausible to suggest that religious and moral enterprises are actually a pursuit for justified lives, not justified sentences. Just as it is not enough simply to have sentences, even if they satisfy grammatical requirements—they ought also to be true—so too it is not enough to live, simply to exist—one's life must be correctly and validly lived. Religion and morality are endeavors on the part of those people who do not find their lives valid simply because they stay alive. Error and falsity are a quality of sentences but also a quality of human lives. Lives too need validation and justification. Most of religion can be construed in the categories of justification, if not by the qualities of one's deeds and works then surely by

the qualities that Christians think to be the deeds and work and person of Jesus Christ himself. The truth which Christians seek to become is not a linguistic quality. It characterizes not speech or prose. Theologically the Christians have said that the work of God justifies men's lives. The work of God which Christians have discovered is seen in the quality of the life of Jesus Christ. Jesus is not condoned or condemned for his intentions as the rest of us so frequently are and hence Christians have been more concerned with his actual existence than with his words. Most of us must say that our words are more instructive than our lives but not so with Jesus Christ. Our words are frequently deceptive of our actual qualities. Christ's sentences, even if each was true, were not the salvation of the world but Christ himself is that salvation.

The irony of all this lies in the fact that words must be used, true words it is hoped, to relay the fact that there is a kind of truth which is not a quality of words. Perhaps it is here, at least Christianly understood, that words have their highest function. For they tell us in sentence form that the truth of sentences is not enough and that Christ is our justification. That Christ is the truth is told us in true sentences. Christianity bids us break out of the circle of words and to encounter and to become Christlike. So flexible are words that they can help us do this. The sobriety with which Christians have treated the New Testament is perhaps a reflection of the fact that it tells us in language form that language, even if true rather than false, is not our salvation. We must be told this in communicable and social categories and this is what the New Testament provides. The Bible is important but not simply because its grammar and truth qualities are marked. It is the testimony in linguistic form of the fact that the quality of our lives is lacking and that this lack cannot be repaired save by the deeds of God. As important as the truth of language is, it is never enough to save the life whose lips it graces.

The truth function of words is certainly a most important one. Words

when treated only as stimulants, as incitements or condiments, are rather paltry things. It takes human greatness, even moral stature, to doubt the powers and authority that words can thus have. To strive to give words their function in virtue of their truth value is the sign too of a moral and chastened man. But, Christians must move to another consideration. They must seek another justification than provided for words. Christianity is not exclusively a pursuit for evidence that warrants belief and credence; instead, being a Christian in pursuit of that kind and quality of life which caused the Gospel writers to repeat that he was the truth and that all men ought verily to walk in it. He is our pattern, our standard, and our Saviour. To know the truth of the words about him is not to know him. To know him is to become like him. This is to use grammatical means to create a new personality—I learn the truth that he is the truth, not in order to repeat that truth, but rather in order to become what he was.

## Quotes on Truth

A devotee of Truth may not do anything in deference to convention. He must always hold himself open to correction, and whenever he discovers himself to be wrong he must confess it at all costs and atone for it.

—Gandhi, *My Experiments With Truth*

One can say without fear of exaggeration that today the spirit of truth is almost absent from religious life. . . . Pragmatism has encroached upon and profaned the every conception of faith.

—Simone Weil, *The Need for Roots*

Many at all times and in all places have encountered the true reality which is in Him (Christ) without knowing His name—as He Himself said. They were of the truth and they recognized the truth, although they had never seen Him who is the truth. And those who have seen Him, the Christians in all generations, have no guarantee that they participate in the truth which He is.

—Paul Tillich, *The New Being*



## *Truth lies at the bottom of a well*--Proverb

A fable by Herbert Hackett

In the center of the universe lies a land at once broad and free. Here it is that civilization was cradled, found nourishment and grew to splendid decadence, Nirvana of aged dreams.

Here it was the Truth roamed and Beauty wandered with the West Wind. And here the hoary sage questioned truth under an oak tree and here callow youth viewed the sunrise with eyes soft in the remembrance of all things lovely, of golden daffodil and sun-ripe hair. And the land prospered and the wind blew east and west with an Ave Maria for deep-valley harvest and craggy pine.

The many travelers came to this land to sit beneath her oaks and view the dawn with her golden hair blowing free.

Now there ruled this land, through neglect, a council of ancients, frosty with the first nip of death, and such had ruled from times past remembering. Truth was, to them, a goddess of infinite purity, and sanctity, and some little practical concern. For the land was rich and a power in the earth because of the manifold blessings of Truth and her handmaiden, Beauty. And each had shared in the common blessing, living in comfort.

One day came a minion of one having seen the Goddess in a strange and lonesome valley beyond the borders of Convention!

The council met, in secret lest Truth herself should enter. What sage words were here spoken is not recorded but throughout the land stalked the cat's-pawed word, "taboo." And over the purr of this word leaped rumor. And rumor hissed the terrifying word "crisis" and told of the passage of Truth through forbidden valleys where flowed streams of ideas from the unseen heights into unknown seas. And some remembered from their grandfathers' knees horrific tales of these

valleys where the sun rises in a "bloody, unholy pink" and not in gold, where strange people in caves do strange, forbidden things.

Rumor's whisper became a roar and thus achieved the sanctity of fact. But some, having known Truth, said, "Let us wait and see, lest we accuse her wrongly." And the crowd assented and waited, for they were a reasonable people.

Came one with a proclamation from the council and read: "Whereas it has come to our attention that there is abroad a false rumor that Divine Truth has wandered beyond the borders of Convention into the valleys of the unknown: Be it known that, since this night, Truth has lain in the bottom of a well.

There was silence.

An old man left weeping. A ragged urchin hooted. The crowd dispersed slowly.

The well, by chance, was in the inner temple and men came, in time, seeking refreshment. And there were keepers of the well to whom the sacred duty fell to give of Truth to all who sought her there and some took their portion and departed happy.

But some, questioning, asked if they might look for her in the well and, their request having been granted, peered long and carefully into the depths, seeing only dim reflections of the surface shadows. "I see her not," one said. "Surely she has the same light she had of old?"

"Your eyes are dim," they said.

And some, looking down in search of her, saw their own image at the bottom and were persuaded not only that they had seen the goddess, but that she was far better looking than they had imagined. (Or so a poet of a later day reported.) And some saw, with her, Beauty, her handmaiden.

"How did she get in?" asked some. "Whose interest is it to keep her in?"

"It is her nature to lie there," the keeper of the well replied. "And it is in her own interest that she remain there." And some departed, satisfied.

But some, rebels against order, found fault. They questioned that Truth could be kept in such a place considering her aerial nature. "Is Truth amphibian?" they asked. "And else, how could she live in such a place. For," they said, "Truth is several and free. So how confined?"

"Some things are not questioned," they were told. But, in time, the questioners left and were forgotten as men ill-suited to dwell in Convention.

And the Well of Truth became a Mecca for those who sought from all lands. And there arose over the well a great temple, a temple gilt with gold. And those who were the guardians of the well became a power in the land, dwelling in the sanctity of the temple. And there was great rejoicing that Truth was no longer a wanderer but now dwelt, respectfully, in the same place, now and forever. And many remembered that of yore she could only be found by those who sought her out and hewed her from the cedars of Lebanon, or crushed her from eternity's granite tomb, or distilled her from the vagrant air. Now, all might come and find her and to all alike she gave wisdom, and honor and content.

Only in lands beyond the borders of Convention lived doubters who made strange claims that with them walked the inexorable daughter of the fall, Goddess of Truth, where winds from unseen heights, where lonesome crag-pine pondered over the immutable universe. There was, they said, a valley where oft she sat, in a scarlet sunrise, weeping.

But it was known by the many that Truth lay in the bottom of a well.

Of her handmaiden, Beauty, nothing has been seen.



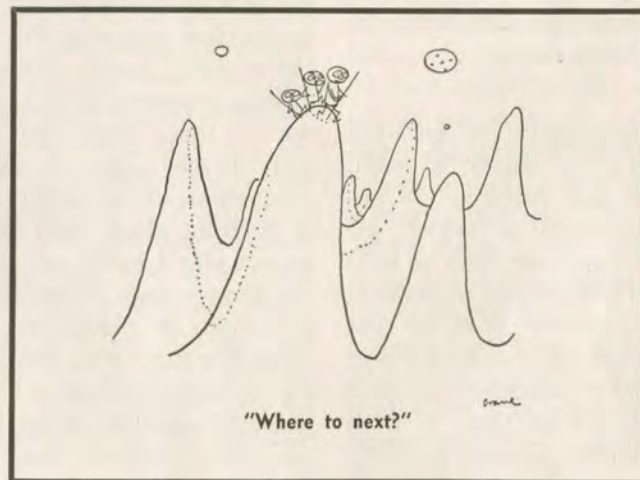
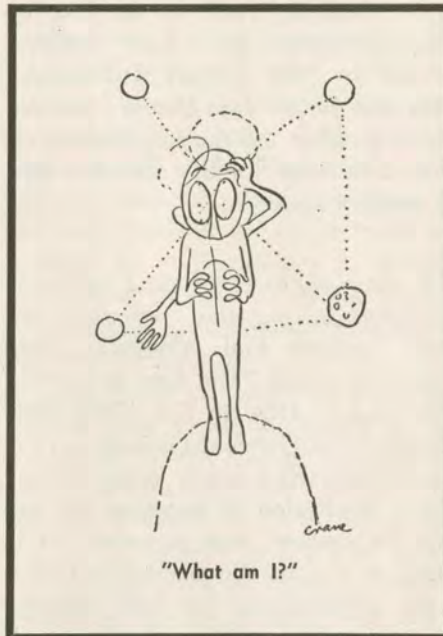
Is there a difference between truth for the individual and truth for the group? Should the individual be concerned only for his own truth? Is truth the same for all individuals? If not, how are these truths to be applied socially? Perhaps Harold A. Durfee can give you some leads to the answers.

**M**ODERN man stands in a strange relationship to the reality of truth. While many would seem to have lost all respect for, or recognition of, the authority and holiness of truth, a few have been awakened to a renewed interest in the relevance of truth and the unveiling of truth (Heidegger) for modern society. It may well be that this reality is the last point of contact between traditional Christian thought and the modern mind. While beauty and goodness have become completely relativised, sometimes even to the point of becoming emotional reactions, the category of truth still retains something of the aura and atmosphere of holiness and authority. It is possible that a renewed understanding of the nature of truth may be one of the most appropriate pathways to a renewed appreciation of the Christian message.

Although we must remember the personal aspects of truth, which are considered elsewhere in this issue, let us also focus our attention on the social nexus of truth. This is an aspect of the Christian faith which has been the subject of harsh controversy in American religious life; and an aspect that Kierkegaard is often accused of neglecting. Unless our appreciation of truth involves its unveiling and its incarnation in its social and collective nature, as well as in its personal and individual nature, we are in danger of suggesting a serious dualism between our individual lives and their social dimensions. American youth does not need to be reminded of the social nature of their existence, but we are in serious danger of separating this

# The Social Incarnation of Truth

by Harold A. Durfee  
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part of our being from the realities of the Christian faith as if the faith applied merely to our individuality.

This age has been hard on truth and one who would live toward truth, and I suspect the situation will become increasingly difficult. Through the media of mass communication simple truths, or even grains of truth, are subject to outlandish exaggeration. It will not be easy for any of us who may participate, however indirectly, in the avenues of mass persuasion, even for good causes, to remain truthful; or even maintain a fairly clear perspective upon the dividing line between the truth and pure deception. In these areas the incarnation of truth is most subtle, and we are frequently aware of the ever-present temptation to build distortion upon distortion until all is out of perspective. The whole domain of advertising, which has done so much to make America what it is, greatly needs the gentle touch of humility before truth. We are face to face with the problem as to how modern man is to maintain respect for truth in an age when everything is presented through the deceptive mirrors of exaggerated adjectives. Now the carnival fun house with its intended distortion of reality has been set up with an air of authenticity in our very own living rooms.

**B**UT commercialism is not the greatest threat to the sanctity of truth. Our lot is cast also in the age of political systems, many of which are built upon what has been referred to as "the big lie." The subtleties of political falsehood at whatever level are not new, but the raising of nation states upon the denial of objective truth, and upon the affirmation that "God is dead" is a uniquely modern phenomenon with which we have to deal. And the thesis that "God is dead" may be followed so shortly by the recognition that also man is dead. It is not at all clear that one can keep man alive while proclaiming the death of God, as many are trying to do in our day. What may be kept alive is a crawling subservient animal who no longer knows himself or that to which he owes respect; an obedient mammal

whose rights and duties are no longer acknowledged. This danger is not confined merely to foreign countries with totalitarian forms of government. Are there not sufficient signs in committee hearings and power-hungry pronouncements that we too have lost some of the respect for the authority of truth? And is there not sufficient evidence in the lives of each of us that the gods of conformity and social acceptance are more our masters than is the God of Truth? In the face of these conditions some have decided to call to "that solitary individual." This may be the best that we can do, but if so what are the implications of such a decision for the collective life of modern society?

**I**N view of our problems a new cult is rising in our day promoted by both business and education. This might be called "The Society for the Teaching of How to Get Along with People." This is what business says it needs, and what nearly every educational institution in America, in one way or another, now announces it is ready to supply. We probably all have some appreciation for this attempt and some recognition of the need. But few have been willing to spell out in any clear way what this involves. It can so easily involve the capitulation of large segments of American education to the demand for conformity, and thereby loss of individuality, uniqueness, and creativity, in the name of "getting along with people." We cannot afford to let our social values and the presence of truth in social relationships be dominated by such a value hierarchy with this as the leading or almost leading value. We dare not let the need for social cohesiveness and order seriously limit the almost inevitably disrupting tendencies which accompany any serious social creativity. If this new goal is to be a serious enterprise and something more than a slogan for the times, there are some fundamental questions at stake, not the least of which concerns the incarnation of truth in its social context. Is not this very idea a part of the tragic element in "Death of a Salesman"? Willy Lowman, with spit and

polish on his shoes and a smile on his face, had "gotten along with people" at the price of his own soul.

The disturbing feature about the new proposal is that this education is to be carried on in a society, and perhaps in an age which has, by and large, refused to discuss its presuppositions. We have lived on, frequently drawing our power from convictions rooted in earlier Greek and Christian realistic affirmations. But these convictions express less and less the modern mind. We are faced today with the question as to the adequate philosophical and theological foundations of the very democracy we inhabit. The objective realism about values and truth which we inherited from Greek culture we have traded for subjectivism and relativity. The Christian realism about the transcendence of God as the ground of truth, the source of true humanism, and the foundation of real community is now traded for the supremacy of man and the empirical criteria of meaning. For the first time we are faced with the attempt to build a democratic social philosophy upon purely secular foundations. With the conviction that "God is dead," that truth is relative, that the self is "pure freedom," and that the universe is "absurd," we will try to show that democracy is the incarnation of truth in the political and social life of mankind. I personally do not believe that this attempt can ever succeed.

**T**HERE is no easy and simple solution to the problems regarding the social structure of truth in our day. No simple sentences written here can neatly turn the trick. In part our problem is that faced with such forces we can do so little. We must all work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for nothing less than the very meaning of our social existence is at stake. Let us recognize at first, however, that truth does have such a social dimension. Whatever may have been the philosophical and theological limitations of the Social Gospel, there was a core of truth in Rauschenbusch's recognition of the existence of superpersonal forces which do evil and

which are in need of redemption. These forces as well as our individual lives are the abode of truth, and it needs incarnation in the midst of these social forces as well as in the depths of our own being.

Let us also recognize the need for what I like to call the "great conversation." The spiritual pilgrimage of mankind in the pursuit of truth has produced many queer suggestions and some fundamental divisions. There are strong forces in our day which would like to still this conversation, or direct it in their own way. This is too frequently done even in the name of religion. Truth, however, cannot be bought, at any price. The holiness of truth maintains its authority over our various opinions and systems and demands that this conversation continue. The incarnation of truth in the social framework of life needs to provide for the vigorous presentation of the various insights regarding truth. Somehow we are to trust that this, with all its dangers, is still superior to the control of truth, even by the wisest and most religious among us. One of the sad facts of our day is that many who affirm the truth of God do not trust enough to allow this debate to proceed.

To maintain the "great conversation" there is need for basic respect for points of view which we surely will not share. It is not difficult to respect the attitude we happen to share. There is little, however, more calculated to prevent the unveiling of truth than a basic lack of respect for the opposition. This respect is not to be promoted in the name of mere politeness, but in the honest awareness of the authority of truth, and the conditions under which it can be made present. Surely the Christian will know that "Thy truth is not my truth." As Gabriel Marcel has written, "There can be no justice where there is no respect for truth. . . . It is in the name of truth, and of the structural conditions that make truth a possibility, that fanaticism must be fought." Those with an orientation toward the authority and objectivity of truth have a sufficient foundation for real respect and the establishment of justice to-

ward the neighbor, even the enemy. Verbal affirmations are no guarantee, however, that they will build their societies upon the foundations which they confess.

**L**ET us also recognize that the superpersonal forces are not merely vast causal powers without spiritual dimensions. We are so apt to treat them as abstract entities without virtue and merely outlets of power. But these forces too are the creation of God, and live in his care and under his providence. God did not make men individuals and leave it to man to make himself social. This would seem to be a constant misinterpretation of the individualistic nature of truth developed by contemporary Americans by treating the social contract theory of society as an historical explanation of our togetherness.

Perhaps the Christian in a secular society must decide to live always on the edge of the social community, never withdrawing, and not pretending that he stands in the center speaking for the culture as a whole. From this vantage point on the periphery of society he may try to bring the impact of truth to bear on the relativities of the historic situation, not always successfully and not overly optimistic about possibilities, but content to help each moment of the historical process achieve whatever incarnation is possible of the spirit of truth. It may well be that an appreciation of this social dimension of truth is a unique contribution of American Christianity to the total Christian community. Let us not lose all our initiative because the problems and perplexities, likewise gifts of God, are far greater than an earlier and more optimistic age suspected.

Let us also realize, and this is most important, that the difficulties we face beset not only the men of ill will, but pervade the best of modern social life. Christian groups have responded to the problems of truth in group life in a way similar to that of secular groups. I am increasingly convinced that the main trouble we have in incarnating truth in our collective life is not with evil men, difficult as that may be. The

real trouble is with the men of good will, those whom we might have expected would have transcended the petty problems of collective existence. However much we affirm fine sentiments, our best societies are also beset with confusion and ill will. Although we should not expect too much, it does seem that we must first put our own house in order. Unless our own groups, with common dedication to the holiness of the God of Truth, incarnate the courage for truth, keen insight into the issues of our day, ceaseless prodding of the neighbor in humility and respect, and the constant renewal of the dedication of the spirit, there is little hope that the rest of society will take notice. With this dedication, however, the God of Truth may unveil in our midst wisdom for our day, and he may incarnate in our midst the appropriate service to the truth which is our reasonable duty.

## Source

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All man's troubles arise from the fact that we do not know what we are and do not agree on what we want to be.

—Vercors, **You Shall Know Them**

. . . in regard to the most important support for a life under the law of God—that is, for the fulfilling of our vocation—it is God first and man second. We are not fully ourselves or fulfilled even in earthly terms unless we live day by day under charter from Him, constantly returning to Him for illumination to the truth about life, for the grace of acceptance when we have not lived according to the truth, and for continual aid and support in our renewed efforts—in gratitude—to do the truth.

—Pike, **Doing the Truth**

Therefore, distrust every claim for truth where you do not see truth united with love; and be certain that you are of the truth and that the truth has taken hold of you only when love has taken hold of you and has started to make you free from yourselves.

—Paul Tillich, **The New Being**

# WHAT IS TRUTH?

from the Perspective  
of the Philosopher of Science

by John J. Compton  
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**Is there a unity of truth? If so, is it found in the way of approach? Or in "what is"? John J. Compton searches the answers given by science, philosophy and theology in their relationship to each other.**

SCIENCE, as we know it today, has been with us for a scant three or four centuries, although its roots recede into the dawn of rational thought. Hence many characteristics of science which we now regard as commonplace are of comparatively recent origin: for example, the multiplicity of fields and techniques of inquiry, cooperative research, cumulative development and rapid replacement of one conceptual scheme by another, great predictive power, and vast technical and social effects. Science with these distinctive features begins to appear in the Renaissance. It appears as men turn to nature and man as objects of study, not inferior to God and philosophical first principles, but worthy in their own right. And the subsequent development of science has depended to a great degree on this willingness and ability to select certain aspects of nature and man for detailed analysis and to establish precise techniques for

studying them. Thus as scientific investigation proceeded, it became increasingly useful for scientists themselves to frame a clear estimate of the distinctive character and limitations of their own methods of inquiry. Galilei, Descartes, Bacon, and Mill were notable contributors.

But if such methodological clarification was useful in the early days, within the last century it has become a necessity. When Lobachevsky and Riemann invented their non-Euclidean geometries it threw mathematics into a turmoil. It had been thought that our familiar Euclidean geometry was the only possible analysis of spatial relations, since it was based upon immediately certain "truths" (axioms) such as that "One and only one line may be drawn parallel to a given line through a point outside the given line." These men showed, however, that a perfectly consistent geometrical system could be erected from

different axioms, and particularly by changing this axiom about parallels. If so, Euclid's geometry is only one of many "possible" analyses of spatial relations. In what sense, then, is any geometry "true" mathematically? For the very progress of mathematics, this question of the nature of mathematical truth had to be answered. The clear answer was not long in coming: mathematical truth merely means internal consistency and simplicity of system—mathematics says nothing about the world. Thus liberated, pure mathematics has mushroomed in recent years.

IN the empirical sciences, which do claim to say things about the world, serious problems have also arisen. These have centered around the problem of "meaning." Before one can even raise the question of the actual truth or falsity of an hypothesis or theory in empirical science, one has to be assured that it actually asserts something capable of scientific test, i.e., that it is scientifically meaningful. When Clerk Maxwell formulated his wave theory of light he suggested that light waves travel in some medium, the "ether," much as sound waves travel in air or water. Extensive search

for information about this ether revealed nothing. It was then said by some, "But the ether must exist. Even if we cannot test for it, it nonetheless exists." To Einstein and others this immediately raised a question: Is it scientifically meaningful to speak of something relevant to which no observations or tests may be made? The answer to this question was clear and forthright: No. An hypothesis or theory in empirical science is meaningful if and only if experiments and observations relevant to its truth are specifiable. The above statement "There is an ether" does not so qualify. Armed with this conclusion together with similar conclusions regarding earlier concepts of physical space and time, and with his creative genius, it was possible for Einstein to emerge with the Special Theory of Relativity.

Continual current efforts to establish psychology and sociology as behavioral sciences depend upon such discussion of scientific method, meaning, and truth. Illustrations in various aspects of other sciences could be multiplied at will. Clarity on the conditions of scientific discourse is concomitant with scientific development.

**T**HE outcome of all this for an understanding of what "truth" means to empirical science is the following. If an hypothesis or theory is meaningful in so far as it has consequences testable in experiment and observation, it is judged to be true or adequate in proportion as it is actually so tested. Thus its truth is a matter of degree of confirmation. And this degree of confirmation depends upon the number and variety of kinds of consequences found to hold in fact. For some theories of wide scope confirmation is continual and various: Newton's laws of motion are verified each time we drive a car, throw a ball, or observe the sun rise. For other theories or for more limited hypotheses, verifications must be sought under particular and often trying experimental conditions: The characteristics of the orbit of Halley's comet by telescopic sightings every seventy-five years, the existence of dinosaurs by fossil remains, variations

in emotional response to threatening situations in terms of records from delicate electrical instruments, wage and price relations by complex statistical samplings. But in each case the definition and criterion of empirical truth are the same. Truth is a property of propositions. It is assigned to a proposition (an hypothesis) or to a system of propositions (a theory) to the degree that consequences logically derived from it accord with observation and experiment.

It is in large part due to the development of this precise conception of truth, within and from science itself, that we face the larger question posed in this symposium. For philosophy and religion have been unable to formulate a similarly precise conception of truth for their tasks. The suspicion has been voiced (indeed, shrieked) that for this reason speculative philosophy and dedicated religion can have no truth value. Unless these other human activities are to leave the field of rational discourse to science alone, this suspicion must be put down.

**A**ND the suspicion is certainly misplaced. It is not justifiable to reject the truth claims of one realm of discourse on the ground that its criteria of truth are not those of another realm or are "less precisely" formulable or applicable. This simply means that neither philosophy nor religion is science. Moreover, "precision" is a relative matter. In different domains one should expect different meanings of precision.

It has been said that science deals with the concrete, philosophy with abstractions. Actually, just the converse is the case. The propositions in any science are abstract in two ways. They deal only with those properties of and relations between events which are quantifiable, fruitful for prediction, and either directly observable or correlated with sensory observation. And they select from among these properties and relations only those relevant to a particular frame of reference, biological, physical, psychological, and the like.

Reality, however, is not so neatly divided up. Science selects its vari-

ables and constructs its systems for convenience in prediction and control. Space, time, mass points, fields of force, Gestalten, cultures, and genes, do not exist as such but as aspects analyzed in the world of existent beings. It is the continual function of philosophy, as A. N. Whitehead puts it, to confront the abstractions of the sciences with the primary and concrete beings encountered in immediate experience. Experience reveals a unified being, a man, for example, not a sand heap of the products of abstracting sciences. Furthermore, experience finds life and movement, color and sound, purpose, moral obligation, beauty, and dedication. The role of the speculative philosopher is to seek such synthesis of these elements as may be possible. It is his task to formulate a view of the world, drawing upon scientific analyses, immediate experience, and the perceptions of artist, poet, and prophet. Such has been the aim of the greatest philosophers: Plato, Aristotle, Spinoza, Kant, Hume, Hegel, Dewey and Whitehead.

As a consequence of the character and scope of its enterprise, the criteria of truth or adequacy of a philosophical synthesis are many, varied, and difficult to apply strictly. Of course, coherence of basic principles and consistency in reasoning from them are required. Essential, also, is fidelity to *all* experience—not alone to those aspects selected for scientific study. In particular, since any philosophic view distinguishes order within the world, the real from the less real, the important from the trivial, its implicit value standards are subject to the test of our value sensitivity.

Finally, and most evasive, the test of insight and imagination; although incomplete, a philosophy may be true in proportion as it directs our attention to hitherto unseen and unappreciated factors. This has been the contribution of such suggestive writers as Plato, Henri Bergson, and William James. Many divergent philosophic views exist; none is final. But each may be judged true to the degree and manner in which it meets these multiple criteria. If philosophies are partial, it is

not due to some failure of philosophy but to the many-faceted character of reality itself.

**B**UT philosophy is not enough. Science, as we have said, is abstract; it selects from the world just those features with which its special methods and criteria of meaning and truth permit it to deal successfully. Philosophy seeks to overcome this abstraction by relating the analyses of the sciences, together with the insights of the poetic and ethical consciousness, to the world of concrete beings found in immediate experience. However, philosophy in turn is abstract. It treats the universe and man in it as objects simply to be understood; it is essentially a reflective enterprise. As such it challenges man to fulfill his rational being. It does not come to terms with man the committed being, or with the universe as a locus for that commitment. This is the function of religion.

A man's religion is his expression of ultimate concern. Whatever invests his life with highest significance is the object of that ultimate concern—his God. Through allegiance to it, whether explicit or implicit, his thought, actions, aspirations, and career are molded. To be committed or not to be committed is not an option. The question is: to what? For some it is the family, for others wealth, the nation, society, or a good cause. Science may become a man's religion; so may philosophy. It is the continual role of religion to confront men (including scientists and philosophers) with the fact and limitations of their commitments. Right religion is that commitment directed to what is "in truth" most worthy and ultimate.

The problem is, then, to discover how this truth is to be known and tested. In order to deal with this problem, the character of commitment must be examined. Commitment is a response, a response to something encountered and felt to demand and be worthy of allegiance. Such encounters and responses are facts—whether the object be another person, knowledge, the nation, or some other. The test, then, of religious truth, of the claim that a certain object is most worthy of

our commitment, is to be found, if anywhere, in immediate encounter with the proposed object and comparison of its felt claim upon us with that of others.

**T**HE thesis of the Christian religion is that the only object which merits our ultimate concern is the personal God who is love, as encountered by and expressed in the life, teachings, death, and victory of Jesus. We have the scriptural record of the developing awareness of this God in the personal and communal testimony of the Jews and of the Gospel writers. We have the continuous line of similar affirmation in the great figures of the church. There are other suggestions and mediations as well: the saints of other world religions and the religious poets. His presence may be implicit and discovered in daily service and sensitivity to our fellows' needs. His lordship may be suggested by our hope that human life and history, frail and self-centered though they be, are not cosmic accidents but have an ultimate significance and are somehow retained and treasured in the nature of things. But these all point, in the last analysis, to but one final recourse for confirmation of this thesis, the "I-Thou" encounter between man and God itself. If this is not sought and found, no "proof" of any kind will provide it.

If thus initially confirmed, the Christian thesis requires to be explicated within a philosophical world view in order to test its compatibility with other truths. In this way theology is generated, so as to grapple with such problems as the nature of God, his creative relation to man and nature, and the status of evil; here criteria of philosophic truth become relevant. What, now, of the relation of science to religion? We have seen that science (and philosophy) may become religions. So also religion may be analyzed scientifically, yielding psychology and sociology of religion or, for example, particular studies of Christian institutions. Science, philosophy, and religion, once distinguished, can profitably cooperate; indeed, they require one another. Moreover, although their

perspectives and aims differ, they find unity in the common cosmos to which they are directed. Thus, we might say that the unity of truth lies in "what is," and not in how it is approached.

## Source \_\_\_\_\_

Truth lights up the soul in proportion to its purity, not in any sense to its quantity. It isn't the quantity of metal which matters, but the degree of alloy. In this respect, a little pure gold is worth a lot of pure gold. A little pure truth is worth as much as a lot of pure truth. Similarly, one perfect Greek statue contains as much beauty as two perfect Greek statues.

—Simone Weil, **The Need for Roots**

No philosophy is possible where fear of consequences is a stronger principle than love of truth.

—J. S. Mill

Truth, though it comprehends finite things, is greater than all it comprehends; its only limitation is the acceptance of its opposite, which is error.

We have fallen into the error of failing to see as clearly as we should that there are areas of truth not fully explicated in Scripture and that these, too, are part of God's truth.

To be sincerely mistaken regarding scientific truth is one thing; to be mistaken, even sincerely, regarding such truth as the Person and the work of the Lord Jesus Christ is another thing. But all the time there is the unity of all truth under God, and that unity we deny in education at the peril of habituating ourselves to the fragmentary kind of learning found on some avowedly Christian campuses today.

—Gaebelein, **The Pattern of God's Truth**

# What are the Questions?

## Introduction by Roger Ortmayer

**I**N a script that got its bearing, but little of its movement, from John Bunyan, young Christian and Hopeful make their way past the suave persuasion of Worldly Wiseman, the schemes that nearly trap them at Vanity Fair; they suffer through the indignity of the trial which condemns Faithful, are cast into Despair, encounter Ignorance and finally come to the Light they have sought all along as the Goal.

Christian feels that this closes the struggle. Now there will be a release from suffering, no more requirement to strive; he is at his journey's end. But a Voice speaks, and while it welcomes the pilgrims, simply says, "You have not come to the end of the journey. You have found the goal, but having arrived, you are to go on."

Christian, perplexed, "To where?" "You are to go back."

"Back where I blundered? Back to the schemes of Worldly Wiseman? To a packed jury and an unfair Court?" wonders Christian.

"There is no goal for man, there is only a life."

"No goal? But all the way? All along my journey I was helped, I could only keep on because of the encouraging hope I would find the answers, my doubts would be overcome, I would sometime arrive."

And the Voice replied, "You thought that was the goal? Yes, it was, but you see, when you have arrived, the answer you find is not an arrival, but a going, going back into life, not out of it."

Christian, "No answers to the questions my soul pleads to understand?"

The Voice insists, "No answers but those of life. The only thing you have to answer with is your life. And that is at your task. Your life is the goal. Only you can live the answer."

Some people have said that experience is a wonderful thing—it helps you to recognize a mistake when you make it over again.

The experience of being "doomed"

to doubt is the daily fare of the Christian. In reaction he pleads for answers.

**O**FTEN certain preachers are not loath to respond to the plea with answers. But we look at the answers and they do not help. They look grand but are actually fragile. If we try to live by these feeble assurances that actually seek to adjust us in the scheme of things as ordered, we soon find these tender myths collapse. What remains is the pitiful condition of today—a basic kind of nihilism buried deep in our conscience.

Nihilism is not an ideology; it is a trap. Some, such as the Nazis, have attempted to formalize it; but it cannot be legislated. Fascism, communism, maccarthysm; Peron and Franco . . . such schemes and persons have imagined that some kind of political tyranny would eliminate nihilism. It and they are all wrong, not just completely wrong, they are the badge of nihilism itself. It is, as Silone reminds us, a disease, a disease of the spirit and its victims are the most oblivious to it.

We are familiar with the contemporary group of Stoics, the existentialists. They have summarized the predicament we are in as the breaking of all links between existence and being. To be human is merely to live. It takes a Stoic to handle this and in the end he must commit suicide. Either commit suicide or find some meaning in human existence.

Does this alternative necessarily imply finding the sweeping generalizations that serve for answers? I think not, at least from one Christian point of view. The only answer that can be given is a commitment. This commitment is not to some nontemporal kind of idealism. It is a life. For the Christian, it seems to me, this can only be a life of love.

The truth we find in Christ is the

truth of an event, not a speculation. It is the truth in a temporal fashion. This truth is not a socratic conundrum. It is not a speculation. It is not an idealism which by implication is in contrast to the things of this world. It is the truth of a life.

Witness to the truth of Christ is the witness of life.

So now where do the questions come in?

They come because, if in all honesty we push to the furthestmost limits, we do it by asking questions. For the most of us it is much more important to ask the questions than it is to seek the answers.

**T**HE answers will come; but they will only come in living.

It is hypocritical to say that "Christ is the answer" until we know the living Christ. "The answer is in the Cross," some say. But the Cross is no answer, it is a judgment.

It is nihilism to give oneself for a cause in which he does not believe. The exaltation of suffering, heroism, courage, endurance aside from or independent of a living cause, puts the murderer and the martyr on the same level. It is giving in to the cult of success, and that, too, is nihilism.

The real horror of George Orwell's prescient novel, *1984*, was not the invention of tortures, not even the trickery and overwhelming power of Big Brother's crew. The shock came when we realized that the hero had been battered into conformity, had won the victory over himself, he was no longer going to ask any questions.

Well, what are the questions, the big questions? We asked our Campus Editorial Board to help us out. So they asked their fellows, "What are the questions?" They sent in a huge batch of questions in response. We have tried to summarize them.

## Questions from Campus Editorial Board

### 1. IS THERE ANY TRUTH?

As one finds truth does he find security and well-being? Is God related to truth?  
Are we doomed to live without knowing?  
Where does ultimate meaning reside?  
Is meaning found in the spiritual or physical realm? or both? or neither?

### 2. IS GOD?

While many students seem reluctant to part with a belief in God, how can we reconcile a conflict in the ways of knowing God when contrasted with criteria of knowledge in other fields?  
Does God exist only to fill the lack or need in man? That is, is God but the end of the search for the talentless student?  
Is God through creating or does he continue to create? Where does he come from and where does he go?  
Is there a Kingdom of God? or is this a subjective experience?  
Can God's kingdom be realized on earth?

### 3. IS JESUS REALLY CHRIST?

Can one be fully Christian without considering Jesus as divine?  
How can a student know that Jesus was not just a prophet?  
Is Jesus to be considered a symbolic figure of deity?

### 4. WHY IS THE CHRISTIAN RELIGION SO HARD FOR A STUDENT TO ACCEPT?

Is faith a commitment? If so, how do we know when the time is right?  
Does it grow by itself or must we point ourselves toward commitment?  
How does faith become one's own and not an adoption of somebody else's belief?

### 5. WHAT IS LIFE?

Is there a purpose in existence? Is a man's life a part of something bigger or the thing in itself?  
Is man still evolving?  
Is man basically good or bad?  
Is there any destiny? Why are we here and where are we going?  
Is there any real security?

### 6. IS THERE SUCH A THING AS RIGHT OR WRONG?

Does evil depend upon good for its existence or is evil independent; that is, is there an intrinsic evil?  
Are good and bad, right and wrong, moral obligations, etc., but relative to one's cultural situation?  
Should good be sought for its own sake and is that a higher cause than to do it because Christ, God or some other deity commands it?

Can man live to the greatest good with a sliding scale of values?

### 7. WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE TRANSFORMER?

Who is more blessed, the conformer or the nonconformer?  
How high should the standards of a Christian college be?  
Is being controversial wrong?  
What careers are in greatest need for the choice of young people?  
Does equality of races matter as long as we love one another?  
With his country at war, where does the Christian's duty lie?  
Can there ever be peace?  
Does Christianity contradict the American way of life?  
Is there a line between false love of country and nationalism?  
Where is man's first loyalty?  
What is the relationship between Christian communism and Marxian communism?  
What is to be done about overpopulation and producing sufficient food?

### 8. DOES THE CHRISTIAN NEED TO BE A CHURCHMAN?

Is worship only satisfying psychologically?  
How does personal religion conflict with organized religion?  
Is there danger in ritualism?  
Is The Methodist Church becoming too commercialized?  
Who can say what denomination is right?

### 9. WHAT IS SALVATION?

Does it mean immortal life?  
Does complete security exist only after death?  
What are we saved from or to?  
Is there any individuality in a state of immortality?  
Is there a difference between immortal life and eternal life?

### 10. WHAT IS PRAYER?

### 11. WHAT IS THE CHRISTIAN VIEW OF HISTORY?

Is there individual importance in human history?  
Is there real progress or are we going around in circles?  
Is there a providence and does God care about history?

Is anything real?

Is it possible for man to understand all these things?





# You Shall Know the Truth

by **Burton N. Cantrell**  
Student, Ohio Wesleyan University

I ASSUME that one would have to look long and hard these days to find a professor or minister or even a Congressional Investigator who would campaign actively against freedom of speech, the press, or assembly. Nevertheless, because we Americans have always heard of our freedoms and seldom investigated their implications, some of us are nearly always treading on some corner of our basic liberties, perhaps quite innocently. An infringement of liberty under the guise of a protection of liberty appeared only last autumn in college circles when West Point, Annapolis, and four state-supported colleges in Nebraska refused to accept this year's national debate question concerning America's nonrecognition of China, because one side would have to argue "for the communists."

I was a novice debater at Ohio Wesleyan University last fall, and decided to argue against recognition of Communist China almost as soon as the debate professor posed the question. At first I wondered where the professor was going to get anyone to argue for the other side. Frankly, I

thought it pointless to debate a question which, to me at least, had so obvious an answer. I began to wish I hadn't signed up for the debate course.

But the professor did find plenty of people willing to argue for "the other side," and although they never changed my first opinions on the China question, we learned together that there were values in debating that controversial problem. We learned more than just how to debate! We learned something about freedom and the way it must be nourished! We learned something about truth!

The men who attempted to suppress college-level discussion of this enigma of U. S. foreign policy obviously thought they were doing right. They obviously believed that it would be detrimental to an American college student to put himself in the place of the Chinese or to look at things through "Red" eyes. They thought that they were protecting freedom,

and they doubtless quoted to themselves: "The price of liberty is eternal vigilance."

WE too may have repeated that phrase, and rightfully so, for it is a sound statement as far as it goes. Our trouble is that we too often think of "eternal vigilance" in terms of minutemen and radar. We are prone to think of protecting freedom as the responsibility of the armed forces or the Secretary of State. We sometimes fail to remember the significance of another famous quotation about freedom: "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." This implies that there is more to freedom than just protection. Freedom must be nourished from within! If mankind ever realizes the ideals of democratic society it will not be by the suppression of any opinion, regardless of how contrary that opinion seems to the basis of democracy and freedom.

The men who suppressed discussion of the problem of Communist China were wrong! They were not guarding liberty, but cutting off one of its main sources of nourishment. Democracy thrives on exchange of views and difference of opinion, because these two factors are basic to truth. As John Stuart Mill pointed out in his *Essay on Liberty*, freedom of expression and willingness to learn from the opposing side are fundamental to the discovery of truth and to freedom. This of course rules out suppression of adverse opinions.

"Well," we students may say as we lean back in our study chairs, "what does that have to do with us? We haven't been suppressing freedom of expression. Let the debaters and the preachers and the communists talk as much as they want to. Their spouting off doesn't bother us!"

"Their spouting off doesn't bother us!" That is the point! If an idea is to receive a fair chance in the court of public opinion, it *must* have a jury! The students of America have the responsibility of weighing all points of view on the problems confronting our society. It is just as dangerous to freedom to shrug the shoulders and go on dealing as it is to prohibit debate on a question vital to the future of our nation.

**I**N our busy days of college sports and campus elections, the rejection of one topic for debate may seem insignificant. It may seem especially so since the ban affected a relatively small number of schools. But we are faced with similar threats to freedom every day. Our right to free comparison of ideas stretches beyond the campus and affects the quality of our religion or our attitude toward democratic society.

We have seen that one must have an open and seeking mind in order to be really free. Let us look at the effects that apathy or hostility toward free exchange of ideas might have on some of the concrete phases of our daily lives.

In the first place, there is the possibility that our opinion is wrong and that some opposing doctrine is correct.

To deny this is to assume infallibility. Even if our doctrine is correct there are probably some good points to be considered in the doctrines which are false. We can seldom say that we know all there is to know about a problem, and it is a good idea to keep an open mind, even when we feel certain that our opinion is valid. There is always more to learn.

But there are even more dangerous problems which confront the bigoted and the apathetic. Argument and discussion are a necessity to firm conviction in any kind of faith or belief. Consider, for example, the point of view of those who argue that modern college football is detrimental to our system of education. If this point of view is brought to light and discussed, it is almost certain to herald improvement for the game. Those who support college football will stand back and take a good look at themselves. They will see the evils in the present situation and they will seek out the actual and potential benefits of a college sports program. In short, they will discover the *reasons* they believe as they do, and they will become prepared to improve and defend their faith in the good of athletics. If, however, they fail to see any true basis for their opinions, they must either be dishonest to the truth or change their way of thinking.

**T**HE presentation of an opposing point of view should make those who hold to the *status quo* sit up and take notice. If someone opposes us we are prodded to investigate our point of view and attempt to find a strong rational basis for our position. If we look at the problem objectively we are certain to become better believers in any theory or position we choose to support.

The fact that a faith has been attacked and discussed makes the believers more adept at practicing their faith. This is true whether the faith is in a college sports program, or a form of government, or a religion. Religion is the best example here. When a religious faith has no opposition it becomes stagnant. Its doctrines become dogma, learned by rote, practiced but

not believed in. When a religious faith is put to the test and when the faithful must justify their faith, then that religion becomes an active, living one! A look at history will bear this out.

This is a day when students are faced with many pressures. Strong, persuasive advocates, self-appointed censors, and our laziness and indifference tend to force our opinions into stereotyped categories. If we are to discover truth and attain the ideal of freedom, we must first free our *minds*. We must be ready to hear and weigh many diversified opinions. At the same time we must be vigilant in searching out and preventing those actions which harm the cause of truth and freedom. The refusal of some schools to debate this year's controversial debate topic was such an infringement. Only as we keep our *minds* free—ready to consider every new slant on things—can we escape those pressure groups that would stereotype our minds. This is the road to freedom! This is the road to truth!

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#### To Know About and to Know

... We know all about ourselves or others or events (world shaking or not is immaterial), and we never feel the bite of truth in our flesh. While I am not contending for a particular philosophy known about by many and known by a few as existentialism (Sartre to Jaspers), I do confess it does not tolerate the superficial toying with life and its meaning which so much "truth" does today.

I think if we allow truth to detach us any more the world is going to become demonic even before the denominational churches in their namby-pamby ways can abet the trend!

What college students need today is not more and more truth about life; they need to be stabbed by it. Statistics do not stab. A wild plea to get out and pitch into the work does not help either. Some slob is likely to stop work long enough to ask what the activity is about (often the clay foot of theological liberalism of the past decades). For a while we can prevent ourselves from being crossed up by knowing more and more about things; but comes the day when God's cross bears down on the soul and our bastille of knowledge is not just stormed, it is atomically disintegrated.

M. Lawrence Snow, Student,  
Drew Theological Seminary

# the PERSONAL

## principle

### in Recent Literature and Its Religious Implication

by Nathan A. Scott, Jr.  
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WE are beginning to be aware that we are moving into a new phase of development in the history of the modern imagination—and, amongst certain prominent spokesmen for the contemporary public, it is an awareness that seems to be disturbing. It was shortly after the close of the war that we first began to seek a clearer understanding of our new situation in literature: and we assumed, of course, that, whatever it was, it must surely be new, since—we told ourselves—every postwar literature expresses the disenchantment, the defeatism, the despair, the sense of nullity, or whatever else it is that constitutes the predominant mood in the time that follows the time of anarchy and turbulence. What we had most immediately in mind, of course, was the trend that poetry and fiction had followed in the 'twenties and 'thirties, when our major writers had undertaken, as if by an act of general consent, to evaluate the disordered world to which they returned from Belleau Wood, from Saint-Mihiel, and the Argonne Forest—a world in which theirs appeared to be a generation utterly lost and without grounds for faith or anticipation. We had in mind the blighted hopes and the sad disillusionments of those young men who wrote books like *The Enormous Room*, *Three Soldiers*, and *In Our Time*; we had in mind the sullen, angry intensity that produced, in the 'thirties, books like the *Studs Lonigan* trilogy and *The Grapes of Wrath*. And, recalling this earlier time, we expected, after 1945, that the youngest generation of poets and novelists, on returning home from

military service in the second major war of this century, would also produce a literature that, in its special way, would mirror and evaluate the broken world in which we live today.

SO—let us say, shortly after Hiroshima—we began to remind ourselves that we must keep alert and prepared to notice and celebrate “the new fiction” and “the new poetry” on the day they should arrive. And we were certain that they were expectable momentarily. The oppressive burden of our historic awareness compelled preoccupation with the ravelment and incoherence of contemporary life: we knew what the issues were—pervasive bad faith abroad and the subversion of individual freedom at home by the adoption of a whole new set of tactics for guaranteeing internal security, by both of which Western democracy seemed to be desperately threatened. Here lay, we felt, the real crisis of our time, and we eagerly awaited the counterpoise to fear and trembling that the new postwar literature would provide, for how, we wondered, could it possibly evade the troubles of our generation? We were—that is, American literary intellectuals as a class—a little wary of the Paris existentialists and their doctrinaire crusades in the realm of ideas; but, however much

skepticism we might profess with respect to Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of *la littérature engagée*, it was, nevertheless, something of the sort that we wanted and expected—and that we did not receive.

Indeed, a great deal of the activity of the journalists who write for the literary columns of the liberal weeklies and the literary supplements of the Sunday press has been expended recently in an effort to comprehend the fact that our postwar literature has not, on the whole, been “engaged” with the crises and distempers of contemporary history, as we had expected it would be. When we think of such books as Elizabeth Hardwick's *The Ghostly Lover*, Carson McCullers' *The Member of the Wedding*, Robie Macauley's *The Disguises of Love*, Jean Stafford's *The Catherine Wheel*, Wright Morris' *The Works of Love*, and Frederick Buechner's *A Long Day's Dying*, we realize that our younger writers have—most of them—resisted the demands of the public life for attention today and have dwelt upon the relationships and the dilemmas of the private life, the psychological penalties exacted by loneliness and the need for love. The theme of childhood, for example, recurs again and again in the recent literature of the novel, in Jean Stafford's *The Mountain Lion*, in Truman Capote's *Other Voices, Other Rooms*, in Carson McCullers' *The Member of the Wedding*, and in many other books by their contemporaries. The reason for this doubtless lies in part in our modern awareness of the psychologically crucial importance of infancy and childhood; but, more fundamentally, it has to be explained (as the English critic Henry

Reed has suggested, in commenting upon similar thematic patterns in recent British literature) by the fact that

*In a world of darkness we learn to hug that memory of comparative light. A child may be unhappy, but it is never wholly so; its happiness is not the mere absence of pain, and it has an innocence which the happiness of adult life is too complex to have. It is natural to turn and attempt to recapture and understand and detail that lost possibility of Eden.<sup>1</sup>*

And—in addition to the novels of childhood and adolescent reverie—the difficult marriage, the intricate maze of personal relationships within a family, the ambiguous sexual identity with all of its hazardous involvements, the crisis of self-recognition in middle age, and many other similar themes are to be found in the novels of the present period. Our best young writers today are, it seems, attempting to embrace the permanent truths of man's condition in the context of the fundamental human relationships. And, in the process of this undertaking, they are fashioning a style of their own which suggests that they no longer live under the dispensation of Hemingway but rather live now under the dispensation of the magisterial figure of Henry James. The new prose is very far indeed from the terse, tight-lipped telegraphy of Hemingway which was for so long the normative speech for the writer of our time, though it by no means represents a reaction toward a new baroque extravagance of diction. It springs rather from a renewed delight in the vivacious and brilliant processes through which the intellect asserts itself in imaginative literature, and it is characterized by the kind of richly personal complexity of style that is perhaps the common signature shared by such otherwise different writers as Peter Taylor and William Goyen, Flannery O'Connor and Jean Stafford, Truman Capote and Frederick Buechner.

<sup>1</sup> Henry Reed, *The Novel Since 1939* (London: Published for The British Council by Longmans, Green and Co., 1946), p. 23.

THIS new generation of American writers, then, is not giving us the kind of straightforward novel of society or politics that was being written in the 1930's. In a world in which, as M. Gabriel Marcel has said, "the preposition 'with' . . . seems more and more to be losing its meaning,"<sup>2</sup> they insist ever more determinedly upon the primacy of the private life and the preciousness of personal relations. Their position is not, I think, prompted by any timorous desire to evade today's public realities, but stems rather from a desire to celebrate and safeguard the personal life, at a time when they believe it to be threatened by the various unconscionably antipersonal collectivisms of the modern world. The unity of the testimony about contemporary life that is implicit in their work was recently formulated by Robert Gorham Davis in the following concise summary:

*. . . the fiction of this period is as unified in its attitudes and dominant concerns as the fiction of the 'twenties and 'thirties. The three periods are, moreover, very directly related. The impulse of the 'twenties was toward an anarchic individualism which turned out to be inadequate in the social crises of the 'thirties. A good many writers and intellectuals then swung to the other extreme and surrendered their individual moral consciences to reformist programs of a more or less totalitarian nature. . . . But after 1939 there was an increasingly strong reaction against totally political solutions.*

*Now the novelists are starting all over again and saying that simple human affection and honesty about oneself are all that can be counted on.<sup>3</sup>*

NOW it is significant that the accent of the young people whose work we have been considering strikes much the same emphasis that has characterized a central strain in recent Christian philosophy which stems very largely

<sup>2</sup> Gabriel Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, Vol. I (Chicago: Henry Regnery Co., 1950), p. 28.

<sup>3</sup> Robert Gorham Davis, "In a Raveled World Love Endures," *The New York Times Book Review*, December 26, 1954, p. 13.

from the writings of the remarkably penetrating Jewish existentialist Martin Buber, and most especially from his little book *I and Thou*, which, in the years since its first appearance in 1923, has become well-nigh a modern classic. Those currents in contemporary Christian philosophy which take the personal level of human experience as their metaphysical point of departure do not, of course, have their sole origin in the impact that this brilliant Jewish thinker has had upon recent Christian theology: they stem in part from our modern recovery of the legacy of the nineteenth-century Danish philosopher Søren Kierkegaard: they have also lately found a remarkably persuasive spokesman in the distinguished French Catholic philosopher Gabriel Marcel, and we associate with them a host of other important figures in the religious thought of our time. But it is with Martin Buber that we most immediately associate the argument in contemporary philosophy that the most fundamental clues to the nature of reality are to be found not in our relations with the publicly existent objective world but in the whole network of our relations with other persons. And traces of his influence are to be found in the thought of almost every major Christian thinker on the contemporary scene—in Emil Brunner and Karl Heim, in Reinhold Niebuhr and Karl Barth, in Paul Tillich and J. V. Langmead Casserley, and many others.

AT the heart of Buber's thought there is a radical disjunction between what he considers to be the two most fundamental modes in which man may relate himself to the world. He may relate himself to things or objects or to what Buber calls the world of "It" which comprises all the things we *experience* and *use*, all the things we arrange and organize and manipulate: this is, primarily, the world of science and technology. Or, Buber tells us, we may relate ourselves not to things but to other persons, in which case we enter the world of "Thou," for here we no longer weigh and measure and judge and control: no, here we are

addressed, and we must respond; and thus the individual is no longer the sole arbiter of the situation, since it includes, beside himself, another independent center of intelligence and volition—and between these two the relation is that of an I to a Thou who is not to be *experienced* or *used* but who is to be *met* in relation.

Now, of course, Buber does not want to suggest that the "I-Thou" relation is expressed only in our relations with other persons and that the "I-It" relation is expressed only in our dealings with things. He realizes, for example (as Philip Wheelwright has recently reminded us in his fine book *The Burning Fountain*), that we may, in certain moments and on certain occasions, enter into a relation of *thouhood* with natural scenes and objects—as had Wordsworth, when he declared:

*The holy time is quiet as a Nun  
Breathless with adoration*

and Buber would agree with Professor Wheelwright that

*Where the entire self is given up  
to a single impression and is in a  
state of tranquil tension toward it,  
owing to a fairly equal commingling  
of love and awe, a balanced sense  
of beauty and of mystery, then the  
self finds its object confronting it as  
a thou and becomes in turn a thou  
before the presence of its object.<sup>4</sup>*

Buber would also admit that the relation between persons is sometimes governed by the laws of the world of "I-It," that, indeed, it must be so governed on certain occasions and in certain contexts—as when, for example, we *order* and *discipline* persons for the sake of maintaining civil peace. And he would furthermore admit—indeed, he often reminds us—that the tragedy of human existence consists, in part, in the fact that our relations with other persons, sometimes the most intimate relations, are continually passing over into the world of "I-It," so that the other person no longer confronts us as a person, as a "Thou," but rather as

an "It," as simply one object among other objects. But though our relations with other persons on certain occasions must, and on other occasions unhappily do, assume the character of the "I-It" relation; and though our relations to things and to situations may, in certain rare instances, assume the character of the "I-Thou" relation, Buber wants, nevertheless, to insist upon the essential difference between these two fundamental attitudes toward experience.

**T**HERE is one beautifully lambent sentence that occurs early in the little book *I and Thou* and that sums up his entire position: he says: "All real living is meeting."<sup>5</sup> "All real living is meeting. And Buber's great point here is that it is through our responses to other persons that we become persons, and that there is no such thing as the isolated person. Individuals may be isolated, but we are persons only in our relation with other persons. The British Congregationalist theologian John Seldon Whale is stating Buber's assertion, when he says in his little book *Christian Doctrine*: "... the most private act any man can perform is to die, to go out of life. As long as he is alive at all he cannot and does not live unto himself. Personality is mutual in its very being. For all its sovereign individuality, the self exists only in a community of selves. The lonely Robinson Crusoe is a possible fiction because he begins as a man before becoming a solitary; but the lonely Tarzan of the Apes is an impossible fiction because he begins as a solitary before becoming a man. Society is only the aggregate of individual selves, admittedly; yet individual selfhood is achieved only in society. In one sense, therefore, the part is prior to the whole: but in another sense the whole is prior to the part. In short, human life demands to be understood in terms of its two complementary aspects, the individual and the corporate, the part and the whole. Each," says Dr. Whale, "has to be interpreted

in terms of the other."<sup>6</sup> And this is Buber's central contention. At one point in his book he says: "Reality is an activity in which I share without being able to appropriate it for myself. Where there is no sharing there is no reality. Where there is no appropriation by the self there is no reality."<sup>7</sup> And at another point he says:

*Individuality makes its appearance  
by being differentiated from  
other individualities.*

*A person makes his appearance  
by entering into relation with other  
persons. . . .*

*The I is real in virtue of its sharing  
in reality. The fuller its sharing  
the more real it becomes.<sup>8</sup>*

**I**N other words, *all real life is relationship*, or, as the writer of the First Epistle of St. John puts it, "He that loveth not, abideth in death." For when we wrap ourselves up in solitariness and closet ourselves in safety from the disturbing challenge of the "Thou," we can no longer hear the eternal "Thou"—the creative spirit of the living God—which speaks in and through every particular "Thou" that calls us to a responsible decision. And in so doing we deny ourselves the privilege of responding to the one "Thou" which can never become an "It," which meets us in our common life, and in relationship with which we do most truly become ourselves. "For to step into pure relation," says Buber—that is, into the absolute relation with the *Mysterium Tremendum*, which is glimpsed and apprehended in every particular relation with a particular "Thou"—"to step into pure relation is not to disregard everything but to see everything in the *Thou*, not to renounce the world but to establish it on its true basis. . . ."<sup>9</sup> In other words, the particular quarry from which the most fundamental categories of human thought are to be derived is the realm of encounter, the realm of dialogue, the realm of personal experience.

(Continued on page 36)

<sup>4</sup> Philip Wheelwright, *The Burning Fountain: A Study in the Language of Symbolism* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1954), p. 81.

<sup>5</sup> Martin Buber, *I and Thou* (Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1937), p. 11. Translated by Ronald Gregor Smith.

<sup>6</sup> John Seldon Whale, *Christian Doctrine* (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1946), pp. 124-125.

<sup>7</sup> Martin Buber, *Op. cit.*, p. 63.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, pp. 62-63.

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 79.

# TRUTH

## as the artist sees it

BY MARGARET RIGG

IN the world of TV, radio, and the downtown department store, the slogan is king. The slogan commands our lives; "go and buy . . . go and do . . . rite NOW." We are urged to unthinking action by the perpetual watchwords of modern living, "he who hesitates is lost." But in the world of art we are asked to stop and consider, to think and to hesitate. Only in moments of reflection and thought may we experience the truth which the artist is communicating. The primary concern of the artist is to render visible that truth which he experiences. The twentieth-century artist proceeds from the area of his own experience to the area of reproducing it by carefully selecting the exact visual means which will, for him, communicate the highest amount of truth. In order to share his experience, to gain meaning from the truth the artist communicates, we must stop.

Incongruity can be a means of communicating experience. John Marin, American water colorist, paints *Ship, Sea, and Sky Forms* by putting patches of sky, sea, and ship forms together without reference to their natural order; Paul Klee does the same thing in *Mask of Fear* and *The Twittering Machine*. The four tiny, poorly shaped legs and feet in *Mask of Fear* seem to hardly fit the monstrous masklike face with its insidious little eyes, and the *Twittering Machine* is a strange union of animal forms and machine forms into one total, incongruous effect. Marcel Duchamp's *Nude Descending a Staircase* gives us an unthinkably warm title for a painting of lines and shapes which seem to jerk and jolt so mechanically down a staircase. The coldness of the odd machinery in *The Bride* takes us by surprise in contrast to the humanness of the title. Picasso does this unexpectedly too, in *Female Nude*. His analysis of the female figure into so many sharp, geometric shapes takes away the familiar feeling the title gives us. The outraging thing about incongruity is the unexpected combination.

THE unexpected is also characteristic of distortion. But the freakishness of distortion is in the violence done to some part of a normal combination. The obvious distortion in painting and sculpture which disturbs so many people today becomes a means the artist uses to convey his experience. The experience of terror and pain is expressed in the twisted forms of Picasso's *Guernica*. The distorted faces, the tortured hands and feet, and the

grotesquely marred effect of the total mural revolt the onlookers into consideration. Henry Moore removes whole sections from his forms in *Reclining Figure* and leaves an uneasy void. The violence is done within the figure as if something internal were missing. In *Chariot*, Alberto Giacometti disfigures with a softer tone by merely omitting much that is familiar in the forms. But the pure terror of Picasso is missing here and the smooth gaps of Moore are not necessary in Giacometti to reveal distortion. The distortion in Giorgio de Chirico's painting, *Conversation Among the Ruins*, is disfigurement of man-made surroundings; the door left incomplete, the walls missing altogether, and the strangeness of the intimacy in such a lonely place. The unexpected distortion calls us to a halt.

This truth of the artists' experience, the incongruous, is what arrests our attention. We stop because what we see does not permit us to go on. The bedlam of incongruity is everywhere evident to the artist and by his profound experience of it he is able to bring it sharply before us. The forms John Marin uses are brought to our attention by their incongruous relationship to one another. They say "things are out of order." In the artistic attempt to represent the disorder which he experiences, the artist reveals the truth of the chaotic unrelatedness of our world. Klee's *Mask of Fear* gives mute assent to the reality of the terror of this unrelatedness. And in *The Twittering Machine* the incongruous unison of animal and mechanical forms seems drawn directly from experiencing the forces of dehumanization which make man the puppet of a capricious machine. The mechanical form Duchamp calls *Nude Descending a Staircase* is a cold commentary on the fact that, after all, man is requested primarily to be in working order and to perform correctly. Dehumanization is more emphatically expressed in *The Bride* where the detachment from warmth and personality is complete. The individual has become a machine for living. This same message is echoed in Pablo Picasso's *Female Nude* less violently, but just as truthfully and courageously. In the cold analysis of the form and structure of the human body, the artist intensifies graphically the incongruous marriage of intimate need to an impersonal culture. Thus, for the artist, one means of achieving the communication of truth is by expressing his experience of disorder, dehumanization, and the impersonaliza-

Ship, Sea, and Sky Forms, by John Marin

courtesy, The Columbus Gallery of Fine Arts



The Twittering Machine, 1922, by Paul Klee

courtesy, Museum of Modern Art



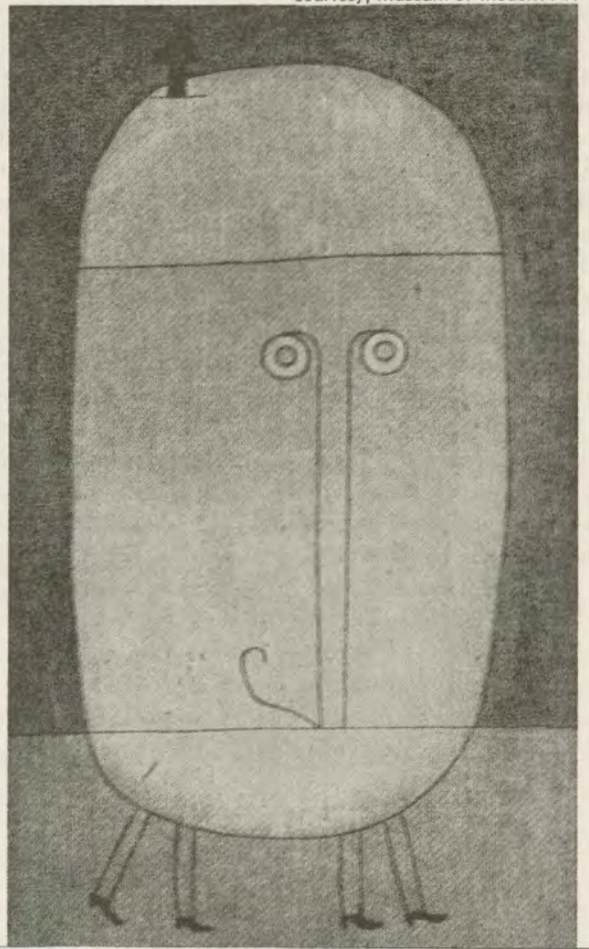
Nude Descending a Staircase, Number 2 by Marcel Duchamp

courtesy, Philadelphia Museum of Art



Mask of Fear, 1932, by Paul Klee

courtesy, Museum of Modern Art

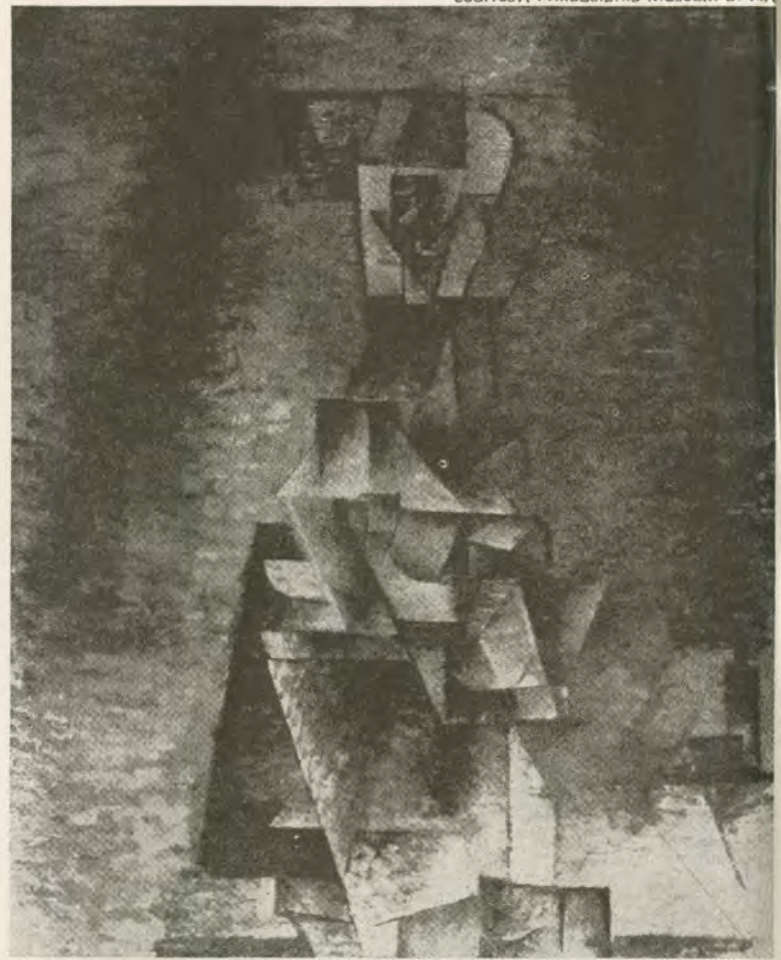


tion of life today by a sharpened and intensified use of the incongruous.

Female Nude, by Pablo Picasso  
courtesy, Philadelphia Museum of Art

**D**ISTORTION, an expression of a sensitive experience, is another means of communicating. So much disfiguring shocks our sensitivities and stops us cold. This is certainly true of the *Guernica* which implies such an essence of pain and fear that we ask ourselves the meaning of art if not life. The despair and meaninglessness of all the terror is completely unrelieved within the frame. The animals and human beings are in such a chaos of agony that the effect is a judgment upon the onlooker. I must answer to this indictment: this crisis situation demands my "yes" or "no." Henry Moore's figure also demands courage to face the despair of distortion. The small, empty face looks out into space. The body, reclining with the air of such tense passiveness, is preview enough for the inactive despair we are lulled into accepting today. Relationship to life appears diluted and distorted. Unthinking resignation is the motif for a seemingly dehumanized value of the individual self. The *Chariot* by comparison is not so internally negative; rather, the distortion implies an external devaluing. The simplicity is devastating. The attenuated body stands alone and erect, but without the slightest allusion to the classically heroic figures of the Greek and Roman sculpture. The figure is primitive in intensity and pagan in bearing . . . a representation of twentieth-century art! The two lone figures of de Chirico's *Conversation Among the Ruins* appear to be the least distorted of all these. However, the tense, arid concentration of the figures upon their conversation in a deserted place, among ruins is less than comfortable. These two, shut off in a heedless corner of the world, appear earnestly intent upon preserving some remnant of their own humanity and personality. Their obvious attitude to the distortion about them is frightening. The picture is almost psychological. We react to such profoundly disturbing expressions of experience with a feeling of disgust and ridicule. But for the artist this expression is a communication of truth.

The truth then, as the artist sees it, is bound within the misery and conflict and despair and fear experienced all over the earth—in short, our actual situation. The awful distortion and incongruity seen in art become the courageous statements of the artist who has experienced it. The facts are that we live in a meaningless world, a world of despair and fear, where human relationships are blurred, and individual personality is obliterated by the scientific, industrial, and mechanical age. All this is called into question by the twentieth-century artist. But what we see on canvas or in the stone is not a mere echo, not an imitation of what the artist observes or experiences. The artist wishes to *translate* the continuous movement, the restless frustration, the decay and anxiety into dynamic, creative terms. He has experienced the modern dilemma deeply and sensitively. He now renders this ex-

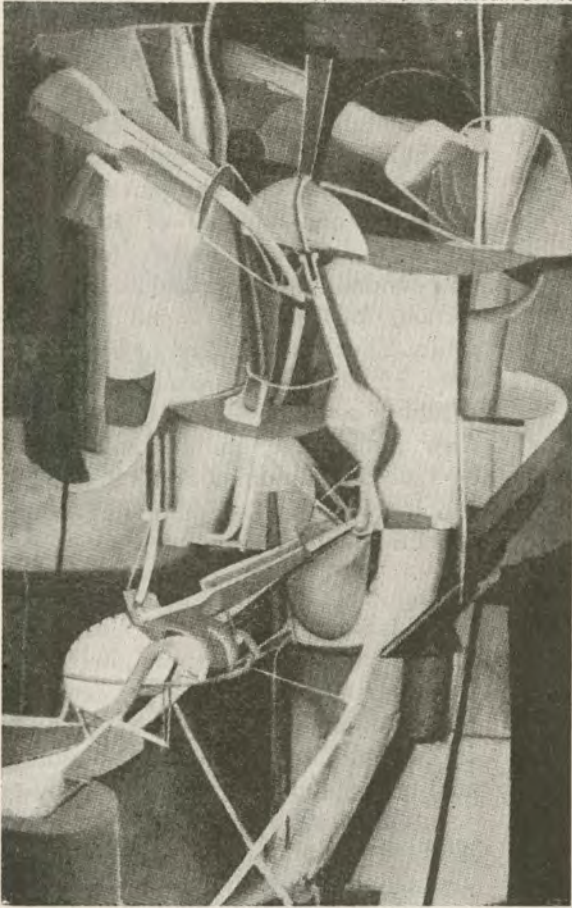


courtesy, The Museum of Modern Art, New York

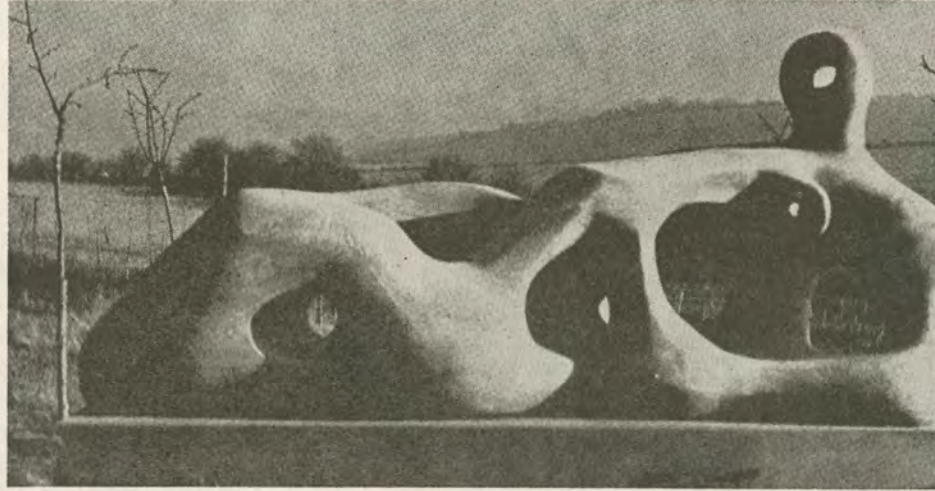




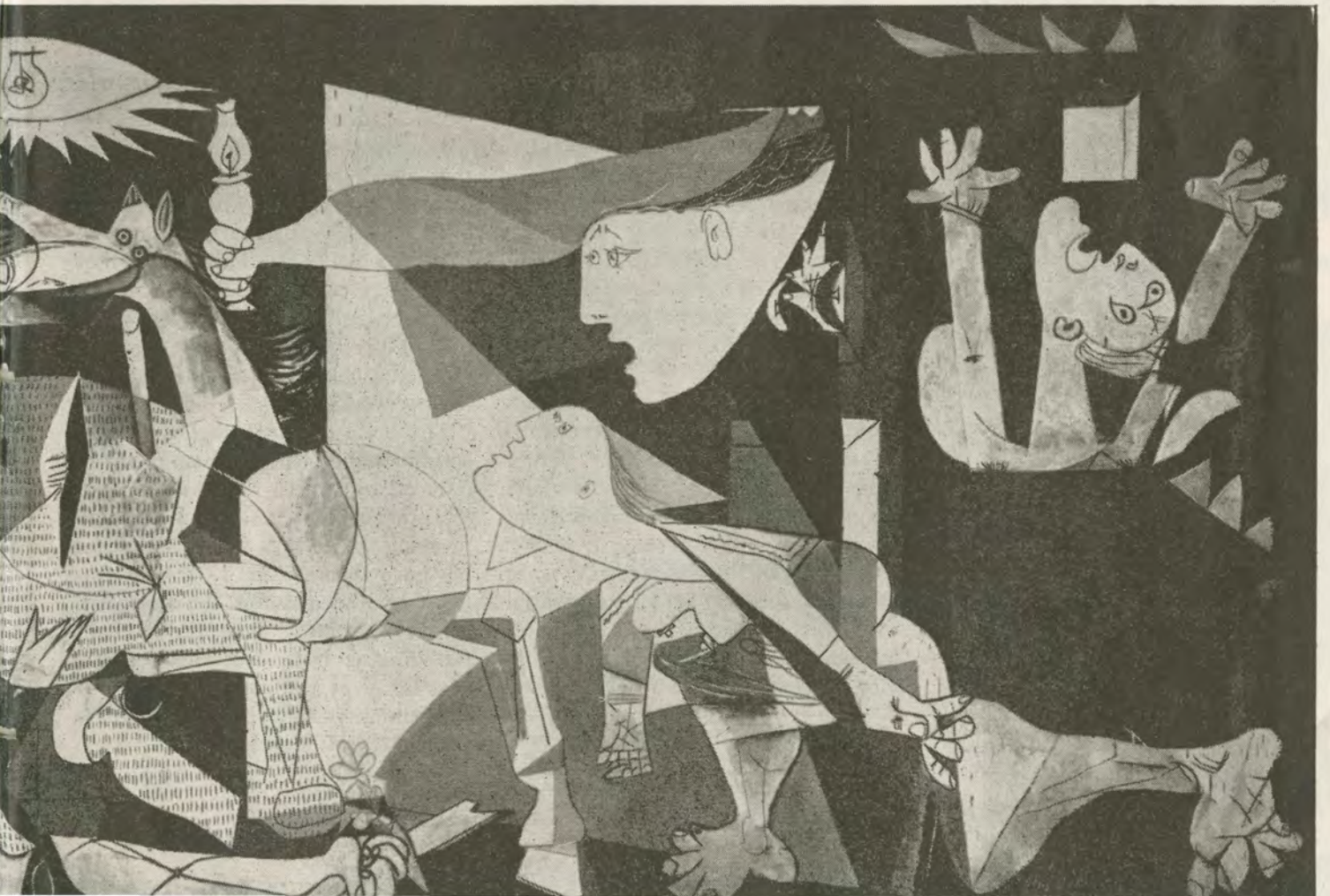
The Bride, by Marcel Duchamp  
courtesy, Philadelphia Museum of Art



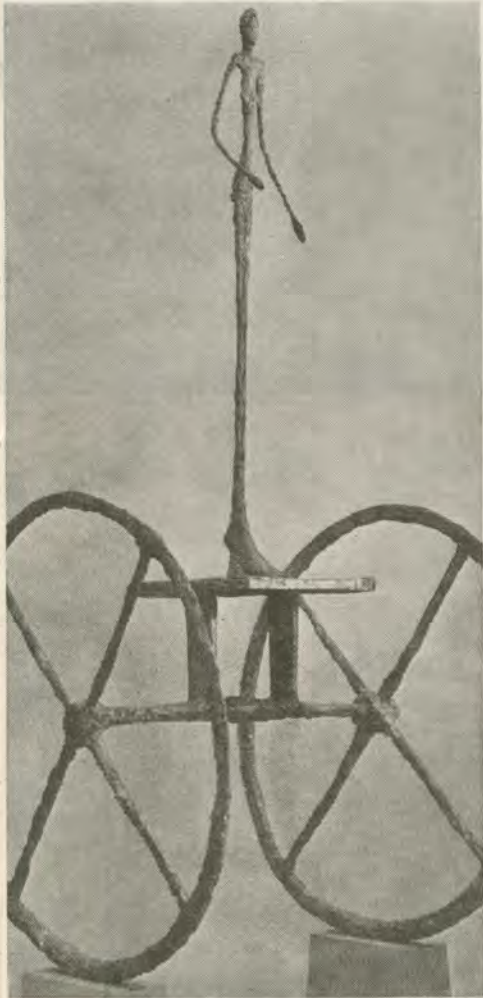
Reclining Figure, 1940, by Henry Moore  
courtesy. the artist



Guernica, by Pablo Picasso



**Chariot, 1950, by Alberto Giacometti**  
courtesy, The Museum of Modern Art



**Conversation Among the Ruins, 1927,**  
by Giorgio de Chirico  
courtesy, The Art Institute of Chicago



perience visible in creative terms. The visible expression of struggle and madness is not meant to be an addition to the misery of the world, but the courageous facing of human predicament as it really is.

**T**HIS is the sort of courage the theologian, Paul Tillich, describes in his book, *The Courage to Be*. He observes that twentieth-century art, literature, and philosophy "... reveal the courage to face things as they are and to express the anxiety of meaninglessness. It is creative courage which appears in the expressions of despair." The passers-by who would "pooh-pooh" modern art "... call decay what is actually the creative expression of decay. They reject as meaningless the meaningful attempt to reveal the meaninglessness of our situation." They refuse to take modern art seriously, "that is, as revelations of one's own existential meaninglessness and hidden despair."\*

Thus, within the awful distortion of Picasso's *Guernica* we have, not merely a twisted scene of the bitter fruits of war, but a highly significant attempt of creative courage daring to communicate the truth of our actual situation. The works of Duchamp and Klee become bold descriptions of our despair. When the work of the artist is meaningful to him it represents a primary step toward the restoration of meaning itself, and hope. These artistic descriptions give rise to a crisis situation by presenting the facts which make us hesitate. The painting, as a "revelation of one's own meaninglessness" and neurosis, confronts man with the truth to which he must answer.

The truth resides in the ultimate possibilities for man's wholeness, value, and integration. Man's limitations and struggles since the dawn of civilization appeared to be giving way to the new authority of science at the end of the nineteenth century. Mankind, focusing his vision upon science as the true answer leading to a new freedom, overlooked the limitations inherent in the results affected

\* *The Courage to Be*, Paul Tillich, pp. 143; 140; 141.

by conceiving of science as an ultimate truth. The new direction seemed to lie in the unfolding of man's authority over his past frailties through the genius of science and technology.

The graphic statements of twentieth-century artists unmask the dehumanizing error of replacing the Ultimate Truth with the partial, and denounce our worship of it. The violent judgment of man's folly is propounded through radical use of distortion, disfigurement, and incongruity. The drastic limitations imposed upon humanity obscuring purposeful existence are traced by the artist to their true source, the technological, by revealing its direct result seen in the loneliness, wars, pain, disunity, and meaningless of our time.

**I**N this way the artist implies, visually, that man's nature can become truest and most whole only by experiencing all of what life can mean in relation and response to the Absolute and not by limiting himself to enjoyment of living through technology. Modern art is a clear statement of protest against any factor in general, and enthroned science in particular, that substitutes itself for the Ultimate Truth. With our narrow, regional vision we have been claiming technology as our savior and it is a lie. The proof is all too painfully evident.

Just as the theologian sees sin as that which cuts us off from an immediate encounter with God, so the artist comprehends that the threat to humanity is in the implication that technology can be absolute for man's existence. And he sees our unwillingness to face reality as part of the general delusion and distortion resulting from separation.

The chaos and meaninglessness are constant indications that man has been reduced to a mere industrial animal. This detachment from wholeness and meaning and worth as an individual has been experienced as our true situation by the artist of the twentieth century. His attack takes the forms of the disease, but never the position. It is his great affirmative cry that our true situation, today, is not meant to be our True Ultimate position.

**G**OD is purely benevolent for I can see that in the midst of death, life persists, in the midst of untruth, truth persists, in the midst of darkness, light persists. Hence I gather that God is Life, Truth, Light. He is Love—Supreme Good.

—*Young India*, October 11, 1928

**M**Y uniform experience has convinced me that there is no other God than Truth. And if every page of these chapters does not proclaim to the reader that the only means for the realization of Truth is Ahimsa, I shall deem all my labor in writing these chapters to have been in vain. And, even though my efforts in this behalf may prove fruitless, let the readers know that the vehicle, not the great principle, is at fault. After all, however sincere my strivings after Ahimsa may have been, they have still been imperfect and inadequate. The little fleeting glimpses, therefore, that I have been able to have of Truth can hardly convey an idea of the indescribable lustre of Truth, a million times more intense than that of the sun we daily see with our eyes. In fact what I have caught is only the faintest glimmer of that mighty effulgence. But this much I can say with assurance, as a result of all my experiments, that a perfect vision of Truth can only follow a complete realization of Ahimsa.

To see the universal and all-pervading Spirit of Truth face to face one must be able to love the meanest creation as oneself. And a man who aspires after that cannot afford to keep out of any field of life. That is why my devotion to Truth has drawn me into the field of politics; and I can say without the slightest hesitation, and yet in all humility, that those who say that religion has nothing to do with politics do not know what religion means.

—*My Experiments With Truth*, p. 615

**T**HE word "Satya" (Truth) is derived from "Sat" which means being. And nothing is or exists in reality except Truth. That is why "Sat" or Truth is perhaps the most important name of God. In fact it is more correct to say

that Truth is God, than to say that God is Truth. But as we cannot do without a ruler or a general, names of God such as King of Kings or the Almighty are and will remain more usually current. On deeper thinking, however, it will be realized that "Sat" or "Satya" is the only correct and fully significant name of God.

And where there is Truth, there also is knowledge, pure knowledge. Where there is no Truth, there can be no true knowledge. That is why the word "Chit" or knowledge is associated with the name of God. And where there is true knowledge, there is always bliss (ananda). Sorrow has no place there. And even as Truth is eternal, so is the bliss derived from it. Hence we know God as "Sat-chit-ananda," one who combined in Himself Truth, Knowledge and Bliss.

Devotion to this Truth is the sole reason for our existence. All our activities should be centered in Truth. Truth should be the very breath of our life. When once this stage in the pilgrim's progress is reached, all other rules of correct living will come without effort, and obedience to them will be instinctive. But without Truth it would be impossible to observe any principles or rules in life.

Generally speaking, observing the law of Truth is merely understood to mean that we must speak the truth. But we in the Ashram understand the word Satya or Truth in a much wider sense. There should be Truth in thought, Truth in speech, and Truth in action. To the man who has realized this Truth in perfection, nothing else remains to be known, because all knowledge is necessarily true knowledge; and there can be no inward peace without true knowledge if we once learn how to apply this never-failing test of what is worth seeing, what is worth reading.

But how is one to realize this Truth, which may be likened to the philosopher's stone or the cow of plenty? By single-minded devotion and indifference to every other interest in life—replies the *Bhagavadgita*. In spite, however, of such devotion, what may appear as truth to one person will often appear as untruth to another

# God Is Truth

Edited by  
**Harold A. Ehrensperger**  
Director  
Foreign Student Program  
Boston University

person. But that need not worry the seeker. Where there is honest effort, it will be realized that what appear to be different truths are like apparently different countless leaves of the same tree. Does not God Himself appear to different individuals in different aspects? Still we know that He is One. But Truth is the right designation of God. Hence there is nothing wrong in every one following Truth according to one's lights. Indeed it is one's duty to do so. Then if there is a mistake on the part of any one so following Truth, it will be automatically set right. For the quest of Truth involves *tapas*—self-suffering, some times even unto death. There can be no place in it for even a trace of self-interest. In such selfless search for Truth nobody can lose his bearings for long. Directly one takes to the wrong path one stumbles, and is thus redirected to the right path. Therefore the pursuit of Truth is true *bakti* (devotion). It is the path that leads to God, and therefore there is no place in it for cowardice, no place for defeat. It is the talisman by which death itself becomes the portal to life eternal.

—*Selected Writings of Mahatma Gandhi*

Ed. by Ronald Duncan

**C**RITICISM is by no means identical with intellectual criticism. There are many other forms of criticism. Religion, for example, is criticized not only by intellectual critics; it is also criticized by *religious* critics. For instance, it is criticized most harshly and radically by the prophets who turn against the traditional religious system which is maintained and preserved by priestly tradition and is distorted in the course of history. The prophet criticizes, but his is not intellectual criticism. It is through the ultimate power of the religion which he criticizes that he tries to separate the good from the evil in it. This was the case with the reformers who criticized hierarchical distortions in the Roman Church on the basis of the ultimate principles, turning against the distorted forms which they found and where they had to separate the good from the bad, the true from the false, and the beautiful from the ugly.

What is *intellectual criticism*? Of first consideration is the nature of intellectual criticism of religion. Intellectual criticism is argumentative. It gives reasons. It attacks the claim of religion to be true; the claim that it has validity in an ultimate sense of human nature and human predicament; the assumption that it is necessary as an expression of the human situation within the world. Intellectual criticism of religion attacks these claims, either completely or in special manifestations of religion. Of course, this intellectual criticism can be combined with political, emotional, and religious motives, but things which cannot be separated often must be distinguished.

What is the root of intellectual criticism? It is man's intellectual power. *Intellegere* means literally "reading between," being able to read between the facts and perceptions of our daily life. "Reading between" means understanding these facts, what they mean, how they are related, what their causes and their effects are. "Intellectual" means "arguing" on the basis of facts but transcending them. It means knowing, taking in as knowledge, and sometimes as certainty, something into the mean-

# RELIGION AND ITS INTELLECTUAL

ing of which we have looked. This intellect which "reads between" is always critical. It belongs to its very essence to be critical. Intellect, if it follows its own nature, never accepts something without asking a question about its nature and its validity. This is something universally human. But intellectual critics are people which, in a special sense, question religion on the basis of intellectual reasons. They may be driven by emotional remembrances of their adolescence, by religious motives, unaware of the distortion of religion, or by political ideas, but they use reasons. They are intellectual critics.

**T**HIS leads me to the second consideration—characteristics of the intellectual and the conflicts with religions arising from these characteristics. The intellectual, as intellectual, questions everything which he encounters. He does not take anything whatsoever, at least not consciously and not intentionally, without asking a question about it. Let us not despise the human possibility to ask questions.

Asking is one of the great expressions of human freedom. Asking means that we are not identical with the reality which we are and in which we stand and which surrounds us. We have it, but also do not have it. We ask for it. Asking always means some identity with and some separation from what we have. And if we want to understand what man is, there is perhaps no better door of entrance into his nature than an analysis of what "asking" means. It is one of the most ordinary and most profound appearances in all reality.

The intellectual is he who asks. The function which is universally human—to be able to ask questions—becomes, in the intellectual, a special function, the function which forms his character, the dominant function of his intellectual life. But if this is so, if asking becomes the dominant function of the intellectual, then a tension arises between the intellectual's radical will to ask and the immediate, blessed certainty of the religious man and woman in their religious experiences, traditions, and symbols. This conflict

# CRITICS

by Paul Johannes Tillich

cannot be avoided. The intellectual also subordinates the religious reality to the function of asking—asking questions—and that means having distance and detachment from the religious reality. The religious man cannot admit this. The religious man subordinates everything else to his encounter with that which is his unconditional concern, his ultimate passion.

**S**TILL another characteristic of the intellectual is that in him the function of asking is necessarily skeptical. He doubts everything. There are two forms of the intellectual doubt. The one is a merely technical, methodological way of doubting, as the great philosopher Descartes described it, when he started his meditations and founded modern philosophy in doing so. He doubted in order to establish a new system of rational insights; if possible, certainties, if not possible, at least high probabilities. But doubt can be something more serious than a methodological trick which every thinker and scientist must use. It can become an

attitude—an attitude which makes any certainty impossible, which doubts even probabilities and thus loses the content of life and is driven into a feeling of emptiness which may or may not end in despair. In both cases there is an obvious conflict with the unquestioned certainties of an immediate, unbroken religious belief. The skeptic is regarded as a danger, and he is even attacked on religious and moral grounds.

A third characteristic of the intellectual is his antiauthoritarian character. This has already been mentioned with regard to emotional terms, but now we come to it in terms of rational attack on any possible authority. The intellectual does not deny factual authority, of course. If he is a scientist, he knows that he is dependent on the historian and *vice versa*. This kind of factual authority is present in every human being. But the intellectual does not accept authority in principle, namely a place or a person in whom authority is invested. When religion says that its contents are based on revelation, then it has an authority

which is authority in itself—authority in principle—authority which cannot be doubted, and so the intellectual rejects it.

**F**URTHER characteristic of the intellectual is his discipline in the clarity and the consistency of his thinking, in the well-thought-out base of verification of every statement, in his infinite caution in making any statement whatsoever. And this, of course, produces a conflict with the ecstatic, unverifiable, daring anticipation of faith.

There is a last and negative characteristic of the intellectual: he often, or almost always, lacks sufficient criticism of the predominance of the intellectual function. Many intellectuals, perhaps most of them, many scientists, and many philosophers exercise a kind of naïve imperialism with respect to the intellectual function. They want to make this function all-controlling. And in spite of their radical, skeptical seriousness and discipline, they are naïve at this point. They have the naïve presupposition that reality as a

whole is open in this way alone. If they are profoundly skeptical, they say that reality in its deeper levels is completely shut off from man and cannot be reached by any kind of thinking, and that the intellectual should be satisfied if he alone deals with the forms and structures of thought and matters of science. Everything else he should leave to the emotions. In doing so, he negates any other key to reality and to our own being except the key of intellectual asking. But if this is so, then religion which claims to be a key to the ultimate reality is no key at all for it does not approach reality with the intellectual function but with another function which we call the experience of the holy. Such a function is denied by the imperialism of the intellectual.

What are the concrete problems, the specific points in the intellectual attack on religion? There is a first group, containing conflicts about factual statements, made both by science, or philosophy, and religion. Such a conflict was the one which was symbolic for our whole modern time between the astronomy of Copernicus and Galileo and the statements of the traditional ideas and symbols of Bible and church about the structure of the universe. Another was the fight about the biological development of men which came into being through the Darwinistic movement and which produced legal trials when the church wanted to defend the nonbiological origins even of man's bodily existence. Finally one which is most actual today, the conflict concerning historical research of biblical literature—so-called "biblical criticism"—which deals with the Bible and its records as it would deal with any other book, namely using the serious and honest historical criteria which every historian uses everywhere if he interprets documents of the past. This conflict is still going on and has not lost its sharpness after these two hundred years of struggle. This is one group of those who attack the intellectual on religion.

**T**HERE is another group. It represents the attempt to explain religion by

explaining it away, namely, explaining it away in nonreligious terms. It is the psychological and sociological explanation of religion represented by three names. One declares that religion is a projection of man's infinite desires for life and love into the heaven of the absolute. The man who did this was Feuerbach. The other who followed him and did it in more complete psychological terms, saying that religion is based on the projection of the father's image into heaven, is Sigmund Freud. And the third, probably most successful, said that religion is based on a projection of the social ideal of a classless society which is not given as a reality into the earlier imagination of a transcendent heaven. This was Karl Marx. When I look at the history of Christian thought and defense, I think that these three attacks were and are the three most powerful ones. They have an extreme power of impressing themselves on the human mind. Much secularism, much negation of religion, is based on these three powerful, intellectual attacks and criticisms of religion.

**T**HERE is a third more positive way. The intellectual establishes systems of thought which with respect to religion either transform it or deny it. The way in which religion is transformed by systems of intellectual thought is usually called idealism. Many a Christian as he hears the word "idealism" thinks, "Now we are saved; this man is an idealist." But they are not saved at all, as the history of Christian thought has shown. Idealism means taking religion as an element into a rational system of the world as a whole, and eliminating those elements of religion which we usually call the paradoxical character of the religious experience. And then the other system which is established by intellectual critics of religion is naturalism, which removes religious contents for the sake of a united world which has the characteristics of nature, whether in sub-human nature or in man. My judgment is that this second, more radical, attack is less dangerous than the former, less radical and an often very compromising attack.

Now I come to my fourth and last consideration, namely, the justification of intellectual criticism and the possible answer of religion. The first and general justification of the attack of the intellectual is that man as man is an image of God only because he has the rational power to transcend the given, to criticize everything which he encounters. And he has this right also, as the image of God, to criticize that realm which deals directly with divine things—the realm of religion. Even more, he must accept this criticism as a religious necessity, and he never should use the arrogant attitude of calling this criticism, as such, human arrogance. This is the general justification of the intellectual criticism of religion, which must be accepted religiously in the name of man as free. Then, the second justification of the intellectual criticism against religion is the way in which religion competes with scientific work in factual statements about nature or about history. In the moment in which this is done religion demands the human intellect to become dishonest in order to accept religion. This is one of the most serious points. In the name of religion, religion must accept the autonomies, the freedom of scientific research in all realms according to the scientific methods which are the best ones in a special period, which may change, but which can change only through better insights of the scientific mind itself. Religion never should go down into the arena in which the sciences fight—be it in natural sciences; be it sociology; be it in psychology (which is very important today); or be it in history. Religion *qua* religion does not belong in this arena.

**T**HIRD, religion has far too often been transformed into a system of statements which look like statements about the finite world of time and space. For instance, if somebody discusses the question, "Does God exist or does God not exist?" then he makes God into a being in space and time and asks a question as if he asked, "Does another galaxy exist or does it not exist?" God is blasphemed if his existence is discussed, because he is

motive

beyond existence, as all classical theology knew. Here again, religion has to make it clear that it is not the same dimension in which religion experiences truth and in which people who deal with the world of the finite in time and space deal. Existence belongs to the world of time and space and not to the dimension of reality which we call the holy or the divine.

Another justification for intellectual criticism is the literalism which is still in the minds of some educated people as it justly is in the mind of primitive people now and in former centuries. People who know the difference between the objective world of time and space and the meaning of religion sin against religion if they take its symbols literally because then they provoke inescapably the asking mind—the mind of the intellectual, its criticism, its skepticism, and its radical wrath. What religion has to do and is doing now, largely in the theological world, is to rediscover that everything religious is symbolic. Symbolic does not mean unreal. It means more real than anything real in time and space. Therefore, intellectual criticism cannot destroy it, nor can intellectual defense protect it. This is also true of biblical symbols which are absurd and blasphemous if taken literally, but which are the adequate expressions of truth if taken symbolically.

Religion should also accept one of the most powerful criticisms of the intellectual, namely, that the symbolic material is changing because the relationship to the ultimate is changing. Not the ultimate concern about God himself is changing, but the concrete forms are changing. And when you ask, "Is that valid also of the Christ?" then I would say, "It is not, because the Christ in sacrificing his temporal and spacial existence did not bind us to any special forms of symbolism but transcended them and became the spirit on which the church is based."

**T**HEOLOGY must accept the problem of verification. Why is something which religion says true? The intellectual says, "We need detached observation." Religion answers, "You

need that; we need it in some respects; but we need first of all, something else, namely participation and risk." Religion is always risk, and verification in religion is never the verification of physical experiment, but it is always the verification of a life risk. Somebody says, "I surrendered; I devoted my life; I accepted this; and I took a chance. It was not, by no means, scientifically verified, but perhaps the risk failed." Or, "The risk was right," but it is impossible to know this beforehand. Now this is the verification of religion—spirit and power as it is called in the New Testament. This is the pragmatic element of risk which we need against any dogmatic absolutism.

Now let me close with one idea which came to me while I was thinking about these problems. The most important thing religion can do about the intellectual critic is to take him into the religion itself, to take him into the totality of the religious life. That was done by the early church and has been done ever since in the churches. And the name of this man who is an intellectual and is taken into the totality of the religious experience is "theologian." And from this follows the situation of the theologian. The theologian is the intellectual critic, and he is the representative of what he criticizes. The theologian is he who represents in himself the whole conflict, the whole weight and difficulty of the conflict. This is his misery and perhaps sometimes his glory.

**T**HERE are different ways in which different religions accept this situation. In the Roman Church the theo-

logian has been, in the course of the two thousand years of the development of this church, more and more subjected to the tradition and the authority of the church. He has, as a Catholic theologian, lost the possibility of radical questioning, of asking in a radical and uncompromising sense. The Protestant has rediscovered the theologian as somebody who, although he stands within the whole of religion, is able to accept the criticism which he has in himself in all the different forms which I have described. And it is the greatness and the weakness of Protestantism that Protestantism is able to have the intellectual critic of religion in its own midst, but perhaps, in the long run, this is the only way in which the relationship of these two human possibilities can be ordered. Our country is in a situation in which the intellectuals are, generally speaking, under attack.

Many church people are happy about this removal of the intellectuals from public influence and from the permission to ask the radical questions. But do not be happy about this in the name of religion. It is a fascist form, to use this general word, which *always*, and I can speak out of experience from Nazism, first turns against the intellectuals because radical questions should be excluded. But even more important than this political danger is the spiritual danger of the fight against the intellectual critic, namely, the danger that religion become superstition. Every religion which cannot stand ultimately the radical question which is asked by the intellectual critic of religion is superstition.



# power Through Fellowship Cells

**Recurring calls from students evidence a need for help given through fellowship cell groups. Here is one that is growing at the University of Washington. It might provide the impetus to start one of your own or boost the lagging and unfired one already in existence. In any case it can be a real experience, one not easily forgotten.**

**S**IX of us have gone a step beyond conventional Christianity, formed a fellowship cell and found a power which no one in the group believed could exist.

George Baldwin, vice-president of our Wesley Fellowship, stopped me on the stairs one afternoon.

"What's it all about?" he asked.

"What's what all about?" I inquired.

"What's all this business about Christianity?" he replied. "I've been here two years, I've been subjected to the Christian attitude and exposed to Christian fellowship and I don't feel any more like a Christian than I did

when I came. What am I supposed to be like?"

We sat down on the stairs.

"George," I said, "I've often wondered about such things. I know other students have, too."

"Another thing" said George, "what's with all this praying? I can bow my head in group worship or keep quiet during a period of meditation but I couldn't possibly say a verbal prayer and really mean it. I just can't feel that I'm really in contact, if that is the right word, with God. I'm beginning to think the only good of prayer may be in its psychological effect."

"Sometimes when we pray together in the Chapel," I said, "I feel as if we are praying to hear ourselves pray.

**by Katie Tarbill  
Student  
University of Washington**

Those written prayers just leave me cold."

George and I talked for nearly an hour.

"You know," I said, "I belonged to a fellowship cell group last year. It kind of died out when spring weather got the best of us but we did touch on some of these subjects. We never really got into them deeply since we spent most of the time talking about personal problems. But when I prayed with that group I felt different than I do in church or chapel services. It was all spontaneous, so natural and sincere. I'd sure like to start a cell group that is interested in some of the things we have been discussing for the last hour."

**G**EORGE and I found four others who were interested and we formed a fellowship cell. The power we found in that cell-group experience is helping to transform six personalities into six strong supporters of real, not conventional, Christianity.

The name, cell, may cause confusion on the part of those who are not familiar with the term. I'll never forget the time a friend of mine over-

heard me talking about my cell group.

"Oh my," she exclaimed, "are you really a communist?"

I explained the term, cell, came from the nature of growth of the fellowship groups which is much like the growth of the human cell. When a group becomes too large for easy discussion it splits and becomes two cells. Maximum sizes range from six to twelve persons.

**W**E are only one of hundreds of successful cell groups in action throughout the United States, Europe, Asia, South America and Canada. Such groups are functioning in churches. The idea has spread on campuses and wherever there are sincere persons ready to explore beyond the conventional expressions of Christianity.

Denominational executives and interdenominational national youth councils have recommended the adoption of fellowship cells.

Christian conference planners are adapting the idea to be used as a part of conference programs to give participants an opportunity to share experiences and new ideas with an intimate group.

The cells, although not by this particular name, were in existence before recorded history. The sociologist might call it a primary group. Wesley called it a class meeting. For Jesus it was a band of disciples.

The establishment of a fellowship cell does not call for mass publicity or support. The desire for formation should be spontaneous. A cell may come into being, as ours did by the action of a few persons with a specific interest or problem. Or, each member of one cell group may desire to organize a new group. A third method calls for orientation of interested persons and a methodical organization of cells according to interests and level of maturity.

A word of warning is in order. The close fellowship of those in a fellowship cell may be interpreted by some as snobbish exclusiveness. Watch out for any holier-than-thou attitudes among the group. The cell should be

motive



willing to take new members or help start new cells.

**A**NOTHER danger is the group may find the experience so good the members will come to think of it as an end in itself. Cells are never the final goals in life but rather a means toward individual and world transformation.

Social-action projects undertaken by a fellowship cell are an outlet for the ideas and principles discovered. Members may become true Christian witnesses by applying the basic Christian teachings to their everyday lives.

A new group project is undertaken by our cell each time a project is completed. Each of us regularly undertakes personal projects in the improvement of attitudes toward a person or phase of life.

Studies of the Bible or other inspirational work may be undertaken by a fellowship cell.

Our group still disagrees over the interpretation of a passage in Mark and even Abingdon's Bible Commentary was not able to settle our dispute. However, our study of Mark and the frank discussions led to personal insights and development.

There is no individual leadership in a fellowship cell. Each person takes his turn as an informal director. The responsive discussions that develop after the group is on its feet may even do away with any sort of informal direction.

The meeting of our cell group takes priority over all other activities. Should a member be unable to be with us we cancel that particular meeting. We meet once a week with a two-hour limit. Punctuality and regularity are unwritten but closely followed rules.

Experiments in intercessory prayer have proved to be exciting for our group. By praying for a particular person and keeping the person in mind throughout the week we have had amazing results. We have been able to change others' attitudes and even cause them to act with no outward stimulation from us.

**I**N one case the results were surprising even to us. A girl had left the Wesley Fellowship because of a misunderstanding. She had resolved to never return. The six of us thought about her at specific times . . . as a group and separately. A week later she was back in the Wesley Fellowship and more active than ever.

This type of power gives us the opportunity to help those who would reject counsel or verbal suggestions. It has made us aware of the new field of extrasensory perception. We have even tried experiments along this line. We have been able to communicate images and ideas by thought.

Other types of group prayer and worship may be as simple as silent meditation or spontaneous prayers at the opening and closing of the meeting or as formal as a small-scale worship service. Most important is that the type of worship chosen will knit the group together.

**W**E have found the use of group meditation and quiet searching brings us closer to each other and to God. The corporate use of silence is an effective means of releasing spiritual power, especially when the members cultivate the use of daily private meditation.

Some cells have an occasional opportunity to meet outside the regular hour or hours. An authority on a topic of particular interest to the group may be invited for a discussion. A weekend retreat in the country makes deeper and longer studies and discussions possible.

From experience I warn that a new cell group may be too easily discouraged. My first cell group allowed the warm spring weather to take priority over the meetings; the group soon died out. It takes time to realize the full possibilities of fellowship. The vitality of the group may have its ups and downs but each cycle will lead to more spiritual growth for the members.

There are probably no two fellowship cells exactly alike anywhere in the world. Each should fit the needs of the particular group and develop

out of the group's experiences together.

#### Calls for Women

- 2 Public health nurses for villages in Malaya. 15 others needed.
- 2 Women for group work and Christian education in community centers in Burma.
- 2 Teachers who can combine Christian education with music, English or home economics in Sarawak in Borneo.
- 2 Teachers of arts and crafts in vocational schools in India.
- 4 Supervisors of women's work in church, and of village schools in India. Needs experience in church and school.
- 6 Teachers of music, physical education, commercial subjects in high schools of Japan and Korea. Need same in other areas.
- 2 Nurses for supervision and training of nurses in Angola. 14 others needed.
- 3 English teachers for schools in Cuba. Others in Asian schools.
- 1 Laboratory technologist in Gikuki Medical Center, Mozambique. Also a need in other countries.

#### Calls for Men

- 1 Couple for church work and pastoral training, Liberia; B.D. needed with pastoral experience.
  - 2 Teachers, men or couples, for high-school subjects in Woodstock School, India, serving missionary and other English-speaking children.
  - 1 Surgeon, man, for general hospital in Delhi Area, India.
  - 1 Couple for rural church work in Cuba; B.D. with preparation and experience for rural areas.
  - 2 Teachers, men, for high-school teaching, with knowledge of administration, Brazil and Argentina.
  - 1 Couple for English teaching and direction of Methodist Student Center at the University of Okinawa.
  - 1 Skilled office man for clerical and accounting work in Korea; must have good business ability.
  - 1 Couple for educational and church work ministry in Malaya; B.D. with knowledge of education.
  - 1 Couple for pioneering ministry to the jungle Bataks; B.D. with rural experience. Sumatra.
- Write: 150 Fifth Avenue, New York 11, N. Y.

# Our New "Secretary of Peace"

by Devere Allen  
editor, Worldover Press

**H**AROLD Stassen's new job as Special Assistant on Disarmament Problems, with Cabinet rank, is bound to be a sticky one. Yet the creation of such a post was dramatic, and if seen in its correct proportions it will symbolize the longing felt by many Americans for direct work on one of humankind's most urgent needs. For perspective on the meaning of Stassen's tasks, we can wisely explore some aspects of American history in their relation to current international politics.

Hailed in some quarters with jubilation, as "at last" the establishment of a Peace Secretariat, it is worth noting that such a dream caught the imagination of Americans periodically through 165 years. The real originator of the idea was Dr. Benjamin Rush, a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and a distinguished physician who served as an army surgeon during the Revolutionary War. It is a bit hard to dismiss him as a crackpot, or as a weak patriot, but what he said when he launched his

plan would provide a field day for almost any Congressional investigating committee. He pulled no verbal punches.

It was back in 1790 that Dr. Rush developed his plan. In his mind it was tied up with the glowing hopes for the new American Republic and its moral leadership. He would have nothing of military training. He said: "Should we inspire our youth, by such exercises, with hostile ideas toward their fellow creatures? Let us rather instill into their minds sentiments of universal benevolence to men of all nations and colors." In his program for a Cabinet post to wage peace, he declared: "Let a Secretary of Peace be appointed. . . . Let him be a genuine republican and a sincere Christian, for the principles of republicanism and Christianity are no less friendly to universal and perpetual peace than they are to universal and equal liberty."

## Source

**F**AR ahead of his time, but with greater support than any such statement could win today, Rush urged: "Let the following sentence be inscribed, in letters of gold, over the doors of every State and Court house in the United States: 'The Son of Man came not into the world to destroy men's lives, but to save them.'" Over the doors to war offices, however, he wanted a very different inscription: "An office for butchering the human species. A widow and orphan making office. An office for creating public debt. An office for creating poverty and the destruction of liberty and national happiness."

The idea did not down. Benjamin Banneker, a free

Negro, followed up the Rush plan in his *Almanac*, outlining it to President Thomas Jefferson. The scheme kept coming to life, after all rebuffs. It was urged through the years prior to the Civil War, and Secretary of State John Hay, after the Spanish-American War, gave it some consideration. In 1909 and for a short while following, President Taft's Department of State actually had an Under-Secretary for peace. It was suggested alike by William Jennings Bryan and Admiral Goodrich. The late Carrie Chapman Catt was for a Peace Department attached to State. Agnes Macphail, a Canadian M.P., introduced a measure for a Canadian Peace Department

ment in 1928. Two years before, Kirby Page outlined a detailed scheme with a budget that suggested the later idea of spending for peace put forward by the late Senator Brien McMahon.

Stassen's task will be formidable because of the very times in which we live. He will have to defer to the Defense Department, the National Security Council, the most bellicose wings of Congress. He will be hopping about on the griddle of ineptitude perpetually heated by John Foster Dulles. He will find roadblocks set up by the monolithic mentality of the communist world. One thing he can do, if he is skillful and determined: he can take the chains off the very word "peace," and give disarmament the place in popular opinion it once had. He can try to counteract apathy, cynicism, and political opportunism. Surely the appointment should be welcomed, and as far as it goes, President Eisenhower given credit for an imaginative and forward-looking step.

**C**OMMON sense, however, must make everyone realize that the most laudable work for disarmament is inevitably a creature of *policy*. If policy is warlike or rash,



SIR ANTHONY EDEN, speaking at a banquet in New Delhi: "The worst stage for international politics to get into is the stage when there is no true meeting of men's minds—a stage when for one reason or another the impact is marked either by conditions of propaganda or of life, whichever it may be. . . . I am reluctant to mention the fact that I have now been more than ten years Foreign Secretary. . . . But if there is one conclusion which more than another has come to me over that period it is never to allow . . . international difficulties of any particular problem to convince you that an attempt to solve them is not worth making."

May 1955

disarmament becomes a mere word. There is something unreal about any disarmament talk while the United States Government is so rashly and unnecessarily willing to risk war over two wretched and insignificant islands like Matsu and Quemoy, which are of no security value to the U. S., and hardly any to that biggest American security risk of all, Chiang Kai-shek.

Yet there has been a gain, for a policy of encouragement about negotiations with Russia might make the London approaches to disarmament shortly take on greater importance. The call for such talks issued by the conservative Senator Walter George, and at least faintly echoed by the Administration, followed by Premier Bulganin's whisper of hope, is a relief from the sheer negativism of recent months. A small egg can hatch into a pullet that can lay a larger egg. Mr. Stassen must be given what popular backing can be mobilized, and the Administration at Washington—which appears singularly unaware of it—made to see that disarmament and policy are not two separate things, but one. You can't expect much disarmament when policy perennially contradicts it.

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"PROSPERO," in *El Tiempo*, liberal daily of Bogotá: "Someone has said that when an American country wants to do business with its neighbor it has to communicate via the 'dollar-line.' . . . Perhaps such a system is justified for long-distance calls, but . . . we shouldn't need dollar bookkeeping for the exchange of Chilean grapes for Colombian coffee or Ecuadorean cacao for Cuban sugar."

ANEURIN BEVAN, rebuked but powerful British Laborite, in *Tribune*, London: "It would seem to me that those who wish to maintain Anglo-American friendship—as I certainly do—should welcome the return of the American servicemen to their own country. I am sure that is what the American airmen themselves would prefer. Politically the case against the bases is obvious. They give us the appearance of being an 'occupied country,' and serve to cast doubt on our freedom of action with respect to America."

LORD BEVERIDGE, speaking in London to organizations discussing a revision of the United Nations Charter: "There is no doubt that it needs revision, since it gives an exceptional position in world affairs to five nations just because they have great killing power."

DR. O. M. SOLANDT, Chairman, Defense Research Board of Canada, to the Canadian Club of Toronto: "We have now reached a stage in history where we can foresee the possibility of having weapons available in the world in numbers capable of destroying our civilization. . . . This means that our attitude toward war must be fundamentally changed if we are to ensure survival."

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## The Personal Principle in Recent Literature and Its Religious Implication

(continued from page 21)

THUS it is that we are confronted by a remarkable convergence of testimony, as between those currents in the religious thought of our time for which Martin Buber is so profound a spokesman and those tendencies in the poetic vision of our time which gain expression in the work of the young writers whom we first noticed. But now, of course, we must be attentive to the fact that the kind of personalism which we have found to be renascent in these two departments of our cultural life today is interpreted by many critics as representing a retreat from the harsh and bitter realities of the iron time in which we live. Malcolm Cowley has, I suppose, been the most forthright advocate of this view of the currents in contemporary fiction which I have singled out for discussion here, and, in his provocative recent book *The Literary Situation*, he has brought forward his objections with great vigor. He complains, for example—and rather petulantly too, as he nostalgically recalls the obtrusively social and political subjects which the novels written by his own generation had—that the scene of the fictions being produced by our best young writers

*is seldom one of the centers where policy decisions are made; it is never Capitol Hill or the Pentagon or the board room of any corporation or political London or Paris or Army headquarters in the field. These are backgrounds for novels with public or social subjects. Preferring to deal with private lives, the new fiction is likely to have a remote and peripheral scene, for example—as I think of some recent novels—a lonely ranch in Colorado, a village in East Texas, a small town in Georgia, . . . a country house in Maine, . . . an abandoned summer hotel, two beach resorts full of homosexuals, several fresh-water colleges, a private asylum, the international colony in Rome, . . . and a caravan crossing the Sahara under the sheltering sky.<sup>10</sup>*

And, similarly, Mr. Cowley remarks that

<sup>10</sup> Malcolm Cowley, *The Literary Situation* (New York: The Viking Press, 1954), pp. 45-46.

*The characters in the new fiction are distinguished by their lack of a functional relationship with American life. They don't sow or reap, build, mine, process, promote or sell, repair, heal, plead, administer, or legislate. In a still broader sense they don't join or belong. One widely observed feature of present-day America is that the lives of most individuals are defined by their relations with an interlocking series of institutions—for example, government bureaus, churches, schools and universities, the armed services, labor unions, chambers of commerce, farm bureaus, veterans' organizations, and, for most of us, that center of our daily activities, the office. But characters in the new fiction are exceptional persons who keep away from offices. . . .<sup>11</sup>*

THESE are, of course, exaggerations which Mr. Cowley makes in the interest of accentuating his case; but, granted the existence of the general tendency which he is observing among young writers today—of stressing the significance of personal relations and of understating the dismal realities of our public life—he is by no means convincing in his blunt assertion that it represents, on their part, the creation of "a tidy room in Bedlam." Indeed, to accuse them, as Mr. Cowley and others are doing now, of a timorous evasion of our troubled world represents, at least to one reader, a complete misconstruction of their mo-

<sup>11</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 47.

tives and, what is more, a profound misunderstanding of the strategem whereby those "bitter furies of complexity" of which Yeats spoke are ultimately to be broken. For to celebrate the personal life at a time when, on all fronts, it appears to be threatened by the various collectivizing forces of our period is not to minimize, or to evade, the enormous difficulties of reshaping our social and political institutions in such a way as to make the modern world a more habitable dwelling place for the human spirit: it is, on the contrary, as Dr. J. H. Oldham has recently argued, an emphasis which points to "the indispensable condition of successfully accomplishing that task. For relations of trust and mutual responsibility between persons is the real stuff of human living. We can achieve the right kind of society only when we are clear about what is essential."<sup>12</sup> And when the generation of Jean Stafford and Carson McCullers and George Lanning tells us this today, they are not, in doing so, to be regarded as abdicating from politics: no, on the contrary, they reveal their vision of life to be profoundly political—in the radical sense, that is, in which Aristotle understood politics, as the realm of thought in which our central preoccupation is with the risks and costs that must be undertaken if we are to be and to remain human.

<sup>12</sup> J. H. Oldham, *Life Is Commitment* (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1953), p. 40.

## Seniors

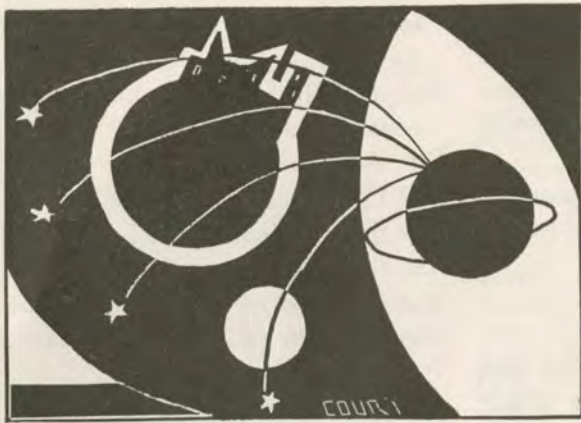


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# How the World Was Not Created

... the author wrote:

"Mildness of temperament saves me from most of the excitement that obtains when, by chance, faculty differences flair up on the campus.

"But analysis paralysis gets me. And after a particularly futile series of faculty meetings this past year, I retired to my office in a quite unnatural huff and relieved myself by composing *How the World Was Not Created*. I felt better. But I did not stop there. I showed it to a select number of my colleagues, whose comments made me feel even better. They felt the sentiment needed general airing.

"I do not know at all that you will think so. But if you should, keep me *ingloriously anonymous*." (a college prof)

AND God called his angels and arch-angels together and said, "I think I'll make a universe."

There was a slight but very distinct rustle of wings and a variety of subdued, well-controlled angel noises.

God continued,

"There really isn't any excuse for our own existence, otherwise. Nothing happens. We just float around in space. We need stars and moons and planets and men and grass and, well, a whole host of things. Then

we'll be alive and they'll be alive and everybody can be happy—or as many as want to be happy, can be. This way," and God waved an arm around, "everything pretty much adds up to zero."

Several of the angels coughed in heavenly harmony and looked at the archangels. The archangels allowed themselves to be looked at for a rather long moment before they too coughed together, in a sort of inverted seventh that was clearly more heavenly than the angels had

managed, and glanced covertly but with dignity at the chief archangel. "Well," said God, "is there any discussion?"

The chief archangel cleared his throat in a vague minor key and rose slowly, delicately fluffing out the service stripes on his wings as he did so.

"Mr. Alpha," he said (for this was God's title when officially presiding over the Assembly of Angels), "in my opinion—in my humble opinion—the idea has merit. A great deal of merit. Certainly none of us would claim that matters are perfect as they are now, although things have not gone too badly these many eons. Not too badly. What, exactly, did you have in mind?"

And God said again,

"A universe."

"Ah yes," sighed the chief archangel, "a universe," and sat down.

Then rather quickly a second archangel, a member of the same department as the first and growing more like him as eon followed eon, rose and spoke: "But, Mr. Alpha, unless I am mistaken—and I hope someone corrects me if I am; I

realize I am not infallible; only the rashest fool would rush into that presumption—unless, I say, I am mistaken, we tried that once and it failed.”

A heavenly murmur of assent rippled over the Assembly of Angels.

“True,” said God, “once we tried and failed. But the need was not so strongly felt then, and we lacked insights we now have. I believe we can make it work, this time. Anyway, if we don’t try, we remain zero.”

Then the angels sang:

“Do you have a bill of particulars?”

“Yes; *when* would you begin?”

“And when would you *end*?”

“Where would you begin—and *end*?”

“Are we ready for this experiment?”

“It’s a good idea, Mr. Alpha, but . . .”

“The fact that it’s been tried and has failed, Mr. Alpha. . . .”

A third archangel addressed the chair.

“Mr. Alpha, your suggestion really points to a definitive integration of the cosmic process—our total abilities and activities. And integration is the very essence of our essence. It is—as you say—the very reason for our existence. It is a must, Mr. Alpha.”

And the third archangel, to make his point very clear, described a wide arc with his right wing, and glared rather fiercely at the angelic host, and sat down.

Then God asked,

“Is there further discussion?”

From his seat, a little startled, the third archangel inquired, “But Mr. Alpha, is this not first of all a matter for the Committee on General Ideas and Basic Assumptions?”

Beginning with the archangels, and going on through the angels down to the neophytes without tenure, the heavenly host sang in accord and God saw that it was so desired, and so ordered.

AND God called his angels and arch-angels together and said, “Let the Committee Report be read.” And it was done.

And the report approved God’s idea to make a universe.

And God said, “Good. Tomorrow I will make a neutron and a proton and bid them multiply and bring forth a universe. Is there a motion to adjourn?”

But the heavenly flutter of wings and splutter of coughs sounded a furious cacaphony and God said,

“Is something wrong?”

And the chief archangel said,

“If the Alpha pleases, only the *idea* was approved. As a matter of fact very few of us think it can be implemented.”

“What is grass, Mr. Alpha?” queried an angel from the back row, “And how will it grow and what is its function?”

“And what will it do that manna is not already doing better?” asked another. “And if it does prove to be different and has its own function and can be made to grow, how will it be cut and kept from strangling every other living thing?”

“Yes, Alpha,” sang the angels, “how?” And God said, “Man will find a way.”

“But what is Man?” said the angels.

And God was sad and said low,

“I don’t exactly know.”

“But then,” asked the chief archangel, “how can we proceed?”

“Yes, Alpha, how?” sang the angels. God sadder yet, could only say,

“On faith, I guess.”

And the angels rolled their heads from side to side and smiled wise smiles and said,

“It would be very nice.”

“The idea is a good idea.”

“But you can’t get away from facts.”

“The facts, Alpha, remember the facts.”

And God said,

“Must we then do nothing?”

But the third archangel said firmly, “On the contrary, Mr. Alpha. Let us attack this problem immediately in an integrated and effective manner. Let us consider the project from every angle.” (And, of course, the puckish archangel in the first row who had been waiting for only such an opening, said in a loud and nasal voice, “You mean from every

*angel*” and the heavenly host roared and flapped their wings and began to believe that everything might turn out all right, after all.)

And the chief archangel, when he could be heard, said,

“Let there be committees.”

And the second archangel said,

“Let there be committees.”

And the third archangel said,

“Let there be committees, well integrated and effective. They are a must.”

And the heavenly host sang,

“Let there be committees.”

One on, “What is Man?”

And one on, “What is Grass?”

And, “How is it better than Manna?”

And, “The Validity or Invalidity of Faith as a Basic Force in the Constitution of a (Hypothetical) Universe,”

And thirteen other committees on equally permanent phases of universe-building.

With subcommittees, very naturally, to work out tentative solutions for each separate subproblem

To make recommendations to the full committees

To make recommendations to the heavenly host.

AND God called his angels and arch-angels together and said,

“Let the committees report.”

And the committees reported.

And God said,

“Is there any discussion?”

And there was,

There was,

Until all the archangels and angels and neophytes without tenure became very hungry and realized the hour was late and finally agreed upon a firm and integrated resolution:

“That the question of building a universe be reopened (sometime) by the heavenly host acting as a celestial Committee of the Whole.”

And the Assembly of Angels adjourned, and ate.

And Chaos was saved yet again.

### If We Are to Evangelize

During the last decade the student Christian movements have subjected the university to a rigorous criticism. It is now generally accepted that the mission of the student movement is not an isolated stream running through the place called the campus but must be the water of life to the whole university situation.

But as members of the movement have become aware of the problems and the need for Christian criticism, they have often felt stymied at the point of just how to witness. They have tried to witness through their studies, to witness in activities, to witness as members of the university community who are also members of the Body of Christ. We are quite aware, however, that we need to know more profoundly the very nature of witness that we might find it working in our life on the campus.

This is certainly true of the Methodist Student Movement, at least. During the next year members of the Methodist Student Movement will find themselves increasingly involved in study of witness on the campus. In preparation for that it may be well to pay attention to three volumes of recent publication:

Julian N. Hartt, *Toward a Theology of Evangelism* (Abingdon Press, \$2).

P. A. Kantonen, *Theology of Evangelism* (Muhlenberg Press, \$1.25).

Théo Preiss, *Life in Christ* (Alex R. Allenson, Inc., \$1.25, number thirteen, "Studies in Biblical Theology").

It seems to me that the study of university evangelism must be profoundly theological. The long discredited emotional blitzkrieg cannot be resurrected nor is the adaptation of the businessman's culture of brisk man-to-man interview and solemn card signing worth much more. New tricks of any kind are not worth bothering with.

The meeting point of university and gospel should be obvious—commitment to truth. I should say that it only seems to be obvious. The culture of the twentieth-century university does not consider truth in the self-validating terms of the gospel. Nevertheless, the university and the church exist for the dissemination of the truth. This is the starting point for evangelistic work.

The first essay in the collection of essays by the late Théo Preiss has one of the most illuminating studies of the meaning of Christ's witness as found in the Johannine writings. True and false witness in the juridical sense, that of cross-examination in the witness chair, is combined with the role of judge. Also noted is the witness as ambassador, as

the condemned, and the postresurrection witness of the spirit.

The scriptural meaning of Jesus' witness is one with other biblical demands to evangelize. Kantonen's lucid analysis of the difference between the truth one discovers and then sits in a corner and meditates upon and Christian truth which must be disseminated shows how much more attractive to Methodists is the Lutheran tradition than we, in our ignorance, have often assumed in the past. He has some provocative things to say, for instance, about the implications of God as creator and the central doctrine of the incarnation which are quite at variance with the extreme "reformed" doctrines which have so offended many in the tradition of John Wesley.

Kantonen, of course, has an appreciative concern for the central role of the Church. I have been even more impressed with the perspective which Hartt brings to bear upon the meaning of the Christian fellowship for evangelistic activity. He does a wonderful job of sniping at the sniper approach: "The sniper is detailed to pick off the enemy one by one. . . . But of course major elements of a campaign or of a battle are not committed to snipers. They have nuisance value, but the strategic plan is far more comprehensive than anything conceivably open to successful actualization by sniper activity alone. . . . The Protestant Church in the modern world apparently does not know this limitation inherent in sniper action, for here the rule seems to be: pick them off one by one, and if you can pile up a very heavy score, you can change the world! . . . Local action of this sort sometimes creates the passing impression of being a major engagement, but at best it is a diversionary or screening action. The decisive engagement is occurring elsewhere."

As one notes from these quotations, Hartt's concern with the role of the Church is anything but uncritical. He is quite aware of the dangers of the culture-conscious church. Nevertheless, the implication, to me at least, is that if Christians ever make any impact upon life in any community in this world, it will be as those who hold and give the treasures committed to the Church.

As we try to find our role as witnesses to the truth of the gospel in the campus scene, let us not be looking for some tricks to "put it over." Let us start by rediscovering what the gospel means by witness. We will soon enough attempt to organize it.

### Three Fine Historicals

I have been asked, over the years, who

my favorite historical novelist might be. With little hesitance, I have answered, Robert Graves. His Claudius stories are great, but in my opinion, *Hercules, My Shipmate* is one of the best pieces of novel writing ever done.

In *Homer's Daughter* (Doubleday & Company, Inc., \$3.95) there is not quite the memorable touch, but the novel is so far above the usual run of historical fiction as hardly to bear comparison.

Once again, Graves has taken a story from Greek legend and made it lively, exciting and provocative. It is this last item in the work of Robert Graves that always interests me. Many other writers can evoke exciting situations from the past and give color and verve to the adventures, nevertheless that is all they are—adventures that pass away. Others try to write into their stories the implications the Greek myth should have, but what should be implications are so obvious that the stories become leaden. Robert Graves has the most skillful ability to tell a rousing story and to set you thinking of anyone I know. His is novel writing of very high level.

Aubrey Menen has a somewhat similar skill, as shown in his retelling of *The Ramayana* (Charles Scribner's Sons, \$3.50). His irony is more obvious and his humor less subtle, but both the story and the thought come through.

*The Ramayana* as told by this mid-twentieth-century Anatole France (whose semiautobiographical *Dead Man in the Silver Market* has told us how this man, born of an Indian mother and an Irish father, got that way) is probably more immediately contemporary in the implications of his story. He seldom, however, lets you see the implications as such. They hit you right between the eyes, and the situation is obvious.

The story of Rama and his attempts to answer the basic questions that he has raised is fine medicine for our time when we have ceased even to raise questions. We have wanted answers and Rama shows us that the questions are more important. That is something we need to learn. There is in Menen the additional aspect of the exotic. His story dips into the lore of India.

The biblical sources of our culture have been, are being, and probably shall continue to be vigorously mined by the novelists. Most of them suffer from either a too pious disposition or an obvious attempt at debunking. Or, if they escape these two, they are allies of the current vogue of Hollywood pictures, namely, a mixture of sentimental piety and sensational sex.

Maria Ley-Piscator has attempted a

more serious task in her novel *Lot's Wife* (*The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc.*, \$3.95). A longer novel than either of the others, I think it would have gained had it been more carefully excised in editing. The author has done an excellent job of interpreting the struggle between the heritage and the way of life of the Sidonian princess who becomes Lot's Wife and the roving patriarch, Abraham, and his children.

Sodom, always a world full of foreboding and an especially evil kind of mischief, after reading this story has a new dimension in this direction.

While these relationships in the dramatic and tragic story of Lot and his wife are intricate and subtle and woven in tragic circumstances, nevertheless, I do not believe the telling needs to be quite so elaborate. In any case, Mrs. Piscator, a Viennese, now director of the *Dramatic Workshop* in New York, has done a serious job with her first novel in English—one which merits attention and should be widely read.

### Shakespeare

I suspect somebody has measured the Shakespeare shelves by now. They surely must fill a sizable, if not tidy, little library.

Discussions of Shakespeare range from tight and obscure linguistic studies which are the delight of certain scholars to broad generalizations based upon often predisposed interpretations of what Shakespeare intended to say.

Of the latter genre is *Ernest Marshall House's Spiritual Values in Shakespeare* (*Abingdon Press*, \$2.50).

This is an aspect of Shakespeare you would expect a preacher to write on—and one which he should. Some scholars have made a certain contribution with their linguistic studies, but Shakespeare lives, not because of the language difficulty that scholars entail in his study, but because he does speak to eternity.

This does not mean that Shakespeare was a moralist—he was first of all, a dramatist. He sought to entertain, not necessarily to point a moral. The greatness of Shakespeare has lain in the fact that in the complex, the cloudy, and even in the midst of the entertaining, we see the human soul. Sometimes it is on the battleground of heaven and hell. It stimulates our sympathies for humanity. Shakespeare saw men as they were, in terms of their responsibilities and the order in which they lived. He was not an evangelist, but what he saw, evangelists should know.

### Evanston Is Still With Us

With the Second Assembly of the World Council of Churches several months behind us now, we are finding the immediate and the superficial mem-

ories more difficult to recall and the profound and significant meanings repeatedly brought to our attention.

*Harold Bosley*, pastor of First Methodist Church in Evanston (and, because so many of the sessions and devotionals were held there, a kind of "host-pastor"), himself a delegate to the World Council meetings, with his usual clarity has cut through the technical language of the documents coming from Evanston and discussed their meaning for the Christian layman. *What Did the World Council Say to You?* (*Abingdon Press*, \$2.)

Dr. Bosley particularly addresses this interpretation of the World Council to Methodists. It is in terms which are understandable to Methodist America. He does a minimum of quotation, a maximum of interpretation, but it seems to me, his interpretation has stuck quite close to the intent and the purpose of the original documents. At many points where I am certain Dr. Bosley is himself in disagreement with what is said, he has not only interpreted what the Council said, but done it vigorously. There are occasions when he gets enthusiastic and, those, I presume, are when he found himself most sympathetic and deeply involved in the witness which the World Council is making to the world.

The second volume in *David Wesley Soper's* "Major Voices in American Theology," *Men Who Shape Belief* (*The Westminster Press*, \$3.50), has now been published. While the first volume treated six men in an analysis of their life and core of their thought, the present work undertakes to present eleven who, in the opinion of seminary and churchmen about the country, are each representative of a living school of thought in the present theological tapestry. Necessarily, the study of the eleven scholars in *Men Who Shape Belief* is much more brief.

Actually, the book is just what its author says, only an introduction to the life of and an attempt to think with, quite briefly, a group of these leaders in contemporary American theological thought. The main thing is to start conversations between the reader and the teacher. The currents of thought which these men have stimulated are often in conflict, seldom parallel. You couldn't expect the biblical literalism of a Louis Berkhof to align itself with the rational discussions of Harris Franklin Rall, and you can travel from Quaker, Douglas Steere, to Anglican Norman Pittenger.

If this book and others attempting a similar task are taken as a substitute for reading the originals, then a pox on them, and I hope they never sell; but if it does what it should do, namely, to stimulate such an interest in exploring the work of many of these different theological leaders, then it is a fine thing to have.

### Study Materials for Next Fall

In preparation for Ecumenical Student Conference (SVM) you will want to read, discuss informally, and study the quadrennial conference study materials:

*Shock and Renewal—The Christian Mission Enters a New Era—compiled by Keith R. Bridston.* This booklet brings together the best thinking of six recent books which examine the meaning and method of the church's mission and provides, in compact form, stimulating source materials for campus, conference, or church groups. Provocative questions at the end of each chapter add to its usefulness. (64 pages, paper, 60 cents)

*Revolution and Redemption. By M. M. Thomas and Paul E. Converse.*

The authors of this booklet—one from India, one from the United States—interpret the creative and destructive possibilities of contemporary revolutionary forces. They analyze the nature of today's revolution and show how the gospel of Christ speaks to and transforms persons and society. Three major sections provide material for use in study groups or informal discussions on campuses or in conferences. (64 pages, paper, 60 cents)

*Encounter with Revolution. By M. Richard Shaull.*

This Haddam House book will help students understand the social upheaval in which they, with the rest of the world, are involved and the positive response demanded of the Christian Church—and particularly of Christians in the United States—as the church carries out its mission in the world of nations. (The paper edition, distributed by the Student Volunteer Movement, is available only to students and student groups at \$1.25. Cloth, \$2.50)

Order from STUDENT VOLUNTEER MOVEMENT, 156 Fifth Avenue, New York 10, N. Y.

### Hang on to the Fifth Amendment

The antidemocratic forces in our country, those who do not believe in freedom, have produced a stereotype in our thinking which tends to equate the Fifth Amendment with subversion. Somehow or other, this emotion considers it as an ill-considered piece of folly to have been written into our Civil Rights guarantees and now it has become a plague. Behind it hide the communists.

It is refreshing and encouraging to have the distinguished dean of the law faculty

motive



at Harvard University, **Erwin N. Griswold**, come so unequivocally to the defense of this basic guarantee of man's rights as he does in *The 5th Amendment Today* (Harvard University Press, cloth bound, \$2; paper, 50 cents).

If there is any condemnation of the procedures which many of the investigating committees have followed, it lies in the fact that they have subverted the Fifth Amendment. It is a bastion of man's right for proper procedure in the gathering of evidence, of guilt or innocence. Without the Fifth Amendment, we would be a police state. They simply bring the medieval tortures to date, and if there's any one function which democracy feels that the government has, it is to protect the citizen against government. And for this, the Fifth Amendment is crucial.

This brief little volume of addresses should be the basis of a great many discussions.

### The African World

We are embroiled in the revolution in Asia. It has hardly come to the consciousness of many of us, however, that the generation ahead may be pitched even more deeply into the boiling world of Africa. Africa is just about a generation behind Asia, but revolution is stirring there, and it may erupt violently all over the continent as it has already in the Mau Mau terrorism.

The best book I have ever read on what is happening in Africa today is **Reginald Reynolds' Cairo to Cape Town** (Doubleday & Company, Inc., \$5). Reynolds is a Quaker. He is a man who doesn't believe in traveling first class if a third-class compartment is available. He doesn't want to live in a hotel if he can find a hut. He doesn't believe in official pronouncements as the way of finding facts, but in talking to people, living with them, writing with them, discussing with them.

He has subtitled his volume, "A Pilgrimage in Search of Hope." He's a sturdy and a sensitive pilgrim.

I think what impresses me most is that this pilgrim has kept his hopes, has maintained his balance without being coldly objective. He is not just full of pity for those nearly without hope, he is also warm in his sharing of their dreams. He has taken subjective experience and made a really profound analysis of a world which is bound to upset the West, even more than has the East.

### Tillich's Latest

I am interested when I get into conversations with the bright young men in theology, that is, those who have rather recently come from the seminaries in the graduate schools and are beginning their careers in the ministry or college and university teaching. My interest is stimu-

lated by the "authorities" that are quoted as contrasted with the years just before and during the war when I was in seminary and also loaded with opinions, if not answers.

In those days, it was Kierkegaard or Niebuhr, depending on whether you were a poet or logician. Never being able to discipline myself to logic, I loved Kierkegaard, but read Niebuhr, but *sic transit gloria mundi*. . . . While Kierkegaard and Niebuhr are not passé, they seem to have been nudged aside. Now if you chat theologically, you can be sure that within the first fifteen minutes of the conversation, **Paul Tillich** will be quoted. We knew about and read Tillich fifteen years ago, but he had not quite become "the master" in American theology that he is today. I have neither the time nor the capacity to speculate why the tremendous influence of Tillich today. I suspect one basic reason is that he is a profound theologian of culture. At least, this is why I am so attracted to his writing. The meaning of the arts and the meaning of life are illuminated in a way that has always been so thrilling with Kierkegaard, but in terms of the twentieth century.

*The New Being* (Charles Scribner's Sons, \$2.75) is a series of short addresses and sermons. Ordinarily I am allergic to such. From Tillich I find much in this book which is a close companion to the *Shaking of the Foundations*. In connection with the basic theme of this issue of *motive*, "What Is Truth?" chapter eight of *The New Being* should have been reprinted—I just hope that you'll get hold of the book and read it anyway!

### Doing the Truth

Using the Johannine exertion in a spirit that Mr. Hobbs has used in our lead article in this issue, **James A. Pike** has produced in the "Christian Faith Series" a summary of Christian ethics, *Doing the Truth* (Doubleday & Company, Inc., \$2.95).

The key word in Christian ethics, insists Dr. Pike, is vocation. It is in his use of the meaning of Christian vocation that I think a fine contribution is made to the study of ethics. Vocation is not a legalism or a set of traffic regulations. Vocation is a partnership with God, albeit, a junior partner. Every decision that we make is one made in that role, and it is one for or against God. This is not a world of the sacred or the secular, a world in which God is lord of only one aspect of life, but a place for our actions where God is Lord of All, not just the "spiritual."

There are, therefore, no moral neutralities. There are no areas free from God's judgment. We are free to do his will, but we are never free from the problems of doing his will.

This is a rigorous approach to ethics,



Reviewed by Roger Ortmyer

*Trends and Frontiers in Religious Thought* by **L. Harold DeWolf**. The Methodist Student Movement, 1955, 139 pages; \$1.50.

The currents sweeping theological thought today are of such vigor that protagonists tend to be intemperate and disparage any discussion with a point of view at variance with their own.

It is refreshing to have a liberal such as Boston University's Harold DeWolf discuss some of the major affirmations of the different Christian theologies without feeling it necessary to disparage their significant contributions.

The frontiers where are met the many varied and sometimes subtle forms of paganism so strong in American life, especially on the college and university campuses, are of such moment that the Christian witness needs to bring to bear every resource rather than debilitate itself with civil wars. This little volume should meet the purpose that DeWolf sets forth; namely, of assisting "in cultivating a more intelligent discussion and resultant understanding of the Christian faith among the Christian students and their leaders who man this frontier."

This valuable book has resulted from a series of lectures given in the late fall of 1954 to the seminar of Methodist student workers.

From an examination of our present cultural situation, Dr. DeWolf has analyzed the liberal and naturalistic accommodations, the fundamentalist reaction, the neo-orthodox reaction, old and new agreements, and the road ahead.

but it seems to me it is the basic Christian road. It is required of the people who profess Christ is Lord to do the truth—which means doing it in love.

### Basic Christian Doctrine

A fine list of books has been produced in recent years that helps to guide laymen through the patterns of contemporary thinking about God. *Man's Knowledge of God* by William J. Wolf (Doubleday & Company, Inc., \$2.95) is an excellent addition to this list.

The central core of this book is an analysis of the biblical understanding of revelation. It proceeds pretty much on a unitary basis. As in the mood of biblical theology today, the meaning of revelation is in the incarnation. This is an altogether healthy emphasis, for it takes belief in Jesus away from the abstract and puts it in a meaningful way among the events of life. With the emphasis upon Jesus and the events of his life, his teachings are saved from the socratic role of nontemporal truths. The truth of Jesus is the truth of life.

Mr. Wolf does not fall into the trap of some of the more extreme biblical theologians of renouncing reason when it comes to knowledge of God. He explicitly rejects the scholastic tradition of reason to prove the existence of God and revelation to supply the content. Reason he sees not as the tool for the discovery of God, but as the human mind perceptive to experience and sorting it into meaningful patterns. The function of reason is to receive God's self-giving truth. It doesn't verify truth, but it brings revelation and reason together.

### Biblical and/or Ecumenical Theology

The most significant aspect of the turn in theology in the last generation, away from the former idealistic thinking, has been its reorientation toward the *Bible*. This process goes on. The slogan "biblical theology" seems to have won the day.

But while most biblical theologians profess a unitary view of the *Bible*, they do not agree among themselves. So, while biblical theology is the popular mode, we are still left with biblical theologies to contend with.

We are fortunate in now having available in English the series of works in biblical exegesis directed by Professor Anton Fridrichsen and members of his staff of the theology faculty at Uppsala, Sweden. Most of these works fit within the eschatological view of the scriptures which sees the unity of the Bible in terms of the continuous tradition of the people of Israel looking forward to the consummation of God's purpose: the New Testament, as the work of Jesus, in the

consummation of God's purpose in history, but looking forward to his final consummation in his second coming.

It is good that the works of this influential group of scholars at Uppsala are made more widely available, and they should be studied by all those who want to know, not only what is happening in the field of biblical theology, but are concerned to find what the *Bible* has to say about God and his purpose: *The Root and the Vine: Essays in Biblical Theology* by Anton Fridrichsen, et. al., (*Philosophical Library*, \$4.75).

—ROGER ORTMAYER

### New SCM Book Club Selections

We repeat, where is there a better book bargain than the S.C.M. Book Club?—\$4 per year (six selections, 81 W. Van Buren St., Chicago 5, Illinois).

Some notes on the last four releases:

#### *The Face of My Parish* by Tom Allan

Tom Allan is a Church of Scotland minister, and this little book is the story of how his parish "came alive" in a predominantly working class section of a Glasgow suburb. Actually, this is the story of evangelism in the local church. If I were a pastor of a local congregation I would definitely want to sit down and read every word of this little book. A lot of the material in it is old and many of the things that he describes have taken place in the United States. Nevertheless, there is something tremendously helpful here in helping the people of a given community or parish to see the significance and the relevance of the church for our time. This little book has an appendix of four pages of very suggestive books that are helpful to the pastor in his work among his people.

#### *The Saving Name* by Hedley Hodkin

The Vicar of Holy Trinity Church, Sheffield, England, edited a monthly parish paper titled "Friends." It is the habit of the editor to put in each monthly issue an essay that has in it some distinctiveness in interpreting the Christian faith. This little book is a collection of 24 of those essays and each is a little gem in itself.

The first one, "Believing on the Name," has an interpretation of the name of Jesus Christ that should be known by every Christian. One would like to comment upon all 24 of the essays but that is impossible. Each of them deals with familiar themes and perhaps "The Resurrection," "The New Dogma of the Bodily Assump-

tion of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (an excellent Protestant Interpretation), "Bourgeois Scribble or Workman of Nazareth?" (an essay on Karl Marx), "Divine Healing," "Be Not Anxious," and "When the Mind Wanders" are the best.

#### "Portraits of Calvin," by T. H. L. Parker

This little book is a portrait; it is not a biography but it certainly is an excellent biographical portrait. The writer calls our attention to the fact that the essential unity of the life of John Calvin, the reformer, is astounding and he makes this clear to us throughout the pages of the book. For those who want to know something of Calvin in his historical area, his work as a man of letters, theologian, and reformer, this book is a must. We cannot recommend it too strongly if a person would want a biographical portrait of Calvin in his library. In it, one will find an excellent record of the events of Calvin's life given from both a sympathetic and an objective standpoint; an excellent outline of the theology of Calvin (see pages 59-61); a brief sketch of the real contribution that Calvin and others like him made to the Protestant Reformation.

#### *The Daily Life of the Christian*, by John Murray

The author writes in the introduction of this little book, "We shall consider some of the activities and duties that enter into an ordinary life, and we shall try to show how, in these areas, the mind and the spirit of Christ that dwell in us radically change basic conceptions, give new dignity, and call for a more awakened sense of responsibility."

The book deals in a practical way with what we do when we work, when we are at home, when we are at leisure, when we are at the movies, on Sunday, and what we do on Monday morning. In other words, the first section of the book is "On and Off Duty." The second section is on "The Great Adventure" in which the author gives some very practical suggestions on "falling in love," "getting married," and "parenthood." The third section is on social responsibilities concerning money, the local community, the Christian in the state, and patriotism. The book closes with an epilogue on "The Personal Relationship Behind It All" in these words, "It is in this personal relationship of love between God and the believer, kept fragrant and renewed in worship and in the sacraments, in the goodly fellowship of the Church and in private devotions, that so profoundly affects and enriches every aspect of a man's being."

—H. D. BOLLINGER

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## WASHINGTON: A FINAL REPORT ON SOME "GREAT DEBATES"

by Joan Lyon Gibbons

January's issue of motive introduced some "Great Debates of 1955"; February took up Reciprocal Trade; March, problems of Military Manpower; April, Federal Aid to Education. In this last issue before the summer break, let's examine some late developments.

What becomes of the 1,622 bills (as of April 1) introduced in the Senate, the 5,665 in the House, depends greatly on pressures—major pressures, like administration insistence; several vote-influencing pressures, organized groups; a myriad of individual pressures in the form of letters. In the following questions, where is the weight of your opinion?

### Foreign Policy

Military Manpower—Certain bills, like H.R. 3005 extending Selective Service, are backed by Administration and Congressional pressure. Easily passed by the House on February 8, it has yet to be discussed by the Senate Armed Services Committee. No opposition is expected.

Its companion bill, H.R. 2967 (providing for a National Reserve Plan), while strongly urged by the Administration as part of its long-term defense policy, has been slowed by objections to anything resembling UMT or too harsh a reserve program. In a House Armed Services Subcommittee, the original proposals have been modified to provide only voluntary (no draft) participation of youths of 17½-18 years in the six-month