

and symbols that unavoidably accompany the expression of the sentiment. Doubters have a habit of fixing attention upon the content that assists our thoughts. But attention, as the poet George Herbert assures us, may be fixated far as well as near:

He who looks on glass,  
On it may stay his eye;  
Or if he pleaseth through it pass,  
And then the heavens espy.

## The Nature of Faith

### 3 STAGES OF BELIEF...

1. IN THE PREVIOUS CHAPTER I stated that belief normally seems to develop in three stages. There is first a period of raw credulity, most clearly seen in the child who believes indiscriminately in the evidence of his senses, of his imagination, and in what he hears. His first religious beliefs are derived chiefly from what he hears, that is, from "verbal realism." To him words are as good as facts. That some of this primitive credulity lasts throughout life is evident, but chiefly, I think, in minds marked by arrested development, or in areas where we are starkly ignorant or in the face of strong prestige suggestion. Some religious belief among adults is of this unquestioning variety—childish, authoritarian, and irrational.

2. Normally, however, a second stage of development disrupts the first. Doubts of the many sorts we have considered flood into one's life. They are an integral part of all intelligent thinking. Until one has faced the improbabilities involved in any commitment one is not free to form an independent conviction based on productive thinking and observing.

3. Mature belief, the third stage, grows painfully out of the alternating doubts and affirmations that characterize productive thinking. We evolve our important beliefs *pari passu* with our values and our sentiments. When I say I believe in education, in civil rights, in the United Nations, I mean

ALONG WITH  
PARI PASSU (PASS-SOO)  
(PAR)

that these intangible objects are regarded by me not only as existing but also as desirable and wholly consonant with my personal sentiment-structure. They are necessary to me if I am to fulfill the course of development that has now become my essential style of life. All positive sentiments entail belief of this sort. For without belief one could not act in keeping with one's sentiments, and if one could not act out one's sentiments one soon would lose them. It is important to remark that beliefs may be held with all grades of certainty. Even a relatively unsure belief can marshal a great deal of energy. One does not know for certain that the United Nations can save civilization from collapse, but one can be loyal and helpful if one at least believes there is a good chance.

\* Is "faith" the same as "belief"? Often the words are used interchangeably, although more often there is a difference in connotation. We tend to speak of faith when we are designating the less sure beliefs. We believe our eyes, and we believe the proposition that twice two are four, but we have faith in America, or in the ultimate triumph of good over evil. There is, of course, a borderline of discourse where we can use either term. "I believe in the United Nations" means much the same as "I have faith in the United Nations."

"Faith" also seems to carry a warmer glow of affection than does bare "belief." It suggests that though the risk may be greater, still the commitment is stronger and the outcome of the wager more precious. Most people, when asked, say they believe in God. But in many of these cases the reply seems perfunctory, and one suspects that the religious sentiment behind the statement is rudimentary. But when an individual says, "I have faith in God," it seems almost certain that the religious sentiment holds a prominent place in his personality-structure.

This excursion into semantics has no particular importance for our purpose excepting to indicate that faith is probably more complex psychologically than is simple belief. Although the term may be used in connection with any sentiment, it is most characteristically used in connection with the religious sentiment. And this fact seems to signify that we are dimly aware of the special intricacies involved in the affirmations arising from this sentiment.

## AN INTEREST SYSTEM.

### The Religious Intention

\* The maturely productive religious sentiment, I have argued throughout these pages, is an interest-system within the structure of an individual's personality basically like any other well-developed interest-system. Like other mature sentiments it is well differentiated, which means that the individual at various times can view its sub-parts and their relation to one another; it is dynamic in its own right, that is, it plays an important autonomous part in the motivational life of the individual regardless of its own origins; it is productive of conduct consistent with the nature of the sentiment, and engenders a conscience appropriate to the values involved. Because of its special nature, however, the religious sentiment in some respects does differ in degree if not in kind from other mature sentiments. It is certainly more comprehensive, since it aims to join all experience into a single meaningful system. It is likewise a uniquely integral system in that it aims to give one leading directive to the life as a whole. Finally, because of the limited certainties that plague any religious belief, there is an heuristic quality to this sentiment: it is held with loyalty for the very purpose of discovering all the good and all the truth that may issue from it.

Now it seems to me that these distinctive features of the religious sentiment must lead us to expect a somewhat distinctive character in religious faith—as opposed to any other sort of faith. Specifically, I propose that we look for that peculiar character in mature religious faith that attends its comprehensiveness, its integral and its heuristic character.

The simplest way to start our search is to examine two profoundly religious utterances from Thomas à Kempis, *De Imitatione Christi*. The first is in the form of a supplication:

Comfort my banishment;  
Assuage my sorrow;  
For my whole desire sigheth after Thee.

The phrase, "my whole desire sigheth after Thee," expresses with classic simplicity the attributes of comprehensiveness and integrality in the developed religious sentiment.

The second quotation is a brief homily:

If God were always the pure intention of our desire, we should not be so easily troubled.

Am I wrong in seeing in this passage a recognition of the heuristic character of religious faith? Is it not saying that if faith were adequate the believer would find his riddles solved and his anxieties allayed? He would make discoveries of knowledge and of value.

But the feature of this quotation of special importance to us is the author's use of *intention*. God, he says, may be "the pure intention of our desire." What does he mean? To explain this statement psychologically is not easy, for American psychology up to now has dealt very little with phenomenological concept of intention. Yet it is my opinion that little progress can be made in the understanding of the individual and his religion without the aid of precisely this concept.

The study of INTENTION IS

The Meaning of Intention

The first modern psychologist to give intention a prominent place in his system of thought was Brentano, the Austrian.<sup>1</sup> For him the one fundamental characteristic of human life is the mental act. To act mentally is to *intend* an object that represents our goal. One can name no condition of mental life that is not one of stretching toward, aiming at, or otherwise intending a goal. Always the individual is trying to do something. One might say that the grammatical part of speech most typical of mental life is the active participle, for at every moment of time the individual is occupied in comprehending, comparing, judging, approving, disapproving, loving, hating, fearing, rejecting, yielding, adoring. The possible modes of intending are numerous, probably more numerous than the available store of present participles in our language.

It is typical of American psychology that it refused to accommodate itself to Brentano's conception of the *mental act*. What would we practical-minded people do with a merely mental act? We prefer physical acts, visible accomplishment, results. Behaviorism is more our style. The very word *act* is hard for an American to understand unless it means the moving of muscles. While Brentano would not deny the motor concomitants of mental activity, still to him the important thing is what the individual is trying to do in relating himself to the objects of his own thinking, not what he is seen externally to accomplish. The superiority of Brentano's act-psychology over behaviorism is immediately apparent in the field of religion where the subjective thrust of the mind is obviously important and where overt behavior is far less revealing.

<sup>1</sup> Franz Brentano. *Psychologie vom empirischen Standpunkt*, two volumes, Leipzig: Verlag Felix Meiner, 1924. (First printed in 1874.)

MISSING IN P.

2 promises that get at the distinctive features of religious sentiment

mental ACT = intention striving towards

(PRAYER)

We need Brentano's teaching likewise to repair the otherwise static impression created by our concept of sentiment. Up to now we have dealt chiefly with the structure and attributes of sentiment, but it is its *activity* that we should emphasize. A sentiment is no mere static fitting of the mind, a simple storehouse for a cluster of related ideas and values. It is rather a mainspring of the individual's life from which radiate all manner of intentions whose purpose is to fulfill the values comprising the sentiment. At one moment a father may intend to understand something relevant to his paternal sentiment; at another moment to give comfort to the child who is the object of this sentiment; at still another time the intention may be to elicit some sign of affection from the child. Any mature sentiment is so highly differentiated that it requires a variety of intentions to express its own many-sidedness.

There is one possible misunderstanding regarding intention that must be avoided. Writing in pre-Freudian days, Brentano was perhaps insufficiently mindful of the fact that a person's goals are occasionally hidden from himself. A possessive mother may claim her intention to be the welfare of her children, though deeper exploration may show that her purposes are far more self-centered. In such a situation the motivational stream has unconscious components, and the person simply does not know his own intentions. But in such cases we are dealing with neurotic disorders where the sentiment is not mature or productive. A mature sentiment, by definition, is not at the mercy of unconscious motives that one fails to understand, but represents a style of existence that the individual has adopted after considerable reflection as a means of relating himself to life.

The goal of an intention, as Brentano pointed out, is always represented to the mind as an idea. The person intends to reach such and such an objective as conceived by himself.

If you propound me a riddle and I seek the answer, I am intending a goal that I feel to lie at the terminus of the mental act itself. Occasionally the object sought, though held in mind as an idea, conforms closely to some outward condition. Thus a century ago it was common to say, "I intend for England this spring," or "I intend for Ohio." Though we do not use the verb any longer without an auxiliary infinitive, we do frequently specify the object of our intention so clearly that its attainment can be unambiguously checked. We say, "I intend to go to England this spring," "I intend to buy a new coat," "I intend to study philosophy."

Yet many times the goal of an intention is not so clear, not even to the individual himself. Hungers and resulting strivings may be acutely felt, without one knowing precisely what will still the unrest. A youth, for instance, may be ambitious to discover a vocation, to make a name for himself, to be "somebody." But all this ardent intention is as yet unfocused. He knows not what vocation he will choose, nor to what concrete objectives he must devote himself. Sometimes we designate unrest that has not found its polarization as "divine discontent." Vividness of longing does not necessarily require clarity of object. When Thomas à Kempis wrote, "My whole desire sigheth after Thee," he was clear concerning his desire, less clear concerning the precise attributes of the Deity for whom he sighed. When the Scholastics wrote, "It is more important to love God than to know Him," they meant that the intention itself, rather than the clarity of the object, distinguishes the religious sentiment.

In developing his psychology of the act, Brentano was influenced by Catholic theology which, perceiving the vital part intention plays in the practice and rationale of religion, has given it a prominent place. Catholic writing defines intention as "an act of will, tending efficaciously to some good, proposed by the intellect as desirable and attainable." This

particular definition is couched in terms of a faulty psychology, viewing will and intellect as separate departments of mental life. Dynamic psychology would prefer to avoid this duality, and say more simply that intention is the striving of an individual for a goal that is more or less clearly envisaged and congruent with a sentiment.

1. In Catholic theological writing concerning intention there are two points of special value for us. One is that intention is never indifferent to the means employed. To desire an end is to desire appropriate means. If a person intends health for himself he is bound to intend the means to achieve health. All our intentions require implementation, and so we conclude that any major intention, say, to seek God, will carry with it minor intentions that lead to the employment of suitable means. In other words, our special attitudes toward ritual, prayer, or matters of doctrine provide particular aids through which we carry out the more general intention of the whole sentiment. It is the differentiation of the religious sentiment that brings about this supplementary relation of intended ends and intended means.

2. Secondly, Catholic theology has made us aware of four grades of intention. There is psychological value in this four-fold analysis. (1) An intention is said to be *actual* when it expressly asserts the end desired. It is kept in mind while the action is taking place. If one intends to worship God and proceeds with his devotions to this end, his intention is actual. (2) An intention is *virtual* when a person has made a previous commitment, but does not feel the need for re-affirming it. Having decided to travel to Paris six months hence, I do not need to repeat the decision. Once made and not retracted, the intention is efficacious until it is carried through. A person who has decided to order his life according to a religious pattern finds this decision influencing his daily conduct even at times when he is not aware that it does so.

3. (3) An intention, in the Catholic sense, is *habitual* when it has never been carried out. Once made and never retracted, it has lapsed from active memory or at least it fails to motivate conduct. I say: I will take out insurance, or paint my house, or give up drinking; but I just don't get around to it. Habitual intentions, in this theological sense, seem to be those with which hell is paved. (4) Finally there are cases where intentions have not been made but we can safely infer they would have been made if the individual had been aware of the opportunity. We can assume, for example, that a good parent would intend to supply the best of vitamins for his child if he knew what they were. This grade of intention the theologians call *interpretative*, a "disposition of the will toward having an intention."<sup>2</sup>

The psychological value of this subtle analysis lies in its demonstration that people who maintain a religious orientation may do so in a variety of ways. In one person the "virtual" intention predominates. Such an individual, we may say, lives his religion though he rarely affirms it explicitly. In another, the carrying out of frequent, devotional, "actual" intentions may be the distinguishing mark. Another individual may seem to us almost "unintentionally" religious. From his behavior we feel certain he would make a religious choice if he were confronted with the issue, but this fact is only "interpretative." There are many varieties and combinations of religious intention possible for different mortals and for any one mortal at different times.

There is one final merit in the concept of intention which helps account for its importance in the psychology of religion. Its emphasis is on the future. And the future is what concerns people most of all. The chief shortcoming of American psychology up to now, I think, is its poverty in representing

<sup>2</sup> See "Intention" in *The Catholic Encyclopedia*, Volume 8, New York: Robert Appleton Company, 1910.

Teleology

People RIDING A TRAIN  
vs - DESTINATION

the future. While most people are absorbed in planning for, working for, dreaming for, the future, psychology for the most part is busily engaged in tracing their lives backward.<sup>3</sup> Most psychologists see behavior as pushed "from behind" by goads that prod us out of our past. Yet is it not characteristic of maturely directed activity, arising from the sentiments that form personality, that it is always oriented toward the future? To understand a person we have to know what he is trying to accomplish, what he is trying to become, not merely "how he got the way he is." When we look at the passengers on a railroad train they seem at first sight to be singularly aimless. But when we become acquainted with our seat mate, and learn his proposed destination and what he plans to do there, he suddenly becomes warm and human. His actions are now seen in meaningful perspective. And so it is generally: all people are in transit; and we find it less revealing to know where they came from or where they are now than to know their intended destinations.

Now many of man's intended destinations are audaciously conceived. Some people envision a One World government, they labor for it, they reach greedily for it, all the while knowing they are unlikely to achieve it in their lifetime. The poet was right: our reach exceeds our grasp. It is the reach (the long-range intention) and not the grasp (the accomplishment up to now) that confers consistency and integration on personality. Harmony of life, as Goethe said, comes not to him who attains his goals, but to him who "ceaselessly striving bestirs himself." It is the long-range intentions that have the power to order habits, thoughts, traits, into a unity of function.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. G. W. Allport. Geneticism versus ego-structure in theories of personality, *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 1946, 16, 57-68; also Scientific models and human morals, *Psychological Review*, 1947, 54, 182-192.

Let me sum up. Faith is basically man's belief in the validity and attainability of some goal (value). The goal is set by desires. Desires, however, are not merely pushes from behind (drive ridden). They include such complex, future-oriented states as longing for a better world, for one's own perfection, for a completely satisfying relation to the universe. So important is this forward thrust in all desires emanating from mature sentiments that I propose the term "intention" to depict the dynamic operation we are endeavoring to describe. Better than "desire" this term designates the presence of the rational and ideational component in all productive striving. Some sort of idea of the end is always bound into the act itself. It is this inseparability of the idea of the end from the course of the striving that we call faith.



*Forms of the Religious Intention*

Unfortunately we cannot say that there is only one basic form of the religious intention. It is a variable phenomenon. One person may seek a beatific vision, another may long for strength to live one day in accordance with his ideals. Both intentions are religious. On one occasion the individual may be heavily concerned with some particular need—for health, for consolation, for the wisdom to make a right decision. This concern, if it touches the religious sentiment, may issue into a prayer of supplication. On another occasion the individual may desire the welfare of others, and his intention is intercessory. Feeling relief or gratitude, the intention may be one of thanksgiving. A longing to be freed from a sense of guilt leads to intentions of contrition and penance. About all we can say is that all religious acts try in some way to close the gap that exists between the actual state of one's values and the possibility of their fuller realization. The

shortcoming of most definitions of religion, as I have previously said, is their tendency to center upon one limited type of religious intention. Finding release from self, perfecting one's social relations, worshipping the "wholly other," are authentic intentions, but by no means exhaust the forms that occur.

Perhaps I am being too relativistic about the matter. May there not be, after all, one central core to every religious state? A study made under the direction of Professor Braden of Northwestern University asked more than two thousand people why they were religious (if they were). Out of sixty-five suggested answers the one most commonly endorsed was that "religion gives meaning to life."<sup>4</sup> Should we not say, therefore, that the pursuit of meaning is the heart of religious intention? The evidence shows that this longing for meaning is indeed frequently present, but the same evidence shows that it is by no means invariably so.

Let us ask again how the religious intention differs from the philosophical. Does not the philosopher also seek the "meaning of life"? Is not his goal, too, to learn "what is permanent in the nature of things"? To be sure; but a philosopher may achieve what for him is a satisfying conception of truth without finding therein a way of life. His knowledge need not lead to action, nor affect the remainder of his life. It is only when philosophy becomes practical as well as theoretical, when it acquires the power of integrating the individual's life without remainder—intellectual, emotional, or aspirational—that it turns into religion.

It is clearly not right to confuse the religious with the philosophical intention. Love of wisdom is only one phase of the complete religious intention. Realizing this fact, Spranger attempts to identify subjective religion with the

<sup>4</sup> C. S. Braden. Why people are religious—a study in religious motivation, *The Journal of Bible and Religion*, 1947, 15, 38-45.

longing for unity—complete unity of thought, feeling, and deed. According to Spranger the religious intention (better to say, I think, the sum of all religious intentions) represents a desire for a total harmony, meaning thereby the individual's successive efforts to complete the incomplete, to perfect the imperfect, to conserve all values, eliminate all disvalues, to find permanence in the place of transitoriness. From this point of view the essence of the religious value can be found only in the mystical goal of oneness.<sup>5</sup>

We must leave this subject here. If one feels it important to seek a common denominator for all religious intentions, Spranger's solution is perhaps the best. But for my part I think we are on safer ground psychologically if we never lose sight of the individual differences that characterize the operation of the religious sentiment.

### Prayer and Ritual

It is from this point of view, I think, that prayer, ritual, and dogma can best be approached. All are means of focusing the religious intention during a definite period of time. Prayer takes many forms. At one extreme it is self-reflective, analytical, hardly distinguishable from strenuous intellectual efforts to relate scattered fragments of life. Richard Cabot characterized this limiting form as follows:

We often advise each other to think it over and see what on the whole seems best; or we say, "All things considered, I have decided to go." Anyone who did this would be near to prayer. . . . "Considering all things" is turning from part to whole, from brilliant near-seen views, all foreground, no perspective, to a vision like that from a mountain top. Whoever tries to "see life steadily and see it whole" by retiring

<sup>5</sup> Eduard Spranger. *Types of Men*, Halle: Max Niemeyer Verlag, translated 1928, Part II, Chapter 6.

to a viewpoint detached from the current quotations and the latest news, has moved in the direction of prayer.<sup>6</sup>

More often prayer is regarded by the individual as a means of reaching a God that dwells at the terminus of the intention. Usually, too, his intention is mingled with expectation of help and response from the Object of his regard, for he would find it hard to sustain a relationship not reciprocated. Therefore God, the Object of the intention, is conceived as holding out a hand to assist the supplicant.

Yet the focusing of a religious intention through prayer does not invariably require this sense of mutuality. In at least two great religious systems, both derivatives of ancient Hinduism, no assumption is made that any supernatural powers are affected by worship or supplication. Jainism recognizes no god, but only a mechanically moral and unconscious universe. This sect believes also in twenty-four Tirthankaras or ideal beings who once lived, but have long since passed beyond the reach of the world, and are in no way affected by human prayers or offerings. Yet the ceremonies in Jaina temples are maintained with sacrifice and prayer. Intentions are reverently directed outward without thought of reciprocity. Offerings are presented to images: white rice signifies the offering of knowledge; saffron rice, of beauty. The presentation of these symbols, together with chanted verses and reflection upon the ideal for which the Tirthankara stands, bring comfort and hope, new aspirations, and strength for the moral life of the individual.<sup>7</sup>

In Buddhism, the story is essentially the same. The Buddhist regards Gautama as unconscious and inaccessible, and the moral universe with its principle of Karma as beyond

<sup>6</sup> R. C. Cabot. *What Men Live By*, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914, pp. 275 f. Quoted by permission.

<sup>7</sup> J. B. Pratt. *The Religious Consciousness*, New York: Macmillan, 1924, p. 293.

the power of man to affect. Yet the Buddhist performs devotions that help him produce a desirable state of mind, in harmony with the moral universe. Intentions may then be directed persistently, reverently, beneficially, even though there is no actual belief in divine responsiveness. Through prayer one simply moves oneself closer to the state desired. Thus, hands may be held up to heaven without the expectation that hands will reach down.

Buddhist and Jainist prayers are genuine religious acts, for their intent is to relate the individual to what is central in the nature of things. In this respect they are unlike simple auto-suggestion which is a self-administered hypodermic for the purpose of achieving immediate advantage to the self without reference to an object of broader concern.

Besides prayer, ritual focuses and expresses intention. Usually ritual may be viewed as a prayer of virtual intention, running its complex course under the domination of an initial reverent idea. The symbols involved in rituals (including liturgies, hymns, religious dances) are fascinating in their origins, drawn often from feeding or death, from sex or from inebriation, with their original grossness eliminated and directed by intention toward the perfecting of the human sources from which they took their rise.

For the great majority of people the solitariness of the religious quest becomes a burden. They long to fuse their religious insights with those of their fellows under a common set of symbols. Indeed, in many cases they first learned these insights in the company of their fellows. Hence both ritual and dogma develop. The expressive symbols of ritual aid the individual by eliciting intentions that would otherwise lie mostly dormant. In psychological parlance, ritual is a form of social facilitation which intensifies the comparable attitudes and sentiments of all participants. At the same time dogma aims to improve and socialize the inadequate intellectual

RITUAL & DOGMA — social —  
community

formulations of the individual. He may accept it gladly because it binds him with his fellows in a common search, and because it serves as a clarifying model to his own thought.<sup>8</sup> Yet, deep inside, the individual may likewise know that the meaning he derives from the dogma is not identical for him and for all believers. At best, as Whitehead points out, dogmas allow comparable experiences to be identified, while their statements are of necessity broad enough to include many varieties of individual thought. Furthermore, the dogmatic model that clarifies for one fails to clarify for another. And this is why freedom of worship in any community is essential, and why, if we prize personality at all, religious toleration is imperative.

### *How the Individual Validates His Faith*

We come at last to the question how the religious individual justifies his faith. Even while his religious intentions are active he is incapable of cross-questioning himself. Is there a God or an orderly purpose to which he can reasonably address these intentions? It is important for him to know. How he goes about the process of validation is psychologically an interesting if complex story.

The basic phase in the process I have already described. A certain measure of confidence in the intended object is necessarily resident in every intention. Man knows his striving is real enough, and he suspects, from repeated experiences of reaching goals, that an appropriate object resides at the terminus of any persistent striving.

Is he thirsty? There is water to assuage his thirst. Is he tired? There is rest to be had. Cold? There is such a thing as warmth. Extending this reasoning to the religious striving,

<sup>8</sup> A. N. Whitehead. *Religion in the Making*, New York: Macmillan, 1926, p. 137.

C. S. Lewis adds: "If I find in myself a desire which no experience in this world can satisfy, the most probable explanation is that I was made for another world. If none of my earthly pleasures satisfy it, that does not prove that the universe is a fraud. Probably earthly pleasures were never meant to satisfy it, but only to arouse it, to suggest the real thing."<sup>9</sup>

Thus people find that belief is both a reflex of their striving, and on the whole a reasonable consequence to draw from the very fact of striving. A Mohammedan legend puts the matter picturesquely. A dervish was tempted by the devil to stop calling on Allah because Allah did not answer, "Here am I." The prophet Khadir appeared to the dervish in a vision with a message from Allah: "Was it not I who summoned thee to my service? Did I not make thee busy with My name? Thy calling 'Allah' was My 'Here am I.'"

According to this homily the fact of seeking is all that is required to validate the seeking.

In that thou seekest thou hast the treasure found,  
Close with thy question is the answer bound.

One step beyond this modest validation takes us to the so-called ontological argument for the existence of God which derives the necessity of God's existence from the idea of God that man has. Although philosophers have been harsh in their rejection of the a priori statement of this proposition, an empirical or psychological version of the argument appeals to many people. Since my longing for perfect wisdom could not be the product of so finite a being as I (I would not be able to endow myself with glimpses of anything more perfect than myself), then it is inevitable for me to assume that God implanted in me the desire to know Him. The mere fact that I do undoubtedly have the idea of a perfect sovereign

<sup>9</sup> C. S. Lewis. *Christian Behaviour*, New York: Macmillan Co., 1943, pp. 57 f. Quoted by permission.

Being is a sign that the Creator has put this idea into my mind "as the mark of the workman imprinted on his work." Descartes is an ardent defender of this view. According to his reasoning, a nonentity cannot produce an entity; that which is imperfect cannot produce an idea of that which is perfect. Peter Abelard in the twelfth century expressed the same thought:

Wish and fulfillment can severed be ne'er,  
Nor the thing prayed for come short of the prayer.

Values that cannot be achieved in this world *require* a Kingdom of Heaven.

The question may now be asked whether anyone is ever convinced by a simon-pure rational argument for the existence of God. It is certainly true that men do try to reason the matter through to a logically tight solution, just as they endeavor to find sound explanations for every riddle that confronts them. People want a rationally achieved answer. Some find it in the so-called cosmological argument which demands a sufficient first cause to explain the existence of matter, mind, and values. Yet is it not also true that unless one is awe-struck at the overpowering structure of the physical and moral universe, one could not feel the cogency of the cosmological argument? Without emotion and value he would not build a system of faith around it. Similarly, unless an individual is moved by evidences of intelligence and design in the universe, he would not take the teleological argument as support for his faith, because it would answer no lively questions for him.

What reasoning does is to lend support to a relationship that is already inherent in every sentiment—the relationship between an intention and the idea which is its object. Having first believed in the object because of the intended relationship that is set up, we normally continue to do so only if

there is independent reinforcement. Sense perception and reasoning provide such support. Whenever belief receives a great deal of such reinforcement so that it conforms with sense perception, with reason, and with the beliefs of others, we are likely to call it *knowledge*. At the other extreme, when belief is deprived of all these supports, we call it *delusion*. In between these limits, where belief rests on probabilities, as the majority of beliefs do, we speak of *faith*. In all states of faith doubt is still theoretically possible though not actually dominating the mental situation at the moment.

Degrees of religious faith, as with all faith, range from high to low. Perhaps the highest is the unshakable certainty of the mystic that his immediate experience (for him the equivalent of sensory knowledge) confirms the existence of God. Perhaps the lowest degree is found in the aesthetic make-believe of Santayana who maintains that the great drama of religion would be marvelous if it were justified, so marvelous that we are entitled to act as if it were justified.

As I have previously pointed out, a relatively low degree of faith may be able to direct an enormous output of energy. One can be half-sure without being half-hearted. You and I may not have complete faith in the United Nations, but since it is our one and only hope we can and do back it with all our might. If our faith were zero we would not back it at all, but one chance in a thousand is enough for us. One recalls Descartes' reflections on this point. He remarks that a traveler who finds himself astray in some forest ought not to wander about, turning now to one side and now to another. He should walk as straight as he can in one direction, and not change it for trivial reasons. By so doing he is bound to arrive at some place probably far better than the middle of the forest.<sup>10</sup> Though it is not within our power to discern

<sup>10</sup> René Descartes. *Discourse on Method*, Part III.

certain knowledge we do well to act decisively on the basis of whatever probability attends the object of our faith.

Where does revealed religion enter into the individual's struggle for validation? It unquestionably assists him if he is persuaded that God of His free generosity has chosen to give dependable, if partial, knowledge of Himself through the devices of the intelligible universe that affect our senses, including, for example, those divinely ordained symbols employed in the sacraments which are sensible signs of what is hidden in Him. It helps to assume that God chooses to declare Himself to us in our own language.<sup>11</sup> Faith, based on this premise, is enjoined by the historic church, and is for millions the decisive consideration. But it is well to note that the church allows also supporting means of faith, including the rational arguments of theology, and the avenue of mystical contemplation or immediate experience. It shows psychological wisdom in multiplying the avenues through which various individuals may achieve the heightened degree of confidence in the validity of their own beliefs.

There are two final modes of validation, different in type: the mystical and the pragmatic.

Although I have no conclusive evidence on the point, I suspect that the most commonly accepted type of verification is some form of immediate experience, convincing to oneself though not as a rule to others. It is religion's peculiar secret that it brings to the individual a solemn assurance unlike anything else in life, a tranquility, an ever-present help in trouble, that makes next steps easier no matter what mesh of circumstances may entangle the life. A person who finds that the practice of faith has brought a genuine solution of conflict is convinced, for to discover order and felicity where

<sup>11</sup> Cf. J. Maritain, *Science, Philosophy, and Faith in Science, Philosophy and Religion: A Symposium*, New York: Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion, 1941, Chapter 10.

TRUST VS DISTRUST

there were chaos and distress is to find something extraordinarily real. This experience of a "solution found" is often attended by some degree of mystical perception. One feels that one has reached out a hand and received an answering clasp. One has sent up a cry and heard a response. Whoever verifies his faith in this manner has evidence no less convincing to him than the sensory perception which validates his beliefs in the world about him. Immediacy of this sort persuades him that revelation comes from God to man. In passing, it may be remarked that what has been called "functional revelation" seems to be more common than is "cognitive revelation." That is to say, apparently more people report an access of strength and power than claim clarifying knowledge.

Swinging abruptly to a less introverted mode of validation we wonder how many people in the present century owe their religious faith to William James's insistence that "a true thought is a thought that is an invaluable instrument of action." No need to embroil oneself in "snarling logicity" when the "will-to-believe" is available through a simple act of choice. For everyone there are higher and lower limits of attainment, and whatever leads the individual to the higher level is worth believing in. Good, believed in, finds itself embodied simply because faith changes aspiration into realization, transforms the possible into the actual. If I refuse to believe in democracy, regarding it as the dream of a fool, I shall not act democratically, and democracy will not come into being. Take the more productive option, says James. Religious faith is such an option. The core of its validation lies in the values generated and unity of life attained.

This outlook has marked appeal to action-minded individuals who have seen so many instances in life where faith in a fact (the optimistic bias) helps create the fact. Practically speaking, faith has undeniably good effects. Blending the

COMFORT WITH  
ANXIETY

pragmatic mode of thought with the rational one asks, "Must not that which has good effects likewise exist?" There are no effects without sufficient cause. Theism, as James himself points out, is a not infrequent accompaniment of pragmatism. Every other way of explaining value seems to break down halfway to its conclusion. The theist, for example, is persuaded that while nothing that contradicts science is likely to be true, still nothing that stops with science can be the whole truth. A more complete world view is to be achieved through affirming that the natural order is under divine rule.<sup>12</sup> Having committed oneself to this position the theistic-pragmatist finds his vision clarifying and his faith strengthened as he acts upon it. When, in the third chapter, I called attention to the heuristic character of mature religion I had in mind this fruitfulness of faith both for value and for understanding.

Any given individual is likely to accept several forms of validation, finding them in combination sufficient to sustain the degree of faith that he has achieved. Modes of validation do not clash; they are mutually supportive. Both reason and pragmatic sanction, for example, may blend in the individual's mind with memories of his own mystical experiences. The latter, in turn, may persuade him that divine grace is in fact available from above to help one's unbelief, and to enable one to complete the edifice of faith that no aspirant can build entirely alone.

With these many aids to verification the individual may achieve considerable certitude in the validity of his religion. Lacking, as he necessarily must, tests of absolute certainty, his own mode of validation is not necessarily convincing to others. But it may be deeply convincing to him.

<sup>12</sup> W. James. Reflex action and theism in *The Will to Believe and Other Essays*, New York: Longmans Green, 1897.

### *The Solitary Way*

My theme has been the diversity of form that subjective religion assumes. Many different desires may initiate the religious quest, desires as contrasting as fear and curiosity, gratitude and conformity. Men show a varying capacity to outgrow their childhood religion, and to evolve a well-differentiated mature religious sentiment. There are many degrees in the comprehensiveness of this sentiment and in its power to integrate the life. There are different styles of doubting, different apperceptions of symbols, contrasting types of content that vary both with the culture and with the temperament and capacity of the believer. There are innumerable types of specific religious intentions. How the individual justifies his faith is a variable matter, and the certitude he achieves is his alone.

From its early beginnings to the end of the road the religious quest of the individual is solitary. Though he is socially interdependent with others in a thousand ways, yet no one else is able to provide him with the faith he evolves, nor prescribe for him his pact with the cosmos.

Often the religious sentiment is merely rudimentary in the personality, but often too it is a pervasive structure marked by the deepest sincerity. It is the portion of personality that arises at the core of the life and is directed toward the infinite. It is the region of mental life that has the longest-range intentions, and for this reason is capable of conferring marked integration upon personality, engendering meaning and peace in the face of the tragedy and confusion of life.

A man's religion is the audacious bid he makes to bind himself to creation and to the Creator. It is his ultimate attempt to enlarge and to complete his own personality by finding the supreme context in which he rightly belongs.

## Index

- Abelard, P., 156  
Actual intention, 145-146  
Admiration, in religious sentiment, 7  
Adolescence, conversion in, 37-38  
  rebellion against religion in, 36  
  religion in, 36-40  
Aesthetic sense and religion, 39, 44  
Age and religious interest, 41-42  
Agnosticism, religious, 119  
Allport, F. H., 50  
Allport, G. W., 2, 36, 40, 67, 72, 148  
"Amazement absolute" as religious experience, 4  
Ambivalence of non-religious, 119  
Anthropomorphism in child's religious concepts, 34  
Atheism, 117-119  
Atreya, B. L., 23  
Authority, questioning of, and religion, 39-40  
Axioms in science and religion, 130-131  
Belief, and faith, 140  
  nature of, 113-114  
  three stages in development of, 139-141  
  see also *Faith*  
Bereavement and religion, 11, 17, 21, 44  
Bertocci, P., 100  
Braden, C. S., 150  
Brentano, F., 143-144  
Brightman, E., 65  
Cabot, R. C., 151-152  
Certainty, 82  
Charcot, J., 85  
Childhood, credulity in, 114  
  effect of, on adult, 59  
  effect of, on conscience, 100-101  
  egocentricism in, 32-33  
  and parents' religion, 35, 42-43  
  religion in, 31-36

- social vs. religious responses  
in, 32
- Clark, E. T., 37
- College students, experimental  
study of, 40
- Compensation, 124
- Comprehensiveness of mature  
sentiment, 76-78
- Confession, secular and religious,  
107-109
- Conflict and conscience, 97-103
- Conformity and religious senti-  
ment, 44
- Conscience, and conflict, 97-103  
and culture, 98  
and mental health, 85-111  
maturation of, 102  
nature of, 98  
universality of, 99
- Conversion, 37
- Creation, in religious thinking,  
23
- Credulity, 114
- Crises, and conversion, 37  
and religious need, 11
- Critical tendency in mature senti-  
ment, 67-68
- Davidson, R. F., 4
- Descartes, R., 81, 156, 157
- Delusion, 157
- Democracy and religion, 75-76
- Desire, organic, as basis of reli-  
gious sentiment, 10-13  
and prayer, 56
- Differentiation of mature senti-  
ment, 65-71
- Disbelief, 114
- Diversity of subjective religion,  
161
- Divinity in religion, 77-78
- Dix, D., 85
- Doubt, associated with violations  
of self-interest, 119-120  
and concept of God in man's  
image, 121-122
- in mature religious sentiment,  
83  
in modern life, 25  
nature of, 113-138  
and origins of religious quest,  
125-133  
reactive and negativistic  
nature of, 117-119  
referential, 133-138  
scientific, 131  
and shortcomings of organized  
religion, 120-121
- Dunlap, K., 5-6, 10
- Dynamic nature of religious senti-  
ment, 71-74
- Egocentricism, in childhood re-  
sponses, 32-33  
and doubt, 119-120
- Emotion, and conversion, 38  
variety of, in religious experi-  
ence, 5, 6-7
- Ethics vs. religion in scientist,  
127
- Evil, in religious thinking, 23  
problem of, 80
- Faith, and belief, 140  
individual validation of, 154-  
160  
nature of, 139-161  
and probability, 81-82  
and religious intention, 141-  
142  
the solitary way of, 161  
see also *Intention, religious*
- Fanaticism, 73
- Father-figure, as God, 8  
child's concept of, 34
- Fear, and prayer, 56  
in religious sentiment, 7, 10,  
17, 44
- Feeling of dependence as reli-  
gious experience, 4
- "Flight from tenderness" in sci-  
ence, 90

- Freedom of orientation and devo-  
tion, 126
- Freedom of will, 80
- French, V. V., 67
- Frankel-Brunswik, E., 67
- Freud, S., 1, 8, 34, 69, 85, 118,  
144
- Furman, E., 91-92, 126
- Functional autonomy in  
religious sentiment, 72
- Genetic fallacy, 125
- Goal and intention, 144-145
- God, children's concepts of, 33-  
34  
concepts of, and desire, 10-11  
and values, 17  
as father-figure, 8  
in man's image, 121-125  
mystical conception of, 70-71
- Gratitude, in religious sentiment,  
7, 44
- Guilt-feelings, 98
- Habit, 62
- Habits of scientist, and doubt,  
126-127
- Habitual intention, 147
- Heath, C. W., 39, 74
- Heuristic character of mature  
sentiment, 81-83
- Hoagland, H., 127
- Höfding, H., 17
- Humanism, 76-77
- Humor, in integration, 104-105
- Illusion, 83
- Individualism of religious experi-  
ence, 6-7
- Ingersoll, R. G., 118-119
- Instinct, as origin of religious  
sentiment, 7
- Institutional religion, college  
students' attitudes toward,  
45-48
- Integral nature of mature senti-  
ment, 79-81
- Integration, aspects of, 103-109  
humor as aid to, 104-105  
interests as aid to, 104  
relaxation as aid to, 105-106
- Intelligibility, bias of, 22-25
- Intention, religious, characteris-  
tics of, 141-142  
forms of, 149-151  
four grades of, 146-147  
meaning of, 143-144  
prayer and ritual in, 151-154
- Interpretative intention, 147
- Isherwood, C., 122
- James, W., 1, 5, 6, 9, 38, 69,  
77-78, 81, 108, 131, 135,  
159, 160
- Janet, P., 108
- Janney, J. E., 37
- Joad, E. M., 122
- Johnson, H. M., 130, 132
- Jung, C. G., 89
- Kant, I., 125
- Katz, D., 50
- Kempis, Thomas à, 142, 145
- Kierkegaard, S., 104
- Kinsey, A. C., 1
- Knowing, experience of, 70
- Knowledge, 157-158
- Kraepelin, E., 85
- Kramer, B. M., 67
- Kuhlen, R. G., 37
- Kupky, O., 33, 34, 39, 70
- Landis, C., 86, 89
- Law of reversed effect, 105
- Leuba, J. H., 8, 108, 121
- Lewis, C. S., 155
- Liebman, Rabbi J., 2
- Lombroso, C., 99
- Love, in psychotherapy and reli-  
gion, 90-92

- in religious sentiment, 7, 10-11, 39
- MacMurray, J., 65
- Magic, in religious sentiment, 20
- Malinowski, B., 20-21
- Maritain, J., 158
- Maturity, criteria of, 60  
religion of, 59-83  
childhood influence on, 59  
task of, 61  
see also *Sentiment, religious*
- McDougall, W., 7
- Meaning, pursuit of, in religion, 17-20
- Medicine and psychotherapy, 87-88
- Mental disorder and religion, 93-94
- Morality, and religion, 74  
vs. religion, in scientist, 127
- Morgan, C. D., 65
- Morris, C., 134
- Motive, 14
- Motivation, 62
- Murray, H. A., 65
- Mystical experience and religious sentiment, 44
- Mystical moments, 69-70
- Mysticism and validation of faith, 158-159
- Negative self-feeling in religious sentiment, 7
- Negativistic character of doubt, 117
- Neurosis, 63
- Newman, J. H., 81, 82
- Nondirective therapy, 110
- Objectivity in science and religion, 127
- O'Neill, E., 83
- Optimism, bias of, 22-25
- Organization of mental life, 62-63
- Origins of religious quest, 1-30  
bias of intelligibility in, 22-25  
of optimism in, 25  
culture and conformity in, 25-29  
doubts associated with, 122-125  
dynamic nature of, 71-74  
magic in, 20-22  
organic desire in, 10-13  
psychogenic desires in, 14-17  
pursuit of meaning in, 17-20  
rationalizing in, 20-22  
search for single form of, 3-10  
spiritual values in, 14-17  
temperament in, 13-14
- Otto, R., 4
- Page, J. D., 86
- Parents, influence of, 34-35, 42, 44-45, 100-101
- Parsons, T., 21, 22
- Pascal, B., 81
- Personal influence on religious interest, 44
- Personality, immature, religion in, 61-62  
mature, criteria of, 60  
and religion, 161  
unification of, in religion and psychotherapy, 90
- Philosophical vs. religious intention, 150-151
- Philosophy of life, in mature mind, 76
- Piaget, J., 33
- Pinel, P., 85
- Plurality of origins of religious sentiment, 5-7
- Prabhavananda, Swami, 122
- Pragmatic validation of faith, 158
- Pratt, J. B., 152
- Prayer, among college students, 46-47  
as expression of desire, 10

- intent vs. content of, 137  
and religious intention, 151-154  
in wartime combat, 55-56
- Pressey, S. L., 37
- Projection, 122
- Psychiatry, development of, 85
- Psychoanalysis, 94-95
- Psychogenic desires as origin of religious sentiment, 14-17
- Psychogenic interests and maturity, 60, 61
- Psychosomatic medicine, 85
- Psychotherapy, and religion, 88-97  
combining resources of, 109-111  
status of, 86
- Race prejudice and religion, 67
- Rafton, H. R., 77
- Rationalization, and doubt, 123  
in religious sentiment, 17-20
- Rebellion of adolescence, 36
- Referential doubting, 133-138
- Relaxation, as aid to integration, 105-106
- Renan, E., 75, 83
- Revelation, functional and cognitive, 159
- Reverence, as complex of emotions, 6-7
- Ritual, and religious intention, 151-154
- Rogers, C. R., 110
- Sanford, R. N., 67
- Schleiermacher, F., 3-4
- Schoen, M., 6, 121
- Schroeder, T., 8
- Science, in psychotherapy, 88-89  
and religion, 22, 125-133
- Security, as basis of religious sentiment, 4, 10, 17, 91
- Self-objectification, need of, in integration, 107
- Semantics, in referential doubting, 133-134
- Sentiment, as activity, 144  
nature of, 62-65  
religious, basic nature of, 3-4  
biases of optimism and intelligibility in, 22-25  
bodily or mental mechanism as origin of, 7-8  
complex origin of, 7-10  
conformity to culture in, 25-29  
and faith, 140  
individual nature of, 7  
instinct as origin of, 7  
mature, attributes of, 64-65  
comprehensive nature of, 76-78, 141  
consistency of, 74-76, 141  
definition of, 64  
derivative nature of, 71-74, 141  
differentiation of, 65-71, 141  
dynamic nature of, 71-74, 141  
heuristic character of, 81-83, 141  
integral nature of, 79-81, 141  
mysticism in, 69-71  
object of, 63-64  
organic desires in, 10-13  
pluralism of, 5-7  
psychogenic desires in, 14-17  
pursuit of meaning in, 17-20  
search for single form of, 3-5  
temperament in, 13-14  
unconscious as origin of, 8-9
- Sex, and religion as psychological subjects, 1-2  
and religious sentiment, 44
- Sex differences in religious interests, 41
- Sex repression, as origin of religious sentiment, 7-8
- Sheldon, W. H., 14, 50

- Shock therapy, 94-95  
 Social emphasis in religion, 65  
 Social environment in psychotherapy, 86-87  
 Social facilitation, ritual as, 153  
 Social service and religion, 76  
 Solitariness in religion, 65, 161  
 Spengler, O., 118  
 Spoerl, H. D., 104  
 Spranger, E., 150-151  
 Starbuck, E. D., 36  
 Super-ego, 97, 100, 101  
 Suttie, I. D., 91
- Teaching, religious, lack of, 51  
 Temperament, in religious sentiment, 13-14  
 Tender emotion, in religious sentiment, 7  
 "Tenderness tabu" in psychology, 92  
 Thouless, R. H., 123  
 Tolerance, 78  
 Trait, 62  
 Transference, 92  
 Truth, 78
- Unconscious, as origin of religious sentiment, 8-9  
 Unity, and religious intention, 151  
 Universal mind, 9
- Validation of faith, 154-160  
 Value, and concepts of God, 17  
 definition of, 15  
 evolution of, 15-16  
 and Kingdom of Heaven, 156  
 in scientific thought, 129  
 Verification, in science and religion, 127  
 Virtual intention, 146
- Wartime conduct and religious background, 75  
 Wartime experience and religious interest, 41, 52-57  
 Weber, M., 22, 27  
 Welford, A. T., 137  
 Westermarck, E., 65  
 Whitehead, A. N., 65, 78, 137, 154  
 Wish-fulfilment, 24, 61  
 Wobbermin, G., 4  
 Wonder, in religious sentiment, 7
- Young, J., 2, 36, 40  
 Youth, religion of, 31-57  
 adolescence, 36-40  
 college students, 40-52  
 early childhood, 28-36, 42  
 doubt in, 119-120  
 veterans, 52-57