

## Paper 103 — The Reality of Religious Experience

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Most endnotes and Urantia Book cross-references have been deleted to enhance readability.

### Key

- (a) **Green** indicates where a source author first appears, or where he/she reappears.
- (b) **Yellow** highlights parallelisms occurring usually in the same row.
- (c) **Tan** highlights parallelisms occurring further apart, usually not in the same row.
- (d) An underlined word or words indicates where the source and the UB writer pointedly deviate or differ from each other.
- (e) **Blue** indicates original (or “revealed”) information, or UB-specific terminology and concepts. (What to highlight in this regard is debatable. The highlights are tentative.)
- (f) **Light green** indicates Bible passages or elements thereof.

### Sources for Paper 103, in the order in which they first appear

- (1) **Garnett**, A. Campbell, *A Realistic Philosophy of Religion* (Chicago: Willett, Clark & Company, 1942)
- (2) **Baillie**, John, *The Interpretation of Religion: An Introductory Study of Theological Principles* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1928)
- (3) **Lewis**, Edwin, *God and Ourselves: A Plea for the Reality, Adequacy and Availability of God* (New York: The Abingdon Press, 1931)
- (4) **Knudson**, Albert C., *The Doctrine of God* (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1930)

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## PAPER 103 — THE REALITY OF RELIGIOUS EXPERIENCE

103:0.1 All of man's truly religious reactions are sponsored by the early ministry of the adjutant of worship and are censored by the adjutant of wisdom. Man's first supermind endowment is that of personality encirclement in the Holy Spirit of the Universe Creative Spirit; and long before either the bestowals of the divine Sons or the universal bestowal of the Adjusters, this influence functions to enlarge man's viewpoint of ethics, religion, and spirituality. Subsequent to the bestowals of the Paradise Sons the liberated Spirit of Truth makes mighty contributions to the enlargement of the human capacity to perceive religious truths. As evolution advances on an inhabited world, the Thought Adjusters increasingly participate in the development of the higher types of human religious insight. The Thought Adjuster is the cosmic window through which the finite creature may faith-glimpse the certainties and divinities of limitless Deity, the Universal Father.

103:0.2 The religious tendencies of the human races are innate; they are universally manifested and have an apparently natural origin; primitive religions are always evolutionary in their genesis. As natural religious experience continues to progress, periodic revelations of truth punctuate the otherwise slow-moving course of planetary evolution.

103:0.3 On Urantia, today, there are four kinds of religion:

1. Natural or evolutionary religion.
2. Supernatural or revelatory religion.

3. Practical or current religion, varying degrees of the admixture of natural and supernatural religions.

4. Philosophic religions, man-made or philosophically thought-out theologic doctrines and reason-created religions.

## 1. PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

PREFACE (Garnett vii)

103:1.1 The unity of religious experience among a social or racial group derives from the identical nature of the God fragment indwelling the individual.

From the analysis of religious experience there issues the finding that what men have called God is a factor within themselves that they naturally distinguish from the familiar self of private desire. It is that within each of us that demands of us that we concern ourselves with the good of others besides ourselves. The history of religion is the story of man's effort to understand and adjust himself to this element of the divine within him.

It is this divine in man that gives origin to his unselfish interest in the welfare of other men.

But since personality is unique—no two mortals being alike—it inevitably follows that no two human beings can similarly interpret the leadings and urges of the spirit of divinity which lives within their minds.

Traditionally he has believed that the divine within comes from a divine being without, and religious communities have divided over their interpretation of that divinity. But it is the thesis of our interpretation of religious practice that, providing we rightly understand the nature of the divine within, as a will to universal good, we can and should cooperate as a religious community without insisting on further agreement in matters of religious theory (G vii-viii).

## I: METHODS AND VIEWS (Garnett 1)

### PROBLEMS OF METHOD IN THE PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION (Garnett 4)

Professor Leuba, writing in 1912, listed forty-eight definitions of religion, and scholars have been so busy with the subject since then that they must have added at least as many more. The contradictions and conflicts that people find when they begin to discuss religion are notorious (G 5).

In this investigation we have to begin with the rough-and-ready concept of religion that we have picked up from our social environment and filled with meaning from our own experience.

We soon discover that we all have different concepts and differences of experience. But if my concept and experience were entirely different from the reader's, then what is here written would be entirely unintelligible to him.

So if we can understand each other at all when we talk about religion we have some experience of it in common (G 5-6).

A group of mortals can experience spiritual unity, but they can never attain philosophic uniformity.

And this diversity of the interpretation of religious thought and experience is shown by the fact that twentieth-century theologians and philosophers have formulated upward of five hundred different definitions of religion.

In reality, every human being defines religion in the terms of his own experiential interpretation of the divine impulses emanating from the God spirit that indwells him,

and therefore must such an interpretation be unique and wholly different from the religious philosophy of all other human beings.

103:1.2 When one mortal is in full agreement with the religious philosophy of a fellow mortal, that phenomenon indicates that these two beings have had a similar religious experience touching the matters concerned in their similarity of philosophic religious interpretation.

But though our whole understanding of such concepts as religion and morality has, in the last resort, to be wrought out of our own experience, it would remain very poor without the illumination we receive from others. It is necessary to bring to bear upon our own experience, therefore, a description of a great variety of the experiences of others, and to seek to enter into sympathetic understanding of them (G 7).

#### RATIONALISM AND SYNOPTIC PHILOSOPHY (Garnett 8)

[contd] [The] empirical and critical approach to the philosophy of religion leads to ... an emphasis upon will and the sense of values as constituents of religion at least as important as the intellectual. The synoptic approach inevitably emphasizes the intellectual content and even suggests that religion is primarily and basically a system of thought—theology. This theory is commonly known as rationalism....

... Thus for rationalism religion is first a belief and secondarily a pursuit of values;

for empiricism it is first a pursuit of values and secondarily a system of beliefs (G 8-9).

[See next pg.]

103:1.3 While your religion is a matter of personal experience, it is most important that you should be exposed to the knowledge of a vast number of other religious experiences (the diverse interpretations of other and diverse mortals) to the end that you may prevent your religious life from becoming egocentric—circumscribed, selfish, and unsocial.

103:1.4 Rationalism is wrong when it assumes that religion is at first a primitive belief in something which is then followed by the pursuit of values.

Religion is primarily a pursuit of values, and then there formulates a system of interpretative beliefs.

It is much easier for men to agree on religious values—goals—than on beliefs—interpretations. And this explains how religion can agree on values and goals while exhibiting the confusing phenomenon of maintaining a belief in hundreds of conflicting beliefs—creeds.

[contd] Only a thoroughgoing analysis of the concept of religion and of the experience on which it rests can disprove the rationalistic theory. But three preliminary considerations may be cited as suggesting its falsity. First, the fact that religion itself has survived such tremendous changes of belief... A person may be very deeply distressed at losing his religious beliefs, but he often develops just as fine and satisfying a religion with a mere fraction of his original and traditional system, or with none of it (G 9).

Thus the familiar phenomenon of continuity of religion **in spite of forced abandonment of religious beliefs**, strongly indicates that belief is *not* the most fundamental element in religion (G 10).

[contd] The second and third considerations may be dealt with together. Religion shows its independence of any specific belief in the fact of **the enormous variety of beliefs** that may be incorporated in a religion, and in the fact that the practical manifestations characteristic of religion may be present even where all the generally recognized characteristic beliefs are absent (G 10).

Religion, of course, always *involves* some thought, some belief. But **it is religion that produces the characteristic forms of thought**, not the characteristic forms of thought that produce all the rest of the religion (G 11).

This also explains why a given person can maintain his religious experience in the face of giving up or changing many of his religious beliefs.

**Religion persists in spite of revolutionary changes in religious beliefs.**

**Theology does not produce religion; it is religion that produces theologic philosophy.**

THE RESULTS OF RATIONALISM (Garnett 11)

Yet another reason why rationalism leads to skepticism is found in the history of religion. Most religious beliefs are obviously false. So if belief is the foundation of religion its foundations are mostly false (G 13).

[See endnote.]

But the situation is very different if religion is based on experience. Religious thought or belief is then an interpretation of that experience, and religious activity a response to it.

The response may be more or less appropriate; the interpretation may be more or less correct (G 13-14).

R O M A N T I C E M P I R I C I S M :  
SCHLEIERMACHER (Garnett 14)

[contd] The father of modern religious empiricism is Friedrich Schleiermacher... "True religion," he asserts in the second of his famous *Speeches on Religion*, "is a sense and taste for the infinite." In his major work, *The Christian Faith*, he maintains that "the essence of piety is a feeling of absolute dependence or, which is to say the same thing, a consciousness of our relation with God." This is said to be the highest grade of feeling, but it is indescribable. It is an "intuition," an "immediate self-consciousness" which one may contemplate but cannot express. It is something psychologically more fundamental than ideas.

103:1.5 That religionists have believed so much that was false does not invalidate religion

because religion is founded on the recognition of values<sup>1</sup> and is validated by the faith of personal religious experience.

Religion, then, is based on experience and religious thought; theology, the philosophy of religion, is an honest attempt to interpret that experience.

Such interpretative beliefs may be right or wrong, or a mixture of truth and error.

103:1.6 The realization of the recognition of spiritual values is an experience which is superideational.

Ideas and words are inadequate to describe it (G 14).

There is no word in any human language which can be employed to designate this “sense,” “feeling,” “intuition,” or “experience” which we have elected to call God-consciousness.

SYMBOLISTIC EMPIRICISM: AMES AND WIEMAN (Garnett 19)

[See endnote.]

The spirit of God that dwells in man is not personal—the Adjuster is prepersonal—but this Monitor presents a value, exudes a flavor of divinity, which is personal in the highest and infinite sense.<sup>2</sup>

Personality is the highest thing we know.... What gives its unique value to personality is the fact of consciousness.... A deity that is unconscious [as in Wieman’s concept] is therefore infrapersonal in value, however suprapersonal it, or “he,” may be in other respects.... Either God must be a conscious being or he cannot be the object of supreme devotion. We only fool ourselves with rhetoric when we try to pay devotion to something allegedly superhuman that, being unconscious, is in reality **infrahuman** in value (G 26).

If God were not at least personal, he could not be conscious, and if **not conscious**, then would he be **infrahuman**.

## 2. RELIGION AND THE **INDIVIDUAL**

### II: THE BIRTH OF RELIGION IN THE **INDIVIDUAL** (Garnett 35)

THE INITIAL PHASES OF RELIGIOUS LIFE (Garnett 35)

[contd] **Birth** is not the beginning of life. It is simply the occasion when we come forth into the light of day. Similarly, by the birth of religion in the individual mind we do not mean the beginning of the religious life, but simply the occasion of its coming forth into the full light of consciousness (G 35).

103:2.1 Religion is functional in the human mind and has been realized in experience prior to its appearance in human consciousness. A child has been in existence about nine months before it experiences **birth**.

The metaphor of “birth,” however, contains certain dangers of misinterpretation. Physical birth is a comparatively sudden and complete change of status. The psychological birth of religion, is, normally, not sudden.

But the “birth” of religion is not sudden; it is rather a gradual emergence.

Nevertheless, sooner or later there is a “birth day.”

In his physical birth the individual is passive. In his religious “new birth” he is active; he is “born again” by his own labors. This labor may involve some travail of soul, or it may not.... The individual actively undergoes certain inner mental adjustments. There is a change and enrichment of his system of values (G 36).

You do not enter the kingdom of heaven unless you have been “born again”—born of the Spirit.

The fact that this change may take place suddenly, and may be accompanied by abnormal psychological phenomena such as spiritual anguish and ecstasy and even by visions and voices and strange physical impulses, has been given a great deal too much attention. This mistake has been committed both by religious people who are concerned with the practical religious results and accompanying beliefs, and by students concerned with the interpretation of religious phenomena.

Many spiritual births are accompanied by much anguish of spirit and marked psychological perturbations, as many physical births are characterized by a “stormy labor” and other abnormalities of “delivery.”

On the other hand, the fact that many people grow to spiritual maturity without passing through any marked period of storm and stress, responding very easily and naturally to appropriate new spiritual stimuli from the environment, has led some religious educators to believe that under proper processes of “conditioning” moral and religious development may take place without effort from within, being purely a matter of passive responses from stimuli without. A fair consideration of the whole range of evidence, however, strongly suggests that both extreme views are wrong (G 36-37).

Yet full religious and moral development is a prize that can no more be won without effort, struggle and occasional failure than can excellence in any other form of human achievement (G 37).

#### THE TYPICAL CONVERSION CRISIS: SOME HISTORICAL EXAMPLES (Garnett 37)

The cases of conversion accompanied by exceptional psychological experiences, whether gradual or sudden, do not usually belong to the earliest phases of religious development (G 37).

#### MENTAL CONFLICT AND THE CONVERSION CRISIS (Garnett 39)

[contd] Modern abnormal psychology enables us to understand these extraordinary experiences. In every case there is mental conflict; and mental conflict, when prolonged and severe, generates repressions (G 39).

Other spiritual births are a natural and normal growth of the recognition of supreme values with an enhancement of spiritual experience,

albeit no religious development occurs without conscious effort and positive and individual determinations. Religion is never a passive experience, a negative attitude.

What is termed the “birth of religion” is not directly associated with so-called conversion experiences which usually characterize religious episodes occurring later in life

as a result of mental conflict, emotional repression, and temperamental upheavals.

NORMAL CONVERSION AND MORAL AWAKENING (Garnett 43)

[contd] But over against these more striking cases and the emphasis on conflict arising from them, there must be placed a great multitude of cases of religious development apparently devoid of crisis.... As an outstanding example of this type [William] James (and many others after him) quotes the reply of Dr. E. E. Hale, an eminent Unitarian minister, to one of Starbuck's circulars:

"I observe, with profound regret, the religious struggles which come into many biographies, as if almost essential to the formation of the hero. I ought to speak to these, to say that any man has an advantage, not be estimated, who is born, as I was, into a family where the religion is simple and rational; who is trained in the theory of such a religion, so that he never knows, for an hour, what these religious or irreligious struggles are. I always knew that God loved me, and I was always grateful to him for the world he placed me in.... A child who is early taught that he is God's child ... will take life more easily, and probably will make more of it, than one who is told that he is born the child of wrath and wholly incapable of good" (G 43-44).

RELIGION AS AN OUTGROWTH OF MORALITY (Garnett 47)

[contd] From all this evidence one fact stands out clearly—that the roots of religion are in the moral life (G 47).

[... Professor E. S. Ames goes so far as to say ... that "the origin of religion . . . is to be sought in the origin of the social consciousness" ... (G 51).]

The first moral problems of which we are aware are not those of sex or doubt or pride, but those of justice and kindness. The moral ideals that first inspire us are not those of chastity or humility but those of service to the common good (G 50).

103:2.2 But those persons who were so reared by their parents that they grew up in the consciousness of being children of a loving heavenly Father, should not look askance at their fellow mortals who could only attain such consciousness of fellowship with God through a psychological crisis, an emotional upheaval.

103:2.3 The evolutionary soil in the mind of man in which the seed of revealed religion germinates is the moral nature

that so early gives origin to a social consciousness.

The first promptings of a child's moral nature have not to do with sex, guilt, or personal pride, but rather with impulses of justice, fairness, and urges to kindness—helpful ministry to one's fellows.

Where such ideals, rather than repentance and submission, are exalted in connection with religious belief, there is a natural and ready response on the part of young people at an early age, and religion develops naturally—not without effort, but happily and without undue distress (G 50).

#### MORAL CONFLICT AND THE DIVIDED SELF (Garnett 51)

[contd] This brings us to the main thesis of this book: *that man's consciousness of God rests upon the element of conflict that is first felt as between the egoistic and the altruistic tendencies of our nature* (G 51-52).

[contd] In the past those writers, such as James and Starbuck, who have drawn attention to the element of mental conflict in the birth of the religious consciousness, have been too much influenced by those features of the conflict in the majority of the cases studied which were due to the special influence of evangelical theology and to pathological repressions. These suggested that the struggle was *away from sin* rather than *toward righteousness*, and that it ended in surrender rather than in victory (G 52).

And when such early moral awakenings are nurtured, there occurs a gradual development of the religious life which is comparatively free from conflicts, upheavals, and crises.

103:2.4 Every human being very early experiences something of a *conflict between his self-seeking and his altruistic impulses*, and many times the first experience of God-consciousness may be attained as the result of seeking for superhuman *help* in the task of resolving such moral conflicts.

103:2.5 The psychology of a child is naturally positive, not negative. So many mortals are negative because they were so trained. When it is said that the child is positive, reference is made to his moral impulses, *those powers of mind whose emergence signals the arrival of the Thought Adjuster*.

103:2.6 In the absence of wrong teaching, the mind of the normal child moves positively, in the emergence of religious consciousness,

*toward moral righteousness* and social ministry, rather than negatively, *away from sin* and guilt.

Conflict is *undesirable*, but it is necessary, for the simple reason that there are opposing psychological factors that have to be overcome if there is to be any growth of the moral personality. If we could grow into full perfection of character without **effort** on our own part we would be either automatons or divinities (G 52).

There may or may not be conflict in the development of religious experience, but there are always present the inevitable decisions, **effort**, and function of the human will.

103:2.7 Moral choosing is usually accompanied by more or less moral conflict.

Now it is important to recognize that ethical principles cannot be stated simply as an issue between altruism and egoism. There are altruistic actions that are wrong and egoistic actions that are right. Nevertheless, it is this issue that constitutes the moral **conflict as it first emerges** in the consciousness of the individual; and it remains the fundamental moral problem throughout life (G 52-53).

And this **very first conflict** in the child mind is between the urges of egoism and the impulses of altruism.

**Personal satisfaction**, of course, will be found in successfully attaining both [egoistic and altruistic] results ... In brief, the altruistic motive rejoices in seeing others prosper, the egoistic in attaining one's own prosperity. The fact that there is **rejoicing** in the attainment of both **goals** does not alter the nature of the distinction (G 53).

The Thought Adjuster does not disregard the personality values of the egoistic motive but does operate to place a slight preference upon the altruistic impulse as leading to the **goal of human happiness** and to the **joys** of the kingdom of heaven.

103:2.8 When a moral being chooses to be unselfish when confronted by the urge to be selfish, that is primitive religious experience. No animal can make such a choice; such a decision is both human and religious. It embraces the fact of God-consciousness and exhibits the impulse of social service, the basis of the brotherhood of man. When mind chooses a right moral judgment by an act of the free will, such a decision constitutes a religious experience.

The conflict between egoism and altruism is always with us, but it needs must pass through a more or less acute stage, beginning usually in later childhood.... The child's own satisfactions and dissatisfactions are prominent in his consciousness, and (in so far as he distinguishes self and not-self) he responds to them as his own. He thus forms a strong body of purely egoistic habits, a tightly knit egoistic self, before he develops sufficient imagination to think of the satisfactions and dissatisfactions of other people and look at matters from their point of view (G 54).

This conflict presents itself as between a lower self and a higher, between an old self and a new (G 54).

[contd from above] This natural, childish system of egoistic habits, which I shall call the original ego, is the "old Adam" that the altruistic desires have to contend with when they arise. It is well fixed and does not readily give way.

Generous impulses arise spontaneously when the young person thinks of the needs of others; and gradually a system of habits, both of thinking of the good of others and of responding to the thought, develops (G 54-55).

But before a child has developed sufficiently to acquire moral capacity and therefore to be able to choose altruistic service, he has already developed a strong and well-unified egoistic nature.

And it is this factual situation that gives rise to the theory of the struggle between the "higher" and the "lower" natures,

between the "old man of sin" and the "new nature" of grace.

Very early in life the normal child begins to learn that it is "more blessed to give than to receive."

THE ALTRUISTIC WILL AND THE IDEA OF GOD (Garnett 55)

It means that man, in this moral conflict, tends to feel that the will to the good of others, when it conflicts with the original ego, is not his own. He identifies himself with the original ego (G 56).

If this analysis is sound then the immediate datum of religious experience, whence the belief in a superhuman moral agency arises, is the altruistic will itself, with its claim to present an obligation and its power to suffuse life with new interest and deeper satisfaction. This means that what men immediately feel as the divine agency, as God within them, is this element of their own personality, the altruistic will. To this extent at least God is real and personal. He is that within us which goes beyond the seeking of our own good to seek the good of others (G 57).

Few theists will object to the view that the moral will in man is God within us; but many are likely to object that the altruistic will is not always moral, i.e., not always right. Its intentions are good, but it may sometimes lead us to undue sacrifice of ourselves, sometimes to a falsity to higher values or to socially important principles in order to please some narrow or unworthy group or individual, sometimes to mistakes as to what is the true good of those whose good we seek (G 58).

103:2.9 Man tends to identify the urge to be self-serving with his ego—himself. In contrast he is inclined to identify the will to be altruistic with some influence outside himself—God.

And indeed is such a judgment right, for all such nonself desires do actually have their origin in the leadings of the indwelling Thought Adjuster, and this Adjuster is a fragment of God.

The impulse of the spirit Monitor is realized in human consciousness as the urge to be altruistic, fellow-creature minded.

At least this is the early and fundamental experience of the child mind.

When the growing child fails of personality unification, the altruistic drive may become so overdeveloped as to work serious injury to the welfare of the self.

A misguided conscience can become responsible for much conflict, worry, sorrow, and no end of human unhappiness.

### 3. RELIGION AND THE HUMAN RACE

#### III: THE BIRTH OF RELIGION IN THE RACE (Garnett 60)

##### E. B. TYLOR: THE ANIMISTIC THEORY (Garnett 62)

[contd] The first of the modern anthropological interpretations of religion was that of E. B. Tylor, published in 1871. He regarded the belief in spiritual beings as lying at the basis of all religion, and so felt that the fundamental problem was to explain the origin of that belief... Tylor recognized that the sheer invention of [a spirit] to explain the difference between the dead and the living would involve a tremendous leap of the imagination. Therefore he looked for a second factor to bridge this gap, and he thought that this could be found in the experience of dreams (G 62).

##### E. DURKHEIM: THE COLLECTIVIST THEORY (Garnett 65)

The social group in which the individual lives and moves and has his being bears, in actual fact, [Durkheim] argues, the relationship toward the individual which religion attributes to God (G 66).

103:3.1 While the belief in spirits, dreams, and diverse other superstitions all played a part in the evolutionary origin of primitive religions,

you should not overlook the influence of the clan or tribal spirit of solidarity.

In the group relationship there was presented the exact social situation which provided the challenge to the egoistic-altruistic conflict in the moral nature of the early human mind.

[The Australian aboriginals] believe in spirits and have traditions concerning certain beings who came from the sky, taught them their culture, and returned thither. But there is neither worship nor prayer offered to the spirits or other divine beings. The aboriginal religious consciousness is absorbed in a mere totemic ritual, each clan or social group having its own totemic symbol.... The religious feeling attached to the symbol, [Durkheim] claims, is derived from the actual feeling toward the clan itself (G 65-66).

Gradually [the mystical power of the totemic symbol] is personalized, becoming first an animal deity and later an anthropomorphic god who appears in the animal form of what was once the totem—a course of development plainly recorded in Egyptian religion (G 66).

[I]t is by no means the case that, as Durkheim assumes, that all people are, or have been, totemistic. Even some of the most primitive food-gatherers, such as the Andaman Islanders, the Congo pygmies and the South African Bushmen, are not totemic, yet they have a religion, they distinguish between the sacred and the secular, and they possess the concept of mana (G 67).

Indeed, if we refer again to the birth of religion in the individual as we know it today, we see how inadequate the collectivist theory is to explain it. This process is certainly rooted in moral experience, but certainly not merely in a feeling derived from the influence of society (G 68).

In spite of their belief in spirits, primitive Australians still focus their religion upon the clan.

In time, such religious concepts tend to personalize, first, as animals, and later, as a superman or as a God.

Even such inferior races as the African Bushmen, who are not even totemic in their beliefs, do have a recognition of the difference between the self-interest and the group-interest, a primitive distinction between the values of the secular and the sacred.

But the social group is not the source of religious experience.

Regardless of the influence of all these primitive contributions to man's early religion, the fact remains that the true religious impulse has its origin in genuine spirit presences activating the will to be unselfish.

E. WESTERMARCK: THE NATURALISTIC THEORY (Garnett 69)

[contd] We may take Westermarck as exemplifying what is commonly called the "naturalistic" theory of religion—that it is primarily natural objects that stir primitive man to superstitious awe, reverence and worship, so that religious belief and practice are to be regarded as the outcome of a very natural but mistaken impression of nature (G 69).

[Westermarck] gathers evidence from primitive language to show that everywhere the word for the divine tends also to mean the mysterious and wonderful.... Since Westermarck wrote, this phenomenon has come to be recognized as the most universal feature of primitive religion. It is the belief in mana.... Mana sometimes appears to be impersonal, sometimes personal, and it resides not only in gods, spirits, priests and magical and religious ceremonies but also in chiefs and even in ordinary persons, animals and things so far as they seem to possess a power beyond that ordinarily intelligible (G 70).

[Malinowski] speaks of "the ethical element intrinsically inherent in all religious activities," and continues:

They always require efforts, discipline, and submission on the part of the individual for the good of the community. Taboos, vigils, religious exercises are essentially moral, not merely because they express submission of man to spiritual powers, but also because they are a sacrifice of man's personal comfort for the common weal... (G 74).

103:3.2 Later religion is foreshadowed in the primitive belief in natural wonders and mysteries,

the impersonal mana.

But sooner or later the evolving religion requires that the individual should make some personal sacrifice for the good of his social group,

The Australian aboriginal insists that his ceremonies “make everybody better” (G 73).

Thus, even in the most primitive forms of religion we must recognize a moral element, which Westermarck’s explanation of its origin would make secondary and unessential. In the developed religious consciousness of civilized man, however, it is primary and fundamental. Religion is the *service of the divine*, not its utilization for our human purposes (G 74).

RUDOLPH OTTO: THE THEORY OF THE NUMINOUS (Garnett 75)

In primitive religion as we know it today the element of fear, awe and fascination is undoubtedly predominant. But primitive religion as we know it today is not the beginning, but the end, of a long process of evolution. It is religion stalemated, religion at a dead end, religion in which the vital element that would make it dynamic, changing, progressive, has been overlaid by elements that render it static, adapted to its environment, but no longer adaptable, no longer a power to change the environment itself and the vehicle of its own expression (G 75-76).

should do something to make other people happier and better.

Ultimately, religion is destined to become the service of God and of man.

103:3.3 Religion is designed to change man’s environment, but much of the religion found among mortals today has become helpless to do this.

Environment has all too often mastered religion.

R. R. MARETT: THE CONCEPT OF MANA  
(Garnett 77)

[Quoting Marett:] “*Mana* is, as Freud would say, ambivalent. Possessed by it a man is moved to let himself go whether for better or for worse. . . . It looks, then, as if religion apart from morality was neither good nor bad, but just a neutral force.”

This may, and must, all be granted—if one agrees that religious beliefs and practices apart from morality are still really religion. But it may be the case that the feeling in which these beliefs and practices arise is essentially a **feeling for moral values**, so that religion is fundamentally rooted in morality. If this is the case, as I will try to show, it could not be expected to involve, as a consequence, that religious beliefs and practices could never become separated by primitive people from their moral roots. This happens all too often, among civilized people, with beliefs and practices which we know have a moral origin (G 80-81).

RELIGION AND ETHICS (Garnett 87)

The important thing is that it is the adventitious element—magic—that is evil, and the essential element—the **moral**—that is valuable. And again it is important to recognize that the **magical element** can be sloughed off from religion without leaving us with nothing but an ethic (G 87).

103:3.4 Remember that in the religion of all ages the experience which is paramount is the **feeling regarding moral values** and social meanings, not the thinking regarding theologic dogmas or philosophic theories.

Religion evolves favorably as the **element of magic** is replaced by the concept of **morals**.

## THE BEGINNINGS OF RELIGION (Garnett 81)

[Loosely gleaned from G 81-85.]

But while magic and superstition, crude guesses at the mysteries of nature, poetic fancy and the scheming of priests have influenced the development of religious ideas, the moral element has never been entirely absent.

It is because of its real moral value that religion survived despite the load of magic and trickery that was thrust upon it (G 86).

## IV: TYPICAL BELIEFS AND PROBLEMS (Garnett 90)

### THE IDEA OF COMMUNION (Garnett 96)

In any public ceremony there is, of course, a tendency to realize a sense of communion with the other participants. But a religious occasion differentiates itself from one that is merely social and secular by the deeper sense of communion that it generates,

103:3.5 Man evolved through the superstitions of mana, magic, nature worship, spirit fear, and animal worship to the various ceremonials whereby the religious attitude of the individual became the group reactions of the clan. And then these ceremonies became focalized and crystallized into tribal beliefs, and eventually these fears and faiths became personalized into gods.

But in all of this religious evolution the moral element was never wholly absent.

The impulse of the God within man was always potent.

And these powerful influences—one human and the other divine—insured the survival of religion throughout the vicissitudes of the ages and that notwithstanding it was so often threatened with extinction by a thousand subversive tendencies and hostile antagonisms.

## 4. SPIRITUAL COMMUNION

103:4.1 The characteristic difference between a social occasion and a religious gathering is that in contrast with the secular the religious is pervaded by the atmosphere of communion.

an experience that the believer naturally tends to interpret as fellowship with the divine, and one that the unbeliever also may feel and cherish however he explains it (G 97).

In this way human association generates a feeling of fellowship with the divine,

and this is the beginning of group worship.

From the beginning of human experience the sharing of food has been a real expression of genuine community of life. From time immemorial such sharing has been a recognized symbol of fellowship, and man has found no more eloquent way of expressing his faith in communion with his god, and with his fellow servants of the same god, than in the symbolism of the common meal.

Partaking of a common meal was the earliest type of social communion, and so did early religions provide that some portion of the ceremonial sacrifice should be eaten by the worshippers.

Even though the idea of God has been so exalted and spiritualized that he can no longer be thought in any sense to partake of food himself, the Christian religion retains such a ceremony as its most solemn act of worship (G 97).

Even in Christianity the Lord's Supper retains this mode of communion.

The God with whom the religious man communes is within him as the most fundamental feature of his own personality—the disinterested will to the good. With that disinterested will his ego is, at ordinary times, in frequent conflict. But in the period of communion the ego loses its prominence.... The tension between the ego and the disinterested will relaxes, and the mind enjoys a sweet sense of harmony and peace within through union of the familiar egoistic self with something infinitely more worth while (G 98).

The atmosphere of the communion provides a refreshing and comforting period of truce in the conflict of the self-seeking ego with the altruistic urge of the indwelling spirit Monitor.

(b) *The Prayer of Communion*.—In public ceremonial, the cultivation of a sense of communion is undoubtedly aided by the presence of others co-operating in the act of **worship**.... It arises also in private prayer and meditation (G 98).

The right attitude [to have in prayer], says Fosdick, involves belief in a “Presence that disturbs us with the joy of elevated thoughts,” and the **practice** of “conversation” with that **Presence** as a friend (G 100).

#### THE IDEA OF ATONEMENT (Garnett 102)

[contd] We have referred to the idea of communion as one of the two most important conceptions underlying the practice of sacrifice. But usually the more prominent of these two concepts is that of atonement. The worshiper believes that he has in some way offended the deity and so cut himself off from communion or favor. The sacrifice is an **effort to rectify this situation, to secure an “at-one-ment,” a restoration of the proper relationship, “to get right with God”** (G 102).

It is not by sinning that people come under conviction of sin, but by **hungering and thirsting after righteousness**. It is the pure in heart who see God, because the finer and nobler a person’s conduct becomes in actual practice, the more sensitive does he tend to become to moral distinctions and **the higher grows the reach of his ideal**.

And this is the prelude to true **worship**—

the **practice** of the **presence** of God which eventuates in the emergence of the brotherhood of man.

103:4.2 When primitive man felt that his communion with God had been interrupted, he resorted to sacrifice of some kind in an **effort to make atonement, to restore friendly relationship**.

The **hunger and thirst for righteousness** leads to the discovery of truth, and truth **augments ideals**,

and this creates new problems for the individual religionists,

We do not catch up to our ideals by practicing them. They have a way of growing by geometrical progression which practice advances by arithmetical progression. It is not that way that people become morally smug and self-satisfied, but rather through lowering their ideals to a so-called “practical” level, easily maintained by their socially instilled habits (G 103).

[contd] Thus there arises an inevitable cleavage within the religious consciousness. It begins with conviction of sin.

This is deepened when the moral ideal is interpreted as the expression of a divine will (G 103).

The more one strives to live up to the moral ideal, the more clearly conscious one becomes of how far short of the highest ideal one falls (G 104).

So long as righteousness is conceived in legalistic terms and God is regarded as a lawgiver, there seems to be no way in which the sensitive religious consciousness can persuade itself that it has made its peace with God save by penances and sacrifices of atonement. The only real escape is to sweep away the whole legalistic conception of righteousness. This, as we shall see later, is what Jesus did (G 105).

for our ideals tend to grow by geometrical progression, while our ability to live up to them is enhanced only by arithmetical progression.

103:4.3 The sense of guilt (not the consciousness of sin) comes either from interrupted spiritual communion or from the lowering of one’s moral ideals.

Deliverance from such a predicament can only come through the realization that one’s highest moral ideals are not necessarily synonymous with the will of God.

Man cannot hope to live up to his highest ideals,

but he can be true to his purpose of finding God and becoming more and more like him.

103:4.4 Jesus swept away all of the ceremonials of sacrifice and atonement.

He destroyed the basis of all this fictitious guilt and sense of isolation in the universe by declaring that man is a child of God; the creature-Creator relationship was placed on a child-parent basis. God becomes a loving Father to his mortal sons and daughters. All ceremonials not a legitimate part of such an intimate family relationship are forever abrogated.

The gist of the matter is this: God, as conceived by Jesus, receives and forgives the sinner, not for the purity of heart and life he has actually attained, but for that which he penitently and faithfully strives to attain (G 105).

103:4.5 God the Father deals with man his child on the basis, not of actual virtue or worthiness, but in recognition of the child's motivation—the creature purpose and intent.

The relationship is one of parent-child association and is actuated by divine love.

## 5. THE ORIGIN OF IDEALS

V: THE ESSENTIAL IDEAL (Garnett 123)

THE DISINTERESTED WILL (Garnett 123)

[contd] In our analysis of the processes concerned in the birth of religion in the individual we found the most important factor to be a volitional tendency, operating as a constituent element of the individual self but directed toward the good of other selves. We saw how the resultant conflict within the self led to the conviction that the demands of this altruistic will are demands of some superhuman agency, something divine. And we have seen how reflection on this experience has gradually expanded the concept of duty.

103:5.1 The early evolutionary mind gives origin to a feeling of social duty and moral obligation derived chiefly from emotional fear.

From a few negative precepts concerning the avoidance of injury to others it has developed into ideals of positive service involving, if necessary, the ultimate sacrifice (G 123).

[contd] Equally remarkable has been the expansion of the notion of the extent of the circle of those whose good it is believed the divine being would have us seek.

First, it is the narrow social group—my neighbor, so long as he is neighborly (G 123).

Gradually a broader answer is given to the question, Who is my neighbor? and a more positive answer to the question, Am I my brother's keeper? In the course of time "my neighbors" comes to include the whole tribe, the nation, and neighbor nations; but still with the same proviso, "so long as they are neighborly," and usually also with differentiations concerning race, sex, caste and creed.

Then finally, through the life and work of the Galilean teacher, there dawns on the world the ideal that would eliminate the last proviso and break down every barrier. It makes no difference whether my neighbor is neighborly or not. God would have me love even mine enemy (G 123-24).

[contd] The extraordinary thing is that, though the modern man scarcely does more than lip service to this ideal in its completeness, it yet commends itself to his moral judgment (G 124).

The more positive urge of social service and the idealism of altruism are derived from the direct impulse of the divine spirit indwelling the human mind.

103:5.2 This idea-ideal of doing good to others—the impulse to deny the ego something for the benefit of one's neighbor—is very circumscribed at first.

Primitive man regards as neighbor only those very close to him, those who treat him neighborly;

as religious civilization advances, one's neighbor expands in concept to embrace the clan, the tribe, the nation.

And then Jesus enlarged the neighbor scope to embrace the whole of humanity, even that we should love our enemies.

And there is something inside of every normal human being that tells him this teaching is moral—right.

Even those who practice this ideal least, admit that it is right in theory.

Today it is the most universally accepted principle of moral philosophy,

even among those who refuse to follow the prophets in calling the will that demands it divine (G 124).

But the sharp dichotomy that the religious **interpretation** thus developed between the will of God and the will of man is an error. The altruistic will is not always superior to the egoistic. It is not necessarily right. The intelligent, reflective moral consciousness does not grant it authority over the egoistic desire simply because it is altruistic, but only when the good with which it is concerned is greater than that involved in the goal of the conflicting egoistic desire. The egoistic will is entirely **right**, and has an equal **claim** to be called divine, so long as it is pursuing the greatest good that seems, to the individual concerned, to be possible in the circumstances, taking into equal consideration his own good and that of others (G 125).

REFUTATION OF EGOISM (Garnett 127)

103:5.3 All men recognize the morality of this universal human urge to be unselfish and altruistic.

The humanist ascribes the origin of this urge to the natural working of the material mind; the religionist more correctly recognizes that the truly unselfish drive of mortal mind **is in response to the inner spirit leadings of the Thought Adjuster.**

103:5.4 But man's **interpretation** of these early conflicts between the ego-will and the other-than-self-will is not always dependable. Only a fairly well unified personality can arbitrate the multiform contentions of the ego cravings and the budding social consciousness. The self has **rights** as well as one's neighbors. Neither has exclusive **claims** upon the attention and service of the individual.

Failure to resolve this problem gives origin to the earliest type of human guilt feelings.

103:5.5 Human happiness is achieved only when the ego desire of the self and the altruistic urge of the higher self (**divine spirit**) are co-ordinated and reconciled by the unified will of the integrating and supervising personality.

Altruistic idealism goes far beyond [instincts of the family and the herd]. And its broad extension is due not so much to *emotional expansion of natural impulses* under the influence of suggestion so much as it is to calm *reflection on what is morally fitting* and logically implied in the best moral judgments (G 128-29).

THE GOOD AS PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT  
(Garnett 133)

It must be admitted, however, that this general tendency to harmony of the true good of the individual (which includes his moral good, or harmony with the disinterested will) with the true good of the group and of human society as a whole, is no more than a general tendency. Specific cases will arise when the good of society, or of the *greater number*, can be achieved only by measures that deprive some individuals of important opportunities of self-development—and opportunities that would seem in no way to discourage their moral development (G 134).

In general, the natural good is, in the long run, achieved most fully by adhering to what is morally good also, for departures from the fundamental principle of personality must in the end lead to self-stultifying conflict which inhibits further development until rectified. So, *if the “long run” of life were eternal*, to be true to the morally good would also entail the greatest natural good, not only for others but for the performer of the moral action also.

It is this faith that lies behind the concept involved in the *paradoxical* saying of Jesus: “For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for *my sake shall find it*” (G 136).

The mind of evolutionary man is ever confronted with the intricate problem of refereeing the contest between the *natural expansion of emotional impulses* and the moral growth of unselfish urges predicated on spiritual insight—genuine religious *reflection*.

103:5.6 The attempt to secure equal good for the self and for the *greatest number* of other selves presents a problem which cannot always be satisfactorily resolved in a time-space frame.

*Given an eternal life*, such antagonisms can be worked out, but in one short human life they are incapable of solution.

Jesus referred to such a *paradox* when he said: “Whosoever shall save his life shall lose it, but whosoever shall lose his life for the sake of the *kingdom*, shall find it.”

103:5.7 The pursuit of the ideal—the striving to be Godlike—is a continuous effort before death and after. The life after death is no different in the essentials than the mortal existence. Everything we do in this life which is good contributes directly to the enhancement of the future life.

The concept of an immortality of static perfection is the product of an inadequate analysis of the nature of personality and its moral good. It is, unfortunately, a very serious error, for it presupposes the sudden and miraculous transition of personality from a state of imperfection to one of perfection. Or, even if it rejects this hope, it looks for the process of perfecting to come through external influences, such as a course of purgatorial purging (G 137).

Real religion does not foster moral indolence and spiritual laziness by encouraging the vain hope of having all the virtues of a noble character bestowed upon one as a result of passing through the portals of natural death.

True religion does not belittle man's efforts to progress during the mortal lease on life.

The faith in immortality then becomes the faith that this process of personal development begun in this life does not necessarily cease with death, but goes on to the realization of further goals, making good its deficiencies so far as it is willing to learn from past experience. And it means that both the natural and the moral good attained in this life—the whole personal development—contribute to the initial stages of the life beyond (G 138).

Every mortal gain is a direct contribution to the enrichment of the first stages of the immortal survival experience.

MORAL GOOD AND FAITH IN THE DIVINE  
TRANSCENDENCE (Garrett 139)

If a man believes that his ideals are ... merely the effect of some sympathetic tendencies and herd impulses of his nature which are of no deeper significance than many other natural tendencies within him, then the rational thing for him to do is to seek to control all these natural tendencies in what seems to be his own self-interest.

But if he believes that the disinterested will to the good of all is the most fundamental tendency of his nature, that it is the expression of that which is eternal within him, the link of his own spiritual life with a wider spiritual activity which is the ultimate source of his being and in harmony with which his personality can alone attain its utmost fulfillment, then the ideals toward which that disinterested will aspires become the most significant features of his whole world.... They help to give him courage, assurance, and a zeal that will not be denied (G 141-42).

And the effort to justify faith in the superhuman origin of our ideals of disinterested service, far from being a waste of time and useless distraction, as urged by [John] Dewey, is a much needed contribution to the support of the human spirit in the pursuit of those ideals (G 142).

103:5.8 It is fatal to man's idealism when he is taught that all of his altruistic impulses are merely the development of his natural herd instincts.

But he is ennobled and mightily energized when he learns that these higher urges of his soul emanate from the spiritual forces that indwell his mortal mind.

103:5.9 It lifts man out of himself and beyond himself when he once fully realizes that there lives and strives within him something which is eternal and divine.

And so it is that a living faith in the superhuman origin of our ideals

Mankind today, as in every age, deeply needs that sense of **human brotherhood** which comes from a faith that we are all, in some very real sense, **children of one Father** (G 144).

But [Nicolai] Hartmann is certainly not justified in assuming that there is no middle ground between such an assertion of the **sovereignty of God** as robs man of all true freedom and responsibility, and a complete abandonment of all superhuman, or cosmic teleology (G 145-46).

[There is a realm of human experience in which we have the power of decision. While this domain over which we have control varies in different individuals, it is nevertheless a fact that **man is, within certain limits, the architect of his own destiny** (William S. Sadler, M.D., *How You Can Keep Happy* [1926], p. 2).]

THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FREEDOM (Garnett 147)

[contd] Our analysis of the nature of the good as found essentially in personal development emphasizes the importance of freedom. There is no *development* of personality that does not **spring spontaneously from within** in response to values felt or anticipated.

External pressures do not develop personality, though they may deform it.

validates our belief that we are the **sons of God** and makes real our altruistic convictions, the feelings of the **brotherhood of man**.

103:5.10 Man, in his spiritual domain, does have a free will.

Mortal man is neither a helpless slave of the inflexible **sovereignty of an all-powerful God** nor the victim the hopeless fatality of a mechanistic cosmic determinism.

**Man is most truly the architect of his own eternal destiny.**

103:5.11 But man is not saved or ennobled by pressure.

Spirit growth **springs from within the evolving soul.**

Pressure may deform the personality, but it never stimulates growth.

Pressure would have no place at all in the educative process were it not that the natural and social world inevitably exerts certain pressures to which the person must adapt himself or be seriously injured. **Educative pressure** is a pressure applied with good will, discrimination and understanding, which prepares the person to make these adjustments to nature and society. It does not contribute directly to personal development, but only indirectly in that **it saves from disaster**.

Actual personal development comes through the positive response from within. It **flourishes most, therefore, where pressure is least** (G 147).

[Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom (2 Cor. 3:17).]

[contd] Now the social groupings of mankind always involve a certain amount of pressure. The **family, the local community, the church and the state** all set limits to the freedom of the individual and make demands upon him.

This raises the question of the value of the religious group, the church. The local community is inevitable, and few question the necessity of the family and the state. But there are many who believe that religion might well become a purely intellectual matter and so would remove the church as an unnecessary restriction upon freedom. It becomes a matter of great importance, therefore, to consider the **place** of the church in the religious life of the individual and in the social life of the community. To these questions we turn in the next two chapters (G 147).

Even **educational pressure** is only negatively helpful in that **it may aid in the prevention of disastrous experiences**.

Spiritual growth is **greatest where all external pressures are at a minimum**.

**“Where the spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.”**

Man develops best when the pressures of **home, community, church, and state** are least.

But this must not be construed as meaning that there is no **place** in a progressive society for home, social institutions, church, and state.

103:5.12 When a member of a social religious group has complied with the requirements of such a group, he should be encouraged to enjoy religious liberty in the full expression of his own personal interpretation of the truths of religious belief and the facts of religious experience.

[The churches] have blighted the free personal development (the truest good) of their own members and of many outside. They have done this in part because of a belief that correctness of doctrine is essential to personal salvation, and in part because unanimity on doctrine seemed necessary to the unity and efficiency of the church in all its work, so that the exclusion of the dissenter and unbeliever seemed the lesser of two evils (G 149).

This does not mean that [the church of the future] must be a community of “free-thinkers” in the current negative sense of the term. But it does mean that it must have room in full fellowship for all people, whatever their opinions on theological questions (G 149).

The security of a religious group depends on spiritual unity, not on theological uniformity.

A religious group should be able to enjoy the liberty of freethinking without having to become “freethinkers.”

There is great hope for any church that worships the living God, validates the brotherhood of man, and dares to remove all creedal pressure from its members.

## 6. PHILOSOPHIC CO-ORDINATION

### I, I: WHAT THEOLOGY IS (Baillie 3)

#### I. THEOLOGICAL SCIENCE DEFINED (Baillie 3)

Theology, then, is to be reckoned along with psychology, logic, epistemology, ethics, sociology, political theory, musical theory, etc., as a science not of nature but of spirit (B 4-5).

[[It is only from within that the religious consciousness can be properly studied ... There is thus a very real sense in which the object of the theologian's inquiry is always his *own* religious consciousness or, what is the same thing, the religious consciousness of the community to which he belongs as reflected in his own private experience (B 113).]

Theology being thus classed as a *Geisteswissenschaft*, or science of spirit, it next becomes necessary to ask what is the main respect in which such sciences differ from natural science. The answer seems to be that in them we are approaching the objects of our research no longer from the outside but from the inside.

103:6.1 Theology is the study of the actions and reactions of the human spirit;

it can never become a science since it must always be combined more or less with psychology in its personal expression and with philosophy in its systematic portrayal.

Theology is always the study of *your* religion; the study of another's religion is psychology.

103:6.2 When man approaches the study and examination of his universe from the outside, he brings into being the various physical sciences; when he approaches the research of himself and the universe from the inside, he gives origin to theology and metaphysics.

The later art of philosophy develops in an effort to harmonize the many discrepancies which are destined at first to appear between the findings and teachings of these two diametrically opposite avenues of approaching the universe of things and beings.

Indeed it is possible that spirit should be regarded as no more than another name for the **insideness of things** and that, as has been well said, “The soul of man is the **universe turned outside in**”;

from which it would follow that, as so many celebrated philosophers have believed, **there is nothing in the universe which would not, if only we could view it from within, turn out to be spiritual in nature** (B 5).

[I]n itself **religion** is a relationship or commerce between the human and the Divine, and our definition [of theology] implies that it is proper for the theologian to remember that he **can never stand** save at the human end of this **relationship** and that he can have no knowledge of What stands at the Divine end save that which is given him in and through the relationship itself (B 10).

103:6.3 Religion has to do with the spiritual viewpoint, the awareness of the **insideness of human experience**. Man’s spiritual nature affords him the opportunity of **turning the universe outside in**.

It is therefore true that, **viewed exclusively from the insideness of personality experience, all creation appears to be spiritual in nature**.

103:6.4 When man analytically inspects the universe through the material endowments of his physical senses and associated mind perception, the cosmos appears to be mechanical and energy-material. Such a technique of studying reality consists in turning the universe inside out.

103:6.5 A logical and consistent philosophic concept of the universe cannot be built up on the postulations of either materialism or spiritism, for both of these systems of thinking, when universally applied, are compelled to view the cosmos in distortion, the former contacting with a universe turned inside out, the latter realizing the nature of a universe turned outside in.

**Never, then, can either science or religion, in and of themselves, standing alone, hope to gain an adequate understanding of universal truths and relationships** without the guidance of human philosophy **and the illumination of divine revelation**.

103:6.6 Always must man's inner spirit depend for its expression and self-realization upon the mechanism and technique of the mind. Likewise must man's outer experience of material reality be predicated on the mind consciousness of the experiencing personality. Therefore are the spiritual and the material, the inner and the outer, human experiences always correlated with the mind function and conditioned, as to their conscious realization, by the mind activity. Man experiences matter in his mind; he experiences spiritual reality in the soul but becomes conscious of this experience in his mind. The intellect is the harmonizer and the ever-present conditioner and qualifier of the sum total of mortal experience. Both energy-things and spirit values are colored by their interpretation through the mind media of consciousness.

103:6.7 Your difficulty in arriving at a more harmonious co-ordination between science and religion is due to your utter ignorance of the intervening domain of the morontia world of things and beings. The local universe consists of three degrees, or stages, of reality manifestation: matter, morontia, and spirit. The morontia angle of approach erases all divergence between the findings of the physical sciences and the functioning of the spirit of religion.

## II. THE PROBLEM OF THEOLOGICAL SCIENCE (Baillie 11)

[contd] For one further step in the point of view as scientific theologians we cannot do better than follow the original guidance of Socrates. What exactly is meant by *understanding*, or giving account of, religion? ... To understand a thing, he said, is just to know what it is. It follows that every scientific inquiry may be expressed in the form, What is it? and that the purpose of the inquiry is accomplished when we succeed in obtaining full and clear *insight* as to what the phenomenon in question really and essentially is. The essential aim of science may thus be said to be correct definition or description (B 11).

Reason is the *understanding* technique of the sciences; faith is the *insight* technique of religion;

*mota* is the technique of the morontia level. *Mota* is a supermaterial reality sensitivity which is beginning to compensate incomplete growth, having for its substance knowledge-reason and for its essence faith-insight. *Mota* is a superphilosophical reconciliation of divergent reality perception which is nonattainable by material personalities; it is predicated, in part, on the experience of having survived the material life of the flesh.

## I, II: THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY TO OTHER BRANCHES OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY (Baillie 26)

## III: THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY TO GENERAL OR METAPHYSICAL PHILOSOPHY (Baillie 35)

But many mortals have recognized the desirability of having some method of reconciling the interplay between the widely separated domains of science and religion;

(A) Kant, Schleiermacher, Ritschl, and all the Ritschlians—which is to say the most influential leaders of modern theology—all understood metaphysics to mean (which, indeed, the name seems to suggest, if it suggests anything) an attempt so to extend the methods and operations of natural science as to make them yield reliable knowledge about the nature of the universe as a whole (B 36).

It is well known how Kant himself denied that by the contemplation of the natural world *any light at all* could be had about the ultimate meaning of things, and how he consequently held that metaphysics (in his sense of the word) was impossible (B 36).

and metaphysics is the result of man's unavailing attempt to span this well-recognized chasm.

But human metaphysics has proved more confusing than illuminating.

Metaphysics stands for man's well-meant but futile effort to compensate for the absence of the *mota* of morontia.

103:6.8 Metaphysics has proved a failure; *mota*, man cannot perceive. Revelation is the only technique which can compensate for the absence of the truth sensitivity of *mota* in a material world. Revelation authoritatively clarifies the muddle of reason-developed metaphysics on an evolutionary sphere.

103:6.9 Science is man's attempted study of his physical environment, the world of energy-matter; religion is man's experience with the cosmos of spirit values; philosophy has been developed by man's mind effort to organize and correlate the findings of these widely separated concepts into something like a reasonable and unified attitude toward the cosmos. Philosophy, clarified by revelation, functions acceptably in the absence of *mota* and in the presence of the breakdown and failure of man's reason substitute for *mota*—metaphysics.

## I, I: WHAT THEOLOGY IS (Baillie 3)

### II. THE PROBLEM OF THEOLOGICAL SCIENCE (Baillie 11)

[See endnote.]

[I]n thus preferring to speak of the laws of change, rather than of the causes of events, we of the twentieth century are but reverting to the very earliest formulations with which science started on its way. Indeed the earliest Greek scientists put the matter more simply and excellently still, when they said that the task of science was to discover *physis*, which, being translated into English, means precisely “the way things grow” or “the way things change” (B 12).

### IV. THE NATURE OF THEOLOGICAL CRITICISM (Baillie 18)

103:6.10 Early man did not differentiate between the energy level and the spirit level. It was the violet race and their Andite successors who first attempted to divorce the mathematical from the volitional.<sup>3</sup>

Increasingly has civilized man followed in the footsteps of the earliest Greeks and the Sumerians who distinguished between the inanimate and the animate.

And as civilization progresses, philosophy will have to bridge ever-widening gulfs between the spirit concept and the energy concept. But in the time of space these divergencies are at one in the Supreme.

103:6.11 Science must always be grounded in reason, although imagination and conjecture are helpful in the extension of its borders.

But while it is thus completely wrong in principle to expect from the study of theology that it should either bring faith originally to birth in our souls or give it a securer grounding in them than it has in the souls of other men, yet on the other hand there is undoubtedly a **real service** which theology is able to render towards the establishment of faith in the world. For though it cannot provide religion with any new assurance of its truth, it can at least make plain the nature of the assurance which it already possesses (B 24).

If religion does not use the new machinery of thought for the cultivation of its own field, then others will use that same machinery to turn its field into a wilderness. There is no doubt at all that the major part of the unbelief that now afflicts the world is due not to the total failure of the impulse to believe in God but rather to the inhibitive influence of what are really *false theologies*, **false explanations** of religion, overhastily arrived at by workers whose main concern was in other fields; and here a true theology may be of the very greatest service in clearing these quite unnecessary obstacles out of faith's way (B 24-25).

[O Timothy, keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding profane and vain babblings, and oppositions of science **falsely so called**; (1 Tim. 6)]

Religion is forever dependent on faith, albeit reason is a stabilizing influence and a **helpful handmaid**.

And always there have been, and ever will be, **misleading interpretations** of the phenomena of both the natural and the spiritual worlds,

sciences and religions **falsely so called**.

I, II: THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY TO OTHER BRANCHES OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY (Baillie 26)

III: THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY TO GENERAL OR METAPHYSICAL PHILOSOPHY (Baillie 35)

(B) It seems preferable ... to use the word **philosophy** in a wider sense, taking it to mean an attempt to gather together in a single synoptic view all the evidence as to the ultimate nature of existence which we are able to gain from any and every quarter.... The business of what he calls speculative philosophy is thus described by Dr. C. D. Broad, a leading philosopher of the Cambridge school, in his book on *Scientific Thought*:

“Its object is to take over the results of the various sciences, to add to them the results of the religious and ethical experiences of mankind, and then to reflect upon the whole. The hope is that, by this means, we may be able to reach some general conclusions as to the nature of the Universe, and as to our position and prospects in it” (B 37).

103:6.12 Out of his incomplete grasp of science, his faint hold upon religion, and his abortive attempts at metaphysics, man has attempted to construct his formulations of **philosophy**.

And modern man would indeed build a worthy and engaging philosophy of himself and his universe were it not for the breakdown of his all-important and indispensable metaphysical connection between the worlds of matter and spirit, the failure of metaphysics to bridge the morontia gulf between the physical and the spiritual. Mortal man lacks the concept of morontia mind and material; and revelation is the only technique for atoning for this deficiency in the conceptual data which man so urgently needs in order to construct a logical philosophy of the universe and to arrive at a satisfying understanding of his sure and settled place in that universe.

103:6.13 Revelation is evolutionary man's only hope of bridging the morontia gulf. Faith and reason, unaided by mota, cannot conceive and construct a logical universe. Without the insight of mota, mortal man cannot discern goodness, love, and truth in the phenomena of the material world.

[T]he determining factor in the formation of philosophical systems has again and again been the initial presence or absence of religious faith in the philosopher's heart. The matter is important enough to excuse our looking into it in some detail, and we may set out from a very clear statement by the Professor of Logic and Metaphysics in Edinburgh University [Norman Kemp Smith]:

“Though philosophical systems vary indefinitely, they are reducible, broadly considered, to three main types. They are either *idealistic*, *naturalistic*, or *sceptical*.

Under *one or other of these three rubrics* every philosophy can be brought; and at every period in which free discussion has been possible, we find the sum total of knowledge and experience being interpreted from these divergent points of view. The three types are, it would seem, perennial in the fluctuations of human thought” (B 39).

103:6.14 When the philosophy of man leans heavily toward the world of matter, it becomes rationalistic or *naturalistic*. When philosophy inclines particularly toward the spiritual level, it becomes *idealistic* or even mystical. When philosophy is so unfortunate as to lean upon metaphysics, it unfailingly becomes *skeptical*, confused.

In past ages, most of man's knowledge and intellectual evaluations have fallen into *one of these three distortions of perception*.

Philosophy dare not project its interpretations of reality in the linear fashion of logic; it must never fail to reckon with the elliptic symmetry of reality and with the essential curvature of all relation concepts.

103:6.15 The highest attainable philosophy of mortal man must be logically based on the reason of science, the faith of religion, and the truth insight afforded by revelation. By this union man can compensate somewhat for his failure to develop an adequate metaphysics and for his inability to comprehend the mota of the morontia.

## 7. SCIENCE AND RELIGION

103:7.1 Science is sustained by reason, religion by faith. Faith, though not predicated on reason, is reasonable; though independent of logic, it is nonetheless encouraged by sound logic.

We are accordingly safe in concluding that religious faith cannot be substantiated by appeal to any idealistic philosophy, because it is itself the ultimate source of all such philosophies; just as it cannot be discredited by appeal to any naturalistic philosophy, because no philosophy could be naturalistic which had not begun by discrediting it (B 41).

Faith cannot be nourished even by an ideal philosophy; indeed, it is, with science, the very source of such a philosophy.

Faith, human religious insight, can be surely instructed only by revelation, can be surely elevated only by personal mortal experience with the spiritual Adjuster presence of the God who is spirit.

103:7.2 True salvation is the technique of the divine evolution of the mortal mind from matter identification through the realms of morontia liaison to the high universe status of spiritual correlation. And as material intuitive instinct precedes the appearance of reasoned knowledge in terrestrial evolution, so does the manifestation of spiritual intuitive insight presage the later appearance of morontia and spirit reason and experience in the supernal program of celestial evolution, the business of transmuting the potentials of man the temporal into the actuality and divinity of man the eternal, a Paradise finaliter.

103:7.3 But as ascending man reaches inward and Paradiseward for the God experience, he will likewise be reaching outward and spaceward for an energy understanding of the material cosmos. The progression of science is not limited to the terrestrial life of man; his universe and superuniverse ascension experience will to no small degree be the study of energy transmutation and material metamorphosis. God is spirit, but Deity is unity, and the unity of Deity not only embraces the spiritual values of the Universal Father and the Eternal Son but is also cognizant of the energy facts of the Universal Controller and the Isle of Paradise, while these two phases of universal reality are perfectly correlated in the mind relationships of the Conjoint Actor and unified on the finite level in the emerging Deity of the Supreme Being.

103:7.4 The union of the scientific attitude and the religious insight by the mediation of experiential philosophy is part of man's long Paradise-ascension experience. The approximations of mathematics and the certainties of insight will always require the harmonizing function of mind logic on all levels of experience short of the maximum attainment of the Supreme.

## II. THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY TO THE OTHER SPECIAL SCIENCES, ESPECIALLY TO NATURAL SCIENCE (Baillie 31)

When an apparent conflict arises between the findings of [theology and natural science], it is the duty of each to go back to its own set of facts and work over them afresh and, if necessary, again and again, in the hope that one or the other may in the end discover some error in its reasonings and the conflict be thus resolved. It is quite wrong in principle for the natural scientist who is also a religious man to incorporate into his science results which he has arrived at by religious insight or theological formulation alone, and to assume that these are scientifically correct even though the facts of his own specialised research seem to point in an opposite direction; and it is as wrong in principle for the theologian who has also some interest in natural science to incorporate into his theology, without further ado, results obtained from natural-scientific sources, and to assume these to be theologically satisfactory even though religious insight seems to point in an opposite direction (B 34-35).

103:7.5 But logic can never succeed in harmonizing the findings of science and the insights of religion unless both the scientific and the religious aspects of a personality are truth dominated, sincerely desirous of following the truth wherever it may lead regardless of the conclusions which it may reach.

III. THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY TO  
GENERAL OR METAPHYSICAL PHILOSOPHY  
(Baillie 35)

(C) We now come to a third and very different way in which the task of general or metaphysical philosophy is sometimes conceived.... Dr. Broad gives it the distinguishing name of ‘critical philosophy’... The task of critical philosophy he takes to be “the analysis and definition of our fundamental concepts, and the clear statement and resolute criticism of our fundamental beliefs ...

Is then ‘critical philosophy’ but another name for logic? Some would answer this question in the affirmative; and Mr. Bertrand Russell has told us that logic, understood as the attempt to formulate the most general characteristics of reality, is the essence of all philosophy. What Dr. Broad (who has been largely influenced by Mr. Russell) says is that logic “is the most fundamental part of Critical Philosophy,” dealing as it does “with the most general and pervasive of all concepts and with those fundamental beliefs which form the ‘connective tissue’ of all knowledge” (B 43).

103:7.6 Logic is the technique of philosophy, its method of expression.

Within the domain of true science, reason is always amenable to genuine logic; within the domain of true religion, faith is always logical from the basis of an inner viewpoint, even though such faith may appear to be quite unfounded from the inlooking viewpoint of the scientific approach. From outward, looking within, the universe may appear to be material; from within, looking out, the same universe appears to be wholly spiritual.

Reason grows out of material awareness, faith out of spiritual awareness, but through the mediation of a philosophy strengthened by revelation, logic may confirm both the inward and the outward view, thereby effecting the stabilization of both science and religion. Thus, through common contact with the logic of philosophy, may both science and religion become increasingly tolerant of each other, less and less skeptical.

It is true that certain sciences have often not been critical *enough* of their own powers or *sufficiently* aware of their own just limits; for science, like other products of human nature, may suffer from the malady that is vulgarly termed “swelled head.” But all sciences *ought* to subject themselves to the most searching and deep-going criticism; and if there be any part of themselves of which they should be more critical than of the rest, that part is surely their general standpoint, their initial assumptions, their fundamental principles—for it is on these that everything else turns (B 45).

## I, I: WHAT THEOLOGY IS (Baillie 3)

### IV. THE NATURE OF THEOLOGICAL CRITICISM (Baillie 18)

The first point to note is that the theologian’s criticism of the facts before him must never be conducted *ab extra*, but always from within.... His business is not to bring to bear upon the religious consciousness the light of any outside knowledge or speculation, but rather to organise that consciousness in the light of its own interior principles. His criticism of it consists simply in allowing it to criticise itself.

103:7.7 What both developing science and religion need is more searching and fearless self-criticism, a greater awareness of incompleteness in evolutionary status. The teachers of both science and religion are often altogether too self-confident and dogmatic.

Science and religion can only be self-critical of their facts.

The moment departure is made from the stage of facts, reason abdicates or else rapidly degenerates into a consort of false logic.

When, for instance, as will constantly happen, he is called upon to decide which of two religious systems is the 'higher,' or which of two rival doctrines is the 'truer,' his business is not to ask which of the two better consorts with our knowledge as a whole, or with knowledge obtained through extra-religious avenues of insight, but only to ask which of the two is more fully and truly expressive of that central faith for which all religion stands—and so, in the end, is more true to itself (B 18-19).

The historical evolution of religion is just another name for the progressive self-criticism to which religion has always subjected itself. It follows that what the theologian is called upon to do is not really to conduct an original or *de novo* criticism of the religious consciousness of our race, but rather to give clear account of the critical insights to which that conscious has already attained (B 19).

This does not mean, of course, that the theologian must accept these insights on the *authority* of the past: the whole point is rather that they are insights which he himself, as a religious subject and an heir of all the ages, actively shares (B 19).

103:7.8 The truth—an understanding of cosmic relationships, universe facts, and spiritual values—can best be had through the ministry of the Spirit of Truth and can best be criticized by revelation.

But revelation originates neither a science nor a religion; its function is to co-ordinate both science and religion with the truth of reality.

Always, in the absence of revelation or in the failure to accept or grasp it, has mortal man resorted to his futile gesture of metaphysics, that being the only human substitute for the revelation of truth or for the mota of morontia personality.

103:7.9 The science of the material world enables man to control, and to some extent dominate, his physical environment. The religion of the spiritual experience is the source of the fraternity impulse which enables men to live together in the complexities of the civilization of a scientific age. Metaphysics, but more certainly revelation, affords a common meeting ground for the discoveries of both science and religion and makes possible the human attempt logically to correlate these separate but interdependent domains of thought into a well-balanced philosophy of scientific stability and religious certainty.

I, II: THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY TO OTHER BRANCHES OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY (Baillie 26)

III: THE RELATION OF THEOLOGY TO GENERAL OR METAPHYSICAL PHILOSOPHY (Baillie 35)

It is indeed true, as was pointed out at length in our first chapter, that the moral scientist's business is simply to understand the moral point of view, and not to provide himself with any assurance or **proof** of its validity; and it is also true that the moral scientist (if he be to any degree a fit member of society) begins by **assuming** its validity. But he assumes it not because he does not conceive it to be his particular business to prove it but rather because he does not feel that it is the sort of thing that **needs** or is **capable of, proof**; and because, as an intelligent being, he finds himself unable to doubt it (B 47).

Aristotle, as we have seen, teaches that every science sets out from certain beliefs which it assumes to be true and does not attempt to prove (B 47).

That is to say, we need no science to assure us of the truth of first principles, for their truth is evident to every man on inspection, and (as he says) we become aware of them not by demonstrative science but by *Nous*—as we might say, by the **direct intuition of our intelligent natures** (B 47).

103:7.10 In the mortal state, nothing can be absolutely **proved**; both science and religion are predicated on **assumptions**.

On the morontia level, the postulates of both science and religion are **capable of partial proof by mota logic**. On the spiritual level of maximum status, the **need for finite proof gradually vanishes before the actual experience of and with reality**; but even then there is much beyond the finite that remains unproved.

103:7.11 **All divisions of human thought are predicated on certain assumptions which are accepted, though unproved,**

**by the constitutive reality sensitivity of the mind endowment of man.**

[[Dr. C.D. Broad] holds also that the most fundamental concepts which are peculiar to the region of physical science, like motion, space, matter, are not properly to be discussed by physical science itself, but only by critical philosophy (B 43).]

Science starts out on its vaunted career of reasoning by *assuming* the reality of three things: matter, motion, and life.

Religion starts out with the assumption of the validity of three things: mind, spirit, and the universe—the Supreme Being.

103:7.12 Science becomes the thought domain of mathematics, of the energy and material of time in space. Religion assumes to deal not only with finite and temporal spirit but also with the spirit of eternity and supremacy. Only through a long experience in mota can these two extremes of universe perception be made to yield analogous interpretations of origins, functions, relations, realities, and destinies. The maximum harmonization of the energy-spirit divergence is in the encircuitment of the Seven Master Spirits; the first unification thereof, in the Deity of the Supreme; the finality unity thereof, in the infinity of the First Source and Center, the I AM.

103:7.13 *Reason* is the act of recognizing the conclusions of consciousness with regard to the experience in and with the physical world of energy and matter.

It is in a real sense true (as we saw at the end of Chapter 1) that theology, considered as a science, has no special means of its own whereby it can demonstrate the fundamental validity of the religious consciousness and the fundamental truth of religious belief. In the end all it can do is to take over into itself the assurance which already and natively belongs to faith. And this assurance it passes on to metaphysics. It is therefore incompetent for metaphysics to attempt to throw any new light on the nature or degree of the validity attaching to the religious point of view; for it is, if we may so express it, one stage further removed than theological science itself from the only source of insight from which light on this greatest of all questions can be expected to come—the direct witness of the Spirit of God in the heart of man (B 48).

*Faith* is the act of recognizing the validity of spiritual consciousness—something which is incapable of other mortal proof.

*Logic* is the synthetic truth-seeking progression of the unity of faith and reason and is founded on the constitutive mind endowments of mortal beings, the innate recognition of things, meanings, and values.

103:7.14 There is a real proof of spiritual reality in the presence of the Thought Adjuster, but the validity of this presence is not demonstrable to the external world, only to the one who thus experiences the indwelling of God. The consciousness of the Adjuster is based on the intellectual reception of truth, the supermind perception of goodness, and the personality motivation to love.

103:7.15 Science discovers the material world, religion evaluates it, and philosophy endeavors to interpret its meanings while co-ordinating the scientific material viewpoint with the religious spiritual concept. But history is a realm in which science and religion may never fully agree.

## 8. PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

### I: THE RIGHT TO BE CERTAIN (Lewis 17)

That there *may be* a God can be shown by reasons that would be called good respecting any other fact: we therefore get our “probability.”

That there *is* a God is the testimony of **religious experience**, the experience being held to require a correlative in reality just as much as any other type of normal experience: we therefore get our “certainty.”

The **philosophical hypothesis** becomes the **religious reality** when the conditions for the transformation are met (L 25).

We shall see later that many things have been held to be “proved by religious experience” which were very far from that. **Statements made about God** are not to be put on the same level as the indubitable certainty of the fact of God as yielded by the process of religious experience.

A man may be certain that he loves his wife and just as certain that she loves him, and yet be **quite unable to pass an examination in “the physiology of love,”** while another man may pass the examination and still know nothing whatever of what it means to love or be loved (L 25-26).

103:8.1 Although both science and philosophy may assume the **probability** of God by their reason and logic,

only the personal **religious experience** of a spirit-led man can affirm the **certainty** of such a supreme and personal Deity.

By the technique of such an incarnation of living truth the **philosophic hypothesis of the probability of God** becomes a **religious reality**.

103:8.2 The confusion about the experience of the certainty of God arises out of the dissimilar interpretations and relations of that experience by separate individuals and by different races of men.

The experiencing of God may be wholly valid, but the **discourse about God**, being intellectual and philosophical, is divergent and oftentimes confusingly fallacious.

103:8.3 A good and noble man may be consummately in love with his wife but **utterly unable to pass a satisfactory written examination on the psychology of marital love.** Another man, having little or no love for his spouse, might pass such an examination most acceptably.

The blindness of the lover to the imperfections of his beloved does not invalidate his love (L 26).

Men of religious faith, therefore, need to be wary of taking too seriously the attacks on the reality of God made by those who admittedly have not that faith.

It is true that many earnest-minded thinkers to-day are endeavoring to keep some semblance of faith—"faith in value"—and some semblance of religion—"the religion of humanity"—while yet utterly repudiating the fact of God in any adequate sense. But these men, on their own showing, do not find in such faith and religion "complete consolation"—to use Lippmann's phrase (L 26).

Instead of our being disturbed in our certainty by his uncertainty we ought to see to it that he is disturbed in his uncertainty by our certainty (L 27).

The imperfection of the lover's insight into the true nature of the beloved does not in the least invalidate either the reality or sincerity of his love.

<sup>103:8.4</sup> If you truly believe in God—by faith know him and love him—do not permit the reality of such an experience to be in any way lessened or detracted from by the doubting insinuations of science, the caviling of logic, the postulates of philosophy,

or the clever suggestions of well-meaning souls who would create a religion without God.

<sup>103:8.5</sup> The certainty of the God-knowing religionist should not be disturbed by the uncertainty of the doubting materialist; rather should the uncertainty of the unbeliever be mightily challenged by the profound faith and unshakable certainty of the experiential believer.

#### IV: PHILOSOPHY AND THEOLOGY (Knudson 146)

##### METAPHYSICAL PHILOSOPHY INTELLECTUALLY GROUNDED (Knudson 161)

[An intellectually grounded metaphysics] has taken three forms—that of materialism, pantheism, and theism. **Materialism** denies both the reality and worth of spirit and thus negates religion. Faith can form no alliance with it. We need, therefore, take no account of it. **Pantheism** also in its more radical and distinctive form is destructive of faith, for it denies freedom and reduces spirit to the level of things (K 161).

Faith, if it is to maintain its rationality, must ally itself with a philosophy which makes a place for real causality and for causality in its volitional form. Such a philosophy we have in a thoroughgoing theism.... For causality implies change and it also implies permanence. There must be some abiding being that produces the change; otherwise the change would not be accounted for. And this **union of permanence and change** inherent in causality is found, as we have seen, only in **personality**. A personalistic philosophy thus solves the problem of metaphysical causality and at the same time furnishes a foundation for the Christian belief in the divine creatorship and providence (K 169-70).

103:8.6 Philosophy, to be of the greatest service to both science and religion, should avoid the extremes of both **materialism** and **pantheism**.

Only a philosophy which recognizes the reality of **personality—permanence in the presence of change**—can be of moral value to man, can serve as a liaison between the theories of material science and spiritual religion.

**Revelation is a compensation for the frailties of evolving philosophy.**

## 9. THE ESSENCE OF RELIGION

### I: RELIGION AND THEOLOGY (Knudson 19)

[PREAMBLE] (Knudson 19)

[contd] Theology may be defined as the systematic exposition and rational justification of the **intellectual content of religion** (K 19).

[See endnote.]

### ILLUSIONISM (Knudson 20)

The more extreme theory, which seems to regard religion as a complete illusion and to point logically to its eventual extinction from human life, has taken various forms. These may, perhaps, be reduced to three fundamental types, all of which are genetic in character. The first finds the source of religion in some unworthy or pathological or misguided element in human nature. This may be called **“psychological illusionism.”** The second derives religion from the unjust structure of human society and the evils that result from it. To this type of illusionism the term “sociological” may be applied. The third type is the “intellectualistic.” It identifies religion with primitive science or deduces it from some baseless fancy or superstitious belief of early man (K 20-21).

103:9.1 Theology deals with the **intellectual content of religion,**

metaphysics (**revelation**)<sup>4</sup> with the philosophic aspects. Religious experience *is* the spiritual content of religion.

Notwithstanding the mythologic vagaries and the **psychologic illusions** of the intellectual content of religion,

A modification of the [sociological] theory, however, has arisen which is at present widely held in socialistic circles. The theory in its new form retains the idea that religion was established or “invented” in the interest of the propertied or ruling class, the lords of society. But its establishment was not due to direct deception. No doubt deception was practiced to some extent by the privileged classes; the “laws of thought” were violated. But it was a case of **self-deception** on the part of the poor quite as much as of deliberate deception on the part of others, and both forms of deception arose more or less naturally out of the social situation (K 25-26).

Of [the] less extreme illusionistic theories perhaps the most interesting is that represented by Emile Durkheim. It is his contention that religion is an essential and permanent aspect of humanity....

But this is true of religion only in its essence, and its essence is wholly practical in nature. It helps us to **act**, to **live**, but **not** to **think**.

**Thinking** is the business of **science** (K 32).

All religions are **true** [according to Durkheim] in the sense that they serve an indispensable practical purpose. They have, however, in their purity no intellectual content, no cognitive function.... A sharp distinction must thus be drawn between religion and theology. The latter is **illusion** and may be sloughed off without loss, but the former is a necessary and permanent factor of human society (K 32-33).

the metaphysical assumptions of error and the techniques of **self-deception**, the political distortions and the socioeconomic perversions of the philosophic content of religion,

the spiritual experience of personal religion remains genuine and valid.

103:9.2 Religion has to do with feeling, **acting**, and **living**, not merely with **thinking**.

**Thinking** is more closely related to the material life and should be in the main, but not altogether, dominated by reason and the facts of **science** and, **in its nonmaterial reaches toward the spirit realms**, by truth.

No matter how **illusory** and erroneous one’s theology, one’s religion may be wholly genuine and everlastingly **true**.

THE NATURE OF RELIGION (Knudson 45)

**Buddhism** is the classical illustration of a religion defying the ordinary notions of what a religion should be, and it is not infrequently cited as evidence that the feeling of trustful dependence is no essential ingredient of religious experience. But this appeal to Buddhism is of doubtful validity. For one thing, it is a question whether original or *Hinayana* Buddhism was a religion in the strict sense of the term.... And the fact that in the process of becoming a popular faith it was transformed into a polytheistic system is a strong indication that in its earlier form it was at least defective as a religion (K 49).

ILLUSIONISM (Knudson 20)

To renounce [faith in a superworld], to deny the existence of God, or of superterrestrial beings in general, is to renounce religion itself.... **Religion without "faith" is a contradiction** in terms (K 37-38).

**MAGIC AND MYTHOLOGY** (Knudson 38)

**Magic and mythology may prepare the ground for religion. By assuming the reality of a superworld, personal or impersonal, they may make religious faith easier. But they are themselves not religion (K 42).**

103:9.3 **Buddhism** in its original form is one of the best religions without a God which has arisen throughout all the evolutionary history of Urantia, although, as this faith developed, it did not remain godless.

**Religion without faith is a contradiction; without God, a philosophic inconsistency and an intellectual absurdity.**

103:9.4 The **magical and mythological** parentage of natural religion does not invalidate the reality and truth of the later **revelational religions** and the consummate saving gospel of the religion of Jesus. Jesus' life and teachings finally divested religion of the superstitions of magic, the illusions of mythology, and the bondage of traditional dogmatism.

But this early **magic and mythology very effectively prepared the way for later and superior religion by assuming the existence and reality of supermaterial values and beings.**

[contd] One significant point with reference to the nature of religion has thus far been established. It is that religion is not purely subjective; it involves a personal attitude toward an objective realm of values.

But this personal attitude is complex. There are in it at least three essential elements. One is that of trustful dependence upon a Higher Power. We might, with Schleiermacher, call it the feeling of *absolute dependence*. But the term "absolute" is not altogether satisfactory.... The feeling of dependence becomes truly religious only when the element of trust is included (K 45).

It was not simply the quest after happiness that led to the assumption of a more-than-human power or world-order. Religion is something more than the valid or invalid objectification of desire. But desire nevertheless plays an essential part in it. Without the longing for salvation or for a larger and fuller life, there would hardly be such a thing as religion (K 46-47).

103:9.5 Although religious experience is a purely spiritual subjective phenomenon, such an experience embraces a positive and living faith attitude toward the highest realms of universe objective reality.

The ideal of religious philosophy is such a faith-trust as would lead man unqualifiedly to depend upon the absolute love of the infinite Father of the universe of universes.

Such a genuine religious experience far transcends the philosophic objectification of idealistic desire;

it actually takes salvation for granted and concerns itself only with learning and doing the will of the Father in Paradise.

The foregoing analysis has brought out what seem to me the fundamental and indispensable elements in the religious attitude toward the superworld. They are the feeling of trustful dependence, the longing after salvation and the sense of obligation to man as well as to God. These elements correspond roughly to the **faith, hope, and love** which Paul singled out as the things in religion that abide. They appear in different degrees and different forms in different religions. But there is no religion worthy of the name in which they do not manifest themselves to some extent (K 48-49).

#### MYSTICAL AND PROPHETIC TYPES OF PIETY (Knudson 54)

There has always been a danger that theology might become the master of religion rather than its servant. And whenever this has occurred, religion has lost its pristine power, **it has become a doctrine instead of a life**. This is the error or evil in scholasticism (K 63).

[See below.]

Religion is something other and deeper than a doctrinal system. It is a profound personal attitude, a vital experience. It was this fact that Schleiermacher brought out in his famous definition of religion as “the feeling of absolute dependence.” This feeling is prior to conceptual knowledge, but it does not exclude it. Indeed, it has in its simplest form an implicit intellectual content. And the function of theology is to **clarify, systematize, and logically justify this content**. The content itself is ultimate and, in a sense, self-justifying, but imperfectly self-conscious and self-directive.

The earmarks of such a religion are: **faith** in a supreme Deity, **hope** of eternal survival, and **love**, especially of one’s fellows.

103:9.6 When theology masters religion, religion dies; **it becomes a doctrine instead of a life**.

**The mission of theology is merely to facilitate the self-consciousness of personal spiritual experience.**

Theology constitutes the religious effort to define, **clarify, expound, and justify the experiential claims of religion**, which, in the last analysis, can be validated only by living faith.

What theology has to do is to bring it to self-consciousness, to guide it and to supplement it with rational grounds of belief (K 64).

## II: THE CHRISTIAN FAITH AND THEOLOGY (Knudson 65)

### FAITH AND REASON (Knudson 67)

[contd] The relation of faith and reason to each other is one of the most complex problems that has arisen in the history of Christian thought and one with reference to which there has been the widest diversity of opinion. We may distinguish two main tendencies. Some have held that faith and reason are mutually antithetical.... Others have maintained that there is a kinship between them, but have interpreted this kinship in different ways, either subordinating one to the other or holding that they in some sense imply or supplement each other (K 67).

The chief source [for the view that faith and reason are antithetical] is the religious feeling or conviction that reason is a purely human faculty and that the knowledge it acquires is also purely human.... There is consequently a necessary antithesis between faith, on the one hand, and reason or knowledge, on the other, since the former is divinely imparted to us, while the latter is a human endowment or attainment (K 68).

In the higher philosophy of the universe, wisdom, like reason, becomes allied to faith.

Reason, wisdom, and faith are man's highest human attainments.

Reason introduces man to the world of facts, to things; wisdom introduces him to a world of truth, to relationships; faith initiates him into a world of divinity, spiritual experience.

Human knowledge [in the Augustinian view] has its **limits**. But these limits are not arbitrarily fixed by the nature either of faith or reason. Faith is not a barrier, but a challenge to reason. It invites rational investigation, reflection, justification. It does not spurn reason, but seeks co-operation with it (K 73).

The older religious thought took little account of the presuppositions of knowledge.... But since the enunciation of the Kantian doctrine of the primacy of the practical reason increasing stress has been placed upon the volitional and vital factors that condition our common knowledge or supposed knowledge.... Take, for instance, our natural sciences. They **assume that the world is intelligible and that we are able to understand it**. Neither of these assumptions can be demonstrated. They rest upon an instinctive faith in reason and in the validity of our cognitive ideal (K 81).

103:9.7 Faith most willingly carries reason along as far as reason can go and then goes on with wisdom to the full philosophic **limit**; and then it dares to launch out upon the limitless and never-ending universe journey in the sole company of TRUTH.

103:9.8 Science (knowledge) is founded on the inherent (**adjutant spirit**) **assumption that reason is valid, that the universe can be comprehended**.

Philosophy (co-ordinate comprehension) is founded on the inherent (**spirit of wisdom**) assumption that wisdom is valid, that the material universe can be co-ordinated with the spiritual. Religion (the truth of personal spiritual experience) is founded on the inherent (**Thought Adjuster**) assumption that faith is valid, that God can be known and attained.

103:9.9 The full realization of the reality of mortal life consists in a progressive willingness to believe these assumptions of reason, wisdom, and faith. Such a life is one motivated by truth and dominated by love;

The faith that underlies scientific knowledge is not, it is true, religious faith. But from the epistemological point of view the two kinds of faith are in principle alike, since both consist in assuming the objective reality of ideals whose existence cannot be demonstrated (K 82).

We are then left with the teleological conception of reason as the only one consistent with the Christian faith.... For only a free intelligence can distinguish between truth and error and thus make knowledge possible. If reason, then, is to escape self-contradiction and self-destruction, it must rise above the positivistic and also the necessitarian plane and be conceived of as free and purposive (K 83-84).

Reason, so conceived, stands in its own right, but it is nevertheless an ally of faith, and faith in its turn is an ally of reason. The two belong together (K 84).

[See endnote.]

#### FAITH AND MYSTICISM (Knudson 85)

We need a religion for the whole life; and this means that Truth and Beauty as well as Goodness must be regarded as avenues of approach to the Eternal, and it also means that the mystic sense will be associated with every revelation of the ideal. The Ritschlian conception of "faith" is too narrow, too exclusively ethical (K 92).

and these are the ideals of objective cosmic reality whose existence cannot be materially demonstrated.

103:9.10 When reason once recognizes right and wrong, it exhibits wisdom; when wisdom chooses between right and wrong, truth and error, it demonstrates spirit leading.

And thus are the functions of mind, soul, and spirit ever closely united and functionally interassociated.

Reason deals with factual knowledge; wisdom, with philosophy and revelation; faith, with living spiritual experience.<sup>5</sup>

Through truth man attains beauty and by spiritual love ascends to goodness.

103:9.11 Faith leads to knowing God, not merely to a mystical feeling of the divine presence. Faith must not be overmuch influenced by its emotional consequences. True religion is an experience of believing and knowing as well as a satisfaction of feeling.

103:9.12 There is a reality in religious experience that is proportional to the spiritual content, and such a reality is transcendent to reason, science, philosophy, wisdom, and all other human achievements. The convictions of such an experience are unassailable; the logic of religious living is incontrovertible; the certainty of such knowledge is superhuman; the satisfactions are superbly divine, the courage indomitable, the devotions unquestioning, the loyalties supreme, and the destinies final—eternal, ultimate, and universal.

103:9.13 [Presented by a Melchizedek of Neadon.]

1. *Compare:* (103:1.5): That religionists have believed so much that was false does not invalidate religion because religion is founded on the **recognition of values** and is validated by the faith of personal religious experience.

*with* (G 12): In reality, of course, tough-mindedness is simply a tendency to do one's thinking without paying much attention to the values involved in the situation, and tender-mindedness is a tendency to pay consideration **attention to values**. One type tends to make the mistake of ignoring the relevance of values, and the other of allowing its thinking to be unduly influenced by them. But an age that is proud of its tough-mindedness is unconscious of its blindness. The metaphysic that pays little **attention to values** seems to it the more reasonable. That which **gives primacy to values** seems like an expression merely of the will to believe. And since religion, on the common rationalistic interpretation of it, seems to be based upon such a metaphysic, it is treated with a lofty skepticism (G 12).

2. *Compare:* (103:1.6): The spirit of God that dwells in man is not **personal**—the Adjuster is **prepersonal**—but **this Monitor presents a value, exudes a flavor of divinity, which is personal in the highest and infinite sense.**

*with* (G 21): [Wieman's] instrumentalist theory of knowledge and positivistic presuppositions, of course, make it impossible for him to arrive at a belief in a **personal** God, but the penetration and breadth of understanding of his analysis of the religious life are all the more striking for being free from any such influence upon his thinking. The term, God, he contends, is correctly used for whatever rightfully commands the supreme devotion of man, whether personal or supernatural or not. **This, he finds, points beyond the range of immediate experience, of the world as known, to a system of real processes of the natural world pregnant with a meaning and value** yet unrealized but in course of realization. "God (or the work of God) is **unlimited** growth of meaning and value," a creative synthesis that is superhuman and superpersonal, though, so far as we know, unconscious (G 21).

3. *Compare:* (103:6.10): Early man did not differentiate between the energy level and the spirit level. It was the violet race and their Andite successors who first attempted to **divorce the mathematical from the volitional.** Increasingly has civilized man followed in the footsteps of the earliest Greeks and Sumerians who distinguished between the **inanimate and the animate.**

*with* (G 69-70): The distinction between natural and supernatural phenomena, Westermarck says, is quite clearly made by primitive people.... Further, the primitive **distinguishes between mechanical causation and volitional activity.** Even among supernatural phenomena he makes this distinction, those mechanically caused being treated as magical but not made objects of worship. It is only those supernatural phenomena that impress him as being voluntary that the savage treats with religious respect and makes his objects of worship. And in order that this should happen these distinctions need not be conceptualized in abstract terms. The emotional response of man to the unfamiliar is even compared to the shying of a horse; and it is pointed out that even a child responds differently to the **animate and to the inanimate** (G 69-70).

4. The current prejudice against theology, insofar as it has a rational basis, is due to the modern revolt against authoritarianism and metaphysics. These twin evils are supposed to be attached to theology, and as far as the second is concerned I see no way of escaping the charge. Authoritarianism belongs to the past. Progressive Protestant theology has set it aside. But **metaphysics** has to do with ultimate reality; it has to do with what "God" stands for in religion. Theology, therefore, could not renounce it without ceasing to be theology. One might, it is true, expound the biblical doctrine of God without relating it to one's total world-view and without seeking to ground it **philosophically.** But this would be a superficial mode of procedure (K 15).

5. *Compare:* (103:9.10): **Reason** deals with factual knowledge; wisdom, with philosophy and **revelation;** faith, with **living** spiritual experience.

with (K 85): No sharp line can, therefore, be drawn between the theology of **reason** and that of **revelation**. One involves the other, and no theology is complete without both. “Revealed theology” is grounded in “natural theology,” and natural theology derives its dynamic and **living** content from revealed theology (K 85).