

RELIGION
and
THE MORAL LIFE

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experiment which mankind has not yet tried. Nor is this surprising, for it is a type of devotion that is only possible for a limited number of intellectuals.

A more promising approach, for humanism, is that of Erich Fromm, a writer whose penetrating thought is illuminated by his rich experience as a psychoanalyst. Man's religious need, says Fromm, is "a need to have a frame of orientation and an object of devotion," and "there is no one without a religious need."³ He supports these statements with evidence from his clinical experience and quotes from an earlier work (*Man for Himself*):

Self-awareness, reason and imagination have disrupted the "harmony" which characterizes animal existence. Their emergence has made man into an anomaly, into the freak of the universe. He is part of nature, subject to the physical laws and unable to change them, yet he transcends the rest of nature. . . . The disharmony of man's existence generates needs which far transcend those of his animal origin. These needs result in an imperative drive to restore a unity and equilibrium between himself and the rest of nature. . . . Devotion to an aim, or an idea, or a power transcending man such as God, is an expression of this need for completeness in the process of living.⁴

This observation concerning man's psychological need of an attitude of devotion to some idea, aim, power, or other object beyond himself, to give unity to his psychic life, is borne out by a wealth of psychological evidences. In spite of the fact that, as we shall see, traditional religion contains many psychologically unwholesome features⁵ the

³ Erich Fromm, *Psychoanalysis and Religion* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1950), p. 25.

⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-24.

⁵ In an elaborate research on anti-Semitism a positive correlation was found between uncritical acceptance of a religious tradition and a similar uncritical acceptance of the stereotypes typical of race prejudice. On the other hand, it was found that "persons or groups who 'take religion seriously' in a more internalized sense are likely to be opposed to ethnocen-

Chapter 4

THE FAITH OF HUMANISM

THE HUMANISM OF ERICH FROMM

Though Dewey's psychology and technical philosophy are distinctly secularistic, there is much in his broad philosophy of life and social writings that expresses an attitude of the humanistic religious type. In *A Common Faith*,¹ and elsewhere, he makes a plea for a devotion of religious intensity to ideal ends. His, however, is not a typical humanism. It is not to any form of human society that he advocates devotion. He recognizes that the objective must be something beyond the self and that it must give unity to all ideal ends that arouse us to action. But he refuses to fix those ideal ends in any object or principle. Each person must find for himself inclusive ideal ends to which he can give allegiance, and Dewey's only program for finding them is a devotion of religious intensity to intelligence as a force in social action.

For a fuller discussion of Dewey's philosophy of religion I must refer the reader to what I have written elsewhere,² but the above comments will show that Dewey's position is not strictly a humanistic religion, in the sense in which we are using that term. It is rather a plea for a religiously intense concern for intelligent and scientific methods within the viewpoint of secularism. As he himself says, this is an

¹ John Dewey, *A Common Faith* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1934).

² See especially *The Moral Nature of Man* (*op. cit.*), pp. 256-66.

results of very large-scale tests, given by the Adjustment Service of the City of New York, point to the same conclusion by showing that persons who believed in religion or attended church have significantly better personalities than those who do not. Dr. Henry C. Link, who took part in this project, reports that this was shown to be the case by a statistical study of the records on 10,000 persons who took a total of 73,226 tests.⁶ In his remarkable book, *The Return to Religion*, he tells how this study, added to his clinical experience, led him, although at the time holding neither to traditional nor humanistic religious views, to encourage the growth of religious faith and practice in his patients as a means to restoring their mental health. Dr. Link was led by these discoveries to recover the essential elements in the traditional religion in which he had been raised. Dr. Fromm has tried to fill the need by seeking a firm basis in psychology for a religious humanism. He draws a sharp distinction between authoritarian and humanistic religions, adopting a definition of the humanistic which is different from ours.

An authoritarian religion is defined by Fromm as one in which the object of devotion is recognized as a power requiring a complete submission of the worshiper. This type includes communism and fascism as well as Catholicism, Calvinism and most forms of traditional religion. Humanistic religion, as he defines it, includes both democratic humanism (by our definition) and the religion of Jesus and Isaiah, Socrates, Spinoza, Buddha, and Lao Tze. The theis-

ism." Those who rejected traditional forms of religion also usually rejected the traditional prejudicial stereotypes, but this depended on the ground of the opposition to religion, e.g. whether it was part of an opposition to repression and reaction or was an expression of cynical utilitarianism. T. W. Adorno, *et al.*, *The Authoritarian Personality* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1950), pp. 730-32.

⁶Henry C. Link, *The Return to Religion* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1936), pp. 12-13.

tic religions which Fromm includes in the humanistic group are those which emphasize the doctrine of immanence of God in man. In them, he says, the idea of God functions as a symbol of *man's own powers*, which he tries to realize, rather than as a symbol of forceful domination exercising a power over man. In all humanistic religion, thus understood, virtue is self-realization, not obedience; faith is a conviction based on one's own experience, not on authority. In its nontheistic types this "humanistic" religious experience is "the experience of oneness with the All" and requires man to develop his capacity of "love for others as well as for himself" and to "experience the solidarity of all living beings."⁷

In the Hebrew-Christian tradition, says Fromm, there has always been a strain of this humanistic religion competing with authoritarianism. The former tends to arise in societies where the individual has freedom and responsibility or among minorities struggling for freedom. The latter supervenes when Church or State becomes highly organized and dominant over the individual. The Jews in their struggles developed frequent manifestations of the humanistic trend and early Christianity was a religion of the same type, but wherever religion allied itself with secular power it necessarily became authoritarian. In both forms the individual finds a way to unify himself, but in the latter this occurs at the cost of loss of strength and freedom and often produces tendencies to psychological perversion. In the former the unification is one that promotes psychological and social health.

The metaphysical and supernatural elements in the Hebrew-Christian tradition Fromm considers an unnecessary embarrassment to humanistic religion in the present day. The function of religion is the care of the soul, the

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 37.

"optimal development of a person's potentialities,"⁸ and the unfolding of his powers of reason and of love. This is the common aim of all the great religions of East and West; and its achievement is independent of theories of ultimate reality and the origin of the universe. The real threat to this goal lies in the wrong attitudes of people to the practical problems of life, particularly in the "marketing orientation"⁹ of modern man, wherein a man's success and value are determined not by what he is, or by his service to society but by the price at which he can "sell himself" to those who can use him.

FROMM'S "MODEL OF HUMAN NATURE"

To the relativists who say that such a statement of the religious aim is meaningless because there is no way of determining what is the "optimal development of a person's potentialities," Fromm replies that it can be determined with sufficient accuracy by "the science of man," to which the practice of psychoanalysis has made contributions of very great importance. This is the theme of his earlier work, *Man for Himself*. The weakness in Dewey's position, he there argues,¹⁰ is its failure to recognize, as did Spinoza, that there is a "model of human nature" which can be determined by scientific study in advance of its achievement and can be held steadily before the individual as the goal at which to aim. This goal can be known even before we know the means by which to achieve it. The means can be discovered experimentally after the "science of man" has determined the end.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 74.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

¹⁰ Erich Fromm, *Man for Himself* (New York: Rhinehart & Co., 1947), p. 28. Quotations in this chapter with pages indicated in parentheses are from this work.

The method of the "science of man" must, of course, first determine what are the potentialities of human nature and what constitutes their optimal development. Drawing on the personality studies of contemporary psychology, and particularly on the experience of the psychoanalysts' dealings with thwarted and maldeveloped personalities and their cure, Fromm proceeds to find the key to optimal development in what he calls the "productive orientation" of character. This is a mode of relatedness to the world which is not only productive of material things, objects of art, systems of thought, and so forth, according to the ability and opportunity of the individual, but involves, above all, the attitude of "productive love" toward man himself. "Productive love" is defined as a concept similar to the Christian concept of "agape" (charity or love). It involves *care*, *responsibility*, and *knowledge*.

To love a person productively implies to care and to feel responsible for his life, not only for his physical existence but for the growth and development of all his powers (p. 110).

Productive love toward a limited number of persons is a common human experience, but such love toward all mankind is relatively rare. Yet, says Fromm, the two cannot logically be separated.

To love one person productively is to be related to his human core. . . . Human solidarity is the necessary condition for the unfolding of any one individual (pp. 100-01).

Furthermore, Fromm argues, productive love toward others is inseparable from productive love of—i.e. proper care for, knowledge of, and responsibility for—oneself. To love one's neighbor as oneself implies a loving of oneself as one's neighbor. But such love is not to be confused with selfishness or any form of egoism.

The selfish person is interested only in himself, wants everything for himself, feels no pleasure in giving, but only in taking. . . . he lacks interest in the needs of others. . . . It is true that selfish persons are incapable of loving others, but they are not capable of loving in the sense of "productive love" themselves either (pp. 130-31).

This, says Fromm, is the basic psychological premise on which his argument rests.

Love of others and love of ourselves are not alternatives. On the contrary an attitude of love toward themselves will be found in all those who are capable of loving others. Love, in principle, is *indivisible* as far as the connection between objects and one's own self is concerned. Genuine love is an expression of productiveness and implies care, response, responsibility and knowledge (p. 129).

Of vital significance in the care, knowledge, and responsibility involved in self-love is the phenomenon of conscience—or rather, that type of conscience which Fromm calls the "humanistic conscience" as distinguished from the "authoritarian." This distinction appears to be the same as that which we have already made between the "critical" and the "traditional" conscience.

The authoritarian conscience is the voice of an internalized external authority (p. 143).

Humanistic conscience is the reaction of our total personality to its proper functioning or disfunctioning. . . . Actions, thoughts and feelings which are conducive to the proper functioning and unfolding of our total personality produce a feeling of inner approval, "rightness," characteristic of the human conscience. On the other hand, acts, thoughts and feelings injurious to our total personality produce a feeling of uneasiness and discomfort, characteristic of the "guilty conscience." Conscience is thus . . . the voice of our true selves which summons us . . . to live productively, to develop fully

and harmoniously. . . . It is the guardian of our integrity, it is "the ability to guarantee oneself with all due pride, and also at the same time to say yes to one's self."¹¹

It follows from this analysis that the "productive" orientation of personality is, in general, the path of true happiness. Happiness is not to be obtained by selfishness, or by concern for subjective states of pleasure. It is enjoyed subjectively, but its conditions are objective and require firmness of character, conscientiousness, and a predominant orientation of productive love. Happiness is therefore man's highest achievement, though it is achieved by aims directed toward other things, such aims constituting its objective conditions. It is also man's most difficult achievement, for it requires the full development of his "productiveness." It is far removed from the path of ease, uncontrolled impulse, and egoism.

FROMM'S CONCEPTION OF RELIGIOUS FAITH

At the next step, Fromm's analysis brings us to religion. The achievement and maintenance of the productive orientation require *faith*. But faith is not to be identified with belief in the metaphysical and supernatural doctrines of traditional religion. Its meaning is rather to be found in the Old Testament term translated as "faith"—*Emunah*—meaning firmness. It is primarily a character trait, "a basic attitude . . . which enables a man to face reality without illusions and yet to live by his faith" (p. 199). The content of belief that arises from such an attitude will differ in different cultures. It may be rational or irrational, the former being "based on productive intellectual and emotional activity," the latter on emotional submission to

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 158-59. The words quoted in the last sentence are from Nietzsche's *Genealogy of Morals*.

irrational authority rather than on the individual's own experience, thought, and feeling. Contemporary criticism of irrational faith has led to a neglect and misunderstanding of the need for rational faith. "Without faith man becomes sterile, hopeless and afraid to the very core of his being" (p. 198).

To have faith in another person is to feel certain of the reliability and constancy of his fundamental attitudes. The same is true of faith in oneself. Both faiths are needed and the culmination of faith in others is faith in mankind.

In the Western world this faith was expressed in religious terms in the Judaeo-Christian religion and in secular language it has found its strongest expression in the progressive political and social ideas of the last 150 years (p. 207).

It is, of course, to what he has recognized as the humanistic rather than the authoritarian elements in the Judaeo-Christian religion that Fromm is referring, and he is quite right in recognizing this faith as the predominant attitude toward man of Jesus (as recorded in the synoptic gospels) and of the great Hebrew prophets. He is also correct in saying that such religious faith, and the democratic faith, constitute a rational faith "based on the idea that the potentialities of man are such that, given the proper conditions, they will be capable of building a social order governed by the principles of equality, justice and love" (p. 207). But it is also clear that such convictions constitute an act of faith. They are not obvious conclusions forced upon us by obvious conditions, but are based on facts discovered and thus interpreted only by a deep searching beneath the superficial display of venality and hostility, a search requiring human sympathy and patience, motivated by what the New Testament calls "agape" and Fromm calls productive love.

Commitment to the program of action indicated by such faith in mankind is also an act of faith. It requires a "firmness" motivated by agape or productive love. Concerning this Fromm is quite clear. He is at great pains to emphasize the idea that true productive love of others is inseparable from a similar attitude toward oneself, and he declares that this is the basic premise of his argument. But he does not make the mistake of arguing that this means that productive love of self and others will never be incompatible with doing what makes for one's own physical health, security, and prosperity, and the satisfaction of one's strongest and most persistent desires. Productive love, as he has defined it, involves the firm adoption of ideas, goals, and principles that may require great self-sacrifice in certain circumstances. And the conscience of the personality oriented by productive love will demand that he make those sacrifices.

Fromm makes this clear in his discussion of the distinctions between "universal ethics" and "socially immanent ethics." The former he defines as an ethic embodying norms of conduct that aim at the growth and unfolding of man, while the latter is an ethic supporting norms "necessary for the functioning and survival of a specific kind of society and of the people living in it" (p. 240). Between these two types of ethics, he says, "there remains a conflict . . . as long as humanity has not succeeded in building a society in which the interest of 'society' has become identified with the interest of all its members" (p. 243). There is no question as to which type of ethics must be endorsed by the attitude and conscience of productive love, nor is there any question that to stand for the norms of a universal ethic against those of a socially immanent ethic always calls for moral courage, and sometimes for the finest heroism and tragic self-sacrifice. Nor is there any society in which this conflict is not present, nor anyone, therefore, who can

escape the ethical requirement that he take his stand. As Fromm says, "He may be the voice of one who 'crieth in the wilderness,' but only if this voice remains alive and uncompromising will the wilderness be changed to fertile land" (p. 244).

We have presented this extended statement of the argument of Erich Fromm because it shows so competently and clearly (1) that man needs to have some object of devotion beyond himself to give unity and direction to his purposive life, (2) that this object must be one which develops in him the attitude of productive love or it will not satisfy needs implicit in man's nature. These two positive points constitute a contribution to the theory of religious humanism (in the sense of our own definition) which was badly needed. Humanistic writers have, for the most part, been content to present a negative criticism of the supernaturalism and metaphysics of traditional religion, then distinguish this from its ethical content and plead for an enthusiastic endorsement of the best in its ethics, particularly of the ideals of love and freedom. They have not, usually, adequately distinguished their position from what we have called secularism, showing why some values must be held to be supreme and call for high devotion. This lack is supplied by Fromm's insistence on the concept of a "model of human nature" which can be discovered by "the science of man," and from which we can deduce a description of the sort of goals in pursuit of which man's nature can find fulfillment. The chief feature in this "model" is Fromm's concept of "productive love" and his argument that conduct in accord with this concept is required by the really basic element in the human conscience, which he calls the "humanistic conscience" and distinguishes from the "authoritarian." This involves a rejection of the "social conditioning" theory of conscience which is held by most secularists and many

Humanists. It may be well, therefore, to add some further evidence to what we have already said on this subject; to defend Fromm's distinction of the two types and sources of conscience, which is essentially the same as our own distinction of the critical and the traditional conscience.

THE SOURCE OF THE CRITICAL CONSCIENCE

A child learns a language by associating a word heard with some experience he has at the time of hearing it. It is agreed that the meaning of the word "wrong," in its ethical sense, is acquired on occasions when the child (*a*) observes social opposition to some action together with certain types of emotional expression, (*b*) himself feels those emotions aroused if the wrong act is that of some other person, and (*c*) experiences the peculiar inner constraint which we call conscience if the act is his own. It is the third feature of the experience which is decisive for the application of the word "wrong" in its distinctly ethical sense. For not all socially opposed actions are regarded as wrong in the ethical sense; even a young child may claim that his action is right, and that group opposition, even parental opposition, to it is wrong. Only when the action is seen to be of the type that involves the constraint of conscience is the word "wrong," in its ethical sense, felt to be appropriate to it; and only then are the peculiar moral emotions felt regarding it.

According to the social-conditioning theory, the constraints of conscience are due to habits inculcated by the social environment. Society expresses its opposition to certain types of action. The child both feels this pressure upon himself and joins in exercising it on others. Thus a habit of opposition to such types of action and a tendency to feel emotions of disapproval toward it are inculcated in the child; and this habit and emotional tendency operate to

exert the peculiar constraint we call conscience whenever he thinks of performing such an action himself—or of having performed it.

Opponents of the social-conditioning theory must attribute the experience of conscience to something in the prenatal structure of the human being. This structural feature might be given several different types of theoretical explanation. It might be a product of evolution; or an effect of some cosmic laws in accordance with which the experience of value arises (just as there must be some cosmic laws determining the experience of color); or an effect of, or part of, the operation of reason; or the effect of a peculiar, God-given, moral capacity; or some combination of these. For our present purposes, we need not discuss the relative philosophical merits of these alternatives.

The objection to the prenatal explanation of conscience is the great variety and numerous contradictions of conscientious convictions. The argument in favor of the social-conditioning theory is the empirical evidence of the great extent to which such convictions conform to the social tradition. However, they do not entirely conform. In particular, our consciences tend to become uneasy about accepting the social tradition, and impel us to doubt the moral precepts previously conscientiously held whenever we discover that such traditional precepts tend to destroy rather than support human welfare.

This suggests that a compromise view will constitute a more adequate explanation of the whole phenomenon. The prenatal theory may be held to be correct with regard to the critical operation of conscience. This would mean that some prenatal factors in the constitution of man determine that he shall tend to feel a distinctive kind of dissatisfaction with any action observed to be, on the whole, destructive of human welfare, and that, consequently, he tends to feel an

inner constraint against the performance of any such action, however desirable its consequences to himself. Such a tendency would not prevent him from pursuing his private interests in spite of this constraint, but it would tend to set up precisely the type of inner conflict conscience tends to experience in such cases; and this conflict would grow stronger with the development of a tendency to think more about the effect of one's actions upon others.

The operation of the critical conscience and its independence of authoritative approval and disapproval may be illustrated by the following childhood experience reported by an acquaintance of mine. As a boy of barely seven years of age he was introduced to the sex relation by a girl playmate a couple of years older. In perfect innocence, he told other older children of this interesting experience, and it was reported to his parents. They, and the older children, assured him that the act was very, very wrong. He was not punished, nor was he given any further explanation of the mysteries of sex, but everything short of giving rational reasons was done to impress him with the serious wrongness and social disapproval of the act. His parents even made a point of praying with him for God's forgiveness of the act, which was very impressive as to how serious they thought it, for they had not done this for any of his other misdeavors. This was all very puzzling to the child and completely failed to impress him with a sense of guilt for he could not see *why* the act was wrong. The solution at which he arrived, and which he presented in unavailing argument with his older playmates, was that the action could not really be "wicked" (i.e. morally wrong) because it did not hurt anybody, but that the heavy social disapproval must be merely because it was "very rude."

This case is very instructive. In the first place, it shows that social opposition and disapproval, however strong and

impressive, do not of themselves arouse the sense of guilt, even in a young child. The experience of the guilty conscience cannot therefore be a revival of emotions induced merely by social opposition and disapproval. Some other factor besides social opposition and disapproval must therefore be involved in creating the sense of guilt. In the second place, this case shows us what that factor is. The child would have felt a sense of guilt and have recognized his action as "wicked" (morally wrong) if he could have seen that it "hurt somebody," or, more broadly, that it was destructive of human welfare and unexcused by a balance of good results. In him the moral experience of conscience, or guilt, was attached to action seen to be destructive of values, but not to actions seen to be socially opposed and disapproved unless the opposition and disapproval were on the ground that the action was injurious to someone. He would, of course, like any other child, accept on authority the statement that certain actions were injurious. But he was not told that the sex act was injurious, only that it was wrong; and because he could not see it to be injurious and had not had the idea of its being injurious in any other way impressed upon him, there did not arise within him that inner constraint against the action which we call the guilty conscience.

Though most of us probably cannot remember from early childhood any such decisive instance as this of the distinction between conscience and social disapproval, yet the distinction is clearly present in adult thought. The basic ground on which every criticism of authoritarian and traditional morals rests is that of the little boy in our story: it cannot be wrong if it doesn't hurt anybody. The basic argument which every authoritarian uses in support of his principles is to show that to break them does hurt somebody. In the light of these facts, we can see what it is that tradition

and authority contribute to moral judgment. Sometimes they contribute the view that certain types of action are injurious to man, the reasons for this belief resting on experience, on error or hearsay, or on superstition. The conscience of those who accept this view from the authority then condemns those types of action. At other times the authority calls the attention of those who recognize it to the injurious nature of certain actions in cases where the interests of those persons would otherwise lead them to ignore or excuse the injury, so that conscience is called into operation where otherwise it would be silenced by opposing interests. In every case where critical thought examines the validity of the authoritative pronouncements, it proceeds to inquire as to whether the actions are really injurious, or whether the injury may not be justified by further good consequences, or whether ultimate consequences require that one should take notice of a wider or narrower range of persons affected for good or ill.

These facts therefore strongly indicate that conscience, basically, is not simply an effect of social conditioning. Social conditioning plays only the secondary role of helping to determine what actions shall be thought injurious or beneficial and whose injuries and benefits, and what extent of injuries and benefits, shall be taken into account and given attention. The basic feature of conscience is a general tendency of human nature, not dependent on any specific type of social conditioning, to feel a distinctive constraint against doing what is believed to be injurious to one's fellows, and a corresponding constraint in favor of what seems beneficial. The tendency to experience this constraint cannot itself be due to social conditioning, for, as we have seen, it does not vary concomitantly with the operation of social conditioning. It must therefore be attributed to something in the prenatal structure from which personality develops.

These considerations, taken together with the mass of evidence from the study of maldevelopments of personality, lead to the endorsement of Fromm's thesis that human nature is not entirely malleable, but that there is a "model" to which its development must needs conform if it is to avoid the self-stultification of inner conflict and realize the fullness of its potentialities. This model is the character type which Fromm calls "productive love," which early Christianity called "agape" and which is inadequately conveyed in such terms as "love of one's neighbor" and "brotherly love." The enlightened, critical conscience of man will be satisfied with nothing less.

THE CHOICE OF AN OBJECT OF DEVOTION

The need of religion is therefore established, for "productive love" or "agape" is devotion to something beyond the self. The nature of the object of devotion is also largely clear. It must involve the ideal of the "universal," not merely a "socially immanent" ethic; it must aim at the true well-being of every person. The objective is therefore one regarded as supremely worthy of devotion. The only questions remaining concern (a) the means, in terms of physical action and social organization, whereby the welfare of humanity may best be promoted by those animated by productive, or brotherly, love, and (b) the means by which such love can be inculcated and maintained in oneself and in others. The answer to the first question is to be found in making the best possible use of the natural and social sciences. The answer to the second is the distinctively religious problem. The most important element in this question, for those of us who have grown up under the influence of the Hebrew-Christian tradition, is whether theism or humanism provides the best discipline of the

moral life—and the question, of course, is not independent of problems concerning the intellectual credibility of the two points of view. In terms of the great and familiar text, it is the question whether or not man can best succeed in loving his neighbor as himself if he also has the faith which enables him to love the Lord his God with all his heart.

This question, unfortunately, is not one which can be answered by a statistical study of personality tests of representatives of the two forms of belief. Our society is so permeated by theistic belief that no one escapes its influence on his ideals and attitudes. Members of humanist religious groups are of two kinds, (a) the small coterie of intellectuals who have rejected traditional theism on intellectual grounds but seek to retain and improve its ethical values, and (b) groups which have rejected both traditional theism and its ethics in devotion to some sectional goal or specific program, such as the Nazis and Communists. Outside of these groups is a large group who have lost their theistic belief and its moral idealism without developing any form of nontheistic religion. Yet all of these have been subjected to the influence of religious ideals. There is no way of sampling these groups that we could feel sure would give a representative sample of the moral effect of absence of theistic beliefs. Further, theistic beliefs are so varied, and so mingled with other factors, that no way of sampling them could assure us of a representative sample of the effect of holding to theism. The method of studying statistical samples is therefore futile. Still more futile is that of arguing from particular examples of very good men and very bad men as to the influence of their particular type of belief. There are outstanding examples to support any view, but in every case the factors are much too complex to assume offhandedly that it is the belief that is the decisive influence in shaping character.

Humanistic criticisms of theism have made great use of the historical argument to show that theism tends to become authoritarian and have stressed the evils resulting from a combination of supernaturalism and authoritarianism. On the other side, it should be pointed out that the largest, most vigorous and powerful nontheistic religious groups are also totalitarian, namely the Communist movement and the Nazi movement, the latter of which required a world war to repress it. Further, these nontheistic totalitarian religions have arisen in the full light of modern science, whereas the authoritarianism of theistic religion depends on supernaturalism and tends to give way to non-authoritarian forms of faith under scientific and historical criticism. The historical argument concerning the tendency to authoritarianism in religion therefore cannot be used to support humanism against theism. It can be used to support secularism against any form of religion, but it is there met by a counterargument showing the tendency of social order to disintegrate if it lacks a religion which can really grip the minds of its people and give unity to their purposive life.¹²

In the past, it must be admitted, this has been most successfully achieved by theistic religions with a magical and miraculous content in their theology. It may be that this will always be the case with the mass of mankind, but it is certain that the influence of such religion upon the most intelligent and educated section of the community is declining and must continue to decline, and there is no obvious reason why the minds of the masses should not also eventually be emancipated and directed to acceptance of enlightened religious views, either theistic or humanistic.

In our present critical examination of humanism, this

¹² See A. C. Garnett, *God in Us* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1945), chap. 1.

raises the question of the satisfactoriness of its intellectual content. This the Humanists have been inclined to regard as the strongest element in their position, for they are ready to accept without question the established results of the natural sciences. However, humanism as a religious faith must go beyond anything that science has proved. In its rejection of theism it must hold that organic life must have emerged from the inorganic in a world devoid of any conscious purpose as high as that of the human. This does not involve the holding of any specific metaphysical theory, but it does involve the holding of a faith that some metaphysical theory of a nontheistic type, perhaps as yet unframed, would constitute an adequate explanation of the facts, and *that such a metaphysical theory need not conflict with humanism's faith in the supreme importance of moral values and the attainability of its ethical goals.*

The difficulty of framing any such theory without making assumptions of a completely nonscientific character, such as a theory of emergence, or a doctrine of essences, is notorious. I shall not press this point further here, for it would take us too far into the intricacies of metaphysics, and I have dealt with the problems elsewhere.¹³ It is sufficient for our present purposes to recognize that humanism does not escape these intellectual problems, and that, as we shall see, the faith of theism need not involve itself in difficulties that are any greater.

THE MOTIVATION OF HUMANIST RELIGION

We come then to the crux of the problem. Why is it that, among the multitude of people who, for intellectual reasons, reject the metaphysical assumptions of theism, so

¹³ See *Reality and Value* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937); *A Rediviac Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1942); and *God in Us* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1945).

few are found to adhere to a religious humanism other than those of a narrow and totalitarian type? Is it that democratic humanism fails, with the majority, to solve the problem of an ethical discipline—to relate its ethical ideals to the sources of human motivation so as to draw out the appropriate moral response? A democratic religious humanism must be able to touch the sources of human motivation and direct them in the attitude of productive love to the goal of a universal ethic, the welfare of humanity; and that attitude of productive love must be made so strong that its goal will be recognized as supremely worthy of devotion even if the character of the individual is too weak to be able consistently to maintain the attitude of productive love in practice. Such is religion. It maintains its faith in the object of devotion even in spite of failures in the effort to serve it; and the faith gradually strengthens the character against failure. Can humanism create such faith in the weak as well as the strong, and make it widespread in society?

Humanism can and does use most of the methods of theistic religion—precept and example expressed in speech, literature, poetry and ritual, music and silent meditation, and the organized practice of good works. But if thoughtful adults are to be induced to the disciplinary influence of these media by which attitudes are inculcated they must first be shown a reason for doing so. They must first be won to approve of the goal. This involves the statement of a philosophy. The other measures used in religious organizations are therefore limited to two functions. (a) They may induce the religious attitude in youth who, following a leadership of their elders, submit to them and spontaneously adopt the suggested goal as a result of this social conditioning. (b) They serve to keep alive and increase devotion to the goal on the part of those who have

already adopted it. They cannot, however, give to the inquiring mind a reason why the goal they present should be adopted. That can only be done by teaching a philosophy¹⁴ which gives the individual reasons why he should subordinate his other interests to an interest in the welfare of mankind.

It is just here that a psychological analysis such as that of Erich Fromm assumes its importance for humanism. It supplies that which the humanism of the Ethical Culture Society in London, under the leadership of Stanton Coit, sought in the implausible doctrine of essences of Nicolai Hartmann, and that which American humanism has for the most part lacked, because it has taken its philosophy from American naturalism, and particularly from the secularistic instrumentalism of John Dewey. Fromm's defense of the Spinozistic concept of a "model of human nature," soundly based in empirical psychology, shows that the way to true happiness for the individual lies precisely in his capacity to subordinate his other interests to those involved in the attitude of "productive love" and loyalty to the humanistic, critical conscience. Thus humanism has a solution to its basic problem of an ethical discipline; it can make the connection between the sources of human motivation and its ethical ideal by pointing out that devotion to that ideal is the true way to individual happiness.

Thus religious humanism can be given a defense which appeals soundly to human reason. It can function as a religion without relying for support on only those who have uncritically accepted its ideal from their leaders or have adopted that ideal under other influences before entering its fellowship. However, it can never be a religion for the multitude, for its way of making the rational connection between the ideal and the sources of motivation is a hard and a dangerous way.

THE LIMITATIONS OF HUMANISM

It is a hard way, in the first place, because its argument is not easy to grasp; it appears to contradict common sense. People naturally assume that the way to happiness is through the satisfaction of their desires—as they are—and especially their strongest desires. They regard most other people as rivals for the means to the pursuit of happiness—the satisfaction of desires. Conscience appears at best as a warning concerning unsafe ways to pursue satisfaction, and more commonly as a barrier to taking the shortest and easiest way. It is not easy to see the fallacy in the pursuit of happiness—that it comes to us only when we pursue something else. It is not easy to see the truth of the paradox that to enjoy oneself one must forget oneself, that to love others as oneself is not being false to one's own self, but being true to it. It is not easy to see that there is nothing in the long run more precious than the integrity of one's own conscience. These things are not easy to see, and they are harder still to remember at precisely those moments when most we need to remember them.

Not only is the argument hard to grasp, but its implications are harder still to put into practice. It implies that what we need is to love something beyond ourselves, something we regard as supremely worthy of love. The argument tells us that for the sake of the love of ourselves we must love something beyond ourselves. But love cannot be simply commanded by the will. Many a woman has tried to love a rich man for the sake of her own happiness, but the attempt is usually a dismal failure. The deliberate cultivation of love is not impossible, but it is extremely difficult. Such cultivation is simply an example of the familiar development whereby something undertaken merely as means to a further end comes, in course of time, to be a matter of absorbing interest for its own sake. A man who goes into a

certain line of business simply for the sake of making money may at first find his work a bore, but later he may grow interested in it for its own sake. A woman with a sufficient family of her own who, purely out of a sense of duty, undertakes the raising of an orphan left by her sister, will probably grow to love the sister's child as much as her own. There is no doubt that love is best cultivated by doing the deeds of love, and therefore it is not impossible to grow to love one's neighbors as oneself by undertaking the activities of "productive love," even though the motive for such action was originally only a recognition that this is the best way to one's own happiness.

However, the cultivation of love for one's neighbors in this way is extremely difficult if the neighbors are not responsive, if one cannot actually see valuable effects growing from one's work, and if the "neighbors" are distant and strange. It is true, as Fromm says, that "to love one person productively is to be related to the human core,"¹⁴ and this contains the roots of a universal ethic. But there is no spontaneous transfer from productive love of one person to productive love of all persons. The activities of a productive character undertaken as a result of a realization that in such activities lies the way to true happiness tend, therefore, to create an attitude of productive love only toward the specific individuals, groups, programs, and policies toward which they are directed and in which they meet a satisfying measure of success. This, however, falls far short of cultivating an attitude in accord with a universal ethic.

The person, therefore, who, for the sake of his own true happiness, tries to create in himself an attitude of universalized productive love finds the task extremely difficult. Such success as he has depends almost entirely on his spontaneous natural and habitual interest in human beings finding positive, interesting, and sufficiently successful expression in

¹⁴ *Man for Himself* (*op. cit.*), p. 101.

various channels of activity which he can see to have social value. His reasoned recognition that in such activity is the way to true happiness probably serves to help him guard against the mistake of giving up too easily when results are disappointing, or of letting himself be distracted by egoistic goals. Beyond that it is of little significance.

Those who find humanism sufficient as a religion are therefore the fortunate individuals whose characters need little aid from religion in order to make a satisfactory social adjustment. It is not a religion in which sinners can find the salvation of their souls, but merely one in which good people can find encouragement. Neither is it a religion that can lift a man to the pinnacles of high devotion, except to some concrete and specific cause in which his special interests have become absorbed. It contains nothing that gives it power to lift the soul out of concern with the particular to devotion to the universal, to man as man, and to man as brother, as kindred soul, whatever be the barriers of earthly circumstance. Its connection with the universal ideal beyond the self is indirect, through pure, cool, and enlightened concern for self. It has no means of striking a spark to light directly the flame of devotion to the universal human beyond the self. It must try to reach the universal indirectly. It must rely on a flame of devotion to some particular human group or cause and strive by argument to spread it to the universal—the argument being that thus to spread it is better for oneself. It therefore has little success except with those whose humanitarian habits are so well ingrained by training, and whose problems of adjustment to conscience are so simple, that they have little need of it.

THE DANGERS OF HUMANISM

The approach of Humanist religion to the problem of creating a devotion in accord with the universal ethic is

therefore largely futile. It also contains two subtle dangers. The first of these lies in its dependence upon the creation of a primary devotion to particular human groups and causes. It cannot begin, as Auguste Comte thought it could, with a devotion to humanity. Humanity, as an object of devotion, is a highly abstract concept. It is not even an organized group with distinctive marks and symbols, such as a nation. The race of human beings, in the concrete, is not a unity, but a diversity shot through with conflicts. What we call devotion to humanity is always devotion to a particular concept of what human beings can be and should be, and of how they need to be organized in order to realize this ideal. Without such definite form it is merely an amorphous feeling, without power or direction.

The devotion of a Humanist religion therefore tends, in so far as it becomes effective, to be a devotion to a particular political program. The more definite the program and its leadership the more powerful it can become. That is why communism and nazism have proved to be the most vigorous forms of Humanist religion. Democratic humanism is weak because democracy is, by its very nature, indefinite and divided in its political program. Apart from its weakness, however, even democratic humanism contains a danger. When enthusiasm for a particular political program (whether on the national scale or in some minor institution) attains the fervor of religious devotion, but is not guided and checked by being primarily and directly a devotion to the *universal human*, it becomes a fanaticism, an idolatry. This, of course, is exactly what happened in communism and nazism, and also among the terrorist extremists of Zionism. It can also happen among theists who are false to their theism in allowing devotion to a particular church to take precedence in their minds over devotion to God. The Humanist type of religion, however, is especially

open to this danger of devotion to a particular program or organization taking precedence over the universal, for it has no direct means of striking the spark of spontaneous devotion to the universal and must work toward it from initial devotion to particular programs. If it creates a genuinely religious devotion to a particular policy without successfully subordinating it to the universal, it creates an idolatry.

The second danger in the Humanist type of religion lies in its appeal to self-love as the ultimate rational ground for universal brotherly love. It is, of course, well for people to know the true psychology of the sources of happiness. It helps to give them confidence in letting themselves go in self-forgetting devotion to a sound religious objective. And the term "self-forgetting," of course, must not be taken too literally. It means that, relative to its usual prominence, self loses its place in the picture—that one's own desires and needs are recognized as no more important than those of other people, even though they must be more directly one's own concern and responsibility. Yet there is something paradoxical in the effort to cultivate an attitude of concern for the welfare of others equal to one's concern for oneself by constantly reminding oneself that the development of such concern for others is a necessary condition of fulfilling the concern for oneself. The promotion of the welfare of others is then still the means to one's own welfare. It may, by persistent attention, become an object of interest for its own sake, but this development, as we have seen, is difficult and slow. It is also fraught with the danger of cultivating spiritual pride and the love of power. If the ultimate reason for the doing of good works is promotion of one's own spiritual well-being, then the good works tend to become a means for the creation of a gratifyingly virtuous appearance of the self; and possession of the power to do the good works oneself becomes a goal more important than the objective

that they should be well done—perhaps by someone who can do them better.

At this point Erich Fromm's analysis of the place of "self-love" in "productive love" is defective, as indicated by his approving quotation from Nietzsche in his discussion of conscience: conscience is said to be "the ability to guarantee oneself with all due pride, and also at the same time to say yes to oneself."¹⁵ His argument urges love of others because this is not an alternative to, but a means to, the objectives of true self-love. This suggests that, for rational conduct, self-love still has the primacy. In that direction, however, lies the danger of introversion and spiritual pride. If personality is to be wholesome, primacy must remain with devotion to an object beyond the self. Care for oneself—for one's physical, mental and social needs and capacities—must remain incidental to the fulfillment of interest in worth-while external objects. To fulfill such worthy interests—to solve the mysteries of nature, produce works of art, create a better social order, or promote the kingdom of God—a man must nourish himself, husband his resources, cultivate his abilities, develop a well-rounded personality, stand up for his own rights, and thus in general promote his own well-being. And in all this there will be a place for sheer relaxation and enjoyment of pleasure. All this may, in Fromm's sense of the term, be called self-love. But its place among the goals of life must remain secondary if the danger of introversion is to be avoided. The good man, with a wholesome personality, is one who cares for himself, but he does so *in order that* he may most successfully do those things in the objective world upon which his heart is most set—things which he sees as having a place in the totality of human good and being his own best possible contribution to it.

¹⁵ See page 67.

This wholesome attitude is spoiled if, to turn attention to universal human welfare, a person must first remind himself that such a form of attention is really best for the proper development of his own personality. In doing that a man makes the proper development of self his ultimate goal. His activities directed toward broad human welfare are seen as means to his own self-realization. The realization of the self as a moral, self-respecting, and respected personality must become the prime interest; and in it will be the principal sense of achievement. Inevitably the love of his fellow men takes second place to spiritual pride and the love of power. This is the danger which besets every effort to promote one's own moral well-being. As we have seen, it can manifest itself in a secularist outlook. In theism, it is a danger of which theologians are well aware. But it is, I fear, a danger to which the humanist outlook must be particularly prone, because humanism emphasizes the supreme importance of moral values, requires the individual to cultivate them in himself, and yet does not call for a devotion to anything conceived as higher than the self in which they are cultivated. Humanism calls on man to do justly, and to love mercy, but not to walk humbly with his God.

When spiritual pride is allied with devotion to a particular program, policy, or party, conceived as the best mode of organizing the lives of human beings for their own good, then the really dangerous fanatic is born. These are the factors that produce the man who, out of high principle, is capable of gullotining an aristocracy, liquidating a class of kulaks, or betraying the atomic secrets of his country. It is not without significance that these things have been done in the cause of humanistic religions. Yet it would, of course, be as foolish to suggest that all humanistic religions must tend to produce this sort of danger as it would be to suggest that all theism must tend to produce the sort of fanaticism

manifested in the Spanish inquisition and the New England burning of witches. Contemporary American democratic humanism, in its devotion to "liberty, equality and fraternity," is as far from the excesses of the French revolution as contemporary American Catholics are from those of the inquisitors in Spain. Yet, if we would understand the effects of different types of religious outlook on the moral life, the lessons of history must not be forgotten.

We may, therefore, sum up our conclusions regarding religious humanism as follows. Like every other religion, it must be accepted, if at all, on faith. Yet it is an intelligible and defensible religious position and can be an encouragement and aid in the moral life. It is of least help, however, to those who need religion most. It is not likely to be found satisfactory except by those whose intelligence is relatively high and whose habits are already set in a generous and humanitarian mold. It can never be a great religion in the sense of stimulating and lifting the spiritual life of the multitude. It is not likely to produce many examples of high devotion except in those forms, such as communism, where the object of devotion has become a very specific political program. Though it avoids the dangers of superstition associated with supernaturalism it is not devoid of its own peculiar dangers. It can be turned to the support of totalitarianism without inner contradiction if one is convinced that therein lies the greatest promise of human good. The deficiencies of humanism at its best can be summed up in these two points. (1) It calls for devotion to an object that cannot spontaneously win devotion—Humanity, vague and unreal as an ideal, bitterly divided and often forbidding, vicious and disappointing in concrete reality. When our hearts fail to respond in love to this object, humanism has to turn us inward upon ourselves to consider that for the realization of our own best selves we must do so; thus

the ideal of the self slips into the place of the object of supreme devotion and religion is undermined by spiritual pride. (2) The ideal of the ethical life falls short of the call to full devotion. To love one's neighbor as oneself still calls, as Fromm says, for equal consideration of oneself. There is no power here, therefore, to call a man completely out of himself so that the self ceases to be an *ultimate* end and becomes instead something we care for only as a means, a vital instrument, for achievement of the objective tasks on which our hearts are set. To attain this standpoint, with impartiality and universality, there must be a love which is above the love of self and neighbor, though these may be made equal. There must be a love that can absorb the *whole* heart, the *whole* life and strength, a love one can live and die for. And it must be the love of an object the love of which will still keep man true to both himself and his neighbor. Such a love can only be found in the love of a God who is beyond and above both self and neighbor—beyond humanity, yet eternal lover of humanity.

Chapter 5

THE FAITH OF THEISM

THE GOD MAN NEEDS

It is clear from our analysis thus far that man's religious need is not that of a God to serve him, but of a God to serve—an object of devotion that he can love with all his heart and with all his soul and with all his might. For it is in love, productive love, that the human spirits finds its fulfillment. We can also list the characteristics which that object of devotion, man's God, must have if his service of it is to fulfill his need.

In the first place, it must be an object beyond (other than) himself, so that he may be drawn out of himself, extorted by his devotion to it.

In the second place, it must be regarded as supremely worthy of devotion, so that it can serve to systematize and integrate his system of values and interests. It must give him a standard whereby to judge other objects of interest, so that he can fit them into place, and by devotion to the supremely worthy object avoid conflict within his own soul.

Thirdly, it must be able to engage the whole of his personality, so that in its service he may be led to live a full life and develop a well-integrated personality.

Fourthly, it must clearly imply the universalistic ethic in which all men, without arbitrary distinction, favoritism, or prejudice, are recognized as among those whom a man should love as he loves himself—with productive love. It

must serve to present all men in a light which shows arbitrary distinctions to be irrational. It must thus serve to dispel prejudice and favoritism and stimulate interest in the welfare of man as man.

Fifthly, it must have power to draw out his interest and love spontaneously and directly, not merely as a means to self-satisfaction or some other goal, and not merely as a duty.

Sixthly, it must be something more than an abstract idea, for few can develop a very strong interest in an idea the basis for which is not somehow clearly given in lived experience. At the same time, its meaning must go far beyond what is immediately given or it could not call for action to realize it. The grasp of this meaning will involve both reason and faith. The relation of these two factors will have to be further studied, but the point for present emphasis is that the object of devotion must appear to man as a concrete reality, i.e., as something in some way, and to some extent, given in immediate experience.

Seventh, it must induce attention to the fulfilling of a man's own moral responsibilities and the maintenance of his inner integrity without encouraging spiritual pride, the "holier than thou" attitude, and the consequent pursuit of power to enforce his own conceptions of righteousness on others. It must rather induce the spirit of humility and honest self-criticism.

It will readily be seen that the theistic conception of a personal God fulfills the first four of these requirements. The God of theism is both immanent and transcendent, operating in man and nature but also transcending both, and is thus an object extending far beyond the self, though also, in some way, found within. He is always conceived as supremely worthy, perfect in goodness and wisdom, and the ultimate source of all good in human experience. In the

concept of the fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man the third and fourth requirements are also fulfilled. Devotion to a God who loves all His children implies that the devotee also must love all God's children. Furthermore, the fact that the other man is a child of God, whom God must love as he loves us, gives to the meanest specimen of humanity a significance that demands attention to his rights and needs. It far outweighs any distinctions based on race or culture. And in the service of God and our fellow men thus required there is opportunity for the full exercise of all the powers of personality.

It is not quite so obvious, however, that the personal God of theism fulfills the fifth, sixth, and seventh requirements, particularly the fifth and sixth. How can the concept of such a Being call forth a spontaneous expression of love and devotion? Is not the concept of God a most distant and intangible abstraction, a product of discursive thought, not of the immediacy of experience? Is it not something that appears as anything but a concrete reality? Does the idea of serving such a Being really make us humble, or may it not tend to make us proud?

RATIONALISM AND WISHFUL THINKING

The answers to these questions require us to look deep into the roots of theistic faith in the human soul. When we do so it soon becomes clear that the basis of belief cannot be purely, or mainly, intellectual. The three traditional arguments for the existence of God are the ontological, the cosmological, and the teleological. The first is purely rationalistic, or logical. It argues that the very idea of a perfect being implies that such a being exists. We need not examine the argument here. Very few people have found it convincing. It was not thought of until the eleventh cen-

tury A.D. It has certainly never been the actual basis of theistic belief for any but a very few philosophers.

The other two arguments are empirical and are widely accepted as sound. They argue from the common-sense concept of causation that our universe must have been produced or ordered by a Being of overwhelming power, intelligence, and goodness. It is clear, however, that the theistic conclusion of these arguments is only one of several hypotheses consistent with the facts and the common-sense notion of causal agency. Other plausible hypotheses, widely accepted, have rejected monotheism. Some have postulated a world with many gods, or rival good and evil powers, or a system of natural laws uncontrolled by any purposive agency.

Even those who have felt logically impelled to postulate some purposive agency, finite or infinite, are not, as David Hume so clearly showed,¹ driven by the facts to postulate that that agency must be morally good. Natural forces produce such a mixture of good and evil, and distribute their favors and their blows with so little relation to moral desert, that it is quite plausible to regard them as nonmoral, even if intelligent. It is clear, therefore, that the theistic belief in the existence of a *moral* power above the human, supremely worthy of man's devotion, does not arise primarily from a purely, or chiefly, intellectual consideration of the mixture of order and disorder in nature. The more or less logical arguments presented in support of theism are afterthoughts, advanced to give intellectual support to beliefs arrived at in some other way.

It is often suggested that this is the way of wishful thinking, and it must be admitted that wishful thinking, as well as purely intellectual arguments, has entered into the com-

¹ See his *Dialogues Concerning Natural Religion*, ed. Kemp Smith (London: Oxford University Press, 1935).

plex structures of thought developed in the various types of theology. If, by the terms "religious beliefs and practices," we mean everything that involves appeal to the mystical or supernatural, then there is certainly much that comes under that rubric that is motivated by both wishful thinking and unenlightened self-interest. It is not wishful thinking, however, that has created the fundamental concept of God as a *moral* power beyond ourselves and beyond society, requiring man's adherence to a moral law which he is often reluctant to obey. Wishful thinking may have led the Hebrews to believe that they were Yahweh's chosen people, but it was not wishful thinking that created the Old Testament picture of the stern and implacable lawgiver visiting his people with famine, sword, and pestilence for their disobedient ways. Nor is it usually wishful thinking that brings about a return to faith on the part of the modern intellectual who has first lost his faith by discovery that the theistic arguments are inconclusive or unsound and the traditional concept of God untenable. Indeed, wishful thinking contributes at least as often to the loss as to the restoration of belief.

What we are concerned to understand is the element of *devotion*, of love and loyal service, that is found at the core of religious beliefs and practices. This element is found even in the religion of primitives, as shown by the researches of Malinowski, Marett,² and many other anthropologists. It involves the recognition of a god who is good and just, at least to those who acknowledge and serve him. The marvel is that this faith in the goodness and justice of a god that is identified with any or all of the forces of nature, or believed to control them, can persist in the face of the

² See B. Malinowski, *Foundations of Faith and Morals* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1936); and R. R. Marett, *Faith, Hope, and Charity in Primitive Religion* (London: Oxford University Press, 1932).

capriciousness of all natural forces. It is clear that man believes in the moral qualities of such gods in spite of the evidence.

This belief, therefore, cannot be one that begins with a pseudorational personalization of natural forces and responds with love and service for what they actually do for the believer. The belief in a moral power beyond the self and beyond the tribe must arise independently of such pseudorational considerations and become subsequently identified with forces of nature. How this may be understood to happen we will explain later, but the point to be emphasized here is that the faith in an unseen god (or God) who is worthy of man's devotion is not dependent upon speculations concerning purposive agency in the control of nature. These speculations account for the approach to the deity motivated by the desire for material aid. They do not account for the faith in a moral being supremely worthy of man's most loyal service.

THE MYSTICAL AND THE EMOTIONAL IN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

The attempt to explain religious faith as due to a supernaturalism originating entirely in primitive speculation on the forces of nature, and an attempt to appease or appeal to those forces, has failed, as is widely recognized today. The alternative is to recognize that the real root of religion is in an experience which is more intimately subjective than that of sense perception. Early in the nineteenth century, Schleiermacher³ suggested that the unique element in religious experience is a sense of "absolute dependence." Man, he says, finds himself in reciprocal relations of mutual

³ Friedrich Schleiermacher, *Speeches on Religion to Its Cultured Despisers*, trans. John Oman (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1893).

dependence upon human society and the physical world. But, as a finite being in a world of finite things, he finds himself and all his world contingent, dependent upon an Infinite beyond himself and the world. This dependence is primarily felt rather than thought. It is, he said, unique and pure feeling in its immediacy, its content being neither rational nor moral. "God" is thus the name merely of *that whence* the feeling of dependence comes, and the feeling tells us nothing of either the goodness or the power of that on which we thus feel ourselves to depend.

The obvious defect of this analysis of basic religious experience is that it is too completely subjective. What is experienced, we are told, carries with it no indication of the nature of that whence the experience comes except the very dubious indication of its infinity. One cannot make an object of devotion of bare infinity, even if one spells it with a capital I. To become an object supremely worthy of devotion the Infinite must be filled with meaning, and in place of real meaning Schleiermacher only offered myth. But religious myths have power to stir devotion only when they are believed to portray deep truths about a real being. When Schleiermacher emptied the myths of truth, he emptied them of power. Further, since he found in the religious feeling nothing to suggest the existence of a real object supremely worthy of devotion, the feeling he points to fails to explain the fact that the essential and living core of the religious response consists in such devotion.

Early in the present century theological circles became excited over another attempt to point to the roots of religious faith in a distinctive type of experience. Rudolph Otto, in *The Idea of the Holy*,⁴ propounded the thesis that religious experience is neither aesthetic, moral, nor rational. It is an objective quality of mystery found in the contem-

⁴ Trans. J. W. Harvey (New York: Oxford University Press, 1925).

plation of reality, a sense of mystery which inspires feelings of awe and holds us fascinated. Otto produces evidence of this type of experience from all types of religion. It is strongest in the primitive. He calls it the sense of the numinous. It is, he says, in some inscrutable, a priori manner associated with moral intuitions, and this union of the mystical and the moral is essential to religion. In primitive religion the nonrational experience of the numinous predominates over the moral, but the association with the moral is always there if the experience be religious. Without it the mystery would be merely magical. As we rise in the scale of civilization, and religion becomes more rational, the moral element comes to the fore and the sense of the numinous becomes less prominent. If it should disappear, however, the experience would cease to be religious. Moral intuition would be left without its religious dynamic.

Whatever objections one may raise to Otto's reference to a priori intuitions, it must be admitted that both he and Schleiermacher have done service in insisting that an element in experience that may well be called mystical, and is vibrant with emotional overtones, is vital in formation of the religious attitude. Otto is also correct, as the abundant evidence of his argument shows, in insisting on the essential importance of the moral element. But he has so sharply distinguished the moral experience as resting on rational intuition and the mystical element as nonrational that he can find no relation between them. He cannot explain how they come to characterize the one object of thought and make it an object of religious devotion. He therefore has to assume that the connection is a priori.

His difficulty, we may suggest, is that he has made the moral element in man's life too rational and the mystical element completely nonrational. It is the latter mistake that is the more serious. Otto has drawn too heavily on

the primitive for his understanding of religion. He forgets, as anthropologists so often do, that what we call primitive religion is the product of a long period of evolution in minds where magical suggestions are almost unchecked by rational criticism. The heavy overlay of magic in primitive religion almost smothers the moral element and makes its mysticism appear basically nonmoral and nonrational. But we have no right to assume that religion in its beginnings bore any great resemblance to the elaborate magical systems of primitives. Still less should we assume that the mystical experience which appears to us to be characteristic of primitives, and which we can occasionally find in our own experience isolated from the moral, constitutes the essential and original type of religious mysticism.

THE MORAL AND THE MYSTICAL IN RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

The attempts to show how religion could begin with purely rational ideas or with purely mystical experience have failed. There is no transition from the purely rational or purely mystical to the moral. There is, however, a transition from moral experience, when the moral issue is faced in its intensity and height and depth, to both the rational and the mystical elements in religion. It was Immanuel Kant's great contribution to religious and philosophical thought to have decisively called attention to the experience of the ethical imperative as both the actual basis of religious faith and the best starting point for its logical justification. This same thesis has also been most cogently argued in the present century by the distinguished Scottish theologian, John Baillie.⁵ Both Kant and Baillie make strong claims (probably too strong) for the significance of the moral

⁵ John Baillie, *The Interpretation of Religion* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1928).

argument for the existence of God. Baillie, however, very wisely, lays primary emphasis on the argument that the moral experience is the *actual* source of faith in a personal God, whether or not it may also constitute a logical ground for such a belief.

Empirical studies of the psychology of religion strongly support this claim for the primacy of the moral experience in the generation of religious faith. This was the conclusion of the pioneer work in this field done by William James⁶ at the beginning of the present century. It has been abundantly borne out by later investigations. All these studies show that the experience called "conversion"—in which a person not consciously seeking to live a life of devotion to God finds himself drawn into a new attitude in which he does consciously, and to some extent successfully, make that effort—is one in which the individual is aware of a conflict within himself between what he regards as right and wrong desires or purposes. In that conflict he feels his own passions and self-interest on the one side and on the other a constraining sense of duty, supported perhaps by some relatively weak, long-range or altruistic interests. The struggle may be mild or severe, but it is characteristic of the sense of duty that it will not accept denial. It opposes our own will like an alien power and condemns us when we violate it. Yet when we accept its verdict and surrender to it we feel not merely that this decision is free and has given us a firmer grip upon ourselves, but that the self is unified within and in harmony with what is most ultimate and real in the meaning of life. This experience James found his subjects tended to describe as one of "making proper connection with the higher powers."⁷

⁶ William James, *Varieties of Religious Experience* (New York: Longmans, Green & Co., Inc., 1902).

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 508.

Here then is mysticism directly linked with the moral experience in its most significant phase. Not only is it a mystical interpretation of experience, in that the resolution of the conflict is attributed to a contact with higher powers, but the experience appears as, in itself, mystical. For mysticism is the view that man can have a direct experience of a reality other than that he experiences in and through his senses. In this sense, the sense of duty, in so far as it is objective, has the character of the mystical. For when man feels a moral constraint placed upon himself, he feels it as the pressure of something other than himself, and yet not in any way sensory or physical. In part he may feel it as pressure of the demands of other human beings, but in so far as it is genuinely felt as moral, it is more than mere social pressure. It is a pressure recognized as that of a rule of right that presses equally upon himself and other human beings.

In this analysis of the experience in which the typical religious commitment takes root the contemporary psychology of religion is at one with evangelical theology and the teaching of the New Testament. The Spirit of God, we are there told, convicts men of sin, and through this conviction and repentance men find God. Men *find* God. They do not merely come to believe in the existence of something represented by an abstract idea. They find God, says Christian thought, voicing Christian experience, as One who comes seeking them. But man does not go readily and willingly seeking God, or creating pleasant images of Him. His first thought of being found by God is one of awe, mingled with fear. For *the God he has found seeking him is the embodiment of the moral law*. The experience is that so graphically described in Francis Thompson's poem "The Hound of Heaven."

RELIGION AND THE MORAL LIFE

I fled Him, down the nights and down the days;
 I fled Him, down the arches of the years;
 I fled Him, down the labyrinthine ways
 Of my own mind; and in the midst of tears
 I hid from Him, and under running laughter.

(For though I knew His love Who followed,
 Yet was I sore adread
 Lest, having Him, I must have naught beside).

Still with unhurrying chase,
 And unperturbed pace,
 Deliberate speed, majestic instancy,
 Came on the following Feet,
 And a Voice above their beat—
 "Naught shelters thee, who wilt not shelter Me."

It is the picture of a man flying from his conscience. Be it the traditional or critical conscience, it is that which seems to him right and good. Yet he flies from it "sore adread" lest, should he shelter and cherish it, he should have naught beside. For conscience comes to a man demanding that he give up things that he wants, that he do things he considers a burden or a danger. No wonder he fights it, flies from it, tries to ignore it. Sometimes he succeeds in doing so, but only at the cost of repressions that hound him and haunt him the more from the subterranean depths of the unconscious. Sometimes he rationalizes and cultivates an insensitivity to it that leaves him living on a lower plane. Sometimes he acknowledges it, gives it shelter, and cherishes it; and then he must serve it. But the service which seemed to promise nothing but sacrifice discloses itself to be a new joy. He finds that he has surrendered to a power that can lift him to new heights, give life new meaning, fill him with new strength and inward peace.

THE FAITH OF THEISM

THE LEAP OF FAITH

It is from this experience that the faith of theism arises. The power that condemned has been found to be a friend. It had pressed upon the self as something alien but incapable, opposing and condemning, yet in surrender to it has been found an unexpected peace, strength, and joy. Here is the deepest mystery of life to ponder. Can it be that in this experience life finds not only its deepest fulfillment, but also the secret of its ultimate meaning? The plodding reason, seeking from the evidence of the senses an answer to the question, "Whence does man come, and why?" finds no response. The kind of reality revealed by the senses does not speak of ultimate origin or purpose. Nor can reason deduce an answer from this other reality faced in our moments of conscientious struggle and decision. Yet nothing in all experience is more real, more vital, more important, more fraught with meaning—though a meaning to be guessed at rather than read.

With its feet planted firmly on the reality of the inward struggle and decision, faith takes its leap, and from its own new vantage point it catches its vision. The voice that has pursued, persuaded, and condemned is not our own, nor the voice of society. It is the voice of that which is common to all men, for all men hear it. It comes from the ultimate roots of our being, the Source of life whence we are sprung; and it speaks of the goal of life which we must serve or miss our destiny, the goal in which alone we can realize the best that is in us. It is an other and higher Will than ours, that seeks in and through each of us the good of all. Herein is the meaning of life revealed. It is the meaning of the universe—that the life of man is drawn from a larger life, the life of One who makes His will felt in ours, a will that calls us to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with Him, our God.

This answer is the theistic vision, an act of faith. It takes the vivid, lived experience of conscience, a power with which man wrestles and from which he strives to escape, a reality that is personal and immanent, and it interprets this reality as not only immanent but, while still personal, also transcendent. Thus it finds within the most intimate recesses of the self the impression of something greater beyond us. The idea of God is the interpretation of a lived impression, as the idea of the sun is the interpretation of the light in our eyes, and the idea of the rock is the interpretation of the pressure on our hands. Thus God is seen not as an abstraction, a hypothetical entity invented as the indirect cause of immediate experience. He is a concrete object of immediate experience. He is also thoroughly objective, for the experience of conscience is common to all normal human beings and theism says it is the one God who makes Himself felt by all of us.

Of course, it is possible that the theistic interpretation of this experience is mistaken, just as we know that the interpretations of the appearance of sun and rock developed by unscientific common sense are mistaken. The latter interpretations, however, refer to their measurable features, which are subject to check and calculation. Most of the ideational content in the idea of God (the interpretation of our experience of conscience) is not subject to check. It must remain held, if at all, as an act of faith, justified, in the only way an act of faith can be justified, by the values that flow from it.

At some points, however, the theistic idea can be checked, and one of the most important modifications of the traditional view is involved in what has already been said about conscience. The traditional element in it is clearly of human, social origin and cannot be attributed directly to God. It is the critical, or humanistic conscience,

which simply demands of us an impartial concern for the welfare of all, that is the root of all conscience; and it is this, and this alone, that can reasonably be attributed to the influence within us of the moral power of the universe. The confusion of the traditional with the basic critical element in conscience has been the source of tragic error and dogmatism. It has brought about a tremendous reaction of scepticism and has also led many theologians to fail to appreciate the nature of the immanence of God in man. With the correction of this error the way is open for a purer and stronger theism, free from dogmatism and the implications that have made so many honest and earnest thinkers feel they cannot accept it.

THE PRIMACY OF LOVE

Another error which has vitiated theological efforts to understand the immanence of God in man is to be found in the Greek psychology of voluntary action. The Greeks believed that voluntary behavior is controlled by reason, all other action being directed by the appetites and passion. They also believed that all rational conduct is self-regarding, i.e., it makes the well-being of the self its end. This is the reason why benevolence never appears in the list of Greek virtues. Like other human beings, they frequently practiced benevolence and appreciated it, but to their philosophers an act of benevolence which involved self-sacrifice always appeared irrational and therefore not genuinely virtuous. The Epicureans, with their hedonistic psychology, declared, "No one loves another save in his own interest." The Stoics praised impartiality and urged the giving of help where it was needed, but insisted that the motive must be conformity with the universal reason, not love or compassion. Plato defended justice (or righteousness) as the true

"health of the soul," and therefore as the proper objective of the rational man. Aristotle regarded the moral virtues as habits of moderation in control of the appetites and passions, such as to constitute a sound basis for that cultivation of the intellect wherein lay man's true well-being.

According to Greek philosophy, therefore, it was neither rational nor virtuous to love one's neighbor as oneself, and to do so deliberately was psychologically impossible.⁸ This was directly in conflict with the teaching of both the Old and the New Testaments. Christian theology met the problem, not by rejecting Greek psychology, but by declaring that, although to fallen human nature obedience to the command is impossible, yet to the Christian it is made possible by the grace of God.

This position is maintained by Augustine and is very carefully stated by Thomas Aquinas. The virtues which can be cultivated by the natural man are summed up by Thomas⁹ under the four traditional Greek categories as the cardinal virtues—wisdom, justice, fortitude, and temperance. Prudence, which is wisdom concerning things to be done, is the *sine qua non* of the other three virtues. Beyond these four, however, lie the three "theological virtues," faith, hope, and charity, which are "above man's nature," not the product of his own working. These virtues "God works in us without us." They are "infused" by divine grace. Of these three, charity is the greatest, but "the order of their generation" is first faith, then hope, then charity. For "the object of the theological virtues is God himself." It is only when, through the knowledge of God by revela-

⁸ The difference, at this point, between the Platonic *eros* and the Christian *agape* is very clearly presented by Anders Nygren, but he refuses to recognize that a non-Christian "love of humanity" can have the spontaneous and disinterested character of the Christian concept. See *Agape and Eros*, trans. P. S. Watson (London: S. P. C. K., 1953), p. 95.

⁹ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, I, II, Q. 61-63.

tion and by faith, man's mind is directed to a supernatural happiness, and by the power of God he enters into "a kind of participation of the Godhead," that man is able to exercise charity—that love of his fellows which is initiated and directed by reason and not by passion.

This theory of the moral will and the virtues linked itself easily with the doctrine of predestination and the notion of the exclusiveness of God's revelation to those in the Hebrew-Christian tradition. It passed from Catholic into Protestant theology, where it still persists in the minds of the more orthodox types of thinkers. Thus for Emil Brunner "natural ethics is dominated by the principle of self-seeking and self-reference." Only with the advent of faith does it become true that "we no longer are concerned with self-regarding aims, but with God's interests, with that which God wills. . . . The ethical impulse is no longer that of self-respect, but of love."¹⁰

The only excuse for the adoption by a Christian writer of this psychological egoism in the theory of motivation, is that it is so often adopted, in one form or another, by non-Christians, both ancient and modern. Contemporary psychologists and philosophers usually reject the view that reason can act as an agency to direct the will. They hold instead, with David Hume, that reason is the servant of desire, or interest.¹¹ All too often, however, they fail to recognize that other notable feature of Hume's psychology which he learned from Hutcheson and Butler, namely, that man's natural interests are not all primarily, or predominantly, self-regarding. They are, as we have already emphasized, primarily and predominantly object-centered, not

¹⁰ Emil Brunner, *The Divine Imperative* (New York: The Macmillan Co., 1937), pp. 68, 69.

¹¹ Hume's use of the term "desire," rather than "interest," is unfortunate, for it suggests the view that he rejects, i.e., the "selfish hypothesis" that all interest is acquisitive.

self-centered; among the most absorbing objects of interest are other human beings; and the normal form of interest of one human being in another (when that other is viewed as end, rather than means) is an interest in his welfare, rather than in doing him harm.

Since reason (or intelligence) is not a power to initiate and direct action, but an instrument for the finding of means to ends, the ends at which human beings aim are those which spontaneously arouse interest, or are deliberately selected as means to other ends. Voluntary behavior is simply the intelligent selection of means and ends with a view to their harmony, integration, and freedom. The action is charitable, altruistic, or benevolent when the end thus selected is concerned directly and ultimately with the welfare of another person. Such motives are common and natural. As habits they tend to be confined to a rather narrow circle, but they may be spontaneously aroused and directed toward any human being, especially anyone in need; and the habit of widespread benevolence is by no means confined to those in whom it is cultivated by the medium of Christian faith. When charitable behavior, or any other type of behavior, is thought of as morally right, the experience of conscience provides additional motivation for the choice of such behavior and the cultivation of it as a habit; and such moral response and endorsement of charity or benevolence is common to all the great ethical religions and to many people outside them.

For modern psychology, therefore, reason is not a principle of action, but charity or benevolence is a spontaneous human reaction which may be freed and cultivated as a habit or inhibited by stronger drives. This modern view is empirically well substantiated and it has important implications for the concept of the immanence of God in man. Traditionally the immanence of God has been thought to

be manifest only in man's reason, not in the life of spontaneous impulse. The Christian scriptures teach that God is love—productive love. Traditional Christian theology, however, has not taught that God is immanent in man as a spontaneous and general tendency to productive love. It has seen the image of God in man, instead, in his logical power of reason, with its outreach to the infinite and its insight into the moral law. Adopting the Greek psychology, which viewed reason as a principle of action, it had to identify the divine reason with the divine love. But since it also accepted the Greek view that reason in man is self-regarding, it had to attribute this fact to human sin, obscuring the true nature of the image of God within him.

If, however, we recognize that reason is but the servant of man's interests (the capacity to select and order means to serve the ends toward which life spontaneously drives), and if we also recognize that these drives, or interests, are not primarily turned inward upon the self but outward, to deal constructively with objects, including, especially, the lives of other men, then a new conception of the divine immanence opens up to us. A constructive interest in the lives of others is exactly what is meant by charity—productive love. If God is love, then this is a part, at least, of the way in which man is made in the image of God. If God is our Father, then this is the Spirit of the Father in the child. Then, since this tendency to constructive interest in human life is, as we have already seen, so basic and prominent in man's personality that he can only be at peace within himself so far as he can harmonize his purposes with it, it would follow that man can only find peace in so far as he is true to that form of will within him which is in the image of God, and expresses the Spirit of God. Thus we could understand the reason for the truth that Augustine found: "Our souls are restless 'til they find rest in Thee."

THE IMMANENCE AND CONCRETENESS OF GOD

This analysis of the psychological experience in which religious faith is rooted provides the answer to the question as to how the God of theism functions to fulfill the last three of the seven requirements of a satisfactory object of religious devotion listed at the beginning of this chapter. The fifth requirement is that the idea of God must be able to draw out a spontaneous response, so as to become a direct object of devotion, not merely something to which one becomes attached as a means to a further end. It is true, of course, that some people pay lip service to God and obey what they believe to be His commands in the hope of earthly or heavenly rewards, but if these were their major motives religious institutions would never have recorded a history of loyalty and devotion. It is true that much that passes for religious activity is not genuine devotion, and that people's motives are usually mixed, but it is certainly also true that most religious people find joy in what they regard as the service of God (indicating a genuine attachment or such service would be merely a burden) and it is further true that religious bodies under trial manifest a surprising capacity for loyalty and self-sacrifice.

The attitude of devotion in theistic religion, therefore, though not pure and consistent, is common and genuine. Its explanation we have found in its roots in moral experience. This experience is vivid and strong. It demands and receives attention. Even though the person tries to ignore it, it impresses itself upon him. If it is believed that the moral law is directly or indirectly the will of God, then, inescapably, in the moral experience man stands face to face with what he believes is the divine will, directly impressed upon him. His decisions for the right are decisions for God's service and in them he finds increasing strength

and joy. His failures are affronts to God for which he must either seek, and believe he obtains, God's forgiveness, or his religion becomes one of fear and trembling, rather than loyalty. But the God conceived as one of mercy, justice and love wins love and loyalty, and these are confirmed through the joy found in service. It is thus that devotion grows strong and becomes a power creating that loyalty to ideal ends which even those who, like Dewey, deplore anything savoring of the supernatural, nevertheless recognize as characteristically "religious."

Our sixth problem concerns the need that the object of devotion should be concrete, something immediately experienced. Abstract ideas, and complex concepts representing nothing perceived, do not readily become objects of interest, still less of attachment, except to intellectuals. Symbols help to create attachment, and so does the presentation of the abstract idea in poetry, song, and other forms of art. Patriotism, for example, may be stimulated by these means, but its ultimate roots lie in attachment to people, land, and language, which are concretely experienced—i.e., to some extent immediately given. In religion, the idea of God is enriched by symbol and art, which can be used to stir an emotional response, but it is the moral experience that really gives concreteness to the idea, i.e., gives it a basis in immediate givenness. Some other forms of mystical experience have the same effect, but they are relatively rare. The moral experience is essentially mystical, in that it is a nonsensory experience which nevertheless gives an impression of relating us to something objective, not merely dependent on our own will and imagination.

Much contemporary religious thought fails almost as badly as naturalism to recognize the concrete experience of the divine in the constraint of conscience. One reason for this is the failure to recognize the true nature of the critical

as distinct from the traditional conscience. The specific convictions of the traditional conscience certainly are not the leadership of God. The constraint to impartial concern for human welfare, however, is another matter. Naturalism has failed to recognize the divine here because it has not clearly distinguished it from the effects of social conditioning and has sought to avoid theistic conceptions in any case. The failure of much traditional theism to identify this constraint of the critical conscience (to love of one's fellow men) with the active presence of the divine in man is, however, chiefly due to the false psychology derived from the Greeks. The result is that emphasis has been placed on the transcendence and "otherness" of God, making Him a stranger who only occasionally breaks through into human consciousness to confront an individual with His demands.

Under the combined influence of Greek psychology and naturalistic interpretations of conscience, religious thought has tended to lose the vision which is the core of religious faith and hope, the vision which sees the power of God somehow present in the constraining influence of the sense of duty and that finds a oneness of the will of man with the will of God in the love wherewith a man may love his fellows. Yet this vision is the core of the New Testament conception of God. "God is love" (I John 4:8). "... It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13). "In him was life; and the life was the light of men. . . . That was the true Light, which lighteth every man that cometh into the world" (John 1:4, 9). "... Gentiles, which have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, . . . [in that they] shew the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience bearing witness" (Rom. 2:14, 15). "Therefore all things whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do ye even so to them: for this is the law and the prophets"

(Matt. 7:12). "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets" (Matt. 22:37-40).

Here we see the single principle of the critical conscience, agape, productive love, set forth as the basis of the moral life. We see the assertion of man's universal capacity for conscientious insight into that law as not merely a God-given concept but as the presence and working of the divine life in man. And we are told that the essence of the divine life is love. When we turn from the New Testament to the records of religious, and particularly of Christian, life we find these conceptions borne out in experience. It is the duty of productive love to one's fellows that is endorsed by the critical conscience. It is in facing up to the implications of this duty that the best of men find themselves falling short and faced with a demand that condemns them. It is this demand that, in a life of religious devotion, is recognized as the ideal. And it is in the vision of that ideal as embodied in the Source of all life, Whose will we feel constraining ours to be loyal to the ideal, that the religious personality finds its inspiration and strength.

WALKING HUMBLY WITH GOD

Finally, we come to the seventh requirement in an object of religious devotion which is to meet man's need. It must develop and tend to maintain an attitude of humility rather than spiritual pride. Does the theistic interpretation of the moral experience do this? Or does the idea of being in the service of a personal power beyond ourselves, who is supremely good, have the reverse effect upon men, and tend to make them self-righteously proud, despising those not consciously enlisted in that service? It must be admitted

that such pride is all too often manifest in the lives of believers. It is, as we have seen, a fault that is apt to beset the best of men simply because they are among the best. But is this besetting weakness of the strong enhanced or mitigated by theistic faith? In Chapter 7 we shall examine the adventitious accretions of that faith which become sources of corruption in it. Here, however, we must see its simple essentials and weigh their effect upon the human mind.

Let us set aside, for the present, what philosophical theology, historical tradition, and myth have had to say about the God of theism and see what elements of interpretation are essential to turn the experience of the critical conscience into an object beyond the self regarded as supremely worthy of devotion. In the first place, the constraint of conscience must be attributed to the relation presently existing between the self and some power beyond it that exercises this influence, though there may be many different explanations of the nature of this relation and the way the influence is exercised. Secondly, that power must be regarded as conscious of the influence it exercises; otherwise, it could not be conceived as the ultimate object of devotion but only as a means to human values. In other words, the object of devotion must be personal or it could not be of supreme worth.¹² In the third place, this personal being must be regarded as equally concerned for the good of all men, since his demand upon us is that we should be so concerned; and this concern for their good implies that his constraining influence must be operative in their lives as in ours, so that they too are beings who are, or can become, conscious of the divine will.

¹² For a criticism of H. N. Wieman's attempt to frame a religiously satisfactory impersonal concept of God see my earlier work, *A Realistic Philosophy of Religion* (New York: Harper & Bros., 1942).

From these considerations, it follows, almost inevitably, that the personal God, so conceived, must be somehow the ultimate source of human life and interested in our ultimate destiny. Beyond this, however, further deductions become more and more speculative. There is nothing clearly implied in these essential ideas as to God's relation to the physical world or his power over it, nothing as to His providence in history, nothing as to any special revelation of Himself save that experienced in the constraint of conscience, which is the ultimate source of our thought and knowledge of Him. These questions may or may not be open to fruitful inquiry through the study of history and science, and particularly the history of man's religious experience and activity. All that is essential to the religious life in theistic faith is the concept of God's personality and love and the awareness of his constraining will that men should love one another.

We can now consider the effect upon the tendency to spiritual pride of a belief in such a God and of an attitude of love, or devotion, to Him. In the first place, it tends to extrovert the personality. Even though a man recognizes the moral values as of supreme importance, and strongly desires to be a morally worthy person, the ultimate end set before him is the service of God, not the cultivation of his own virtue. The stronger his love of God the less satisfied will he be with himself and his service of God, but the more joy will he find in that service. Thus he can live a full life and reap the reward of joy in it without becoming pleased or satisfied with the contemplation of his own righteousness. In the second place, the ideal is set so high that he can never feel that he is really living up to it. That ideal is a concern for the welfare of all others that is no less than a man's natural and wholesome concern for his own welfare. It is a pattern to which he may more and

more closely conform, yet one in the light of which he is always imperfect. Its effect, therefore, is to create, not conceit in his own virtue, but humility. Thirdly, there is the fact that the immediacy of God's presence is felt in the constraints and demands of conscience and in its condemnations, not in the complacency of self-approval. Not that, in the sense of God's presence a man must always feel the divine displeasure and disapproval. The person who *wants* to serve God, and believes that he has failed to do so, may feel the constraint of his conscience that tells him of the presence and otherness of God, but his conviction of the goodness and love of God, together with the consciousness of the desire to serve Him better, create the sense of forgiveness and communion. Thus the literature of religious experience reveals the fact that in humility of spirit, and in that alone, a man may find peace and security in the sense of the divine presence.

It is, therefore, in the humble estate of penitence that theistic faith is born. Its influence throughout is to keep man humble in his own eyes while it makes him more worthy of praise in the eyes of others. And it is only while he retains his humility that his faith remains alive. For if he develops spiritual pride, though he may retain theological beliefs, the dynamic of faith withers and dies. Becoming insensitive to his own spiritual deficiency he no longer feels the constraining power that creates the sense of the presence of God. He no longer walks with God, for he cannot walk humbly. He marches instead in the confidence of his own self-sufficiency, perhaps waving the banner of a theology which he is proud to have acquired, though it has ceased to have any meaning to him save that of a banner. Perhaps still more proudly he casts it aside. He marches, however, in the causes he is proud to serve, and in pursuit of the power he is confident he knows well how to wield.

THE SIMPLE THEISTIC FAITH

In concluding this chapter on the faith of theism it may be well to state again, briefly, but fully, the intellectual content *essential* to that faith. It is the tragedy of Christendom that this is what its creeds never attempted to do. The Church only made creeds to settle disputes, to give decisions on points that had been questioned. The result is that the unquestioned essentials of its faith were never stated in the creeds; they (the creeds) are confined to decisions on matters of doubt. To clarify the essential elements of belief in the faith of Theism we have therefore to go behind the creeds to things that all believed so implicitly that they were never challenged. Among these our analysis of the roots of theistic faith in the needs and experience of the moral life reveal the following thoughts as constituting its intellectual essence:

That man is loved of God.

That man should love God with all his heart.

That man should love his neighbor as himself.

That in such love to God and man the human spirit is made whole.

This was the faith of the greatest of the Hebrew prophets. It shines out also from the theistic religions of the East. And with marvellous simplicity, clarity, and force it was the faith of Jesus Christ. With peerless art he embodied it in those two deathless stories which we call the parables of the Good Samaritan and the Prodigal Son. Its implications for daily living he expounded in the sayings collected as the Sermon on the Mount. Though distorted by extraneous influences, and overlaid with unscientific speculation and superstition, this faith has been the inspiration of almost all that is best in the culture known

as Christendom. It is the force that accounts for the difference between the carelessness for the life and freedom of the masses in the slave states of the ancient world and the Orient, and the conception of the rights of man as man, and the growing sense of social responsibility for the needy, that characterize the modern world. In its purity, it is a faith that does not drive by fear, but wins by love. It overcomes selfishness in the only way it can be overcome—by drawing us out of ourselves and creating a broad and impartial interest in our fellows. It destroys pride in the only way it can be destroyed—by making us aware and ashamed of it. It calms our fears in the only way they can be calmed without blinding us to dangers—by revealing the supremacy over all values of the values created in the life of faith itself, which are imperishably secure in the relation of man to God.

Chapter 6

FAITH AND REASON

THE INDEPENDENCE OF FAITH

We have seen how the simple theistic faith arises in the human mind, how it functions to secure wholeness of personality, and what is its essential intellectual content. This intellectual content is constantly subject to criticism and modification by ideas derived from factors extraneous to it. The most important of these influences are those of the critical reason and tradition. In this chapter and the next we shall examine their relation to, and influence upon, the simple theistic faith—an influence which, in both cases, has been both bad and good. In the present chapter we shall be concerned with the activity of reason in a contemporary criticism of faith. In Chapter 7 we shall examine its effects, in conjunction with other factors, in the creation of a tradition which both supports and distorts faith.

It will be well to begin our examination of the relations of faith and reason by defining our terms. We are using the term "reason" in the broad sense which includes all intellectual activity by which knowledge is acquired; and by "knowledge" we mean not only certainty, but all beliefs which, as shown by elaborate testing, enable us to make statements in accord with facts of experience. "Faith," on the other hand, is not merely intellectual activity. It is much broader. It includes faithfulness, loyalty, or devotion. It is both conative and cognitive. It is an attitude of attach-

ment or commitment to something. It may be defined as an attitude toward some fact based on a certain understanding and appreciation of value in that fact, and tending to issue in further thought and action in accord with the understanding of the fact and its value. This definition may be applied to faith in a friend or in a bank as well as to religious faith. In theistic faith the basic fact, as we have seen, is the constraint of the critical conscience. The understanding and evaluation of it is that stated above as the intellectual content of simple theistic faith. The further thought and action that issue from it are philosophical and historical theology and the ethical decisions of the religious life.

Since theistic faith is concerned with a fact, of which it involves a certain understanding and interpretation, it cannot escape the necessity of reconciling its interpretation with the interpretations of this and related facts that constitute our knowledge of science and history. It is not to be expected, however, that faith's interpretation of its fact should, through logical or scientific testing, attain the status of knowledge. There are two reasons for this. In the first place, it is shown by experience that a belief in the God of theism, held by those who are clearly aware that this belief, by logical and empirical tests, falls far short of objectively demonstrable knowledge, can nevertheless function in life to make God, thus understood, an object of supreme devotion. And this can be shown to be the case among those who are both high and low in the intellectual and educational scales. In the second place it is clear, upon reflection, that if such belief did amount to objectively demonstrable knowledge the effect of this would be to blight the higher development of the spiritual life.

This latter point is one of great importance. If man knew for certain the reality of the constant presence of a

personal God, he would be in the position of a child living at every moment in the presence of a perfectly wise, loving, and just parent. Even though that parent refused to make decisions for the child, and left him to find out for himself about many things, the child could never develop any real independence. To disobey the known basic principles taught by such a parent would be the most complete folly. To adhere to those principles would require nothing more than elementary prudence. So, too, would it be for man with objectively certain knowledge of the presence of God. Living in the assurance of such protective love and power, courage would never be called upon to rise to its heights. Love would be made almost meaningless by the conviction that its rewards must be so much richer than its gifts. Honesty would be no more virtuous than the shoplifter's decision not to steal while the owner is looking. There would be no opportunity to develop independence and strength of character. Only in a situation where a man can believe that his decisions and his actions are to some extent his own secret can he feel that the responsibility for them is entirely his, that they are not being forced upon him by external pressures. And without such responsibility man would be something less than completely human.

The belief that is born of faith, without the evidence that would make it count as objective knowledge, has, on the other hand, not a blighting, but an inspiring effect. It rests upon appreciation of the call of the sense of duty as worthy of man's full devotion. Thus the faith is itself an attainment and an expression of the independence, responsibility, and decision of the moral life at its best. It can live only so long as the moral attitude is alive. And it lives, not as a parasite on the rest of the moral life, but as an inspiring part of it, giving it greater and richer meaning, unity, and courage.

Such faith can attain the strength of a subjective certainty in which doubt disappears. Superficially it might seem as though this would also reduce moral decisions to the level of elementary prudence. But if the subjective certainty is an achievement of faith rather than an effect of objective evidence this does not happen, for in the attainment of faith the personality has already developed beyond the attitude dominated by prudence to that in which the predominant motive is love of God and man. Faith is born of love, and it lives only so long as it is sustained by love. Its effect is to sustain love in return when love is assailed by such opposing motives as fear, anger, pride, and weariness. If, in the face of these, love falters in spite of faith, then faith falters too. So faith never lives to determine a decision by prudence where love has failed. It can only reinforce love where love exists. And this it does chiefly by strengthening the love-winning power of the object of love, and only secondarily by calling in a high and distant counsel of prudence to weaken the opposing motives by which love is assailed.

The subjective certainty that is born of faith, which in turn is born of love, is therefore a factor that helps, but cannot injure, the finer development of the moral life. The sort of certainty, or near certainty, that can be injurious is that which is believed to rest on objective evidence. Objective evidence is a nonmoral factor compelling belief and impelling conduct; it may override love and it leaves no room for faith. It is therefore a *condition* of faith and of the higher development of the moral life that one must see that there is room for doubt. Some measure of doubt is a precondition of faith. In those societies in which a fixed and unquestioned religious tradition is allowed to impose itself from generation to generation the morality of the unthinking multitude tends to sink to the level of a mere

otherworldly prudence, and their religion to the practice of a cult and the acceptance of a creed with very little of the spark of faith. This was, in part, the blight that crushed the spiritual life of the Middle Ages. That period is misnamed the Age of Faith. It was an age of uncritical credulity and otherworldly prudence. Only when the Renaissance made doubt again possible did faith come to life again. Faith must triumph over doubt, but there can be no faith without a doubt to triumph over.

The fact that the intellectual content of the theistic faith cannot be proved is, therefore, not in any way a reason for casting doubt upon it. This insusceptibility of proof is an essential condition of faith's fulfilling its function. The claim to proof made by Catholicism, if believed, is only a source of dogmatic authoritarianism and a blight upon real faith and the higher phases of the moral life. Even Catholicism saves itself from this effect to some extent by recognizing that faith must come first. "I believe in order that I may understand." The demand for proof made by agnostic and sceptic is a misunderstanding of the nature and function of faith which is excused by the fact that Catholic orthodoxy and some Protestant apologists have also misunderstood the place of reason in the religious life and claimed to offer proofs of the existence of God. Protestantism on the whole, however, has repudiated this error. It has recognized that religion is a life of faith. Its dogmatism has rested on claims to revelation attested by experience and recognized by faith. It is unfortunate, however, that Protestant liberalism, resisting dogmatic claims to revelation, and insisting on intelligence in religion, has sometimes made the mistake of claiming that the idea of God can be proved, or at least shown to be so probable that faith could be interpreted as a decision to act upon a basis established by reason with a high degree of probability.

CRITICISM AND JUSTIFICATION OF FAITH

Faith, then, is not dependent upon the positive support of reason. On the other hand, it is not independent of the negative criticism of reason. To say, as does Kierkegaard, that the essential significance of religious faith lies in the belief in the absurd, is not merely nonsense; it is unethical. Man has no right to surrender his reason. He deludes himself if he persuades himself that he believes a contradiction which he knows to be a contradiction. And it is immoral to try to persuade others to believe what one knows they can only accept in defiance of their reason. Faith, therefore, must recognize that, though it does not have to depend on reason, and would cease to be faith if it did, yet its bounds are set by reason and it has no right to transcend them. Faith has its sphere in the realm of "may be," between what is known to be and known not to be. In that sphere ideas have varying logical and empirical probability, and faith must take account of these probabilities.

Faith does not, however, merely adjust the strength of its attachment to an idea to the degree of rational probability attached to it. It adjusts its attachment to the *value* of the idea, and the rational probability of the idea is accepted as one phase of its value. In some situations, e.g., in faith in a bank's solvency, the element of rational probability is the most important consideration in the estimate of value. In other cases, such as faith in the innocence of a friend accused of a crime, the objective evidence is of much less significance in determining the estimate of value by which the attitude of loyalty, or faith, may be justified.

Similarly, the justification of an attitude of religious faith depends upon an estimate of the value of the object as interpreted in the intellectual content of the faith; and

the rational probability of the interpretation constitutes a part of that value. However, in the case of the faith of theism the value of the idea does not increase concomitantly with its probability up toward the point of certainty. As we have seen, if it were to approach certainty, or attain a very high probability, its ethical and personality value would suffer. Its ethical value would also suffer if it had a clear negative probability (i.e., an improbability), for it would then involve a believing against the reasonable balance of evidence. Its optimum value is therefore maintained if it can be shown to have a modest degree of positive probability. It is impossible, of course, to present an exact estimate of the probability of a proposition that is not concerned exclusively with known types of uniformity, but a modest degree of positive probability of the intellectual content of theism could be claimed as demonstrated if it could be shown that there are no good reasons for believing the doctrine false and some good reasons for believing it true.

I think it may be claimed that the history of philosophical discussion has shown this to be the case. As I have discussed these questions extensively elsewhere, however, it will be well to treat them only briefly here. The scepticism common among philosophers is due chiefly to five considerations, all of which we have already shown to be irrelevant to the theistic faith as here stated: (1) The idea that religious belief should, if acceptable, be reasonably defended by arguments convincing to the intelligence. This has been refuted by showing the true nature, basis, and function of faith and its incompatibility with a rational demonstration by argument. If the true relation of faith and reason were understood it would remove half the intellectual objections to theism. (2) The fact that the physical evil in the universe is incompatible with the idea of an omnipotent deity.

This is admitted in the simple faith of Theism, which does not assert omnipotence. (3) The evil of authoritarianism which has entered religion through rationalism and magic. This, however, is also repudiated by the simple faith of theism. (4) The fact that theism has added to its simple faith a mass of doctrine based chiefly on untenable claims to historical revelation. The surrender of these while clinging to the simple faith has the superficial appearance of the gradual, and now almost complete, collapse of a faith *every part of which stands on the same decaying foundation*. This has been shown not to be the case. The faith of theism is a wholesome and reasonable interpretation of a common experience, while the decaying creeds are dubious interpretations of historical facts or legends. This will be further demonstrated in our next chapter. (5) The use in the past of inadequate philosophical arguments to support theism, together with the claim that the existence of God can be proved by reason. In demolishing such arguments, many philosophers felt that they were demolishing theism itself, not realizing that, as we have shown, they were doing faith a service.

MATERIALISM AND DETERMINISM

There remain, however, some philosophical positions, accepted by some philosophers, which would, if sound, constitute good reasons for rejecting the simple theistic faith. The two most important of these are materialism and certain types of determinism. It will be well to say something briefly of these. Materialism is the view that the only reality is matter, the sort of existence that appears in sensory experience, or is revealed through it. Mind, or consciousness, is regarded as simply a peculiar property possessed by certain organizations of matter found in animals and particu-

larly in the human brain. There can, therefore, be no interpenetration of minds, and no influence of mind on mind, except through physical impact on sense organs; minds cannot survive their bodies and there can be no minds other than those of men and animals. Determinism is held in many forms, some of which seek to define a form of self-determination which is not incompatible with individual moral responsibility. The form which is incompatible with theism is that which undermines the recognition of one's own moral responsibility by interpreting causation as a chain of absolutely necessary connection determining the course of all bodily behavior and thought. What we experience as intention, decision, and effort cannot, then, change the course of events from that which antecedent conditions determined they should be ages before the intention, decision, or effort was formed.

These two philosophical positions are highly metaphysical. They claim to know a great deal about the reality that determines the course of our sensory experience, and about the ultimate nature of what does and what does not exist. In particular, their claim to negative knowledge, knowledge of the nonexistence of mind except in limited forms and places, and knowledge of the impossibility of effective voluntary intervention in the course of events, is very bold and sweeping. Modern advances in physics, in the physiology of brain injuries, and in abnormal psychology have cut the ground from under many of the assumptions on which this boldness rested. Even more effective has been contemporary philosophical criticism of the theory of knowledge. This critique has been carried out by pragmatists, positivists, and other naturalistic philosophers who have been innocent of any intention of thereby supporting theism, but it has almost swept the philosophical scene clear of metaphysical materialists who would claim that their view is anything

but a postulate adopted in the interests of the extension of methods of natural science to every sphere of investigation.

As for determinism, most philosophers have learned that they have no right to speak of absolute necessities. Determinism also is only justified as a carefully defined and limited postulate made in the interests of science. Further, when it is once recognized that the entities and laws of which physics speaks are not something proved to exist and operate as described, but simply postulates made for purely scientific purposes, then it becomes clear that the materialistic determinism known as mechanism must certainly be abandoned. For the test of a scientific hypothesis and the utility of a postulate is that it enables the scientist to *predict and control* the course of physical events. Physical events are therefore postulated as both *predictable and controllable* by the thoughts and volitions of the scientist. Thus matter, or the system of physical events, as posited in science, by *definition*, is recognized as subject not only to prediction but also to a limited human control.

THE CONTEMPORARY CRITIQUE OF KNOWLEDGE

Few philosophers today would claim that materialism and determinism (understood as the assertion of a chain of absolute causal necessity unchangeable by intention, decision, and effort) are well-established philosophical positions constituting good reason for rejection of the simple theistic faith. Very many, however, would claim that the contemporary critique of human knowledge leaves no ground for propositions about reality, or existence, which can be used either to support or adversely criticize its beliefs.

The contemporary critique of knowledge most commonly involves the following three points: (1) It rejects synthetic a priori propositions, i.e., propositions asserting

some factual content and held to be immediately known as universally valid. This can be cheerfully accepted by holders of the simple theistic faith for it undermines the evil of rationalism,¹ and such propositions are not needed in the sort of support that faith would find helpful. (2) It rejects the claim that sensory experience reveals a world of material substance, or a system of nonsensory events, as underlying or antecedent to it and determining the course of its appearance; i.e., it rejects materialism and physical realism. This also the holder of the simple theistic faith could accept with equanimity. He can rejoice in the demise of materialism and many types of physical realism, though he might be glad to accept some types of physical realism as a whole—some check on extravagances of mysticism, or as an explanation of the limitations of divine power. (3) It frequently refuses to recognize that we are directly aware of the occurrence of unique mental acts. This is typical of instrumentalism and positivism. The possibility of mental activity as a unique existent is not denied, for that would be a metaphysical position inconsistent with the epistemological critique, but its occurrence and uniqueness are left much in doubt. Here the holder of the simple theistic faith must demur. He holds to the reality of intention, effort, and decision; and recognition of the immediacy of our awareness of these mental activities is a prime point in favor of his position.

The denial of mental acts is made in the attempt to escape from a dualism which, like that of Descartes, would define the mental and the physical in such terms that they have nothing in common and their interrelation therefore becomes unintelligible. The common objects of experience, as given in sensation, are taken as ultimately real. So, too, are images and feelings, but it is denied that they contain anything distinct in nature from sensory objects. Thought

¹ See Chapter 7.

is accounted for by recognizing that some images and sensory objects are related to others by the peculiar relation of symbolism, whereby part of the given content of experience may refer to something not given. The manner in which this relation makes its appearance in the world is recognized as utterly mysterious, but that the occurrence of the symbolic relation involves any new kind of entity or event not present in nonsymbolic experience is denied. The emergence of symbolism is attributed to connections formed by sensory objects and images in past experience, and the mystery is left there.

There are two weaknesses in this position. The first is its ignoring of the question as to what makes the difference between an image or sense experience which is not a symbol and one which is. The difference is not merely that the former is not associated with, and does not recall, some other imagery and the latter does. Association and recall do not constitute meaning. The sound of the word "alpha" may be associated with and recall both "beta" and "A", but it only *means* "A", not beta". The difference is that in certain connections "alpha" is *taken for* "A". It is *intended for* "A". It *refers to* A, not by reason of its own unique properties, or merely by reason of its having appeared together with "A" in the past, but because of the *intentional reference* involved in the way it has been used in the past. However, *taking for*, *referring*, *intending*, and *using* are acts, and their activity does not consist in movement or pressure. They are various modes of the act of *attending* to the contents of experience. Attending, in all its modes (intending, expecting, referring, anticipating, retrospectively interpreting, liking, disliking, deciding, preferring, wanting, loving, hating), is a unique kind of activity, not in any way akin to the activity of sensory objects and images, or the postulated activity of electrons and protons.

This brings us to the second weakness of the position we are criticizing. The process of symbolization does not by any means exhaust that of mental process. Mental activity has its conative as well as a cognitive character. Liking, disliking, wanting, preferring, deciding are conative modes of attention, and are just as distinct as the cognitive modes from the sort of activity performed by sensory, imaginal, and ideational objects. They cannot be analyzed in terms of feeling states to which we may *attend*. There is a sense of the distinction of subjective and objective in which all that can be attended to is objective, and only the *attending* is subjective. It is the subjective in this sense that is missing from the account of experience offered by those who ignore the distinctive nature of mental acts. Experience is bipolar. At one pole is the objective content, consisting of various qualities in various relations. Some of this content is also objective in the other sense of being public, i.e., content for more than one observer, thus making communication possible; other parts of the objective content are subjective in this latter sense, i.e., the private content of only one observer. The other pole of experience is subjective in the former sense, akin to the grammatical usage; it comprises the doer of the action. And this subjective activity is rich in the varying modes referred to by use of the psychological verbs, such as those listed above. This duality of the active and passive elements in experience, the subjective and objective poles, must be faced as a fact. The philosopher, in his anxiety to avoid the difficulties of idealism and dualism, must not allow himself to ignore or blur the distinction between the two poles of experience.

OUR BIPOLAR WORLD

The subjective pole of experience is also part of the content. We are aware of it, though it is difficult, if not

impossible, to attend to it. Attention is directed upon the objective content, and attempts at introspection, seeking to concentrate attention on subjective activity, seem to miss the subjective act and merely discover faint elements of the objective content which are subjective in the second sense, i.e., private, such as muscular tensions. It is this that has convinced many introspectors that the experience of subjective activity must be illusory, and it has helped to support the instrumentalist and positivist denial of the existence of mental acts. Yet there is no doubt that a person is normally aware of when he is attending and when he is not, and can state, *as immediate report of the content of his experience*, that he, at the previous moment, was *attending* to a noise, *intentionally* moving his hand, *anticipating* the movement of another person, *wishing* he would not move, *deciding* on a course of action, *trying hard* not to appear concerned, and so forth.

What is reported in such statements is not states of feeling, such as pleasure or sensation, nor is it imagery, or relations, or passive changes of relation between any of these. The anticipation of a sensation, for example, is not itself a sensation, nor any other kind of feeling or image, nor merely a relation between such. It is a subjective activity, responding to some such objective content. And when we anticipate, we are normally aware of the fact and can report it. Perhaps it is the fact that the so-called "specious present," the lived moment of present experience, contains an extent of time within which we can distinguish before and after, that makes this awareness of our own activity possible; i.e., it may be that the activity we are aware of is that which lies in the earlier part of the moment constituting our present. However this may be, the fact is clear. We are aware commonly of these activities at the moment of performing them, and they are uniquely distin-

guishable from the variously related qualitative content upon which they are directed.

If, in spite of such considerations as these, a philosopher still denies that he has any distinctive experience corresponding to the use of the psychological verbs (e.g., attend, intend, anticipate, strive, resist) then those of us who believe we have this experience can only regard its absence as psychological blindness and attribute it to a sort of occupational disease. It is well known that people who cultivate habits of abstract thinking tend to lose their capacity for visual imagery and it may be that certain habits of philosophical thinking tend to inhibit the noticing of certain common but rather elusive elements in ordinary experience. In any case this is more likely than the alternative theory, that the vast majority of people assume (and when asked report) the occurrence of a unique type of experience they do not have.

The world of which we are a part is therefore a bipolar world. Its objective pole consists of sensory objects, such as tables, chairs, and human bodies, including our own, a large part of which we can immediately feel. We learn that this world of sensory objects must be recognized as much more extensive than any present experience of it, though it is a very puzzling question as to what status it has at moments when it is not part of our experience. That question, however, is of little importance here. What is important is to recognize that the subjective pole consists of a uniquely distinct set of activities which may be classified as mental, or better as interest, processes, for they all consist of taking some kind of interest in the objective world. Further, these interest processes are systematically interrelated to form what we call a mind, and only a small part of this organized whole is aware of itself, or conscious, at any one time. It also has continuity through periods of unconsciousness.

THE PROBLEM OF A WORLD ORDER

To make a theoretical world order out of the discontinuous scraps of our experience we need to postulate some connecting events and relations. The only theories of this kind which can have any positive probability are those which postulate these unknown events and relations as further occurrences of the sort of events and relations which occur in our experience. So long as we keep within these limits, and do not claim *proof* for speculations, we shall not fall foul of the contemporary critique of human knowledge. For the purpose of testing the theistic faith by the criterion of a scientifically reasonable view of the world order we can accept these limitations and criteria. We can even agree to take Hume seriously and make no appeal to any principle of causation, confining ourselves to tentative generalizations concerning the particulars of experience. We must, however, insist on the recognition of subjective activity as well as objective qualities, relations, and events as distinguishable among these particulars.

We find then, at the objective pole of experience, a system of spatiotemporal events, correlated with various sensory qualities, and interrelated in certain uniform ways which make the system to some extent predictable and "retrodictable" as stretching indefinitely into the future and the past. These events make their impact of attraction and repulsion upon the subjective pole and are to a very limited extent controllable by its activity. At the subjective pole we find a system of acts of attention, or interest processes, teleologically interrelated, i.e., organized as acts of attention to an end in view and to means to such ends. No end is final, every end in view, when attained, becoming in its turn a means to a further end. We find that the temporal continuity of *conscious* processes is broken every day, but

that their teleological continuity survives the breaks. Teleological continuity is that continuity of means and ends whereby, in conscious experience, the end attained in one activity becomes the material and motive out of which new strivings toward new ends are generated and may serve as means to the new ends. It is this continuity that constitutes the identity of a personality, and the personality has unity so far as its ends form an integrated and mutually supporting whole. The subjective activity of the individual thus manifests a teleological structure which survives the periods of unconsciousness.

It was formerly thought that this continuity of teleological structure through periods of unconsciousness requires a substantial continuity, a mental substance, or else a dependence of subjective continuity on the continuity of the brain, as explanation. Modern psychology, however, has found abundant evidence of the continuous functioning of subjective activity through periods of unconsciousness. Consciousness is merely the retention in the present of memory of the immediate past and the exercise of powers of recall. Subjective activity, as attention to the immediate present and immediate future, may function along lines of established habit, in established purposive forms, without this retrospective element. Such an unconscious interest process appears to be continuous and forms a massive background to the small part of mental activity which is conscious. Even in its unconscious phases, it has teleological continuity. When unconscious feeling-striving processes are recovered to consciousness we find that the felt end, or result, of the one activity functions as material, motive, and means for further strivings generated from it and working toward new ends, in conformity with the dominant structure. This may therefore be taken to be the characteristic form of all feeling-striving, whether or not it ever becomes conscious.

An individual mind, therefore, can be regarded as a continuously growing organization of such interest processes, its partial and intermittent conscious activity serving only to make possible the reorientation of interests in the light of past experience and thus the progressive modification of the dominant structure.

This continuity of subjective process through periods of unconsciousness also suggests the solution of another problem—that of the nature of vital process as distinct from both conscious mental activity and mere physicochemical activity. It may well be that all vital process is a primitive form of unconscious subjective activity transmitted from parent to offspring, the definite forms of the subjective processes combining with the distinctive physicochemical structure to constitute the distinctive sensitivity, typical behavior patterns, and growth tendencies of the species. Once it is recognized that vital process, though something less than conscious mental activity, is more than merely physicochemical, the principle of economy of hypotheses would suggest this as a very probable solution of the problem. Whatever may be the answer to this question, however, we are still faced with that of the beginning of subjective activity.

In answer to this question there are four alternatives. (1) Subjective activity may have arisen spontaneously² at the beginning of the evolution of life on earth, and its teleological and temporal continuity may thence be maintained (for the most part unconsciously) through the whole process of development. (2) It may have arisen spontaneously at some relatively late stage of animal development and thence have been similarly maintained from generation to generation. (3) It may arise or have arisen spontaneously

² I.e., without teleological and temporal continuity with antecedent subjective activity.

at some time after conception in each individual human and animal organism in which it is manifested. (4) Subjective activity may not be confined to living organisms but may be present in our environment as a more general feature of the world order (a life or mind of the universe) which has teleological and temporal continuity with the specific form of subjective activity which we find emerging on earth, whether this emerges separately in the life history of each individual that manifests it or whether it emerges at the beginning of the process of biological evolution, or at some later stage of animal evolution, and is thence continuous through all generations.

Now there is no logical impossibility about any of these alternatives. It is not self-contradictory to deny that out of nothing nothing comes, nor is it self-evident that antecedent conditions must contain something in some way resembling the succeeding events. Nevertheless, no positive probability can be claimed for any hypothesis concerning the antecedents of an event unless some analogous case can be found in experience. It is therefore clear that no positive probability can be claimed for any of the first three hypotheses, for they postulate a negative proposition for which no analogue can be found. If the subjective activity now manifest in the world is recognized as a continuum of subjective activity transmitted from parent to offspring, then the hypothesis is that there was no subjective activity of any kind present among the immediate antecedents of this terrestrial chain of subjective activity and having teleological continuity with it. If subjective activity is regarded as beginning afresh at some point in the life history of each individual, then the hypothesis is that there is never any subjective activity present among the immediate antecedents of these beginnings and teleologically continuous with them.

To hypotheses of this kind it is clear that there can be no analogue, for no succession of events outside the range of subjective activity could be analogous to the occurrence of a subjective event at all; and no succession of events within the range of subjective activity could be analogous to the occurrence of a subjective event without a subjective activity as antecedent. It cannot even be claimed that within the realm of physical events there are known sequences where the later event differs as much from anything among its immediate antecedents as a subjective event does from physical events, for all physical events are much more like each other than they are like subjective events. The conclusion, therefore, is obvious. The first three hypotheses, postulating the emergence of subjective activity on earth without antecedents in the form of some kind of subjective activity, though not logically impossible, are hypotheses for which no positive probability can be claimed.

Belief in such an hypothesis can only be logically justified if it can be shown that all logically possible alternatives are subject to objections which create for them some degree of improbability rather than positive probability. If several logically possible alternatives are equally devoid of positive or negative probability, then each of these alternatives is equally probable. Religious faith could be content if its thesis were one of such equally open alternatives. It can feel itself stronger, however, if it can claim some positive probability for its thesis while there is none for the alternatives. Now the thesis of the theistic faith involves the view that our subjective activity has teleological continuity with a more general subjective activity of the world order antecedent to it. There is, as we have seen, no well-grounded objection to this thesis and no positive consideration in favor of its alternatives. So it is, at least, a thesis with which religious faith may logically be content. We can,

however, go further, and claim that there is, for this thesis, some positive probability.

In its favor, the consideration that it is based on good analogy can at least be claimed. In psychological study we find innumerable cases where subjective activity seems to emerge without teleological connection with antecedent subjective activity, but investigation shows that the appearance of unconnected emergence (or an emergence connected only with physiological processes) is false. The antecedent subjective activity was there, conscious or unconscious, and teleologically connected with that which later appears as if spontaneously. This is so common that we have little hesitation in generalizing and affirming the teleological continuity of the whole subjective activity of each individual, whatever the apparent gaps.

There is also good reason, as has been briefly suggested above, to believe that there is similar continuity, teleological and temporal, of the subjective activity or feeling-striving process manifested in the whole system of biological evolution. Subjective activity appears to be integrated with the physicochemical system of the living organism throughout the whole process of evolutionary development, and teleologically continuous throughout. In living organisms we recognize its presence through certain peculiarities in the operation of their physicochemical systems. If (as seems very probable) these peculiarities indicate the presence of subjective activity, they could indicate either that subjective activity is present here but absent elsewhere, or that there is present in living organisms a distinctive form of subjective activity which is teleologically continuous with another form antecedently operative outside organic structures. Which is the more likely? If we answer this question in conformity with the generalization concerning teleological continuity, found to be justified in other cases of our

search for the antecedents of a subjective activity, then it is the latter hypothesis that must be adopted. Of the two possibilities, it alone has any positive probability. And in the light of the strength of the generalization on which it is based, the probability would seem to be fairly strong.

If it is contended that subjective activity can only be recognized as appearing after conception, or after birth, in the higher animals and man the logical position is just the same. The hypothesis that the subjective activity in which the individual mind is initiated is not teleologically continuous with any antecedent subjective activity is an hypothesis without positive probability. The only positive probability belongs to the hypothesis of teleological continuity. For all research into the beginnings of subjective activities, through the whole life history of the individual, however lacking it may be in conscious continuity, indicates that subjective activities are teleologically continuous with antecedent subjective activities. We may have great difficulty in finding these antecedents, but we have learned to assume with confidence that they have occurred. Somewhere in the early life history we come to a point where, according to the view under discussion, it is asserted that no further traces of subjective activity can be found. But even this does not justify the assumption that the initial subjective activity of the type that is recognized is different from all other instances of its kind in that it arises without teleological continuity with subjective activity of *any* form. Subjective activity, as known, is the sort of event that has teleological continuity with antecedent subjectivity of some form, and the only hypothesis concerning the origin of any particular series of subjective activities that can have any positive probability is one that postulates its teleological connection with antecedent subjective activity.

The thesis thus far defended, however, does not amount to that of the theistic faith. It could be the case that the subjective activity, postulated as operative outside of living organisms and antecedent to the specialized forms we find on earth, was and is merely an unconscious feeling-striving of a minimal kind, not one which envisaged the possibility of developing individuals of human intelligence by initiating an interest process concerned with the sort of constructive activity and social intercourse with which we find life on earth is engaged. To accept this suggestion, however, would again be the acceptance of much the less probable of two alternatives. When the question concerns results reached by a process that is admittedly teleological, and we find individuals struggling shortsightedly with tasks set them by their environment and unintentionally realizing results of a significance and value to the whole community of individuals, far transcending anything envisioned by any one of them, experience shows that it is only reasonable to assume that their efforts are to a great extent coordinated by an intelligence that is guiding them, through some control over the environment, in the realization of a plan. If the coordination is not perfect, this does not indicate absence of any over-all plan but merely the absence of complete regimentation by the agency envisioning the plan, or some incompleteness in control over the environment.

There can be no doubt that the whole picture of biological and social evolution is one of comparatively unregulated, freely striving but shortsighted individuals, whose efforts are coordinated to the realization of a succession of such goals beyond the comprehension of those at the time participating in them. There is therefore very good reason to believe that the subjective activity of the world order antecedent to this evolutionary process, and from which it has sprung, has prepared the environment, and through it

coordinates the activity, to realize those larger ends and values which it has already manifested and continues to Promise.

We are thus led to a world view which accords well with the simple theistic faith and with that interpretation of it which has chosen the term "Father" as expressing the relation of God to man. In our speculative but reasonable philosophical hypothesis, we find a world mind which is the ultimate source of our lives, and whose purpose our lives somehow fulfill. We may identify this mind with that of the God of the theistic faith, conceived as a Father who loves his children and is concerned to have them love one another. At the same time we may recognize that our world view gives us no ground for attributing omnipotence to the world mind, but suggests that mind (or subjective activity) has only limited control over matter (its objects). Our own subjective activity has only limited control over the physical order, and though the world mind may well have much more control than do we, there is still no ground for postulating omnipotence. The objective world order is the complement which makes one whole with the subjective activity of the world mind which is able to experience it, predict its course, and work its purposes in it. If we recognize that a *person* is the unified whole of body and mind, of subjective activity and objective process in mutual relation, then the world order is a Person, and the God of theism is a personal God in Whom we, as subsidiary persons, live, and move and have our being.³

³ This type of philosophical theism is sometimes called "Panentheism." It has been ably defended in several books by Charles Hartshorne, who says of it: "Its chief recent representative among philosophers is Whitehead, but we trace it back to Plato, Ramanuja, and Schelling; and something like it can be found in most of the outstanding theologians of recent times—Berdayev, Nygren, Niebuhr, and even, to a lesser extent, Barth." Charles Hartshorne and William L. Reese (eds.), *Philosophers Speak of God* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1953), p. vii.

THE DESTINY OF MAN

Finally, we are led to consider the idea of immortality. This is not a part of the simple theistic faith, i.e., it is not an essential part of the intellectual content involved in the attitude of devotion to a God of love, beyond ourselves and society, and supremely worthy of our devotion. It is an afterthought of that devotion, as is the concept of God as Father, i.e., as Source of our lives. But it is an afterthought which is almost necessarily implied in the concept of the love of God. To love means to seek to preserve and develop that which is loved. The love of God to man, therefore, means that He must seek to preserve all that is worth preserving in our personalities, and to give them further opportunities of development, if He can. That God loves man and requires us to love one another indicates that man's personality is worth preserving. The only question is whether God is able to do so. The theistic faith may therefore be taken as logically implying that we should *hope* for immortality. And philosophy would need to present strong negative arguments in its world view to make it reasonable to think this hope is vain.

Our discussion of what is implied in a reasonable world view would, on the other hand, strengthen the theistic hope. It indicates that our minds are systems of subjective activity rooted in that of the divine. They are interest processes in the mind of God which, for His good purpose, have been given opportunity for semi-independent development. They are not dependent upon the body and nervous system for their existence, but only for an instrument of effective action in the physical order. It is true that the interest processes that form a human mind largely consist of interests in the body and what can be done by the use of it; and such interests must cease to be effective at death.

Yet these interests and habits are, in large part, such as the mature mind may well discard with relief. The mature mind develops interests in intersubjective intercourse and inquiry, and in imaginative and aesthetic construction, which are of far greater importance. It is only necessary that there should be possibility of communication of mind with mind without the physical medium of the senses for this phase of life to go on.

In this connection recent experimental work with telepathy leaves little reason for doubt that this can occur even with our minds absorbed, as they normally are, in attention to sensory sources of information. When we are forced by death to surrender this, we may well develop those other means of communication to which only a few people are occasionally attentive now. There is, therefore, good reason to believe that the major part of our personality, our interests in the whole nonsensory range of existence, may survive death and form a nucleus from which further developments of personality may grow. Our modern psychological knowledge makes this a reasonable possibility. The theistic faith that God is love transforms it into a lively hope.

If we take together the pictures given us by the simple theistic faith and a world view which grows out of a recognition of the bipolar character of experience, then we see that this life of ours functions as a phase in the life and larger purposes of God. God is love. His nature is to create and care for beings who develop their individuality within His own. As the love of finite individuals is to gather other individuals to themselves as objects of thought and care and harmonious communion, so the love of the infinite⁴ being is to create within Himself finite individuals who grow, by their own free choosing and with His constant care, into greater and greater thought, care, understanding, and har-

⁴ I.e., "all-inclusive" and "everlasting."

monious communion with one another and with Him, approaching an ever-increasing union with the divine in which all opposition disappears, though individuality is not lost. The divine life is thus constantly enriched by the growing into harmony with Him of individuals who ultimately differ from Him only in that they each see the course of time from a different particular standpoint in its ever-growing history.

In this process, the objective world which we call material functions as medium of individuation. Life consists of planning, striving, achieving. If matter were completely amenable to the divine will, there could be no divine life, only a timeless state of being, and that being would not be love. Subjective activity requires an objective order that is somewhat resistant and only gradually malleable to its plans. Love, furthermore, requires that there be more individuals than one. It requires individuals that have grappled with the objective order in different times and places and become different, yet can communicate and become in thought and intention one. This is achieved in the divine life by preparing within the objective order a place where the material conditions are such that a finite, spatially and temporally localized, subjective activity can exercise a limited control. In exercise of that control it grows, multiplies and evolves until individuals capable of abstract thought emerge. Such individuals develop interests that go beyond the control of their bodies and of the surrounding world that serves the body's needs. They develop interests in one another's subjective activity, and in God, and in the beauty and truth of the world apart from its function as a means to their physical needs.

Thus the life of the body serves first to develop an individual that sees the world from a private point of view in world history, and then to enable that individual to reach

out in thought to become a system of interests no longer engaged exclusively with the objective world order, but with the development of relations of cooperation and communion with the wider order of subjective activity of which it is a part, seeing its world through other eyes than its own and shaping not merely a material, but an intersubjective or social order. Then, because these interests retain both objects and means of pursuing them after the body is left behind, the spirit (or system of interest activities of this higher order) survives bodily death. To it death is a release for a larger life.

In earthly life the interest system is dominated by attention to the normal channels of sense experience and muscular control. Even abstract thought and imagination cannot secure clarity except by means of the images which are spoken words. Purposive activity is concerned above all to secure the material means for its ends. Habits are inevitably predominantly egoistic in the sense of an extrovert egoism, even if not introverted. True self-understanding is limited because so much of the basic experience that underlies our motivation is impossible of recall, the channels of interest being dominated by concern with the present and the future, to the exclusion of rediscovery of the past. The more introverted a person is the more he needs such self-understanding and the less he is capable of it.

From all the external factors which tend to maintain such egoism and preoccupation death must come as a release. Even the psychopath will begin to relax and, as psychotherapy has shown us, with relaxation comes a flood of memory, with memory comes understanding, and with understanding a passing of the psychological tensions that distort personality. With release from external pressures and internal tensions will come a new interest in understanding others, a seeking of intersubjective intercourse

with an interest in the other, not in self-display and exercise of power. With growth in understanding of others must come forgiveness, affection and esteem. The process may well take time, long efforts at understanding, mutual aid, progressive communication and learning. It may be more difficult for some than for others. But the end should be the same for all—integration of the individual with the social whole of which he has been a more or less isolated part—integration, with a leveling up to appreciation of the best in the social whole. This should be the first stage in the growth of a mind released from the body that has been its medium of individuation. Beyond that we can envisage infinite possibilities of growth in understanding, and discovery of new ranges of activity, moving ever toward the culmination in which the individual attains complete harmony with the divine, his life enriching the divine life without tension or opposition, but with completeness in the vision of the ever-growing panorama of time seen from his unique point of view.

This picture is a logical deduction from our present knowledge of man combined with the faith that God is love. It will be criticized by some as not presenting a dark enough picture of sin and its need of punishment. Sin, however, is its own punishment, in the bitterness of spirit and regrets it causes here and hereafter. And most of what we think of as sin we now know is not merely the deed of the individual but of society and of forces beyond our foresight and control. It is God's purpose to overcome sin, and sin is not overcome by fear of punishment, nor is it purged by suffering. It is only overcome and purged by understanding and by love. These are the forces with which sin must be fought in this life. They are the forces with which the victory must lie in the life to come. This is the hope that is born of faith, as it is the faith that is born of penitence and love.