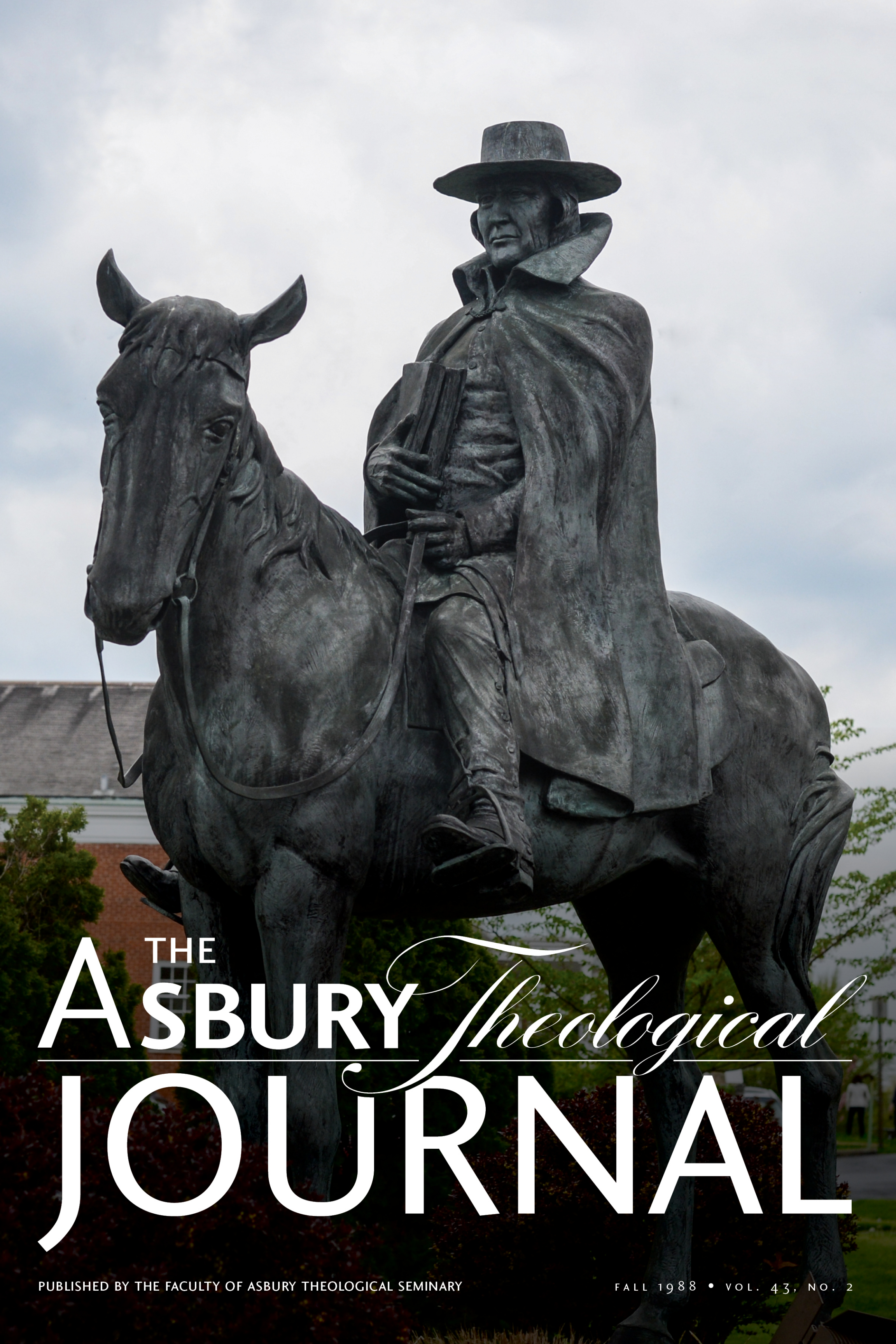
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# *Editorial Note: Aldersgate Time*

1988 is Aldersgate year. Methodists and other Wesleyans remember, celebrate and praise Wesley's experience on the evening of May 24, 1738. To the surprise of many, Wesley suddenly seems to be "in." During the latter part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth, there emerged Wesley "biographies" both here and there, with contents more hagiographical than biographical. Around the middle of our century the reaction was clear: John Wesley was slowly relegated to the dark chambers of dust and forgottenness. When I, in the early sixties, did graduate work in the theology of John Wesley at one of the United Methodist Universities which had excellent collections of Wesley material, we were only three working in that area, none of us American. Today, however, a new generation of young Wesley scholars are emerging in the U.S. Celebrations such as mentioned above, are no longer frowned upon. What has happened? Does John Wesley have anything to contribute to our lives as Christians today? Or, as others may say, have we fallen prey to the pleasant attractions of romanticized hagiography--although we appear to have lost the much condemned (by some) and praised (by others) triumphalism that seemed to be firmly yoked with the hagiographical emphasis?

I wrote twenty years ago:

> Modern Methodism, for all practical purposes, must be considered Pelagian, with little spiritual power and very limited intercourse with God in the lives of the individuals. The sacraments have become "empty," mere signs; the Word has lost the high place it should have in the devotional life of the believer, and prayer has often become purely formalistic or non-existent. On the background of such a situation, which, of course, will admit of exceptions, the need for a rediscovery of Wesley's basic emphasis is urgently needed. The basic lack of God-given-spiritual power will demand that the means of grace again be given, not reverence, but a dynamic function in the common, as well as in the private, life. Only through a disciplined use of these means, springing out of hearts longing to see their people and their church arise with new spiritual vigor, can the great task of renewal be made possible. Wesley's emphasis upon God's work and initiative, coupled with man's responsibility, will serve as a much-needed corrective to our self-sufficient, middle-class, work righteousness.

I do not think I would say anything different if I had to write on the same topic today. I would just add that this concerns not only Methodism, but also other expressions of the Christian faith.

I believe Wesley is highly relevant for us today, for several reasons. First, his theology is a "theology of the center": He keeps in a fruitful tension and balance such key doctrines as sanctification/justification; spiritual/practical; personal/communal; the need for spiritual experience/the necessity for using the means of grace; practical, concrete life/a holy life; God's grace/human works and response; and much more.

Secondly, perhaps more importantly, we must recapture the preaching of and the witnessing to sin and grace, God's forgiving love, and our greatful response in commitment to Jesus Christ as our Lord. As a consequence, the longing search for the fullness of this grace must emerge as holiness, our being sanctified through faith, which again is working through love, in service to God and neighbor.

Finally, if we are to avoid the shoals of neglect, indifference or, as Wesley called it, "enthusiasm" (fanaticism, i.e., believing one can reach the goal without the means), and escape the dark caves of closed sacerdotalism, we'd better pay close attention to Wesley's guidance.

I also wrote 20 years ago:

> Without a recovery, not necessarily of the conceptual framework and practice, but of the substance of Wesley's theology of the sacraments and the means of grace, the future of the Methodist Church as the living body of Christ is rather doubtful....The distinction between "evangelicalism and 'sacramentalism' must never be applied to Wesley. For him these two aspects were one, and later Methodism has paid dearly for tearing apart what God has united."

Is John Wesley relevant for today? Yes, indeed, he is.

BISHOP OLE BORGEN
Northern European Area, The United Methodist Church
Visiting Lecturer, Asbury Theological Seminary

# The Conversion of the Wesleys --1738 Reconsidered

JOHN LAWSON

John Wesley's famous definition of evangelical saving faith occurs towards the beginning of his *Standard Sermons*: "It is not barely a speculative rational thing, a cold, lifeless assent, a train of ideas in the head; but also a disposition of the heart." (Sermon I.i.4.) Here are two qualities in principle distinct one from another, yet in authentic Christian experience inseparably connected. There is first the rational basis of Christian faith, "a train of ideas in the head." This is something reliable, which can be learned, argued about, and to which rational and responsible assent can be given. And built upon this foundation, or rather, flowering from this root, there is "a disposition of the heart." This is the mysterious gift of God, and is immediate and personal. One can by wise teaching be persuaded to desire it, but one cannot by learning come to possess it. It is a gift.

That this must be so springs from the circumstance that our Christian faith is an historic faith, and also a life of present fellowship with a living personal Savior. Most certainly our faith is not based on subjective feelings. We totally repudiate the seductive suggestion of unbelief that religion took its origin in the fact that our primitive ancestors woke to consciousness in a mysterious world full of uncanny dangers, and found a compelling psychological need to imagine a protective "father figure" to

*This article was first delivered as the annual lecture of the Wesley Fellowship in Britain, and is released for publication in America by that Society. Further texts of the hymns discussed in this article, and the texts of other important Wesley hymns, are printed and commented on, with full analysis of the Scripture references in them, in* The Wesley Hymns as a Guide to Scriptural Teaching *(written by John Lawson, published by Zondervan.)*

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supply a sense of security, and that we believers still cling to the idea of God because we desire comfort in a tragic and dangerous world. The foundation of Christian faith is rational knowledge of God's saving acts performed upon the plane of history.

The Old Testament contains the record of God's choice of His Chosen People, and of His discipline of them through historic experience and the teaching of the prophets, until there was a people and a time prepared for the coming of Christ. Thus the Old Testament speaks of Christ, and is Christian, as well as Hebrew Scripture. In the New Testament there is witness to those historic facts about Christ which are requisite to the preaching of the gospel--His birth, character, teaching, acts, death and resurrection. In the New Testament, also, there is the first formative and authoritative interpretation of the theological and spiritual meaning of these facts, through the influence of the Holy Spirit. Thus in Scripture there is the essential foundation of all doctrine.

If Scripture gives a clear witness to some point of belief, then to the Christian that is definitive, final. Yet how is Scripture to be interpreted? This is not purely an individual concern. The reliable interpretation of Scripture requires, under the guidance of the Spirit, the consensus of thought of long centuries of Christian experience from that first day to this, among men and women of many and various gifts and temperaments, social and cultural backgrounds. In the broad sense, then, Scripture is to be interpreted through tradition. Yet there is also a place for reason, for "a three-fold cord is not quickly broken." The interpreters in the Church must not only be devout, reverent and Spirit-guided--though that is essential if they are to discern truth in Scripture--they must also be informed in sacred learning. Nor are Christians antiquarians, who love a position simply because it is venerable and accustomed. Tradition as well as exposition must be put through the sieve of reason.

All this, however, though the indispensable foundation of faith, is not more than "a train of ideas in the head." It is a body of belief meriting intellectual assent, though it must not be assumed that this assent is "cold and lifeless." It may well be a matter of profound and sincere conviction. Nevertheless, the body of reliable scriptural belief only becomes full, evangelical faith, "the faith that worketh by love," when it captivates the heart and the imagination as well as the mind, when it moves the affections and emotions in such a way as to stir the moral will to action.

It is at this point that mention must be made of the cherished evangelical principle of "the open Bible." We judge that this is not to be taken to mean that the uninstructed Christian man or woman can, as an isolated individual in a private corner, divine all sound

doctrine from the Bible. "The open Bible" belongs to the sphere of public and private devotion, of worship and prayer, rather than of theological instruction. It is the experience of Christian people that if the sincere searcher, coming to the Bible with the eyes of a modicum of informed Christian belief, reads in the attitude of reverent devotion, then the Holy Spirit can visit with the blessed experience that a text lights up with spiritual illumination. Our Lord, as it were, "steps out of the page," and brings to the heart the personal experience of His living presence, and of love shed abroad. The grand case in point is that formative pioneers of the evangelical way, such as St. Augustine, Luther and Wesley, came to their liberating experience through Scripture in just this way. Here is the mandate for all searchers to read the Bible, and to hear it preached.

It is a familiar truth that whereas the thinking mind, with its intelligent convictions, is the rudder on the ship, the engine which moves the human will to effective action lies in the emotions. Thus both parts are necessary. A Christian and scriptural "train of ideas in the head," though of itself an excellent thing, may of itself constitute only a sincere but powerless religion. It is uncharitable to say of such a believer that he or she is not treading in the paths of Christian salvation. However, such a one will not enjoy the peace of mind and joy in God which is the good purpose of God for His children. Even more of importance, such a one will not be fully equipped to be an effective and winning witness to the Christian gospel. In the last resort, the divine purpose in "a full personal experience of Christ" is not to make us happy, but to make us useful to God. On the other hand, to be possessed in imagination and emotion without a secure grounding in authentic Christian and scriptural knowledge is to have an engine without a rudder. This sort of religion is at best weak Christian sentimentality, at worst, the perilous path of fanaticism.

Those who are wise enough to wish for Christian instruction have something which they can usefully do. They can follow the example of the "more noble" people of Berea who, having "received the word" under the guidance of apostles "searched the scriptures daily, whether these things were so" (Acts 17:11). However, those who are painfully aware of the poverty of their personal experience cannot hope to improve themselves by their own efforts. There is no profit for the heart to say within itself: "Oh, I ought to have more sense of the presence of God, more delight in prayer, more love to men and women round about me," and to repeat desperately a hundred times: "Oh, I ought! Oh, I ought! Oh, I ought!" To seek to work oneself up into an experience is the path to artificiality, and thence perhaps to

despair. A man who is distressed to find that his marriage is threatened has some things which he can try to do, and which he can rightly do. He can try to be understanding to his wife, to be courteous, to be just, to be forgiving. But he cannot try to love, for the spring of pure personal affection is spontaneous. And so it is with our standing before God. If all we had to do to please God was to obey Him, the more fortunate among us in temperament, habits and background might at a pinch try to save ourselves. But God requires obedience for the sake of love. Whereas we can try to make ourselves obey, we cannot, by trying, make ourselves love. This is why there is so little use in conventional exhortations that we ought to love God and our neighbor. And this is the essential reason why salvation is by grace. Divine grace is not merely assistance to make it easier to do something which if we try hard we can do for ourselves. It is the power of God to do for us what we cannot do. All we can do if we would be granted the "full personal experience of Christ" is to wait upon God for Him to bestow His "unspeakable gift," in the time and in the measure adapted to our need. And we are to wait upon God not in indiscipline, but in the appointed means of grace, expectantly using them, but not trusting them. Many well-intentioned plans for evangelism have miscarried at that point. Some have supposed that the Church can by its devotional efforts work itself up to the point when it can, as it were, constrain the "showers of blessing." This is a subtle branch of salvation by works. We cannot go through "a great door and effectual" to the work of God, however much we desire, unless God opens it, and leads us through.

A great example of these principles is the evangelical experience of the Wesleys. It is often assumed that the "formal Churchmen" of the Holy Club did not understand evangelical doctrine. It is said that by the Aldersgate Street experience they were brought to a new form of doctrine. This is clearly an exaggeration. John Wesley does indeed express surprise when, in conversation with the Moravians, he came across the idea of instantaneous conversion not as something limited to the apostolic or ancient Church, but as a matter of present experience. He was also surprised, and deeply impressed, at testimonies to abounding peace, and joy in the Lord (cf. *Journal*, April 21, 1738). However, these are things connected with "the disposition of the heart," the apprehension of Christian truth in personal experience. They are matters of spiritual devotion rather than the body of doctrine properly so called.

John Wesley had been brought up to accept that salvation is by the grace of God, and had always accepted the doctrine of justification by faith. These truths are enunciated in the Articles and Homilies of the Church of England, which he regularly cites as

the authoritative standards of "our own church." The element which was revolutionary was the notion that one could venture outside the decent and disciplined confines of the Church with this gospel. The mind of Wesley is revealed in the celebrated and moving testimony recorded in the *Journal* for March 4-6, 1738. He writes: "Peter Böhler, by whom (in the hand of the great God) I was, on Sunday the 5th clearly convinced of unbelief; of the want of that faith whereby alone we are saved." That was the immediate impression, candidly recorded. Yet when he got round to publishing for the guidance of his people, there is the later footnote added and also candidly recorded, reflecting a more considered verdict: "whereby alone we are saved - *with the full Christian salvation*." So there are in fact degrees of faith, even degrees of authentic justifying faith (cf. *Journal* December 31, 1739). The "unbelief" of which he was convinced was not resistance to sound doctrine, but inability to "feel."

The response to Böhler's famous challenge "Preach faith till you have it; and then, because you have it you will preach faith" is "I began preaching this new doctrine, though my soul started back from the work. The first person to whom I offered salvation by faith alone, was a prisoner under sentence of death." What, may we ask, was "the new doctrine?" Hardly, "justification by faith," considered formally as a doctrinal position. Possibly the emphasis "alone" was a new note. However, the sense of the passage surely is that the chief thing which was new was the notion that one could take justification by faith to a man who was in the desperate condition of Clifford, awaiting execution. "My soul started back from the work" because until that time he had been "a zealous asserter of the impossibility of a death-bed repentance." What was coming new to Wesley was an engagement of the heart, more than a conviction of the theological mind.

The same point arises in connection with Wesley's preaching of holiness. We are familiar with the proposition that Wesley regarded it as the distinctive mission of Methodism "to spread scriptural holiness throughout the land." It is significant that he always sought to vindicate the truth of his preaching by demonstrating that the doctrine was not new. It was part of the original tradition, and he himself had always upheld it. Here is an example of the gulf between the modern "liberal" theological mind and the traditionalist mind of Wesley. Nowadays a scholar commonly seeks to establish his credentials by affirming that he is abreast of the latest developments. To Wesley the mark of a true doctrine was that it was old, as was the manner of the writers of the ancient Church. So he rejoices to find "Perfect Love" in the good old *Book of Common Prayer*, citing the Collect for Purity. He points

out that he lived in pursuit of holiness as an Oxford student, long before Aldersgate Street.

Surely there is something of this behind the dialogue recorded in the *Journal* for November 25, 1739, of Wesley's first visit to Exeter. He preached in the beautiful Norman Church of St. Mary's Arches, just 'round the corner from the Mint Methodist, where I worship. He writes, in the morning "I preached at St. Mary's, on, 'The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.' [We may deduce the gist of what he said from Sermon VII: Real religion is not common honesty, regular church attendance and almsgiving, but inward holiness, and joy in God.] Dr. Wight told me, after sermon, 'Sir, you must not preach in the afternoon. Not,' said he, 'that you preach any false doctrine. I allow all that you have said is true; and it is the doctrine of the Church of England. But it is not guarded; it is dangerous; it may lead people into enthusiasm or despair.' " (And the nature of these objections is appropriately laid out in Sermon I.iii.3-7.) Wesley was doubtless gratified that Prebendary Wight had sufficient knowledge and candor to recognize that what had been preached was not an innovation, considered as a body of doctrine. What was new and disturbing was the way in which he said it! It was the application from the heart to the heart.

We are aware of the intangible but potent difference between evangelical doctrine as sincerely accepted by the mind and as captivating the heart. It is sadly possible to be an Evangelical in the one sense, but not evangelical in the other. I remember many years ago my honored tutor, that learned and evangelical soul, Dr. R. Newton Flew, was disconcerted by my confession that I sometimes felt reserve in singing the well-loved lines:

> My chains fell off, my heart was free;
> I rose, went forth, and followed thee.

What I was feeling after was this. Here was I, a young man of an evangelical background, who had, thank God, as a youth come to a genuine conversion experience, and who was an entirely sincere believer in and preacher of "our doctrines." Nevertheless, as I read the moving testimony of the Wesleys I was painfully aware that my personal experience and my evangelistic passion were low-key compared to that of my heroes. And this was not because in anything I had consciously been disobedient to the heavenly vision. It was simply the effect of my personality and the times in which I lived. It has been my joy and pride to be a preacher of the gospel, and a Methodist minister. I look back on the work I have done,

with its modest success, with sincere satisfaction. In my early days I desired with a great desire that God would powerfully use me in the revival of His work, yet somehow He never laid His hand on me in quite that manner. So after these years I have to accept that in character and gifts and calling I am what I am, and not someone else I might wish to be, because God has made me that way.

Surely, this is where our Church now is. We know that emasculated and unevangelical doctrine sadly flourishes in some quarters of the Church. It is important, I think, that friends of evangelical truth should take an informed and a charitable judgment of this phenomenon. It does not generally spring from carelessness for the truth, or conscious hypocrisy. The fact is that if one's personal experience, and experience of preaching, makes evangelical fervor hard to sustain, evangelical doctrine gradually ceases to be credible. If one's sense of God has grown dim, it is hard to speak convincingly about the Living God. It is easy to refer to "the ground of being," a phrase not false in itself, but inadequate. It is more congenial to speak of Jesus as a great teacher, which He is, than as an atonement. Not a few teachers coming from a Christian background, and sincerely wishing still to call themselves Christians, have discovered that with the passage of years, "the faithless coldness of the times," and the prevailing intellectual atmosphere of the secular world have gradually chilled down both themselves and their congregations. So they instinctively seek to make Christianity easier to believe by half-believing men and women by lightening the load of doctrine. This is a fatal step, which makes the ailment worse. So we judge that "reconstructed" theology is not the faith of the future being creatively pioneered, as some would assure us. It is residual Christian faith, sincere so far as it goes, but faith observed in process of dissolution, like the Cheshire Cat gradually vanishing, until in some extreme cases only the grin is left. The only remedy is one provided by God, namely, widespread spiritual revival, such as will produce more and more convinced and convincing preachers, and congregations prepared to respond. This is what happened before. The revivals of spiritual devotion which marked the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries dispelled the miasma of latitudinarianism, Deism and thinly disguised Unitarianism, which had so widely prevailed, and restored to credibility the traditional doctrine.

Some will accuse my own Methodist Church of evangelical decay. It is my distinct impression, gained from helping to examine candidates for the preachers' plan, and for the ministry, and from working with local preachers in their studies, that the great majority of those who offer themselves have a genuine

personal experience of Christ, and an authentic sense of divine call. When, synod by synod, we Methodist ministers acknowledge that we believe and preach our doctrines, I think in the main this is true. Our difficulty is that, though our hearts have been touched, they are not sufficiently engaged. It is hard for even the most resolute preacher to live and minister unaffected by the world in which we live. So we sing:

Enlarge, inflame, and fill my heart
With boundless charity divine;

but we do not always expect the prayer to be answered because our expectations have been lowered by the experience of apathy in our hearers. However, this is not the end, because "there is a God in heaven." If His witnesses are faithful in bad times as well as good He can work "His work, His strange work." So we have to wait upon Him in believing prayer, though our cry is bound to be "O Lord, how long!"

This expectation is in fact our confidence. We cannot hope to outbid the massive apparatus of the secular world in resources for propaganda. If competition of that sort were our only hope we should indeed have arrived in "the post-Christian era." We cannot forget that that is just what intelligent and sympathetic observers were saying of England when the events we commemorate were taking place. Joseph Butler, Bishop of Bristol, was the most learned defender of the Christian faith in his day. When invited to become Archbishop of Canterbury, he declined, on the ground that "I have not strength to support a falling Church." That is what it looked like in a day of frequent emasculated doctrine, relaxed discipline and small congregations. Yet during that time there endured God's righteous remnant in the Church, and God was preparing His secret weapon. It is sad that the good and wise bishop could not see the signs of the times, and was repelled by the teaching of Wesley. On a famous occasion he said to Wesley: "Sir, the pretending to extraordinary revelations and gifts of the Holy Ghost is a horrid thing, a very horrid thing." He had his case, for there were some pretenders to divine inspiration of which this was true, just as there are in Britain today. The difference was that Wesley was securely grounded in scriptural doctrine and the discipline of the Church. His father and mother were of that righteous remnant. So he possessed the reliable "train of ideas in the head" as well as "the disposition of the heart." This is why his claim to "the witness of the Spirit" was not individualist, subjective and "extraordinary." The wise evangelical will not be too hasty in questioning the right of the Holy Spirit to work

salvation through eccentric sects, even if they are disapproved.

> Me will ye mete with reason's line?
> Or teach My grace how far to move?

Nevertheless, the historic experience of the Church shows that the substantial, the lasting, the truly beneficial revivals of spiritual religion have not taken place through individualist sects nourished on partial truths, but through "the true Church within the Church." The natural instinct of impatient groups of zealous revivalists to despair of the Great Church and to break away, has often proved to be one of "Satan's devices" in frustrating revival.

In line with this we observe that Wesley's preaching of holiness was not new. It had a background in reliable Christian tradition. John Wesley was essentially a High Churchman turned evangelist, and the traditionalist High Churchman had a reverence for Christian antiquity. The young Wesley read, and found much to admire in, such writers of the ancient Church as Clement of Alexandria, and some of the ascetic writers such as "Macarius." He also studied some of the devotional writings of the Roman Church of later times. This historic tradition had a place for "perfection," and the holy life, though we have with all respect to say that it was often a flawed tradition. St. Anthony of Egypt was one converted through hearing the reading of Scripture. His text, which became the sheet-anchor of monasticism, was the words of our Lord to the rich young man who had kept all the regular commandments: "If thou wilt be *perfect*, go and sell all that thou hast, and give to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come and follow me" (Matthew 19:21). Out of this was derived the idea of a double standard of Christian morality.

The notion of a double standard is offensive to the doctrine of salvation by grace, for it savors of the notion of the merit of good works. At the same time, it appears to be a common-sense idea, for it is a matter of plain experience that in the Christian community there are always a few ardent souls who seem called by God to a more fully committed life of service, and a great many other essentially well-intentioned people who do not seem to have it in them to embark upon the more heroic course. So it was traditionally taught that God has given the "evangelical precepts" for the guidance of the general body of believers, and the higher "counsels of perfection" for those who are called thereto, and given grace sufficient to follow them. This distinction extended to all spheres of human life. For example, in the matter of property, God has, since the Fall, allowed to sinful men and women the institution of private property, and the social distinctions which

flow from it. The reason for this is that unregenerate men will only care for what is their own, which appears to be a realistic judgment upon common human nature! However, those who would anticipate on earth something of the life of heaven, and who have the grace and spiritual vocation for it, can embrace the higher life of the communal property and individual poverty of a religious order. So in the matter of sex, the evangelical precept is the holy estate of matrimony, instituted by God, for one man and one woman "till death us do part," with a calling to bear and nurture Christian children. And the higher way for the few is the celibate life, married to Christ and His Church.

This doctrine has the advantage that it sets no limit on the power of grace "to save to the uttermost." It is possible by grace to live a life entirely devoted to the service of God. It is a salutary discipline that this ideal should be affirmed. The flaw in the scheme is that it appears to place a barrier between the holy life, and the home and workshop. The fatal implication that more can be expected of folk like monks and nuns, or perhaps the clergy in general, is that not too much can be expected of "ordinary people." If the general body of men and women who have homes, spouses, children and a living to earn in a hard world are made to feel that they are condemned to a life of inevitable moral compromise, they will cease to aspire to the highest. The common-sense attitude of a double standard "lowers the sights" of spiritual expectation.

Classic Reformation doctrine represents a natural strong reaction against this venerable system. The young Martin Luther, caught in an emergency by the sudden fear that he might die without being fortified by the Last Rites, made the typical medieval reaction of one who would devote himself entirely to God. To make sure of his salvation he embarked upon the counsels of perfection, and entered a monastic order. The change of times is discerned in that he found deep spiritual frustration in this course of life. There were many things which the young monk found he could do by the exercise of disciplined will. He could excel all the other young monks in his zeal for keeping the rules of monastic devotion. However, there was one thing he could not do. He could not make himself love God, in the way he knew God ought to be loved. He was moved to obedience too much by hope of celestial reward, and fear of punishment.

Most sincere but conventional minds are more or less content if they find that they can keep the usual rules of religion. They are not too deeply concerned to look minutely within. However, Luther was different. Being a man of spiritual genius, he had grace and sense to discern that his condition was deeply unsatisfactory in the sight of God. To please God he must not

only obey. He must obey for the right reason, from the heart. So in the end, when God mysteriously visited him with "the o'erwhelming power of saving grace," and set him free from his bondage, Luther very naturally turned strongly against the whole conception of counsels of perfection. Talk of "perfection" reflected a totally inadequate estimate of the fallen character of human nature, and of the impossibility of doing anything to please God by one's own moral resolve. So far, so good: we accept this Lutheran position. However, there is in it concealed a flaw.

It would, we judge, be unsympathetic to condemn Luther himself at this point. The phrase we are later to quote from him in relation to Wesley's evangelical experience is a clear affirmation of the true evangelical position that saving faith must of necessity produce moral good works. However, there is in Luther an element of rugged paradox, and phrases which have sometimes been misunderstood by those who have proclaimed themselves his followers. The Reformation proposition *simul justus et peccator* (i.e., that the Christian believer is "at the same time justified and a sinner") is intended as no more than a statement of the truth that those justified by faith still need to pray for forgiveness. However, it can be allowed to slip into a degraded sense, namely, that it is not absolutely necessary for the believer to bring forth the good works of faith in order to be accepted by God. The bare transaction of the atonement is sufficient for divine acceptance, without a moral change in the believer. "Just as I am," taken in the sense "In my hand no price I bring; Simply to Thy cross I cling," involves the separation of justification and sanctification. This also is a fatal "lowering of the sights" of moral expectation, in another direction. The common-sense attitude among quite sincere believers that "after all, no one of us is perfect" can convey the implication that even in believers some degree of deliberate moral compromise is in principle inevitable, human nature and the world we live in being what they are. This is to deny the power of God "to save to the uttermost."

Between these two extremes we find Wesley, the High Churchman turned evangelist, occupying a prudent and moderate middle ground. No one could be plainer than he in witnessing to salvation by grace, through faith, and in excluding all thought of the merit of good works. Herein he is clearly on the Reformation side. Yet to him "perfection" is not an opprobrious word. He boldly restores it to a place of honor. And he is most vigilant to guard the preaching of salvation by grace from antinomianism--that is to say, from the notion that free divine forgiveness in some way releases the believer from the absolute duty of obeying the moral law of God. So, following the devotional writers of the

ancient tradition, he is not afraid to talk about "perfection" and "holiness" as the only proper aim in life for the earnest Christian disciple. Yet in Wesley there is no flawed double standard, as between the cloister and the hearth. There is no place for "counsels of perfection" in practice limited to religious orders, or to the clergy. Wesley upholds a sternly Puritan holiness, but not an ascetic holiness.

In Wesley's teaching, all "ordinary" believers, if they will but fully trust their Savior, are called to the highest imaginable, even if they are surrounded by the pleasures and cares of home and family life, and by the thronging concerns of earning a living in the busy world. This life of austere religious discipline is called upon boldly to witness against all the sins and follies and moral compromises of the secular order, in hope of reforming the whole life of the nation. Anyone who reads documents such as *The Rules of the Society*, and sermons such as "The Use of Money" (44), "On Spiritual Idolatry" (78),"On Dissipation" (79), "On Friendship with the World" (80), "The Danger of Riches" (87), "On Dress" (88), "On Redeeming the Time" (93), and "On Pleasing all Men" (100), will be aware that Wesley's ideal for the Methodist Society was that of a kind of "married monasticism," which should present to the world the sort of challenge mounted by the monastic orders, but organized from the basis of the home, the market and the workshop, not the convent. The true Methodist was to be set apart from society just as clearly as were the members of a religious order, or the early Quakers, or the Mennonites, by their regular devotions, close fellowship, plain dress and austere manner of life, industry and economy, and plain-spoken rebuke of the mores and manners of the community. And this was the outward expression of inward holiness.

Do we say of this ideal, as of the Charge of the Light Brigade, "It is magnificent, but it is not war"? Is this asking too much of human nature? Was the cooling down of institutional Methodism into a denomination of "respectable" but Puritan manners inevitable? Perhaps in the world of practical affairs it was. The irony of the situation is that Wesley was commonly dismissed as an extremist, even as a fanatic. Yet, cooly considered, his doctrine is the eminently reasonable balance, the salutary comprehension between extremes. Dr. Outler is surely right in his "Introduction to Wesley's Theological Foundations" to say that "He was, by talent and intent, a *folk*-theologian: an eclectic who had mastered the secret of plastic synthesis, simple profundity....The elements of his theology were adapted from many sources" (*Library of Protestant Thought: John Wesley*, p. 119.) We do not, however, agree with the judgment that this position excludes him from "the front

rank--that select company of systematic thinkers who have managed to effect major mutation in the Christian mind." "The faith once committed to the saints" is not seeking "major mutations," but rather new ways of giving plain statement to old truths. The renovation of the Christian faith consists in the return to original positions, including the holding together of diverse shades of "the manifold wisdom of God" which were in danger of falling apart in the apprehension of small minds. Wesley's "new creative synthesis" was creative, but not in fact new, because it was a return to the position as it was before it was polarized between Rome and anti-Rome. That is to say, it was scriptural and apostolical. That Wesley did not appear to so many of that day to be eminently reasonable and balanced was due to the contrast between "the train of ideas in the head" and "the disposition of the heart." Considered as a body of doctrine, the preaching of perfection is indeed balanced and reasonable. It was the prophetic conviction with which it came, and the conviction which it evoked, which was unnerving to conventional minds.

It would appear that the preaching of holiness has sometimes been brought into discredit by too emotional an approach. Enthusiastic preachers have encouraged their hearers to expect some sort of sudden emotional earthquake which would fill them with ecstasies of joy--and that is the sum of the matter. Clearly, a firing of the imagination and the affections is a part of the matter. The dynamic of evangelical perfection is love shed abroad in the heart, and this of necessity has an emotional content. However, following Wesley, the primary purpose of the divine gift of holiness or perfect love is not to make men and women happy, but to make them morally upright, and fully obedient to God, so that they may live and serve to His glory. This is an important and salutary proviso, which will keep the preaching of holiness on a rational and disciplined track.

Here again is an aspect of the principle that Wesley is a moralist turned evangelical, and that the evangelical Wesley is a moralist still. In the great doctrinal sermons on the religion of the heart there is a constant "war on two fronts." His treatment characteristically has three points. First, he rehearses the praiseworthy acts of devotion and charity which commonly and conventionally pass for "religion." This, he says, is not the Christian faith. Second, the act of faith in appropriating the saving work of God in Christ is enforced. Third, the praiseworthy acts of charity and devotion are again rehearsed as essential in the life of the believer, because they are the necessary fruits of faith. The war on two fronts is ever carried on against the opposite errors of legality and antinomianism. Here is another example of Wesley's central,

moderate and reasonable position.

A chief reason for Wesley's rejection of the Calvinist theology is connected with his resistance to antinomianism. A modern liberal Christian who repudiates Calvinism commonly does so because it seems to infringe upon the dignity of the human personality, by denying autonomous free will. We note that Wesley never argues like this. He is not concerned for the reputation of humanity, but for the glory of God. Wesley abhors, as a base slur upon God's justice and goodness, the more extreme doctrine of reprobation, that is, that God has positively willed the perdition of those who are finally lost. There is, however, another point of importance. One of the chief factors which gave Calvinist preaching its cutting edge was that it professed a strong doctrine of the assurance of salvation, based upon the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints. This was the teaching that if one was elected to salvation, and the object of irresistible saving grace, it was impossible finally to fall into eternal damnation, even though one might appear temporarily to slip upon the path of Christian grace. This conviction fortified the believer with a most comforting assurance of salvation.

The element of truth in this position is enshrined in the traditional lines:

> Let me no more my comfort draw
> From my frail grasp of Thee;
> In this alone rejoice in awe;
> Thy mighty grasp of me.

However, Wesley discerned a fatal flaw in the Calvinist presentation of assurance. It might encourage insensitive people to suppose that their final salvation was assured solely by the action of God, and apart from the absolute necessity of bringing forth the fruits of good moral character and conduct. We are far from accusing responsible and informed Calvinist teaching of being antinomian. If Calvinist moral teaching has erred, it is more likely to have done so in the opposite direction of legality, the stern religion of the Ten Commandments. However, Wesley was not concerned to judge the abstract principles of Calvinist doctrine, but the practical views of some he met who called themselves Calvinists. Characteristically, he is not debating the theory of God's government of all human souls in this world, and in glory. He is concerned for the practical good of simple people in the Society. Some, on the strength of the proposition "once saved, always saved," did seem to sink into presumption, and here was an error Wesley abhorred. His preaching of full assurance is marked

by a clear insistence that the foundation of all was a deep awareness of moral change in the heart of the believer.

In his exposition of the leading text, Romans 8:16, "The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit," Wesley points out that there are two "witnesses." There is "the witness of my own spirit," which is the common sense moral argument: "Since my conversion I am so deeply aware of a complete change of inward character and outward conduct that I cannot doubt that God's saving grace is at work in my heart" (cf. Sermon X.i.2-6). And there is also "the witness of the Spirit," which belongs in the last resort to the sphere of the emotions, the imagination, the affections--that is to say, "the heart." This "inward impression on the soul - whereby the Spirit of God directly witnessed to my spirit that I am a child of God" is by the nature of things mysterious (cf. Sermon X.i.7,11-12). When the two "witnesses" chime together, then, and only then, is the believer granted the privilege of a present full assurance of salvation.

A point to be remembered, however, and often slurred over in popular teaching, is that to Wesley the reasonable and moral "witness of my own spirit" is the essential element. To claim an assurance of salvation solely on account of "the witness of the Spirit," that is to say, on the ground of the great joy in believing, and without the moral change, is to fall into the most dangerous delusion. Wesley never taught the naive subjective doctrine: "I feel saved, therefore I am saved." Although the heartfelt "witness of the Spirit" comes first in time, because we must consciously love before we can fully obey (i.8), yet the all-important test that the *supposed* "witness of the Spirit" is not in fact the delusion of Satan, is the awareness of the moral change. This is argued with characteristic emphasis (ii.1-12). We are aware, however, that Wesley's teaching underwent a certain cautious modification in light of continuing evangelical experience. In the early days of the Revival, he was inclined to the position that if one did not enjoy full assurance one was not in a state of full salvation. This is to make "the witness of the Spirit" essential. This he realized later was too rigid a judgment. The effect of this modified teaching is that if one is aware of the moral change, one may have confidence that one is indeed on the way of salvation, even though the deep sense of peace with God, and of joy abounding, is denied. However, the divine gift of "the witness of the Spirit," and the *full* assurance which it brings, is the *privilege* of all believers, intended by God, and to be expected, preached and believingly prayed for. This privilege is indeed not essential to salvation, but it is part of the fitting spiritual equipment of the fully useful and convincing servant of Christ and the gospel. (Cf. the sermon, "The

Witness of the Spirit--Discourse II," v.3,4. This is not in the familiar *Standard Sermons*.)

Once again we find Wesley in the characteristic position of teaching a creative synthesis of elements which were in danger of falling apart in polarization. In this he is the High Churchman turned evangelist. In England before Wesley the old High Church party maintained the predominant tradition of the ancient Church, that saving grace is in principle available to all mankind, because the means of grace, and in particular the sacramental means of grace, are open to all. Thus, they did not accept the Calvinist doctrine of particular election, i.e., that those individuals are saved whom God has chosen to save. In current controversy, "Arminian" was used as a term of opprobrium applied to the High Church party by their Puritan and Calvinist opponents, to indicate that they were unsound on salvation by grace, and on this account not proper Protestants. However, though the High Church party in principle professed universal grace, they were not on that account evangelists to "all sorts and conditions of men." Their characteristic interest was to uphold the spiritual prerogative and the power of the bishops, and above all, the king. The image of the High Churchman is struck in the old ballad, "The Vicar of Bray:"

In good King Charles' golden days,
When loyalty no harm meant,
A zealous High Churchman was I,
And so I got preferment.
To teach my flock I never missed
Kings were by God appointed,
And lost are those that dare resist,
Or touch the Lord's anointed.

And the whole Wesley family were certainly devoted "King's men"!

It is from this background that Wesley lifted to a place of honor the term "Arminian," just as he had done with the word "perfection," though there is no evidence that he had actually read Arminius, or was directly influenced by his teaching. The Church party had a cautious maxim with which to express human destiny: "No saved Christians but dead Christians." As saving grace is not irresistible, it is sadly possible, if the believer did not persevere in the spiritual and moral discipline of the Christian life, to fall from grace into perdition. Therefore no one was safe home until he or she had arrived at a godly deathbed! This is a sober degree of expectation, well-guarded against presumption. This is the voice of the *Book of Common Prayer* at the graveside: "that, when we

shall depart this life, we may rest in Him, as our hope is this our brother doth." After all, we can express kindly *hope* for everyone in the parish, but not more than hope for anyone! All this is very reasonable. However, frail humans can hardly launch out over the awesome gulf between this world and the next on the strength of the reasonable proposition that "probability is the guide to life." In the hour of stress we need some stronger word. And this Wesley has, yet without falling into the presumption of the opposed maxim, "Once saved, always saved." He has the comforting message of a *present* assurance, "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast," yet which is not to be presumed upon, for in principle it can be lost. Of evangelical believers he says: "They are saved from the fear, though not from the possibility, of falling away from the grace of God" (Sermon I.ii.4).

The fitting commentary upon this body of doctrine is the Pilgrim's Progress of John Wesley, as illustrated from his *Journal*, and illuminated by his brother's hymns. When the celebration of the centennial of Methodism was being discussed, some suggested that the hundred years should be measured from Wesley's ordination. This would have included the Oxford Methodism of the Holy Club, and the venture to Georgia, as a part of the Methodist story. This was refused on the ground that "At that time Mr. Wesley was not converted." So the centennial of Methodism was celebrated in 1838, one hundred years after Aldersgate Street. This raises the question, "At what point did Wesley become an effective Christian? When was he 'converted'?"

One sometimes hears an enthusiastic soul use the phrase "Since I became a Christian." Sometimes this can give one pause for thought, or even a painful jolt. The speaker may, by implication, be writing off the spiritual validity of Christian parentage and baptism, nurture in a Christian home and Sunday school, perhaps years of regular worship, or even of work as a teacher or steward, up to the moment of a more recent and blessed "time of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." One may have a good deal of sympathy with what the person is trying to say. He is rejoicing in the splendid newness and power of a great evangelical experience. Yet the phrase often reflects muddled theology. Even Charles Wesley slipped at this point. He adorned his mother's tombstone with some of his less gifted verse, in which he stated that she:

Mourn'd a long night of griefs and fears,
A legal night of seventy years.

This is indeed a ruthless judgment upon the heroic mother of the Wesleys!

It is important to observe that John Wesley did not speak like this. On the one hand, the Aldersgate Street experience clearly meant a great deal to him. So, in his *Journal* for May 24, 1738, he prepares the way for his testimony by giving a careful and very moving survey of his previous spiritual experience. Yet the strange thing is, the momentous experience over, he hardly ever refers to it again, though he often remembers with affection his experience as an Oxford Methodist. He was not the sort of Methodist who lived by recounting a conversion experience of ten years ago, of twenty, or of fifty. There was much of spiritual worth which went before, and much which came after. "The experience of the heart strangely warmed" was an important link in a chain, but not more.

In the autobiographical sketch in the *Journal* for that momentous day, we find him first as the child and schoolboy of religious habits, and then as the High Church Oxford student. On the one hand, judging himself by the severe standard of later years, he taxes himself with spiritual blindness. Yet on the other, he is scrupulous in preparing himself to receive the communion at the required three times per year. It is significant that the later "evangelical" Wesley should have communicated so much more regularly than the early "legal" one. So he comes to what has been described as "his first conversion":

> When I was about 22, my father pressed me to enter into Holy Orders. At the same time the providence of God directing me to Kempis's 'Christian Pattern,' [*Imitatio Christi*] I began to see that true religion was seated in the heart.

So he embarks upon a life of whole-hearted Christian discipline. "I set apart an hour or two a day for religious retirement. I communicated every week - I began to aim at, and pray for inward holiness." And, being appointed a fellow of Lincoln College, he reads William Law's *Christian Perfection* and *Serious Call to a Holy Life*.

So we have a man who in many ways comes close to the later evangelical Wesley. He realizes that true religion is inward, he aspires after perfection, or holiness, and, in that aspiration, waits upon God in all the means of grace. Indeed, he can salute this period in a very significant way. Among his *Standard Sermons* there is a University Sermon preached in this period, and upon the very subject of inward religion (XIII, "The Circumcision of the Heart"). He states that after these years he cannot preach a better, save that, most significantly he adds to his statement of faith in the atoning work of Christ a clearer reference to assurance by the work of the Spirit (XIII.i.7). In theology and moral discipline he has

everything he needs. The one thing lacking is a sufficient engagement of the heart. He has done everything which a spiritual seeker, by the assistance of God's grace, can do. And these are the things which the earnest seeker for growth in grace must do, if he is to receive more grace. Wesley would hardly have arrived eventually at Aldersgate Street unless he had persevered with the Holy Club, for that was the door of obedience set before him by God at that stage. The one thing he lacks is the one thing he cannot do for himself. "The heart" is not fully engaged. He does not enjoy the fullness of that inherently mysterious "inward impression on the soul" which only God can give.

Is this man, then, a "converted Christian," or is he not? It must have been a strangely stirring confrontation with former university colleagues, who remembered Wesley of the Holy Club, to hear him paint a portrait in words of himself as "the Almost Christian" in his University Sermon of July 25, 1741. It is almost, though perhaps not expressly, implied that the entirely dutiful, disciplined and sincere clergyman, and preacher of the atonement and of salvation by faith, is on the way to perdition (Sermon II.i.1-13). This very severe judgment does rather appear as the triumph of theological theory over common sense. So we are not surprised that, after long reflection, the level-headed Wesley comes to a more moderate judgment in the much later Sermon 89, "The More Excellent Way." In fact, the "almost Christian" is a Christian after all, though God has still something further to give him!

It is significant that Wesley's further pilgrimage advanced through worship rather than through argument. First, he was impressed by the Moravians he met on the voyage to America by their peace of mind and moral courage, by their humility and by their song (*Journal*, January 25, 1736). So, in Georgia, he sang with them, and made those masterly translations into English of many of their hymns. These are a priceless part of the Methodist heritage of hymnody, and the chief witness to German Pietism in English Christianity. In the manner natural to evangelicals who look back to a pre-conversion state, Wesley takes a severe view of his spiritual condition, and we cannot doubt his sincerity. We must also make allowance for the natural and inevitable clash of temperament between a precise and very zealous clergyman, and a free-and-easy frontier colony of folk who were certainly not anxious to be disciplined by him into a model parish! This landed him in mistakes in human relationships, and many discouragements, which must have taken a heavy toll of his good spirits.

So he records of this time "In this vile, abject state of bondage to sin, I was indeed fighting continually, but not conquering. Before I had willingly served sin; now it was unwillingly." In

those memorable and bitter words he penned as the ship got back to England: "It is now two years and almost four months since I left my native country, in order to teach the Georgia Indians the nature of Christianity; but, what have I learned myself in the meantime: Why (what I the least of all suspected,) that I who went to America to convert others, was never myself converted to God." Yet, after the candid confession there is the candid footnote, later added. "I am not sure of this." And a further footnote reads: "I had even then the faith of a *servant*, though not that of a son" (*Journal*, February 1, 1738). And one with the faith of a servant is treading the road to salvation, even if not "saved to the uttermost."

There is, however, another side to this. At this time in Georgia Wesley translated from the German of Tersteegan:

Thou hidden love of God, whose height,
Whose depth unfathomed, no man knows,
I see from far Thy beauteous light,
Inly I sigh for Thy repose;
My heart is pained, nor can it be
At rest, till it finds rest in Thee.

Each moment draw from earth away
My heart, that lowly waits Thy call;
Speak to my inmost soul, and say,
"I am Thy love, Thy God, Thy all!"
To feel Thy power, to hear Thy voice,
To taste Thy love, be all my choice.
(*Hymns and Psalms*, 544; *M.H.B.* 433.)

The man who could be attracted to the original, and translate with such feeling, can hardly be described as a dull formalist, or a "legal" Christian. He is an active and growing soul. Yet the hymn itself shows evidence of growth in spiritual understanding. The fourth verse, (omitted in *Hymns and Psalms*) originally read:

Is there a thing beneath the sun
That strives with Thee my heart to share?
Ah tear it thence, that Thou alone
May'st reign unrivall'd Monarch there;
From earthly loves I must be free
Ere I can find repose in Thee.

So it appeared in *Psalms and Hymns*, 1738. Wesley later amended the lines to:

> Ah, tear it thence, and reign alone,
> The Lord of every motion there!
> Then shall my heart from earth be free,
> When it hath found repose in Thee.

This shows the salutary realization that divine love must expel "earthly love," not "earthly love" be driven out to make room for the divine. The action is from God, not man.

The finger of divine providence may indeed be seen in the circumstance that within a few days of Wesley's arrival back in London Peter Böhler arrived from the Continent, on the way to America. They were together for only a few formative weeks, for Böhler left before the Aldersgate Street experience. We have already glanced at some of the counsel which took place between them. We need not suppose that the frustrated missionary to America came back a beaten man. Like St. Paul, he was "cast down, but not destroyed." After such cruel disappointment some would have gone into retreat, to give time for reflection, and who could blame them? Not so John Wesley, the man of iron! Having penned his chapter of bitter self-reproach, on disembarking, of the inn where he spent the first night he writes: "I here read prayers, and explained the second Lesson, to a few of those who were called Christians, but indeed were more savage in their behaviour than the wildest Indians I have yet met with." So much for the British!

The conversion scene now changes to Brother Charles, the mercurial, the man of poetic fire, who got there first. In John Wesley's *Journal* for May 20, 1738, we read:

> The next day, being Whitsunday, after hearing Dr. Heylyn preach a truly Christian sermon, - and assisting him at the Holy Communion - I received the surprising news, that my brother had found rest to his soul. His bodily strength returned also from that hour.

This account dovetails with Charles Wesley's *Journal*, a narrative which is unfortunately much less known among Methodists than the story of John Wesley's experience. The contrast is most illuminating, and illustrates how the Holy Spirit performs His converting work in different ways in men and women of different temperament and background.

Though God, and His historic saving action in His divine Son, incarnate, crucified and risen, is always the same, the way in which this action is brought home to the heart of believers varies with the variation of human condition. This is why the different

parts of the Church, despite the things which apparently divide, are in fact so largely united, and must be united, in the doctrine of God, the incarnation, the atonement and the resurrection. Churches tend to be disunited in doctrine arising from conceptions of the effect and mode of the means of grace, the worship and devotional experience of believers, and the ministry and discipline of the Church. There is in modern conditions often more divergence within the various denominations between scriptural traditionalists and liberal reconstructions, than there is between the official standards of those churches.

For more than a century past the churches of this land have been deeply exercised in spirit that such a large part of the nation, the unprivileged, the less educated and the less socially responsible, have remained obstinately outside their ministry. It seems to have been this way for centuries, and no one seems to have any solution to this intractable problem. So our hearts warm when prevailing spiritual revival now and again spans the gulf between the classes.

It is good to know that a plain working man and his wife had a part in the action at Charles Wesley's conversion. It is a token of what did happen, at least to some extent, in the early and great days of the Revival. After Peter Böhler had departed for Carolina, and had written his good-bye letter from Southampton in Latin, Charles Wesley, the Oxford scholar of good family, but no money, sat down for pastoral counseling with Mr. Bray, the worker in brass. The unlearned may understand the things of God, as well as the learned. Wesley uses a phrase which, in these equalitarian days, would be interpreted, by some, as patronizing. Taken in the right sense, however, it is a magnificent tribute.

In his *Journal* for Thursday, May 11, 1738, Charles Wesley writes:

> I was just going to remove to old Mr. Hutton's, when God sent Mr. Bray to me, a poor ignorant mechanic, who knows nothing but Christ; but by knowing Him, knows and discerns all things. Some time ago I had taken leave of Peter Böhler, confessed my unbelief and want of forgiveness, but declared my firm persuasion that I should receive the atonement before I died. His answer was, "Be it unto thee according to thy faith." Mr. Bray is now to supply Böhler's place. We prayed together for faith. I was quite overpowered and melted into tears, and hereby induced to think it was God's will that I should go to his house, and not to Mr. Hutton's - His sister [Mrs. Turner] I found in earnest pursuit of Christ; and his wife well inclined to conversion. [There is also a Mrs. Musgrave in the house.]

> Sunday, May 21: I waked in hope and expectation. [Wesley is in bed with pleurisy.] At nine my brother and some friends came, and sang an hymn to the Holy Ghost. [Some investigators think that this was perhaps "Granted is the Saviour's prayer," *Hymns and Psalms*, 287, *M.H.B.* 277.] My comfort and hope were hereby increased. In about half an hour they went. - I composed myself to sleep, in quietness and peace, when I heard someone come in; Mrs. Musgrave I thought by the voice [it was, in fact, Mrs. Turner], and say "In the name of Jesus of Nazareth, arise and believe, and thou shalt be healed of all thy infirmities." I wondered how it should enter into her head to speak in that manner. - I sighed, and said within myself, "O that Christ would but speak thus to me!" I lay musing and trembling: then thought, "But what if it should be Him? I will send at least to see." I rang the bell, and, Mrs. Turner coming, I desired her to send up Mrs. Musgrave. She - said, "Mrs. Musgrave has not been here." - I hoped it might be Christ indeed. - I felt in the meantime a strange palpitation of heart. I said, yet feared to say, "I believe, I believe!" She [Mrs. Turner] came up again and said, "It was I, a weak, sinful creature, spoke; but the words were Christ's: He commanded me to say them, and so constrained me that I could not forbear."

Wesley goes on to say that Bray encouraged him that he had indeed received faith. He informed Wesley that some days before, his sister, in a dream, had had a vision of Christ in white, and had been commanded to go and speak these words to the invalid upstairs. She had reflected much and prayed about this. The *Journal* continues: "On Sunday morning she took Mr. Bray aside, burst into tears, and informed him of the matter; objecting she was a poor weak sinful creature, and should she go to a minister? She could not do it, nor rest till she did." Bray had encouraged her, prayed with her, and she had gone upstairs with her strange message.

> Tuesday, May 23: I waked under the protection of Christ, and gave myself up, soul and body, to Him. At nine I began an hymn upon my conversion, but was persuaded to break off, for fear of pride. Mr. Bray coming, encouraged me to proceed in spite of Satan. I prayed Christ to stand by me, and finished the hymn. Upon my afterwards showing it to Mr. Bray, the devil threw in a fiery dart, suggesting it was wrong - when, casting my eye upon a Prayer book, I met

with an answer for him. "Why boastest thou thyself, thou tyrant, that thou canst do mischief?" (Psalm 52:1). Upon this, I clearly discerned it was a device of the enemy to keep back glory from God.

Wednesday, May 24: Towards ten, my brother was brought in triumph by a troop of our friends, and declared, "I believe." We sang the hymn with great joy, and parted with prayer.

The conversion hymn is sufficiently well known that it is hardly necessary to cite the whole of it. "Where shall my wondering soul begin" appears as 706 in *Hymns and Psalms*, and 361 in *M.H.B.* It may be presumed that the point at which Charles Wesley feared that he was being led into pride was the end of verse 2:

Should know, should feel my sins forgiven,
Blest with this antepast of heaven.

"Should know" and "should feel" may almost be taken to represent the two parts of that which John Wesley expounds from Romans 8:16 as the witness to full assurance. The reasonable and moral "witness of my own spirit" is "knowledge," the mysterious "impression on the soul" is "feeling."

The warm temperament of Brother Charles is so lifted up at this assurance that he sings of the "antepast of heaven," the "Joy of heaven to earth come down." Perhaps he is flying too high, into the dreaded "enthusiasm"! It is the remembrance of those many who have not yet found "the gift unspeakable" which emboldens him to continue with his gospel invitation to the world. We may perhaps quote verses 4 and 6 from the original, as they are less generally known.

No - tho' the Antient Dragon rage
And call forth all his Hosts to War,
Tho' Earth's self-righteous Sons engage;
Them, and their God alike I dare:
Jesus the Sinner's Friend proclaim,
Jesus to Sinners still the same.

Come all ye *Magdalens* in Lust,
Ye ruffians fell in Murders old;
Repent, and live: despair and trust!
Jesus for you to Death was sold;
Tho' Hell protest, and Earth repine,
He died for Crimes like Yours - and Mine.

We now turn to the more familiar account of John Wesley's evangelical experience. First, Wesley's conversion, if that is indeed the right name for it, is the conversion of a scholar, and of a highly disciplined scholar. We find from his *Journal* for May 24, 1738, that at five o'clock in the morning he is reading his Greek Testament. The text which goes to the heart is 2 Peter 1:4. We observe something of the debit side to modern critical scholarship. 2 Peter has, we feel, been somewhat downgraded by the critics because it is generally agreed that it is "late," and not by St. Peter, and because it is written in a pretentious dialect, full of strange words. Its right to be in the canon has even been questioned. Such issues were indeed known, and had been discussed, in Wesley's day, but he is untroubled at his devotions. To him this epistle is a word from God.

Second, here is the conversion of a musical man. In the afternoon he remembers being helped by the singing of *De Profundis* as an anthem at St. Paul's. We need not enquire too closely whether all the choristers were "real Christians," because the effect of God's word is from God, not from the singers. However, it will surely encourage all singers, choirmasters and organists that they were granted a presence in this memorable action. Why did Wesley go to the religious society in Aldersgate Street "very unwillingly"? Certainly he was not a man seeking sensation. There is much significance, however, in the passage of Luther which was being read, and which was adapted to Wesley's present condition, particularly as he was later sometimes critical of some things in the great reformer. We may presume from the phrase "while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ" that the passage in Luther's *Preface to Romans* was:

> Faith, however, is a divine work in us. It changes us and makes us to be born anew of God; it kills the old Adam and makes altogether different men, in heart and spirit and mind and powers, and it brings with it the Holy Ghost. O, it is a living, busy, active, mighty thing, this faith; and so it is impossible for it not to do good works incessantly. It does not ask whether there are good works to do, but before the question rises it has already done them, and is always at the doing of them. He who does not these works is a faithless man.

The significance of this particular passage is that Luther is here pointing out most plainly that evangelical saving faith holds the secret of spontaneous moral effort, of morality from the heart.

Wesley has shown himself to be searching not so much for joy as for something which will enable him to obey God as He ought to be obeyed, freely and from the heart, and release the servant from inward moral frustration into the liberty of a son. Luther is pointing out just what Wesley required, and the reading was the trigger which God used to bring the release. The words "I felt my heart strangely warmed" have unfortunately too much overshadowed the remainder of this revealing passage in the *Journal*:

> About a quarter before nine, while he was describing the change which God works in the heart through faith in Christ, I felt my heart strangely warmed. I felt I did trust in Christ, Christ alone, for salvation; and an assurance was given me that He had taken away *my* sins, even *mine*, and saved *me* from the law of sin and death. I began to pray with all my might for those who had in a more especial manner despitefully used me and persecuted me. I then testified openly to all there what I now first felt in my heart. But it was not long before the enemy suggested, "This cannot be faith; for where is thy joy?" Then was I taught that peace and victory over sin are essential to faith in the Captain of our salvation; but, that as to the transports of joy that usually attend the beginning of it, especially in those who have mourned deeply, God sometimes giveth, sometimes withholdeth. - After my return home, I was much buffeted with temptations; but cried out, and they fled away. They returned again and again. I as often lifted up my eyes, and he sent me help from His holy place. And herein I found the difference between this and my former state chiefly consisted. I was striving, yea, fighting with all my might under the law, as well as under grace, but then I was sometimes, if not often, conquered: now I was always conqueror.

The contrast between this down-to-earth and sober evangelical experience with Brother Charles's "antepast of heaven," is most significant, though it has not always been sufficiently noticed. Clearly, what came to Wesley that memorable night was a genuine measure of full assurance. He received the mysterious "inward impression on the soul," "the witness of the Spirit" which works this "privilege" of the believer. There was indeed something of this morally liberating emotional content to the experience, or he would hardly have used the phrase "the heart strangely warmed." However, the impression was peace, rather than "transports of

joy." The first thing which Wesley discovered was that he was not as happy as he thought he ought to be. "Where is thy joy?" He had doubtless been long considering what the Moravians' converts had been saying about the great joy and peace brought by faith in Christ, and had built himself up to expect that when the gift came to him he would be lifted up to heights of happiness. Yet this was not so. He did not go home that night "treading on air" and whistling revival choruses. The chief thing he discovered was that he had been granted power to pray for his enemies, and to overcome his temptations. The change was chiefly in moral will. "The witness of one's own spirit" was powerfully reinforced, the essential constituent to assurance. By the experience of "the heart strangely warmed" Wesley was lifted powerfully in sanctification, though it was not entire sanctification, or perfect love.

Wesley's evangelical experience was the conversion of a moralist, which left him a moralist still, though now a victorious moralist. If one reads on into the *Journal* one finds that he continued to have ups and downs of peace and joy, until, in the spring of the following year, he was constrained by Whitfield to preach in the open air. He was then astonished to find multitudes of convulsive conversions in response to his message (*Journal* April 2-29, 1739). It was then, and only then, that his own experience of liberation came to its climax. This is the measure of the work of God. The new convincing power was not the outcome of his temperament, or gifts or preaching approach. The message was the same as before: salvation by faith, and the pursuit of holiness. Before Aldersgate Street Wesley's earnestness appeared as fanaticism, and produced the response of indignant rejection. Now some still rejected, more indignantly than before, and discerned fanaticism. There is no way of making all hearers believe. But some began to be powerfully convinced. The change was that God had decided to work, for the time was come and the messenger prepared.

It is a symptom of the decay of understanding for these things in current conventional Methodism that the classic Wesley hymn on the subject of full assurance was printed in the 1933 *Methodist Hymn Book* without the operative verse, and that the hymn was on the point of being rejected altogether in *Hymns and Psalms*, had it not been the subject of special pleading in Conference. Ostensibly the objection to the hymn was a philosophical one to the phrase "the signs infallible," though this is Wesley's reference to Acts 1:3. Speculative thinkers do not like the idea of "infallibility." Clearly there are some among us to whom the idea of strong religious certainty, and the confident preaching of Christian doctrine is still "very horrid enthusiasm." This doubtless is in part reaction against the common misrepresentation of Wesley's doctrine of assurance as

simply based on subjective feeling. It may be of interest to quote a selection from the many verses of this hymn as Charles Wesley originally wrote them. It will be noted that John Wesley himself altered the meter for the hymn as it appeared in the 1780 hymnal. Clearly, no one "is able to mend either the sense or the verse" of Brother Charles other than Brother John himself! Compare the version, no. 114 in *The Methodist Hymnal* (1964):

How can a sinner know
His sins on earth forgiven?
How can my Saviour shew
My name inscribed in heaven?
What we ourselves have felt, and seen,
With confidence we tell,
And publish to the sons of men
The signs infallible.

We who in Christ believe
That He for us hath died,
His unknown peace receive,
And feel His blood applied:
Exults for joy our rising soul,
Disburthened of her load,
And swells, unutterably full
Of glory, and of God.

His love, surpassing far
The love of all beneath
We find within, and dare
The pointless darts of death:
Stronger than death, or sin, or hell
The mystic power we prove,
And conquerors of the world we dwell
In heaven, who dwell in love.

The meek and lowly heart
Which in our Saviour was,
He doth to us impart,
And signs us with His cross:
Our nature's course is turned, our mind
Transformed in all its powers,
And both the witnesses are joined,
The Spirit of God with ours.

Charles Wesley's famous hymn "For the Anniversary Day of

one's Conversion," published originally in *Hymns and Sacred Poems* (1740), and given pride of place as the first hymn in the 1780 *Hymns for the Use of the People Called Methodists*, as in the British *Methodist Hymn Book* (1904 and 1933), and the American *Methodist Hymnal* (1964), has been so widely loved and sung, and included in so many hymnals, that it may be of interest to reproduce in full the original text. John Wesley opened the hymn at verse 7, under the title *Exhorting Sinners to return to God*, and "dear Redeemer" was later changed to "great Redeemer." Dr. Henry Bett in *The Hymns of Methodism* (1913, 1945, p. 95) records that Peter Böhler said to Charles Wesley, "Had I a thousand tongues I would praise God with them all!" and gives the German of the Herrnhut hymn he doubtless had in mind. This great hymn is Charles Wesley's own comment upon the events we have been considering.

Glory to God, and Praise, and Love
Be ever, ever given:
By Saints below, and Saints above,
The Church in Earth and Heaven.

On this glad Day the glorious Sun
Of Righteousness arose,
On my benighted Soul he shone,
And fill'd it with Repose.

Sudden expir'd the legal Strife,
Twas then I ceas'd to grieve,
My Second, Real, Living Life
I then began to live.

Then with my *Heart* I first believ'd,
Believ'd, with Faith Divine,
Power with the Holy Ghost receiv'd
To call the Saviour *Mine*.

I felt my Lord's Atoning Blood
Close to *my* Soul applied;
*Me, me* he lov'd--the Son of God
For *me*, for *me* He died!

I found, and own'd his Promise true,
Ascertain'd of *my* Part
My pardon pass'd in Heaven I *knew*
When written on my Heart.

O for a Thousand Tongues to sing
My dear Redeemer's Praise!
The Glories of my God and King,
The Triumphs of his Grace.

My gracious Master, and my God,
Assist me to proclaim,
To spread thro' all the Earth abroad
The Honours of Thy Name.

Jesus the Name that charms our Fears,
That bids our Sorrows cease;
'Tis Musick in the Sinner's Ears,
'Tis Life, and Health, and Peace!

He breaks the Power of cancell'd Sin,
He sets the Prisoner free:
His Blood can make the Foulest clean;
His Blood avail'd for me.

He speaks; and listening to His Voice,
New Life the Dead receive,
The mournful, broken Hearts rejoice,
The humble Poor *believe*.

Hear Him ye Deaf, His Praise ye Dumb
Your loosen'd Tongues employ,
Ye Blind, behold your Saviour come,
And leap, ye Lame, for Joy.

Look unto Him, ye Nations, own
Your God, ye fallen Race!
Look, and be sav'd, thro' Faith alone;
Be justified, by Grace!

See all your Sins on Jesus laid;
The Lamb of God was slain,
His Soul was once an Offering made
For *every Soul* of Man.

Harlots, and Publicans, and Thieves
In holy Triumph join!
Sav'd is the Sinner that believes
From Crimes as great as Mine.

Murtherers, and all ye hellish Crew,
Ye Sons of Lust and Pride,
Believe the Saviour died for you;
For me the Saviour died.

Awake from guilty Nature's Sleep,
And Christ shall give you Light,
Cast all your Sins into the Deep
And wash the *Ethiop* white.

With me, your Chief, you then shall *know*,
Shall feel your Sins forgiven;
Anticipate your Heaven below,
And own, that Love is Heaven.

The first major theological point to be observed in this great hymn is that the full evangelical experience is granted when the Holy Spirit brings home to the heart a personal realization of the historic fact of an unlimited atonement for sin in Christ crucified. This comes out in the repeated phrase, emphasized in italics, "for me, for me!" This answers to the words used by John Wesley of his Aldersgate Street experience. A further vital evangelical point is expressed in the familiar line "He breaks the Power of cancell'd Sin." Here is the saving union of justification and holiness. The guilt of sin is first freely cancelled by trust in the atoning work of Christ. But this essential first step is not by itself sufficient. The power of sin must also be broken, inwardly and outwardly. The professed believer is no true believer unless conversion brings a radical change of character and conduct. We should read with discrimination the couplet:

Look, and be sav'd, thro' Faith alone;
Be justified, by Grace!

Justification, forgiveness, the cancellation of the guilt of sin, is indeed "by faith alone," the characteristic Reformation formulary. There is no place for earning forgiveness, and acceptance with God, by the merit of good works. The saving work of Christ has to be received by simple and penitent faith. Yet Wesley does not say "by grace alone," in the sense that the action of the sovereign grace of God is the whole matter of salvation. This would be the Calvinist position. Sinful men and women cannot be saved without the action of grace. At every stage of the Christian life the empowering grace of God must go first, or man can do nothing.

Yet at every stage man must respond to grace with that degree of free and morally responsible choice which creating and redeeming grace makes possible.

It is perhaps not superfluous to observe, in light of some recent and rather pointless controversy, that to be understood these great scriptural hymns must be read in a scriptural sense. Thus, the Word "man" in "For every soul of man" does not mean "male" as the counterpart to "female," as though women either can not be saved, or do not require a Savior! The word has the scriptural sense of "human being." In the same way, there is no point in the deaf, the dumb, the blind or the lame being offended at the twelfth verse. This is implying a reference to our Lord's words in Matthew 11:5. The cure of the afflicted is a mark of the Kingdom, not a slur on the disabled! Nor can we blame Jeremiah for being a "racist" for having written "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil" (13:23). This is no more a slur on black people than on leopards, but a statement of fact!

Both the Wesleys agreed that the due end of the process of sanctification, that is, "entire sanctification," is to be defined as perfect love or holiness. John Wesley, as we have seen, strongly encouraged his followers to believe that perfect love can be granted by God in this present life, and that it is to be expected in a second dynamic spiritual experience. We have to admit that this doctrine has sometimes had prejudice generated against it by unwise and unbalanced advocacy by some later teachers. This has happened in three ways. First, the preaching of holiness has sometimes been too much associated with an unduly emotional atmosphere in some revival movements. The plain answer to this is that Wesley's authentic doctrine, though based on the love of God shed abroad in the heart, is essentially a preaching of moral change and renewal. The focus is on right doing, personal and social, not spiritual excitement. Second, there has been an undue emphasis upon the gift of holiness as a sudden and perhaps convulsive experience. This has been associated with the notion of "the second blessing," a phrase not very characteristic of Wesley. However, psychological processes often work up to some sort of climax, and if a believer, having long waited upon God in spiritual and moral discipline, is granted some outstanding spiritual blessing, it is not unnatural to suppose that it may well come in a flash of sudden insight. The danger is to suppose that this must be convulsive. The third difficulty is perhaps the most substantial. There is the strong feeling that it is either naive, or immodest, or both, to claim the gift of holiness for oneself, or for one's religious circle. It is an essential part of goodness to be modest about one's

goodness! To most people it seems plain common sense that "They who fain would serve Thee best are conscious most of wrong within."

The answer to this third prejudice is that holiness is not to be thought of as a sort of individual and permanent possession, to be gloried in as a mark of spiritual status. This attitude is very offensive. Wesley clearly teaches that even those few who do come to the gift of perfect love can fall away, if they grow slack in moral and spiritual discipline. The gift is not to be presumed upon. Also, it is not a purely individual experience. The essential background to all Wesley's teaching on the subject is that those who are seeking holiness are joined together in the inner circle of the Society, in the Band meeting, with its unsparing discipline of confession and mutual criticism. Anyone who could face that discipline would have had any faults pointed out! Members would take a modest view of their own attainments. This was of the essence of the business, which is why Wesley so constantly insists upon humility, teachability and modesty as marks of discipleship. The approved model is surely Fletcher of Madeley, the acknowledged saint of early Methodism. He did apparently become aware that God had granted him the gift of perfect love, and he dare not deny the gift. But he would only mention it with deep hesitation, and in quiet tones, and in private moments. If the gift can be claimed it must not be claimed loudly and self-confidently.

Another difficulty is a purely logical one, which will appeal to systematics. Any system of moral and spiritual discipline to be lived by real men and women in this world must contain provision for growth through experience. And a "perfection" which can be "improved," the critic will say, is a contradiction in terms. Perfection is by definition timeless and static. It belongs to heaven! The issue depends on what is meant by "perfection." To Wesley, holiness is "perfect love," not perfect performance. It is certainly not "sinless perfection." Once again we are driven back to what we mean by various terms. If "sin" is anything in human nature which is at variance from the moral perfection of the holy God, and for which frail humans may feel shame in the presence of God, then, of course, freedom from sin is impossible in this world. However, if we follow Wesley in the common sense moral view of sin, that it is "an actual, voluntary transgression of the law, - of any commandment of God acknowledged to be such at the time" (Sermon XV.ii.2), then complete victory over sin in the heart of the believer is at least possible in principle, if God can indeed "save to the uttermost." Yet, "acknowledged as such" speaks of an elastic standard, for believers can grow, and may be expected to grow, in understanding of God's will, in light of

continuing experience and discipline. The idea of "perfect love" answers to a heart and will entirely going out in obedience to what is seen to be the will of God. It does not follow from this that the believer is possessed of instant and infallible knowledge of what the will of God in fact is. Thus there is room for learning.

The believer may indeed have a heart filled with love, and desire to obey, but in a very mixed and puzzling world, moral guidance is not always easy to come by. Particularly is this the case if one is taken in unaccustomed circumstances, or by surprise. Then there are all those hard cases where legitimate calls of right pull in opposite directions. Also, however close be Christian fellowship, we cannot always see into the hearts and motives of other people, so we may misjudge them. The mark, surely, of the "perfect" Christian is that as soon as the disciple is aware that "sin lieth at the door," it is not weakly welcomed in a little, dallied with, and then repented of. That is a sadly common experience, even among sincere Christians. Rather does the whole heart turn away from temptation with loathing. The incipient error is swiftly recognized, and gladly corrected. The lesson of that experience is well and truly learned, and vigilance increased. Furthermore, with "perfect love" human personality and temperament is not lifted clean above all limitation. Thus, for example, a completely devoted preacher who is somewhat lacking in that precious gift of a winning personality is not by divine grace turned into a different person, but is kept by grace from allowing disability to get the better of him, so that he is less than fully useful to God.

Holiness may be defined as entire victory over all known and wilful sin. It is not freedom from temptation, or superhuman character, or perfect performance. Thus the perfect still need to come to God in penitence, and are dependent upon supporting grace. And they can grow in grace. A treatment of this process of growth is given in Sermon VIII.ii.4-13, and LXXVI. The distinction between those who are justified, and growing in grace, and those who have been granted perfect love is set out in the "Plain Account of Christian Perfection" (*Works*, XI, p. 379). "They are freed from evil thoughts, so that they cannot enter into them, no, not for a moment. Aforetime, when an evil thought came in, they looked up, and it vanished away. But now it does not come in, there being no room for this, in a soul which is full of God." However, practical account had to be taken of the circumstance that the majority of devout Methodists, whose final salvation it was uncharitable to question, had not come to this experience. So Wesley had to teach that these would be granted holiness in the hour of death. This is really a way of saying that the matter is shrouded in mystery. So, in the *Methodist Minutes*

for August 2, 1745:

> Q. What will become of a man - if he dies without being thus sanctified?
> A. He cannot see the Lord. But none who seeks it sincerely shall or can die without it, though possibly he may not attain it till the very article of death.
> Q. But ought we not to expect it sooner?
> A. Why not? Although we grant: That the generality of believers whom we have hitherto known are not so sanctified till near death.
> (See also *Methodist Minutes*, June 17, 1747, QQ 1-17, particularly 2.)

There was a certain difference of opinion between John and Charles Wesley at this point. Brother Charles viewed perfection as virtually of an absolute kind, and therefore only possible at death. Perfection comes slowly, as a result of painful self-abegnation. (See the 1960 Cambridge dissertation by James Dale, *The Poetry of Charles Wesley.*) It has to be admitted that, within the mainstream of Methodism, Charles Wesley has largely carried the day, because the effective witness to the preaching of holiness among Methodists has been through the singing of his great hymns on the subject. These are all-aspiring prayers for the gift of perfect love. Nowhere is there a claim to have attained. Whatever may be true of the private experience of individuals, this attitude surely is the proper ethos for general congregational worship. It is significant, also, that neither of the Wesleys ever claimed that the gift had been granted to them. In general, then, perfect love is something to be accepted as the proper goal of serious Christian discipleship, to be believed in, prayed for, and expected, but not claimed for oneself.

Perhaps the most widely loved of all Charles Wesley's great prayers for the gift of perfect love is "Love divine, all loves excelling" (*The Methodist Hymnal*, p. 283). The original form of the second verse merits discussion, on account of its great theological interest:

| | |
|---|---|
| Breathe, O breathe Thy loving Spirit | Jn 20:22, 2 Tim 1:17 |
| Into every troubled breast, | Lk 24:38 |
| Let us all in Thee inherit, | Rom 8:17 |
| Let us find that second rest: | Heb 4:8-9 |
| Take away our power of sinning, | 1 Jn 3:9 |
| Alpha and Omega be, | Rev 1:8 |
| End of faith as its beginning, | Heb 12:2 |
| Set our hearts at liberty. | Ps 119:32 (B.C.P.) |

The phrase which has caused misgiving is "Take away our power of sinning." This, as Dr. Frank Baker observes, "implies an extreme view of Christian perfection" (*Representative Verse of Charles Wesley*, p. 95). A phrase having similar implications, which has also disappeared in modern Methodist hymnals, occurs in the original text of "O come and dwell in me" (*Hymns and Psalms*, 293, *M.H.B.*, p. 554):

> The original offence
> Out of my soul erase,
> Enter Thyself, and drive it thence,
> And take up all the place.

Original sin is that bias in common human nature which renders temptation seductive, and evil in general easier to do than good, and which secures that, unless supported by divine grace, all men and women inevitably commit sin, and are by nature alienated from God. For this bias to be entirely eliminated by divine grace would indeed be the highest degree of perfect love.

The difficulty in "Take away our power of sinning" has been commented upon by no less an authority on holiness than Fletcher of Madeley:

> Mr. Wesley says *second rest*, because an imperfect believer enjoys a first inferior rest: if he did not, he would be no believer. "Take away the power of sinning?" Is not this expression too strong? Would it not be better to soften it by saying "Take away the love of sinning"? (or the bent of the mind towards sin.) Can God take away our *power of sinning* without taking away our power of free obedience?

In line with this suggestion, American Methodist hymnals have read "Take away our bent to sinning" (*The Methodist Hymnal*, 1964, no. 283), thus preserving a fine verse. John Wesley avoided the difficulty by omitting the verse in his hymnals of 1761 and 1780.

The issue depends on what is meant by "liberty." In the ordinary secular sense of the word, "liberty" means autonomous moral choice. The mental picture is that I have my hand on the wheel, and am completely free to choose between "the high road" and "the low road." The Christian agrees that this is a part of liberty. As Fletcher observes, one cannot have responsible moral choice without some measure of it. However, the "liberty" spoken of in the New Testament is surely much more than this, a bare

power of indifferent choice. The Christian picture of spiritual liberty is that when one has used the wheel to steer on to one's chosen course, one finds that one is in a high-power car on the motorway, with no obstruction in sight. One then enjoys the freedom to open out full throttle, mile after mile! Christian liberty is the release of that fatal frustration of the divided heart which prevents us from moving effectually upon that course of life which our higher and "real mind" has resolved upon. It is the ending of that condition diagnosed by St. Augustine, that the mind commands the will, but the will disobeys, because the mind does not fully command (*Confessions*, viii.21). By contrast, the unregenerate man has indeed that degree of free moral choice which makes him morally responsible, but he is like the motorist with his hand on the wheel, but who cannot move because he is in a traffic jam. There is a nominal but painfully fettered freedom. However, if the love of God and one's neighbor, shed abroad by the influence of the Holy Spirit, is such as wholly to fire the imagination and move the affections, so as to dominate the moral will, and make obedience instant, constant and glad, this is holiness. Clearly, the climax of this holiness would be a character and personality entirely confirmed in good, so that the residual freedom of the will to choose evil would be a purely nominal freedom. It would be present, as the theoretical condition for moral responsibility, but it would not be exercised. Let me quote part of the note written upon this hymn in my book, *The Wesley Hymns as a Guide to Scriptural Teaching*:

> The very bold petition "Take away our power of sinning" is a reference to a famous passage in St. Augustine (*De civitate Dei*, xxii, p. 30) in which he is discussing the spiritual condition of unfallen Adam, as compared with the better conditon of the redeemed. "The first immortality, which Adam lost by sinning, was the ability not to die (*posse non mori*); the new immortality will be the inability to die (*non posse mori*). In the same way, the first freedom of choice conveyed the ability not to sin (*posse non peccare*); the new freedom will confer the inability to sin (*non posse peccare*). - It surely cannot be said that God Himself has not freedom of choice, because He is unable to sin?" Thus unfallen Adam was morally free in the sense that he was not fated to sin. The perfected in Christ will be morally free in a higher and fuller sense. They will share in the moral freedom of God, who, being entirely good, cannot sin. - The difficulty which has troubled some is that whereas St. Augustine is talking about the condition of the perfected saints in glory, of which

this is doubtless true, Charles Wesley is praying that it may happen on earth! Is it indeed possible for the believer to speak as though the love and joy of heaven has actually come down to earth? We observe, firstly, that Wesley's line is an aspiring prayer that this degree of holiness may be granted, not a presumptuous claim that he had attained. And secondly, a raptured poet must not be expected always to express himself in the language of common sense, such as may be taken literally. Even hymn writers may be allowed on occasion some degree of enthusiastic poetic licence! Nevertheless, the phrase is perhaps over-bold.

A prayer from the venerable Sarum Use speaks in a more moderate tone, and framed in matchless English, but it joins in voicing the petition for the divine gift of perfect love:

> Almighty God, unto whom all hearts be open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid; Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of thy Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love thee, and worthily magnify thy holy Name; through Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

# Holiness Thought and the Moral Image of Man

EDWARD H. MADDEN

Toward the end of the eighteenth century Christianity was at its lowest ebb in the history of the American settlements. Moral repugnance against Old School Calvinism had in large part made deistic views of the Enlightenment an acceptable alternative to our founding fathers. To the mass of people, however, the natural theology of the Enlightenment soon proved to be as unpalatable as Calvinism. So it was that, at the turn of the century, a new brand of evangelical, freewill Trinitarianism began to flourish and attract converts by droves. Barton Stone, Alexander Campbell, Asa Shinn, John Rankin, and Asa Mahan were active ministers on the frontier--that is, Kentucky, Ohio and what is now West Virginia--while Lyman Beecher preached the New Light doctrine in Connecticut and Charles Grandison Finney preached through upper New York State and produced, among others, the great Rochester revival.[1]

The freewill Trinitarians, entirely interdenominational, were completely dependent on Thomas Reid and the Scottish realist tradition for their rebuttals of Calvinistic determinism and for their agent causality interpretation of free will (which meant that man is the cause of his own acts and nothing causes him to act the way he does, for motives are not causes). The Americans were mainly influenced by Reid and Dugald Stewart and, shortly after, by Victor Cousin and Théodore Jouffroy, French advocates of much of Reid's thought. We will examine in some detail the Trinitarians' critique of Calvinism and their own concept of agent causality since they constitute the crucial elements of the Reidian moral image of man and hence of the freewill Trinitarians who grounded their views in the Scottish tradition.[2] Before beginning my detailed examination I need to point out that the Holiness Movement is a sub-class of freewill Trinitarianism. Holiness advocates, to be sure, held the Reidian view of agency, like any other members of the freewill Trinitarian tradition; but not all of the latter, of course, held the holiness view of sanctification. So it follows that everything I say about agency will be true of the whole class.

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Those aspects of the moral image of man unique to holiness thought we will examine a bit later.

I

Asa Mahan, first president of Oberlin College and deep in the holiness tradition, ardently criticized Old School views; they make moral responsibility impossible and turn God into an unjust tyrant. If men have no power whatever to choose or act differently than in fact they do, then the concepts of merit and demerit, and the consequent propriety of reward and punishment, become meaningless and inapplicable. And God is transformed into a tyrant when he admonishes men to give up their sinful ways since He is demanding of them the impossible. God must be seen on Judgment Day as eternally damning certain souls and saving others when none of the lot supposedly could have done other than they did, and so merit no judgment at all.[3] Dr. Emmons' Old School view is the oddest of all since he was an occasionalist and believed that all things considered to have been done by human beings were in fact done by the direct agency of God. Hence God is conceived as punishing men for His divinely instituted acts. Do not all of these strange consequences constitute a reductio ad absurdum of old School Calvinism? Mahan answered "yes" unequivocally; but he still needed to show that later Edwardsian efforts to make determinism compatible with freedom and moral responsibility--what has come to be called "soft" determinism in contrast to the "hard" determinism of the Old School--were unsatisfactory and failed to do the job.

According to Jonathan Edwards, freedom means the power or ability to do as one pleases. One is unfree only if he is compelled to do other than he wishes. A man is not responsible for what he is compelled to do, but he is responsible for what he does when he is not coerced. After all, in such cases *he* is the one who does as he pleases and so is responsible. Mahan objected that this argument confuses several senses of the word freedom, a confusion made evident by comparing "freedom" with the concepts of *servitude* and *determinism*. Freedom contrasted with *servitude* means that a man can do as he pleases because he is not in chains or forced by other constraints to do other than he would. Freedom contrasted with *determinism* means that a man can please (or will) to do one thing rather than another; he is under no constraint to will or choose the way he in fact does. Freedom in the second sense is what is required for the ascription of responsibility. Edwards allowed only freedom in the first sense and offered it, irrelevantly, as sufficient grounds for ascribing responsibility. Mahan summed up the point succinctly: determinism is identical

with Fatalism "in its worst form"; they both alike affirm that man can "do as he pleases" and both agree that "man cannot but please to do as he does."[4]

It might be supposed that the defense of free will, as in Mahan's case, would invariably be directed against the Calvinists, and there is much truth in such a supposition. However, some medics, physiologists and chemists occasionally used their scientific determinism against religion, and such scientists as well as the Calvinists had to be dealt with by the New Lights. The defense of free will against scientific determinism fell to the lot of Alexander Campbell in his great debate with Robert Owen.[5]

Owen failed to see, Campbell averred, that the concept of cause is not applicable to human actions. To act as an agent "is quite different from the running of water, the blowing of the wind, or the revolution of a mill wheel." A cause necessarily produces its effect while motives do not, for it is "up to the person" to decide in any given case what motive, among many possible ones, will be chosen and will explain why he acted the way he did. It is in this sense that a person initiates an act, does something that makes the future in part different from what it otherwise would be, and prevents him from being simply a link in an infinite causal chain. Frequently rational motives win out, though that need not be the case. Choosing freely, Campbell wrote, "is sometimes to go with our feelings, and sometimes against them."[6] But, whatever is chosen, the fact remains that a person is able without any change of character to choose and act differently at different times even though the conditions, except for time, are identical.

Determinists objected that Campbell's view leads to indeterminism and chaos. There would be no reliability in human action if a person could act differently in two identical situations and without a change in character to make the different responses understandable. Campbell was unimpressed by the change-in-character doctrine, part and parcel, as he saw it, of the whole determinist misconception that motives are causes. What specific counter-examples did Campbell have in mind? Something like the following ones are implied by what he said in more general terms. Man is not omniscient; he can misjudge the nature of an act one time and judge correctly another. Or he might act perversely toward moral rules, or even against his own legitimate interests, the second time, say, just to prove, as Dostoievski would have it, that he is not a set of piano keys to be played upon by external forces. Or a person might intentionally allow a selfish motive to rule in one case since sainthood is not demanded of him. He was helpful to the needy last time; this time he passes by the needy and indulges himself. Some people, to be sure, simply refuse to act in

any consistent manner, choosing willy-nilly at the whim of the moment. Other people, it must be emphasized, act perfectly consistently and predictably according to principles which they have chosen to guide their lives.[7]

Campbell would claim that none of these cases leads to indeterminism or chaos but that they are perfectly understandable in the agent causality framework and do not require invoking a change in the agent's nature, the last resort in the determinist's decline.

That the concept of cause is not applicable to human actions is the theme of the whole Scottish tradition. A few writers in the tradition, notably Dr. Gregory, tried to formalize the difference between the cause-effect and motive-action relations, one of the most successful being the conceptual-connection argument, still promulgated in the twentieth century by such able philosophers as A. I. Melden and several of Roderick Chisholm's students.[8] According to this argument, a cause and effect can be described independently of each other, while a motive and an act cannot be independently described since they are conceptually connected. Motives provide the point of an action, and the action is to be understood by this point--hence the two are conceptually or intentionally related. Not many figures in the early tradition accepted this formal differentia, whatever its merits may be, since it seems to depend upon a Humean view of causality but mainly because Dugald Stewart thought such criteria unnecessary. There is, he thought, a more direct way of making the distinction, which involves knowledge of the Scot's metaphilosophy.

According to Asa Shinn, articulating the work of Reid, the mind of man is not a tabula rasa but has nativistic epistemic import into knowledge claims.[9] The concept of space, for example, cannot be learned from experience inasmuch as it is a prerequisite for all perceptual knowing and hence must be nativistically basic. The same is true for agency theory. A person is directly aware of acting freely and responsibly. This claim is universal and catholic, and these criteria suggest that this awareness is basic and part of the epistemic input of the intellect itself. Moreover, such a belief is unavoidable in the sense that while one may reject it in his philosophical study he immediately reverts to it in the market place. That Hume and other skeptics admitted this fact speaks highly of their honesty but not their consistency. Now, if a belief is unavoidable it is necessary, but necessities cannot be learned from experience. Hence the belief is part of the original epistemic input of the intellect itself. Kant later called such original epistemic input the transcendental esthetic and the categories of the understanding. Reid, however, being a natural realist, avoided

Kant's distinction between phenomenal and noumenal and hence avoided Kant's skepticism in advance.

It must not be supposed that the advocates of agent causality thought man is always an agent, an initiator of events; far from it. They believed that some human behavior, as distinct from an act, is caused by events over which a person has no control. Thomas Upham, professor of philosophy at Bowdoin College, and a stalwart in the holiness tradition, stressed this point.[10] He was the most psychologically sophisticated member of the Reidian tradition. According to Upham, the McNaghten rule of insanity is pernicious. On this rule, a person is insane if he does not know the difference between right and wrong and cannot reason in the sense of relating means to ends. Upham saw that such a rule was a disaster. He was close to the mark when he insisted that a person can reason in a perfectly acceptable way, adapting means to ends, but that this ability is pointless when it proceeds from crazy premises. Such a person is not responsible and yet, according to the McNaghten *Act*, he can be condemned to death. Moreover, the ascription of insanity and commitment to an asylum is such a serious matter that it must never be undertaken lightly, particularly since morally depraved individuals have endeavored to fasten the charge of insanity upon others in order to control them and their money. Finally, Upham said, compassion toward people with mental problems is essential. It is clearly the moral duty of society to see that those who are legitimately committed are treated humanely.

Let us now sum up the moral image of man that emerges from our discussion. An agent is dynamic and active, is not simply acted upon, but initiates actions, is not epiphenomenal but makes a crucial difference in the world. The agent is not a link in an infinite causal chain but makes a genuine difference in what the future will hold. He produces something new and original in the universe by virtue of his free will. Agency is defined volitionally and existentially; it is "up to a person" to decide what he will do and what sort of person he will become. While one has motives which suggest opposite kinds of acts, one must choose among them; one must decide what will give meaning, whether good or bad, to what one does or to the life one adopts. An agent is spontaneous, and may even act perversely just to prove that he is not a piano key to be played upon. An agent does not act rigidly; but may act differently under identical conditions without chaos or the need of introducing the change-of-character theme. His mind is not a tabula rasa but is itself active and provides, along with releasing occasions, its own explanation of his basic experience of freedom. Finally, the agent is, or should be, compassionate, guarding the unfortunately impaired ones to see that they are treated humanely.

II

Having restored freedom to their satisfaction, the freewill Trinitarians relied again on Reid and Stewart--and Butler, too--to formulate a moral philosophy, something the Old School Calvinists could not do given their "hard determinism." The moral image of man conceived by the Holiness Movement is identical with that of the whole freewill Trinitarian tradition. As we shall see, they all agreed in condemning classical utilitarianism, as well as the Edwards-Finney variant of this doctrine. They generally espoused instead a fitting-relationship and voluntaristic view of moral philosophy. We must wait a bit longer before we discuss those elements of the moral image of man unique to the holiness tradition.

Francis Wayland, president of Brown University, was perhaps the most relentless critic of classical utilitarianism. What follows is only a small sample of his arguments, but even these cannot be evaluated in our time span.[11]

1. Children are perfectly aware of the differences between right and wrong without being capable of comprehending, let alone calculating, the greatest amount of happiness for all people affected by an act.

2. We are frequently ignorant of what will happen in the future; hence any moral judgment based on the consideration of likely consequences is doomed to fail.

3. Every act has infinite consequences. Where, short of infinity, can the utilitarian draw the line and make his judgment?

4. Crimes sometimes have the happiest results--indeed, given the utilitarian view, "we must award to the treachery of Judas the praise of the greatest virtue."[12]

5. The utilitarian is unable to distinguish between specific virtues; they are all taken up into the single virtue recognized by utilitarians. Most duties depend upon fitting relations among human beings. Gratitude and benefactor fit together, and yet all fitting relationships are wiped out by the utilitarian.

While evangelist C. G. Finney was an ardent critic of Calvinism, he nevertheless, surprisingly, held a moral theory precisely like that of Jonathan Edwards.[13] He was one of the very few New Lights to accept Reid's agency theory but abandoned the moral theories of the Scottish tradition. As we shall see, Finney wanted his view to be distinguished carefully from all forms of utilitarianism, though it seemed to some of his peers that this was precisely what it amounted to.

Finney distinguished between a right intention and a derivative

right act. He called the latter an "outward act" and said the only reason for doing it is that one intends to promote universal well-being and this act will probably do so. He also called the intention of the agent an act--it is the choice or decision to want to promote universal well-being, and the only reason that justifies this choice is the intrinsic goodness of the end envisioned. This "ultimate act" must not itself be justified by any reference to utility. For Finney that is precisely what utilitarians do--they fallaciously try to justify the ultimate act. The worst "justification," he thought, was Paley's wholly egoistic one to the effect that one should choose to help others in the expectation of reward in the afterlife for doing so!

It is certainly understandable that Finney did not want his view associated with Paley's. However, those commentators on his moral philosophy who called it a form of utilitarianism had no intention of identifying it with Paley's system. The critics realized that Finney's views were not identical with any other view (with the exception of Edwards's) but argued that in the long run all utilitarian or teleological systems have a common core of meaning. They all insist that only one thing is intrinsically valuable--be it pleasure, happiness, or well-being for me, you, or everyone, including God--and that all other acts and events in the world are valuable only insofar as they are conducive to achieving this end.

Finney's most intimate critic--his colleague Asa Mahan--focused on what he took to be the essential point, namely, that there are many basic obligations of life which cannot be reduced to one all-inclusive principle. Obligations, duties and rights depend upon perceiving certain "fitting relationships" in the web of social life. Even Finney realizes, Mahan wrote, that there is a fitting relationship between virtue and happiness. After all, who could deny that Finney believes in the Final Judgment? Thus he must believe that only virtuous people deserve to be happy. But then Finney's single principle of right and wrong is already lost.[14] He has at least one non-teleological sense of moral duty which is incompatible with his general utilitarian views.

Tappan and Mahan claimed that no justification of moral rules is possible--whether utilitarian, Kantian or any other--since they all involve giving a non-moral reason for doing one's duty. We do not give reasons why acting fairly is right; we simply see that it is a fitting relation among all people, or, again, that it is part of a web of social responses that constitutes a shared life, which may be freely accepted and experienced. Just so, a person is free to reject that way of living and, as contemporary advertisements have stressed, "Dare to take it all." Tappan's and Mahan's views, we might say, borrowing from contemporary usage, are existential.

For the import of this word seems to fit precisely the freewill claim that volition defines man, not reason or sensuousness. It must be kept in mind, of course, that the freewill Trinitarians insisted that the reasonable life is the moral life and they highly regarded its control over sensuous motives. However, reason was not coercive for them as it was for the post-Kantians. A man may choose to adopt a reasonable motive, to accept the fitting relationships, or choose a sensuous one to guide his actions; but in either case he is responsible for his choice. He is responsible for the kind of person he is to become.[15]

Let us see how the freewill Trinitarians fared on some basic moral issue--and what issue could be more basic than the crime of slavery? We will consider in this context Campbell, Mahan, Wayland, Finney, Fairchild and John Rankin. We will see how the Reidian and utilitarian responses to the issue contrast.

Campbell's case is the saddest. He began as a Reidian in moral philosophy and was actively anti-slavery in his earlier years. Then the abolitionists came along--Weld, Garrison, Rankin, Mahan and Luther Lee--and said that slavery was a sin, that sin cannot be eliminated gradually, and that slavery, therefore, must be done away with at once. Campbell agreed that if slavery were a sin then immediate emancipation was necessary. But he then reasoned on utilitarian grounds that emancipation was fraught with evil, would disrupt the economy of the nation, and perhaps lead to civil war. Hence he felt he must deny the premise and say that slavery was not a sin. But on what grounds to sustain this denial? Campbell decided to drop all philosophical morality and to put in its place a biblical criterion of morality according to which slavery was not a sin since the Bible condones it in several places and nowhere rejects it explicitly as sinful.[16] One might have objected to Campbell's claim and said that slavery seems out of harmony with the whole spirit of the New Testament. Mahan, however, would have none of these piecemeal responses. He considered all attempts at biblical justifications of slavery as so much chaff in the wind. He clearly did not believe that the Bible in any way condones slavery. Mahan went to the heart of the matter when he said that if one could clearly prove that the Bible condoned slavery he would not have shown that slavery is right but that the Bible is wrong.[17]

Wayland, sharing Mahan's moral philosophy, went at a slower pace. He was anti-slavery always; but due to the violence of the Dorr Rebellion--which concerned the issue of whether people without property should have voting rights--he became frightened of the abolitionists. However, his disgust with the Mexican War, the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, bleeding Kansas and numerous other events, finally convinced him that slavery had to be done

away with at whatever cost. For a while he supported the abolitionists only by "speaking the truth as he saw it" and becoming active in the Free Soil and Republican parties. Eventually, however, he fed, housed and clothed a runaway slave and sent him safely to freedom. In 1859 he could not even bring himself to condemn John Brown; he admired the "bravery, coolness, and evident sincerity of the old captain."[18]

Finney was clearly anti-slavery, preaching, as he did, against slavery and occasionally taking active measures against it. Though he was not necessarily opposed to his abolitionist colleagues, he was by no means their leader. Through the years fewer Oberlin students became professional abolitionist lecturers, many having been dissuaded from the task by Finney, who wanted to push revivalism and regeneration of the soul instead. James H. Fairchild, third president of Oberlin and devoted follower of Finney, was extremely conservative and during his presidency led Oberlin out of the Holiness Movement. He was also orthodox in political matters; e.g., he fought against women's suffrage to the end.

Mahan, ardent abolitionist, was quite different from his cautious colleagues. When Mahan was appointed president of Oberlin in 1835, the tradition started of flouting all fugitive slave laws, whether state or federal. Oberlin was an extremely important part of the underground railroad. Through the years many hundreds of slaves found shelter in Oberlin, some staying indefinitely and others pursuing the journey to Canada. Most of the Oberlin community cooperated with this type of civil disobedience. President Mahan's house was one of those in which runaway slaves were regularly hidden. Mahan is reported to have said that should the authorities attempt to capture the fugitives he and other members of the community would fight until the last. While this report came from Delazon Smith, an unreliable source, there is nevertheless probably a small kernel of truth in it.[19]

John Rankin, one of the greatest abolitionists, founded an anti-slavery society in Kentucky at the astoundingly early date of 1818. As late as 1832 the Lane Seminary students in Cincinnati were prohibited from having an abolitionist society. Rankin served two pastorates in Carlisle, Kentucky, and subsequently moved to Ripley, Ohio, not far from Cincinnati, where Rankin was well known to Weld, Mahan and Lyman Beecher. Rankin did more than preach and lecture against slavery. He was not content with only trying to regenerate people's souls so that slavery would eventually disappear; far from it. Rankin was active in the Underground Railroad and was perfectly located at Ripley to receive runaway slaves on their flight to freedom. According to

the National Cyclopedia, "He it was who assisted the colored woman and her child, the originals of Eliza and her boy in *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, to escape from slavery."[20] There is a John Rankin House State Memorial in Ripley, a fine tribute to the real pioneer among abolitionists.

Intransigence, boldness and volitional autonomy constitute the moral image of man arising from the specific moral commitments of the freewill Trinitarians. The agent absolutely rejects happiness as the summum bonum and commits himself, uncoerced, to the web of fitting relationship that constitutes a shared existence. He emphasizes the fitting relationship between what a person does and his just desserts. We must do our duty even if the consequences are extremely painful. And so Mahan, John Copeland, Calvin Fairbanks, Henry Cowles and Luther Lee, among others in the holiness tradition, boldly opted for abolitionism. Many others in the tradition worked actively in anti-slavery circles even though they were not abolitionists. The agent never tries to *prove* that he should act morally. To try to do so is to step out of the moral realm. However, the agent remains volitionally autonomous. It is "up to him" whether to step into the web or to stay out of it. The agent must decide between conflicting motives; he must decide what kind of person to become. There are no acts without motives, to be sure, but motives are not causes. The agent must decide, sometimes early on, whether to act morally or "dare to take it all."

## III

The holiness tradition is extremely complex and does not lend itself to anything like an adequate analysis in a few pages. The complexity is suggested by the variety of names used to describe the tradition: for example, scriptural holiness, Christian perfection, the second blessing, sanctification, the higher life, perfect love, full consecration, the baptism of the Holy Ghost, the rest of faith, and the enduement of power.[21]

While some of these expressions have been interpreted in different ways, they have, nevertheless, a common Pentecostal element since they stress the weakness and frailty of human agents and their need for the indwelling Spirit to reach higher spiritual levels. Through the grace of God, the indwelling Spirit is available through deeply earnest and sincere prayers. The results of this Presence are manifold: victory over sin, consolation in affliction, sustainment of heavy burdens, transcendental joy in the presence of God, and an enduement of power to work effectively for Him-- to preach beyond one's own natural powers and thereby to be wondrously successful in revivals and conversions in general.

Scriptural holiness, Christian perfection, the second blessing, sanctification, perfect love and full consecration generally referred to victory over sin; baptism of the Holy Ghost and the "rest of faith" to consolation and sustainment; and "the baptism" and the enduement of power to doing God's work beyond one's natural abilities. The latter two expressions are the most strictly Pentecostal referring, as they do, to the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the apostles.[22]

Let us pursue in some detail the sanctification, scriptural perfection and full consecration strand in the Holiness Movement. According to these doctrines, in order to achieve victory over sin, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit must be sincerely prayed for; and the grace of God brings about the indwelling Presence. With the indwelling Spirit one becomes wholly sanctified and is capable of a perfect commitment to follow God's commandments.

It must not be supposed, however, that a sanctified or fully consecrated person necessarily *acts* perfectly. We must distinguish between a sanctified will, which characterizes an agent, and objective rightness or wrongness, which characterize an act. A person is holy or perfect only if he is wholly committed to God's commandments; an act is perfect if, in addition to the agent's sanctified intention, the act itself is just, right or appropriate. That a sanctified will seems attainable is not unlikely, since it would be odd for a Christian knowingly to consecrate himself to God only partially. But no person is able to *act* perfectly since no one except God is infinitely wise. Given one's imperfect knowledge, a person is bound to produce out of ignorance acts that are strangely wrong or unjust even though one's will is genuinely sanctified. However, unjust acts resulting from ignorance *are* sins, and the person's will not sanctified if the requisite knowledge is available.

The distinction between the instantaneous sanctification of the will and the growth in holiness through increased knowledge of the will of God and to increased sensitivity to the casuistic dimensions of morality is an important distinction and helps to clarify a specific point of John Wesley's teaching. Sometimes he wrote as if sanctification were instantaneous while at other times he seemed to think of it as a gradual process.[23] It is not unlikely that Wesley's problem resulted from not first distinguishing between the sanctification of the will and the increase in holiness through increasing knowledge. Sanctification of the will can then be characterized as instantaneous and holiness as gradual, growing as the knowledge of God's will, through the *guidance* of the Spirit, becomes increasingly evident.

Calvinists asked if an allegedly sanctified individual would never

be subject to temptation, which is itself a sin. In response, holiness advocates pointed out that on this reasoning Christ himself would count as a sinner since He was tempted--certainly a reductio ad absurdum of the Calvinist thrust. "The fact that Christ was thus tempted, and yet without sin, absolutely implies that mere temptation to sin is not sin in anyone." Only temptation yielded to is sin. "Temptation promptly resisted and overcome implies the purest and brightest virtues known in the universe of God."[24]

The advocates of holiness, perfection and sanctification had constantly to fend off the criticism that the movement was antinomian in import. The critics thought that the inward presence of the Holy Ghost amounts simply to the supplanting of human agency by divine agency; and hence whatever a person does, since the Spirit of Christ is operative, is right no matter if it contravenes what we ordinarily mean by morality. How is the holiness tradition, they asked, different from Humphrey Noyes's antinomian perfectionism which justified, on the grounds of the inward spirit, such reprehensible practices as "complex marriages." And we can only say that his followers who criticized Noyes did not see the heart of the moral issue when they complained that their leader usually got the most appealing complexes.

The Holiness Movement replied that antinomianism, the displacement of human agency, is completely inapplicable to the concept of sanctification since it denies what the movement insists upon, agent causality, a strong formulation of the freewill doctrine. Man is weak, to be sure, but free agency is involved in all holiness transactions. A person sincerely prays, wholly uncoerced, for a new nature capable of complete dedication to God's commandments. The indwelling Spirit replaces a heart of stone with a heart of flesh, and the agent has a new character for which he freely asks: and, moreover, he is not coerced to keep this nature. Again, keeping it must be of his own free choice. A wisely sanctified believer is continuously watchful and, like the careful sentry, is never for a moment off guard. It must never be forgotten that the advocates of holiness and sanctification, given their volitional outlook, believe that at every moment it is "up to the person" to decide what to do, to choose what kind of person to be, what sort of nature to have.[25] They may decide in different ways, but if they choose sanctification it is as freely done as if they had chosen to "dare to take it all."

There are other ways of avoiding the charge of antinomianism. Sanctification, said some people in the movement, results from the united actions of the human agent and the indwelling Spirit. To be sure, man is weak, but not wholly hopeless. Sanctification, rather, can be conceived as a cooperative effort between the human and

divine being: one tries one's best, and the other brings out the best that is possible--and the best that is possible with the Spirit's aid is perfect love and total commitment to God's commandments.

However, other people in the movement, holding even less flattering views of humanity, tried to avoid antinomianism in still another way. Some people in the movement had not rejected the whole of Calvinism but believed that man is not simply weak but is utterly depraved. Anything a human being did in conjunction with the Spirit is bound to fail since corruption of any kind entails falling to sin, not victory over it. The kind of cooperation needed is a more humble one. A baptism of the Holy Ghost occurs only if a person chooses to seek it, decides to ask for its bestowal as a free gift from the grace of God. This much impact man has in the transaction, but not a whit more. According to one commentator, "It is our part, as the revealed condition of receiving the blessings provided for us, to 'inquire of God to do it for us'....By the free assent, and consent, the full choice of our heart of hearts, Christ thus dwells in our hearts."[26]

There is still a problem on this view in spite of the emphasis on the free and uncoerced supplication to the Spirit. Even if the Spirit enters the heart of a person by devout invitation and supplication, the agency of the person subsequently seems to be supplanted by the agency of the Spirit. The holiness advocates rejected this consequence and in order to avoid it had to introduce a further role for human agency. The agent can always succumb to previous sinful ways and thus lose the Spirit's guidance in life. Our first parents and the fallen angels were once completely pure, or sanctified, and still they were tempted and fell. "So, when we have attained to a similar state, we are subject to the same liabilities, and, without watchfulness and prayer on our part, 'as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so our minds will be corrupted from the simplicity (perfect purity) that is in Christ.' "[27]

The moral image of man that emerges from the theological commitments of the Holiness Movement is something less flattering than that derived from their philosophical views. Man is weak and feeble and unable to conquer sin, sustain himself in troubled times, do the work of God effectively in parish work or revivals, and so on. According to some members of the tradition, man is not only feeble and weak but utterly depraved. He needs the active support of the Spirit to overcome sin, sustain heavy burdens and to advance God's work beyond his natural abilities. We no longer hear that an agent acts spontaneously, makes things happen, makes a difference in how the future will turn out. There is no longer a reference to nativistic moral input but many references to increased moral knowledge through the Holy Spirit. Is there an incompatibility

between the philosophical views on freedom and moral knowledge and the theological views on the same topics held by the advocates of the holiness tradition? I do not see that the views are strictly incompatible but certainly I see a different emphasis, indeed a strain, between the two contexts. Nevertheless, freedom remains absolutely essential to the Holiness Movement in order to avoid antinomianism. Yes, freedom is still basic but not in its philosophically dramatic form where one initiates actions and helps bring to pass one of several potential futures. Finally, the sources of moral knowledge in the philosophical and theological contexts are quite different; however they need not be incompatible. But has anyone shown what their relation is? No one with whom I am acquainted has successfully explained the relationship.

## IV

Mahan, Finney, Upham, W. E. Boardman, Luther Lee, Lucy Stone, John G. Fee, John Copeland and Sallie Cowles, among numerous others, were moral stalwarts in the holiness tradition in America. They rarely seemed guilty of a rationalization to avoid doing their duty. Are the current members of the holiness tradition, and those who are not within it but have great respect for it, as steadfast? Or are they more prone to rationalize away improper behavior? Consider a student at a Wesleyan seminary who appropriates a book from the library on the grounds that he is graduating and will need it much more than anyone else and will use it more effectively than anyone else in his writings, dedicated, as they are, to advancing God's work. There is much rationalization here to avoid calling the act what it really is: stealing.

Some of the older stalwarts in the tradition were radical in a sense which seems to be missing in the tradition currently. For a number of them evil and sin had to be rectified no matter how painful the consequences may have been. There were numerous adamant abolitionists and most others in the tradition were at least anti-slavery.[28] Have conditions changed or have people in the tradition changed? I remember distinctly the deeply moving chapel talk of Dr. William Abernathy in which he sensitively traced his journey out of darkness into light, from an early racism to a commitment in his maturity to the welfare of blacks. It remains within the contemporary tradition the best rejection of segregation and espousal of equal opportunity that I know. And we must keep firmly in mind that Dr. Abernathy meant *equal opportunity*, not reverse discrimination. Have we heeded what this fine gentleman had to say? How many black people are there on the faculties of holiness colleges around the country?

We must not lose perspective. There are many stalwarts in the tradition today. And not everyone in the early days of the movement was saint-like. Robert Pearsall Smith's behavior was a severe blow to the tradition. His moral behavior was shabby, to say the least, and was the cause of a number of dropouts from the movement. However, this is an isolated case, and the question still remains, do we measure up to the founders?

Mahan died in poverty, though he managed to edit *Divine Life* until his death. Are there many of us willing, like him, to emulate poor Jesus for the sake of helping others?

Have any in the tradition tried recently to alleviate the tension--though not contradiction--between their philosophical views on agency and their theological views on combatting sin? Or what are the contemporary views?

All of these questions are difficult to answer, but they may be summed up in a final question: would Jesus of Nazareth be saddened by man's use of his gracious gift of freedom? Particularly now?[30] Though the answers are difficult and not obvious, it seems the duty of anyone in the tradition, or deeply sympathetic with it, to raise these questions in a spirit of loving care. Finally, I should like to express my admiration and respect for the stalwarts in the tradition today. They carry on the best features of the tradition and are clearly and beautifully filled with the presence of the Holy Spirit. I cannot work these matters into my own metaphysics, but neither can I deny what is evident.

## Notes

1. E. H. Madden, "The Scottish Tradition in the West," *The Thoreau Quarterly*, (1985) 17:41-61; *Civil Disobedience and Moral Law* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1968), pp. 3-6.

2. We shall depend particularly on the works of Alexander Campbell, Thomas Upham, Asa Shinn, Asa Mahan, C. G. Finney, Francis Wayland, Barton Stone, Henry Tappan, Victor Cousin and, of course, Thomas Reid and Dugald Stewart.

3. Mahan, *Autobiography: Intellectual, Moral and Spiritual* (London: T. Woolmer, 1882), pp. 204-214.

4. Mahan, *Doctrine of the Will* (New York: Mark Newman, 1845), pp. 75-79, 194-198.

5. Alexander Campbell and Robert Owen, *Debate on the Evidences of Christianity*, 2d ed., two vols. (Cincinnati: Robinson and Fairbank, 1829). Cf. E. H. Madden and Dennis W. Madden, "The Great Debate: Alexander Campbell vs. Robert Owen," *Transactions of the C. S. Peirce Society* (1982), 18:207-226.

6. *Debate on the Evidences of Christianity*, 2:242-243.

7. Thomas Reid believed that there are some acts that have no motives at all, but his followers universally rejected this view.

8. For comments on Gregory, see Dugald Stewart, *Collected Works*, ed. W. Hamilton (Edinburgh: Thomas Constable, 1854-1860), 6:352-353n. Stewart wrote that an agent is equally ignorant of the nature of the connection between motives and acts as he is between causes and effects, 6:351.

9. Asa Shinn, *An Essay on the Plan of Salvation* (Baltimore: Neal, Wills and Cole, 1813). Shinn devotes the first half of the book to Reid's metaphilosophy and metaphysics.

10. Thomas Upham, *The Elements of Mental Philosophy*, two vols. (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1841), 1:411-455, 2:369-416; *Abridgement of Mental Philosophy* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1883), pp. 231-257, 451-480; and *Outlines of Imperfect and Disordered Mental Action* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1840).

11. Francis Wayland, *The Elements of Moral Science*, ed. Joseph Blau (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1964), pp. 26-29, 30-31, 36-41, 367-370.

12. Ibid., p. 370.

13. E. H. Madden and J. E. Hamilton, "Edwards, Finney, and Mahan on the Derivation of Duties," *Journal of the History of Philosophy* (1975) 13:347-360.

14. Mahan, *Science of Moral Philosophy* (Oberlin: J. M. Fitch, 1848, 1884), pp. 102-103. Cf. also pp. 104, 110-112. Finney wrote no separate book on moral philosophy but included the topic in his *Systematic Theology*.

15. Henry Tappan, *The Doctrine of the Will, Determined by an Appeal to Consciousness* (New York: Wiley and Putnam, 1840). This whole book is relevant to the above issue, but see especially pp. 281-314. Cf. Mahan, *Doctrine of the Will* and Wayland, *The Elements of Moral Science*.

16. H. L. Lunger, *The Political Ethics of Alexander Campbell* (St. Louis: Bethany Press, 1954), pp. 202-204, 206-212.

17. Mahan, *Science of Moral Philosophy*, p. 316.

18. J. O. Murray, *Francis Wayland* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin and Co., 1891), p. 145.

19. This report is contained in Delazon Smith's pamphlet "Oberlin Unmasked." "For sale at the Office of the Cleveland Liberalist" appears on the cover.

20. *The National Cyclopedia of American Biography*, p. 321.

21. These various expressions were used by the leaders in the movement: Fénelon, John Wesley, Charles Wesley, Phoebe Palmer, W. E. Boardman, Thomas Upham, Asa Mahan, C. G. Finney, A. M. Hills, William Taylor, Hannah Whitall Smith, Luther Lee, John Guthrie, along with many other equally important leaders.

22. Pentecostalism, as we know it today, must be distinguished from the American Holiness Movement. The latter takes a strong stand, for example, against glossalalia which is associated with contemporary Pentecostalism.

23. John Wesley, "Christian Perfection," "The Scripture Way of Salvation," "Thoughts on Christian Perfection," and "Cautions and Directions Given to the Greatest Professors in The Methodist Societies," in *John Wesley*, ed. A. C. Outler (New York: Oxford University Press, 1964), pp. 252-305; *The Journal of John Wesley*, abridged by N. Curnock (New York: Capricorn Books, 1963).

24. Mahan, *Autobiography*, pp. 382-386; *Banner of Holiness* (1875), 1:4.

25. The centrality of volition in Reid's thought and in that of his followers was never put more forcefully than by Thomas Upham:

> "The will, therefore, is the culminating point in man's spiritual nature. It sits the witness and the arbitress over all the rest. It is essential alike to action and accountability, to freedom and order, to intelligence and virtue. Without this all else is nothing. It is in reference to this, that all other susceptibilities keep their station and perform their functions. They revolve around it as a common centre, attracted by its power, and controlled by its ascendency." *A Philosophical and Practical Treatise of the Will* (Portland: William Hyde, 1834), p. 72.

26. Mahan, *Autobiography*, pp. 325, 330.

27. Ibid., p. 384.

28. The ardent abolitionists in the Holiness Movement included, among others, Mahan, Lee, John Fee, Lewis Tappan, John Copeland, Calvin Fairbanks, Lyman Beecher (after his daughter wrote *Uncle Tom's Cabin*), and many of the rank and file of the Wesleyan Methodists and the Free Methodists.

29. E. H. Madden and J. E. Hamilton, *Freedom and Grace: The Life of Asa Mahan* (Metuchen, N. J. and London: The Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1982), pp. 201-202.

30. I should point out that no matter how saddened Jesus of Nazareth might be He would still see free agency as a necessary prerequisite for being a human being. The necessitarian alternative might be less sad in one way but ultimately sadder, since the earth would swarm only with robots.

# Understanding God Incarnate

THOMAS V. MORRIS

The doctrine of the Incarnation is the central Christian conviction that the man Jesus of Nazareth was and is God Incarnate, the Second Person of the divine Trinity, God the Son, a properly divine individual, in human nature. In Jesus, we are confronted by one person in two natures, human and divine. Since being formulated carefully at the Council of Chalcedon in 451 A.D., the two-natures view of Christ has served as a cornerstone of Christian faith through all subsequent centuries, up until the present day. But like many other fundamental, traditional Christian convictions, in recent years it has undergone a barrage of severe criticism and has become a focus of widespread controversy.

A great deal of that controversy has arisen in England where on occasion it seems that nearly everyone with an education and a typewriter has a penchant for theological disputation. Recall for example the publicity surrounding Bishop John Robinson's book *Honest to God*, whose publication in 1963 set off an explosion of reviews, response articles and letters to the editors of professional journals, popular magazines and newspapers. In 1977, the publication of *The Myth of God Incarnate*, edited by John Hick, had the same sort of result, generating and focusing much of the controversy that currently surrounds the doctrine of the Incarnation. Within months of its appearance, *The Myth of God Incarnate* was answered by another collection of essays entitled *The Truth of God Incarnate*. This soon was followed by another book *The Myth/Truth of God Incarnate*, and another called simply *God Incarnate*, with one more entitled *Incarnation and Myth: The Debate Continued* hot on its heels, and so on, and so on.

In America, it seems that the only religious controversy we have had even approaching these dimensions is the evolution-creation debate, and that has attained its level of publicity only because of the practical and legal questions of what should be taught in the schools. In general, we have tended to keep our disputes in philosophical theology modestly confined to a few professional journals. However, the recent attacks on Christian orthodoxy now threaten to enter the popular press and the pubic arena on this side of the Atlantic as well. To illustrate this let me quote from, of all

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things, a diet book published by a popular American press a few months ago, with the rather ambitious subtitle *How to Lose Weight and Change the World*. Paging through this little book in a shopping mall bookstore, I found sandwiched between chapters on fat and roughage the statement:

> Christian dogma contains a number of flagrant contradictions, such as: that the same thing is both one and three things (the Trinity)...and that something can be both human and divine (Christ).[1]

Now, how such a claim finds its way into a diet book I won't linger to explain. But let me comment on the specific charge that this author, in common with many others, makes; the charge that there is something logically or conceptually wrong with the doctrine of the Incarnation. In particular I want to examine the structure of that charge, sketch out one defensive strategy for turning it back, and then outline two interestingly different attempts to explicate the doctrine coherently by elaborating on the metaphysics of the Incarnation.

The charge of flagrant contradiction, or, more cautiously, of incoherence, or even more cautiously yet, the charge of metaphysical impossibility, has been repeated in various forms quite often in recent years by critics of the doctrine of the Incarnation. Basically, the sort of argument most of them seem to have in mind is roughly something like the following: On a standard and traditional conception of deity, God is omnipotent, omniscient, incorporeal, impeccable and necessarily existent, among other things. Moreover, by our definition of "God," such properties as these are, so to speak, constitutive of deity--it is impossible that any individual be divine, or exemplify divinity, without having these properties. To claim some individual to be divine without being omnipotent, say, or necessarily existent, would be on this view just as incoherent as supposing some individual to be both a bachelor and married at one and the same time. By contrast, we human beings seem clearly to exemplify the logical complement (or "opposite") of each of these constitutive divine attributes. We are limited in power, restricted in knowledge, embodied in flesh, liable to sin and are contingent creations. Jesus is claimed in the doctrine of the Incarnation to have been both fully human and fully divine. But it is logically impossible for any being to exemplify at one and the same time both a property and its logical complement. Thus, recent critics have concluded, it is logically impossible for any one person to be both human and divine, to have all the attributes proper to deity

and all those ingredient in human nature as well. The doctrine of the Incarnation on this view is an incoherent theological development of the early church which must be discarded by us in favor of some other way of conceptualizing the importance of Jesus for Christian faith. He could not possibly have been God Incarnate, a literally divine person in human nature.

As I have addressed this challenge to the doctrine of the Incarnation in great detail elsewhere, in *The Logic of God Incarnate*, I shall give only a relatively brief indication here of how it can be answered.[2] A lengthy response is not required in order for us to be able to see how this currently popular sort of objection can be turned back. A couple of very simple metaphysical distinctions will provide us with the basic apparatus for defending orthodoxy against this charge, which otherwise can seem to be a very formidable challenge indeed.

As it usually is presented, the sort of argument I have just outlined treats humanity and divinity, or human nature and divine nature, as each constituted by a set of properties individually necessary and jointly sufficient for exemplifying that nature, for being human, or for being divine. Such an argument most often depends implicitly on a sort of essentialist metaphysic which has been around for quite awhile, and which recently has experienced a resurgence of popularity among philosophers. On such a view, objects have two sorts of properties, essential and accidental. Roughly speaking, a property can be essential to an object in either of two ways. It is simply part of an individual's essence if the individual which has it could not have existed without having it. It is a kind-essential property if its exemplification is necessary for an individual's belonging to a particular kind, for example, humankind. Human nature, then, consists in a set of properties severally necessary and jointly sufficient for being human. And the same is true of divine nature. The critic of the Incarnation begins with the simple truth that there are many properties humans have which God could not possibly have, goes on to assume that these properties, or at least some of them, are essential properties of being human, properties without which no one could be fully human, and then concludes that no divine being could possibly become a human being. The conclusion would be well drawn if the assumption was correct. But it is this assumption we must question.

Once a distinction between essential and accidental properties is accepted, a distinction employed in this sort of argument against incarnation, another simple distinction follows in its wake. Among properties ordinarily characterizing human beings, some are essential elements of human nature, but many just happen to be

common human properties without also being essential. Consider for example the property of having ten fingers. It is a common human property, one possessed by a great number of people, but it clearly is not a property essential to being human. People lose fingers without thereby ceasing to be human. Further, consider a common property which safely can be said to be a universal human property, one had by every human being in history--the property of living at some time on the surface of the earth. Obviously this is not an essential human property either. It is clearly possible that at some time in the future, human beings be born, live and die on a space station, or on another planet colonized by earth, without ever setting foot on the earth itself. So it is not a safe inference to reason simply from a property's being common or even universal among human beings that it is an essential human property, strictly necessary for exemplifying human nature.

The relevance of this distinction to the doctrine of the Incarnation should be obvious. It is certainly quite common for human beings to lack omnipotence, omniscience, necessary existence, and so on. I think any orthodox Christian will agree that, apart from Jesus, these are even universal features of human existence. Further, in the case of any of us who do exemplify the logical complements of these distinctively divine attributes, it may well be most reasonable to hold that they are in our case essential attributes. I, for example, could not possibly become omnipotent. As a creature, I am essentially limited in power. But why think this is true on account of *human nature*? Why think that any attributes incompatible with deity are elements of human nature, properties without which one could not be truly or fully human?

It's important here to draw another distinction. An individual is *fully human* just in case that individual has all essential human properties, all the properties composing basic human nature. An individual is *merely human* if he has all those properties *plus* some additional limitation properties as well, properties such as that of lacking omnipotence, that of lacking omniscience, and so on.

It is the claim of orthodox Christology that Jesus was fully human without being merely human. He had all properties strictly constitutive of human nature, but also had higher properties as well, those properties distinctively constitutive of deity. What is crucial to realize here is that an orthodox Christian perspective on human nature will just categorize all human properties logically incompatible with a divine incarnation as, at most, essential to being *merely human*, or, more exactly, as individually-essential, not kind-essential, properties of those of us who are merely human. No orthodox theologian has ever held that Jesus was merely human, only that he was fully human. It is held that the person who was

God Incarnate had the full array of attributes essential to humanity, and all those essential to divinity.

I am suggesting that, armed with a few simple distinctions, the orthodox Christian can clarify his conception of human nature in such a way as to provide for the coherence and metaphysical possibility of the traditional doctrine of the Incarnation. But I am sure it will be objected by many that to use these distinctions to explicate what Chalcedon and the rest of the church has had in mind about Jesus is to land oneself in some well-known absurdities. On the Chalcedonian picture, it seems, Jesus was omniscient, omnipotent, necessarily existent and all the rest, as well as being an itinerant Jewish preacher. But this has appeared outlandish to most contemporary theologians. Did the bouncing baby boy of Mary and Joseph direct the workings of the cosmos from his crib? Was this admittedly remarkable man, as he sat in a boat or under a fig tree, actually omnipresent in all of creation? Did this carpenter's son exist *necessarily*? These apparent implications of orthodoxy can sound just too bizarre for even a moment's consideration, despite any amount of what critics often see as no more than metaphysical magic, or hypostatic hocus-pocus, we might engage in to save the doctrine.

At this point we face two distinct problems. First, it may be difficult to imagine how anyone could be genuinely human from first to last while exemplifying the full array of divine attributes. It may be just simply beyond belief that such an individual would share the human condition. Second, when we study the biblical portrayal of Christ, we do find ourselves presented with an extraordinary individual, but as a matter of fact the Jesus of the Gospels seems not to have been exemplifying all those impressive divine attributes. Was he omnipotent? He grew tired. Omniscient? On at least one occasion he indicated there was something he did not know. Omnipresent? At one time he was in Jericho; at another time in Jerusalem. He walked from one place to another.

By means of the sorts of distinctions I have already sketched out, we can defend the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation against direct charges of logical inconsistency. But we need much more than this if we are to make sense of the doctrine, if we are to come to any significant understanding of what it could mean for Jesus to be God Incarnate. What we are forced to consider is whether an account of the Incarnation can be provided which will on the one hand recognize Christ as a properly divine being in accordance with conciliar orthodoxy, and yet on the other hand clearly allow his earthly sojourn a genuinely human quality, such as what we find portrayed in the Gospels. I want to present the

outlines of two very different attempts to provide such an account, and along the way indicate some of my own grounds for preferring one to the other.

In the nineteenth century a view was developed which has come to be known as "kenoticism" (from *kenosis*, the Greek word for emptying; see Philippians 2:5-8). The central claim of kenotic christology is that in order to enter the earthly stream of human life, God the Son voluntarily and temporarily laid aside, or emptied himself of, all those metaphysical attributes of deity which otherwise would preclude such an incarnation. Some people understand kenoticism to involve the claim that the Son gave up all the distinctively metaphysical attributes of deity for his time among us, while yet retaining all the moral qualities which are properly divine. But of course it is just impossible that all the metaphysical attributes of deity be temporarily laid aside. No individual could possibly cease to be eternal, or immutable, or necessarily existent, for a brief period of time, not even a being with the most astounding powers of self-limitation. But it can be argued in defense of a kenotic christology that the kenotic maneuver need not be applied to these properties. For example, relying on the distinction between common and essential human properties, and the distinction between being fully human and being merely human, we can argue (I think, quite plausibly) that the properties of coming into existence at some time (a contrary of eternality) and contingency (the contradictory of necessity) are just not kind-essential properties for being fully human. Thus, the individual who was Jesus could have been both necessary and eternal in basic metaphysical status while taking on the nature of a fully human being. Furthermore, there are construals of divine immutability which will allow the possibility of a divine incarnation, although none of them will allow a movement of kenosis with respect to immutability itself. But this is unnecessary anyway, since on the sort of understanding of immutability clearly compatible with a divine incarnation, God the Son could perfectly well retain his proper immutability while yet exemplifying the fullness of human nature. In short, it can be argued that, armed with the distinctions we have drawn concerning human nature, we can see that any divine attributes which do not allow of kenosis do not require it either in order to be compatible with an incarnation into human nature.

But I need to say something about how Jesus' having these kenotically recalcitrant metaphysical attributes need not have any absurd implications for orthodoxy. First, it is an ancient, and independently plausible, claim that no person is strictly identical with his body. Even a modern materialist who holds that all

personality is necessarily embodied need not deny this. So the necessary existence of God the Son, with its implications that He cannot have begun to exist and cannot cease to exist, and therefore is eternal, does not entail that the earthly body in which He incarnated Himself had these properties. His body was conceived, and grew like any other human body. Likewise, the kenotic theologian must hold, a person is not identical with any particular range of conscious experience, or any particular set of belief states, he might have. So the eternality of God the Son need not entail the comprehensive continuity of His cognitive states from His pre-incarnate mode of existence as God into His earthly childhood. The kenotic theologian thus allows that the earthly mind-set, along with the earthly body, came into existence and grew. Nothing about the necessity, eternality or immutability (in a sense to be explicated) of the divine Son need preclude this.

It is a standard kenotic claim that God the Son temporarily gave up His omniscience for the course of the earthly stage of the Incarnation. From all eternity, He had been omniscient. For roughly three decades He was not. But upon His Ascension, and for all eternity future, He continues now to enjoy that maximal noetic state once again. This is the kenotic story about God the Son's knowledge. Clearly, it allows both the orthodox claim that Jesus was God, and the biblical claim that He grew in wisdom as a child.

It is fairly easy to explicate coherently the kenotic allegation that the Son voluntarily and temporarily gave up His omniscience, later to regain it. For consider Shorty, a spy who is going on a dangerous mission in which he will have to pretend to be a great scientist with amnesia. So that he will not succumb to questioning under torture if suspected, Shorty is given a limited-amnesia producing pill, and an antidote for later use. Clearly, such a scenario seems perfectly coherent. And in relevant respects it parallels the kenotic claim about Christ.

Temporarily failing to exemplify the property of omniscience thus seems, at least so far, to be a possibility. But what of omnipotence and omnipresence? Perhaps the best understanding of the attribute of omnipresence is that of its being the property of being present everywhere in virtue of knowledge of and power over any and every spatially located object. A divine being would then presumably divest himself of that attribute by divesting himself of the requisite power or knowledge. Omnipotence, however, may not so simply fit into the kenotic scheme. It, like immutability, is what we might call an internally modalized attribute. Being omnipotent is, very roughly, being *able* (having the power) to do anything it would be logically possible (in the

broadly logical sense) for a maximally perfect being to do. Now, let us attempt to describe a case of fully voluntary kenosis with respect to this property. A being, *S*, is omnipotent from *t*1 to *t*2, voluntarily divests himself of this property from *t*3 to *t*5, and regains it at *t*6. What exactly is the state of *S*'s power or abilities at *t*4, during the period of kenosis? If the state of kenosis is entirely and thoroughly voluntary, at *t*4 *S* has the ability (an ability which he freely refrains from exercising) to re-exemplify omnipotence. But at *t*4, if *S can* be such that he can do anything logically possible for a maximally perfect being, then at that time he can do anything logically possible for such a being--in other words, it seems he is still omnipotent. If he cannot at *t*4 take up his omnipotence again, he is not in a state of the thoroughly voluntary, temporary relinquishing of it.

If the kenotic theologian is committed to the complete voluntariness of the state of the Incarnation, he thus may not be able to hold that God the Son temporarily ceased to be omnipotent. But if the Son then lacked at least omniscience, one piece of knowledge He may be said to have lacked is the knowledge of His being omnipotent. And anyone who has restricted his knowledge of the range of his own power may be argued thereby to have restricted the exercise of his power, since, presumably, no one usually draws on resources he does not believe he has.

By maneuvers such as this, kenoticism can attempt to explain how it is that:

1. Omniscience, omnipotence and omnipresence are properly divine attributes;
2. Jesus was divine as well as human; but,
3. During the decades of His time among us on earth, this individual appeared to have none of these attributes.

The kenotic strategy has had many critics, but most of them have failed to appreciate the subtleties of a limited kenotic picture with elements such as these. When combined with the distinctions we have drawn concerning human nature, the kenotic maneuver applied to the attribute of omniscience alone can appear to go a significant way toward ridding orthodoxy of any apparently absurd implications.

I do not, however, find the traditional kenotic strategy fully plausible, or even very attractive. I'll mention here only a couple of problems I think it faces. First, given any traditional and standard analysis of the divine attributes, kenoticism requires a general view of the modalities of those attributes which is less than fully satisfactory. Second, on the same condition, it necessitates abandoning any plausible, substantive metaphysical ascription of immutability to God, of even a quite moderate form.

The first point about modality is this. As I mentioned earlier, it is a fairly standard theistic view that there are properties essential to being God, attributes which can be considered to be constitutive of deity. Omnipotence and omniscience are clear and relatively uncontroversial as examples of such properties. It is impossible, on this view, for an individual to be God, or to be literally divine, without being omnipotent and omniscient. Many orthodox theists, in particular many of those who endorse an Anselmian conception of God, go further and hold that omnipotence, omniscience and the other attributes constitutive of deity form not only something like the kind-essence of deity, but also serve as components of the individual-essence of any being who is God. Moreover, many also go on to hold the even more stringent and exalted view that no individual can possibly count as God unless it is essentially possessed of maximal power, and likewise for the other attributes constitutive of deity. On this view, there is a collection of attributes an individual must have, and must have essentially, in order to be strictly, literally divine.

It should be clear that on this modally exalted view of deity, divine kenosis as I have explicated it so far would be an impossibility. No individual can give up temporarily a property he has essentially. If any being who is divine must have all the metaphysically distinctive attributes of deity essentially, none of them could be given up by him temporarily, while he yet continued to exist. If omniscience is an essential property of God the Son, He could not have given it up temporarily. If it is merely a requisite of deity, but not a part of His individual essence, He could have given it up, but He would thereby have ceased to be God. So the earthly period of the Incarnation would not, after all, have presented us with an individual with the two natures of humanity and divinity simultaneously. On either understanding of the modal status of omniscience, the traditional kenotic strategy as so far presented cannot be used to explicate and defend the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation.

Now consider for a moment the ascription of immutability to God. A number of prominent theists throughout history have understood God's immutability to be the property of being absolutely incapable of undergoing or engaging in any sort of real change whatsoever. It's obvious that this extreme sort of immutability would disallow the possibility of a divine kenosis. But what is important to note is that even moderate construals of immutability would render kenosis impossible. Consider, for example, the conception according to which divine immutability consists in simply the impossibility of any individual's beginning to have or ceasing to have any of the attributes distinctive of deity,

such as omnipotence or omniscience. Such a conception is moderate in that it allows many sorts of change in the case of God, but it is nonetheless a conception of divine immutability because it disallows the possibility of basic change with respect to the exemplification of the distinctively divine attributes. This is a view I think many traditional theists, including Christian theists, would endorse, and it is also a view which rules out the kenotic strategy for defending the doctrine of the Incarnation, at least in its standard form. So again at this point, traditional kenotic christology is incompatible with a view which is otherwise very attractive to theists.

But why accept any of these views about the modal status of the divine attributes? It has been suggested by some very traditional, conservative theists that these modal claims are untrue. Stephen Davis, for example, has claimed to see no reason to think that omniscience is necessary for being divine. Other philosophers have suggested that on a certain view of the Trinity, the divine persons may differ in the modal status of their attributes; for example, it could be that God the Father is essentially omniscient, and that God the Son exemplifies that property only contingently, being capable of ceasing to have it for a while. If we make less than the most modally exalted claims for deity, the standard kenotic strategy will be a live option for displaying the coherence of the Incarnation and explicating some of its features. But it seems to me that there are plausible grounds of an Anselmian sort to make such strong modal claims for deity as those I have mentioned. If such claims clearly prohibited an incarnation, I would join Davis and others in relinquishing them. For any Anselmian intuitions on which they are ultimately based are after all defeasible. But I am inclined to think that these modally maximal claims can be made for God and can be reconciled quite well with the evident facts of the career of Jesus that kenoticism tries to accommodate. If I can go some distance toward showing this, I can thereby provide some reason for thinking that the modal background of standard kenoticism represents at least an unnecessary weakening of the claims many traditional theists otherwise want to make about God.

I want to sketch out an alternative to kenoticism which accords with a modally exalted conception of deity. It is a perspective which may even comport with the most extreme understanding of divine immutability, if that construal is compatible with any divine agency in a world such as ours. It is clearly a perspective which stands fully consistent with the more moderate version of divine immutability most theists are prepared to endorse. In many ways it seems to me to offer a picture, or model, of the Incarnation which is superior to that provided by a kenotic view. The view I want to

present can be called, succinctly, if possibly somewhat misleadingly, "the two-minds view of Christ." It is an ancient view which has been relatively neglected for a long time. I believe some distinctively modern perspectives can be drawn upon to explicate it and display its plausibility.

Recall first of all a claim needed for kenoticism, the claim that no person is identical with any particular range of conscious experience, or collection of belief states, he might have. I think that the truth of this claim will follow from any modally plausible and metaphysically careful account of what a person is. With this in mind, we can begin to appreciate the early view that in the case of God Incarnate, we must recognize something like two distinct ranges of consciousness. There is first what we can call the eternal mind of God the Son with its distinctively divine consciousness, whatever that might be like, encompassing the full scope of omniscience. And, in addition, there is a distinctly earthly consciousness which came into existence and grew and developed as the boy Jesus grew and developed. It drew its visual imagery from what the eyes of Jesus saw, and its concepts from the languages he learned. The earthly range of consciousness, and self-consciousness, was thoroughly human, Jewish and first century Palestinian in nature.

We can view the two ranges of consciousness (and, analogously, the two noetic structures encompassing them) as follows: The divine mind of God the Son contained, but was not contained by, His earthly mind, or range of consciousness. That is to say, there was what can be called an asymmetric accessing relation between the two minds. Think, for example, of two computer programs or informational systems, one containing but not contained by the other. The divine mind had full and direct access to the earthly, human experience being had through the Incarnation, but the earthly consciousness did not have such full and direct access to the content of the over-arching omniscience proper to the Logos; only such access, on occasion, as the divine mind allowed it to have. There thus was a metaphysical and personal depth to the man Jesus lacking in the case of every individual who is merely human.

This account allows for the apparent intellectual and spiritual growth of Jesus in His humanity to be a real development. And when it is used in connection with the distinctions we have drawn concerning human nature, we have in principle a full and adequate account of the basic features of the metaphysics of the Incarnation. In particular, this view allows us to avoid the absurdities to which orthodoxy has always seemed vulnerable. On it, we have in the person of Jesus no case of a God merely dressed up as a man. We have an individual who is fully human, and who shares in the

human condition, experiencing the world in a human perspective. No docetic absurdities are implied by the view. Nor is it Nestorian. Nor Appolinarian. There is one person with two natures, and two ranges of consciousness. He is not the theological equivalent of a centaur, half God and half man. He is fully human, but not merely human. He is also fully divine.

The two-minds view seems to me, further, to be a clear improvement over standard kenoticism. When He became a man, God the Son did not give up anything of deity, He merely took on the nature and condition of humanity. We can capture full well the New Testament claim that in the Incarnation, God the Son humbled Himself, without following kenotic christology in holding that He gave up any metaphysical attributes distinctive of deity. His humbling consisted rather in His rendering Himself vulnerable to the pains, sufferings, aggravations and agonies which became His as a man but which, in His exclusively divine form of existence, could not have touched Him this way. It is not by virtue of what He gave up, but in virtue of what He took on, that He humbled Himself. This sort of divine kenosis was a feature of the Incarnation, but so understood, it is a feature which accords logically with strong claims concerning the modality and immutability of the attributes distinctive of, and traditionally held to be constitutive of deity. No kenotic move with any of those attributes is required for ridding orthodoxy of any appearance of absurdity.

But can we really understand what it is to attribute two minds, or two ranges of consciousness, to one person? That depends on what is required for understanding the claim. Can we know what it is like to be a God-man? Well, can we know what it is like to be a bat? It is hard, if possible at all, to imagine what a sonar-consciousness is like. Likewise, we do not, and cannot, know what it is like to be God, at least not in the way we know what it is like to be a human being. It is no objection to my suggestions that it is impossible in this sense to know what it would be like to be a God-man with two related but distinct ranges of consciousness. But as a matter of fact, we can fill out some significant level of understanding concerning the claim by way of some analogies.

I have suggested already a computer or artificial intelligence analogy. Consider two or three others. First, an interesting, and interestingly parallel, dream phenomenon is reported by many people. It is an experience I think I have had myself on more than one occasion. The dreamer is having a dream with a large cast of characters. The dreamer himself is one of those characters, perceiving the internal environs of the dream and taking part in its action "from within." But, at the same time, the dreamer "as

sleeper" is somehow aware, in what could be called an overarching level of consciousness, that it is just a dream that is going on, in which he is playing a role as one of the characters. If in fact there is in such an experience a twofold consciousness, one "within" the dream, the other "outside" the dream simultaneously, then we have, if not a model, then at least an analogy of some value in helping us to get some imaginative grip on the two-minds picture of the Incarnation. It is possible, though, that in such experiences the dreamer is very rapidly alternating between two perspectives. And of course this would provide no model or particularly good analogy at all.

Consider the common claim in twentieth-century psychology that there are various strata to the ordinary human mind. The postulated unconscious, or subconscious, mind would stand in an asymmetric accessing relation to the conscious mind somewhat parallel to that postulated between the divine consciousness and the earthly consciousness of God Incarnate. If modern psychology is even possibly right in this postulation, one person can have different levels or ranges of mentality. In the case of Jesus, there would then be a very important extra depth had in virtue of His being divine.

Finally, there are cases of commissurotomy, multiple personality and even hypnosis, in which we are confronted by what seems to be, in some significant sense, a single individual human being, one person, but one person with apparently two or more distinct streams or ranges of consciousness, distinct domains of experience. Now, of course, there are philosophers who claim that in many if not all cases of multiple, simultaneous ranges of experience associated with the stimulation of one human body, the requisite conditions are lacking for judging there to be a single person who is the ultimate bearer of the disparate sets of experience. Some theorists identify each discrete range of consciousness in the commissurotomy patient, and each personality in the case of a multiple personality, as a person. Such a claim is less often made with respect to different levels of consciousness or divergent streams of awareness associated with cases of hypnotism. But, in any case, the sort of identification can be argued to be implausible. If one troubling, aberrant personality is eliminated therapeutically from the behavioral repertoire of someone afflicted with multiple personalities, the therapist surely need not see the effect of his work as the killing of a person. Moreover, it is plausible, and indeed illuminating, to view normal persons as either having or even being systems of systems of mentality or experience. And, again, if it is even conceivable that one person have, simultaneously, such distinct ranges of mentality, we may have

here, in at least some of the more unusual cases, vivid, partial analogies which can help us to gain some firmer understanding of the two-minds view.

As a matter of fact, in some cases of multiple personality, there exists one personality with apparently full and direct knowledge of the experiences had, information gathered, and action initiated by one or more other personalities, a sort of knowledge which is not had by any other personality concerning it. In other words, there seem to exist asymmetric accessing relations in such cases interestingly, though of course not perfectly, parallel to the sort of relation claimed by the two-minds view to hold between the divine and human minds of Christ.

Does the two-minds view then present the Incarnation as a case of split-personality on the part of God the Son? And if so, should not the recognition of this alone suffice for a rejection of the view as an unworthy, demeaning characterization of Christ? Does what initially can appear to serve as a partial explication of orthodoxy end up amounting to no more than a gross impiety?

First of all, the reference to some phenomena of multiple personality here is intended only to provide a partial analogy for some of what the two-minds view claims to be true in the case of Christ. It is to have no more than the limited, but hopefully helpful, function of providing some understanding of, and imaginative grip on, the central elements of the two-minds view. It thus is intended to serve the same function as the computer (AI) analogy, the dream analogy, and the reference to the classic distinction between the conscious and unconscious, or subconscious, mind. It is not intended to be a complete modelling of the noetic features of the Incarnation.

Furthermore, the analogy or partial parallel is in no way demeaning to God the Son. To see this we must ask exactly what it is about the phenomena of multiple personality generally which renders the state of exhibiting such phenomena a bad state to be in for a human being, a state which it would be better to be without. The answer is, I think, quite simple. Typical cases of multiple personality exhibit two negative features: they are not mental states, or arrangements, voluntarily entered into by the person who exhibits the phenomena, and they are not mental states, or arrangements, conducive to the attainment of goals valuable to the person involved. Both these features are, on any orthodox deployment of the two-minds views, absent from the case of Christ's exemplification of two minds. His taking on of a human mind was entirely voluntary. And, given any traditional account of the purpose of the Incarnation, it was conducive to, if not in fact necessary for, the attainment of goals valuable to God. So it seems

to me that we have no reason from this quarter to hesitate using whatever parallel phenomena we find in psychologically unusual human cases to help us to understand the relevant aspects of the Incarnation.

The two-minds view of Christ allows us to take seriously the human limitations of the earthly career of Jesus without incurring the metaphysical and modal costs of kenoticism. I believe it is a very powerful picture, and that it can be an important ingredient in philosophically explicating the orthodox doctrine of the Incarnation and defending it against all forms of the contemporary incoherence challenge.

## Notes

1. Richard Watson, *The Philosopher's Diet: How to Lose Weight and Change the World* (Boston: The Atlantic Monthly Press, 1985), p. 49.

2. Thomas V. Morris, *The Logic of God Incarnate* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1986).

# The Moral Obligation of Belief

JERRY L. WALLS

## I

The "ethics of belief" is a much discussed topic in modern and contemporary philosophy. It is fairly common to see discussion of what we *ought* to believe, are *warranted* in assuming, *should* conclude, and so on. Phrases such as these clearly indicate that morality and epistemology overlap in some very interesting ways. Indeed, epistemology and ethics converge in many cases in everyday life when we assess beliefs and judgments in terms of blame or approval.

Perhaps the most extreme example of assigning blame to beliefs is in the Christian tradition. A classic passage illustrating this is Romans 1, where Paul says that those who do not believe in God are morally culpable. But the Christian tradition goes further and requires more specific beliefs. For instance, the Athanasian Creed which expounds in detail the doctrines of the Incarnation and Trinity, begins with this sober claim: "Whoever will be saved, before all things it is necessary that he hold the Catholic Faith. Which Faith except everyone do keep whole and undefiled, without doubt he shall perish everlastingly." The idea here is that certain beliefs are essential for salvation, and that those who do not accept them are damned. Surely damnation is the ultimate form of blame for wrong belief. Moreover--and most significantly--the notion that belief is important for salvation can be supported by Christ's own words. In the Gospel of John, for example, He is reported as saying "if you do not believe that I am the one I claim to be, you will indeed die in your sins" (John 8:24).

It is not surprising that this element of Christian teaching has proven offensive to many. Some would even say that this very teaching provides a good reason not to believe Christianity. The idea that one's beliefs about Christ could be culpable strikes some as simply outrageous. Richard Robinson expresses this view pointedly:

> It is most important to reject the view that it is a sin not to believe in Jesus; for the view that a belief can be sinful is very harmful and wrong. It destroys the whole ideal of

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> knowledge and reason, and prevents man from achieving the knowledge in which much of his dignity and much of his safety lie. No belief is as such morally wrong; but it is morally wrong to form one's beliefs in view of something other than truth and probability; and Jesus demanded this moral wrong....It is terrible to think how many million people have, as a result of those passages in the gospels about having faith, done what probably each of us here did in his childhood, tried to hypnotize himself into some particular belief and to disregard whatever scraps of judgment he possessed. The fine things in Jesus' preaching have been and will be greatly harmed by this blasphemy against reason.[1]

This passage well expresses the aversion which many have felt to the Christian view that it is wrong not to believe in Christ. Robinson's general point is that beliefs as such are not fit subjects for moral evaluations. No belief is itself wrong in the moral sense. What is right or wrong is how one forms beliefs. Robinson's view is that beliefs should be formed in view of truth and probability, and Christ violated this ideal in demanding belief in Himself. In his experience, to believe in Christ is to try to "hypnotize" oneself to so believe, in defiance of what he actually judges to be true. Given this picture, it is no wonder that many have recoiled from the idea that one must believe certain things in order to be saved.

Indeed, it is noteworthy that Christian thinkers, too, have backed away from the claim that beliefs about God and Christ are blameworthy. Nor should this surprise us, in light of the steady stream of attacks which have, since the Enlightenment, been levelled against Christian belief in general. In previous ages Christian thinkers were generally confident that it could be known and shown that God exists, that Christ is His Son, that Christ was raised from the dead, and so on. Given this confidence, it is easy to see why those who did not believe were considered blameworthy, for the evidence for God's existence and other Christian doctrine was thought to be clear and compelling.

Now, however, it is generally agreed that there is no compelling argument for God's existence, let alone for the deity of Christ. In this intellectual climate there is accordingly much greater reluctance to think unbelief is culpable. For if there is no substantial reason to believe in God, there hardly seems to be any warrant for thinking anyone might be held accountable for unbelief. Related to this, I suggest, is the quiet abandonment of the doctrine of hell among Christian thinkers in favor of universalism.

However, the doctrine of hell remains a thorny problem which

cannot be so easily ignored. As Peter Geach claims:

> We cannot be Christians, followers of Christ, we cannot even know what it is to be a Christian, unless the Gospels give at least an approximately correct account of Christ's teaching. And if the Gospel account is even approximately correct, then it is perfectly clear that according to that teaching many men are irretrievably lost.[2]

And, as we have already noted, Christ has traditionally been understood as teaching that unbelief is one of the sins which leads to damnation.

I want to insist that this is an issue which Christian thinkers must face. Unless they are willing frankly to argue that the Christian tradition has misunderstood Christ and is mistaken in teaching that unbelief is blameworthy, and may even lead to damnation, they should offer some account of why unbelief is culpable. For the remainder of this paper I will assume the Christian tradition is correct in teaching that unbelief is morally culpable and even leads to damnation.[3] I will attempt to defend and make sense of this claim. My purpose is not to argue for the existence of God or the truth of Christian doctrine. I only suggest the lines of argument which underlie the notion that unbelief is blameworthy.

## II

Let us approach this problem by considering in general terms the fact that we do sometimes judge beliefs to be morally wrong. The question is, when do we judge a belief to be morally wrong? Why do we sometimes render this verdict?

Consider a few examples. In the state of Indiana there have recently been cases of parents who were found guilty in court because they neglected to get medical care for their children, who consequently died. An interesting thing about these cases is that the parents are members of a religious cult which believes that it is wrong to seek medical attention. Now it may be that what is blameworthy in these cases is not the belief that it is wrong to seek medical attention, but the action which follows from it, namely, keeping children from needed medical care. However, these cases illustrate one of the reasons why beliefs are sometimes culpable: because they are the basis for actions. Indeed, the relationship between belief and action is so intimate that the action cannot be blamed without also blaming the belief. For the action does not stand alone. It is a direct consequence of the belief.

Or take the case of a tobacco company executive who denies

that smoking is hazardous to health. We suspect that his belief is prompted by financial motives and that he has ignored or suppressed the substantial evidence that smoking is harmful to our health.

More directly culpable would be a physician who continues to use a drug for treatment which research indicates has very negative side effects. If she has heard of the research, but has not bothered to check it, we would say she is blameworthy for believing the drug harmless, especially if it turns out otherwise. We would be particularly justified in blaming her if she has ample opportunity for keeping up on the research, but spends all her free time, say, playing tennis.

It is worth stressing here that, in this case, the physician's belief is a consequence of an action, namely, neglect of the research. This contrasts with our example above of the parents whose actions were the consequence of their belief. These examples illustrate that there is a two-way street between belief and action and that beliefs may be blameworthy either because they are the *basis* of wrong actions or the *consequence* of wrong actions.

Now consider the case of a person who hears and believes vicious gossip. Let us say Quine tells Quinn that Quinton is a fraud and a liar. Suppose also that up to that point, Quinn has had good reason to believe Quinton is a good and honest man. If Quinn simply accepts Quine's word and henceforth believes that Quinton is a fraud and a liar, I think we would blame him for this belief. We would think he should have investigated the charge before accepting it. We think beliefs about the character of other persons are serious matters and should not be arrived at carelessly or casually.

Think now of a person who is informed of an alleged duty. Suppose Gray is running for public office and hears from a friend about the requirement in the law to keep an account of all campaign expenditures. Suppose further that Gray does not bother to confirm or disconfirm what is heard. He goes on in the belief that it is not important to keep such an account. Later, if Gray runs into trouble with the law for illegal campaign practices, we would think him culpable for believing it unnecessary to record his expenditures.

Finally, consider the extreme case of someone who believes there are no moral distinctions, that the whole idea of morality is superstitious or just plain silly. Most of us would judge such a belief to be not only mistaken, but also corrupt. Why is this so? Alvin Plantinga offers this explanation:

> A part of what is involved in our blaming people for holding

> corrupt beliefs, I think, is our supposing that the normal human condition is to reject them, just as the normal human condition is to accept *modus ponens*, say, as valid. We think a normal human being will find injustice--the sort depicted, for example, in the story the prophet Nathan told David--despicable and odious. In the face of this natural tendency or prompting, to accept the view that such behavior is perfectly proper requires something like a special act of will--a special act of *ill* will. Such a person, we think, *knows better*, chooses what in some sense he knows to be wrong.[4]

In this quote, Plantinga puts his finger on one of the main reasons why we can evaluate beliefs in moral terms: because some beliefs are chosen. Some of our beliefs are like actions in this sense, and most would agree that we are responsible for our actions.

But it may be doubted whether our beliefs really are like actions. For most, if not all, of our actions are under our direct control. For instance, we voluntarily and directly perform such actions as turning our head or pointing our finger. But can we choose to believe things in the same direct way as we perform basic actions? The answer, I think, is generally no. With respect to most of our ordinary beliefs we are passive rather than active. Our perceptual beliefs, for instance, are not chosen. We simply believe many things as the immediate result of seeing and hearing the sights and sounds around us. Similarly, we believe many other things because they seem true to us, apart from any choice we have made.

So generally we do not directly choose our beliefs. However, this still leaves open the possibility that we may indirectly choose what we believe. For instance, if I want to believe a certain proposition, *P*, I may cultivate belief in *P* by performing certain actions. For instance, I may gather and reflect on evidence which is relevant to *P* or read books by people who believe *P*. I may consciously try to modify my other beliefs so they are compatible with *P*. Eventually, I may find myself believing *P*.

In a similar vein, consider how someone may cultivate wrong moral beliefs by making wrong choices. For instance, a person who performed a number of unjust actions may come to believe that actions which almost all of us would regard as wrong are actually right. That person may modify his or her previous moral beliefs in order to believe those actions were justified.

Of course, it may be objected that a person would already have to believe that an unjust action was acceptable in order to perform it. This points up again that there is a two-way street between belief and action, and it is not always easy to tell which direction

the traffic is moving. However, the point still stands, I think, that we do choose some of our beliefs, if not directly, then indirectly.

With these examples before us, we turn to the more specific question of how beliefs with respect to God may be blameworthy. I will deal with this question by considering two well-known accounts of religious belief in contemporary philosophy of religion, namely, those represented by Alvin Plantinga and Richard Swinburne. My main concern is to point out the implications of each of these concerning our moral obligation to believe in God.

III

Let us begin by considering Plantinga's view that belief in God may be properly basic. In taking this view, Plantinga is following a number of Reformed theologians who have held that belief in God is not inferred or deduced from other beliefs. Rather, it is a belief which we hold spontaneously like our beliefs "in the existence of other persons, an external world, or the past."[5]

Why is this so? The Reformed theologian does not try to *argue* that God exists; however, he does *give us an account* of why we do, in fact, believe that God exists. In the first place, God has created us with a strong tendency to believe in Him. Our very nature, then, accounts for the common persistence among human beings to believe in God. John Calvin put it this way:

> To prevent anyone from taking refuge in the pretense of ignorance, God himself has implanted in all men a certain understanding of his divine majesty. Ever renewing its memory, he repeatedly sheds fresh drops. Since, therefore, men one and all perceive that there is a God and that he is their Maker, they are condemned by their own testimony because they have failed to honor him and to consecrate their lives to his will.[6]

This quote from Calvin also indicates the second reason Reformed theologians give for taking belief in God as basic: namely, because God is "ever renewing" our awareness of His existence through the witness of nature. The entire world around us is an ever-present reminder that God exists.

To be more specific, our inclination to believe in God when we are impressed or affected in certain ways by nature is a circumstance which justifies or grounds our belief. Plantinga explains this point by comparing what it is that justifies our ordinary perceptual beliefs. For example, if I believe I see a tree, I am justified in this belief because (to use language Plantinga borrows from Chisholm) I am "appeared to treely." Unless I have

reason to believe my perceptual equipment is misleading me, this circumstance justifies my belief that there is a tree before me. I do not deduce that there is a tree before me. I believe it directly upon being appeared to treely. That is why it qualifies as a basic belief.

Belief in God is basic in an analogous way. Not only are we so made that we immediately believe *I see a tree* in certain circumstances, we also naturally believe in God-given certain conditions. "More precisely, there is in us a disposition to believe propositions of the sort *this flower was created by God* or *this vast and intricate universe was created by God* when we contemplate the flower or behold the starry heavens or think about the vast reaches of the universe."[7]

Plantinga's development of the Reformed view of religious epistemology is certainly intriguing and demands careful assessment. My purpose here, however, is only to ask what implications this view has for evaluating unbelief in God as blameworthy. The above quote from Calvin spells out these implications quite clearly. As he saw it, not only is there no excuse for not believing in God, there is no excuse for not living a life of devotion to Him, since He has revealed Himself so clearly to all of us.

It is not clear how far Plantinga wishes to follow his Reformed predecessors on this point. The implications of his view, however, surely point in the direction Calvin took. For if God has created all of us with a strong inclination to believe in Him, and we are surrounded by circumstances which renew this tendency, it is hard to see what more God could do to have us believe in Him without imposing such belief on us. Of course, it may be suggested that there are other ways of explaining why belief in God is properly basic. But it seems to me that something like the Reformed account of human nature, and of how the world of nature inclines us to believe, is required if belief in God as properly basic is to be adequately accounted for.

If belief in God as properly basic is accounted for in such terms, it is hard to avoid the conclusion that those who do not believe in God only do so by an act of will similar to that of persons who believe there are no moral distinctions. That is to say, we are pushed toward the conclusion that those who do not believe in God actually know better, but have *chosen* not to believe.

Thus, the Reformed account does far more than show that belief in God *can* be basic for those who want to believe; it shows that belief in God *is*, in fact, basic for all. In other words, the conditions which are sufficient to *justify* belief in God as basic also *demand* belief in God. Those who do not believe in God must

suppress and deny what all persons naturally believe. Unbelief, then, is an unnatural condition brought about by a sinful act of deliberate choice. Therefore, it is culpable.

But is unbelief always culpable? Are there not cases when our inclination to believe may be thwarted in such a way that we should not be blamed for unbelief? Suppose a person was inclined to believe in God and even wanted to believe. But suppose further that that person was forced to undergo systematic brainwashing by persons who did not believe in God. In this instance, the person involved might come not to believe, but it would not be because he chose not to believe. It would hardly make sense in such a case to blame the person for unbelief.

And in a similar vein, we can imagine cases where a person might have good grounds for thinking his belief in God was illusory. Suppose a person who believed in God was given a detailed psychoanalytic account of why people believe in God, and was told that his own belief could be fully explained in such terms, even though God does not exist. Suppose that upon reflection this person became convinced that the psychoanalytic account did accurately describe his belief in God. Maybe he comes to see his belief in God as nothing more than neurotic wishful thinking. He would then have some reason to believe his apparent perception of God was misleading. Would this person not be irrational to continue to believe in God? And could he be culpable for giving up an irrational belief?

The latter case is more ambiguous, for it may be the psychoanalytic account of belief in God was accepted too easily. Furthermore, even if belief could be adequately explained as wishful thinking, it does not follow that all belief in God can be accounted for in this way. And it certainly does not follow that God does not exist, just because some persons believe in God because of wishful thinking. So it may be the case that this person should give up his present belief in God, but then go on to consider whether there are other grounds for such belief. To simply abandon belief in God in this case would be much too hasty a judgment on such an important matter.

Before moving on, perhaps we should pause to stress the point that beliefs may be blameworthy because they lead to wrong actions. This is especially so if wrong beliefs are deliberately chosen, as in the Reformed view. For beliefs are a basis for action and certain beliefs require certain actions. For instance, a bus driver who is "appeared to treely" has an obligation to steer the bus so as to avoid hitting the tree. If he chooses not to believe there is a tree in front of him, he may wreck the bus and bring harm to himself and his passengers. Likewise, a person who

chooses not to believe in God may not perform the actions which belief in God requires. This, I think, is the point of Calvin's claim in the quote above, that persons who do not consecrate their lives to God are morally accountable.

IV

Now let us turn to another account of religious belief and rationality. In this section I want to consider the view that belief in God is rationally supported by evidence and arguments. This view has been recently defended by Richard Swinburne, who argued in *The Existence of God*, that, on balance, it is more probable than not that God exists. Once again, it is not my purpose here to expound this view in detail, but only to consider what implications it may have for the notion that belief in God is an intellectual obligation.

In this view, the existence of God is not so starkly obvious, as in the Reformed view. Rather, the situation is more ambiguous, but reason, if properly exercised, will lead us to conclude that God exists. That is to say, God's existence is not immediately evident, but we can quite properly infer it.

Interestingly, this view also, like the Reformed view, involves a certain view of human nature. In the first place, reason points to God's existence because reason is a gift of God.[8] This is akin to the Reformed idea that God has made us so that we have a strong tendency to believe in Him. Here, however, it is not a direct tendency so much as a faculty which, when properly exercised, supports belief in God. Also akin to the Reformed view is the notion that the world of nature justifies belief in God. Here, however, nature does not simply trigger a disposition to believe. Rather, it is part of the total evidence which reveals God, and can be assessed by reason.

There is another assumption about human nature operating in this view. It is that "all men want long-term well-being and deep well-being: that is, they want to be for long in a supremely worthwhile situation doing actions of great value."[9] Such well-being, moreover, is only found through a relationship with God. To sum up then, we have a God-given desire for deep and lasting well-being. This desire can be satisfied only through knowledge of God. And the evidence around us, when properly evaluated, will lead us to belief in God.

With this background in place, let us go on to focus on the question of how unbelief may be blameworthy in this view. The first general suggestion here is that people who are uncertain of God's existence should investigate whether there is a God and what implications there might be for our lives if there is one. For, in

our society at least, we are often confronted by the claims of different religions which promise deep and eternal well-being to their adherents. Since we naturally desire such well-being, it is plausible to suppose that we should pursue the claims of religion to find out whether any of them are in fact true. Moreover, it is widely believed by "the man on the street" that there must be a God. Even if this belief is not properly basic, it is still commonly believed that God exists and that somehow He gives meaning to life. Those who believe this ought to seek to find out what they can about God and His purposes.

I am using the word "ought" here in a fairly strong sense. For "if there is a God and he has made and sustains the world and issued commands to men, men have moral obligations which they would not otherwise have."[10] Such commands might pertain to how to use our lives, how to treat other people, how to treat the natural order, and so on. We should want to discover whether there are such commands, whether we have disobeyed them, whether we can obtain forgiveness, and so forth.

> Among man's duties is the duty to find out what his duties are. He must therefore find out whether the world is his to use as he pleases, or whether it belongs to someone else; whether he is indebted to anyone for his existence, to whom he owes acknowledgement and service. The duty to pursue religious inquiry is a particular case of the duty to check that we owe nothing to any man.[11]

So then, the general starting point here is the possibility that there may be a God, that we may owe Him something by way of obedience and worship, and that our ultimate well-being may depend on knowledge of Him.

It is because these issues are so important that we are responsible for having true beliefs about them. The more that is at stake in something, the more important it is that we have true beliefs about it. Given the importance of the issues which are at stake in religion, it is incumbent upon us to seek the truth of the matter with diligence and honesty.

It is not, however, easy to define exact standards for adequate investigation. Consider the question of God's very existence. The arguments surrounding this issue have been rather sophisticated for some time. In our day, some of these have become so technical that untrained persons could not possibly evaluate them. Is it then necessary, if one is to investigate with integrity the question of God's existence, that one must first undergo considerable philosophical training?

Surely not. The evidence regarding God's existence must be such that a basic grasp of it can be had by untutored minds as well as philosophers. Sophisticated arguments, we may suppose, only spell out in greater detail what can be recognized by anyone at a more intuitive level. Thus, it is reasonable to believe that all persons may have an intelligent belief concerning God's existence.

However, religious inquiry cannot stop here. For if one comes to believe there is a God, he should go on to find out more about what God is like. What are His purposes? What is His will for man? Has God revealed himself in specific ways? To ask questions such as these is to ask which, if any, specific religious creed is true. And to ask this question is to raise again the practicality of serious religious inquiry. For it would be virtually impossible to make an exhaustive investigation of all religious claims. Besides the major world religions, there are countless cults and sects. The task of serious religious investigation may thus seem impossible.

However, our investigator may plausibly assume that if there is a God, the truth about Him is to be found in some religion which has had substantial success in winning adherents throughout the world. For the truth about something so essential to all men should commend itself to a broad range of persons and not just an isolated few.[12]

It is because we should seek more detailed knowledge of God that beliefs about Christ are important. For the Christian claim is that God's highest act of self-revelation was given through His Son, who became incarnate in Christ. If Christ is God's Son, our worship is due Him. Moreover, His teaching is essential for knowing God's will which leads to our eternal well-being. Thus, to fail to believe that Christ is God's Son may result in failure to properly worship and obey God, and ultimately lead to a loss of eternal well-being.

At any rate, investigators should gather what evidence and information they can by reading, talking with adherents of different religions, and so on. They should pursue the available evidence and reflect on it until they reach a settled conviction about which, if any, religious creed is true. Perhaps the key to what is to count as sufficient investigation of religion is to be determined by comparing the standards a person applies to other matters. For:

> Although a man may think that he has devoted enough time to such investigation, even by his own standards he may not have done. He may have devoted far less time to it than the importance which he believed the matter to warrant by his

> normal standards of how much time you ought to devote to investigating things.[13]

For instance, suppose a person painstakingly and thoroughly researches all the options available before investing money. Furthermore, he makes it a point to keep up with financial news by regularly reading business reports, market analyses, and so on. Suppose further that this person's religious beliefs are based on investigation which is superficial and perfunctory compared to the research on financial affairs. In this case, I think the person involved could be held culpable for carelessness in forming wrong beliefs on a matter of supreme importance. And carelessness on such a matter is not easily excused.

Of course, this raises questions about cases of persons who investigate religious matters carelessly, but who happen to come to right beliefs anyway. And, on the other hand, there may be cases of persons who are diligent in religious inquiry but who arrive at erroneous beliefs. Perhaps in their investigation, they came across only weak presentations of Christianity, but impressively argued apologies for some other religion. In this case, it is hard to see how a person could be faulted for not believing in Christ. Indeed, perhaps in a situation like this it would be logically impossible for a person honestly to believe in Christ, at least without further research and reflection. Such a person should not, as Robinson put it, "hypnotize" himself to believe, against his better judgment.

Certainly honesty is crucial to genuine religious inquiry. And honesty requires us to be led in the direction the evidence points. To refuse to be led by the evidence is blameworthy, especially if one is wrongly motivated. For instance, a person may be inclined by the evidence to believe in Christianity, but may refuse to do so because he or she is unwilling to face up to the moral demands of the Christian faith. As Swinburne comments:

> Men have no doubt down the centuries cultivated unbelief or allowed themselves to slide into atheism on various bad non-rational grounds--e.g. in order to be able to commit other sins without a bad conscience. But this is surely one kind of unbelief which the Christian religion has stigmatized as a great sin.[14]

Now then, let us summarize the argument of this section. I have been sketching the grounds for holding that unbelief is culpable given the assumption that the overall evidence shows not only that it is probable that God exists, but that the more specific Christian creed is true. The general idea here is that it is our duty to engage

in religious inquiry because it is at least initially plausible that God exists and we may have obligations to Him. Our ultimate well-being may depend on having true beliefs about God. To engage in religious inquiry is not, however, to assume from the outset that any religion is true.

Culpability may stem from two things: either failure to investigate religious claims seriously or dishonesty in weighing the evidence. If it is indeed true that the evidence supports not only the existence of God, but also the Christian creed, then honest investigation should lead most people to believe the Christian faith. This assumes, of course, that the relevant evidence is accessible to the investigator and that the collected evidence is representative. That is, the evidence must accurately portray the religions in question, and the amount of rational support they in fact enjoy.

Given these assumptions, belief in Christianity would be the natural outcome of investigation. Not to believe in God, or to believe in some other religion would have to be a choice made in spite of good reason to believe otherwise. There is thus another point of contact with the Reformed view: seeing unbelief as a choice. The difference, of course, is that in the Reformed view unbelief must fly in the face of an immediate, strong, natural tendency to believe. In this view, the tendency to believe is not so immediately strong, but results from investigation and reflection on the evidence.

The move to blameworthiness is thus more tenuous and open to objection at a number of points. The very first step may be contested in that it may be doubtful whether we have a duty to find out what obligations we may have to God if we are unsure whether God even exists. Thus, one may simply opt out of religious inquiry from the outset. If this decision is to be judged culpable, it seems that it must be insisted that the initial obligation to seek out our duties is fairly evident or intuitive.

Moreover, if it is to be claimed that unbelief is universally culpable, then it must be maintained that there is evidence universally available. Obviously, however, all the relevant evidence is not evenly distributed. There are, for instance, numerous places where Christianity has not spread. In such places, it is hard to see how anyone could be held accountable for not believing in Christ.

This difficulty may be met by the suggestion that God only holds us accountable for whatever evidence or information is in fact available to us. This is not a modern expedient for an embarrassing problem, but a reasonable response which has been proposed by Christians of earlier generations. For instance, John Wesley held that failure to believe in Christ is only blameworthy among those to whom the gospel has been preached. He urged that

we should leave the fate of others up to God, who can be trusted to judge such men "according to the light they have."[15]

If there is at least some "light" available to all persons in all places and circumstances, then all may be required to have at least a rudimentary belief in God. Fortunately, we can follow Wesley's counsel and leave it in God's hands to determine how much belief is required. But if it is true that some evidence is available to all, then it is fairly clear that unbelief may be a choice which is universally culpable.

V

As we noted at the outset, the line of argument we have been considering is offensive to many. To think that anyone's beliefs could be blameworthy even to the point of leading to damnation may seem to bespeak a certainty, nay a dogmatism, which is not only unwarranted but despicable as well. Kant expressed this sentiment in a rather pointed, but delightful passage:

> The very man who has the temerity to say: He who does not believe in this or that historical doctrine as a sacred truth, that man is *damned*, ought to be able to say also: If what I am now telling you is not true, *let me be damned*! Were there anyone who could make such a dreadful declaration, I should advise the conduct toward him suggested by the Persian proverb concerning a *hadji*: If a man has been in Mecca once (as a pilgrim), move out of the house in which he is living, if he has been there twice, leave the street on which he is to be found; but if he has been there three times, forsake the city or even the lands which he inhabits![16]

Certainly the notion that religious beliefs may be blameworthy has bred fanaticism, persecution, crusades and even wars. Kant is right to point out that zeal for religious beliefs can be dangerous.

But what about Kant's assertion that no one should claim anyone is damned for unbelief unless he is willing himself to be damned if it turns out he is wrong? Again, I think Kant's point is well taken if he means to remind us that judging the fate of others is not a human prerogative. But beyond this, is it wrong to believe that other persons may be damned because of their beliefs? Ironically, Kant turns the table by suggesting that those who believe that the beliefs of others are damnable, may themselves hold a damnable belief!

But let us come back: is it wrong to believe others may be damned because of their belief? In considering this question, it is important to keep in mind that this belief is part of a larger web

of beliefs, namely, the traditional beliefs of Christian theism. More exactly, this belief follows from the beliefs that Christ is the Son of God, that His teachings are authoritative, and that He taught that unbelief is a sin which leads to damnation. If there is nothing wrong in believing Christian theism in general, it will be hard to show that it is wrong to believe this particular aspect of Christian teaching.

I have also tried to emphasize in the discussion above that one's beliefs are not isolated from one's behavior. Rather, they are the basis for actions, values, attitudes, and so on. In short, they are an integral aspect of a total way of life. Perhaps it is important to understand something of this in order to rightly hold that beliefs are blameworthy.

It is also important to grasp the connection between blameworthiness and the ground of belief. In the accounts we examined above, belief in God was grounded in such a way that unbelief was a culpable choice. As we noted at the beginning, those who think there is no positive reason to believe in God have tended to abandon the claim that unbelief is blameworthy. I think this is appropriate. Those who think the evidence is neutral, and who do not think belief in God is properly basic, have no basis for holding that unbelief is culpable. Even many Christian thinkers grant that atheists can give perfectly rational explanations of everything which requires explanation. If the evidence is thus neutral, those who want to believe in God may have the *right* to believe, but it is hard to see how anyone could have an *obligation* to believe. But, on the other hand, those who think that belief in God is properly basic or who think the evidence positively supports belief in God can hardly avoid the implication that unbelief is culpable.

## NOTES

1. Richard Robinson, *An Atheist's Values* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1964), p. 151.

2. Peter Geach, *Providence and Evil* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1977), p. 123.

3. By damnation, I simply mean a state of unhappiness which results from being eternally separated from the love and presence of God.

4. Alvin Plantinga, "Reason and Belief in God" in *Faith and Rationality*, eds. Alvin

Plantinga and Nicholas Wolterstorff (Notre Dame, University of Notre Dame Press, 1983), p. 36.

5. Ibid., p. 66.

6. Cited by Plantinga, ibid., p. 65.

7. Ibid., p. 80. Plantinga mentions other conditions which may "trigger" the disposition to believe in God, such as having a sense of God's disapproval or forgiveness.

8. As John Courtney Murray put it: "How odd of God it would have been had he made man reasonable so that, by being reasonable, man would become godless" (*The Problem of God* [New Haven, Yale University Press, 1964], p. 76).

9. Richard Swinburne, *Faith and Reason* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1981), p. 77.

10. Ibid., p. 79.

11. Ibid., p. 80.

12. Swinburne suggests something like this (ibid., p. 196).

13. Ibid., p. 70.

14. Ibid., p. 102.

15. John Wesley, *Works* (Grand Rapids, Baker Book House, 1979; reprint of the 1872 Edition), 7:48.

16. Immanuel Kant, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* (New York, Harper and Row, 1960), p. 178.

# Language, Logic, Logos

STANLEY L. JAKI

## PHILOSOPHY OF MACHINES AND MECHANISTIC PHILOSOPHY

The title of this essay* may seem to contradict the rule that logic should come first. The rule may be particularly appropriate in connection with artificial intelligence, a topic synonymous with computers, or logic machines as they are often called. Very recently, the Nobel-laureate biologist Gerald M. Edelman spoke of computers as logic machines in order to distinguish them from the human brain: "What a computer can do is an effective procedure. What you can describe beforehand in a meaningful way, it can deal with. A computer is a logic machine. The brain is more than a logic machine." Immediately following this came the phrase, "It [the brain] can deal with novelty," which, though the words of the reporter, obviously reflected the thinking of Edelman. Not content with emphasizing the difference between the brain and the computer, Edelman made a parting shot at reductionists: "I know that people have tried to reduce human beings to machines, but then they are not left with much that we consider truly human, are they?" In fact he went so far as to claim that "individuality is not an epiphenomenon; it's at the very center of our humanness."[1]

In making these statements Edelman could hardly be unaware of those who nowadays see in human intelligence a subspecies of artificial intelligence, or AI for short, an intelligence already embodied in computers and with unlimited future potentialities. But he seemed to be unconcerned about the way he used the word "meaningful" and, more importantly, about the inconsistency of his own work: a simulation by computer programming, called Darwin III, of the working of nerve connections in the brain. Those

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connections, along which information passed between various parts of the brain, were too numerous in his view to be predetermined by the genetic code.

Edelman's failure to define the word "meaningful" in a context relating to computer programming will reveal its problematic and symptomatic character as the argument of this essay is developed. More obvious should seem the inconsistency in his method: If the brain processes in question are too numerous to be physically specified, then how could they be simulated by a computer program which contains a set of steps exceedingly limited by comparison? When inconsistency can work itself into the very start of the reasoning of a scientist who is most eager to avoid the pitfalls of equating the mind with a machine, it should not be surprising that inconsistencies run amok in the writings of those who glory in the "mind equals machine, machine equals mind" proposition, which is the very cornerstone of AI as a mental construct.

A careful look at whether one's first move is logical may not be really necessary if one dealt with mere machines. Machines, if properly constructed, require no more than plainly worded operating manuals that are useful in the measure in which their writers make no pretense to philosophical sophistication. Indeed very little can be written about the philosophy of machines, unless one is ready to take prolixity for substance. In the philosophy of machines the essential point can be made, *pace* Mumford, in a few lines. Chesterton's dictum, "There must in every machine be a part that moves and a part that stands still," is philosophy of its deepest kind, partly because it is followed by the unwavering generalization: "There must be in everything that changes a part that is unchangeable."[2]

The profundity of Chesterton's dictum becomes obvious as soon as one considers that in a world of change rational, that is, meaningful judgments must assume a connection between the starting and end points of any process. This, however, makes sense only if something remains identical while the process or change runs its course. The merit of this consideration is recommended not only by its balanced character, but also by the vertiginous stances to which any tinkering with that balance inevitably leads.

One such stance is occasionalism or the claim that all events, physical or mental, are strictly disconnected. Needless to say, occasionalism was not referred to when computers were given the first opportunity, in connection with machine translation, to prove that they embody some intelligence, even if purely "artificial." Advocates of AI, who hardly ever demonstrate a serious concern for basic philosophical problems, let alone their very long history,

would not, of course, be embarrassed on that score. They are determined to go about those problems *ambulando*, that is, in Diogenes' way of coping with one of Zeno's paradoxes or sophisms. Nevertheless, the philosophical presupposition that language is decomposable into strictly separate units has always been a cardinal tenet in the ideology underlying AI programs including machine translation. The ideology reveals its Ockhamist character by the very fact that those units, artificial to be sure, resist efforts aimed at grouping them into a coherent intelligible whole, such as any plain discourse.

Those disdainful of wider views would do well to recall four chief advocates of occasionalism, al-Ashari, Ockham, Malebranche and Sartre. Being so widely separated from one another in time and space (and culture), their identical options should seem to represent a pattern of the inner force of logic. That science and the making of machines are not germane to occasionalism is amply illustrated by the virulently antiscientific dicta of al-Ashari and Sartre. That Ockham and Malebranche were keen on science has not failed to give headaches to those students of theirs who easily overlook the ineradicable call of human nature for intellectual coherence.

The other departure from that balance advocated by Chesterton is the denial of real change standing for real differences. As will be seen, spokesmen of AI fall back time and time again on the claim that intelligent or ultraintelligent machines are possible because the various manifestations of "intellect"--from amoebas through rats and dolphins to men--represent no real differences. The idea that all events, ideas, things and perceptions lie along an unlimited continuum and smoothly fuse into one another, has also been an invariable feature of AI ideology, although it clearly contradicts the one outlined above. In the thoroughly materialistic views of AI advocates, novelties are merely the critical points where the gradual accumulation of quantities appears, however illogically, as a really new grade or quality. Marxists would nod in agreement. That machines are impossible to make in terms of the former, or occasionalist, stance, that allows no connectedness, should seem obvious. It is still to be widely realized that the making of machines (electronic or not), where parts must be different in spite of their connectedness, also becomes a logical contradiction within the continuum principle as embraced in the ideology of AI.

So much about the philosophy of machines which is very different from mechanistic philosophy and from the philosophical or ethical problems posed by the use of machines and of making more machines. Mechanistic philosophy came to the fore in the

second half of the eighteenth century in the writings of De la Mettrie, d'Holbach, Helvetius and other *philosophes.* In the world picture they offered man was a mere machine, which, if true, implied that machines could in principle turn into men, or at least into the kind of humans that have already been deprived of their humanness. The machines of the mid-eighteenth century, so many elaborations on medieval technological breakthroughs, were too crudely mechanical to appear human, however embryonically. Still too heavily mechanical were the steam engines, the mainstay of the Great Exhibition of 1851, to appear to be more than powerful tools of humans rather than their potential competitors. The coming of electric motors brought some relief from smoke and soot but no real departure from the markedly non-human unwieldliness of machines.

The disparity in size between man and machine has not changed with the transformation of purely mechanical computers, operating with gears and rods, into the first generation of modern computers that were huge sets of vacuum tubes. Even the so-called second-generation computers, introduced in the 1950s, following the invention of transistors, still occupied much of a large room that, in addition, had to be air-conditioned. Only when integrated circuits allowed the elimination of wires, did computers (their third generation) begin to shrink. They became similar in size to human brains only when the introduction of silicon chips gave rise to their fourth generation. No further major miniaturization seems to come with their much talked about fifth generation.[3] Few users of typical desk computers, now almost a household commodity in the USA, have seen, of course, that small brain-size unit that gives them moments of exhilaration as well as occasional despair. At any rate, the typical work station can at least by its size give the impression of a possible symbiosis between an artful intellect and an "artificial" intelligence.

The wide availability, since the early 1970s, of desk computers parallels the flood of writings, most of them boldly assertive, on the advent of AI. A section on AI, a section distinct from computer manuals, is now a staple feature in major bookstores. So much about the inexorable logic whereby the celebration of *l'homme machine* by Julien Offroy De la Mettrie,[4] leads, once opportunity arises, to widespread belief that some artifacts think as humans do. What is meant here by artificial intelligence is very different from mere computers and of software called "expert systems." Had the latter been called, say, complex data channels, a possible misunderstanding might have been nipped in the bud. Awareness about the danger posed for understanding by careless use of words may in itself commend the merits of starting with

language, instead of logic, and also may help keep in focus that those "expert systems" are no more expert in channelling data than are gutters and canals in hydrodynamics as they drain rain and marshes.

To forget this is to repeat the pattern whereby "natural selection" and similar expressions, suggestive of a personal "Nature" that "selects," have created endless equivocations about evolution. Metaphorical attributions of human capabilities to machines have been greatly responsible for creating the belief about the existence of electronic feedback mechanisms that are "experts" and about the reality of a new type of intelligence, although it is a mere artifact. Expertise, properly so-called, is synonymous with the ability to think and to plan. That ability is at the very core of the claim that there are now artifacts that have intelligence in a manner in which humans do and will soon outdo all humans in the art of understanding.

In promoting their mechanistic philosophies, the late eighteenth-century *philosophes* brazenly exploited the marvels of classical physics in plain disregard of the anti-mechanistic views of great eighteenth-century physicists and of Euler in particular. In the same way the extravagant claims about artificial intelligence became a vogue only after the creators of analog and digital computers had done their pioneering work. John von Neumann who--no less than H. H. Aiken and Vannevar Bush--had no use for "thinking" computers,[5] had been dead for two years when, in 1958, A. Newell and H. Simon claimed that "there are now in the world machines that think, learn and create." Most readers of that phrase were far less startled by that stupendous claim than by its sequence, namely, that the ability of those machines "to do these things is going to increase rapidly until--in the visible future--the range of problems they can handle will be co-extensive with the range to which the human mind has been applied."[6] An age like ours, which is defiantly contemptuous of basics, can hardly appreciate the insight demanded by the construction of the first wheel. Much less would it recognize the enormous superiority of that insight over the mere cleverness of making better wheels and many more of them. It is still to be widely perceived that understanding does not primarily consist in its vastness but in its very fact, small as its momentary range may be.

## THE PHENOMENOLOGY OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

Failure to appreciate that difference has invited ever bolder appraisals of AI that now constitute its cultural "phenomenology." In the process popularizers were greatly encouraged by experts. In 1959, Simon predicted that within ten years "the digital computer

would be the world's chess champion, unless the rules bar it from competition." This contemptuous proviso, so expressive of confidence in the computer, could appear all the more justified when presented as a follow-up to a remark of Mikhail Botvinnik, world chess champion at that time. He not only held that "in the future the machine should surpass the grandmasters," but also that parallel to championships among them there would be also one among chess playing computers. Both Simon and Botvinnik were quoted in John Pfeiffer's *The Thinking Machine*,[7] a book based on a one-hour program on CBS TV, hardly a stage for serious thinking. Pfeiffer glibly developed the inability of "experts" to determine the limits of the computers' "thinking ability" into the claim that the further "evolution of computers" will become a "significant part of human development."[8] Reinforcement did not fail to come from the experts. Before too long, Newell and Simon spoke of the programmed computer and the human problem solver "as two species belonging to the genus 'Information Processing System'."[9] On behalf of the correctness of that perspective they offered but the vague generality that both men and computers were "adaptive."

Once those who in the AI field were known above all for technical writings had struck a "philosophical" chord, colleagues of theirs with a visionary zest got emboldened. Caution was nowhere in sight as a wide sampling of that zest reached the public in late 1970 when *Life* magazine carried an article that, in view of the shakiness of its reasoning, was aptly titled "Meet Shaky, the First Electronic Person."[10] There Marvin Minsky, a chief protagonist of AI at MIT, who subsequently turned to computer-generated music, was quoted as saying that "within three to eight years, we will have a machine with the general intelligence of an average human being." (Others who found Minsky's timetable too optimistic, were willing to bet on a mere fifteen years!) The really telling aspect in Minsky's prediction is not that it dismally failed to become true, but rather the force of logic it reveals. Once a basic though proper understanding is granted to a computer, no limit can be set to its self-education. Moreover, that self-education would come with an explosive speed. Once there is on hand, Minsky contended, a "machine that will be able to read Shakespeare, grease a car, play office politics, tell a joke, have a fight," it "will begin to educate itself with fantastic speed. In a few months, it will be at genius level, and a few months after that, its power will be incalculable."[11]

The only logic in all this was the recognition that the "incalculable" may contain, like anything truly incalculable, a terrifying prospect. Once machines achieved, in Minsky's words,

"immense mentalities," they could hardly be kept under control by human minds, puny in comparison. Actually, those machines would control us and, to continue with Minsky, "we would survive at their sufferance. If we're lucky, they might decide to keep us as pets." Logic was quickly honored in the breach when Minsky also voiced confidence that though "the machine dehumanized man, it could rehumanize him." Those willing to live with reversals of logic would then indulge in a masochistic savoring of the destruction of human intelligence. R. Quillian, described in that *Life* report as a computer memory expert and a "nice warm guy with a house full of dogs and children" (in that hardly logical order), was in fact found to face up intrepidly to the chilling choice: "I hope that man and these ultimate machines will be able to collaborate without conflict. But if they can't, we may be forced to choose sides. And if it comes to a choice, I know what mine will be. My loyalties go to intelligent life, no matter in what medium it may arise."[12] Once more the medium turned out to be the message.

The inexorable force of logic was at work in the fact that the "intelligent life" in question did not fail to be described as universal intelligence, embodied, of course, in the medium of the Ultra Intelligent Machine, or UIM for short, a phrase coined in the early 1970s. One such machine, predicted to be ready by the 1990s, was quickly envisioned as the key to "all major political decisions, including matters of war and peace."[13] Whether the price of that achievement, "the piecemeal conversion of people into UIPs" (ultraintelligent people), to say nothing of the "conversion of the world's population into a *single* UIP,"[14] is worth being taken, is not the point at issue for the moment. Here the immediate task is to register a runaway logic: once a computer is granted to understand a single word, the world, or the very cosmos or universe, becomes the only limit to AI. If holders of distinguished chairs in AI departments could wax prophetic, their students could hardly be blamed for seeing visions. Speculation about AI work elsewhere in the galaxy prompted Hans Moravec, a graduate student at Stanford University's AI laboratory, to predict that the Ultra Intelligent Machine would "convert the entire universe into an extended thinking entity."[15] Roger Schank, computer scientist at the University of California, was not so modest as to count on extraterrestrial cooperation: "I think there'll be an all-knowing machine someday. That's what *we*'re about" (italics added).[16]

The expression "all-knowing" attached to mere machines may in itself indicate those deepest roots in AI ideology that are distinctly theological though hardly in the sense Christians and believers in an infinitely perfect personal God would take that expression.

When materialism becomes mystical, the result is a replay of age-old pantheism. Some Greek sages of old, some Averroists (Muslim and Latin), then Bruno, Spinoza, and Jacobi, and finally Rudolf Steiner and Arthur Koestler are echoed when an AI devotee, in innocent ignorance of an age-old pattern, speaks of "the gradual erosion of individuality, and [the] formation of an incredibly potent community mind" all across the universe.[17] Formerly, the process was predicated on the "unicity of intellect," or the cosmic mind-repository from which all individual minds emanate at birth and into which they return after death.

The "unicity of intellect" is a very refined notion in comparison with the easy metaphors grafted on computers as "all-knowing" machines and harbingers of "the elixir of life"[18] or plain immortality. Such implicitly theological metaphors easily take on a sarcastic hue in the diction of AI protagonists. A case in point is A. Turing's reference to man's creating the ultra intelligent machine (UIM), a performance whereby humans act "as instruments of God's will providing mansions for the souls that He creates."[19] Contempt for matters theological shows through E. Fredkin's puzzlement over God's failure to make artificial intelligence. The making of AI would have alone been worthy of that God whom Fredkin, tellingly, did not credit with two other events "of equal importance," or the creation of the universe ("a fairly important event" in his magnanimous concession) and "the appearance of life."[20]

Yet even in this post-theological and post-Christian era, it is difficult to assume that the idea of a substitute "God" is not at least subconsciously on the mental horizon when one attributes a most specific kind of knowledge to "all-knowing" AI machines. It is not merely knowing *all* but also knowing *all* about oneself: "One artificially intelligent device can tell another not only everything it knows in the sense that a human teacher can tell a student some of what he knows, but it can tell another device everything about its own design, its make-up--its genetic characteristics, as it were--and about the characteristics of every other such creature that ever was."[21] Here, too, logic is inexorably at work as misplaced presuppositions are allowed to have their full implications unfolded.

Again, if AI is taken for the latest and best example of the human being's effort to rise to a "metahuman" level,[22] the soaring will have its own perils. One of them is the charge, often used against the "old" religion but now returning as a boomerang against the "new-fangled" one, that man is merely caught in futile self-projection. That ultimately all insights of man may be but thinking about models man makes of himself and of things and not

about himself and the things around him is the gist of Minsky's remark: "When intelligent machines are constructed, we should not be surprised to find them as confused and stubborn as men in their convictions about mind-matter, consciousness, free will and the like, for all such questions are pointed at explaining the complicated interactions between parts of the self-model. A man's or a machine's strength of conviction about such things tells us nothing about the man or about the machine except what it tells us about his model of himself."[23]

In a less sophisticated way, the same futility is acknowledged when the reality of AI is predicated on its eventually becoming as bored with itself as humans become with themselves.[24] Finally, there is the fearful possibility, hardly exorcizable on the basis of AI ideology, that man, in inventing things, is but the dupe of a blind runaway process. The testimony of Turing should seem to be impeccable as the "Turing's test" still lingers on as the ultimate touchstone of truth for AI. As he discussed with his friend, the mathematician A. H. Newman, the construction of a large digital computer known as MADAM (the Manchester Automatic Digital Machine at Manchester University), also present was Mrs. Newman who, though much of the conversation was above her head, suddenly picked up a remark of Turing: "I suppose when it gets to that stage we shan't know how it does it." In reporting this to Turing's mother, Mrs. Newman added that the remark "sent a shiver down my back."[25] Nothing is so fearful as an all-knowing being that becomes a complete mystery.

The claims about AI reaching pseudo-theological heights have been recalled here at the outset as an illustration of the merciless manner whereby logic exacts its due. The claim that a machine, once sufficiently sophisticated, does think, has innumerable consequences. Since these include not only their philosophical, psychological, and sociological but also their theological varieties, a theological reflection, of a very different kind of course, on AI should seem entirely legitimate even on the basis of mere parity. But there is, as will be seen, a justification for that reflection far more serious than the one assured by the rules of civilized debating.

In the second half of the 1960s, when my *Brain, Mind and Computers* was researched and written, not much was yet visible of the rising tide of interest in AI and much less that it would turn into an infatuation that blocks sensitivity for plain logic. An illustration of this is Pamela McCorduck's admission that "if the effort to make artificial intelligence has taught us one thing, it is that natural intelligence is a formidable and woefully underutilized resource."[26] Had she utilized that resource more effectively, her

book may not have ended on a love affair with anti-intellectualism. For if her foregoing statement has any coherence, she cannot be consistent in stating that "the accomplishments [of AI research] have been significant and the promises are nearly beyond comprehension."[27]

Contrary to McCorduck, inconclusive arguments and self-contradictory reasonings cannot be settled by references to the difference between Hellenic and Hebraic minds, the former not subject to brooding and the latter given to it. (It is indeed strange that so many Hebraic, though wholly secularized, minds in the AI establishment are most vociferous with their disclaimers of having second thoughts on the matter. Or do they protest too much?) Nor will those arguments and reasonings become non-existent by, to quote McCorduck, "claiming fortitude, exhibiting courage," and by "pausing to savor the thrill of sharing in something awesome."[28]

Such declamations set the tone (distinctly unintellectual) of nine out of ten books on AI nowadays displayed in any large bookstore. The prospects they conjure up are awesome, not because of the chances, absolutely nil, of the coming of intelligent machines. (About that dream world in which those machines exist, one thing should, however, be noted. There they cannot help being locked in an "awesome," blind, life-to-death struggle with themselves and with us according to that Darwinist ideology which, because it rests on the continuity of all, heavily supports dreams about AI). The actual awesomeness of those prospects pertains to the intellectual and not to the biological level. Were the human body threatened by fantasies about AI, the Food and Drug Administration could easily move in, as it did recently on finding that leading producers of cosmetics have taken to marketing their magic facial creams and other "elixiric" ointments under scientific labels as if they were well-tested drugs. Such creams have for time immemorial been harmless though very costly make-beliefs about make-up. Those who can afford spending large sums on unguents that act as elixirs of legendary fountains of youth, are free to deceive themselves. Equally, the producers of those "miraculous" chemicals are free to be part of a lucrative game of mutual self-deception. But when scientific labels came to be used to abolish the difference between reality and fantasy, the F.D.A. decided that society deserved to be protected.[29]

## THE REALITY OF FIRST BASE

No such action is, of course, conceivable in matters purely intellectual. The harm to the intellect may be the greatest of all harms, but it is neither legal, nor culturally respectable, to call for censorship. The marketing of AI under scientific label will only

increase in decibels if this is possible at all. Momentary admissions about "chronicling the history [of AI] as one of the most wrong-headed human follies in existence"[30] are artful means of disarming the typical reader's suspicion that both sides of the coin have been equally presented. Little does that reader realize that as far as reasoning is concerned the cards have been heavily stacked against reason. Even less would that reader guess the farce which is latent in the game played with the mechanism that carries the ploy. The mechanism is language which, if carefully considered, may through its very terms, reveal the fallacy of a logic according to which some, let alone all, machines have intelligence.

That language is a subject that eludes a simplistic approach should have been amply clear to those who in the 1950s tried to make the breakthrough to AI along the lines of machine translation. The evidence, which only gained in strength since then, was plain about the chronic failure of linguists to find a primitive language. In fact, languages of all primitive peoples have been found to display syntaxes as complex as is the case with any modern language. For the most part rank amateurs alone keep constructing futile schemes in which basic words of all languages are made to appear as close parallels to sensory experiences stretching from hardness to softness, from suddenness to slowness and so forth.[31] Only with a touch of amateurism can one disregard a by-now-old story which shows that the decomposition of languages into atomistic units is indeed a futile exercise.[32] Only wishful thinking can make one overlook the fact that Darwinist evolutionary theory is caught in a *petitio principii* whenever it tries to cope with the problem of the origin of language.

The pattern made its first and dramatic appearance shortly before Darwin completed *The Descent of Man*. There he merely paraphrased the imperious *No*! (hardly a scientific argument) which he had penned on the margin of a paper that Wallace published shortly beforehand. Wallace correctly argued that if language had its origin in the need for survival, the larger brain that makes possible linguistic operations had to be available to pre-hominids before they sensed the need for language.[33] Nothing essentially new was added to this observation (a warning about the futility of trying to lift oneself by one's bootstraps) when N. Chomsky dressed it up with the claim that special neuronal networks have to be present in the brain before it can serve as a vehicle of that only form of language which operates with sentences.[34]

All these considerations, so many exposures of the shortcomings of the scientific method, fail to touch on the true nature of language. Being a reality, steeped in the use of the intellect, language requires for its proper appraisal an epistemology if it is

really about *episteme* or understanding and not about mere formalisms of it. But even on a purely empirical ground, it should be clear that language is a communication of something understood to somebody capable of understanding. Although propagandists of AI have always been wary about confronting this elementary feature of language, they recognize it by their use of language as they talk in private or in public about their favorite subject. They may speak of language as if it were a mere skeleton, but in doing so they still "press the flesh," that is, they want to be understood by flesh-and-blood intelligent beings. In that fact of understanding, as verbally communicated, there is involved a procedure which goes far beyond mere formalization. The latter can become its own object and retain no meaningful tie with the object of which it was the formalization in the first place. Understanding always bears directly on its object, the very reason why any talk becomes a mere shooting of the breeze unless it is about something.

Verbalization is a connection between the subject who understands and the object which is understood. That connection between the object and the subject is a tie between two existents, with the tie being not only conceptual but also existential, though not in the sense given to that word by Sartre and his followers. They voiced contempt for arguments that implied validity beyond the moment, while they failed to notice that they meant their brand of existentialism to have a validity for each and every moment. More importantly, as they wanted to be understood through their discourses, they served evidence that language as an intellectual communication is a primary datum, not explainable in terms of something else, and certainly not in terms of a language which is not intellectual.

Language is not the only datum which is primary or primitive. Other such data or factors are no less important to list, especially in a debate with AI propagandists whose basic strategy is to set up a very special game aimed at skirting around the very first step. Thus, to use baseball as an analogy, they try to make it appear that starting from the second base is not a break of the rules. Implicit in that strategy is the assumption that any earlier step, such as facing the pitcher and producing a hit that allows the runner to reach first base, let alone second base, is not a matter of truly valid rules. Translated into epistemology, the analogy means that basic or primary questions need not be asked, and in particular the question of what it means to know anything before one can reflect about formalizable aspects of that knowledge. In trying to make their intellectual game appear creditable, the propagandists of AI act very much for a purpose, though in terms of their "rules of game" they are not entitled to do so. Such is a further serious

chink in their armor to be discussed shortly.

Since few champions of AI have given evidence of familiarity with basic epistemological questions, it may not be useless to spell out the thrust of that game analogy. Since the advent of rationalism, Cartesian and Kantian, to say nothing of the skepticism and pragmatism it generated, it has become a sign of cultural sophistication that basic epistemological questions about understanding the real have no validity. The alleged reason for this is that to raise those questions is not a "scientific" procedure. Invariably overlooked in that reasoning is that science deals only with the forms of already existing things and much less does it provide those forms, let alone the things. So much about the genesis and merits of the claim that intellectual pursuit must start from second base where the formalizable or quantitative aspects, solely useful for scientific purposes, are already available.

That the real as the carrier of those aspects cannot be accounted for by the rules of that new-fangled epistemological baseball game has a telling impact on the thinking of those fond of its "rules." The impact is all too often observable in the writings of logical positivists, almost invariably the only kind of philosophers read by devotees of AI. Some logical positivists have indeed been logical to the point of realizing that their disdain of reality traps them in their own world-building, a sort of solipsism.[35] One "hacker" made the point bluntly: "You can create your own universe, and you can do whatever you want within that. You don't have to deal with people."[36] Except, of course, when the "hacker" wants to market his software about his private universe so that he may have access to the non-private mini-universe of a supermarket for the daily bread.

Mere logicism or solipsism cannot be refuted on its own grounds. The only effective argument against solipsists must rely on the reality of language as an intellectual tie with the real outside the subject. On that basis alone can one point out to the solipsist that he has no right to leave his own universe by talking to others about it. The only right solipsists (including their AI brand) have is to cherish their own dreams.[37]

Only when that point is made clear can one call attention, without the danger of being trapped in mere voluntarism or subjectivism, to another primary factor, the sense of purpose. Acting for purpose is different from mere instinct evident, say, in the unreflective pulling back of one's hand after it has come into contact with a hot object. Unlike an instinctive act, an intellectually perceived action is to be acted on by a conscious will if the sense of purpose is to arise. This alone should make it clear why the argument that although AI may cope with knowledge it

cannot cope with purpose, is no real threat to speculations about it.[38] The argument cannot forestall the counterargument that if AI can imply an understanding of the real, then its understanding of the purposeful action may become tantamount to being possessed of real purpose as well. Similarly, machines cannot effectively be denied self-awareness, unless emphasis is laid on the fact that self-awareness is not a mere idea, but a real perception of the subject insofar as it is its own real object, and that this perception presupposes awareness of objects separate from the self.[39]

Purposeful action involves not only an intellect whose nature is to know things, but also a will that is a mere instinct if it is not free. The freedom of the will, another primary datum that cannot be circumvented or leapfrogged, has always been a source of nightmares for those dreaming about a purely "scientific" or strictly deterministic state of affairs fully engulfing man. Those dreams, as long as they are mere games with the intellect, have always been less repulsive to common sense than plain denials of free will. This is why AI ideology contains more fantasies about the fusion of all intellects into one than about the sublimation of all free wills into one Will that no argument can make appear free,[40] so that the wills participating in It may have this share of freedom.

Undue preoccupation with scientific evidences had for some time been undermining sensitivity about much more immediate evidences before AI came to the scene. This is not to suggest that this process, mostly psychological, has resulted in lessening the weight of evidences much more immediately available than their scientific kind. One of them is one's immediate awareness about one's ability to move one's little finger at will. About the weight of this evidence no less a physicist than A. H. Compton noted that it intensely outweighs all evidences of Newtonian physics. In fact, he held the disparity so great that he preferred the abandonment of that physics, were it to contradict the foregoing evidence about free will.[41]

Newtonian physics, which is very different from mechanistic philosophy, or from materialist determinism, can be no more in opposition to the freedom of the will than quantum mechanics can be a support for it. In both cases the limitations of the scientific method foreclose that this or that law, formalism, or experimental result of physics should have legitimate bearing on the reality of free will. Tellingly, no physicist who subscribed to materialist determinism has ever claimed that his work in physics was not a free activity. There was at least one early interpreter of quantum mechanics, Eddington, who publicly recognized the nonsensical character of his claim that quantum mechanics made first possible a

rational belief in the freedom of the will.[42] Unfortunately, countless is the number of physicists who, from Heisenberg on, declared the abolition of causality in the name of quantum mechanics. They all failed to perceive the fallacy in the inference that an interaction that cannot be measured exactly, cannot take place exactly. The inference is fallacious because "exactly" taken in an operational sense is very different from "exactly" taken in an ontological sense.[43]

Possibly, the literature promoting AI is lacking in references to Heisenberg's uncertainty principle because of a lopsided preoccupation there with mere patterns in logic.[44] Unfortunately, one cannot assume that advocates of AI--so much the prisoners of various current intellectual fashions--would remain free of that pervasive fashion which confuses quantum mechanics, a marvelous physics, with its Copenhagen interpretation, a most fallacious philosophizing.[45] An interpretation, which is most germane to sheer phenomenology or to mere pragmatism, will not fail to appeal to protagonists of AI as in both only knowledge about aspects or forms of things is allowed but no knowledge about the very things existing. The better-known result of this is a decrease of confidence in the objectivity of knowledge, accompanied by the stultifying claim that the observers create reality. They certainly create--the multiworld theory of quantum mechanics is witness[46]--their own subjective worlds or universes. The lesser-known but no less instructive result is the inevitable reification of mere aspects and relations as if they had an existence of their own. It is on that basis that, as so often happens in endorsements of AI, the sign is taken as equivalent to the thing signified.

That non-realist, non-objectivist philosophies are driven, as if by an inexorable logic, to reinstate, however illogically within their perspective, the objectivity of knowledge, is an illustration of the fact that picket lines, useful as they may be elsewhere, are powerless against the reemergence of age-old truths. Among these is the view of knowledge as a mental act to know things. Merely to know, without knowing something, is impossible. Moreover, that something has to be a real object before it can become a conceptual object in the act of knowing.

## THE DYNAMISM OF KNOWLEDGE

Herein lies a crucially important aspect of knowledge with respect to AI. The act whereby one becomes a knower is the forging of a dynamic tie between the mind and an object. Such a tie is not a conceptual or static relation between the concept of the mind and the concept of something else. Were the latter the case, thinking would be resolvable into conceptual analysis. This is not

to suggest that thereby a royal road would be open to AI. As will be seen, most concepts have supple contours that cannot be accommodated within the cubbyholes of binary algebra or of any mathematics for that matter. Still, it cannot be emphasized enough that knowledge is above all an act that establishes a dynamic unity between the object and the intellect. The unity is not a reduction of the object to the subject, nor of the subject to the object. The former case should easily be recognizable as Kantianism, the latter as a variant of Platonism. Both, in their own ways, block access to external reality and by the same stroke spark doubts about the mind as it is being turned, against its nature, into a source of reality (in Plato) or of its structure (Kant).

Nothing may be more logical at this point than to recall Aristotle as the erstwhile protagonist of the epistemological stance which consists in the resolve to render both mind and matter their due. Such a recall is especially appropriate at a time when a return to Aristotle is advocated as a remedy to the "closing of the American mind."[47] Its author failed to list AI ideology among the sickly symptoms to be cured by an exposure to Aristotle. That the remedy will not be easily found may be gathered from the rank misconstruction of Aristotle's philosophy in the most widely read critique of AI ideology by one holding a Ph.D. in philosophy from a prestigious American university. More of this later.

Even more revealing than a recognition of that remedy was the cryptic admission that Aristotelianism, owing to its being taught in Catholic colleges, did not become entirely unknown in America. That in a book written by an academic mostly for fellow academics the survival of Aristotelianism was not specified any further has more to it than what meets the eye. In those Catholic colleges Aristotle was kept alive because of belief in Someone who made a far greater impact in history than did Aristotle. For reasons that should not be difficult to fathom, Christ is not to be acknowledged as a gigantic fact of history in a culture that boasts about its respect for facts alone. At any rate, the Aristotelianism taught in Catholic colleges, seminaries and universities is an Aristotelianism that was saved by faith in Christ from Aristotle himself.[48] How Aristotle's thinking can turn into a self-defeating straitjacket received ample illustration in Averroes and the Averroism he started. Averroes found nothing repulsive in Aristotle's lack of resolve to save the individual intellect from being submerged into one "cosmic" mind. Nor was Averroes agitated by Aristotle's hesitation to recognize the freedom of the will. If the reaction to Aristotle on the part of medievals, and especially of Thomas, was so different on those two points (and on some other crucial points as well),[49] it was due to their unswerving allegiance to the gigantic

fact of Christ, which reveals the true God in true man.

This is not the place to recount a story, vastly documented in researches on medieval philosophy during the last hundred years. The story tells about the immense debt which Christian philosophy, or moderate realism, owes to its allegiance to dogmatically defined tenets about Christ as a union of two natures (divine and human) in one divine person. Those tenets, which include the survival of Christ's true human soul (or mind) after his bodily death on the cross, were so many unfoldings of what is contained in the principal ecclesial dogma, issued at Nicea in A.D. 325, about Christ as the Incarnate Divine Word, or Logos, consubstantial with the Father.[50] Nothing would be more mistaken than to take for a purely philosophical proposition the unflinching resolve with which the dualist doctrine about man is maintained in genuine Christian ambience, and not also for a most considered reflection on the gigantic fact which is Christ.

Non-Christians (and even liberal, well-nigh secularized Christians) will hardly appreciate this Christological perspective of a doctrine about the nature of man. Excuse themselves as they may on "religious" grounds, they have no such liberty when it comes to that doctrine's epistemological fruitfulness. The latter extends even to taking a proper measure of the true merits of AI. The doctrine implies a dualism, though certainly not its Cartesian kind, where the soul or mind is never truly united with the body but merely attached to it. According to that dualism, the mind is not a ghost in a body-machine,[51] elevated as the latter is to the status of a "computer that happens to be made out of meat," to recall a crude phrase of a champion of AI.[52] The mind is rather in the most intimate symbiosis with the body and carries out its activity in the utmost dependence on the body.

This means, on the one hand, that the acts of knowledge are truly intellectual, that is, they transcend the limitations of material entities. This is why any knowledge of any material entity has a universal bearing, or in technical terms, the intellect perceives the universal in the particular and that this is its only way of knowing particular things. Herein lies the fundamental and only ground for denying the claim that machines, composed of truly singular items and singular in all their workings, can *know* as much as a single word or symbol. Herein lies also the justification of the view that unless such knowledge is denied to a computer, there is no way of denying to it the ability to know all words, symbols and their syntactical combinations. Failure to make recourse to this kind of knowledge leaves the critics of AI with lame alternatives. They will either limit AI to knowledge as distinct from purpose, will and emotions,[53] or they will say that there can be an AI about ordinary

knowledge but not about creative knowledge and wisdom.[54]

The view of knowledge as the active recognition of the universal in the singular has its proof in each and every word--noun, verb, adjective. None of them can be restricted to a single thing, action or quality. All of them are universals that can be seen only by the mind's eye in any singular sensory perception. Any word is a magic tool whereby a concrete limited item appears in a limitless perspective. In that sense no book is so systematically packed with metaphysics as is any ordinary dictionary. There word after word bespeaks of that wondrous ability which is to generalize. To restrict any word to a singular empirical item can only be done with the help of two most generic words, *this* and *that*. Every use of them (on countless occasions in each and every day) witnesses the working of the mind's dynamism that alone, by its existential presence, can turn the singular item to useful account even from the strict pragmatist viewpoint. The mind's presence should seem even more in evidence when it effectively describes most particular situations and relations by a word *it*, possibly the most nondescript word of them all and yet a word which the mind can invest with overpowering weight.[55]

## A WORD ABOUT WORDS OR SYMBOLS

About that dynamic or existential manner which is present in the use of words as means of reaching the real world, two remarks are in order. One is that it reflects the same dynamic quality that has already been noted about the act of knowledge itself. Words are not the mechanical images of things physical, or of physical actions and qualities. Precisely because of this they can only serve as means of reaching the real insofar as it can be understood. Whatever else words are, they cease to be words unless they are in the active service of the intellect. In fact, all of them are the intellect's free creations as shown by the incredible variety of languages. (No less evident is this fact in a facet present in each and every language: one word--the example of the English "bit" will be discussed shortly--can denote a bewilderingly wide variety of objects and actions). This is why words exist only inasmuch as the intellect uses them as signs that mean something only because the intellect actually signals with them things, actions and qualities. Nothing is indeed more dangerously misleading than Popper's turning of the world of phonetic and written symbols (and all the cultural plethora resting on them) into a "third world"; that is, into a realm on equal footing with the mind and the purely physical realm. As will be seen shortly, it is precisely because of this that Popper's stance versus AI is a mere evasion.

Symbols or signs are, however, very tangible items. In an almost

literal sense they *embody* what is intelligible in the concrete particular. Therefore they take part in that fundamental characteristic of each concrete thing which is to have form. Herein lies the source of an unlimited opportunity for computers and also of their radical limitedness.

No limit seems to be set to the computer's receptivity in those areas where the formal aspect is almost identical with its content. Such areas are mathematics and geometry, with their manifold ramifications and vast range of applicability. Units, fractions, points, lines, angles, areas, volumes, coordinates, transforms, logarithms, functions and series have a meaning that is almost exhausted in their "forms." Hence the stunning measure to which computers can be programmed to correlate very complex set of numerical data, a measure which is made even more impressive by the speed with which the task is executed.

In any problem in which words relating to quantitative data dominate, as they do in many problems of business and engineering, the effectiveness of computers can indeed be made so great as to create the impression that they do an "expert" job. But in the measure in which one departs from the strictly quantitative or geometrical realm, words, always the carriers of meaning, offer fewer and fewer formal aspects of things and ideas they represent. This is already evident in words denoting plain physical entities, such as a stone or a stick. Even their weight, density and hardness are far more than so many numerical measures. This disparity between physical reality and its formalizable aspects becomes still more striking when complexity and vastness are part of that reality, let alone when it is the source of an aesthetic experience, as is the case, for instance, with a human figure or a sky bathed in the rays of the setting sun. An even more perplexing disparity between form and content is latent in negative terms, such as invisible or intangible. A debilitating problem for AI may be posed, for instance, by the term "atom," if it really stands for something that cannot be cut or divided. Any formal representation of an "atom" by an extended symbol or signal, which is always divisible, implies a contradiction with the idea to be represented. Similarly instructive is the impossibility of adequately formalizing the process involved in "going to the limit" in integral calculus. In that respect the square root of -1 should seem to take on an added measure of irrationality.[56]

When one moves to the area of words dominating everyday discourse that are not primarily quantitative, the formalistic aspects no longer have the definite contours that most mathematical concepts have. While much of mathematics may be built up from the juxtaposition of units, and much of geometry from similar

operation with an extended point (leaving aside the problem of formalizing a non-extended point), other areas of discourse rely on words with no strict contours. This is why defining most words in any dictionary is always an unfinished job. Even in the case of objects with markedly geometrical forms, the "extent" of their meaning can indeed be rather indefinite.

Thus the word "bench" is defined in *The Random House Dictionary* as "a long seat for several persons." The definition does not give the exact measure where a seat becomes a bench. Nor does the definition specify the word "several." Whereas "two" can mean "several," a "love-seat" does not thereby become a bench. When a word, which is often the case, carries several metaphorically different meanings, their respective formalizations may have no similarities at all. Here it should be enough to think of the widely different formalizations called for when, say, "bench" stands for judicial authority, or for the judges themselves, or for substitute players, or for a good or bad team, or for a shelf-like area of rock with steep slopes above and below. Further differences in formalization will arise when "bench" is used as a verb.

Even more bewildering differences come into view when, as is the case with "bit," homonymous uses are possible. From the viewpoint of meaning there is absolutely nothing in common between the mouthpiece of a bridle, a small measure of time, twelve and a half cents, the cutting part of a hatchet, the end of a key that moves the bolt, a part in a play, units of information as defined in computer theory, and a B(achelor) of I(ndustrial) T(echnology).[57] The fact that this short paragraph contains at least one other word, "bolt," that also lends itself to homonymous use, may suggest the enormous number of such words that could be gathered from the same dictionary. Proportional to that number should be the "fun" such words present to ambitious programmers of conversations "understood" by computers.

That in all such cases the "exact" meaning, which is always far more than its formalization, can only be established from the context, should be obvious. Such a context is the definition of each and every word in any dictionary. Almost all of them are based on a recourse to synonyms, each with an "extent" of meaning that can be circumscribed only by dotted lines. Being used in a definition, these not strictly defined areas of meaning are made to partially overlap one another. The more "exact" is a definition of a word, the greater is its share in those not strictly circumscribable overlappings. The more of them there are on hand, the greater is the "formal" imprecision, both with respect to content and to total outline, that is, the "extent" of meaning. Such

is a graphic rendering of the reason that prompted Whitehead to speak of the "Fallacy of the Perfect Dictionary."[58]

Why is it then that verbal definitions, or any discourse for that matter, are not a potential vicious circle? For such would be the case if knowledge were, as Hobbes claimed, a mere reckoning with words,[59] a perspective very much at the basis of the AI ideology. Then the explanation of a word, always imprecise in itself, in terms of other imprecise words, would become equivalent to the compounding of probabilities, or to the decrease of certainty or clarity. The reason why the best minds usually take the fewest words is not that they are in sympathy with the consequences of Hobbes' hopelessly flawed view. Rather, they cast a vote on behalf of the dynamism whereby language is an exercise of an intellect zeroing in on the intelligible object with unfailing immediacy.

## THE UNWISDOM AND POVERTY OF REDUCTIONISM

The intelligible character of the spoken or written word that carries a meaning has an epistemological primacy even in that realm, mathematics and geometry, where the formalized aspect may seem self-explaining. Actually, it was in connection with the most formalized systematization of mathematics, the one worked out by David Hilbert, that his foremost disciple, Hermann Weyl, wisely stated that even there "one must understand directives given in words on how to handle the symbols and formulae."[60] That this is also true of the notations of symbolic logic should seem all the more logical, except perhaps to some infatuated with it. Those who are strangers to what Hilbert, Weyl and other leading mathematicians deal with still can grasp the priority of words over formulae and shapes by reflecting on the figure indicating the "quantity" called zero. Unless an intellect substantially superior over matter were at work in the pronunciation of the word "zero," the word itself would necessarily stand for "something," the very opposite of nothing. The formalization in the shape of a small oval circle of the concept of zero may indeed be the most explosive among all discoveries of the mind, "the coining of Nirvana into dynamos."[61]

At the other end of the quantitative spectrum is that infinite whose description as the realm where "zero is the magician king,"[62] will appeal only to the wise. It should be enough to think of the resistance which some advocates of the "transfinite" infinite set up against the logical stringency of the inference whereby one concludes to the impossibility of an actually realized infinite quantity.[63] About the schizophrenic reasoning which supported for so long in scientific cosmology the presumed reality of an infinite universe,[64] a remark of Eddington may seem most appropriate:

"That queer quantity 'infinity' is the very mischief and no rational physicist should have anything to do with it."[65] Wise programmers take note!

Just as in moving from basic words used in mathematics to words relating to everyday realities one encounters an increasing disparity between meaning and its formalization, a similar situation is on hand when one moves from mathematics to the empirical sciences. This fact received a poignant recognition in a remark of Professor George Wald, a Nobel laureate for his studies of the physiology of vision. Much as we know about the physics and chemistry of vision, he remarked, "we don't know what it means to see."[66] The source of epistemological defeatism (and touch of unwisdom) transpiring through his remark lies in the assumption that understanding consists in knowing all the quantitative, that is, easily formalizable, aspects of a process and that whenever we don't have complete information about those aspects, we don't understand.

A chief merit of Professor Wald's remark is that its ill-concealed defeatism evokes the poverty of reductionism, a poverty brought about by sheer unwisdom. Reductionism is the very same philosophy that lies at the base of hopeful statements about AI. They all share in the facile oversight of two facts: One is that as close as form and meaning may be in basic mathematical notions, the form as such means nothing unless it is understood. The other is that understanding is a primary datum that cannot be reduced to something else so that it may be better understood or understood at all. Reductionism, which, once grafted on the interpretation of science, turns the latter into a cultural wasteland, is also the source of the pathetic predicament generated by belief in AI. There one can also see the hapless resistance of human sanity to becoming the victim of self-despoilment.

A telling illustration of this is Douglas R. Hofstadter's *Godel, Escher, Bach*, a book offered by him as a perspective on the battle that still rages between the followers of De la Mettrie and their opponents. Hofstadter assigns ultimate victory, which he specifies as one of the major theses of his book, to De la Mettrie's followers on the ground that the opposition between the two camps does not represent a "contradiction at all." The ground is equivalent to stating that one's opponents are actually non-existent, a way of resolving crucial differences worthy of that make-believe realm which is nowadays being crowned by copious assertions about the existence of AI. Yet the battle line separating those opponents remains as real as ever. A proof of this is Hofstadter's oversight of the fact that from his point of view it is plainly contradictory to urge "each reader" to engage in a most non-mechanical activity,

namely, "to confront the apparent contradiction head-on, to savor it, to turn it over, to take it apart, to wallow in it, so that in the end the reader might emerge with new insights into the seemingly unbridgeable gulf between the formal and the informal, the animate and the inanimate, the flexible and the inflexible."[67]

That Hofstadter, a physicist turned philosopher, failed to urge his readers to reflect on what it means to understand both that battle and the activity he recommended, should not seem surprising. The act of understanding that cannot be understood in terms of anything else is not part of the instruction offered in the philosophy departments of most American universities. There one is allowed to discuss intelligent behavior, which Hofstadter explicitly mentions in the context, but not what it means to be intelligent. There philosophy begins with Descartes (or with Ockham), grows into pragmatism, logical positivism, and linguistic analysis, and ends with the illusion that no respectable philosopher would ever consider but problems that are "analytical."

This illusion, particularly strong in British and American philosophical circles, received most recently a rebuff so sharp as to make front page news.[68] The American Philosophical Association, dictatorially ruled by the "analytical" establishment that has only its sceptical solvent for questions relating to ontology, is now challenged by a breakaway group, called the Society of Philosophers in America. Members of the latter are resolved to give proper attention to questions such as: What is being? Is there a purpose? Is there something beyond the physical? and the like. Their revolt is the bursting to the surface of long suppressed dissatisfaction with the "received view," a quintessence of which is Quine's answer to the most fundamental question, made famous by Hamlet: "To be is to be the value of a boundary variable." Clearly, such is not an answer that would have agitated a Hamlet or anyone not shielded from reality by the emoluments of opulently endowed chairs of philosophy. It is therefore supremely ironical that Quine could be referred to as the "titan of American philosophy," unless, of course, for the unintended reason that his definition of "to be," if taken logically, that is, with full consistency, is a foolproof directive to a titanic catastrophe of thought and life.

It would be an illusion to hope for a change of heart on the part of most "analysts" who, for ample reason, see no threat in that revolt to their domination of the academia. They will continue to dismiss their opponents' appeal to the long history of philosophy with the words of Ruth B. Marcus of Yale, words illustrative of the mere game with words into which the "analysts" can turn the interpretation of philosophy or of anything else: "It's not just fake

history, it isn't even history. The tradition up to Kant was analytical. It was one of addressing questions in a careful way and giving reasons for one's point of view." Clearly, the program of instruction in most departments of philosophy will continue in its "analytical" tracks. Neither the true Plato, let alone the true Aristotle in quest of making clear the understanding of the real, will be spoken of, nor those who saved Aristotle from himself, and much less those who presented that story to our times with extraordinary historical scholarship.[69]

An aspect of the poverty of that instruction in philosophy is that it imparts no intellectual sensitivity for pondering the points which precisely those critics of AI brought up who steeped their criticism of it in the primacy of understanding. A case in point is Hofstadter's description of my *Brain, Mind and Computers* as a book "whose every page exudes contempt for the computational paradigm for understanding the mind." Yet, although he admits that the book brings up points "interesting to ponder," he considers none of them.[70] Nor does he mention even the four main points of my book, although, being the themes, prominently listed, of its four chapters,[71] they are too obvious to be overlooked. None of those points can, of course, be eye-catching to any of those countless "modern" philosophers who try to begin understanding with the forms of understanding that constitute "intelligent behavior" and not with that understanding whose nature is to understand things before it can understand itself.

One aspect of those points made in my book relates to some patent, jewel-like evidences, the very source of philosophical riches, of what it is to understand. One's mental eyes are continually excited by those evidences, one of them the word *now* or rather the intelligible reality it evokes. The reality is indeed the immovable axis on which everything else revolves in intelligent life, including any discourse about behavior, intelligent or not. It has often been stated that animals experience neither the past nor the future. If this is so, it is only because they have no sense of the present. The *now* which does not exist for them, exists for humans and is the very factor that turns their particular mental possessions into that whole which is more than the sum of its parts. It is in terms of that whole that humans can conceive of the Perfect Being, God, in whom all is present all the time and this is why He is not touched by time, the great spoiling factor.

Compared with that eternal present, man's grasp of the *now* is incredibly imperfect though still so reliable as to constitute in his mental "machinery" (a place with incessant transformations) the pivotal factor that remains unchanged. This is why man's conscious identity, his chief and most precious possession, is

retained through incessant transformations, not only mental but also physical, including the entire replacement of all atoms in his body (and brain) in every seven years. Chesterton's definition of a machine reveals its philosophical depth precisely because it can illustrate even the "machinery" of the mind without turning it into a machine. In addition to depth he also showed courage when long before the appearance of computers he labeled the expression "thinking machine" as a "baseless phrase of modern fatalism and materialism." A machine, he added, "only is a machine because it cannot think."[72] As to those who can take basic philosophical advice only when it is offered by a prominent physicist, they would do well to ponder Einstein's remark, targeted at no less a logical positivist than Carnap, that the *now* completely escapes the net of physics.[73]

What, indeed, would be a formalization, even remotely convincing, of the *now*? For if an electrical impulse, or a given dot on the screen, is taken to represent the *now*, do not thereby all such impulses and dots become representative of the *now* and make meaningless its arbitrarily chosen "formalist" representation? Similar questions could be raised about such words as *nevertheless*, *if*, *but*, *however*, and, last but not least, about *as*, a tiny word that carries on its back an enormous variety of conceptual relations.

And what about signs of punctuation? They should seem so easy to formalize as they are but mere forms, yet the intangible nuances of meaning they are meant to convey are all too often hopelessly elusive to a formalist representation. An exclamation mark gives itself away and so does a quotation mark. Yet in both cases a sense of impotency should be felt if some proportion were to be found between the formalization and the shift in meaning those marks can bring about. Thus the distance should seem enormous between the unimportance suggested by a cursory "don't mention it" and the crucial importance of a "don't mention it!" The difference between God and "God" is abysmal and so is the one between God and god, whereas most computers operate on the basis that there is no difference between upper case and lower case. A mere comma can turn the confidence of "God save the Queen" into a cry of desperation: "God, save the Queen."[74] Efforts at formalization should seem doomed to failure if it is true, as H. W. Fowler, the arbiter of the King's English, stated that a comma "separates the inseparables."[75]

Phrases of this kind, undoubtedly paradoxical, are instances of the mind's inventiveness that should seem magical, if not plainly absurd, from the reductionist viewpoint. Prospects for finding some formalization of that inventiveness are nowhere in sight. Furthermore, ever fresh evidences of the inexhaustible riches of

that inventiveness turn up continually. One of the pleasures of keeping up with the latest and best in novels and poetry is to come across ever new verbal virtuosities, whereby insights, situations, motives, fears and hopes come alive in a light never seen before. The average reader can savor at regular intervals either in *The New York Times Magazine*[76] or in the *Reader's Digest*[77] fresh offerings about the latest exploits in the use of language that should make computer programmers groan with despair. The delight or plight of teaching English has in part to do with being exposed to some hilarious misuse of words and errors in spelling that turn up in term papers. College-bound students can come up with the declaration that they want to be "bilingual in three or more languages" or with their desire to be "weight-listed," or with a gently needling "needles to say."[78]

As to the last two cases a computer can easily be programmed to be led to the proper expression as the differences are but slight between the incorrect and correct forms. The day may not be far when computerized author listings will bring up the right author even if his or her name has been slightly misspelled. The problem represented by the improper use of *bilingual* is far more complex. To cope with it the programmer has to pay attention to the large variety in which *bilingual* can be connected with names of languages and various groups of them. Programming subtle paradoxical nuances may present so great a difficulty as to appear insurmountable.

## TEN GUIDELINES ABOUT AI

In view of all this, nothing is more tempting than to oppose AI on the ground that practically impossible may seem the task of programming into computers the kind of information that goes considerably beyond the use of purely quantitative terms.[79] Such a temptation must be resisted for a reason far more serious than the prospect of making a wrong bet. In fact, if guidelines are to be set for dealing with the cultural malaise embodied in AI, the *first* should be the following: Don't insist unnecessarily on the enormous complexity of formalization connected with ordinary human discourse and reasoning.

Undoubtedly, insistence on that difficulty can effectively cut to size brash spokesmen of AI and deny them undeserved psychological advantage. But the same insistence may undermine the merits of a truly dualist view of man as outlined above. According to that view, all workings of the human mind, insofar as they are conveyed, that is, made known, have sensory aspects which lend themselves to various degrees of formalization. A complete listing, for the purposes of programming, of all those

aspects may forever lie beyond the combined practical capabilities of all human talents, but great advances along these lines have been made and even more of them will come, and at an accelerated rate.

A genuine dualist should never become a crypto-manichean suspicious of technology and even of that technology-on-paper, which is programming. Insistence on the failures of programming should never serve as the basis of defense of the existence of the human mind. Such a basis would prove as counterproductive as did those arguments in which shortcomings of physical science were taken for a justification to invoke God. Holes in scientific knowledge have an uncanny way of being filled up and leave shortsighted divines stranded. Formalization, too, will proceed by leaps and bounds.

The *second* guideline is that while with respect to formalization one should be most generously minded, one should not yield an inch, not even the fraction of an inch, on the essential issue of understanding. That issue is the priority of understanding over the formalization of what is understood. Those who oppose AI on any other ground inevitably give away the game. They do not fail to demonstrate the dire consequence of dangling one's hand through the bars of a lion's cage. Two cases have already been mentioned. One is the denying to computers wisdom and creativity while granting them ordinary understanding or intelligence. The other is to grant to computers the ability to know but not the ability to experience purpose. A third one is the granting to computers the ability to make some modest discoveries but not the ones that represent a real breakthrough.[80] The computer no more discovers anything than does a slide rule or an abacus.

The *third* guideline relates not to the difficulties of formalization but to the claims according to which AI has been achieved in whatever rudimentary form. While the countering of those claims is ultimately a philosophical task, psychologically a most effective use can be made of blunt appraisals of the state of art by some leaders in computer programming. One of those appraisals was heard in the full glare of publicity at the 1984 conference of the computer-science community in San Francisco. There Herbert Grosch, a member of the advisory board of the Association for Computer Management, minced no words: "The emperor, whether we call him fifth-generation project or artificial intelligence, is stark from the ankles up. Or to put it in the vernacular, most of what we're talking about is a bunch of crap. Now I said from the ankles up. From the ankles down the emperor is wearing a well-worn and sturdy pair of shoes...and we call them expert systems...they are good. We need lots and lots of expert systems. And we'll grind them out the way we've been grinding

them out for thirty years. We won't generate them with magic. We won't generate them with artificial intelligence."[81] The effectiveness of recalling outspoken criticisms of AI that may appear too negative, can greatly be strengthened with references to some scathing words which basically sympathetic critics of AI offered about some programs embodying conversational understanding: "I have just said," M. Boden wrote, "that PARRY is a fraud. This is fair comment also on ELIZA, to whom human interlocutors typically attribute a good deal of common sense and reasoning ability."[82]

The *fourth* guideline is about the paramount importance of seeing through the hollowness of the rhetoric of advocates of AI. Whenever they admit the substantial failure of this or that project, they credit the failure with great advances as well. A case in point is the statement Michael Brady of MIT made in 1985 about the status of robotics: "Robotics is the intelligent connection of perception to action....We've barely scratched the surface. It is going to be a long haul for hundreds of years to get to anything with the same kind of capabilities as man. On the other hand, there has been some damn spectacular work in the last five or ten years."[83] A curious scratching of the surface that, admittedly, was but barely touched. The interview, of which Brady's words formed a part, was presented under the title, "Today's robots have to be told." Obviously Brady could not convince the reporter that the wall separating non-intelligence from intelligence has been pierced by robotics, however slightly.

Especially much should be made, and this is the *fifth* guideline, of the occasional admission by AI advocates about a pressing need for clarifying basic philosophical questions. "We *do* have problems," stated Edward Feigenbaum, "and they could be illuminated by a first-class philosopher." Typically, Feigenbaum failed to spell out those problems as *he* saw them. He could think "of only one, perhaps two philosophers who have the grasp of what AI and computing are all about, and also know philosophy." They were of no use, according to him, because both were busy with their own problems and not with the basic philosophical problems posed by AI. Clearly, such was a transparently cheap way of coping with a situation, which, and here Feigenbaum was on target, could not be cleared up with Dreyfus's phenomenology, aptly described by Feigenbaum as "that ball of fluff! That cotton candy!"[84]

The *sixth* guideline is that only by being steeped in moderate or methodical realism can one cope with false philosophical criticisms of claims about AI. The most talked about of those criticisms is the one offered by Dreyfus who falsifies Aristotle by turning him into a forerunner of Descartes![85] By taking Aristotle for an

intuitionist, he ignores Aristotle the realist and the very reason for which Aristotle was a critic of Plato insofar as the latter was a rationalist. But if one can ignore that difference between Plato and Aristotle, the far greater difference between Aristotle and Descartes will appear non-existent. Furthermore, nothing will then transpire about the straight road that led from Descartes's rationalism (a subtle form of the priority of the formal and mathematical over the physical or ontologically real) to De la Mettrie's sheer materialism.[86] The farce is then crowned by Dreyfus's effort to overcome the dehumanizing materialist consequences of AI ideology by opting for a covert materialism.

To be sure, *human* thinking is a reality only because the mind operates in and through a body. Dreyfus rightly emphasizes the bodily parameters of the expression of any perception and judgment. They are indeed omnipresent, enormously large in number, and interconnected in staggeringly complex ways. But this does not turn the act of understanding into a mere bodily or physical process, however complex. Yet Dreyfus would be the last to take the mind for a reality essentially different from the body, however closely connected with it.[87] No wonder. Phenomenology, which he takes for a guide, has been notorious for blocking genuinely metaphysical perspectives and has served all too often as a specious excuse to disregard them.

The *seventh* guideline is methodical realism which is a dogged, systematic resolve to recall at every juncture the basics in epistemology. This procedure is the only safe guide when it comes to criticisms of AI that are dressed more in scientific than in philosophical terms. The chief among them is the one offered by Godel, author of the famous incompleteness theorems in mathematics that formed the center of many debates about AI. This is not the place to sum up, however briefly, those debates.[88] Let it merely be noted that, according to those theorems, no set of mathematical propositions can have its proof of consistency within itself. Herein lies a feature, which a machine obviously cannot embody, namely, to "go outside itself" for a proof of its consistency which it must have or else it would not work in a genuinely machine-like manner.

Only those overawed by mathematics or formalization see a crucial argument against AI in those theorems. They do so by taking them for a proof that there is at least one thing a man can do that a machine cannot. Severed from sound epistemology that argument does not amount to much. Godel, in fact, provided a telling illustration of this as he granted to computers the ability to know, though with the meager proviso that the ability in question will not include mathematical certainty.[89] Clearly, Godel

overlooked the elementary fact that it is the immediate certainty (never achieved with the aid of mathematics) of knowing ordinary external reality that alone assures the applicability of mathematics to physical reality, including the ability to talk about it to other real beings.

Certainty of knowledge severed from that reality will easily become a feature of the solipsist heaven. In fact, it is that solipsism which threatens to engulf Popper's scorn for computers as so many "glorified pencils"[90] and his criticism of them as thinking machines. The criticism is aimed at Turing's challenge or the claim that any specified, that is, formalized way of man's superiority over computers can be shown to be computerizable. Against that challenge Popper offered the distinction between specifiability or formalizability and subjective experience. This distinction, as it stands in Popper's phrasing, cannot cope with the fact that the subjective, as such, can never be communicated. For once it is communicated, it takes on tangible, that is, specifiable or formalizable aspects. Popper would not, however, admit, and for strictly antimetaphysical reasons, that the act of verbalizing an intellectual judgment represents a unity of mind and matter, of the unformalizable and of the formalizable. By taking refuge in the "subjective," which he does not identify with an objectively existing mind or soul, Popper can only warn that "Turing's challenge should not be taken up,"[91] a warning that counsels resolve not to meet one's opponent head-on.

In debating with advocates of AI, and this is the *eighth* guideline, one should remain especially aware of the difference between proofs and convincing. Proofs, however sound in themselves, can be convincing, that is, effective with a real opponent only if reality as such is acknowledged as the ground of any proof. Anyone who is unwilling to admit the primacy of man's grasp of reality either when he thinks or when he acts for a purpose, makes himself immune to arguments about the inanity of AI. That by the same unwillingness one locks himself into solipsism has, of course, its own instructiveness, though only for the realist. The solipsist is a philosophical narcissist who, enamored of his own mental physiognomy, grows unappreciative of the real world around him. In view of what has been said about AI as an invitation to solipsism, advocates of AI fully deserve Chesterton's devastating "Cherish it!"--his reply to one who extolled solipsism as the best of all philosophies.[92]

The *ninth* guideline calls for courage to call a spade a spade. The daring may seem outrageous, but hardly unnecessary in a society that merrily marches down the road to anarchy. The march is to the tune of brass bands composed of academics who have

been busy trumpeting that exclusive attention to quantitatively specifiable patterns is the only posture with intellectual respectability.[93] Such a pattern is on hand whenever a behavior, no matter how queer, is acted upon in a statistically significant number. From there it is but a short step to claims to legal recognition and protection, as on the basis of mere patterns, so many pure formalizations, everything becomes a mere machinery, with no allowance for distinctions between the morally good and the morally evil. Hence the steady erosion of sensitivity for hallowed principles, as if they were so many words, and the growing readiness to grant social respectability to any behavior, provided it establishes itself as a pattern.

The measure to which AI ideology is fueling that sinistrous decay of modern society should seem obvious. To oppose that subversive trend the least one should do is to imitate the courage of Winston Churchill, not a great philosopher by any standard but certainly alert to threats which so many of his contemporaries preferred to ignore. On being presented, in 1949, with an honorary degree at MIT, an early stronghold of AI research, Churchill had to listen to the oration of the dean of humanities who boldly predicted, with an eye on computers and biochemistry, the complete control of human mind and will within the foreseeable future. In accepting the honor conferred upon him, Churchill acidly remarked that he "would be content to be dead before that happens."[94]

Courageous remarks are not, however, enough, which is the very point of the *tenth* and last guideline. One may wonder whether Churchill was sufficiently aware of the debt which his sense of human dignity owed to Christian cultural tradition. Yet, even more frequently than in Churchill's days is the brave claim made in purely secularist circles that the unconditional dignity of the individual can be secured on grounds that exclude religious perspectives. Historically, the matter should be clear. Sophocles could compose admirable choruses about the marvel which is man and especially about the marvel of human speech, but he remained perplexed in the face of Antigone's single-minded commitment to moral ideals. His perplexity was part of a surrender to a blind Fate engulfing all human beings and above all their dignity.[95]

Escape from that dead end came only when the human word was found to be a worthy means for carrying mere man into God's innermost life. Belief in the Word (Logos), eternally uttered by the Father, has become the salvation of human words as well. Only in that perspective have those words remained immune to being degraded into mere tools of facile intellectual games, all aimed at undermining the intellect itself. Such games systematically cater to

infatuation with the moment, so different from the *now* transcending the succession of moments. Hence the irreconcilability of a view of the mind, trapped in those games, with the vision of Christ as one who is the same yesterday, today and forever (Heb 13:8). The eternal *now* which is Christ is the inspiration behind the motto, *stat crux dum volvitur orbis*, engraved on the obelisk at the center of St Peter's Square in Rome, a motto evocative of Chesterton's view of the machine, be that machine of cosmic dimensions.

Those unwilling to follow this theological train of thought may not be equally reluctant to take a closer than customary look at scientific history. Advocates of AI are wont to look at the alleged advent of AI as the culmination of man's scientific progress. They still have to face up to an apparently most untheological question about science: Why did science, the great pride and advantage of the Western world, not arise in any of the great ancient cultures? The question should seem all the more important as the rise of science in ancient China or India would have greatly changed the course of world history. Few things are indeed as instructive as the desperate efforts in the modern counterparts of those cultures to catch up with Western science and the various explanations given there for their backwardness.[96]

Any serious probing into these topics brings up, however, questions about world views and with them theology, too. In all those cultures the world view was dominated by emanationism which invariably implies the growing absence of order and rationality as the chain of being extends farther and farther from the source of emanation, however divine. It was only with belief in that Word or Logos--as is clear from the writings of Athanasius who fully perceived in Arianism a potential backsliding into emanationism--that there came a categorical assertion about the full rationality of a world created by a fully divine Logos.[97] Was not that cosmic rationality--so alien to the Greeks of old who took the sublunary realm for the arena of partial disorder--the very precondition for seeing the fall of an apple and of the moon as expression of the same law? Was not empirical investigation sparked precisely because a given set of created physical laws could be seen as contingent, that is, only one among an infinitely large number of possible sets of laws, all available for the free choice of a truly transcendental, personal Creator? Was not belief in the createdness of man's mind to the image of such a Creator the source of confidence that man's words, the tangible signs of his intellect, can truly grasp the laws of a universe no less created than was man's mind?[98] And was not that createdness best safeguarded among all monotheistic religions in the one in which the work of

creation was assigned to the Word?[99]

In *That Hideous Strength*, C. S. Lewis offers a remark couched in medieval garb about those who lose their hold on human words because of their growing insensitivity to God's word.[100] Modern secularized culture, which wallows in mental contortions (poignantly evoked by Escher's drawings[101]) to make the idea of AI respectable, certainly illustrates this point. But those ready to make that point and appreciative of not yet being engulfed in a global vortex of irrationality, must have an eye for the other side of the coin as well. (That a coin has two sides to it may seem obvious, but only the Word of God made an emphatic recall of that elementary truth, another memorable proof of His being a safeguard of rational balance). If indeed our cultural debt to that Word or Logos is immense, we must be logical to the point of realizing our intellectual duties as well.

Those duties are part of that Christian worship about which Paul enjoined that it should be a *logike latreia*, or a reasoned worship (Romans 12:1). While Paul did not recommend logic chopping, he certainly did not suggest a timid, let alone a suspicious recourse to reason.[102] History is a witness that a steadying hold on the Word of God always implied a firm resolve to vindicate the human word as a reliable tie with intelligible reality, physical and spiritual, human and divine. Such a view of reality is the basis of that salvation which safeguards man's ability to wonder in the broadest sense. Wonderment is not only the condition of that love of wisdom, to recall the very opening of Aristotle's *Metaphysics*, which is philosophy, but also the mental stance that alone can do justice to the wonder which is any machine, primitive or sophisticated.

It is that wonder which is turned into a pseudo-admiration within the ideology supportive of AI and therein lies its sin against humanity. For as Chesterton put it in his *Heretics*: "The wrong is not that engines are too much admired, but that they are not admired enough. The sin is not that engines are mechanical, but that men are mechanical."[103] Whereas machines cannot sin, a chief of man's sins has become his abuse of machines. Recent history is in fact a record of tragic abuses of artifacts that in themselves are but so many wonders of human inventiveness. In view of this disheartening past, contemplation of the future should be full of foreboding about possible abuses of that machine, which, though perhaps the most wondrous among all of man's machines, should be best called a mere logic machine.

## NOTES

1. D. Hellerstein, "Plotting a Theory of the Brain," *The New York Times Magazine*, May 22, 1988, pp. 17-19, 27-28, 55, 61, 64. For quotations see pp. 61 and 64. If, however, individuality is more than an epiphenomenon, then the abolition of essences by Darwinism, conceded by Edelman (ibid., p. 17) cannot also be true. The failure of Edelman (and of the reporter) to see this contradiction should make one doubtful about Edelman's "eloquent recounting" (in the words of the reporter) of "the mind-body problem from the time of Descartes to the present" (p. 61). Anyone who starts that recount with Descartes, as Edelman does, tries to initiate a march with the second or third step. Far more frequent is, of course, the characterization of the brain as a computer. The categorical claim that "the brain is nothing more than an immensely complicated computer" was made by the social anthropologist Sir Edmund Leach in a guest editorial (*Times*, Nov 16, 1968, p. 11) which appropriately had for its title: "When Scientists Play the Role of God."

2. G. K. Chesterton, *What's Wrong with the World* (London: Cassell, 1913), p. 129.

3. See E. A. Feigenbaum and P. McCorduck, *The Fifth Generation: Artificial Intelligence and Japan's Computer Challenge to the World* (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1983).

4. Available in English translation, *Man a Machine* (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1961).

5. As documented in ch. 1. of my *Brain, Mind and Computers* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1969), reprinted with a new introduction (South Bend: Gateway Editions, 1978).

6. H. A. Simon and A. Newell, "Heuristic Problem Solving: The Next Advance," *Operations Research* 6 (Jan-Feb, 1958), p. 8.

7. J. Pfeiffer, *The Thinking Machine* (Philadelphia: J. B. Lippincott, 1962), pp. 173-174.

8. Ibid., pp. 20-21.

9. A. Newell and H. A. Simon, *Human Problem Solving* (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1972), pp. 870-871.

10. See *Life*, Nov. 20, 1970, pp. 58B-68. Brad Darrach, author of the report, began his description of Shaky, a computer at Stanford Research Institute, with an appeal to fantasy: "It looked at first glance like a Good Humor wagon sadly in need of a spring paint job. But instead of a tiny little bell on top of its box-shaped body there was this big metallic whangdoodle that came rearing up, full of lenses and cables, like a junk sculpture gargoyle" (p. 58C).

11. For Minsky's statement see ibid., p. 58D. Another aspect of the illogicality transpired in the admission that human prodding was needed to turn those "immense mentalities" into reality. An illustration of this was the musing of Joshua Lederberg, a

Nobel-laureate biochemist, about the tediousness of programming the computer for each new problem: "Couldn't we save ourselves work by teaching the computer how we write those programs, and then let it program itself?" (ibid., p. 65). The same human superiority was in view when Minsky asserted, in another context, that computers could be programmed to have emotions once "we've decided which emotions we want in a machine." Quoted in P. Huyghe, "Of Two Minds," *Psychology Today*, Dec. 1983, p. 34. To compound illogicality, Minsky admitted that the programming of emotions into computers presupposed the programming of thoughts into them. The latter was not a reality long after the deadline set by Minsky's prediction quoted above. To complete the farce Huyghe's article was followed by an advertisement about a "thinking thermostat" to be had for a paltry $79.00 plus $3.95 for postage and handling.

12. *Life*, Nov 20, 1970, p. 67.

13. Quoted in C. Evans, *The Mighty Micro* (London: Gollancz, 1984).

14. I. G. Good, "Human and Machine Intelligence: Comparisons and Contrasts," *Impact of Science on Society*, 21 (1971), p. 321.

15. Quoted from Moravec's essay, unpublished for better or for worse, in P. McCorduck, *Machines Who Think: A Personal Inquiry into the History and Prospects of Artificial Intelligence* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1979), p. 335.

16. Quoted in F. Rose, *Into the Heart of the Mind: An American Quest for Artificial Intelligence* (New York: Harper & Row, 1984), p. 208.

17. A statement of Moravec, quoted in McCorduck, *Machines Who Think*, p. 354.

18. A statement of Good in his "Human and Machine Intelligence," p. 321.

19. A. Turing, *Computer Machinery and Intelligence*.

20. Quoted in McCorduck, *Machines Who Think*, pp. 352-353.

21 Ibid., p. 346.

22. A remark of McCorduck, ibid., p. 329.

23. Quoted ibid., p. 340.

24. A remark of Schank, in Feigenbaum and McCorduck, *The Fifth Generation*, p. 93.

25. Sara Turing, *Alan. M. Turing* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons, 1959), pp. 97-98.

26. McCorduck, *Machines Who Think*, p. 328.

27. Ibid., p. 357.

28. Ibid., p. 357.

29. See editorial, "A Tale of Magic Wrinkle Creams," in *The New York Times*, April 10, 1988, p. E30.

30. McCorduck, *Machines Who Think*, p. 355.

31. Not much more believable are those very professional linguists who confidently reconstruct a language (called Nostratic), spoken presumably about 15,000 years ago by the common ancestors of most Indo-European and Semitic people. In J. N. Wilford's report, "Linguists Dig Deeper into Origins of Language" (*New York Times*, Nov. 24, 1987, pp. Cl and C4) it is mentioned that a Soviet émigrée champion of Nostratic was cautioned at Yale against mentioning that "language" in class.

32. A thorough coverage and critical analysis of efforts, going back to Condillac, aimed at atomizing language is given in E. Gilson's *Linguistics and Philosophy: An Essay on the Philosophical Constants of Language* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1987).

33. L. Eiseley, *Darwin's Century* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1962), pp. 311-313.

34. N. Chomsky, *Aspects of the Theory of Syntax* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1965), p. 58.

35. R. Carnap's *Der logische Aufbau der Welt* (Berlin: Schlachtensee Weltkreisverlag, 1932), is a classic in a world-construction (on the basis of pure logic) that totally fails about that real *Welt* which is the cosmos or universe.

36. Jay Sullivan, as quoted in S. Levy, *Hackers: Heroes of the Computer Revolution* (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1984), p. 290.

37. I am merely paraphrasing a statement of Chesterton, to be quoted later; see note 92.

38. Thus, for instance, M. A. Boden, *Artificial Intelligence and Natural Man* (New York: Basic Books, 1977), pp. 421-425. Boden, however, demolishes the threat which she seems to pose to AI by that distinction with her remark "categories of subjectivity, meaning, and purpose *as currently understood* can be attributed to artifacts only in a secondary sense" (italics added). Shortly afterwards she crowns that self-defeating proviso with the assertion that "there need be no danger to a humane image of mankind in allowing that machines are (or one day will be) intelligent in a *non*analogous way" (p. 425). Her assertion assumes that reasoning can be based on sheer equivocations, the only alternatives to analogous terms, unless, of course, one assumes the possibility of a univocal identity between artificial and human intelligence. Similarly defective are her assertions in her *Minds and Mechanisms: Philosophical Psychology and Computational Models* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 1981), pp. 86-87.

39. A point amply brought out by the classic investigations of J. Piaget.

40. Here it should be enough to think of Poincaré's devastating remark: "C'est librement qu'on est déterministe."

41. See Compton's Terry Lectures at Yale, *The Freedom of Man* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1935), p. 154.

42. Eddington did so in his *The Philosophy of Physical Science* (London: Macmillan, 1939), p. 182.

43. First pointed out in the pages of *Nature* in 1930. For details see the first essay in my *Chance or Reality and Other Essays* (Lanham, MD: University of America Press, 1986).

44. Hence the inordinate praises accorded to Boole, the founder of mathematical logic, in books favorable to AI, such as, for instance, G. Johnson, *Machinery of the Mind: Inside the New Science of Artificial Intelligence* (Redmond, WA: Tempus Book, 1986), pp. 38-39, and P. McCorduck, *Machines Who Think*, pp. 40-41.

45. For a discussion of the anti-objectivist and anti-realist biases of the Copenhagen school, see chap. 13, "The Horns of Complementarity," in my Gifford Lectures, *The Road of Science and the Ways to God* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978) or its paperback reprints.

46. For a short and non-technical discussion, see ibid., p. 411.

47. My reference is, of course, to Allan D. Bloom's greatly overvalued book (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1987), see especially pp. 377-378.

48. Details of this are masterfully presented and documented in E. Gilson's *A History of Christian Philosophy in the Middle Ages*.

49. Such as creation out of nothing and in time, and the strictly personal characteristic of the Prime Mover.

50. In commending, not enthusiastically though, the word "consubstantial" in his *Institutes* (I. 13. 5), Calvin does not face up to the crucial question about the apparent ineffectiveness of the scriptural term "monogenes" in the Arian controversies.

51. A main target of A. Koestler's *The Ghost in the Machine* (New York: Macmillan, 1967).

52. Minsky's words, quoted by B. Darrach, see note 10 above, p. 68.

53. As done by Boden, see note 38 above.

54. Thus J. Weizenbaum in his *Computer Power and Human Reason: From Judgment to Calculation* (San Francisco: W. H. Freeman, 1976): "However much intelligence computers may attain now or in the future, theirs must always be an intelligence *alien* to genuine human problems and concerns" (p. 213).

55. As, for instance, in H. G. Wells's devastating criticism of Herbert Spencer's cosmogenesis: "He believed that individuality (heterogeneity) was and is an evolutionary product from an original homogeneity, begotten by folding and multiplying and dividing and twisting it, and still fundamentally it." *First and Last Things: A Confession of Faith and Rule of Life* (London: Watts and Co., 1929), p. 30.

56. The Pythagorean of old who first noted the irreducibility to an integer of the square root of the hypotenuse of a right-angled triangle with unit sides, committed suicide in despair. Since then all that has been learned about the limitations of quantitative method would allow for AI champions a less drastic escape from the clutches of an irrationality of their own making.

57. Similar reflections could be sparked by a brief look at the 35 meanings listed in the same dictionary in connection with the word "bite," which by its similarity in form (and strict identity as a simple past and past participle to "bit") could easily turn matters nightmarish for programmers.

58. N. A. Whitehead, *Modes of Thought* (1938; New York: G. P. Putnam, 1958), p. 235.

59. "Words are wise men's counters--they do but reckon by them; but they are the money of the fools" (Hobbes, *Leviathan*, Part I, chap. 4). A grim reckoner like Hobbes, could but make a mockery of wisdom. One wonders what interpretation Hobbes would have given to the reasoning of the three Wise Men of the Nativity story.

60. Quoted from Weyl's lecture, "Knowledge as Unity," from the text of lectures delivered at the Columbia University bicentenary celebration, October 1954, and published under the title, *The Unity of Knowledge*, ed. L. Leary (Garden City, NY: Doubleday, 1955), p. 22.

61. An expression of Halsted, quoted in B. L. Van der Waerden, *Science Awakening*, tr. A. Dresden (New York: John Wiley & Sons, 1963), p. 56.

62. P. Carus, "Logical and Mathematical Thought," *The Monist* 20 (1909-1910), p. 69.

63. In spite of the warning of Hilbert, a foremost admirer of Cantor's transfinite numbers, that "the infinite is nowhere to be found in reality. It neither exists in nature nor provides a legitimate basis for rational thought." D. Hilbert, "On the Infinite," in *Philosophy of Mathematics*, ed. P. Benacerraf and H. Putnam (Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall, 1964), p. 151.

64. Throughout much of the nineteenth century and during the first decades of the twentieth when the Milky Way was taken for the forever visible part of the infinite universe. For details, see chap. 10, "The Myth of One Island," in my *The Milky Way: An Elusive Road for Science* (New York: Science History Publications, 1976).

65. A. S. Eddington, *New Pathways in Science* (Cambridge: University Press, 1934), p. 217.

66. Quoted in P. J. Davies and R. Hersh, *Descartes' Dream: The World According to*

*Mathematics* (New York: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich, 1986), p. 245.

67. D. R. Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach: an Eternal Golden Braid* (New York: Basic Books, 1979), p. 26. The subtitle, a vote on behalf of cosmic eternalism, was also expressive of its interminable convolutedness, a facet aptly rendered by Escher's drawings, but, contrary to Hofstadter, incompatible with the magnificent linear architectonic of Bach's compositions.

68. As reported by R. Bernstein, "Philosophical Rift: A Tale of Two Approaches," *The New York Times*, Dec. 29, 1987, pp. Al and A4. Quotations in this and the next paragraph are taken from that report.

69. Such as E. Gilson, in particular.

70. Hofstadter, *Gödel, Escher, Bach*, p. 750.

71. This is all the more curious because he referred to the second edition of my book in which that listing is succinctly given in a new Preface.

72. G. K. Chesterton, *The Father Brown Stories* (London: Cassell, 1929), p. 11.

73. As reported by Carnap himself in his intellectual autobiography, *The Philosophy of Rudolf Carnap*, ed. by P. A. Schilpp (La Salle, IL: Open Court, 1963), pp. 37-38.

74. See Pico Iyer, "In Praise of the Humble Comma," *Time*, June 13, 1988, p. 80.

75. H. W. Fowler, *Modern English Usage* (1944; Oxford University Press, 1950), p. 567.

76. I mean, of course, William Safire's weekly column "On Language."

77. I mention the February 1987 issue which lay around in the room where I was collecting my thoughts in preparation of this lecture. On p. 111 it contains a half-page long section under the caption "One Good Thing..." illustrated with seven facetious remarks, one of them being "...about playing a piece of modern music is that, if you make a mistake, no one notices."

78. See the excerpt from a communication by Richard Lederer of St Paul's School to *National Review*, May 13, 1988, p. 16.

79. At present they cannot cope with the slightest misspelling, say, of an author's name, as countless users of computerized library catalogues have already found out.

80. Anyone who follows carefully the steps of programming in the system called BACON (developed by Gary Bradshaw, Pat Langley and Herbert Simon) can easily see that the "discovery" by that system of Ohm's law, of Snell's law of refraction, and of Kepler's third law of planetary motion was an inevitable consequence. Failure to note this is only one of the several serious misconceptions in the article, "Computers and the Nature of Man: A Historian's Perspective on Controversies about Artificial

Intelligence" (*Bulletin of the American Mathematical Society*, Oct. 15, 1986, pp. 113-126) by Judith V. Grabiner who systematically skirts basic questions of epistemology as if mere historical perspectives were a satisfactory substitute to them. Even the distinction between exaggerated and modest claims about AI (a distinction on which Grabiner ultimately falls back) cannot be made unless an epistemological judgment is made, however implicitly, about intelligence and understanding.

81. Quoted in G. Johnson, *The Machinery of the Mind*, p. 235. Grosch was applauded by not a few in a gathering which AI advocates hoped to use as an undisputed platform of publicity and propaganda. Sanity, it appears, has a greater presence in the computer field than suggested by that systematic and sensationalist cultivation of half-truths, equivocations and insinuations bordering on rank falsehood to which Pulitzer provided so much respectability.

82. Boden, *Artificial Intelligence and Natural Man*, p. 106.

83. Quoted in G. Johnson, *The Machinery of the Mind*, p. 150. Only contempt is deserved by T. Winogradow's phrase, "computers can only touch the shadow of what we call emotion," quoted in *Newsweek*'s cover story, "Machines That Think," June 30, 1980, p. 53, whereby he did not suggest that there is a shadow only if there is a thing, but that the shadow is a part, however minute, of the thing itself.

84. Quoted in McCorduck, *Machines Who Think*, p. 197.

85. He does so both in the revised edition of his *What Computers Can't Do: The Limits of Artificial Intelligence* (New York: Harper and Row, 1979) and in his *Mind over Machine: The Power of Human Intuition and Expertise in the Era of the Computers* (New York: Free Press, 1986), see especially pp. 202-203, which he wrote jointly with his brother, S. E. Dreyfus.

86. The development was carefully traced by Gilson in his *The Unity of Philosophical Experience* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1937), pp. 174-175.

87. According to Dreyfus, it is the body that organizes and unifies "our experience of objects." See *What Computers Can't Do*, p. 234. In sum, Dreyfus's ultimate argument against AI is that computers cannot grow into organisms comparable to human bodies.

88. For a summary, see my *Brain, Mind, and Computers*, pp. 214-216.

89. In fact, Godel granted the possibility that "there may exist (and even empirically discoverable) a theorem-proving machine which in fact is equivalent to mathematical intuition." The sole difference, according to Godel, between that machine and human intellgience is that the former could not prove its intuition. Godel spoke in this vein in his Josiah Willard Gibbs Lecture in Providence, Rhode Island, on December 26, 1951. The foregoing quotation is from a somewhat longer passage from the manuscript of Godel's lecture that first appeared in print in Hao Wang, *From Mathematics to Philosophy* (New York: Humanities Press, 1974), p. 324.

90. A phrase which Popper used as early as 1950 and which he emphatically repeated

in his *The Self and Its Brain*, written jointly with J. C. Eccles (New York: Springer International, 1977), p. 208.

91. Ibid.

92. Maisie Ward, *Return to Chesterton* (London: Sheed & Ward, 1952), p. 130.

93. The principal parts of that brass band are behaviorists, sociobiologists, logical positivists and linguistic philosophers.

94. Quoted in J. W. Kratch, *The Measure of Man: On Freedom, Human Values, Survival and the Modern Temper* (Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1954), p. 45.

95. Sophocles' perplexity should seem particularly poignant when viewed against his summary of man's excellence: "O clear intelligence, force beyond all measure" (*Antigone*, Ode I, antistrophe 2).

96. A point discussed through chapters 1-6 and 9 of my *Science and Creation: From Eternal Cycles to an Oscillating Universe* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1974; 2d enlarged ed., 1986) and in chap. 1 of my *The Savior of Science* (Washington DC: Regnery-Gateway, 1988).

97. It was also on that ground that Athanasius opposed the idea of several universes (see his *Against the Heathen*, 39), an idea whose blatant illogicality is still to be perceived by many modern men of science.

98. Such is a consideration to which Galileo gave a pivotal role in his methodology of science as can be seen in the concluding pages of the First Day of his *Dialogue concerning the Two Chief World Systems*. Conversely, the absence of that consideration among Chinese of old was singled out by J. Needham as the cause of their failure to formulate science.

99. For a discussion of the dogma of Incarnation as a shield against pantheism within genuine Christian contexts, see chap. 2 of my *The Savior of Science*.

100. C. S. Lewis, *That Hideous Strength* (1946; New York: Collier Books, 1962), p. 351. "*Qui Verbum Dei contempserunt, eis auferetur etiam verbum hominis*" or "They that have despised the word of God, from them shall the word of man also be taken away."

101. That Escher's world is worlds removed from Bach's can easily be seen by anyone who tracks down in Hofstadter's rambling pages the mere one page he is able to offer on the "similarity" of the two. Typically, the "proof" is Bach's Crab Canon, a simple musical joke, and less than a mere drop in Bach's vast, and linearly lucid, creativity. Bach's name in the very title of Hofstadter's book is typical of the intellectual flippancy characteristic of AI advocates. That flippancy, which is refractory to any argument, however cogent, received its most revealing, as well as self-defeating, formulation in Good's idea that the gap between mind and computers will be closed "because we shall

gradually make human thinking less mysterious and machine operations more so." See his "Human and Machine Intelligence," p. 306.

102. Similar enjoining of the same rationality is 2 Corinthians 5:12, Colossians 4:6 and 1 Peter 3:15.

103. G. K. Chesterton, *Heretics* (London: John Lane, 1905), p. 140.

# Book Reviews

Noll, Mark A. *Between Faith and Criticism: Evangelicals, Scholarship, and the Bible in America.* Society of Biblical Literature Confessional Perspectives Series. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1986. i-xiv. 255 pp. Select Bibliography. Index. ISBN 0-0606-6302-2.

In this work, Wheaton historian Mark Noll traces American Evangelicalism's stormy relationship with biblical criticism. After defining his key terms and approach, particularly the definition of "evangelical" (chap. 1), Noll moves into a chronological account of evangelical involvement in critical biblical scholarship (chaps. 2-5). After an initial period of vigorous response to criticism in the late nineteenth century, evangelical biblical scholars steadily withdrew from the arena of critical study and forged an uneasy alliance with populist revivalism until around 1935. Assisted by their British counterparts, American evangelicals began reentering the scholarly arena, with the publication of Lane's *Mark* in the NICNT series serving as a milestone, since it was the first American contribution to that series. Noll then analyzes the present situation (chaps. 6-8) and offers a series of suggestions and projections for the future. The history is heavily documented and well told, and provides an insightful analysis of the lovers' quarrel between evangelicals and professional biblical criticism. Evangelical biblical scholars, especially, will find this story helpful for assessing their own attitudes and aspirations. Lay readers will profit from a broader awareness of the historical context in which a distinctive American evangelical biblical scholarship arose and within which it functions.

Despite its obvious quality and value, certain limitations characterize the work. First, the author is a historian, not a biblical scholar, and does not evaluate the quality of evangelical scholarly arguments, but looks only at credentials--a dubious criterion. The crucial issue for the key players in the debates was, however, the effectiveness of the arguments. Many believe evangelical conservatives at the turn of the century simply failed to answer the emerging critical theories adequately, and thus justifiably were excluded from subsequent debate. Again, the author seldom differentiates "higher" criticism from text-critical, linguistic and artifactual study. Evangelicals usually supported and excelled in the latter, but seldom touched the former, except for polemics. In OT studies, ancient Near Eastern languages and archeology constitute the competence of most evangelicals who,

nevertheless, address higher-critical questions in their publications. But is the study of, say, Punic inscriptions really preparation to evaluate source, form and redaction criticism? Are "credentials" equated with qualifications? Very few of the Old Testament professors in Noll's survey studied at institutions where engagement with critical, hermeneutical and theological questions formed an inescapable aspect of graduate study. This gap in preparation could explain the continuing problem specifically in evangelical Old Testament studies and in evangelicals' failure to deal with the substantive theological and hermeneutical difficulties described in the final chapters.

While Noll's book is an excellent survey and analysis of the presence and absence of evangelicals in critical biblical scholarship, only a deeper probing of the underlying higher-critical issues and arguments will finally reveal the reasons underlying the fluctuating marginal status of evangelical biblical scholarship.

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Morris, Thomas V., ed. *The Concept of God*. Oxford University Press, 1987. vi, 276 pp. $36.00, cloth; $13.95, paper. ISBN 0-1987-5077-3.

The main relevance of this book to readers of this journal is suggested by the following line from the Introduction: "In recent years, numerous philosophers have talked about God with a degree of confidence which, interestingly, is not to be found amongst many professional theologians" (p. 10). The essays which follow are an impressive demonstration of this claim and represent an important development which has significant implications for the future of theology.

In the past few decades, philosophers of religion have focused on what Morris calls "broadly epistemological" issues such as arguments for and against God's existence and the rationality of religious belief. Lately, however, many philosophers have turned their attention to matters more specifically theological. Much of this work is being done by philosophers committed to the orthodox Christian tradition. These philosophers are exploring afresh many

of the topics treated by classical theologians and are producing updated defenses of traditional doctrines.

In this volume, Thomas Morris has brought together some of the outstanding recent work dealing with the divine nature. Some of the topics treated here have been largely neglected or abandoned in contemporary theology. For instance, there is the doctrine of divine simplicity, a popular doctrine in medieval theology, which maintains that God has no "parts" or components of any kind. In his essay entitled "Simplicity and Immutability in God," William E. Mann argues that the doctrine of divine simplicity can help us understand how God can be both immutable and active. The doctrine of simplicity is highly controversial and has been criticized by a number of other philosophers, including Morris. Mann's essay is a good entry into this discussion.

Most of the essays deal with more familiar themes such as divine goodness, omnipotence and omniscience. All these attributes have generated puzzles and difficulties for traditional theism and a number of the essays address these difficulties. Robert M. Adams's important paper "Must God Create the Best?" makes the case that God need not create the best possible world He could create in order to be perfectly good. The claim that God is omnipotent seems to entail the theologically unacceptable consequence that God is able to sin. In "Maximal Power," Thomas P. Flint and Alfred J. Freddso articulate a rigorous account of omnipotence which avoids this problem. And, in a typically masterful paper entitled "On Ockham's Way Out," Alvin Plantinga defends divine foreknowledge against the common charge that it is incompatible with human freedom.

Not all the essays, however, are written from the standpoint of traditional theistic belief. In his contribution, David Blumenfeld maintains that the attributes of maximal power and maximal knowledge are incompatible, so the traditional concept of God is contradictory, and hence, not possibly true. And, in a fascinating piece entitled "Does Traditional Theism Entail Pantheism?," Robert Oakes returns an affirmative answer to the question he raises. His title, however, is somewhat deceptive, for what Oakes ends up claiming is that traditional theism entails Berkleyan Idealism.

The volume is a recent addition to the well-known Oxford Readings in Philosophy series. It contains twelve essays in all, as well as a very helpful Introduction which clearly summarizes the current debate about the nature of God. A few of these are rather technical and would be hard going for those without a philosophical background. However, the sections which include difficult papers also include more accessible ones which facilitate understanding of the more difficult.

The book is a valuable resource for anyone interested in disciplined thinking about God. It would be an excellent text not only for courses in philosophy of religion, but also systematic theology.

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Froehlich, Karlfried, ed. and trans. *Biblical Interpretation in the Early Church*. Sources of Early Christian Thought. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1984. viii, 135 pp. $12.95. ISBN 0-8006-1414-3.

The series, Sources of Early Christian Thought, seeks to provide students with access to texts crucial for understanding the development of the Christian tradition. Froehlich, Benjamin B. Warfield Professor of Ecclesiastical History at Princeton Theological Seminary, has contributed a concise introduction to early Christian exegesis and illustrated that analysis with selections from the following texts: (1) Sifra-The Exegetical Rules (Middot) of Rabbi Ishmael and Rabbi Hillel; (2) Ptolemy, *Letter to Flora* from Epiphanius's *Panarion*, 33; (3) Irenaeus, *Against Heresies*, Bk. 4.26.1-4; (4) Origen, *On First Principles*, Bk. 4.1.1-4.3.15; (5) Papyrus Michigan Inv. 3718, a list of "standard" Christian allegorizations of biblical texts including Matt 19:24, Matt 13:33, John 2:1, Luke 3:8, Prov 13:14 and other miscellaneous proverbs; (6) Diodore of Tarsus, *Prologue to the Commentary on the Psalms;* (7) Diodore of Tarsus, *Preface to the Commentary on Psalm 118;* (8) Theodore of Mopsuestia, *Commentary on Galatians 4:22-31*; and (9) Tyconius, *The book of Rules*, 1-3.

The introduction (pp. 1-29) surveys the history of Christian exegesis during the patristic period and comments on the selected illustrative texts. The presentation of the issues and the interpretation of the various writers are cautious and conservative. The essay does not reflect, for example, the ongoing debates about the position of Marcion and his canon in the history of Christian thought, and retains the somewhat too rigid bifurcation between Alexandrian and Antiochene exegesis. On the other hand, Froehlich does an admirable job of suggesting relationships between the diverse schools of thought and regions of the Empire. Unfortunately, this does not extend to the Syriac-speaking church. For example, although Ephrem of Syria thought carefully about the

methods and uses of exegesis, his work is not discussed.

Other issues which might have been addressed are those of the genre in which exegetical results are presented, and the socio-ecclesiastical function of the genre within the Christian community. Both form and function were influential in the development of hermeneutics.

These suggestions are not intended to detract from a very useful volume. At last, theological students have available a succinct, reliable, well-written and inexpensive introduction to the complexities of early Christian exegesis. The well-chosen bibliography will serve as a guide to further reading.

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Dayton, Donald W. *Theological Roots of Pentecostalism.* Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1987. $19.95. 199 pp. ISBN 0-310-39371-X.

For the general reader, this volume will set the Pentecostal movement in its theological context within an extremely complex nineteenth-century American religious history. Such an exercise is especially critical for a proper understanding of evangelical revival movements, because so frequently they regard themselves as having come into existence *de novo.* The tendency for such movements to ignore or even deny their historical and theological rootage is more common in America than elsewhere. Our experience as a nation of immigrants and our consequent separation from old homelands and cultures fuels an emphasis on the "now" among us which in turn generates the sense of "historylessness" of which Sydney Mead has reminded us so forcefully.

No American revival movement has been more prone to this "historyless" understanding of itself than Pentecostalism. And no feature of the movement lies more at the crux of this *de novo* claim than the essential character which it gives to the witness of glossolalia as the only valid sign of Spirit Baptism--a phenomenon so new to the whole of Christian history that efforts of Pentecostal scholars to establish any regularity, even of its exceptional practice, remain unconvincing. Therefore, when Dayton makes this feature a matter of non-consideration in his treatment of the movement, he is striking at the heart of the hermeneutical problem. Only in this

way can he get at the legitimate historical and theological roots of the movement within the complex of American Revivalism in the nineteenth century.

This procedural device, however, creates the greatest weakness in the book in that Dayton does not explicitly come back to tie in the significance of this most distinguishing characteristic of the movement to the main interpretive categories he has utilized throughout the volume. He is on solid ground when he claims that all late-nineteenth century Evangelicalism was only a "hair's-breadth" from Pentecostalism, but he fails to indicate how radical a step those holiness and higher-life advocates took who crossed that thin line and made glossolalia the necessary and only authenticating sign of Spirit baptism. The Pentecostal pioneers' unique claims for this sign-gift radically transformed the dynamics of the complex of historical theological categories, contained within the "Four-fold Gospel," from the way that complex operated within the context of the Holiness Revival where it first arose. The change was so critical that the Wesleyan/Holiness Movement was the first to sense an abrupt historical and theological disjunction between itself and the new Pentecostal Revival.

It is at this pivotal point, the witness of glossolalia, that we arrive at the essence of the movement's *de novo* understanding of its place in Christian history. At that juncture, the early Pentecostals--some consciously and others unconsciously--broke with Christian history. Their understanding of the "Four-fold Gospel" became so much more radically restitutionist and eschatological that most of their fellow "Four-fold Gospel" advocates failed to relinquish their more reformationist, historically-focused sense of mission to follow them. It is the former mind-set, or the lack of it, which created the strong theological tensions which have existed between the historical churches and Pentecostalism. These tensions, unfortunately, have become more bitter than those between Pentecostalism and many other bodies. This antagonism arose more because of common roots than in spite of them.

One indication of the critical role which glossolalia plays as the sole sign for Spirit Baptism in this analysis is the difference found in the self-understanding of those adherents of the more recent charismatic movement who regard the witness of the gift of glossolalia as only one of a number of identifying signs. Such a stance allows a much broader historical and theological self-understanding. Hence, there seems to be an easier accommodation of persons in that movement to other evangelical groups, who accept some aspects of the current charismatic focus upon gifts of the Spirit, but not their tendency toward accommodation to

traditional Pentecostalism. The more pluralistic charismatic understanding is utterly unacceptable to traditional Pentecostalism because it would irreparably dissolve its critical point of distinction from its holiness and higher-life familial rootage.

Dayton's excellent analysis of nineteenth century revivalistic theology, however, serves the student of the Holiness Revival just as well as the person who seeks an understanding of Pentecostalism. He reminds us once again of what is now almost a truism--that the roots of the latter movement lie, in the main, in the nineteenth-century Methodist Holiness Revival. As a result, the essay represents the most comprehensive and definitive presentation of the theological development of the Holiness Revival which we have to date. With clarity and plausibility, the account wends its way through the intricacies of the complex theological influence and counter-influence between American New School Calvinistic Revivalism and Methodist Holiness Revivalism. It contributes especially to a better understanding of how extensively Methodist Arminianism and Perfectionism permeated all American religion in the nineteenth century, especially through the holiness/higher-life revival.

There is a consistent leit motif in the presentation which will be as interesting to Wesleyan scholars as is the central theme of the work. It plays out in Dayton's constant comparisons and contrasts between Wesley's positions and those subsequently adopted by the myriad of Holiness, Higher-Life and Pentecostal Holiness movements which recognize him as father or, at least, as grandfather. Dayton's interpretation of subsequent theological developments among these Wesleyan kinfolk attempts to determine the extent to which they modify, or contradict, Wesley's own purported positions. Limitations of space obviously make any extensive analysis of the stance of either party at any given point difficult at best. The lack of evidence at many points provides illusive hope for any more informed conclusions than have already been reached. Nevertheless, the impression persists that Dayton too readily separates Wesley from what seem to be the logical consequences of his own often radical positions. The degree to which he committed himself, within the confines of his own religious milieu, to positions very parallel to related positions taken by his namesakes, in the context of their own later milieu, may be too readily diminished in the effort to suit a thesis of radical modification.

In summary, the volume effectively represents the conclusions of Dayton's own twenty years of scholarship in the area of American Wesleyan/Holiness/Pentecostal studies in interaction with others in the field with whom he has been in intensive dialogue over these

years. The result is a book that incites new discussion equal in intensity to that surrounding the older questions it helps lay to rest. Pentecostals and Wesleyans, as well as all students of American religion, must take his thesis into account in any further meaningful analyses of nineteenth-century religious history and the Wesleyan revival movements which today comprise such a large sector of Protestant Evangelicalism.

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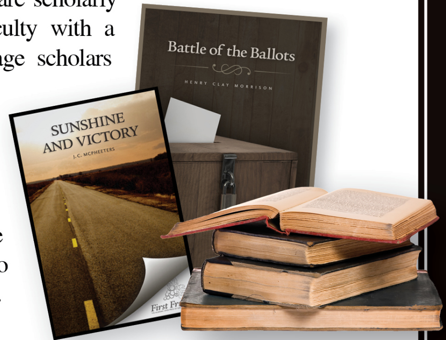


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