

**RELIGION AND  
THE AMERICAN DREAM**



# RELIGION AND THE AMERICAN DREAM

BY

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Chaplain of Columbia University

WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY  
NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER



MORNINGSIDE HEIGHTS · NEW YORK  
COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY PRESS

1934

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Published 1934

PRINTED IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
BY QUINN & BODEN COMPANY, INC., RAHWAY, N. J.

*To my friend*

JAMES TRUSLOW ADAMS  
*historian and prophet*



## INTRODUCTION

THIS volume has been written by the Chaplain of Columbia University as the result of a commission accepted by him to study the place of religion and religious instruction in modern education, particularly in the countries of western Europe.

It was felt by the Administrative Board of Social and Religious Activities at Columbia University that the time had come when the whole question of religious instruction in the life of the modern college and university should be carefully studied and experience in other lands made familiar and taken into account. It was the belief that the present-day situation could not be fully met by any of those minor administrative adjustments which are so frequently proposed, but that we were face to face with the whole question of the place of religious instruction in a proper education for life in this modern and highly industrialized society of the machine age.

It is important for us in the United States to know what is going on elsewhere in the world. For example, what is the effect in Spain of the revolt against the church in that country, and what is there taking the place which the church once held? What is the exact situation in Italy, where there seemed not long ago to be a conflict between the authority of government and the church? Why does religion

still seem to hold a strong place in the Scottish universities? Has there been any recent change in England, and if so, of what kind and in what direction? Is there any such thing as a new Oxford Movement conceivable or likely? What are the existing conditions in the Scandinavian countries, and what are the true facts relative to the place of religion and religious instruction under the new régime in Germany?

In acceptance of this commission, the Chaplain spent several months of the year 1932-33 in Great Britain and in various countries of continental Europe. This enabled him to gain not only first-hand knowledge of the conditions attaching to religious instruction in the countries visited, but also an admirable foundation upon which to build a discussion of the specific problems which face the American people in this field. The results of his observations and reflections are summarized in this very significant and unusual volume as well as in a separate report made directly to the President of the University.

It was pointed out a generation ago that the place, character and function of religious training are to be settled, and only to be settled, by reference to fundamental educational principles.<sup>1</sup> We must study the environment of a human being, both his physical

<sup>1</sup> Butler, Nicholas Murray, *The Meaning of Education* (New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1915), pp. 179-200.



surroundings and that vast accretion of knowledge and its results in habit and conduct which is civilization. We must make sure that we see and comprehend all the elements of man's spiritual environment, and that we take steps to make use of each one of these in that process which we call education. The fact that the religious element in civilization is both fundamental and vital is obvious. The fact that religious training has been largely separated from education because of the growth of Protestantism and Democracy is equally obvious. The practical problem, therefore, is, with the history of the past five hundred years before us, to find ways and means to give to religion and religious knowledge their proper place in the educational process of the present-day world.

For reasons which are too obvious to be dwelt upon, this is not an end easily to be obtained. Yet, unless we are to dissect out of the history of civilization one of its long dominant and controlling elements and in education deal only with what is left, the end is one which we must never cease striving to attain.

NICHOLAS MURRAY BUTLER

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY  
IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK  
MARCH 1, 1934



## AUTHOR'S PREFACE

IN the comprehensive commission assigned me by the President of Columbia University, the foremost responsibility was succinctly stated. It was to study carefully "the whole question of religious education in the life of a modern university," with experience in other lands than our own taken into account; and further, to examine fundamentally "the place of religious instruction in a proper education for life in this highly industrialized society of the machine age."

To gain accurate information regarding religious movements in foreign countries, a period of residence and investigation abroad was necessary. The results of such study have been presented in a report to the University, describing the conditions and issues in the countries visited during the year 1932-33.\* From an acquaintance with these specific issues and conditions much may be learned both of current interest and of permanent value.

The consideration of "the place of religious instruction in a proper education for life in this highly industrialized society of the machine age" demanded, plainly, a separate treatment, and therefore this book was written. World-wide influences, reflected in America no less than abroad, must as far

\* If a copy of this *Report . . . on Significant Religious Conditions and Movements in Europe, 1932-33* is desired, it may be obtained from the Chaplain of Columbia University.

as possible be traced and diagnosed. To be at all applicable and effective in the world of today, religious education must not only be informed of its heritage, but must also be able to supply a vision of the future.

Students of today, in company with the rest of us, have to face a world of unprecedented difficulties and tasks. Religion, surely, must contribute all in its power to equip them in working out with others the solution of the social problems in which the lives of all men and women are involved.

To this end, a knowledge of the basic convictions of Christianity, its conception of the meaning and purpose of life, its ideal of society, is indispensable. And for students in our colleges and universities the significance of these convictions and ideals for America should first be made clear. The highest rôle of religion is to fulfill. It is the belief of the writer that when religion, which is distinct from the State, is brought into the right relation to the democratic traditions and aspirations of America, our nation will perform its part in the achievement of a world-wide civilization.

Education is intimately connected with life, and is a life-long process. It is hoped, therefore, that this book will be of interest to general readers, as well as to those who are concerned with religious instruction.

RAYMOND C. KNOX

COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY

MAY 1, 1934

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**RELIGION AND  
THE AMERICAN DREAM**





## *Chapter I*

### THE QUEST FOR VISION

THE age in which we live is urgently seeking for some new vision of life—"almost advertising for it." Something, it is evident, in our accustomed way of living has gone seriously wrong, and has brought widespread disaster with it. And the conviction is deepening that our plight is ultimately due to a lack of vision. "Where there is no vision the people perish." Today the correctness of this insight is receiving fresh confirmation, and what was once the utterance of a seer is now expressed by many representative voices of the multitude. People whose security and means of livelihood have largely perished are coming to realize that there is a vital connection between their ideals and their welfare. In a time of material abundance we did not seek the real ends of life for which all things are to be used, with the result that these things have been stripped from us by our own incompetence. Life has become impoverished primarily because there was no directing, spiritual ideal. With the destruction of material power, men are everywhere awaking to a critical searching of heart and mind. There is a longing to

understand better the vast forces which now seem beyond control, and to find the way to gain mastery over them. The need is felt to lay hold of a purpose which will release capacities and guide acts toward a new goal of endeavor. The highest quest seeks an answer to the question, What is life for?

Undefined and often inarticulate as is this search, yet the elements out of which a new conception of life can be formed are already present. The purpose which is struggling to be born has in our land a history and a heritage. In *The Epic of America* James Truslow Adams has made us aware of the unique character and the molding influence of the "American dream." He points out that in the development of the physical resources of the country there has been an idealistic striving which, however obscured, is still the distinctive note and the chief contribution of the nation to human progress. It is the ideal of a more abundant life, of realizing life in its largest possibilities. It is "that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to his ability or achievement." While the ambition to gain material plenty has undoubtedly been a strong motive, the dream is "not of motor cars and high wages merely," but of a "social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and

be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position." <sup>1</sup>

Here then is a spiritual conviction, a "dynamic belief," which, interpreted in various ways, has been held by many generations and has been woven into the thought of a people. The fact that it is a part of our unconscious thinking gives rise to the fresh insistence for vision which is stirring today. The sharp contrast between conditions as they are and the view of life which we had come to take for granted, causes us to ask whether the "dream" is valid, whether it is to be abandoned or renewed.

No one would claim that this ideal of the fullest realization of life had been always or consistently followed. The light of the vision has been seen, but there was never complete obedience to that vision. It has been darkened by an identification with material acquisition. As opportunities to gain wealth were exploited, it has been shamefully discredited and denied. Nor is there need sentimentally to idealize the men of the past who in different degree gave utterance and devotion to it. They had their frailties as well as their virtues. Like the leaders of every age, they were both in advance of their time and sharers in its limitations. But their lasting achievements were in proportion to their fidelity, and in these we have our most prized inheritance.

Can the vision of a social order in which the life of every individual is enlarged and enriched, be so revitalized, clarified and expanded that it is made the dominating purpose in meeting the immensely difficult, complex tasks which now confront us? There are the accumulated old evils in the world by which life is repressed, and which are so entrenched that they seem to defy all our efforts to dislodge them. There are also the new and baffling social and economic forces of today, which are so huge and impersonal that we often feel helplessly caught in their grip as by a blind fate. In a world of such perplexities, has this intangible spiritual ideal of a larger life sufficient power to keep us from perishing? In dealing with the economic situation, shall the goal be to afford the fullest possible life for every person, or shall we be overborne by the sheer weight of inertia and mass to accept some expedient which deprives many of that opportunity? In determining this issue everything depends upon the mental attitude of the American people.<sup>2</sup> It is only through the resources of the mind, by the fresh spiritual energies there released, that the battle with an opposing materialism which crushes life can be won. There will need to be an adaptability in our thinking to consider unfamiliar facts and to advance to original and untried solutions. The purpose of liberating life must become the inspiration of a

whole people, the goal of their every endeavor, so that they may possess the power to take control of circumstances and to translate a revived ideal into larger patterns of fulfillment.

There are two outstanding factors in the present condition of the nation, and in that of the whole world, which in quite unprecedented manner call for the highest exercise of our mental and spiritual capacity. The first is to discover what to do with plenty. After centuries of struggle the problem is no longer how to overcome scarcity. The task is rather how to make the immense quantity of things which can now be produced serve the ends of life. It is at last within the ability of men wholly to do away with poverty and want. Yet it is from want and poverty that the whole world is suffering. A score of familiar illustrations in regard to food, clothing, shelter and the ordinary comforts of life will occur to everyone. It is this aspect which makes our predicament so utterly unreasonable and so inherently unnecessary. Our distress is not due to any failure of nature, or to any plague or catastrophe such as is sometimes impiously called an "act of God." The power in the earth to bring forth of itself, in which Christ saw the bounty of God, is still there to be used; and compared with the crudeness of earlier methods, men have learned how to multiply the soil's increase a thousandfold. Nor is

there unemployment because there is no work to be done. Looked at in the large and considering the desirable enterprises which might be undertaken (the razing of slums and the erection of houses fit for human beings to dwell in, for example) there is certainly no shortage of jobs.

The machine, which man by the adaptation of science has invented, and which has so large a part in our civilization, is causing the difficulty. Of indispensable aid in performing the work and supplying the needs of men, machinery can turn out more goods than we have as yet learned rightly to distribute and to utilize. As Mr. Julian Huxley says: "The problem, what man will do with the enormous power which science has put into his hands, is probably the most vital and alarming problem of modern times." Apart from discussing here whether man will insanely use this gigantic power to destroy himself and his civilization in war, the question is whether this equipment, which has unlimited possibilities for beneficial use, will be employed to the detriment of life or for the welfare and the highest development of every human being. "If the looms and the shuttles could work of themselves," said Aristotle, "we should not need slaves." <sup>s</sup> Looms and shuttles now all but work of themselves. But will they enslave life or set it free? Is man for the machine, or is the machine for man?

Provided our vision is clear and our determination resolute, this problem ought not to be too difficult for men to solve. For the way that leads to its solution is in plain sight of all who have eyes to see. It is wholly to employ the enormous power placed in our hands in the service of the Christ-ideal of ministering to life. Science has shown us how to do away with scarcity. Is it too much to expect that the same critical intelligence, the same persistent energy and resourcefulness in experiment which has brought the accumulation of plenty, can, if applied to this end, find out how to make it available for everybody? If this application is made, the world will go forward into a new epoch of attainment.

The danger is that our sight will be blurred in seeing the vision, or that we will succumb to the temptation to compromise with its commands. In recognizing the existence and inevitableness of economic forces and laws, we may forget that they also are subservient to the laws of human need. Human lives with their spiritual capacity and their legitimate desire to be treated according to worth, cannot be regarded as mere instruments either of production or of consumption. Any attempt to establish prosperity on this level will fall short, and bring its own Nemesis with it. Nor can measures be tolerated which would rule out any individual or group

from the full opportunity to life. To permit as an assumed necessity the margin of a constant number of unemployed, thus depriving them of one means of life through work, is directly contrary both to the democratic ideal and to the standard of Christ. We certainly would not wish to be among the victims of such a social order ourselves, and we have no right to impose the restriction upon others. A social order is condemned in advance where this is considered as a possibility. The objective must be to liberate and to foster the life of all members of society.

The second factor which has to be dealt with is the necessity of conscious planning for the reconstruction of society.<sup>4</sup> In the nineteenth century, particularly in the Victorian age, the prevailing view was that progress was a kind of automatic process. It was thought to be in the inherent nature of things; the stars in their courses were on its side. This world, and probably the entire universe as man conceived it, was something like an escalator which would bear men upward. They had only to live "naturally" and to get aboard. Evolution, which was the guarantee, saw to the survival of the fit, and the deduction was made that those who survived must therefore be the fittest. Society was assumed to advance in the same way. Men had only to let it alone and it would progressively evolve.



Although some more critically minded, recalling the prophets of Israel, Plato with his planned Republic, and a long succession of dreamers, dissented from this notion and vigorously endeavored to inaugurate many needed reforms, society generally was left to grow of itself without deliberate direction.

Allied to this conception was the doctrine known as *laissez-faire*, of each man being allowed, within the negative limits of not doing injury to others, to do pretty much as he pleased. The desire for personal advancement was deeply implanted in every man, and it was taken for granted that if one followed his own interests, he would have all the enlightenment that was necessary to guide his conduct. As applied to industry and commerce this doctrine maintained that business organization would flourish best when least controlled by government. Free competition was called the life of trade, and the law of supply and demand, unchangeable as the law of the Medes and Persians, was thought to be the only regulation that was necessary.

Both of these views have now been totally discredited and are rapidly being abandoned. The further discoveries of science concerning the universe have proved them unsound, and the hammer blows of events have completely demolished them. There is no such thing as "automatic progress" in nature.

In place of an unrestrained individualism, the "fit" to survive in a civilized community are increasingly seen to be those who have in the forefront of their aims a high social purpose. The Great War which suddenly engulfed the world was the consequence of men's failure to see the tragic trend of events and to control them for humane and worthy ends. The collapse which brought our country from the peak of prosperity to the depths of depression was the inevitable outcome of an absorption in material gain which blinded men to the portents that were being written in the sky by their own acts.

Moreover, as is quite generally perceived, we are not facing simply a surface disturbance in our ordinary arrangements of living, such as has occurred in practically every generation. We are in a period of fundamental and far-reaching changes. Decisions have to be made for which there are no precedents, with immediate well-being and future happiness dependent upon our wisdom and choice. Personal relationships complex and intractable, in industry, in society, and affecting the policy of nations, have to be readjusted and established upon a more secure foundation, in accordance with new standards of judgment. In the presence of these imperatives, we cannot be "disciples of Lot's wife," looking fondly back upon old scenes and practices, which if restored would only bring disaster again. Our gaze must be

toward the future, and, like mariners, we have to take our bearings by the sun and plot our course.

But while progress does not take place of itself, that is not to say that progress cannot be made. In a true sense it has now become really possible. The way is more open and the opportunities are greater than at any previous time. Besides the ample products of the earth and the apparently inexhaustible physical forces which man has learned how to harness, there is the as-yet-little-used power of coöperative human effort, of men consciously working together, inspired by a common aim. What has happened is, that we have come to the stage in development when we must accept full responsibility for our acts, socially as well as individually. We are not unconsciously borne onward by impersonal forces, which is a discovery all to the good. We are called upon to prove ourselves capable of discerning the purpose of living, in harmony with the ultimate realities of life, and of a conscious devotion to it. We have arrived at the place where we can better comprehend the Christian conception and ideal: that men have responsibility, and what they sow that shall they reap; that there is a purpose in life of which they can learn and to which they can devote their intelligence and will.

To plan for the reordering of society is necessary. But in order to plan we must decide what to plan

for. We must have purpose. And to have purpose is to have vision. Indeed, it is this essential quality in vision which will alone keep planning from defeating itself. No one is wise enough at this time, or probably at any time, to draw up a plan which will meet all our needs and solve all our difficulties. It would be unfortunate if there were such a plan. We and all future generations would have nothing more exciting to do than to follow the specifications and a blue print. Any cure-all plan devised today would perpetuate practices which ere long would be found intolerable. It would turn out to be a strait-jacket. True vision requires planning, but replanning also. With our purpose clear we must devise as best we can, and then revise. We shall have to learn by experiment, by trial and error, by an open-mindedness, to find wisdom in obscure bypaths as well as on broad highways. It is said that when the engineers constructed the first tunnel under the Hudson River they found conditions in the bottom which compelled them to alter every detail of their plans. But they had as their purpose to dig under the river and to come out on the other side, and they had enough knowledge to make the start. We shall have to be prepared for a similar experience in social construction.

Vision demands also an exacting self-discipline and the willingness to risk and to sacrifice for the

sake of an ideal end. No one should fancy, because there is the aspiration for a social order which will afford larger opportunity for life, that this is an aim which can be achieved without encountering obstacles. The intrenched evils and the bulwarks of habits, the social lag and the inbred distrust of the new, will be a wall of opposition that will not fall by the blowing of trumpets. The contest for the unseen will have to be waged when there are no victories to report among the things that are seen. Vision is always a long view into the future as well as a fresh insight into the facts of the present.

The quest is for vision. Men are dimly aware of the tremendous possibilities of an age which has plenty wherewith to supply their every physical need, which has a machinery that might be used to release them from the harsh exactions of toil and permit the cultivation of the richer satisfactions of the mind. There is an inherited ideal, unique in the history of America and which still survives, of a social order in which opportunity is offered for the fullest possible life. This might again become the goal, with far larger implications than in the past, if men have the wisdom to plan for it, and the courage to make the necessary sacrifices for its realization. The appeal must be higher than that of self-interest and the desire for material gain. The aim will have to be above that of material aggran-

dizement, which ignores the unity of mankind and the plain facts which demonstrate that no nation can live unto itself alone. The inspiration for creating a social order in the interest of life is to be found only in a dominant purpose, comprehensive of all human needs, whose truth and universal validity will enable men to know the fullest life in devotion to a supreme end.

## *Chapter II*

### RELIGION AND THE INCREASE OF LIFE

As a result of the disturbing events which have been experienced in the postwar period the thoughts of men have been stimulated to a new search and aspiration. In facing the necessities of the world without they are led to a more critical examination of the world within. "Men are everywhere turning their intellectual gaze inward, to ask what can be the matter with our customary convictions, our customary habits, our customary practice, our customary feelings, that have allowed the world to come to the pass in which it now finds itself." <sup>1</sup>

As a first step, the defects must be discovered; their origin must also be traced so that we may know to what causes and circumstances they are due. But after the correct diagnosis has been made we are under the further necessity of finding the remedy. What are the mental and spiritual resources by which men may meet and overcome the disintegrating forces which assail them from without? If customary convictions and practices are seriously at fault, what truer convictions and standards of action

can be reached that shall prove adequate? If we can no longer drift, but must consciously plan for the social order in which we are to live, what shall be the purpose of our efforts without which no planning is possible? As the thoughts and the beliefs of men are seen to be responsible for allowing the world to come to the pass in which it now finds itself, so will there be a different world only as the beliefs and thoughts of men are changed. It is this interrelationship between external conditions and the interior life of man which makes religious convictions and ideals of the greatest significance.

All history, especially biblical history, illustrates this same correspondence between the outer and the inner life. Every larger conception of God had its origin when men had to meet some acute social crisis which caused them to seek for a new vision of life. In a new thought of God was the vision which enabled them to see the deficiencies in their prevailing ideas and practices, and to discern a purpose which guided them to the reordering of society. Because of the oppressive conditions in Egypt, Moses was prompted to seek for a new knowledge of God, which fortified him to lead his people out of servitude into a land of greater opportunity and freedom. A few generations after the settlement a nation was founded whose greatest contribution has been its growing spiritual vision as new and more



complex issues were faced. With the passing of centuries, the increase of wealth became extremely concentrated. Sharp class divisions arose among the people, many of whom were deprived of landownership and reduced to poverty. Cities grew, to the draining and the detriment of rural populations. Trade was conducted mercilessly for gain; judges were bribed, and graft made its inroads. The earlier simple moral code of a frontier community was not equal to the demands of a more advanced society. Religion lost its ethical application and consisted mainly in spectacular ceremonies. Then the prophets proclaimed a new vision of God. They perceived that His foremost requirement was social justice, which in the words of Amos was to "roll down like waters, and righteousness as a mighty stream." In the name of Jehovah Isaiah declared: "What unto me is the multitude of your sacrifices? Bring no more vain oblations. When ye make many prayers I will not hear. Put away the evil of your doings; seek justice; relieve the oppressed; protect the fatherless; plead for the widows." <sup>2</sup>

Through the prophets men learned that God was not a national and a warlike deity, but a universal God whose beneficent purpose was equally for all nations. Isaiah as a statesman set forth as the ideal the time "when nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any

more.”<sup>3</sup> A century later, when the capital city was in ruins, the prophet Jeremiah directed the thought of men inward for a knowledge of God, and looked forward to a reorganized society which would be governed not by external compulsion but by truths that were written in the heart.<sup>4</sup> Still later, in a time of closer contact among the nations, the “Second Isaiah” pondered on the mystery of pain and saw its place in the lives of those who vicariously suffer, especially in One who is their representative, that justice may be brought forth on the earth.<sup>5</sup>

No less is it necessary to consider the conditions and the needs of the people if we are to understand the teaching of Jesus. Careful investigation of this background has been made by scholars, and their findings are illuminating. We can see the Roman rule with its military might and administrative genius; the masses who chafed under their conquerors and longed to be free. There were the groups who were ostracized by customs and by religious ritual; the poor whose scanty means scarcely permitted them to have a loaf to set before a guest; the sick and the helpless who sought assistance by the roadside. We can see that there was an expectation and a search for a social order in which life would be rewarding and full. It was to this situation and need that Jesus first addressed His message. The new order, which was called the Kingdom, was, He as-

sured them, "even at hand." It was not a vague Utopia. It was like a city that was to be built upon enduring foundations. It could be established as men gained a clear vision of God. In a vitalizing knowledge of the reality of God was its creative power. In that vision men would find the purpose of life and the basis for the upbuilding of a new and world-wide society. The first step to that end was that men should examine their customary thinking and practices. They were "to change their minds for the better," advance to a new way of thinking, which is the exact meaning of repent, always with the implication that conduct shall be made to correspond to it. With their thoughts clarified, they were, by the venture of faith, to devote themselves to the purpose of making all human relationships a reflection of the divine spirit.

If the record of spiritual progress was written for our learning, we ought to discern in the conditions of our time the signs which give promise of another significant advance. There is an acute social need, more urgent than we have hitherto known, and on a far larger scale than at any previous period in the world's history. There are the problems of the distribution of wealth and the banishment of poverty; of the different standards and practices which are to obtain in trade. Shall nations still learn war and arm for destruction, or is the desire for peace

sufficiently strong and susceptible to wise direction so that a new era of coöperation shall begin? The new mood of critical examination, of "turning the intellectual gaze inward" to discover the defects in accepted beliefs and actions, is in itself a profound spiritual awakening. The old individualistic morality and the ideas as to what constituted success are seen to be no longer adequate to our modern society with its intricate human relationships. Everywhere there is the demand that justice be less negatively and more amply defined, not only for the redress of wrongs but as the guarantee of security and opportunity for life. A purpose is sought for the planning and the reconstruction of society. But a purpose in social organization leads back to the personal question which many men and women are asking: What is life for? Is there any purpose in life that can be discovered, that men dare trust and strive for as true? Are all spiritual aspirations only imaginary illusions, all standards and aims at best merely the unstable conventions of society, or have they a foundation in reality? The inward search cannot stop short of facing ultimate convictions. It is now everywhere apparent that both the life of the individual and the whole structure of social organization are directly determined by what men fundamentally believe. And if there is no belief at all, that makes a difference, too. Such ultimate con-

victions are essentially religious in their nature. The one vision which can fully meet these deepest needs today is a clear and vivifying knowledge of God.

That basic religious conviction is always concentric with life is the most important fact that has now to be realized. A genuine knowledge or vision of God means the largest possible increase of life. It is not an isolated or occasional experience, peculiar only to some people. It belongs to normal human experience, as men seek for the meaning of life and for a reasonable faith by which to live. The greatest hindrance to vision is the perverted tendency to separate religion from life, to crib, cabin and confine it in a limited inclosure of certain feelings or observances, to identify it with a formulated system of dogmas which is not to be questioned or modified, and to leave the larger field of daily living untransformed by its influence.

In the teaching of Jesus this intimate connection between knowledge of God and increase of life is strikingly shown. He was not merely an ethical teacher whose "morality was touched with emotion." He made God so known as a living presence that men might see that life was to be found in a true relationship with Him. So Jesus was always speaking of life. He did not give rules or a code, but underlying principles of living, which He con-

cretely illustrated. He explicitly stated it as His aim that men might have life, and have it more abundantly.<sup>6</sup> His sayings about life were so original and so applicable that the attention of men was immediately attracted. In the teaching which they were accustomed to hear many precepts were emphasized to instruct them how they might keep themselves from defilement by separation from others, and by purifying ceremonies. He asserted it was not through external contacts that a man was defiled, but by a wrong inner motive, by that "which proceedeth out of him." He spoke of the impossibility of the divided life, that it violates a fundamental law of one's nature to engage in selfish getting eight or ten hours of the day, and to restrict the principle of unselfish giving to the margin that remains. "Ye cannot serve God and Mammon." He condemned those who put any obstacle in the way of life, especially those who deprived the young of opportunity, and He fearlessly opposed the customs which divided men into classes, permitting some to be outcasts. Love to God and love to man were both contained in the Scriptures; but Jesus perceived their vital oneness, and illustrated what love of God implies by relating the parable of the Good Samaritan. He so identified Himself with all human need that He saw every considerate act as done unto Him.<sup>7</sup> He proclaimed as the new standard of greatness the

contribution to life which each man makes, and declared that as men are actuated by the motive of unstinted giving they become perfect as their Father in heaven is perfect. He had as His vision an ideal of society in which the spirit of God would be so infused and expressed in all human relationships that men would live together in sympathy, mutual helpfulness, and coöperative goodwill; and He called the realization of this society the Kingdom of God upon earth.

The purpose of establishing the new order of the Kingdom was the definite answer of Jesus to the question, What is life for? In serving this purpose life is found in fullest measure. He began with the individual, with each man's desire for life, but always to make evident that this can be realized only through a whole-hearted devotion to this highest social aim. The distinction which is sometimes made between the "personal gospel" and the "social gospel" has no justification in fact. There is only one Gospel. To proclaim the Kingdom was His message,<sup>8</sup> and it is the equivalent of the abundant life. It is an eternal order, for its principles endure and possess a ceaseless, creative power. It can be entered into whenever men are willing to change their way of thinking, and to seek its values as the end for which society is to be organized. "Only the consciousness of a purpose," it is said, "that is might-

ier than any man and worthy of all men can fortify and inspirit and compose the souls of men.”<sup>9</sup> The mighty purpose which Jesus showed was the Kingdom of God, comprehending in its scope the whole of life.

Not only did Jesus teach men that the way to find life was in the service of the Kingdom; He knew in Himself that complete devotion to this purpose was life. Thus He spoke not as a theorist, or one who can merely give a counsel of perfection. He did not simply describe an ideal society which in some remote future, the outward conditions then being quite other than at present, would afford men full opportunity to live. Rather He could give the assurance that through loyalty to the Kingdom life would be known as an immediate possession. To accomplish the work of the Kingdom in accordance with the will of God was His “meat”; and the testimony of those who had contact with Him was that in Him was life. In like manner Jesus would have men know and possess life by sharing in the same experience. The increase of life which He made known was not to be deferred to another world or to a later time, though its perfected expression would bring to pass a new age of transformed conditions and of a re-created society. Life was to be realized here and now in the degree that the Kingdom was wholeheartedly served.



Within recent centuries a view of life and of human activity has grown up from which religious interpretation and conviction are increasingly ruled out. This view is known as secularism. It maintains that man does not need religion in order to overcome the evils from which he is suffering and to work out his destiny. The task can be achieved wholly by the exercise of his own abilities, and by utilizing the natural forces in the universe which he has proved his competence to discover in ever larger impressiveness. He may dispense with a vision of God. It would be a mistake to think of this way of looking at life as deliberately hostile to religion. Many through whom most important scientific discoveries have been made were men of religious conviction. And there are prominent investigators today who, while not accepting traditional beliefs, have yet reached a reasoned faith from which much may be learned. On the one hand the spread of the secular outlook is directly traceable to the failure on the part of leaders in religion to make religion comprehensive of the whole of life. The intellect of man has been distrusted, and unwise and sometimes cruel attempts have been made to suppress it. As the mind has been denied its proper freedom, because it was asserted faith would thereby be destroyed, men have accepted the alternative, and in continuing their researches have given up faith. On the other hand,

the spirit of men who have persistently sought truth, who often by personal sacrifice have made discoveries of incalculable human benefit, is in such close correspondence with Christian precepts that the contribution of their service to religious aims must be fully recognized. Nevertheless, the net result of these conflicting currents is that a large area of life has been withdrawn from religion.

The achievements which give support to this secular approach are apparent and cumulative. Knowledge of the universe has been immensely extended and its forces employed to perform the work of men; plagues and diseases have been overcome; commerce has been developed; educational institutions have been established for humanistic culture and for training in every profession. As men have used their abilities, physical conditions and society also have been totally transformed. It is not strange, therefore, that they have come to put their trust in the methods which led to these accomplishments, and to a belief that man must look to himself in facing the tasks that lie ahead. No conception of religion as embracing the whole of life should underestimate man's attainments. To belittle man and what he is able to accomplish to the supposed glory of God is not the way to a full understanding of what religion really is. Rather it is precisely this evidence of the things men can do, provided their vis-

ion is clear and their energies directed by purpose, that furnishes a strong basis for the belief that the Kingdom of God can in fact be established on earth.

For of course the above summary of human achievement is not all there is to the story. By no means all that has been done in a secular society is so glowing and praiseworthy. To dwell in complacent optimism upon the extent of progress, with its related assumption that the final secret has been found, is too much tinged with the sentimental coloring of the Victorian era. It can no longer conceal the unpleasant facts we have to consider, or suit our mood. What we realize is that this view of life has badly broken down. And investigation must be made as to where was the fault in the construction of our house which caused it to fall about our heads.

We put our faith in education, and the desire is to make it accessible for everyone. But even with imperfect efforts, an urgent question has arisen: Is there place in society as now constituted for the men and women who are educated? What shall we make of this situation as an authority has described it?

The events of the past two years in the field of education in the United States have brought us in line with practically the whole world in one respect, and that an unfortunate respect, viz., the great increase in unemployment among college graduates. The colleges of our country graduated at the commencements of 1930, 1931

and 1932 thousands of young men and women for whom there are no opportunities of gainful employment. They were added to the other thousands in the higher fields of human endeavor who had been discharged from their positions because their services were no longer needed by a society that had to reduce its standard of living and curtail its activities in those fields.<sup>10</sup>

Why was it that the most gigantic war in history broke out in our time, misusing for slaughter the powerful equipment which science had put in men's hands? And why is it that, in spite of this experience, we still hear of the preparing of gases and devices which will make a future war—regarded by some as inevitable—destructive on a scale exceeding even that of the one we have known?

A society which cannot use the services of its trained men and women, which is subject to turning its powers to self-destruction, is an old order that is passing to give place to a new. Fatal weaknesses which need to be corrected and supplemented are demonstrated in the underlying assumptions upon which it is built. A stronger ethical motive is necessary, and a higher goal must be found. Speaking of the contributions to progress of the engineer, Sir Alfred Ewing, President of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, makes this appraisal:

Beyond question many of these gifts are benefits to man, making life fuller, wider, healthier, richer in com-

forts and interests and in such happiness as material things can promote. But we are acutely aware that the engineer's gifts have been and may be grievously abused. In some there is potential tragedy as well as present burden. Man was ethically unprepared for so great a bounty. In the slow evolution of morals he is still unfit for the tremendous responsibility it entails. The command of Nature has been put into his hands before he knows how to command himself.<sup>11</sup>

In the civilization composed mainly of Greek culture and Roman organization, a condition had been reached at the beginning of the first century A.D. which has significance for today.<sup>12</sup> The initial vitality of the forces which had produced that civilization was diminishing; like a shot that had been fired the trajectory was downward. The boldness and originality of Greek thought in a former period had become stereotyped, run into grooves, afflicted with staleness and a loss of nerve. Men felt baffled and helpless in the presence of the mystery of the universe, holding a belief in blind fate, and discounting reason. The Stoics taught a lofty ideal of morality with precepts of rare beauty and appeal, but the hardihood which they called for was touched by a pessimism of outlook, and back of their exhortations to virtue there was no dynamic compelling power. Ancient beliefs in the gods of mythology had been discarded as superstition by reflecting people; exotic mystery religions from the East attracted

a following among the masses, but they were neither sufficiently reasonable nor ethical to meet the deepest spiritual need of the age. Everywhere there was a longing for greater freedom of life; it was a time of aspiration and desire. The gap between men's wish and the attainment was in the lack of a worthy religious faith. Here again a larger conception of God was needed which would revive the vigor of their cultural heritage, give stimulus to their intellect, show the value and the purpose of living.

It was in and to this world that Christ came with His proclamation of God and of the Kingdom as a liberating force. The quickening effect may be seen in the new sense of the worth and of the possibilities of human life. "Only in the present age," says Professor Shotwell, "after democracy itself has learned to read and begun to think, is the historian awakened to the spiritual forces in the lives of the obscure." <sup>18</sup> An awakening recognition of the spiritual forces in the lives of obscure people was the immediate and permanent consequence of the influence of Christ. The capacity for life with the right to its fullest development is a major theme in the entire gospel record, especially in the Gospel of Luke, and it gives to that record a historical value surpassing that of all other contemporary writings.

Essential in this new faith was a morality which inculcated a fortitude equaling that of the Stoics,

but superior to it in the spirit of sacrifice. A motive was supplied to do more than faithfully perform one's task in whatever circumstances, and to render the utmost service to men. A bond of unity was created stronger than that which could be forged by Roman government, through fellowship and the recognition of a common aim. The influence of Christ meant "not the negation of truth attained, the rejection of man's gains and gifts, but the acceptance of them, the breaking down of the barrier of stoppage, the fuller and richer development of all."<sup>14</sup> These elements were all centered in the Kingdom, in the purpose to remodel society in accordance with a new vision of God. What this vision brought was not merely a theory, a speculative explanation, but an accession of vitality. Its truth was best proved by the new quality of life that proceeded from it, and by the demonstration of deeds.

Aided by larger knowledge, recognizing and utilizing the "gains and gifts" which men have won, it is the function of religion in this age, when civilization is again changing, to bring a like vision of God which will result in increase of life.

### *Chapter III*

#### RELIGION IN EDUCATION

IF religion is centered on life and is a way for its increase, there is no field more interesting and fascinating to consider than that of education. A campus is a very live place. Curiosity, frankness in discussing questions unrestrained by convention, initiative in action, and the spirit of fellowship are probably more spontaneous and prevalent than in any other community. There is search for the meaning of life often expressed and ever present, though there may be, perhaps, no direct inquiry. It underlies consciously or unconsciously the student's choice of courses of study, and is found particularly in the difficult decision as to the profession or occupation for which he is best fitted by talent and training. When a career is definitely selected, the income it will yield is not as a rule the sole consideration. The ultimate aim which it can be made to serve is a dominant factor. There is real concern as to conditions and foremost issues in society. And not infrequently an explanation or conviction is sought regarding the universe with which his studies have made him acquainted.



In the days of the settlement of this country religion had a close connection with education. It was the motive of the first provision for education, as may be seen in the founding of Harvard College in 1636. "Fearing God's displeasure visited upon ignorance more than they feared their own poverty," there was set aside "a year's rate of the whole colony" to advance learning. Religious influences and support played a large part in the rearing of other colleges along the Eastern seaboard, and later throughout the development of the West. But it was chiefly due to the many divisions in Christendom which followed the Protestant Reformation, and also to the spread of democracy, that religious instruction became removed from general education.<sup>1</sup> With the separation of church and state, the state assumed control of education and, wisely refusing to take sides in theological controversy, confined its instruction to nonreligious subjects. It was in accord with the spirit of democracy, and also with a view which finally established itself as a religious principle, that belief was not to be imposed, but that everyone should have freedom to hold his own convictions and to follow his own inclinations. Religious instruction from the standpoint of a particular creed was therefore an infringement upon this principle, and even the reading of the Bible, which contained passages variously inter-

preted in support of doctrine, was excluded. Further, the wide use of scientific methods in study produced a similar effect. Religious faith might, or might not, be held by the individual, but it was in a realm apart from the investigations of science.

As a result of this separation and omission study and training in religion have become the province of special institutions, such as preparatory schools and colleges in which denominational influence is emphasized, and theological seminaries for the training of the ministry. In other colleges and universities of private foundation, chapel exercises, courses in religion, and voluntary student organizations are the opportunities for religious training generally offered.

Within recent times, however, there is a new approach to religion which is of much promise and educational significance. It has long been recognized that an education which does not provide for an intelligent understanding of religion is incomplete. Religious faith has made its impress upon all civilizations. It has been productive of masterpieces in literature, architecture, music, and art, and is bound up with the major events and movements in the history of every people. It is found in contemporary civilization so that an adequate knowledge of our own age must include a survey of its influence. Religion has its place in individual life, and therefore

its cultivation is naturally a part of one's education. An educational institution is not to proselytize.<sup>2</sup> The established principle of complete freedom in matters of religious belief and participation is to be guarded and upheld. What are the measures which can be taken without violating this principle that will give completeness to education by including religion? How may students generally, irrespective of the profession or occupation they may choose, be given opportunity to gain an understanding of religion that will correspond in thoroughness to the knowledge which they may acquire in other subjects? This is the problem which many educators are now considering.

The new approach opens the way to a solution. Religion can and should be studied in the same spirit of inquiry, candor, and freedom from bias which alone makes study profitable in any field of investigation. Using the methods of modern scholarship the books of the Bible are studied not from a theological standpoint or to find support for the doctrines of any denomination, but solely for the purpose of knowing what they contain. Each writing is seen in its historical setting, against the background of the conditions, social customs, ideas and issues of its time. An estimate can thus be made of the significance of the book for its age, and also of its permanent contribution to religious thought.

Account is taken of the varied literary forms which are used by the authors, poetry, drama, parable, and the prophetic interpretation of history, so that the confusion of a mistaken "literalism" is avoided. Courses in the psychology and the philosophy of religion, in the history and classic literature of Christianity and of the other great ethnic faiths can all be conducted strictly according to scholarly principles. The object of study is in each instance intelligent understanding, not exhortation nor special pleading.

Differing views will naturally be held by students, and by teachers also, but that is to be desired and encouraged. In science there are differing theories in regard to every large subject of inquiry. One investigator may believe that the physical energy of the universe is running down, while another may think that it is "winding up"; which is a considerable divergence. But each has a respect for the other's opinion, is willing to examine the reasons for holding it, and seeks without partiality to ascertain the facts. There is a common spirit of search which makes for the discovery of truth. The same spirit and practice should obtain in the study of religion. An important by-product will be an increase of tolerance, which is a real charity of mind and not to be identified with indifference or mere vagueness of thought. Religion has so often been made the

breeding ground of the vice of intolerance, that promotion of mutual understanding by scholarly study among those of different faiths and opinions is in itself a high educational service to the community.

In institutions where study of the Bible, of the historic faiths of mankind, of religion in its varied manifestations, is conducted by methods approved and employed generally in scholarship the results have well justified the undertaking. Students come to appreciate the intrinsic interest of the subject, that it belongs in human experience and in culture, that it deals with a continuing force which directly affects the real issues of life. They find that it calls for the best and fullest intellectual effort and insight of which they are capable. And steady progress along these lines may be looked for in the future. These are gains which cannot be overestimated.

In regard to other provisions for religion in education, increasing interest with constructive planning may also be seen. The place of worship, essential to the cultivation of the religious life, is now receiving particular attention. This is an aspect which demands full consideration, and can best be treated in a later chapter.<sup>3</sup> Methods for the special training of student groups are also discussed elsewhere.<sup>4</sup>

An all-important question to be determined is, What is the contribution of religion in education?

What is the distinctive sphere, the specific aim of the work which it may rightly be expected to perform? The first answer is that the place of religion in education is as religion. It should not be confused with nor represented as anything else. Its province must be as clear and definite as that of literature or history or science. Drawing upon all branches of knowledge, and influencing the entire range of human interests, it does so from a standpoint that is peculiarly its own. There should be no hesitancy to employ the means of exploration and cultivation which are of repute in an academic community, but these should be directed towards its own subject matter. Otherwise there will be uncertainty in the minds of students as to what religion is. Vagueness in understanding the nature of religion, miscellaneous ideas and beliefs which in one way or another have become associated with it, are always a source of difficulty. A mistaken conception will frequently account for loss of interest. Vital as is the connection with ethics, religion cannot limit itself to ethical rules and standards. It must go deeper by making evident that it supplies a motive, a loyalty, which surpasses rules and generates ideals. Religion is concerned with an awakening of inner conviction which makes a man's personality greater than anything that he does.

Having a sphere of its own, religion will rec-

ognize and respect the integrity and independence of every other field of study and investigation. There will be no meddling. There will not be the disposition, for the supposed sake of faith, to suggest that there be any curtailment of intellectual inquiry, or that any theory be modified or abandoned by those who are quite competent to judge of its truth. It will not assert that a particular view as to how the world was created, be it found in Genesis or elsewhere, must be upheld in the face of advancing discovery. Geologists and astronomers are better able to ascertain the facts; and from a past experience where discovery was first opposed and then later accepted, it would seem to be in the interest of religion to keep abreast—if the inexpert mind is capable of it—of the best that is known. Religion does not claim to explain all the mysteries of the universe. It does not provide a chart to show how everything has happened in the past, and what everything will be like in the future. It was said by Bishop Hall in the seventeenth century that “the most useful of all books on theology would be one with the title, *De Paucitate Credendorum*, or the fewness of the things which a man must believe.”<sup>8</sup> These few it holds to be reasonably justified and of fundamental importance. If to believe that as men seek the truth, the truth will make them free, is one of its convictions, the best evidence that that belief is held will

be to leave every man independent and free as he seeks for truth.

In an atmosphere of freedom, and without dogmatism, the highest contribution of religion is to present its vision of the purpose of life. It is to enlarge life by making clear a basic conviction or faith as to life's meaning, possibilities, and aim. Education, as has often been said, is not simply to prepare one to earn a livelihood, but to live a life. It is not alone preparation; primarily it is the liberating process and training whereby life through expansion and direction is at the same time found. Education, then, is life, and is to be continued throughout the whole of it. And indispensable as is the training of intellectual capacity, yet life to be fully realized contains more. To quote Professor George S. Counts, referring to the intellectual aspect of education:

Quite as important is that ideal factor in culture which gives meaning, direction, and significance to life. I refer to the element of faith or purpose which lifts man out of himself and above the level of his more narrow personal interests.<sup>6</sup>

To cultivate this element of faith or purpose, with all the resources which belong to its distinctive sphere, is the responsibility with which religion in education is charged. In fulfilling this task it thus relates itself naturally and helpfully to every other



educational activity. Because it gives significance to life, a comprehensive purpose to which every form of endeavor can be related, any sense of aimlessness is banished, and fresh and productive energies are released. It meets the need of a "central purpose," which in Dr. Dewey's diagnosis the schools and the nation are seeking, "which will create new enthusiasm and devotion, and which will unify and guide all the intellectual plans." <sup>7</sup> Understanding of and coöperation with the many vigorous, invaluable efforts that are now being made to establish a high purpose from the standpoint of other and independent interests, ethical, social, scientific, economic, and political, are to be sought. Among all there is the bond of a common aim. The distinct, and also the inclusive, purpose which religion presents is in the new order which is the Kingdom of God to be realized on earth.

As religion is seen to give meaning and purpose to life, so will it be found that students are interested and responsive. Religion is a subject which is frequently thought about and discussed among them, as those who know them will testify. In spite of a statistical kind of evidence which may be interpreted as indicating indifference, there is a genuine spirit of inquiry. The prevailing mood can be characterized as that of search, which, however, is not likely to be expressed unless there is confidence that

the questions raised will be candidly considered. Let anyone whose views are respected be willing to talk frankly without employing conventional phrases, and he will have many interesting interviews. To cite an illustration: when a faculty member in speaking to a group of students propounded an original argument for belief in a personal God, his somewhat abstruse address was listened to attentively by a large audience, though he kept them "over time."

Lack of knowledge of religion, even a rudimentary kind, is in many instances a serious handicap. If a person entered college having no familiarity with history, or with ideas gathered here and there from scattered instruction, he could hardly be expected to have much initial interest in this subject, and his progress would be extremely difficult. When professors of literature complain that even the most familiar biblical allusions cannot be identified, it can be seen that the preparation is scant upon which to build. It is remarkable that there are many students who take steps of their own accord to overcome a limitation in training for which they are not responsible. In other instances students have had instruction and practical experience in different forms of church work. It is essential for them, as well as for those who have no preparation, that they should have a persistent willingness to grow, and

to keep on growing. Nothing does more to cause a loss of faith than a static faith; a view of the Bible, for example, which does not see in it the record of development in religious conceptions. In surroundings of diverse opinion and critical investigation, faith must be of the kind that can make adjustments to larger knowledge, expand to more mature convictions. St. Paul declared that as he grew older there were childish thoughts which he had to put away. This is a natural process, quite to be expected, usually working out through doubt. The one danger is in arrested development, in that the search may be given up when the first uncertainty or necessary change in outlook is encountered. To leave student initiative free, to stimulate it whenever possible, to make growth continuous, and to make provision so that interest may have healthy and satisfactory expression, should be guiding principles in religion in education.

It is religion as purpose or life vision which is cogently relevant to the work in the world for which students are acquiring their education. What are the opportunities for them to use their trained abilities, and to perform some useful service in the society which they are to enter upon graduation? They are confronted with a condition, and not a theory; and it is one of which they are acutely aware. They do not think that the world owes them a liv-

ing, but they are concerned with whether it is permitted to them in society as now constituted to earn a livelihood and to live a life. There is doubtless always room at the top for those of exceptional ability. But what of the others who also have talents which they are eager to put to use and who have an equal right to live? Is the aim only to outstrip competitors and to reach the top? Or is it the Christian standard and the democratic ideal to make the fullest life possible for all? When such is a man's purpose his own personal interest is then rightly subordinated to the contribution he can make to life. Thus the conditions in society are always reflected in education. They raise and make urgent the question, What is education for? The purpose which is formed in college and university must be the same purpose which is pursued in the world without. This is the character of the aim which religion supplies. It shows a purpose that is valid everywhere; namely, to minister to life, even as did He who came to serve. If society is to be planned and reconstructed to afford opportunity for the fullest development of every life, it can be achieved only by those who use their trained intelligence in wholehearted and sacrificial devotion to that aim. It will not simply happen, nor can it be waited for until brought to pass by somebody else. "Because the

finest individuals are nothing until mastered by a cause"; because to find a cause which does take possession of them is the search of minds that are adventurous and young, no one need fear that religion will fail of appeal.

## *Chapter IV*

### THE VISION OF GOD

IN considering the quest of men for a fresh vision of life, we have seen that religion has its distinctive and fulfilling answer. Its answer is that life is both immediately found, and also directed to an increasing realization, in a new and inspiring vision of God. Whenever a clearer vision of God has been gained men's latent capacities have been released, greater confidence and vitality in thought and in action have appeared, and a purpose has been discerned for which all the energies of life were to be used.

A wider recognition of the worth of personality, a greater security against external ills, the ability to control for human benefit the encroaching power of the machine—such is the larger life that is sought for today. There is a protest against a mechanistic interpretation of life which makes man the victim of blind forces, leaving no room for reason, responsibility, or intelligible purpose. There is the aspiration for a reorganized society in which right human relations will be the guiding principle; in which ethical standards and spiritual values will not

be sacrificed for material profit; wherein beauty in environment shall displace ugliness, and opportunity be afforded for the abiding satisfaction of the mind. Shall we be able to win a new vision of God which will so quicken and inspire that these ideals may be attained?

It is here, in regard to this vision, that peculiar difficulties are met. For owing to the spread of the defective notion that religion does not affect the whole of life, it may seem to many that a vision of God may be left aside as not needed and extraneous. Or it may be admitted that it has its place in the lives of those who desire a religious motive for their actions, but that the same ends can be sought quite as well—it may be thought better—without any reference to religious belief. It should be said at once that a vision of God is never under any circumstances a matter of superimposing a religious belief upon human action. Whoever strives for the goal of a larger life will naturally do so from motives of his own and from the standpoint of his particular interest. The service that is thereby rendered to the Kingdom is none the less real, and its value should always be recognized. When the disciples of Christ mistakenly forbade a man who was doing a good work because “he followed not with us,” Christ reproved them for their lack of discernment, saying, “He that is not against us is for us.”<sup>1</sup>

It is also quite possible for a person to be seeking God and yet not to be aware that he is doing so. In the book of Isaiah there is a remarkable statement: "I am inquired of by them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not." <sup>2</sup>

Nevertheless, the real issue must be examined. Men can never be content, nor can they best direct their acts in conscious planning, without trying to understand their own lives and the full implications of what they do. What is the deepest significance of all effective work done to promote life? What is its basis and explanation, and to what comprehension of the value and meaning of life should it lead? And further, considering the magnitude of the task of creating a new social order for the fullest possible life, it is evident that only a true vision of the highest quality and actuating power will suffice. Whatever may be achieved by men, life will fall short of its fullness to the extent that that vision is not seen.

Another hindrance to a real and relevant thought of God is the survival of outworn and erroneous ideas which the word, God, may suggest. Crude images are often retained in the mind which shut out new insight. Reference to God as personal may bring up the childhood picture of a "huge man" seated upon a throne in the sky, an anthropomorphic conception which was discarded many centuries before Christ. With His governance may be



associated the idea of a capricious oriental monarch who bestows his favors upon some of his subjects and banishes others from his presence. Biblical passages can be cited to show that this belief was once held, but it is also in the Bible that this faulty idea was long ago repudiated. Manifestations of the divine may be thought to consist in miracles, so that the orderly sequence which science discovers is regarded as entirely outside its domain. It is not strange, therefore, that there are many who feel that they "cannot believe in a God like that." No one should so believe. A liberalizing instruction in religion will make plain that these antiquated views are to have no place whatever in present thought. They correspond to the old Ptolemaic conception of the universe as compared with the view of modern science, of interest historically as we realize how far we have outgrown them. And in religion as in science we judge by the furthestmost discoveries that are made. To have a valid and inspiring vision of God the first step is to rid the mind of all lingering, discredited notions, and to be prepared to use the mind in seeking a knowledge of God whose spirit and purpose are to be found in the universe of which we now know.

But it is because of what has been learned concerning the universe that one of the greatest difficulties arises. There is its overwhelming vastness. From

the time when it was demonstrated by Galileo that the earth was not the fixed center around which the sun revolved, successive discoveries have shown the ever-receding boundaries of the universe. The simplest descriptions which astronomers can give of its origin, age and mysterious forces are staggering to the mind as we attempt to follow them. In a universe of such unfathomable dimensions, with life as we know it appearing late in its slow evolution, how can one think of a Being whom we call God, or imagine that our individual welfare and the affairs of men are of any concern to whatever is the Power that created and controls it? In days when men believed that the world was made in six days, and the earth a small flat surface beneath the near dome of the sky, then it was easy for them to think there was a God who cared: but how can one hold such belief now? The truth is, men's knowledge of God who is Spirit has not kept pace with what has been learned of the facts of the physical universe.

Still another cause of perplexity and doubt is the age-long problem of pain. Suffering seems to be deep written in nature, and to enter into every form of life. Incipient life is wasted wholesale, and one life preys upon another for food. In human experience man is subject to innumerable diseases which impair his activity and happiness, and shorten his brief years. Earthquakes and hurricanes bring de-

struction in their path. Men and women have to endure privation and poverty which bear no relation to anything they have done. Evil and injustice often indefinitely triumph, while men of integrity find that their best efforts fail. Wars exhaust nations, sweeping away a generation of youth, destroying homes and their occupants. Men ask, If there is a God of goodness and of love how can He allow such things to happen? Why is there so much pain if the world is His creation, and, if His purpose is life, why is it so thwarted?

These are the common reasons: the insufficiency of old ideas, the magnitude of the physical universe with the late appearance of life, and the problem of pain, which may make a vision of God seem impossible of attainment, though there remains the sense of a great mystery men would have explained. Faith in God comes to be regarded as only a "wish-fulfillment," a product of man's myth-making faculty, which psychology has shown is active in an earlier period of history, and is still a tendency to which some people are prone. Those who feel themselves helpless, it is said, who are unwilling to face the real facts of life, take refuge in wishing there were some Being to do their work for them, and in the thought of an imaginary world.

But an authentic faith in God does not partake of any such fanciful character. Its true basis and its first

requisite are a resolute facing of facts—the whole of them, and not merely a selection of facts which is often the cause of abandoning the attempt to work out a faith. To strive for a vision of God is not an “escape” from reality; it is the determination to seek reality. It is not to indulge in illusion, but to gain the illumination of a clarity and veracity of insight. It takes into account all that can be known of the physical universe; but it also examines the facts of man’s conscious, spiritual life, that alone possesses the power to discern the truth concerning the outer world and the nature of his own inner life as well. There is not only the problem of evil to be solved, but also the problem of good. In order to discover the truth in any realm of knowledge, we cannot leave out the inner life and aspirations of men. The essence of scientific investigation has been defined as the passion for truth.<sup>3</sup> It is an intense, insistent desire, which must rid itself completely of outworn or preconceived ideas and the discoloration of prejudice. It rests upon and proceeds from the faith that there is truth to be found, which is not a “wish-fulfillment” or a feeling of incompetence, but is an expression of confidence and the prerequisite of discovery. Man has a feeling of helplessness not when that passion and that faith are actively present, but when they are withdrawn. So religion may be defined as a passion for reality,

which is based on the faith that it can be found. It seeks God as the ultimate foundation of life, endeavors to free itself from all misconceptions that warp judgment, and persists in the search until He is known.

There is no claim in religion to even an approximate comprehension of the full power and wisdom of God. Many centuries ago He was spoken of as the Creator whose understanding no one could search out, and whose likeness man was utterly unable to conceive. "Before Him," it was said, "the nations are as a drop in a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance . . . they are counted to Him less than nothing." "As the heavens were considered, when still thought of as not far above the earth, the question was asked, "What is man that Thou art mindful of him?" The name God has always referred to the Power that transcends the grasp of our finite minds. And if the amazing discoveries of science have the effect of making us realize how little we know, that is a condition with which faith fully reckons.

But though we have caught glimpses of the vastness of the universe, and are deeply conscious of our limitations in comprehending the Power that underlies it, yet it does not follow that we have no dependable knowledge. From science we learn that the laws which can be discovered here hold true

everywhere, as far as the largest telescope can penetrate. This is the basis of accurate prediction and the ground upon which it can be verified. Chemical elements which are found here are detected with the aid of the spectroscope in other bodies, and descriptions are given us of the composition of planets and stars. Thomas Edison is reported to have said that no one knew a seven millionth of one percent about anything; but he did know something about electricity, making large use of it. And by using and experimenting with what is known men are learning more about an energy which apparently fills the universe. In like manner we think of the Power that created life. However incapable we are to define that Power, we do know that it creates.<sup>5</sup> And we also know that as far as we have experience the highest manifestation of this creative Power is in conscious human life. The process of creating life appears as a slow evolution, but it did at last arrive. Whether life is known in any other part of the universe no one can positively say. Its presence here surely makes of our planet an interesting place. If life does not exist elsewhere, then this earth would become a new center in the universe of life and spiritual experience, even though it has not that importance according to a merely physical scale. As Canon Streeter has stated: "No theory of the universe can be satisfactory which does not adequately

account for the phenomenon of life, especially in that richest form which finds expression in human personality." \*

This is the standpoint of religion. It is centered in life. It interprets and judges from the highest that is known. It is based upon reality in that it makes its appeal to the place where reality can be known, that is, to fact and experience of conscious life. For the universe as we know it has not only produced life, but we experience it as a universe in which the investigating mind of man is an active agent, in which human values are essential to life. To ignore the significance of life and to attempt to interpret the world only in terms of its physical structure and forces, while necessary in the investigation of one aspect, cannot be taken as the sole basis of interpretation. However accurate within its limitation the description may be, the fact of life with its spiritual capacity is left out. A part cannot be taken for the whole. Since the creative Power has produced life, we take life at its highest in human personality as best giving the clue for an understanding of that Power. We cannot think of the creative Source of life as less than that which has proceeded from it. It must be a Living Power, in a real sense not less than personal, though it is doubtless infinitely more. The life of man, including its legitimate and tested spiritual values, is a

part of the ultimate Reality; and religion is the bond that unites the life of man with its creative Source.

This conviction was once expressed by the poetic metaphor. "The spirit of man is the candle of the Lord." <sup>7</sup> As a simile less poetic but possibly more familiar to our age, we may say that the spirit of man is the atom of the Almighty. In size but an infinitesimal point, we are yet told that the atom with its whirling electrons and ions is a microcosm, that in it is concentrated the mysterious, radiating energy which underlies the structure of the entire universe; that if this energy locked within could be released it would enable us to transform the face of the earth. Attempts are being made by subjecting the atom to high temperature and electrical discharges to "bombard" it, so that its forces may be liberated and become usable; and in all probability these experiments will sooner or later succeed. Man in comparison with the universe may seem scarcely more than an atom, but why should we think the less of him? He has in his spiritual nature an endowment which the atom has not; he has a mind to discover the atomic energy and to harness it when set free. Is there not in his mind, which "a kingdom is," in his spiritual personality, something of that Creative Life from which his own is derived, and which is the great Reality that underlies the entire universe?



Perhaps, to carry the analogy further, he needs to be subjected to the high temperature and bombardment of a difficult, inspiring task before his hidden energies can be released to transform the world.

To Jesus, God was the living Reality, the creative Power within the universe but superior to it. There is no indication that Jesus ever conceived His work to be to make known all mysteries, to define for men the full range of God's infinite wisdom and might. He never spoke of any theory of creation, in six days or otherwise, nor was acceptance of His teaching made to depend upon the view which men may hold. He believed that they who seek shall find, and that the truth shall make men free. What Jesus did impress upon men and enable them to realize was that God can be actually and dependably known in life; that men can live in a real relationship to the reality of God, that they can have conscious fellowship with Him, and that they can share in His ongoing purpose. The larger life which men everywhere sought could thus be found and had in abundance, because it was established upon its true foundation. Through relation to God the latent life in men is set free to engage in new, constructive tasks; its energy partakes of the creative Source of life in the universe.

This vital relationship gives meaning to the name which Jesus frequently used for God. By an easily

understood symbol He was spoken of as "Father."<sup>8</sup> We have to remember that to convey an idea of anything that is real we are compelled to use symbols. All language is a series of symbols, representing a large reserve of experience which is suggested rather than defined. Even in science with its precise descriptions symbols are necessarily employed. Energy, radiation, are only names for a force which is known in experience but the full nature of which is beyond comprehension. Not otherwise must we interpret the name "Father." It was not intended as a complete definition of the Eternal God. It was selected because it was a familiar word which would give an understanding of God in terms of people's experience. In normal family life it would suggest spontaneous trust and affection.

The deeper content which Jesus gave to the term is the willingness to participate readily and intelligently in the achievement of an aim. God is called "Father" always with reference to the establishment of the Kingdom on earth:<sup>9</sup> the purpose of creating a society of free personalities, working together in a fellowship in which life can be fully realized. The upbuilding of this society is called the Father's will, which is not an arbitrary rule; it is a purpose in which men have a share and with which their wills are to be freely united. Far from being a "father-complex," or a wish "to have God do our work for

us," the name implies that men have a greater responsibility, and are called upon to engage in the hardest conceivable task. The name also signifies that when a man so strives, he works in accord with an ultimate and adequate spiritual power of realization. The complementary term, the "sons of God," is the designation of those who prove by their deeds that their purpose and wills are one with His. Christ conceived His own unique sonship in the same way. To proclaim and inaugurate the Kingdom was the Father's will, and in Him the Father was to be seen.

Love is a word that is seldom used in the first three Gospels, but in the Gospel according to John it is rightly made the keynote of Jesus' teaching and life. In New Testament usage, the Greek word has an ethical emphasis which is not brought out in the English translation "love." The primary meaning is an active and unfailing good will; as one scholar gives its practical equivalent it is to "live constructively."<sup>10</sup> Feeling is indicated, but it is essentially the positive motive which overcomes barriers and creates fellowship, uniting men of diverse interests in society. As describing God's character it has much the same content as the symbolic word "Father." In an ideal family relationship love is the bond. It displaces all idea of force and autocratic rule, is not hampered by petty regulation, is sympathetic, intelligent, ever seeking to increase the opportunities

for life of those for whom it is felt. This spirit, Jesus declared, is found as its source in God, and is the truth which men may know. As it becomes their motivating spirit, they "live constructively" for the Kingdom's purpose of enlarging life.

There is an important consequence which follows from this knowledge of God in its bearing upon the problem of pain. He is not a God who sits aloof from the world, or who rules by omnipotent force. He works by love. He enters into the suffering of the world and Himself bears the pain. However unsolvable at present the enigma of evil may be, it is in the struggle to overcome evil "that the God of religion is revealed to us as a God of love." The finally triumphant power is not physical might, but a persistent will to good, guided by truth, ready to sacrifice for the sake of life's increase. This is the way of the Cross. Christ's revelation of God was not alone by His teaching. It is not to be identified with miracle and wonder; He rebuked and repudiated that interpretation. It was in His life; and in His complete fidelity to do His Father's will in ministering to men He met death upon the cross. The larger life that has thus far been gained in the world has always entailed sacrifice in devotion to purpose. It will be required in some form if the life of vision to which we now aspire is to be won. Jesus' direction is that those who are His followers must be prepared

to take up their cross daily. But from Him there is the assurance that in that willingness there is the spirit of God, for His is the love which through suffering overcomes evil and sets life free.

How profoundly and powerfully a true vision of God affects life is evident. Only so is life made intensely and vividly real. It gives validity to the highest values in life, and energizes every effort of man to attain them. In striving for them man is not the victim of illusion, but is laying hold of the greatest of all realities. In the light of this vision men are saved from the intellectual confusion, the sense of frustration, which follow from the thought that life with the values that enrich it are without significance in the universe. If the truth of a theory of life is to be tested by the way it explains and actually liberates the forces of life, then the conception of the Reality of God, whose purpose for men is life's fullness and freedom, can be verified in the life that results as that conviction is held. Man's thinking about life is brought into accord with what he has learned of the principle of unity in the universe, so that all the knowledge and experience of life that he may gain becomes the key to an ever larger understanding of the creation of which he is a part.

This vision of God, if it is to have its full vitalizing effect upon life, is to be apprehended not only by the mind. It enlists the feelings as they become

the motivating response, and it directs the will toward the end which the mind perceives. It is an experience with the whole of life, in the true sense mystical, not because there is so much in the universe of which man is still ignorant, but because his greater clarity of insight makes him aware of the abiding wonder and mystery which increase as his knowledge grows. The vision of God is always and essentially a religious experience. As a psychologist has described it: "Der psychologische Vorgang im religiösen Erlebnis ist genau gleich dem psychologischen Vorgang bei einer wissenschaftlichen Entdeckung: ein Stück der Realität wird begriffen." <sup>11</sup> Or as has been stated by a writer whose approach is that of a historian: "The heart of religion is the appreciation of mystery"; and he adds: "Mystical religion makes all experience its instrument and all knowledge its outlook." <sup>12</sup>

An experience of this character is not unusual, nor known only by people of peculiar temperament. It belongs normally to life, is as natural as hunger or the desire for knowledge. "It is the nature of life everywhere to outgrow its present and its past, and in the life of man the spirit has outgrown the body on which it depends and seeks an expansion which no finite fulfilment can satisfy." <sup>13</sup>

The vision of God may come amid varied surroundings, in either of two ways. It may come at a

time of quickened insight when all of one's faculties are awakened to the meaning and purpose of life in the presence of the Reality of God. Or one may steadily pursue this purpose, which is the increase of life, until it unfolds into the recognition that every service which is rendered is done unto Him. By either path the vision of God is the highest good, which brings life.

## *Chapter V*

### VISION AND WORSHIP

THE vision of God gives man the insight that life and the values which make it significant are not illusory or evanescent, but are established in the Eternal Reality which underlies all being. In this vision there is the answer to the question, What is life for? The purpose is the constant increase of life through fellowship, with God and with men.

That this vision may have its transforming effect upon life there is need that it be more than a single, initial experience. Once seen, its illuminating influence will never wholly cease. But it has to be renewed and expanded. Otherwise it will tend to disappear in the performance of routine and perhaps monotonous tasks. It has to be translated into familiar duties and relations; and especially is vision necessary in seeking out new ways for the promotion of life.

An indispensable means for the renewal and enlargement of vision is worship. This is its aim, to make vision fresh and vigorous in its application to life. The practice of worship is one of the oldest in human history, regulating the customs of tribes



and of ancient peoples, molding the culture and art of an entire civilization, as we find it in ancient Egypt or in the Europe of the Middle Ages. As with all other human traits, it has been given expression in crude forms, in incantation, magic and superstition. But with advancing knowledge these have been attacked and rejected as the corruption of worship, for they are not of its essence. In the higher stages of culture it has been the inspiration which created the enduring monuments of art, the Parthenon in Athens, the cathedrals of Europe, the masterpieces in painting and in music. Worship has exhibited this power because in the truest sense it gives natural expression to a belief in the positive meaning of life and the goal of human striving. A characteristic of human nature so deeply implanted, so creative and so capable of continuous refinement, is not likely to disappear. It falls into disuse when it is denied satisfaction in prevailing forms of religion; but then it will seek compensation elsewhere. It also declines in a period when there is no mastering conviction as to life and its purpose. Worship needs to be closely and intelligently examined, to be repeatedly purified and elevated. If this is done, it will undoubtedly become again an inspiring and creative influence. But always it is to be related to a vision of life, and what it expresses and inspires will depend entirely upon the vision which is seen.

Worship is essentially an awareness of the reality of God. This awareness is the initial and abiding element in religion. When one is so aware then he knows the meaning of worship. Without this inner sense of the reality of God, practices and forms of worship become either an external exercise or simply an esthetic emotion.

In all the more highly developed religions this experience of awareness has in it nothing whatever that is "uncanny" or "eerie," "the peopling of the unseen by the imagination." However far back its origin may be traced, or in whatever extravagant language it has at times been described, the experience is not to be uncritically identified as the feeling of a "*mysterium tremendum fascinans*," the "numinous," the "nonrational" element in religion, which Professor Otto has done so much to make known. In religion as elsewhere the facts given in experience come first. But it is not the case that the experience in which the facts are found is "irrational." The "moralization and rationalization of religion" are not added as a convenient trailer. As with all forms of knowledge, a correct interpretation when it is found is an intelligible account of that which can be reasonably explained.

The experience of awareness, of inner appreciation in religion, has its correspondence in other

realms. It is found, for instance, in the difference that is made when "one has seen a truth and not merely accepted it." It is quite possible for a person to study a subject and to know many facts concerning it, yet he may not really appropriate its significance as his own, first-hand experience. That is, he is not inwardly aware of its truth; it is not so perceived that it becomes a part of his thinking. No originality is shown in its use because the knowledge he has is only from others, through books. When he sees and knows the truth for himself the experience is a turning point in his education. It is so in music and in art; it is always the inner appreciation which is important and which permits one to share in the enjoyment of the finest productions. Likewise knowledge of God is not as a theory or description which others may give, but through inner appreciation it becomes an intimate, integral part of one's own thought and life. To make vision inward and real, a permanent influence in life, is the function of worship. A full comprehension of God is impossible; we see only in part. But such is our knowledge of everything that is real. We grow in knowledge by appropriation and use of that which is known, and by continued search. Life can be seen against the background of His eternal Reality, and understanding will increase by the same method of discovery.

Though finite, man needs the infinite to complete

and unite his own being. . . . That is the mystery and the paradox of our natures.<sup>1</sup>

As a man worships, so he becomes. In realizing himself, in achieving the unity which is of the essence of personality, man is inwardly aware of a relationship to the Power from which his life is derived, the "Something Other" (Otto) which is in the structure of his own selfhood, for it is in Him that we live and move and have our being.

Though the emotional element is always present and is sometimes predominant, the first appeal in an elevated form of worship is always to the mind. Feelings of devotion are valuable only as they are in response to truth. It is most significant that in the two great commandments the initial requirement is to "love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind." In this enumeration it should be remembered that, according to the thought of the day, the "heart" was the location of the mind as well as of the feelings, and the word "soul" had practically the same meaning.

It is in the mind that a conception is formed of the God who is worshiped. If that thought is faulty, then the emotions aroused, the strong sense of what is deemed sacred, and the direction believed to be given to the will, lead to injurious consequences. When God is conceived by the mind as the

favoring deity of a particular people, who champions them against all others, giving them victory in war, the feelings and actions of the worshipers will be narrowly nationalistic, and a crusade of plunder and conquest will be considered a "holy" war. But if men's minds have advanced to a belief in the God of all peoples, equally solicitous for their welfare, merciful and forgiving, whose purpose is justice and good will, then the establishment of good will and justice, the readiness to forgive and to overcome evil with good, will be the only consistent conduct of those by whom He is worshiped. As Archbishop Temple has stated:

To believe in God falsely conceived may easily be worse than to disbelieve in Him altogether. . . . False religion can be worse than atheism; skepticism is less dangerous than credulity. . . . Just because religion is the greatest power in the world, touching men's souls at a depth which nothing else can reach, it can, if perverted, do greater harm than anything else.<sup>2</sup>

Nor is popular enthusiasm to be accepted as the criterion of truth. The fact that crowds may assemble is not in itself the proof that the secret for awakening the finer life of the spirit has been successfully discovered, and that a noteworthy "revival" of religious interest is taking place. The people of Israel forsook the God of moral law to worship a golden calf. And when Jesus insisted upon a new

standard of conduct and a spirit of sacrifice, He asked even His disciples if they also would join the multitude and go away.

The first requisite of worship is for the mind to try to gain a true conception of God, the highest that it is possible for man to know, and then to realize that the loftiest idea one can grasp is but a faint adumbration of His character. When a man so uses his mind he will have the feeling of reverence and of adoration; and the vision in worship will become the allegiance of his life.

One of the difficulties in many ordinary forms of Christian worship is that the mind may fail to gain a definite impression of God; that is, of God as we learn of Him through Christ. A partial reason for this is that the use of the mind in worship is not usually stressed. It is not sufficiently regarded as an act of worship. Or the Christian belief in God is assumed, though perhaps little attention or sustained thought has ever been given to it. Another reason is that the Scriptures contain the record of how knowledge of God has gradually grown, and if this fact is not made clear in reading them the effect is bound to be confusing. As the derivation of the name, Bible, indicates, the Scriptures are not one book, but a collection of books, a selected library. And what they teach is of unequal religious value in worship. There are passages from every

period of rare poetic beauty and insight, such as appeal and give utterance to man's permanent needs. But there are also descriptions, especially in the older portions, which show man's limited and mistaken thought of God. Tales are related of savage deeds done ignorantly in His name, which are poles apart from the prophets' message of social justice and the teaching of Jesus that love of enemies is the way of sharing God's spirit. These ancient practices, which are plainly repudiated in later writings, cannot be read for edification, and they were surely not written to be "examples." When Jesus first spoke in the synagogue in Nazareth it is said that He began with a citation from Isaiah: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor: he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord" (Luke 4: 18-19). But if we compare these verses with the passage in Isaiah (61: 1-2) we shall see that as He used them there is a significant omission. He left out the saying, "and the day of vengeance of our God." If this principle were applied, for instance, to certain imprecatory utterances in the Psalms, the Psalter would be much more useful.

Prayers and hymns and creeds which have come

down through the ages must also be understood in their right historical setting. It is a restricted imagination which cannot understand and sympathize with the tasks and aspirations of other ages than one's own. There is an immense gain in any field of endeavor as men realize that they are engaged in an on-going movement which is in the tide of history and which is capable of unpredictable achievement in the future. Ancient forms make appeal to a sense of sharing in the experiences of many generations, and their beauty is often such that they give more satisfactory expression to our feelings than do the utterances of the moment. Nevertheless, it is always to be made evident that the value of a historical perspective is to quicken our insight into the significance of the present, and to enable us to have a vision of the greater things that are possible. It is fatal to religion if it is believed that the living, creative spirit of God is not to be found in our day. When this faith is lost, tradition ceases to be an inspiration and becomes stagnation. "We must lend our ears, then, not only to the wisdom of the Gospels, but to the wisdom of the ages and the present age." The "everlasting Gospel" must be so presented "that the men of our time may catch in it the reflection of their own best thoughts and aspirations." <sup>8</sup>

The highest thought of God which the mind can



conceive is that He is One whose purpose for men is the fullness of life, whose nature can best be expressed by the word, love. So to apprehend His Reality is the sole aim of worship. Life will then be seen to have supreme worth. One becomes inwardly aware of the meaning of the Kingdom: that it is the upbuilding of a society of free personalities, united and working together in constructive good will, expressive of His spirit, and in which life is to be realized.

It is because of this conception of God that the second of the two Great Commandments, the love of one's neighbor as one's self, has its indispensable place in worship. The two fundamental commandments, love of God and love of men, are as Jesus interpreted them one and indivisible. There were not in His teaching two sets of duties, one toward God and the other toward men. Love of men is not a kind of "secondary activity," of "good works" which follow and bring man his reward. It is not a matter of reward, for men are to do good, "hoping for nothing,"<sup>4</sup> but of the genuineness of a knowledge of God. His one aim was that men should truly know God, and He taught that when there is real knowledge of Him this oft-made distinction in duties does not exist. All life is an expression of His spirit known within. Love of men is of necessity present whenever there is actual and vital union

with Him; that is to know His nature. If there is not this inner motive of love toward men, it is thereby demonstrated that we are separated from God; we are not inwardly aware of His presence.

This is the true mysticism of religion. It is not a vague, indescribable emotionalism, but a profoundly spiritual, ethical bond uniting men with God and with their fellow men. It is the mysticism of knowing God's love which ever holds life as sacred, and which seeks the utmost fulfillment in fellowship. This is the meaning of that striking saying: "For he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen." <sup>5</sup> That is, unless love is shown in visible human relations, it is not possible to think that there is love of God who is invisible. Love of God is not another name for an indefinite "love of humanity." God is not "humanity" personified; not at all. But apart from love of men one does not and cannot know what the love of God means.

The importance of this ethical motive of love Jesus repeatedly stressed and illustrated. He specified it as the one condition which makes worship acceptable. "If thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there rememberest that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way; first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift." <sup>6</sup> To see in life

wherever found the highest value and to treat it accordingly; to put an end to its exploitation and to remove the conditions which repress it; to refuse to retaliate when one suffers injury; to forgive enemies and establish good will; to measure greatness in terms of contribution to life; to devote one's all to the creation of a society in which life is possessed in abundance—this, by His example, is the true service of God, and the evidence that God is known and worshiped in spirit and in truth. The culminating sacrament in worship is one of fellowship, the entering into an intimate relationship with God which knows no distinction of rank or color or race among men. The spiritual union with Christ is with Him who is the incarnation of love.

To give expression to the significant experiences of life man seeks naturally for some means of symbolic or ceremonial representation, an outward and visible sign of an inward spirit. To find a suitable way of meeting this need is an art which has two principal requirements. One is that the symbol or ceremony should be related to the experience; otherwise it is felt to be artificial and insincere. The other is that it should be of superior beauty. As a symbol is intrinsically beautiful so will it be uplifting and lasting in its influence.

These are the two demands in worship as an art. Without the experience there is nothing to express;

and without beauty the spiritual quality of worship inevitably suffers. Goethe's remark that wonder-working pictures are never artistic masterpieces was a discerning comment. People will differ widely in what they desire, largely according to association and training; and no one form of worship will meet the need of all. In no place are tolerance and sympathetic understanding, a real charity of mind, more necessary. Everything in worship should conform to and be expressive of the conviction that the Reality of God can be known in an inner spiritual awareness, and that the knowledge of Him is to be reflected in all human relationships. The symbolism of worship is to give fitting expression to the divinely ethical motive of love which makes all life sacred and fellowship a sacrament.

An interesting explanation of our modern life has been suggested by Professor Macmurray of the University of London.<sup>7</sup> He points out that we have no clear, positive faith to which we give whole-hearted allegiance. Belief in freedom, in progress, and in democracy which were formerly guiding convictions now seem trite and their validity is seriously questioned. Science has made its discoveries and brought many benefits, but we have not yet learned the use to make of its power. Old forms of religious belief have been discarded, and a more adequate faith has not been achieved. Without religious be-

lief there is not the sense of the highest values of life, for these are not dealt with nor supported by science. The result is "a split between our head and heart, between our thoughts and our feelings." There is nothing for which we feel stirred to work and to make sacrifices. "It is precisely that feeling that we cannot decide what is worth while achieving that I put my finger upon as the heart of the modern dilemma." His appeal is for a faith that will give the ability to decide, and in so doing will make the necessary adjustment between mind and emotions.

The faith in God which establishes the highest values in life as real, and which shows the purpose most worth achieving, calls for the continued full exercise of the mind, and also liberates the emotions in response to the range of our thoughts. This is the adjustment, the harmonizing of life, which is the deepest meaning of worship.

In worship man's finite life has its contact with the Infinite. Within his life there is an inner court, a shrine wherein his sacred values are placed, where he may have a vision beyond the world of sense with which he is daily concerned. There his innermost resolutions are formed, and the purpose his life will serve is determined. Into this court he alone can enter; but it is there that he can be aware of the reality of God. In obedience to that vision he goes forth to a life of fellowship and achievement.

## *Chapter VI*

### RELIGION AND THE BUILDING OF A NEW SOCIETY

IN America, as elsewhere, the tasks and the issues which confront men today are mainly in the realm of economics and industry, with such political action to be formulated and carried through as will best safeguard and promote the highest common welfare. These problems and undertakings are concentrated for us in one question: Amid the conditions of the present can the American "dream" of the fullest possible life for everyone be made the realizable goal? This is the characteristic faith of the nation which, in spite of flagrant betrayals, has persisted. As an ingrained ideal it still survives in the thought of the people. But a new situation has arisen; there are more difficult and complex hindering forces to be overcome. Which still prove the stronger, this faith or the opposing forces?

Since the invention of machinery and the Industrial Revolution which followed, modern society has been steadily and rapidly built up into a vast, complicated structure based upon the production of goods and the immense increase of wealth de-

rived from it. Out of the distressing experiences in the years after the World War, and in America mainly since the sudden fall from prosperity, there has come the conviction that new and intelligent measures in regard to industry and finance must be inaugurated which will profoundly affect our whole social organization. They are demanded not only for immediate recovery, but also because we desire to be free in the future from the evils and the injurious practices from which we have so painfully suffered. The conspicuous fact is, that we have learned that in the amassing of wealth and the use of it, human life and human issues are inextricably involved. The production, distribution and consumption of material goods, while they have their facts and traceable laws, do not exist apart from life. It is now borne in upon us with fresh vividness that they are tremendous forces, inescapable, which for good or for ill directly affect the comfort and the opportunity for life of everyone. This means that if these forces are to minister to life and not work to its detriment, they cannot be left to accident or chance. They must be controlled and directed. Society must be reconstructed so that the evils shall be eliminated, and a greater measure of life attained. We need resolutely to set our house in order, and to make it a more fit and habitable place in which to live.

What, now, has religion to do with this reconstruction? Concerned as reconstruction chiefly is with forms of industrial organization, with matters of finance, with political policies and enactments, is it a territory into which religion with its spiritual message has no justification to enter? Or is there inherent in religion not only the necessity to be intelligently informed, but also the positive obligation to apply its distinctive spiritual message in a work of such moment to human welfare? In a situation where human life and its values are at stake, can religion which is centered in life and is to bring life, be indifferent and aloof? Wherever there are misery and want there is the religious duty, as all would agree, to see to it that no one suffers from lack of food and care. Is it not even more demanded of religion that it search out and remove the causes which produce misery and want, and by eradicating them, give life its needed opportunity to develop unhampered? If the uncontrolled material forces in society have now assumed such magnitude that men are overwhelmed by them in peace and made the helpless victims of them in war, is it not evident that these forces can be directed and made to serve man's well-being and happiness in a new order of society, only as the spiritual vision and energies of men are made strong enough to master and transform them?



The vision of the Kingdom of God is His purpose of creating a society in which all material power shall be used for spiritual aims, in which there is the fullest development of individual life through fellowship and loyalty in the common cause of increasing life. Religion has, therefore, its clear responsibility in the present efforts for a reordering of society. In the teaching of Jesus with its background of the prophets' proclamation that to "do justly and to love mercy" was the true service of God, the establishment of the Kingdom was to realize the highest aspiration and allegiance of men. The spirit and purpose of the Kingdom in the individual, working in the power of a growing fellowship, are as the leaven which transforms the whole mass of surrounding conditions and influences. The innermost bond of a personal relationship to God is the ethical motive of love, of an active, constructive good will, which is to be expressed in all human relationships, to be made dominant in all human affairs.

Though there is recognition that religion has this responsibility, that the vision of the Kingdom of God is to be the inspiration of all activity, there is, nevertheless, hesitation and distrust, in some quarters resentment, at the thought of applying everywhere the principles and the standards of the Kingdom. There are sincerely religious people who

maintain that religion is a purely personal affair, that it is not concerned with social organization. They fear—and it is a warning to be heeded—that religion will be “secularized,” that it will become entangled with economic administration, with political parties and platforms. Religion, it is said, should “stick to its sphere,” which is solely “spiritual” and has nothing to do with the material interests of life. This is, however, a failure to make religion applicable to the whole of life. Instead of making spiritual ideals dominant it strictly limits them. It has nothing definite to say to a double standard of conduct, the one marked “private” and the other “public” or “business.” But is not this double standard, this impossibility of serving two masters, one of the chief obstacles to the Kingdom, and a plain cause of many of the evils from which we have suffered? On the other hand, in the domain of business and industry, religion is quite generally regarded as an intruder. It is said to introduce elements and considerations which cannot be admitted, for “business is business and it is no place for sentiment.” The questions to be decided and the measures taken are to be determined according to economic facts and laws, which cannot be changed however much we may desire that they should be. Inadequate knowledge and impracticable ideals only add to the confusion. But to enlist the services of

men who have exact knowledge is precisely the means which religion has in view, while the ideals it presents are the ones that are eminently practicable, bringing actual solutions because they make life supreme. They can overcome the chaos and the wreckage which have resulted from the fact that they have been left aside.

Here, then, is the situation. Religion is concerned with life, with the whole of it. Everything that the individual does whether in private or in his business affects society, and the practices and standards in business and society directly affect every individual. In religion are spiritual values, a comprehensive purpose of life which is to be the end that is sought in all undertakings, individually and collectively. And yet believers in religion are often uncertain as to their responsibility, having little that is positive or constructive to offer in the presence of conditions where the need of spiritual ideals and purpose is plainly evident. In struggling with gigantic problems men realize the necessity for a guiding purpose before any solutions can be attempted. In planning a reconstructed society they must first know what to plan for. They see that life must be made more secure, the rewards of labor less subject to sudden disruption. Moral principles cannot be ignored in seeking material gain, and contribution to life is to be made superior to the acquisition of

power and wealth. Yet life is divided into two compartments with scarcely a door between them. The cultivation of the life of the spirit is regarded as one sphere, the manner in which wealth is acquired and used is the other; and, it is held, they are not to be related. What can account for this anomalous, contradictory situation? Who put up the high fence that divided the one field of life into two? Was it done because of unneighborly acts and blunders which were once committed, the scars of which still remain, so that men are naturally fearful lest they be repeated? What were the causes which led to the separation, and how can they rightly be removed? An eminent economist has declared that "the two great forming agencies" which mold character are the religious and the economic.<sup>1</sup> If they pull apart, a man's character is a constant scene of inner conflict. And society is a house divided against itself which cannot stand. What is the right relation of religion, whose spiritual ideals and purpose are to include the whole of life, to the industrial, economic, and political activities of men?

In reading the record in the Gospels it is noticeable that Jesus spoke often of wealth. His sayings in regard to it are among the most incisive, vigorous and startling of His utterances. He asserted that it was hard for those who had riches to enter the new order of the Kingdom, a statement so amazing to

His hearers that the comment was immediately made, "Who then can be saved?" The possession of riches might easily choke the life of the spirit, like thorns that crowd out the wheat. Men were to guard themselves against covetousness, the desire to wrest away the property of others, which St. Paul rightly terms a form of idolatry, making of wealth a god. It was pointed out by Jesus that mammon when made a master demanded the sacrifice of everything in its interest, and that God and mammon could not both be served. In reply to a question, He bade men recognize that as citizens there was an obligation to the state, designated at the time by the name "Cæsar." But no misreading of this familiar passage is more contrary to Jesus' teaching than the idea that the state is an end in itself, not subject to moral principle and standard. He judged and condemned the "great ones of the earth" who sought "lordship" and power, by the one standard of the Kingdom which was always to guide those who lived for its aims; namely, the measure of service to men.

In the Middle Ages, continuing the tradition from the beginning of Christianity, it was the basic belief that the sphere of religion was the entire range of human interest and activity.<sup>2</sup> Were the suggestion to have been made that any action, private or public, was unrelated to moral and spiritual ends it would have been considered as unthinkable.

All life had a central and controlling purpose; what had to be determined was how the various duties and concerns of men were to be conducted in its furtherance. This is not to idealize the period, nor is it a plea to return to the practices of the Middle Ages as this view of life was then interpreted. There were crudities in the way that purpose was understood, a narrowness in application, and oftentimes a discrepancy between theory and practice, which made it no "golden age" that any man now living would wish to have restored. But it is important to remember that the Christian faith as it was continued through the centuries contained no intimation of the distinction between the "individual" and the "social" gospel. Religion was not intended to be only a "private affair," but was to demonstrate the supremacy of its principles in all affairs. The outer things of sense were given for the sake of the inner life of the spirit, and in making right use of them the spiritual nature of man had its discipline and growth. In Professor Tawney's summary:

The criticism which dismisses the concern of churches with economic relations and social organization as a modern innovation finds little support in past history. What requires explanation is not the view that these matters are part of the province of religion, but the view that they are not.<sup>3</sup>

Even the concentration of thought upon salva-

tion in the life hereafter, while it did divert attention from the study of the world and its forces, did not make the affairs of men appear negligible. On the contrary, their significance was heightened because whatever was done was seen against the background of eternity. What this conception of an all-embracing religious purpose did do was to give to men and to society a sense of unity and coördination. Like the body which is composed of many members, each individual according to his gifts and station had a responsibility related to the whole of society, while the life of the body depended upon the well-being of all of its parts. Society was conceived of as essentially spiritual in nature. For the bond of union was a deeper principle than the production of wealth, and material goods had value only as they served the higher interests in human life. It was this conviction which provided the basis for European culture, whose influence has survived as the spiritual heritage and foundation for later achievement in our Western civilization, though the principle of unity has been shattered into fragments.

In this unified society of the Middle Ages economics were treated as belonging to ethics. The way wealth was gained and used was judged not from the standpoint of financial profit, but from that of its conformity to moral standards and by its social con-

sequences. It was seen that the desire for wealth was a strong passion, and that it was prone to disregard and encroach upon the claims of human life. Thus many safeguards were erected. There were repeated efforts to determine what was a "just price," and what profits were permissible in any given business transaction. Usury, which was the taking of a fixed rate of interest irrespective of whether the borrower was successful in his venture or not,<sup>4</sup> became a storm center of dispute and denunciation, the worst terrors of hell being pictured as fitting for those who demanded its payment. The people were to be protected in securing the essentials of life; the "unpardonable sin" was that of "the speculator or the middleman, who snatches private gain by the exploitation of public necessities."<sup>5</sup> Throughout, the principle was expressed by St. Antonino that "riches exist for man and not man for riches."<sup>6</sup>

How can we explain the withdrawal of religion from concern "with economic relations and social organization"? How did this "modern innovation" come about? What has led to the common idea that religious principles should be excluded from this area of life, and that it is not a spiritual prerogative to apply them? There are several discoverable reasons which account for this contraction, and they also make plain the mistakes to be avoided in the present and in the future.



In the first place the view that was everywhere accepted prior to modern times was that life and society were fixed and static. The social structure as it was then known was thought of as permanent, destined to endure without important modification. The task of religion was thus conceived to be, not the reconstruction of society according to the vision of the Kingdom, but making right use of the medieval forms of society as they then existed. But there were forces which were steadily evolving social change and ushering in a new era. Industry and commerce were passing out of the simple stages of peasant tillage of the soil and the small transactions of merchants into the larger arena of world trade and financial power. Sea routes were opened for ships which investment companies sent forth to bring back wealth from the East in ever greater quantity. Control became concentrated in rival cities. Distant lands were discovered where men fancied was the rainbow pot of gold.

There was a ferment in men's minds. The routine and drudgery of old occupations were resented by a new spirit of venture and enterprise. There was an awakened curiosity for knowledge and a resolve not to be deterred in the search. A new age was dawning, but unfortunately, with few exceptions, the representatives of religion had no vision of it or for it. They neglected to discern the signs of the times, and

they paid the penalty of being incompetent to lead. The age was plastic, waiting for the impress of a high social purpose, but in their eyes it was static. The attempts to keep it in the old molds were as ineffective as they were pitiable. Instead of making religion an inspiration for social reconstruction they tried to build higher the old walls of medievalism. They had not the faith to seek the better country which was prepared for them. This was the first important reason for the withdrawal of religion from the whole of life. Trade and commerce continued to advance and to exploit the rich resources of the new, outlying territory, and in the absence of any other viewpoint, developed in time the philosophy of the "economic man."

The second reason is the reverse side of the same static conception. Where there was no vision of anything greater, religion came to identify itself with the existing order. This accounts for that strange and inconsistent acceptance of the feudal system. It was a system harsh and unjust, totally incompatible with the principles of a Christian society. But since it was thought to be a type that was fixed, no fundamental changes could be made. Religion could insist that the poor be relieved, that a man be protected in his rights; but it could not bid men direct their thoughts to the defects in the institution. Nor, because of this acceptance of the existing order, could

religion escape contamination. Corruption and political intrigue made devastating inroads, and did damage to the ideals that were proclaimed. At its best religion stood for the supremacy of the spiritual elements in life, but because it too largely acquiesced in ideas and practices long common in society there was not the power to raise it up. As it ceased to act as the leaven it became more like the lump. Religion was thus further unprepared for the tasks of a new day. Increased economic activity could not be carried on in the framework of feudalism and it proceeded to devise an organization of its own.

A third limitation was in the fact that religion was made into a legal system. Every duty and action were more and more specified; what a man could do and what he could not were precisely defined. Nothing was left to one's own initiative. Courts abounded to pass decisions upon everything. Administration of canonical law became a wilderness which scarce anyone could thread. The result was, that as the new age expanded the rôle of religion was thought to be to maintain the same minute regulation. Precedents in the old laws had to be found and all sorts of constructions put upon them. Religion took on the appearance of being chiefly concerned with restraint. Instead of a force to inspire it was made into a network of petty legalistic control, against which there was increasing protest. Ways of evading

the laws were successfully devised, and in many cases laws were finally abandoned altogether. Laws to be respected and observed must be broad-based upon principles which people understand and are willing to uphold. The failure to inculcate principles, and the association of religion in men's minds with a restraining legalism, widened the separation of the spiritual from the economic life.

It is sometimes asserted that the Protestant Reformation with its insistence upon faith as a personal experience and the implied right of private judgment, abandoned the social ethics of Christianity, and that to its innovations the "moral chaos of modern industrialism," with intense nationalism and strife, are to be attributed. This is, however, not a correct reading of historical fact.<sup>7</sup> The Reformation was primarily and in essence a spiritual, religious movement. It recovered and restated a fundamental principle in the teaching of Christ and of the Church which had never ceased to exert its influence, but which had become overlaid and obscured. The Reformation was not a departure from tradition, but an attempt to return to it. It did liberate strong forces in individual life, and in this respect accorded with and fortified other movements for freedom which were active in the same period. But in the minds of the leaders of the Reformation these released individual forces were to make the social obli-

gation, not less, but more binding. It was only by a curious perversion in the conflicting currents of later events that they were made to give indorsement to quite different practices, which may be seen today.

The most conspicuous illustration both of the social purpose, and also of the loss of it, is to be found in Puritanism; and nowhere more plainly than in America. Calvin in Geneva and his successors in New England had as their object to build up a society in which every activity, in home and in public, was to be strictly prescribed and regulated by the dictates of religion. The state was to be a theocracy, and its rulers and members the elect. In this stage religious liberty, which was tenaciously guarded, was not conceived as it is today; that is, as the right of the individual to decide according to conscience. This came independently as a logical and necessary development. But at the beginning of the struggle for religious freedom the social viewpoint was so dominant that this consequence was not admitted. Freedom in religion meant the right of a community to live its faith without interference or disruption from within; which explains the intolerance that was often shown.

The belief and conduct of every individual were scrutinized with merciless severity. In reaction against the corruptions and extravagance in Old-

World society every taint and suspicion of them was to be rooted up. Luxuries were thought to be a trap and pleasures a lure. In the land to which they had been led there was work to be done, and each man had his calling. By work one became self-respecting and respectable and he who produced the most best helped his fellows. The virtues to be cultivated were a sense of duty, diligence, thrift, and prudence in the management of one's affairs. To be religious was to be strenuous, not slothful in business, and it brought obvious rewards. Leisure was reprehensible idleness. There was neither time nor place for reflection, and a disposition to contemplate, when there were so many profitable activities, was useless and a sign of weakness as well. Poverty came to be looked upon not only as due to lack of skill, but also to a defect in character. The persons who suffered from it might be aided by charity, but they were deemed inferior, unable to compete with those who by using their talents had risen in wealth and affluence. Success was the sign of virtue as well as of ability. Prosperity was the seal of approval put upon upright conduct.

It is easy to see how these ideas and qualities stressed in Puritanism played a significant part in an age of economic interest and expansion. They were particularly adapted to a people who were engaged in the task of settling a new land, and to-

gether with the influence of the frontier, they have had a molding effect upon American character and history. They produced many unique and excellent traits, but they were also subject to certain inevitable limitations. They gave energy, a readiness to engage in new enterprises, a determination of will to surmount obstacles, in developing the resources of a continent and in the upbuilding of a nation. To make the common duties of life a sphere for the exercise of religion was in principle an advance over the idea that religion was restricted to particular occasions and times.

The limitation was in the conception of religion then developed, which has passed on to later generations, and which has become so much a part of our thinking that it is now extremely difficult to overcome. In emphasizing personal faith and individual morality the social purpose of religion was allowed to fade from sight and all but disappear. Since virtue was necessary to success, and success the reward of virtue, it was easy and natural to assume that a man's "enlightened self-interest" was his main responsibility. But like the point of a pencil held before the eye it shut out the view. It shut out the vision of the Kingdom, of a re-created society that would be expressive throughout of the divine spirit of love and good will. By the example of its Founder, its standard of greatness was service to men to which

self-interest and the ambition for personal success were to be subordinated. It is true that there were men reared in the faith of Puritanism who did have a glimpse of the Kingdom, who devoted themselves in the light that they saw to social reform. But the center of gravity in religion was in individual cultivation and advancement, not in social purpose. Not infrequently a man's life illustrated the two-compartment theory; his religion and his business were in sharply separated spheres. He could be ardent in his faith and perhaps generous in his gifts; but to take advantage of a competitor, manipulate stock, and depress wages, caused no compunction of conscience. There were appalling conditions in mills and in industrial towns. The lives of men, women and children were ruthlessly exploited. Yet because of the ethical and economic theories that were held, people of personal piety either were blind to such practices, or felt they were unavoidable in business organized for profit, and that consequently they were not a matter of religious concern.

This transvaluation, this loss of social purpose, illustrated in the religious life of America, is one of the strangest facts in history.<sup>8</sup> Puritanism had as its initial object to carry on the tradition of the ages and establish the Kingdom of God upon earth. It ended in an individualism of the most rugged sort. A further contributing cause was that the concep-



tion of the Kingdom was not taken from the New Testament. Even the stern logic of Calvin was strained to make a connection with it. The system of minute legalistic control had in it "the thunders of Sinai." It was based upon a literalistic interpretation of the Bible, mainly of Old Testament legislation. There was a passion for righteousness like that of the prophets, but not their free appeal. Law and Old Testament prescriptions were to direct every footstep and to guard against every pitfall. Legalism and literalism had their usual consequences. The growing spirit of independence in religion as well as in business could not be suppressed. The rule of the saints was too uncomfortable to be endured. Thus the Kingdom was not as a treasure hidden in a field for which a man would joyfully give his all to possess. It became like the minute legal prescriptions of the Pharisees, a burden that was grievous to be borne. Again, laws were regarded as restrictions to be evaded whenever possible. It is worth considering to what extent the familiar practice in America of enacting laws as a general cure-all for evil only to be followed immediately by the attempt to escape their requirements, is traceable to this Puritan experiment. Ere long a way of release from the legal restraints of religion was found. Religion was made chiefly a private affair, and what was done in business was not its concern. No effort was made to re-

state the social purpose of the Kingdom in the spirit of the New Testament.

But the obligation of religion to have as its concern the entire range of human interests still remains. It is the true tradition of the Christian faith. The one Gospel is the Kingdom, which is the heritage and the responsibility of every communion. The mistakes and blunders which led to a harmful division of life can be definitely traced, and these must never be repeated. Religion must now with greater wisdom and devotion address itself to its real task. For we have come again to another period of change, when expanding forces make necessary an intelligent social reorganization, guided by a clear perception of purpose. The need is for a fresh vision of the Kingdom whose purpose and principles are applicable to the whole of life.

"An appeal to principles is the condition of any considerable reconstruction of society, because social institutions are the visible expression of the scale of moral values which rules the minds of individuals, and it is impossible to alter institutions without altering that valuation."<sup>9</sup> This is a statement in another form of the saying which Christ summarized: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."<sup>10</sup> Religion is to present the values which as they rule in the minds of men are given free expression in every activity and institution. This is the

relation of religion to the economic and industrial life, as it is to all other interests. What are the moral values of the Kingdom whose righteousness men are to seek first?

A foremost value in the scale of the Kingdom is the supreme worth of every individual life. In the teaching of Christ the value of life in each person is raised to the highest terms, the  $n^{\text{th}}$  power. It is so held in the sight of God, and in the sight of men it is to be everywhere sacred. A man is so to evaluate his own life. He is to be vividly aware of its intrinsic quality, so that as he uses its capacity life ever becomes more worth the living. Practices which destroy the finest texture of life are not a violation of rules, but a self-inflicted injury. A "new mind," a new estimate of life, is necessary. Nothing can be given in exchange for it. If a man gain the whole world of material goods but through selfish seeking lose his life, he has made a stupidly bad bargain. For it is in devotion to an end that is higher than goods or self that life is found.

How exalted is this conception of the worth of life may be seen in the central doctrine of the Christian faith, in the Incarnation. Belief in the Incarnation is not in a definition which taxes the mind to comprehend. It is a recognition of the significance of the Supreme Personality in history, that in a human life at its highest was the manifestation of the di-

vine. The distinction between the human and the divine does not exist in the perfection of personality. This faith testifies to the dignity, the potential capacity, of every life, perceiving that all that is truly human is really divine. "It saves us from that fatal schism between secular and sacred." On it is based the sacramental principle which sees that material things and the institutions of men are to be outward and visible signs of an inward spirit.

While Christianity is not to be identified with any political system, the influence of its estimate of individual life may be seen in the establishment of democracy. In his book, *The Essentials of Democracy*, Dr. Lindsay places the first clear statement of the democratic idea in English history in a debate at the time of Cromwell. In the discussion one of the participants declared, "I think the poorest he that is in England hath a life to live as the richest he." This, in Dr. Lindsay's view, is the authentic note of democracy. . . . It is a religious and moral principle . . . the translation into non-theological language of the spiritual priesthood of all believers.<sup>11</sup> All men are not equal in capacity; but all men should have equal opportunity to live the fullest life of which they are capable.

The estimate of life as of highest value is, according to the standard of the Kingdom, to rule the minds of men in their relations to one another. It

is especially necessary to make this estimate the test in the gaining of wealth. For here is the place of greatest conflict, where the pressure is strongest to substitute another standard, to make it a sphere apart. When life really ranks highest in the scale of values, then it is made the end for which business is conducted, just as in other lines of endeavor. It is not a standard which is forced upon one from without, and with which he complies only to the extent specified. A law of the land to insure fair dealing and to promote opportunity for life is not searched for loopholes through which to evade its spirit. Life is put above profits because it is of greater value than profits. No business, it is true, can be carried on unless it yields profit. But no profit is ever justifiable if it is gained to the neglect or at the expense of life.

In the intensity of competitive struggle it often happens that a man of generous sympathies and desires feels compelled to take action that brings severe hardship to others. An invention is made or a merger put through, and hundreds may be dropped from employment perhaps after years of contributing service, their dependents as well as themselves being left without means of support. This is only one illustration of the impersonal element in present economic practice which goes counter to a man's best impulses and ideals. "What is the use," a business man writes, "to talk charity to the strug-

gling employer faced with a pitiless economic warfare that knows neither charity nor mercy?" The "greatest good to the greatest number," sometimes cited in justification, does not always work out. And if it did, a portion of society, though it be the majority, has no right to benefit at the sacrifice of the life of the minority. Somehow, through a proper adjustment and planning, provision must be made for the superior claims of life everywhere. The social system was created by men. How it became separated from ethical standards we now know. And by men it can be changed.

To Christianity no institution is supreme over life and personality. No institution stands in its own right. Every institution, whether it be religious or economic, is made for man, and never man for the institution. It is justified or condemned by its fruits. If it promotes the good of man, it is fit to endure save in so far as it can be bettered. If it is barren or hurtful, it cannot by any claim of inherent right escape the command "Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?"<sup>12</sup>

To make every practice and institution serve life is a task that calls for brains devoted to that end. A man will demonstrate his ability not only by what he can do alone, but also by the way he can bring about collective action. There are encouraging movements making in this direction. They are in the line of progress. Their success will depend upon the scale of values in the minds of the American peo-

ple. Where their treasure is their heart will be also. If the "eye," that is, the purpose, is both "single" and "light," "the whole body shall be full of light."

As the ideal of the Kingdom is of a united society, the establishment of fellowship is also a value which is everywhere to be realized. The bond of fellowship is in the recognition of the supreme worth of personality. To love one's neighbor as one's self is the strongest social binding force. It is capable of overcoming the barriers of class and circumstances which have been superficially erected, and of relating men to one another in the fellowship of a constructive good will. And love in the Christian sense is, as we have seen, the divinely ethical motive which esteems each human life as of highest value, though there may not be the emotion ordinarily associated with the word in our English usage. It is the essence of religion because it is in the reality of God, at once the bond that unites men with Him and with their fellow men. To dismiss this motive as "mere sentiment," as having "no place in business," is an absurd misapprehension. What needs to be got rid of in business is false sentiment, which puts love of money above regard for human life. For this estimate is not true to the facts, and makes the love of money the root of all evil.

Distinctive of love of neighbor as a motive is its power of visualization. It is always clear-eyed,

thinking not in terms of statistics or "cases" or "classes" but of persons. It cannot withhold anything that will make fellowship more widespread and vital, is ready to assume tasks, to remove barriers, and to make sacrifices. In the well-known parable, a Samaritan saw in a stranger in need by the roadside a person whose life was even as valuable as his own and he therefore treated him as a neighbor. In modern society, the answer which Christ gave to the question, "Who is my neighbor?" has to be given in relation to all persons whom civilization has brought into contact on its highways. Invention and commerce, as is often said, have made the whole world a neighborhood. A decision that is made by a group of men in an office, a change in a tariff schedule, may affect the lives of thousands of strangers in all parts of the land and in far distant countries. Food and comforts are supplied us by the labors of a countless number of people. Ownership in the stock of a corporation means that one has a responsibility for the lives of those who are engaged in its enterprise, which is a claim prior to dividends. The question presses back to one still older in history, "Am I my brother's keeper?" A clear visualization is needed to see the extent to which the conditions of life, at least, are in our complex society in the keeping of each one of us. Fellowship is the principle of loving one's neighbor as oneself



in a world that has now become a neighborhood.

It is sometimes contended that the motive to fellowship on the basis of life's value cannot be the bond by which men are united. The only bond, it is said, which actually leads men to work together in a nation or in the world is the common economic interest of a group. So groups are represented as being constantly at warfare, each striving to wrest control of wealth and privileges from the others, the "have nots" trying to get the property of the "haves." Not a new scale of moral values is advocated for the altering of institutions, but the exercise in one form or another of force. All history can be interpreted from this standpoint. There are many practices in modern society which can be cited in its support. In legislative bodies it frequently occurs that the economic interest of a group overrides political principle and is made superior to public welfare.

The investigations which have shown how powerful, how often unscrupulous, is the economic motive, have rendered a lasting service. They have laid bare the sham use of phrases and professions of liberty and regard for life. Their conclusions uphold exactly what Christ said long ago, that it is hard for those who are possessed by the motive of gain to break from it and to enter into the fellowship of the Kingdom whose standard is service. The issue that is now before us in the reorganization of society

has been made plain. Which shall be made foremost, the economic motive of gain in the interest of a group, or the motive of fellowship in the interest of the fullest life for all? Granted that history does show as one of its large phases the struggle of classes for economic advantage, it does not follow that that warfare is to be accepted as final and is to be perpetuated. The question is, Have men sufficiently progressed in reason, in a recognition of their membership one with another, in a high valuation of life, so that their diverse interests and sometimes discordant wills are adjusted in relation to a common purpose?

Powerful as the motive of economic interest undoubtedly is, yet it is not a strong bond in holding men together. It may shift or be broken at any moment. The friend of one day may become the foe of the next. It breeds not unity, but distrust; every man tends to suspect his neighbor. If the primary motive is material gain, everyone wants the most he can get and those who lose in the contest are left to look out for themselves. A society built upon that motive rests upon disintegrating sand. And what is the force or pressure to be exerted in seeking economic advantage? Is class legislation, which is condemned as it is secured by other groups, to be employed for one's own group? But measures are justified only as they are enacted in the interests of

all, to the restraint of encroachments by any class.

The Christian ideal of society is committed to the fellowship that is created by a valuation of life. Where this is the bond by which men are united society endures. Provision for economic well-being as one of the necessities for life becomes not subject to the fluctuating power of conflicting groups, but is insured by a common responsibility.

In the scale of the Kingdom the third value is the supremacy of the life of the spirit, in the full range of its individual and social expression. Material goods are to be so acquired, so possessed, and so used, that they are made merely the means by which that end is attained. The promotion of the spiritual life, in the widest sense of the word, is the final criterion of all efforts for social reorganization. It is not sufficient as an aim that there should be greater power to consume simply in order that more things can be produced on which to make profit. Human beings cannot be regarded only as fodder to feed machines. Justice and common sense demand a greater equity in the distribution of goods. But a nation's prosperity cannot be estimated solely in terms of riches without regard to the end for which they are used. Materialism, which has brought disaster by sacrificing spiritual principles, cannot be cured by spreading it. A higher standard of living

requires a superior quality of life, and not merely an increase in the quantity of possessions.

The plethora of things that are now produced, and the pressure to accumulate them, require that a selection be made. A sense of relative values to determine what things really minister to life is necessary if life is not to be smothered. A machine age is not a triumph of materialism, not if men have a spiritual purpose for which to use its power. It is in itself a triumph of the spirit of man in an age-long struggle to secure from nature an abundant means of livelihood. It gives unparalleled opportunity for leisure, for the increase of knowledge, for the cultivation of art, for fellowship and an understanding of other peoples through travel and intercourse, for the development of gifts and interests in endless diversity. It can afford time to work out a sustaining philosophy of life.

By a new sense of values the profit motive is transformed into a social motive. A stubborn obstacle to the reconstruction of society is the belief that the strongest incentive to action is the desire for profit, and that "human nature doesn't change." In its fundamental characteristics human nature does not change. But the question is, What are the characteristics that are distinctively human? Are they those traits which survive from an earlier stage in man's evolution which, unless they are related

to a higher spiritual end, hinder his development? Or are they those unique qualities which have enabled him to rise and which have in them the power of continuing progress? Man is least human in what he shares with the brutes and most human as he differs from them.<sup>13</sup> In his reason, in his ability to control and to create his environment, to build up institutions, to have a vision of the future which he deliberately seeks to realize, and to discern a purpose above self-seeking in devotion to which he finds life—these are the qualities distinctively human which do not change, but grow.

If by the profit motive it is meant that man has not sufficient inducement to effort, apart from material reward, that is not true. Man does need to have enough on which to live in reasonable comfort, but his highest achievements have always been prompted by another motive; by a purpose in the service and realization of which he finds his reward. Scientific research and discovery are a conspicuous illustration, as are also the professions of men, medicine, law and the like. In many instances this incentive of purpose has been so strong that men have been willing to sacrifice material reward and comfort, even to lay down life. When the purpose has been truth and social benefit the motive and action are honored as illustrative of human nature at its

best. And time and again it has been demonstrated that the average person, in obscure ways, is capable of a like devotion when inspired by purpose.

The profit motive has its legitimacy; but it must be subordinated to the purpose of social benefit. Whatever profit is gained must be tested and determined according to the benefit contributed. It cannot be assumed that this benefit will accrue of itself when the aim is profit. Profit is now often far in excess of any service given, and positive injury is done to society by the exploitation of its resources for private gain. Social benefit must be made the aim that is sought first. When profit is the first aim the right relation is reversed. It is this distorted idea that the actuating motive in the conduct of business has to be profit which needs to be corrected in the light of the evident facts. For in the end it piles up evils, throws the whole economic machinery out of gear, and prosperity is wrecked. In the reconstructed society prosperity will have a permanent basis only as the object is public benefit, with profit as the result, measured in strict accountability for the service performed.

The worth of personality, fellowship, and the spiritual quality of life are the moral values of the Kingdom, the end for the promotion of which the production and distribution of material goods

are only a means. They are the application to industry and commerce of the standard of greatness in terms of contribution to society. They constitute in themselves the way whereby the fullness of life is realized.

## *Chapter VII*

### EDUCATION IN RELIGION

EDUCATION in religion has one supreme purpose. It is to give a vision of life and to afford a training which will make that vision effective in living. It is to aid each individual to realize the fullest possibilities of his life by discerning the end which enlists the devotion of all his energies and to which he can relate whatever may be his special interests. The cultivation of religion is to promote the spirit of fellowship. In a community of diversified pursuits, it is to strengthen the bond of a common, unifying endeavor and to be an incentive to practical forms of coöperation. It is to include an appreciation of the various ways in which educational institutions through their members contribute to society, by scholarship, by public service, and by creating larger opportunities for life. The vision of religion should be as comprehensive as the interests and aspirations of all mankind, international in its outlook, informed and resourceful in promoting understanding and peace. Specific provisions for education in religion have to be adapted to the particular situation



in every institution. But an atmosphere of freedom is always an essential.

Nothing is so voluntary as religion. . . . Religion practiced under compulsion is no religion at all.<sup>1</sup>

As training in religion fulfills its highest responsibility, it will inspire with a vision of the reality of God. This may not be gained at the outset. Quite possibly it will require long and diligent effort. Casual and erroneous conceptions will need to be discarded. Many adjustments in thinking may be necessary, with a persistent determination not to discontinue the search because difficulties are encountered. For a true vision of God is the utmost attainment of the human mind. The highest thought of God known to man will be the vision, which is a valid but only a partial comprehension of His infinitely greater Reality.

Worship has a central place, never as a formal, perfunctory exercise, but always that vision may be inwardly renewed and sustained. In worship knowledge of God is not a theoretical speculation nor a definition, but an apprehending experience. It deepens the inner motive of a creative will to contribute to life, and clarifies the social purpose of religion as a fellowship.

Religious training should stress the freest use of the mind in every field of inquiry, recognizing in the discovery of truth the exercise of a divinely

given capacity. Knowledge gained independently in all departments of learning is to be utilized in religious thinking, not only to enlarge the outlook but also to save religion from the mistakes and handicaps of ignorance. It is especially necessary to employ the mind with freedom and candor for an understanding of religion, its history and its classic literature, as well as its principle of development. In an age when races and different cultures are brought into close contact, a study of all the great faiths of mankind is immensely valuable, making for tolerance and improved relationships.

No obligation in religion is more urgent than to be able to discern the "signs of the times." That men should give critical attention to an understanding of their age was a repeated injunction of Christ; their eyes were to be used to see. As they studied the times as naturally as they observed the weather, they would detect the movements which brought near the Kingdom. Blindness to the significance of events was the disqualification for leadership of which men were in need. The imponderable elements, such as the trend of opinion, and the fresh aspirations of the mind, were to be seen and reckoned with. An adequate religious training is not possible unless a thorough attempt is made to have a like discernment. The mirror of an intelligent understanding must be held up, that the age in which we live may

be known in its form and feature. The signs of the present point to the fact that we are not passing through a temporary stage of making a few adjustments in the externals of living, but that we are in the midst of changes which mark an epoch in the life of our nation and of all nations. It is not enough to consider some small alterations in the upper story of civilization, taking down a partition or adding a penthouse. Men must now examine the foundations and enlarge their plans for remodeling the whole structure. Training in religion, for adults as well as for the young, is to equip students to meet the real issues, and to undertake the difficult work to be done in the world in which they have a share. It is to give them not only accurate knowledge, but also to assist them in reaching well-reasoned convictions and a definite life purpose.

As the vision of God is clear, so will be the goal of the Kingdom, the re-created society in which His spirit is expressed in all activities and institutions. In whatever apocalyptic language the coming of the Kingdom is described in some New Testament passages, symbolically to portray its majesty and eternal character, nothing can obscure the fact that men are to be fellow workers with God in the realization of its aims. This Kingdom ideal of a transformed society is inseparably a part of our religious heritage, of its very essence. But it is a living tradition which

in modern times has been walled up. It is imperative, therefore, that the obstruction to a right understanding of religion be removed, that the true inheritance be not only preserved but enriched.

How far the deficiency in a sense of social obligation in the general conduct of commercial affairs is due to a decline in personal religious convictions it is not easy to estimate. An obviously serious defect is that the social purpose and ethics of religion have not been inculcated. They have not been made to apply when the motive is profit making. Membership in religious bodies represents a considerable part of the population of America. It has approximately kept pace as the country has grown, and it is a fair forecast that the ratio will continue in the future. In many instances the connection is scarcely more than the statistics of the census; in many others it is a genuine allegiance. But as all leaders are aware, the influence of the churches upon social life and business practices is not in proportion to the numbers on their rolls. And this must be charged in no small degree to an imperfect training in what membership should mean. What an on-coming generation shall accomplish will depend upon the character of the training they receive. If the social responsibility is emphasized, if membership indicates some vision of the new order of the Kingdom, personal religion will be heightened and concentrated

on a definite task. The social order, which is "the most massive expression of the scale of values that is the working faith of a society," will then be made to express the values of the Kingdom. For the view that "the religion of a society makes no practical difference to the conduct of its affairs is not only contrary to experience, but by its very nature superficial."<sup>2</sup> Only the "creed of indifferentism" makes no difference.

It is important to realize that as the ideal of the Kingdom was not identical with any past social order, in medievalism or in Puritanism, so there must be a clear perception of the difference between this ideal and existing society. That progress has been made in enlarging the opportunities for life should be fully recognized. Let anyone be familiar with conditions in any former age and he will not want to go back to them. Physical comforts have greatly increased, class distinctions have been reduced, ability has had more room for accomplishment, education has become widespread. Consideration for others has steadily grown as a personal attitude; many injurious business practices once accepted are now regarded as unethical; the standard of service which, when Christ first proclaimed it was in revolutionary contrast with prevailing ideas, now suffers because as an exhortation it has become commonplace. The danger is that because progress

has been made we will be complacent, and by dwelling upon what has been achieved, we shall have no vision of anything greater. Consciousness of virtue will become a vice.

A goal, a higher purpose to be attained, is thus plainly needed, by which everything can be measured. Whatever already exists that contributes to it can be utilized; whatever hinders is to be removed. The quality most prized will be creativeness in devising new methods by which the end sought can be reached. Accurate knowledge of facts, a facility in making adjustments in time of change, a spirit of coöperation—these are all indispensable. But they are not enough to create a new society. An aim is necessary by which to steer, and not drift. The best service to society will be not in conforming with things as they are but in making them different.

For this creative work the most effective provision is the intensive training of groups. There should be no mistaking the fact that the task is an arduous one, calling for intelligence and undeviating devotion. Christ always warned men of the difficulties in serving the Kingdom. He did not offer His followers prizes and protection and success, but bade them count in advance the cost of discipleship. They would be misunderstood and opposed by those who in so doing "thought they did God's service." They would have to be prepared to make constant

sacrifices. And His method of education and training was in the intimacy of a small company. The history of Christianity confirms the wisdom of this method. Periods of greatest accomplishment have been when the numbers were relatively few, but of strong driving power.

In the intensive religious training of a group the aim should be not merely a theoretical discussion, but an actual facing of tasks in the light of the purpose which it is the intention to serve. A wide survey can be made of the Kingdom in the teaching of Jesus, its basic religious convictions and moral values, its interpretation in history, and its growing significance in the literature of today. While a group so formed would have a common purpose, it is not to be expected or desired that there would be agreement as to methods of promotion. Religion is far stronger, its contribution is much greater, when it puts foremost the end to be served, insists upon the right of each individual to decide as to methods, and judges every proposal by the extent to which it advances that end. In variety of viewpoint and belief, no less than in union of aim, there is strength. In scientific discussion exact knowledge of facts is sought, no partisanship is to be shown in interpreting them, results of varied experiments are critically tested. One is as eager to find out where he is wrong as to be confirmed where he is right. In this manner

truth is learned. A similar devotion and absence of partisanship will have a like result in discovering religious truths. Such training will have a salutary effect. Men differ widely in their religious beliefs and affiliations. But instead of this leading to division and aloofness as has been often the case, it should make for the recognition of a common cause and a closer association. The unifying purpose is the Kingdom of God.

Participation in some form of practical work is desirable in training. This supplies first-hand knowledge for study and discussion, and establishes a relation to the life of the community. But the training is to converge upon pioneer work as one engages in his own occupation. Actual, creative work in whatever one does is the spear point of preparation. That a group be formed is not novel. Organizations already exist with overlapping functions. It is not the idea that another should be set whirling in space. Rather the object is that each member should be equipped to do his particular work in his own way for a purpose which all share. The novelty will be found in the originality which each one can show, for which there is unlimited opportunity.

From the moment anyone attempts to earn his livelihood and increase his income, he will have to decide whether his real motive is to be profit or so-



cial benefit. One or the other will have to dominate. If the Kingdom is sought first, its moral values cannot be left aside nor treated as secondary where profit is to be made. They must be the supreme end, the profit subordinate to them and tested by them. This means that one will have to pull against a strong, turbulent current in a society where profit is chiefly sought. He will have to be fit to make headway against it. He will also have to use his intelligence. His big job is to plan how to build waterways that will set the flow in another direction. For it is only as the current is turned into broad channels and myriad conduits that the fields will become fertile, the arid deserts irrigated, and the land be really prosperous. If anyone can show skill and energy in building new channels for this purpose, he will make a contribution of the greatest value. What is learned from it can be improved upon and extended. The like-minded can unite and their power will be multiplied. As men have formed combinations of their own accord for huge profit, so can they devote the same energy and organized ability for huge social benefit. There is no single formula, like a magic carpet, that will immediately transport people to a land where the motive of contribution to society brings its benefits everywhere. The land must be built up by men and women who having faith in this principle exhibit initiative,

learn of experience, give proof of their faith by what they do. From their labors the right system can be gradually developed and carried to perfection.

In national and in local government we are in the midst of legislative changes, of new policies and programs. That a larger measure of social supervision and control is necessary in matters of production, distribution, finance, conditions and remuneration of labor, is quite generally accepted. But if there is not an enlightened sense of social responsibility, if the motive of profit is not made secondary to the motive of benefit, no legislation can be so wisely formulated and enforced that it cannot be circumvented. It will be like the olden practice of waving a sword over a land and declaring the inhabitants Christian. Laws are necessary and beneficial as they register the convictions and standards in the lives of a people. They are progressive as they are expressive of an advance in moral values. No system will work, even assuming that it could be perfectly devised, unless the people are resolved to make it work. If its aim is to give larger opportunity for everyone, there will be opportunity for abuse as well as use. Men will have to be so imbued with social purpose that they enter into its spirit; that they are able to detect on the field the play to be made, and to carry it out on their own initiative. They will have at all times to do more than the best system

specifies. Private enterprise no less than public office will have to be conducted as a public trust.

Religion nowhere deals more with real issues than in its insistence that, by the clarifying and the strengthening of the spirit within, the outward changes in individual action and society are to be wrought. It does strongly demand that all external obstacles shall be removed, all oppressive conditions, neglect and exploitation, the offenses that do injury to life. But it sees plainly that the only successful way by which these evils can be permanently overcome is by the energy of a new inner motive. To study contemporary society and to plan for its reconstruction are essential. But to present the goal is one thing, to be able to reach it is another. Religion is realistic in that it is power as well as purpose. The intimate, inevitable connection between man's inner spirit and the external structure of society should be one of the strongest impressions gained in intensive religious training.

But as religion issues in creative action, so a knowledge of the age in which we live will show not alone the deficiencies in comparison with an ideal. In the foreground of understanding will be a just appreciation of the positive forces contributing to the Kingdom, upon which to build. The highest aim of religion, it is always to be remembered, is not to condemn and to destroy, but to fulfill. In the past

achievements of a people, in their potential capacity, in their new aspirations, are to be discerned the "signs of the times" in relation to which the coming of the Kingdom is brought near.

It is from this standpoint of fulfillment that democracy is to be appraised. Christianity, as it cannot be too strongly stated, is not committed to any political system or form of government. Its concern is with spiritual conviction and moral values of which institutions, freely devised, are to be the "massive expression," and its judgment is that "by their fruits" they shall be known. But if in the ancient world the "touch of Christ" meant "not the rejection of men's gains," but "the breaking down of the barrier of stoppage, the fuller and richer development of them all," that influence can be equally potent in the life of today. The weaknesses and failures of democracy are evident; our attention is everywhere called to them. But what shall be made of its gains? What are its possibilities of achievement if the barriers to progress can be broken down? The "dilemma of democracy" is the absence of a definite faith; there is not a clear perception of its principles and a vision of the goal to be attained in the presence of the new forces with which it has to deal. There is no lack of material resources; they are possessed in abundance. The end for which they are to be used as a means must of necessity be a faith. In faith

is also the spiritual energy to attain the end. If democracy finally fails, it will be due to losing sight of the goal and to a lack of courage.

In other systems which are being set up in different parts of the world, frankly repudiating democracy, their adherents do know what they believe. How far these systems are adapted to the welfare of peoples who have not the traditions of democracy is for them alone to decide. A reciprocal attitude of fair understanding and friendliness should under all circumstances be cultivated. What is here important to realize is that fascism and communism are passionately held faiths. They have the power of a religious conviction. In a definition of fascism by Mussolini he made, as reported, this statement:

Fascism is a religious conception in which the man is seen in his immanent relationship with a superior Law. . . . [It] is not only the outcome of laws and institutions; it desires to reform not merely the form of human life, but its contents, man himself, his character, his faith. Everything for the State, nothing against the State, and nothing outside the State.<sup>8</sup>

Democracy is a faith. Why should not a people with the democratic tradition of America, with their enormous resources, their vitality and inventiveness, have a positive faith in their distinctive principles which will unite them in the determination to build up a finer society than has thus far been

achieved? In democracy are principles of freedom which were won after centuries of struggle and which are not found elsewhere. Are these to be surrendered simply because they were not given to us in perfection, because we are now called upon to reformulate and advance them ourselves?

The "authentic note" of democracy is the worth of life, the right of each individual to live; and the "dream" is to provide opportunity for the fullest possible life of everyone. The serious menace today is the control of life by the magnitude and complexity of economic forces. The task then evolves to break that "barrier of stoppage," by making material things and economic forces the means that serve life, by making possible a reasonable security and income for everyone, by leaving each life free to show initiative, and to develop untrammelled whatever spiritual capacity is possessed. It is sometimes assumed that democracy is passing because we have reached the stage where more comprehensive measures of social planning and control are obviously necessary. But in democracy this control is not by an individual or a class that has gained a power which is used to bend each individual to its end. Democracy is the self-control of a whole people, and planning, the product of the best intelligence which they are able to contribute.

Along with the worth of life, assured in its free-

dom, the faith of democracy is the belief in social purpose. This is its central principle. The affairs of the nation are to be conducted and built up by the services of its citizens. Against a ruthless individualism, and against groups whose chief motive is economic gain, democracy will have to employ methods to restrain and to supervise. What democracy now calls for is an individualism in effort and initiative which is intent upon public benefit. And the more "rugged" this kind of individualism is, the better. The need is to cultivate and to strengthen the pivotal principle of democracy, the motive of social purpose. What is causing the trouble is that this motive has been weakened, has suffered from neglect. It has not kept pace with economic growth. But this motive can be made supreme by an inner faith. If democracy is to overcome its present weaknesses, if it is to meet successfully its larger tasks, it must do so as those who are the inheritors and adherents of democracy have a renewal of faith in its essential principles. The way out of our difficulties is not in a distrust or an abandonment of democracy, but in a stronger, more intelligent devotion to it.

The part which religion has to perform in this larger achievement is quite evident. As has been pointed out, the democratic emphasis upon the value of life, the right of each individual to attain to the fullest development of his life, has its origin

in a religious and moral conviction. And the motive of social benefit is inculcated by religion as the one test of conduct, as the new standard of greatness in the teaching of Christ. The ideal of the Kingdom is the re-created society in which life is realized in the fellowship of contributing service by all of its members. Religion can thus supply to democracy an indispensable, fulfilling faith. But it does so without political entanglement or identification with any form of government. For the ideal of the Kingdom is above every state, is the corrective of all narrow nationalism, and is the bond of unity among the nations.



## *Chapter VIII*

### RELIGION AND THE UNITY OF CIVILIZATION

THERE remains for consideration the significance of the social purpose of religion for the task which is now engaging the enlightened thought and efforts of men throughout the world: Can nations find the way to live and to work together in assured and permanent peace, and for the promotion of their highest common good? The time has more than come wholly to abolish the insensate stupidity, brutality and crime of war, and to settle all differences by reasonableness and amicable adjustment.

From whatever standpoint, to do away completely with war is an imperative necessity. The safety and welfare of every nation is bound up with its accomplishment. No nation is safe, it cannot best develop in security and freedom its own internal affairs, so long as war is a possibility. If any nation thinks to put its trust in its own strength and to arm, the injurious effects will be felt immediately. The cost of armaments will suck its economic lifeblood. Suspicion and fear will be engendered. Other nations will arm likewise. Limiting agreements, provided

they can be made, may mitigate the cost by ruling out this or that weapon of attack; but they will not overcome the suspicion that pledges will be violated, possibly in peace time and surely in war. And in the event of war between nations whose military equipment is supplied by its industries, with airplanes to drop deadly gases upon whole populations, there will be an appalling destruction of life and devastation of territory that none can escape. If, instead of entering into upbuilding, coöperative relations with other nations, the policy of armament is pursued for supposed protection, it is a fatal delusion. It is a course which aggravates and makes for disaster.

War is the great destroyer which must be renounced if civilization is to continue and future progress is to be made. For we cannot blow up the material resources of civilization, demolish its cities and towns and monuments, employ its discoveries and inventions for ruin and slaughter, cut off millions of lives, especially youth, giving them no chance to fulfill their promise and to carry on, without pulling down the pillars about our heads and destroying ourselves. We cannot by violence make a wreck of our house and still have it to live in, nor leave it as a fit dwelling place for those who come after us.

In modern civilization the contacts are so numerous and so interwoven that it is not possible for any

nation to choose whether it will have relations with others or not. The sole question is, What shall be the character of those relations? If a man lives in a remote cabin in the wilderness his fortunes are mainly in his own keeping. But when the land is developed and villages and towns grow up about him, he will have many associations with other people. He will have to decide how he can work in friendly and successful relations with them. And if the life of the community is not well managed and prosperous, he will be affected. A century or so ago it might have seemed possible for a nation to live in comparative isolation. But that day is past. Owing to developments within civilization itself no nation is remote. News and opinions are communicated almost instantly everywhere. Industries and financial operations are an intricate network flung over the earth. We must therefore face the realities of our age and not cling to the "wishful thinking" that a nation can, if it chooses, live for and unto itself alone, for that is only an idea existing in the imagination, from a former period, without foundation in fact. There is not a single major issue of today which can be satisfactorily solved save by intelligent, world-wide effort. Tariffs and monetary standards, the production and distribution of goods, are concrete illustrations, while education, spiritual intercourse, scientific and

cultural interests, have a horizon of outlook which knows no geographical frontiers.

There are quite obviously duties and tasks which each nation must perform for itself. Every people must see to it that its own house is put in order. No person is in a position to do much that is helpful with others if he neglects his own task. But will his work be done in a manner that benefits or injures the community of which he is a member? That is an aspect which cannot be ignored. So is it with nations. If any one of them adopts a policy that adversely affects the conditions of living in other countries, the plea cannot be made that it is only looking after its own affairs. It is causing other people serious hardship. As each nation performs its work it must perforce consider the consequences of its acts, whether these lead to friction or to cordial relationships, and in case of conflicts how revisions may be effected to mutual benefit.

The adjustments that need to be made among nations are so involved, the problems of international coöperation are so enormous, that it is sometimes thought that it is beyond men's ability successfully to deal with them. It is an intriguing idea that in a land with the population and resources of America we do not need to be concerned with them. We have not the knowledge or the training, it is said, to cope with them; we are likely to become the vic-

tims of a subtle diplomacy which is distasteful and of which we are guileless; and it is not wise to depart from a policy of aloofness. Why not leave such matters alone and be content and comfortable with what we have? In a world made small by commerce and science, with myriad connections binding together all parts, it is difficult to picture what kind of a Chinese Wall could be erected over which we would neither pass nor allow intruders. But even assuming that it were possible, is it a desirable course? Is the bigness of a task any reason for running away from it? Certainly that is not the reaction of young people, nor of people who keep young. In a generation which, with the exception of a few individuals, did not observe what was happening in the world nor take measures to avert a gathering catastrophe, it is perhaps understandable that from a feeling of perplexity and weariness some might counsel leaving the mess and getting away from it. But it takes little acquaintance with an on-coming generation to discover that its members have no intention of avoiding a challenging, constructive undertaking. In increasing numbers they are studying the facts and the causes, and going into training to deal with them. And if they sometimes hit about quite lustily in protest against things as they are, that is understandable, too. A better course than to surrender is to bid them learn from past failures and devote their

energies to an exhilarating task which calls for the highest intelligence and courage.

In the years that have passed since the War, there has been, especially in some European countries, a conspicuous and disappointing growth of nationalistic spirit. A consciousness of weakness from exhaustion, a feeling of insecurity, a smoldering sense of injustice, the suffering from unemployment and poverty, have caused the people of a nation to think chiefly of how they could bring about their own recovery, redress their wrongs, and be protected from the devastation of another war. By familiar arguments armed force is advocated and depended upon as the means of defense. Tariff barriers are raised. There are slogans urging it as a patriotic duty to buy only articles that are produced at home. By specious interpretation and sometimes by pressure the support of religion is sought for solely nationalistic aims. In extreme cases portions of the population thought to be incongruous are expelled or subjected to hardship, in disregard of the self-injury that is thereby inflicted on the aggressors.

The indictment cannot fairly be made against any people of deliberately war-like intentions. Among the folk of every nation there is a deep, even an intense, longing for peace. But they are obsessed with fear; and fear will blind a nation, as it does an individual, to its best interests and will prevent

reasonable judgments. The citizens of one country will dwell on the wrongs which they feel have been imposed upon them, on the way some other nation thwarts their proper aspirations, and on the designs which it is suspected are entertained against them. But visit that other country and the citizens there will talk in the same manner regarding the first. So there is the vicious circle from which no one seems able to escape, but which somehow must be broken before progress can be made. It is a study on a large scale for the psychologist as well as for the statesman, and requires for adjustment sympathetic insight into the workings of the mind and the emotions, no less than skillfully formulated political plans. The heart of the problem is to overcome fear, and the only power that can dispel fear is faith.

Men can never be content with an exclusive nationalism. It goes counter to a deep instinct for unity, reacts harmfully within a nation, is not in accord with basic human relationships, and is the repetition of a policy which man's better judgment, taught by experience, knows to be defective. The highest devotion to country cannot be made anti-thetic to the larger interests of mankind. Men are made of one blood to dwell upon the face of the earth, and the search must be continued for a kind

of civilization which is in conformity with that fundamental fact.

The League of Nations is a definite forward step in that direction. In spite of failures and disappointments the remarkable thing is that it has survived. A close examination will show a record of achievements which are real and important, though they are often unrecognized. While its decrees may be ignored, for the employment of physical force as a super-government would be counter to its aims, yet strong nations as well as small are aware of its potential value and promise, in promoting conference and conciliation, and in expressing world opinion. But its operations are seriously hampered. In many respects the League has "hardly yet been permitted to attempt the task men expected of it after the Armistice."<sup>1</sup> Representatives of the nations are not free, as for example, are men of science, to examine impartially any issue, to establish the facts, and to make decisions as far as possible in the interest of fairness and justice. They have to take into account the views of those whom they represent, their unfamiliarity with all the facts, their preconceived ideas and prejudices, and their reluctance to accept any decision which can be construed as an infringement upon the claims which they insist must be upheld.<sup>2</sup> There is the absence of a superior purpose, accepted by every nation and served by all, in the



light of which common action can be taken with the assurance that it will receive general support. Thus public opinion in each nation, the kind of education and intellectual outlook that there prevail, the standards and purpose which a people have as the goal they would reach, are the vital factors which determine the relation of nations to one another.

For many centuries there was, as has been said,<sup>3</sup> the conception of an overarching purpose which was the basis for a world-wide unity. No state was an end in itself, organized without thought of obligation to others, and to assert only its own assumed interests. There were moral values and spiritual standards which were superior to the state, which as they were sought made for concord, and which were to guide the actions of rulers and peoples. As the one purpose was to be served by all, it was the bond that related nations to each other. It made possible the adjustment of conflicting claims, as the nations worked together in a common loyalty. This was the ideal of the Kingdom of God. But with the waning of the social application of religion, the contraction of its influence simply to personal conduct, and the division of life into two spheres, the modern state became more and more an end in itself. It had no other object than to uphold and to extend its own power. By no moral standard were its actions to be determined or judged. In place of the unity of a

common superior purpose, bitter rivalry arose for markets, enlargement of territory, and political dominance, with scheming and unstable alliances adding to the menace. The results are well known.

With the utmost wisdom and fearlessness it can command, religion must give to the nations, as well as to individuals and to the society within each nation, the vision of the new social order of the Kingdom of God. Without any form of political dictation, and equally without political subserviency, it must uphold moral values and principles as above the state. And it must present the aim of the Kingdom to create a world society in which men everywhere shall realize the fullness of life as the unifying purpose which the nations are to serve. Religion now plainly suffers from the handicap of permitting this ideal to be withdrawn from the whole of life. As a consequence it was not able to counteract the forces that led to a world war. Instead of standing for a superior, spiritual order, it became subject to the states. The grossly inconsistent, humiliating spectacle of "blessing the arms of all the belligerents" teaches a lesson which the adherents of religion must never forget. Among Christian bodies there are divisions and a lack of coöperation which, unless they are overcome, will largely nullify the appeal of religion to men and to nations to live together in unity. In a new age re-

ligion must purify its practices, summon up new energies, enlarge its vision, and resolve not to be disobedient unto it. Religion must now deal with and eradicate the causes of conflict, make strong the basic relationships of men, so that the bond is equal to the strain of whatever differences.

As the root cause of conflict is the state wrongly conceived of and acting as an end in itself, so the purpose that is higher must be first seen and striven for within the state. If it is not made the goal in a nation's internal affairs it will not be sought anywhere. But the purpose is not of limited application. It has universal validity. It fashions and disposes the character of a people in all their dealings. And what a people do at home will largely determine what they seek abroad. The same aim is therefore to be made foremost as the nations have contact with one another. It is the one end above them all which they are all to serve by their united efforts. This is the one condition which makes effective coöperation possible. The international mind of understanding embraces an international purpose of action. Independence is everywhere cherished, nowhere more so than in our country. It is a hard-won possession, too valuable to be surrendered. But devotion to a universally valid purpose is the truest form of self-direction. It is the willing use of independence for an end that is greater than self-advancement. For na-

tions, like individuals, grow and fulfill their lives as they are mastered by a cause in the service of which there is perfect freedom.

To promote spiritual culture in the widest sense of the term is the true aim of coöperation. The imperishable greatness of any people is in their intellectual attainments, in their literature, art, and education; in their conception of life and the provisions made for its fullest development; in their knowledge and interpretation of the universe in which men live. These achievements are by their very nature a common possession. They are increased by sharing. The success of any one nation contributes to the life of all. They lead to understanding and association among nations and races of differing gifts and inheritances; and they are multiplied as men unite in seeking them. Only as this spiritual purpose is made supreme can economic and political problems be successfully adjusted. When each nation has as its chief object material gain and political power it is simply the profit motive magnified and made infinitely more complicated. Its poison has the same destroying effect as when it is the motive of individuals within a nation. Economic and political movements now make strongly for unity and coöperation among the nations. They can contribute mightily as the means when the moral and spiritual values of life are sought first.

It is this type of unity which is envisaged by the Kingdom of God. Every civilization is the creation of vision, whether it be the ancient civilization of Greece and Rome, the organization of society in the Middle Ages, or in the rise of modern states. America has its "dream" which has now to be more fully realized in a new age when a reordering of its social life is necessary. By the interplay of forces the same task is faced by every nation. A clear perception of the goal for which to plan is indispensable.

The purpose of the Kingdom of God is in the worth of personality, fellowship, and the spiritual quality of life. These are its ultimate moral values to be realized in all human interests. Like all other values they are a faith. This faith is that life has a meaning, a purpose, that though man cannot comprehend the infinite universe of which he is a part, yet in his highest aspirations and ideals he is inwardly related to its Creative Power and Reality. Civilization, which is always a spiritual achievement, is weakened and subject to disintegration when life is felt to have no meaning or purpose, when the finest conceptions that men can form are regarded as having no correspondence with anything in the universe of fact. The moral values of the Kingdom have their validity in the vision of God. Faith in them as real can prove itself by its creative

power. A new, world-wide civilization, consciously planned for and built up in the social organization of each nation according to its heritage and the pattern of its "dream," is the creation which that vision foresees.

## NOTES





## NOTES

### CHAPTER I

1. James Truslow Adams, *The Epic of America*, 1931, p. 404.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 405.
3. Quoted by Dean Inge, *Things New and Old*, 1933, p. 11.
4. A stimulating discussion of this subject is given by Walter Lippmann in his Charter Day Address at the University of California, printed in *The New York Herald Tribune*, March 24, 1933. Indebtedness is acknowledged to his concise treatment.

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1. Nicholas Murray Butler, an address, *Our Times*, April 15, 1932.
2. Amos 5:25 and Isaiah 1:11-17.
3. Isaiah 2:4.
4. Jeremiah 31:31-33.
5. Isaiah 42:1-4.
6. John 10:10.
7. Matthew 25:31-40.
8. Mark 1:14-15, and many other passages.
9. Walter Lippmann, "Charter Day at the University of California," *The New York Herald Tribune*, March 24, 1933.
10. Stephen P. Duggan, *Thirteenth Annual Report of the Director, Institute of International Education*, 1932, p. 3.
11. Sir Alfred Ewing, *Presidential Address*, British Association for the Advancement of Science, 1932, p. 17.

12. T. R. Glover, *The Influence of Christ in the Ancient World*, 1932. The general argument of this book is here followed.
13. James T. Shotwell, *Introduction to the History of History*, 1922, p. 279.
14. T. R. Glover, *The Influence of Christ in the Ancient World*, p. 122.

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1. Nicholas Murray Butler, *The Meaning of Education*, 1915, pp. 184 ff.
2. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
3. Chapter V, pp. 66 ff.
4. Chapter VII, pp. 114 ff.
5. Quoted by Dean Inge, *Things New and Old*, 1933, p. 48.
6. George S. Counts, *Dare the School Build a New Social Order?* 1932, p. 22.
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## CHAPTER IV

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2. Isaiah 65: 1.
3. Compare Frederick Barry, *The Scientific Habit of Thought*, 1927, Chap. I.
4. Isaiah 40: 15-17.
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6. *Ibid.*, p. 31.
7. Proverbs 20: 27.
8. Compare G. A. Johnston Ross, *Behavior and Destiny*, 1931, p. 16.
9. As in the Lord's Prayer, Matthew 6: 9-10; Luke 11: 2.
10. B. H. Streeter, *The Buddha and the Christ*, 1932, p. 248.
11. The psychological process in a religious experience is exactly like the psychological process in making a scien-

tific discovery: the mind lays hold upon a piece of reality. Statement by Dr. Fritz Künkel of Berlin.

12. James T. Shotwell, *The Religious Revolution of Today*, 1924, pp. 184, 185, 186.
13. William P. Montague, *Belief Unbound*, 1930, p. 67.

#### CHAPTER V

1. William P. Montague, *Belief Unbound*, 1930, p. 95.
2. William Temple, *Personal Religion and the Life of Fellowship*, 1926, pp. 2, 3.
3. Charles Gore, *Christ and Society*, 1928, pp. 25-26.
4. Luke 6:35.
5. I John 4:20. See also comments by Rudolf Otto, *India's Religion of Grace and Christianity Compared and Contrasted*, 1930, pp. 76-77.
6. Matthew 5:23-24.
7. John Macmurray, *Freedom in the Modern World*, 1932; also review of this book by C. E. M. Joad, *The Spectator*, July 9, 1932.

#### CHAPTER VI

1. Alfred Marshall, quoted by H. G. Wood in "Ethics and Economics," *Christianity and the Present Moral Unrest*, 1926, p. 196.
2. Compare *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, by R. H. Tawney, printed in several editions, 1926-29. This work is a scholarly and illuminating study of the causes which have led to a restriction of religious influence in relation to economics and social organization in the modern age. Obligation is here acknowledged for use made of Professor Tawney's material and treatment.
3. *Ibid.*, p. 278.
4. *Ibid.*, p. 42.
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3. A statement as quoted and translated by Professor Sibille in his address on "Fascism and Life in Modern Italy."

## CHAPTER VIII

1. Alfred Zimmern, *Learning and Leadership*, 1930, p. 82.
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3. See Chap. VI of this book.

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