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Dorothy L. Sayers: an Exemplar for Lay Theology

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INKLINGS FOREVER, Volume VI

A Collection of Essays Presented at the Sixth

FRANCES WHITE EW BANK COLLOQUIUM on C.S. LEWIS & FRIENDS

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Dorothy L. Sayers

an exemplar for lay theology

Christine M. Fletcher

Abstract:

This paper argues that all Christians are called to serious theological reflection on the Creed within their lives and that Sayers's life and work gives us an example of intellectual rigor that finds the doctrine of the Church about Christ and the Trinity truly good news.

The paper looks at Dorothy L. Sayers's theological method as an exemplar for how lay theologians should work. It examines the two dominant themes of her theological writing: the Incarnation and the Trinity, in light of her life and her practice of using her talents as a writer, specifically a playwright, to produce new theological insights.

The first part of the paper gives a short history of her religious formation and adult faith, and details her fascination with Christ and the mystery of the Trinity from childhood through her adult life. The second section of the paper examines the origin of her analogy of the Trinity in her own life as a writer, and especially her experience as a playwright.

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Dorothy L. Sayers: an exemplar for lay theology

This paper argues that all Christians are called to serious theological reflection on the Creed within their lives and that Sayers's life and work gives us an example of intellectual rigor that finds the doctrine of the Church about Christ and the Trinity truly good news. Dorothy L. Sayers in her life and work is an example of lay theology.

The first part of the paper gives a short history of her religious formation and adult faith, and details her fascination with Christ and the mystery of the Trinity from childhood through her adult life. The second section of the paper examines the origin of her analogy of the Trinity in her own life as a writer, and especially her experience as a playwright, to produce new theological insights. The third section examines her analogy and her theological method and its suitability for lay Christians today.

Sayers, Child of the Vicarage

Dorothy L. Sayers was a child of the vicarage. Her father, the Revd. Henry Sayers was head of the choir school for Christ Church cathedral in Oxford. When Dorothy was four he accepted the living in Bluntisham-cum-Earith, Cambridgeshire, and Dorothy spent the rest of her youth in the fens.

She seems not to have had much formal religious instruction from her father; however, the household had morning and evening prayers, and she attended the services in the parish church throughout her life. Her letters from Somerville show that she was attending church and thinking for herself: 'Having read the two Gospels with more attention than I had ever before given to the subject, I came to the conclusion that such a set of stupid, literal, pig-headed people never existed as Christ had to do with, including the disciples.' (1: 71) She had been reproached by her pious aunts, so she wrote to her parents:

it's difficult to make people see that what you have been taught counts for nothing, and that the only things worth having are the things you find out for yourself. ...It isn't a case of 'Here is the Christian religion, the one authoritative and respectable rule of life. Take it or leave it.' It's 'Here's a muddling kind of affair called Life, and here are nineteen or twenty different explanations of it, all supported by people whose opinions are not to be sneezed at. Among them is the Christian religion in which you happen to have been brought up. Your friend so and so has been brought up in quite a different way of thinking; is a perfectly splendid person and thoroughly happy. What are you going to do about it?' I'm worrying it out quietly, and whatever I get hold of will be valuable, because I've got it for myself. (1: 85)

She continued worrying at it, through her troubles with men, resulting in the birth of Anthony, her illegitimate son. Although we have some evidence that she was not a 'churchwoman' or even a regular attendee for some years, she did wrestle with the intellectual challenges of Christianity, and become a public advocate for Christianity through the late 1930s until the end of her life. Part of her attractiveness as a Christian apologist was her consciousness of her own sinfulness, and of her failures. In a letter to Archbishop William Temple, declining his offer of a Doctorate of Divinity to honor her work in *The Man Born to Be King* and *The Mind of the Maker* she wrote:

A Degree in Divinity is not, I suppose, intended as a certificate of sanctity, exactly; but I should feel better about it if I were a more convincing kind of Christian. I am never quite sure whether I really am one, or whether I have only fallen in love with an intellectual pattern. (2: 429)

Such humility, I maintain, is essential for any true theology to be done.

On that sound foundation, Sayers consistently defended Christian dogma as primary and essential for Christian morality, unlike the liberal parsons of her day who wished to have Christian morality without a Christ who was raised from the dead and co-equal to the father.

In an address to a congregation at Hayward's Heath in Sussex she explained:

if we believe Christ to be truly God, His ethic of perfection does represent the eternal standard by which all human efforts are to be judged. And if we believe Him to be incarnate God, He is the link between two worlds, and the means by which that which is impossible with man is made possible with God. But if he is only man, then His ethic has no more authority than any other human ethic. (*Mid-Sussex Times* 1)

It is pointless for the Church to neglect dogma and believe that she can teach Christian ethics.

Trinity and Christ

Sayers was fascinated throughout her life with the figure of Christ, and haunted by the Trinity. The unifying theme of Sayers' diverse writing is the primary importance of these two dogmas, the Incarnation and the Trinity. Her early poetry collection *Catholic Tales and Christian Songs*, published in 1919, included a long poem about the person of Christ and how individuals project their wishes or needs onto Him. Her first religious radio play was a *He That Should Come* for the BBC in 1938. Her two greatest works of Christian writing are *The Mind of the Maker* a study of the Trinitarian doctrine of creation first published in 1941, and *The Man Born to Be King*, twelve radio plays on the life of Christ broadcast on the BBC for the first time from 1941 to 1943 and repeated often thereafter. C. S. Lewis read the plays every Lent.¹

The phrases of the Athanasian creed intrigued her as a child, and stayed with her through her adult writing, with references culled from that creed in her letters. She developed her analogy of artistic creation which she used as the foundation for her social ethics of work. Sayers, writer and playwright, experienced creation as a three-fold process. She examined this experience in light of her understanding of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity. She then wrote an analogy which appeared in its full form in the printed version of the play *The Zeal of Thy House* and was discussed in detail in her book *The Mind of the Maker*. It is:

Praise Him that He hath made man in His own image, a maker and craftsman like Himself, a little mirror of His triune majesty.

For every work of creation is threefold, an earthly trinity to match the heavenly.

First: there is the Creative Idea; passionless, timeless, beholding the whole work complete at once, the end in the beginning, and this is the image of the Father.

¹ I have just used the plays in an Introduction to the Bible class with great effect.

Second, there is the Creative Energy, begotten of that Idea, working in time from the beginning to the end, with sweat and passion, being incarnate in the bonds of matter, and this is the image of the Word.

Third: there is the Creative Power, the meaning of the work and its response in the lively soul; and this is the image of the Spirit.

And these three are one, each equally in itself the whole work, whereof none can exist without the other; and this is the image of the Trinity. (103)

Sayers asks us to connect the behavior of Christian theology and art and by doing so gain a clearer understanding of what Christian dogma means when it tells us that God is Trinity. Claude Welch, within a theological criticism of the problems of analogy for theology, seemed to claim that Sayers started with her knowledge of the Trinity, consciously or unconsciously, and produced a three-ness in artistic creation. Then she tried to prove the Trinity by her experience and so, he claimed, she produced a circular argument. (87-91) This paper contends that although this is the impression Sayers makes in certain parts of *The Mind of the Maker*, it is not a complete or fair characterization of her method or results. It is correct in that Christian revelation was part of her mental background, and this paper claims that she is an exemplar for lay theologians precisely because she uses revelation to interpret her experience. It is reasonable to see that having a mind formed in a Trinitarian faith, she would discover three-fold analogies; but she did not imposed three-foldness on all experience. She was aware of the dichotomy of author and book or painter and audience, and the multiplicity of steps in creation, especially in the process of writing and editing text. Her own claims for the analogy she proposed are not that it proves the existence of the God as Trinity, despite some incautious statements she made.² Her claim is that she discovered a pattern, a three-ness, in her work as a writer. When she compared this pattern to the doctrine of the Trinity she found 'that between the two there is a difference only of technical phraseology...a difference, not of category, but only of quality and degree' (*Mind* 182).

In *The Mind of the Maker* she expanded her discussion of this analogy to sort out the confusions of the multiple attacks on Christian dogma. So she made clear that if the critics say that the Trinity is simply an anthropomorphic projection by theologians, then they cannot the same time claim it is 'apriorist and unrelated to human experience; since we are committed to supposing that is a plain *a posteriori* induction from human experience' (183). On the other hand, if the claim is that the doctrine is the product of revelation, pure religious experience from God interpreted by philosophy, then the critics cannot charge that it is irrational. On this basis, then readers can evaluate her account of creative mind and decide whether or not it is rational and fits with human experience. They can then evaluate the parallels Sayers drew between her experience and the Trinity and decide if it is a true analogy, an instance of the same pattern, as the behavior of apples and planets are for

² She recounted the experience of Newton relating the behaviour of apples and the behaviour of planets and concluded: 'Similarly, we may take a cross section of the spiritual universe, (note) at the point marked "Christian Theology" and at the point marked "Art", and find at both precisely the same pattern of the creative mind; it is open to us to draw a similar conclusion.' that is, 'that this pattern was part of a universal structure which ran through the world of visible phenomena' (184-185) This seems as if she were offering her analogy as a proof of God's existence. I maintain, however, that it was her standard method of explaining what the terms used in Christianity actually meant, so that her reader could make an informed decision to believe or not believe.

gravity. If readers accept that there is a similarity of pattern, they must accept the conclusion that Christianity is not an incomprehensible or irrational phenomenon. Thus, the criticism that she imposed a three-ness, may be true, but does not invalidate her project. Readers are free to reject her analogy, and certainly free to reject belief in the Trinitarian God. If, however, they can understand her analogy, they may not claim that Christianity is irrational or unrelated to human experience.

Tracing the origins of the analogy will, I hope, make clear the interplay between Sayers' experience as an artist and her mind as a Christian and demonstrate a sound method for lay theologians to follow. Canon John Thurmer suggests the origin of her analogy lies in her analysis of detective fiction using Aristotle's *Poetics*.³ Thurmer notes that in her introduction to *Great Short Stories of Detection, Mystery and Horror, First Series* in 1928, Sayers wrote that detective stories had an 'Aristotelian perfection of beginning middle and end' (37). In her introduction to the 1931 volume, *Great Short Stories of Detection, Mystery and Horror, Second Series*, she analyzed detective stories into idea, plot and responsive reader⁴ (qtd in Eureka 198). In a lecture given in 1935, 'Aristotle on Detective Fiction', she wrote that the triad of beginning, middle, end is the 'make-up of the plot' (26), and that a detective plot has three necessary parts: 'Peripety, or Reversal of Fortune; Discovery; and Suffering' (29). Clearly, she found threesomes; however, the idea-plot-and responsive reader is of a different explanatory power than the threesome of beginning, middle and end.

Thurmer suggests that Aristotle enabled her to see that the idea-plot-response pattern which she identified as the essential pattern of the detective story applies more widely, to all tragedy and therefore particularly to the greatest, the drama of Christ (201). I argue that she first wrote her analogy, although not consciously; in her 1933 pot-boiler, *Murder Must Advertise*. *Murder Must Advertise*, set in an advertising agency, drew on her experience of working in advertising. Her description of the process of creating a big advertising campaign for a cigarette called Whifflets, included three incidents in the narrative which correspond to the three parts of her later, developed analogy. First we have the description of what she later called the IDEA, an analogy for the Father:

It is not to be supposed that the great Whiffle-Way in all its comprehensive perfection, sprang fully formed from Mr. Bredon's brain when Mr. Armstrong uttered the words, Family Appeal. All that then happened was a mental association with the phrase Family Hotel, coupled with a faint consciousness of inner illumination. He replied humbly, 'Yes, I see; I'll try to work out something,' gathered up some sheets of paper on which Mr. Armstrong had scribbled a few illegible notes and a thing that looked like a hedgehog, and made his way out. He had taken six steps down the passage when the idiotic slogan: 'If that's what you want, you can Whiffle for it,' took possession of his brain; two steps further on, this repellent sentence had recast itself as: 'All you Want by Whiffing,' and on the threshold of his own room, the first practical possibility of Whiffledom struck him like a sledgehammer. (Chapter 15)

³ Thurmer's original work can be found in *A Detection of the Trinity* (1984) and in *The Reluctant Evangelist Papers on the Christian Thought of Dorothy L. Sayers* (1996). His new suggestion is found in 'Eureka – The Genesis of an Analogy' (2002)

⁴ The hint of things to come lies her description of the idea: 'The "idea," whatever it is, usually presents itself in a flash of insight' (1948, p.14); of the plot 'Frequently a story with a brilliant central idea is ruined by failure in plot-construction'. (*ibid.*, p.13); and of the reader: 'the important part played by the reader himself. His co-operation is all-important'. (*ibid.*, p.22)

The IDEA for Sayers is the glimpse of the whole, without beginning or end. But to work any Idea out, either as a book, a painting or an advertising campaign requires activity. She describes the activity which she later called ENERGY, an analogy for the Son:

‘I like this scheme, Mr. Bredon,’ said Mr Pym, tapping his finger on the drafts submitted to him. ‘It has Breadth. It has Vision. More than anything else, Advertising needs Vision and Breadth. That is what determines Appeal. In my opinion, this scheme of yours has Appeal. It is going to be expensive, of course, and needs some working out. For instance, if all these vouchers were cashed in at once, it would send up the cost per packet to a figure that the profits could not possibly cover. But I think that can be got over.’

‘They won’t all be cashed in at once,’ said Mr. Armstrong.

The two directors plunged into a maze of facts and figures. (Chapter 16)

Here is the central dilemma of creativity: getting the idea embodied in time and space, in a fallen world. The analogy isn’t yet complete.

When the work is done and the IDEA is embodied in the activity or ENERGY, it creates a reaction in the creator and anyone else who sees it. Sayers calls this the POWER, the response, an analogy for the Holy Spirit. At the end of the novel Sayers pictures Wimsey standing on the street:

A bus passed bearing a long ribbon display upon its side:

WHIFFLE YOUR WAY ROUND BRITAIN!

The great campaign had begun. He contemplated his work with a kind of amazement. With a few idle words on a sheet of paper he had touched the lives of millions.
(Chapter 21)

In *Murder Must Advertise*, the three parts of creative mind are present implicitly.⁵ I believe it was the experience of the theatre which forged the final link between her experience as a writer and Christian theology and made the analogy between creation and the Trinity explicit. In ‘The Christian Faith and the Theatre’ (Wade MS. 43) she wrote:

But if he [the playwright] is humble and prepared to take a very realistic view of his own deficiencies he does, nevertheless, undergo the tremendous and almost terrifying experience of seeing his own word made flesh. (Wade MS-43/8)

She went on to compare the typescript of a play to a prophecy of creation; and wrote of the ‘miracle’:

But when the rehearsal begins, then the miracle begins. The maker of the play sees his word animating, and as it were, making for itself a body out of living flesh and blood. Not only that, but a corporate or common body inhabited by wills independent of his own, which, yet, by the power of that word which is himself, are subdued and responsive to his will, conforming all that they are to his word dwelling and acting within them rendering him back to himself a kind of living mirror, so that his own

⁵ Canon Thurmer also sees a foreshadowing of the analogy in *The Nine Tailors*. See his article in *Sidelights on Sayers LIV*, October 2004.

thought is at once within himself and also manifest outside him incarnate in a fully-conscious, fully self-willed and partly independent creative form.

Speaking only for myself, I can only say that this miracle never fails to move me. It is experienced at its freshest and most astonishing at the first rehearsal of each new play. I think that if I were to write a hundred new plays, it would never lose its power to startle ... me. (Wade MS 43/9-10)

Here we see the humility before experience of an intellect whose intellectual framework is Christianity. The interplay between these is the starting point for any theologian.

Sayers theological method

We possess an extended letter which gives us Sayers' perception of her task and method in theology.⁶ Sayers described what it is that 'her sort' can safely do and categorized her own writings.

1. We can write a book, play or other work which genuinely and directly derives from such fragments of religious or human experience as we ourselves have (*The Zeal of Thy House* –the sin of the artist; *The Just Vengeance* – which is about the choosing of God through the only values we know)...
2. We can (if we feel like it) write a direct statement about our own experience. (*The Mind of the Maker*). ...
3. We can show you in images experiences which we ourselves do not know, or know only imaginatively. (*The Man Born to Be King*). Because in this, we do not need to pretend anything about ourselves. ...
4. We can interpret another man, who has what we have not (we can translate and edit Dante). Our intellect can assess him and our imagination feels what he feels. ...
5. We can, so far as our competence goes, help to disentangle the language-trouble by translating from one jargon to another. For this we need to know both jargons thoroughly. (4: 141-142)

Sayers saw her own theological work as falling into these categories. She would distinguish between two kinds of imaginative writings that show the theology, the first derives directly from her religious or personal experience such as *The Zeal of thy House*. The second is created as the artist empties himself and imaginatively takes on another self.

In the final play of *The Man Born to Be King*, 'The King Comes To His Own,' Sayers' stage directions tell Thomas that his great line must be said 'with flat conviction, as of one acknowledging irrefragable evidence: "2+2=4", "that is the sun in the sky", "You are my Lord and my God"' (314). Sayers wrote to Marjorie Barber:

Going back to the plays—one of the actors came up to me during rehearsal, just after we'd been doing the 'my Lord and my God' bit, and said, 'that's the first time I've ever heard the Atonement explained—so as to mean anything, that is.' Which shows the advantage of putting things into words of one syllable, without technical theological

⁶ John Wren-Lewis disagreed with what he called Sayers' overly rational approach to presenting Christianity. He confronted her at St Anne's, Soho, and she wrote a long letter to him explaining her ideas and background (4: 136-145).

terms, and linking them up to the action of the story. I admit that it's not a complete explanation, but so long as one can persuade people that it has a meaning of some kind one does at least save the thing from appearing completely irrational. (2: 380)

Equally, she identifies two types of translation. One type occurs when the artist can assess another writer intellectually and imaginatively. She identifies her link with Dante through the 'passionate intellect' acknowledging Dante as infinitely the greater. By that contact, she wrote, 'I can accept and interpret his ... "Beatrician" side, which by itself would be meaningless to me' (4: 141). This category would include her translations of *The Song of Roland* and of *Tristram in Brittany*, but those works do not have the theological content that Dante has.

Finally, there is the second type of translation, which she identified as translating one jargon into another, requires that the translator understand both jargons. Sayers knew her gifts and limitations:

(I can translate from the jargon of the Schools in to the common speech of the twentieth century, and I can sometimes translate from Biblical speech into scholastic or from poetry into prose. But I cannot, for example, translate either from or into the language of Existentialism, which is a language of introverts, and darker to me than Sanskrit or Choctaw, because it corresponds to nothing in my experience.) One knows one's own limitations, and nobody else knows them or can dictate in the matter. (4: 142.)

Sayers' translation partners: Scholastic philosophy-common speech in mid-20th century England, Biblical speech into scholastic philosophy, illustrate MacIntyre's concept of the 'second first language'; the translator not only knows the words and idioms, but understands something of the history and the cultural underpinnings which give the language its shape and present form.

Most of Sayers' speeches and articles about work and theology fall into this category. In the 1937 letter to Fr. Kelly she discussed the point of translation and the equally important point of intellectual rather than emotional faith; what she worried about was not lay people thinking about theology, but their having 'a lack of practice in handling technical terms.' (2: 51-52) After her articles appeared in *The Sunday Times* she was inundated with invitations to speak on religious topics, and was generally willing to do so in one of two ways, either in translating the creeds into modern idiom, or in telling the churchmen exactly what kind of wildly mistaken ideas the majority of people had about Christianity.⁷ She knew why she was called upon so often. In a letter to John, later Cardinal, Heenan she wrote: 'I think one of the troubles is that so few parsons are really trained to the use of words. They use the standard technical phrases without quite realising how they sound to the ordinary reader or listener' (2: 179-180).

⁷ Her reply to an invitation to talk to clergy is typical. She agreed to speak on the condition that she would be allowed to recount the extraordinary ideas people had about Christianity and giving 'suggestions of a few ways of countering the prevalent impression that the Christian religion is unreal, depressing and fit only for very stupid people' (2: 116).

The key point in most of her presentations is that ‘the heathen’ had no idea about what Christianity actually taught.⁸ In a letter to *The Spectator* in the summer of 1940 Sayers denied she was creating new interpretations of Christianity, an accusation which always irritated her. She responded: ‘The terms are not mine: they are the terms of the ancient creeds; the doctrinal system is not mine; it is that of the Church. All that I have done is to explain, to the best of my ability what those terms mean, and what that doctrine is.’ (2:170) The creeds were her touchstone, only then could she be sure that she wasn’t leading people into apostasy. She explained to Bishop Talbot,⁹ this time in connection with the series of talks they were giving on the BBC, that: ‘I am taking the line that my business is to explain as well as I can what the clauses of the Creed actually mean, rather than to exhort people to belief’ (2: 258).

She was fitted for this work of translation, and was aware of the pitfalls. In a letter to the Revd. T. Wigley she remarked that it is impractical to only use modern idiom when dealing with theology for two reasons:

- 1 The mere fact that we have to deal with the Bible obliges us to make use of the theological ideas and expressions in which it abounds. . . . Many, indeed of the most crude and erroneous ideas about doctrine (especially as regards redemption) are directly derived from the reading of the Bible without sufficient knowledge of its theological and historical backgrounds.
2. The older theological words and expressions formed a real technical vocabulary, and it is at least possible to discover and say what they meant to the theologians who used them. (2: 288)

Her first point illustrates someone who understands the Bible as a ‘second first language’ from someone who is translating Biblical language in a purely sentence-matching way. The second point illustrates that she was very aware of how language changed through time; a point which she makes again in *The Mind of the Maker* (117-121).

Her dislike of personal questions and her emphasis on personal responsibility contributed to her choice of method. She was prepared to explain, but wanted people to think for themselves and make up their own minds. Taking responsibility for thinking, not being led by the crowd or propaganda was the theme of *Begin Here* and a secondary theme in all her essays on work. This concern for intellect is reflected in her concern for logic and clear thinking. She repeatedly told people that they are free to believe or disbelieve Christianity. What she wanted to do is make sure that they understand exactly what it is they are accepting or rejecting.

Reviewing her life and her works, one sees a pattern of consistent, studious, creative engagement with the doctrines of Christianity: Trinity, Incarnation, Atonement. In her

⁸ In *Creed or Chaos?* she wrote: ‘The trouble is that, in nine cases out of ten, he has never been offered the dogma. What he has been offered is a set of technical theological terms which nobody has taken the trouble to translate into language relevant to ordinary life. . . . nine out of ten or my heretics are exceedingly surprised to discover that the Creeds contain any statements that bear a practical and comprehensible meaning’. (33,35)

⁹ She was astonished by the Bishop, ‘I am reduced to complete pulp by Bishop Talbot, who says that in FOUR talks devoted to *Why* we want a God to believe in, it has not occurred to him to explain what is meant by the word “Sin”!!!!’ (2: 260).

imaginative works, she wanted the dogma to be the framework for the consistency of the characters and the action of the play or novel. In her essays she sought to clarify the dogma of the Church in language that was understood by her contemporaries. In her social ethics she sought to relate the dogmas and ethics to daily life.

A Model for Lay Theologians

Fr Aidan Nichols, O P, quotes the French Dominican theologian, Yves Congar, 'theology is the highest of the habits of mind that a Christian man or woman can acquire'. (13) Von Balthasar writes that theology should be done 'on one's knees'. St Benedict in his rule teaches his monks that 'if we humble our hearts, the Lord will raise it to heaven.' (Ch7:8) Humility in presenting the dogmas of Christianity has always been recognized as essential for knowledge of God, and Sayers shows us this in her description of her method, and in her own works.

She has much to teach Christians who are educated in fields other than theology. The great commandment: 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength.' (Mk 12:30 NAB) must be obeyed by all Christians, and for lay Christians that includes being as intellectually engaged with their faith as they are intellectually engaged with their profession. Sayers is a follower of St Anselm, who understood theology as faith seeking understanding.

She used her gifts as a writer in a special way for theological reflection, but believed that every Christian is called to theological reflection. She wrote, 'Do please remember that your own belief and your own religious experience are not going to be of very much help to your neighbour unless you are prepared to give a reason for the faith that is in you.' (Making Sense 14) To do that, I believe we should follow her pattern of concentrating on doctrine before ethics. We all have dealt with the absolute relativism of our culture, the idea that there cannot be any truth (except of course this statement). By concentrating on doctrine, and presenting it as the assumptions we begin from, our perspective in the post-modern phrase, we can then invite people to examine our thought and its conclusions, and test it for consistency and relevance. Our ethical choices are rational and based on something other than passing feelings. This way of proceeding respects human freedom, and shows that the faith and the morality which flows from it are not irrational. Our lives will show our neighbors just how deeply we believe.

The special task of the lay theologian, I believe, is to relate the faith that God has revealed to the circumstances of life. Jesus Christ is the same yesterday, today and forever. Human nature is still fallen. But human culture, art, language, music, forms of life, changes. The Word must be presented to each new generation. Sayers' gift of showing the dogma in a play or novel may be beyond our skills; however, her method of translation is one we, with appropriate study, can begin to master. We are participants in our culture, we need to study our faith and its language, and begin to relate the two. In a culture that seems to flee from reason, we need to be reasonable: Christianity is not a warm, fuzzy blanket but a lived loyalty to a person, Jesus Christ, that changes everything. Our call is to show that to our world. Sayers gives a way to begin.

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