

WHAT SHOULD WE DO?

CHAPTER 23.

My three books, “Man’s Relationship with God”, a “Reconciliation with Science and War”, and this book, are intended to be a trilogy. Let me first recapitulate the essence of these three books, and then try to reduce what I have to say to the utmost simplicity.

The principal and fundamental idea in my book “Man’s Relationship with God” is that all true relationships preclude analysis, and can be analysed only in so far as they are defective. So if you try to analyse them, you destroy them; at least you do if you succeed in analysing them. The final idea in the book is that the next step to take in man’s guidance of evolution is to transfer the idea of the interpenetration of two minds, from the world of military command where its efficacy has been appreciated for a long time, to the civilian world, where instinct warns of its dangers. Indeed the whole book is an account of the fearful dangers of attempting such an interpenetration, without a corresponding sense of communion with the Divine Spirit. Emily Bronte’s novel *Wuthering Heights* sums up to perfection what those dangers are. All other thoughts in the book are subsidiary to these.

The principal idea in a “Reconciliation with Science and War” is that there is no permanence of thought in the mental world, anymore than there is permanence of substance in the physical world. Only in a companionship with the Almighty is there any permanence. And even an indwelling with Him changes. I compress the theory of consciousness developed in *Man’s Relationship with God* into a more philosophical form; and suggest that the symbolism of my theory is that **every attitude of mind has its own logic**. All disciplined thought takes place in an attitude of mind, and indeed all thought does; and any attitude rests on certain unspoken and usually unconscious assumptions, some of which may be true and some false. Jung was mistaken when he said in the last chapter of *Psychological Types* that “Attitude” was an **a priori** orientation which was not susceptible to analysis; it can be analysed on the basis of the assumptions on which it rests. And any attitude exists within an envelope of consciousness that imposes a rigid discipline on the thought that can take place within that attitude of mind. In other words, the envelope **shapes the reasoning** within that attitude of mind, and so provides its unique logic. For example, worthwhile legal thought or worthwhile military thought can only take place within the professional frames of mind of these two professions. And of course logic, or reason, can only tell you what conclusions are true if the basic assumptions of that attitude of mind are true. In other words, if the assumptions are not entirely valid, neither are the conclusions; and all mental discipline is cut down to size.

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To summarize, no intellectual discipline is worth much, until you have considered the unspoken and usually unconscious assumptions that underlie the attitude responsible for that discipline. This is equally true for religion, science and War.

The principal idea in this book is that there is no impediment to a Christian View of Nature and the Universe, because no theory of life ever measures up to the reality of life, as we all live it in practice. Science is limited, political and military theory are limited, theology is limited; there is nothing to prevent a man or woman regarding this world as God's creation. No need for them to do so; but nothing to stop them if they want to, neither in logic, nor in experience, nor in authority. Besides traditional authority largely vanished with the slaughter on the Somme in 1916. The authority that most people respect is that of their colleagues; professional bodies, trades unions, neighbours, churches, even criminal gangs. Few respect the State, when they regard those who run the State with contempt. And many people find the rate of change in modern society bewildering. So there is much to recommend the view that God created the Universe. Probably it is true, and that recommends it. God's mind seeking out Man's mind makes sense of Evolution, and provides an indirect approach to creating a better world, when the direct approach ended with the murder of Jesus. And above all, everyone has a part to play, who wants one. What more could one ask, to make sense of life?

Can I reduce what I have to say to simplicity? Whilst the inspiration for my first book was undoubtedly the forlorn love, by which I hoped to reconcile symbolically England and Germany after the War; it would be absurd for me to persuade myself that this was the inspiration throughout. No single person, however attractive their character, is going to provide the inspiration for creating a view of the entire known cosmos in the imagination. Not even Jesus could provide this inspiration. You cannot pluck him out of his Jewish society of 2000 years ago, and deposit him into our contemporary society, with its astonishing wealth of knowledge and experience; and expect a happy result. And this is the essential thing: to try to understand the situation in which we find ourselves. Clausewitz never laid down Rules for planning a campaign or conducting a battle. He sought to teach soldiers to understand the nature of War; and if they did, and if they were caught up in war, they were then in a position to decide how to act wisely. And that is what I seek to do with my Theory of Consciousness; to try to help others to appreciate the power and the limitations of the processes of the mind. What the mind can do, and what it can not do; and not be taken in by those who peddle lies.

And as far as inspiration was concerned, I accepted it from any source that offered it. So what sense was I able to make of things, once I had left the initial inspiration behind? The best sense I could make of it, was that a religion that does not help to resolve the most

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difficult decisions one is ever likely to have to make, namely the **form of one's relationships with other people**, is largely a waste of time. "Man's Relationship with God" has been described as "basically a study of relationships". And I came to see that religion should help form, not just the most important relationships, but all of them. So these three books are my attempt to persuade myself and others that the religion that Jesus inaugurated, however many mistakes he made, however inappropriate his language in the dramatically different social conditions today, does indeed help one to form all these relationships, because he persuades us that God himself is willing to participate in their formation. **That means helping to form the structure of the State**, which is the sum total of the people who comprise it, and their relationships with one another. At least the Christian God helps; though I very much fear that the Muslim God might consider it would demean himself to do so.

If the Quakers are right to talk about "that of God in everyman", if Jung is right that the image of God is deeply written into the unconscious part of the Psyche, then those who turn their backs on religion, are cutting themselves off from what is best in themselves. In our secular society, the Army is probably the best human society within our country; but serving soldiers wisely and understandably resist the temptation to get involved in politics. So in the civilian world, you need something to replace the esprit-de-corps that carries the Army through its difficulties and dangers. A vision of a World Created by God is, in my opinion, the best that you are going to get. And if you have sufficient imagination to look through His eyes, just for a moment, it is hardly surprising that by hook or by crook He should compel men and women to acknowledge his presence?

Although for the individual, a companionship with the Almighty, the Creator, should be a life full of wonder and praise; it should no longer be a solitary journey with Him. It should rather be as a citizen of the State, with its history and traditions, its camaraderie, its humour and its tolerance, but spurning the allurements of evil. And a national church ought to be the focus of these most desirable aspirations.