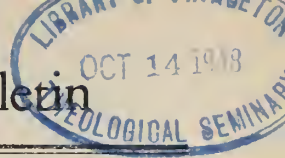


# The Princeton Seminary Bulletin



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# OUTLINES OF A CHRISTIAN POSITIVISM

EMILE CAILLIET

THE word "positivism" in our title is used for want of a better one. Its immediate reference is to certitude, or the claim of certitude, in knowledge. Thus we call "positive" that which may be directly affirmed. Now there does not exist a current and well-informed view of life and knowledge which may be affirmed and referred to as *the* philosophy of the Reformed Faith; and something ought to be done about it.

A recent book of high quality, widely used on the American campus under the title *Types of Religious Philosophy*, follows up a splendid fifty-three page presentation of the Roman Catholic philosophy of religion with a miserable twenty-seven page caricature of what is called "Protestant Fundamentalism." The author of the latter is not, mind you, a Roman Catholic. Neither do I use the word "caricature" to indict his treatment of Protestant fundamentalism. Clearly the cause of such a lamentable situation lies right at our door. Are we willing to lose the best of our enlightened youth to a scientific agnosticism or to Roman Catholicism? Denunciation will simply not do. Shouting from the pulpit will not do. And, as a college student once put the matter in a deserted chapel, "It is not enough to ring the bell."

In this connection, Reinhold Niebuhr makes it clear that a program of religious reorientation of our higher education must come out of the religious community and its institutions. He lays down the principle that "the primary responsibility for resolving the contra-

diction between religious obscurantism and religious defeatism rests upon them."

We agree. Let us then proceed with the business at hand.

## I.

Going straight to the heart of the matter, it is obvious that the secret of the sway of science over this world of men and affairs, and its thinking, is essentially this: science knows how to do things so as to get results. It works.

Let us see how this is done. A good way of doing it is to consider the case of a science which matters very much to each of us, that of medicine. No better guide in this field could be found than the founder of experimental medicine, Claude Bernard, through whose impetus a scientific medicine came into its own in the middle of the nineteenth century.

The scientific concept of medicine had been held back in his day by endless controversies between "vitalists" and anti-vitalists so-called, the bone of contention being that science ended where the consideration of life began. At this point, it was felt, a "vital principle" intervened, which caused all possible predictions to go astray, thus rendering further experimentation fruitless. Just as a walking man disposed of Parmenides' and Zeno's denial of the possibility of movement, the vitalist controversy was simply ignored by Claude Bernard, who thereupon proceeded with what proved to be an extremely successful series of experimentations in biology. The vicious circle

had been broken, the rule of clever but empty dialectics had come to an end.

It would be an understatement to say that such dialectics had their day. They had been anybody's sport for centuries, the only limitation to such feats of logic being the amount of imagination of the talker in question, also the fact that as a rule, such dialectics were practised in Latin—a good way, doubtless, of hiding their emptiness. In one of his comedies Molière shows such an impressive confabulation broken up with the doctors leaving all together. To a questioner wondering where they were going, one of them answered solemnly that they were going to see a man who had died the day before. This of course made the questioner wonder still more, until his query was silenced by the doctoral pronouncement that they were going to see this dead man in order to find out what should have been done in order to prevent his death.

When we pause and think about this comical answer we realize that there is a great deal of truth involved in it. The trouble with these seventeenth century doctors was that they were unable to provide for a given situation because they were unable to foresee such a one; and they were unable to foresee it because they did not know enough. So they ventured all sorts of explanations in the form of gratuitous systems. Claude Bernard was right, then, to see that such systems led nobody anywhere. A survey of eighteenth century literature in philosophy would uncover the growing awareness of this fact in a number of works written on, or rather, against such systems. The case of medicine is but an illustration of what was true in every branch of human knowledge. Far from being an indictment,

such an admission amounts to rendering justice to necessary preliminary efforts at investigation.

## II.

To sum up, scientific theories patiently and critically worked out to a point where they may even be expressed with mathematical precision, rule over a certain realm of reality to the exclusion of other theories. Their limitations and imperfections, as universally acknowledged in the world of science, give the status of their actual scope.

That this is not the case as yet among the laity for many an ethical "theory" so-called, is only too obvious to the moral scientist. He sees such "theories" as contradict one another to the point of cancellation, actually end in advocating the same practice at a given time, in a given society. Another surprising feature is seen in the fact that as a rule the authors of such "theories," who walk together although disagreeing even in their silence, hardly ever admit to difficulties or limitations in their ready-made solutions. For, as a rule, each one provides from the outset answers to all the problems involved, a fact which should immediately put the wary on their guard. As Archibald MacLeish would say, they know all the answers, but they have not as yet asked the questions.

Is it not evident that in such cases the so-called "theory" is but a mere afterthought, a rationalization of actual practice, at best a dialectical feat? The public at large, as well as its leaders, are aware of this, the scientist further argues; they will allow theorists to speculate to their heart's content, in the awareness that the clever opponents will fall in line, like everyone else, when the time comes to do so. What we

have in mind for the present, the scientific outlook, is the kind of practice which may be observed in what Bunyan called the "village morality." This village remains quite typical of the world at large.

Each and every society at a given time actually has a moral code, or better, a pattern of moral codes which may direct its individual members to strange forms of behavior. The senseless taboos you and I are unable to sweep aside in the realm of fashion, thus are seen to give the measure of our slavery. It must have been in this connection that George Eliot once remarked, "We are all born in moral stupidity."

Now such patterns of collective behavior are observable facts. It is therefore the contention of the moral scientist that they are subject to scientific investigation. In this vein we should welcome, for instance, the concern of the research worker bent on the solution of problems such as those related to production and distribution, the function of labor leaders, the technique of relief and charity, and others. As soon as a solution is attempted, however, the "brain-trust" so-called realize that they have hardly begun a formulation of the same. They find themselves unable to provide, and, or so the scientists think, the result is that the "grapes of wrath" reach maturity. To the research worker, an inability to provide appears once more to be a symptom of an inability to foresee, of a lack of adequate knowledge. Therefore it is that wild theories, unheard-of utopias, solve nothing. The science of tomorrow will have to go into such problems, our scholars conclude.

An important remark is called for at this point. Human motivation has thus far been taken for granted, as perfectly

normal and legitimate. The reason for this is obvious. Such motivation referred solely to basic concerns we may be said to share with frogs in a pond. Intelligence then was applied to the mere safeguarding of life and health, and beyond that, merely to the satisfying of urges and motives natural to man as a tool-using, food-preparing, weeping or laughing animal.

Yet, pausing too long on such elementary aspects with reference to our animal nature may prove unfair even to animals, for there is seen to be in man what Professor C. H. Dodd has called that "ingrained wrongness," an almost uncanny propensity to wickedness, which is unknown to animals.

How much of a guide, then, can science be in these circumstances? This, we readily discern, is not a mere vitalist-antivitalist sort of issue. We are dealing with stark realities, and hard facts.

### III.

As soon as this all-important issue is brought to a head, we become aware of the true scope and impact of an unassuming science. What strikes us immediately is a constant emphasis on depersonalization on the part of any individual scientist. What is mostly found to be responsible for phenomena is the scale of observation. It is for such reasons that the human recording set is now being rapidly replaced by mechanical devices. Yet these same instruments, in their turn, prove to be limited by their own sensibility.

The scientist is perforce engaged in a form of cold-blooded detective work, even if personal feelings, motives, or values are likely to be involved in the primary concern. He is a sort of Sherlock Holmes aiming at a transcription



likely to fit the facts. Thus our research worker will beware of any irruption of emotionalism. His task in the presence of nature, according to a parable of Einstein, is very much like that of a man who had been given a closed watch which he could never open. His business would then amount to figuring out the workings of that watch.

The scientist's pragmatic notion of causality becomes a mere heuristic principle which he introduces at any point of his investigation until a working theory be formulated, namely one which may allow for a minimum of prediction. Once the script obtained begins to make sense, everyone concerned is given a chance to discuss it and to criticize it. Fresh information having been brought forward, a reconsideration takes place until nobody can any longer find fault with the outcome, at least for the time being.

Scientific truth, then, is what remains at the end of the last cross-examination. Very much in the manner of the battle of Corneille's hero against the Moors, the battle ends because there are no warriors left on the battlefield—shall we say, until the next "last war"? Accordingly, such truth amounts to a depersonalization through socialization of thought. As such it may have little to do with the deep reality of the things that *are*. What we call scientific knowledge now turns out to be a sort of temporary script, a series of clues about that which is, and the manner of its being what it is. Such knowledge is best expressed in mathematical language, as already noted.

But then, to expect from a purely objective elaboration of the kind we have suggested, any decisive axiology, and, still more, to expect affirmations

or negations as to the existence of a supernatural being, nay, reasons why there should be any supernatural form of existence at all, is to expect from the scientist the very things he cannot produce. It is only in legends that a good fairy will emerge from a dusty scientific treatise and proceed to dance on the printed page!

Such a situation is at least gratifying in one of its implications, namely, that one fails to see how, in these circumstances, any real conflict could arise between a sober science and the Christian faith. The plain fact is that I have as yet been unable to detect any serious point of disagreement between the two. We may safely leave alone such pseudo-scientists as indulge in unwarranted speculations irksome to the Christian message, be it only because it does not pay to advertise one's opponents, especially when they are unworthy of public recognition. The Christian philosopher has, therefore, every reason to accompany his scientific friend all the way, or at least follow him with his sympathy. Such an enlightened attitude on his part will indirectly pave the way for mutual respect and understanding. And so the Christian philosopher will be more likely to get a hearing later on when proceeding to read the scientist's transcription in the light of revelation.

However important such corollaries, there comes out of our consideration of the true scope and impact of an unassuming lay science another conclusion, the importance of which could hardly be exaggerated. Precisely because science is impersonal, colorless, and neutral by nature, precisely because as an essentially pragmatic transcription of available clues, science may well have little or nothing to do with the

deeper reality of the things that *are*, it can hardly be thought of as a guide in the realm of true motives and values. When argument is taken, for example, from George Eliot's contention that "we are all born in moral stupidity," to prove that what we need is more research and statistics, it becomes obvious that this is at best a small portion of the truth. There are, as a matter of fact, whole areas of human behavior which have been thoroughly investigated and where, as a result, the "how" is fully known. Yet, could it be said that, *ipso facto*, human behavior is being straightened out in such areas? To begin with trivial illustrations, is it true that we men dress intelligently? is it true that doctors do not smoke? that a tremendous advance in our scientific knowledge of human adjustment prevents divorce? that the most enlightened and statistically supported methods of progressive education *ipso facto* produce moral fiber?

The deeper truth about this whole matter, if it be the truth we want, is written in letters of fire and blood all over the pages of history. Let us be positive about this also. Can any one study the annals of our civilization without being driven back upon human nature, back to what the Bible calls a "lost" humanity in need of redemption? True enough, Calvin considered politics as an earthly discipline. As such, he added, however, they have little to do with the intelligence of things divine—namely, "the rule and reason of true justice, and the mysteries of the heavenly Kingdom." And so, the best this great humanist of the Renaissance could say about political science, was that in such a realm as that of the government of men, human understanding does not labor entirely in vain.

In the words of my late friend, Hartley Burr Alexander, "truth is of faith fulfilled, faith is in truth anticipated, and of both our intelligible life is the expression." Such is the divine order. Allow truth and the faith to be divorced, and see our best patterns of humanism become the motives of an infernal sabbath, not unlike *Dies Irae* in the last movement of the *Fantastic Symphony* by Berlioz. In Italy during the Renaissance, in England during the Restoration, in France under Robespierre, in Germany under Hitler and his Gestapo, nay, in the midst of a sinister caricature of medical research at Buchenwald, cold-blooded calculation, brutal selfishness, that untranslatable *thing* called *Schadenfreude*, will come and crouch at the door, as it had already done in the days of Tiberius. And unto thee, O man, shall be its desire, in a kind of parody of conjugal relations, dreadfully suggested in the Book of Genesis.

Let a merely academic knowledge ignore such roots and such depths, and miss the mark. If lack of power be the test of truth in theories, as our scientists proclaim, then let us ponder, as enlightened humanists stare at this present-day world of ours, aghast and powerless. Neither can they explain away its worse features in terms of glandular deficiency. The practitioners of scientifically secularized psychology, ethics, history, government or economics, by being unaware of their heritage, living and thinking in ungrateful ignorance of it, are most likely to play into the hands of their worst enemies.

A Christian positivism, then, would be careful to draw a counterpart to the picture, just given, of a life and knowledge divorced from our heritage. Thus

we see great battles for liberty won by men whose faith is grounded in Holy Writ. William Wilberforce leads the crusade to emancipate Negro slaves in the British empire; his successor, Lord Shaftesbury, in Parliament successfully champions the cause of factory workers in industrial England. The tradition of the American philosophy of government goes back to the Pilgrims of Plymouth, Connecticut, and Rhode Island. Roger Williams it was who asserted the necessity of liberty of conscience and the equality of opinions before the law. Men to whom "God alone is Lord of conscience" were well prepared to become staunch supporters of a free Church and of a free state. In Pennsylvania especially, they were among the foremost to advocate American independence. If indeed we mean to understand documents such as the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights, we must realize that while they reveal strong rationalistic trends, they are essentially Christian documents. The very psychology of the American founders is derived from deep-seated religious convictions. Even men like Franklin and Jefferson, who particularly liked to assume a rationalistic attitude, will fight oppression in the name of the Lord. To them "rebellion against tyrants is obedience to God." To them the Creator of heaven and earth was the Giver—and remains the Guarantor—of the rights of man.

Far from being an impractical, dreamy star-gazer, therefore, the Christian philosopher proves to be the true realist in this world of men and affairs. His realism, moreover, is of the utilitarian sort, intent first and foremost on self-preservation. Using Scripture as a constant frame of refer-

ence, he approaches the study of nature, of history, and especially of man, in the awareness that there is more involved in the whole inquiry, and far more at stake, than a mere transcript of useful clues.

#### IV.

What has happened in modern times now becomes clear. A great deal of damage has been done to the Aristotelian notion of causality, in both science and theology, from Galileo, through Hume, down to Heisenberg and Max Planck in our day. This situation has been complicated by the compromising character of an incomplete, then back-sliding Reformation only too eager to come to terms with rationalistic ways of thinking. Construction costs, such as the façade of scholastic clarity involved, are truly prohibitive. One is also left to wonder how it could be possible for assurances which owe so much to human infirmity, to provide security unchallenged. If Christians were thus able to enjoy perfect peace of mind, would they ever turn to seek the same in the seclusion of a monastery, in meritorious works or mortification? Let us rather learn from Pascal, as "a capital truth of our religion," that there are "times when we must trouble this possession of error that the evil call peace."

A climax was reached in the metaphysical realm with Kant, whose antinomies may be seen as a perfect expression of scientific neutrality. To my knowledge, such a finished form of objectivity had been exhibited only once before, namely by that star-gazer of old who, according to legend, fell into a well. He had simply forgotten his own existence.



Yet the truth has strange ways of re-asserting itself. Kant's posthumous notes published in 1920 by Erich Adickes would tend to show that the great German rationalist henceforth was groping for a genuinely Biblical notion of righteousness. We find already under his pen the equivalent of Matthew Arnold's awareness of "the Eternal not ourselves who makes for righteousness," except that it remained hard for Kant to consider God outwardly. This Being was in him, Immanuel Kant, though distinct from him. He felt inwardly directed, as through a causal efficacy not dependent upon the law of nature in space and time. At one point even, he almost echoed Saint Patrick's famous hymn by experiencing "God in me, about me, and over me." Truly he was not far from the Kingdom of Heaven.

Seen in this light the life-work of Kant would seem to point to a most significant fact. For the last one hundred years some of the most highly cultured men, dominated by an earnest concern for truth, have submitted religion to the harshest criticism. They have finally struck the rock roughly at the point where God, once more thought of in the light of Scripture, is identified with the Power-not-ourselves, who makes for righteousness, and sends the blessed ones back to their fellow men "with a richness not of the common earth." It would be hard to overestimate the positive value of such a conclusion.

The most frequently quoted text of the prophets from Matthew Arnold to Professor Erwin R. Goodenough of Yale University in our own day, is Micah's beautiful assertion: "He hath shown thee, O man, what is good: and what does the Lord require of thee,

but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?" It is by attending to righteousness in actual faith and practice that we become aware of this enduring Power, as of a reality verifiable in the light of Scripture.

Such a reality, then, is first and foremost a kind of truth that must be *done*, according to a Hebrew phrase which would put a philosopher like Hegel quite on edge. If any man will *do* the divine will, he shall *know* of the doctrine. Thus any further progress in truth is conditioned by an attitude which John A. Mackay has characterized as quite incompatible with a purely theoretical mode of existence.

This basic incompatibility finds its most striking expression in Kierkegaard's *Either/Or*. As we know, the Danish Pascal finally parted ways with a purely esthetic enjoyment of life, for a lone venturing forth far upon the deep, with seventy thousand fathoms of water under him, in the firm assurance that he should be supported, then be met in the fullness of time. As in the case of Isaac, this venture of faith even implied a temporary, awe-inspiring suspension of the "ethical" until he had been found by the truth.

Such an acknowledgment of the strangeness of a Biblical pattern of thought, and of the tremendous value of some of its most objectionable aspects, decidedly implies a turning away from the System and a resulting awareness of the reality of the things that *are*, so that one may truly exist, stand out—*ex-stare*. Heidegger suggests the same experience as the fact of *Da-sein*, *In-der-Welt-sein* which Walter Lowrie pertinently translated "thereness," "the fact of being in the world." And so our Hebrew-Christian notion of truth, of that which is truth



for me, proves to be, in the last analysis, *existential*.

It should be made clear at this point that no intellectual anarchy is involved in the case. This is merely a re-admission of the most obvious fact—namely, that truth is being refracted in every individual soul, that no two persons will perceive the same truth in exactly the same way. We become aware of a *homo-standardization* of our experience, which causes us to measure the world in which we live in terms of ourselves. This awareness of the vital symbolism which generates in particular the very pattern of our thinking, should cause us to pause on this all-important subject, had we time to do so. Be it sufficient to remark that we make our apprehension of reality both a mirror and a reflection of ourselves. In fact we actually expand our own nature as we assimilate its environment. Thus we find the inner self not only reflected in our world-picture, but coloring it and colored by it.

When natural man, therefore, projects his whole being into immensity so that he may wrench away the secret of the universe, as used to do the magicians of old, the outcome is in part an idol-making process. Not only is such a process likely to miss the divine mark; it may also produce mere fancies, or even monstrous conceptions, which a candid science will proceed to expose in the terms we know.

Let, on the other hand, a man be in Christ, that is, not only redeemed, but progressively enlightened and delivered from blindness of heart. As he projects himself into God's creation, he does it henceforth through an inner Christ taking control more and more, focussing the vision and purifying it. Thus is a true knowledge of God

restored to man. Only once the Christ is fully enthroned in a fully surrendered soul, does the vision become as clear as it can be on this side of the veil, where we see as through a glass, darkly.

Thus, in the light of a guarded use of analogy, the principle, and therefore the end, of Christian philosophy, may be seen to rest on the cornerstone of what Robert E. Speer has magnificently called "the finality of Jesus Christ." We may well imagine what such a culmination means in the case of well-equipped disciples having at their command, together with the best resources of scholarship, the data made available by a lay science.

Call to mind now the dramatic scene of the Westminster Assembly of divines when the incomparable definition of God was literally conceived in prayer, wrought out in a spirit of utter loyalty to Scripture. "O God, who art a Spirit infinite, eternal, and unchangeable, in Thy being, wisdom, power, holiness, justice, goodness and truth. . . ." Thus was the living God disclosing his very essence and majesty in the matchless invocation uttered by a fully dedicated Christian scholar. No better confirmation could be found of the ultimate validity of a scripturally inspired and scholarly approach to our knowledge of God than the one freely given by the living God himself.

Precisely because such an approach is so thoroughly Scriptural, the objection may be raised that this very method involves a certain confusion and duplication between theology and Christian philosophy.

But then, this objection would admittedly proceed from a scholastic conception of the whole matter, a con-

ception which our argument previously dismissed. It may therefore be ignored.

Yet, nodding approval to such dismissal implies that a new responsibility has now been thrust upon us, namely that of formulating a new status where-in the jurisdiction of both theology and Christian philosophy may be clearly mapped out. This new status we see forthwith implied in a careful distinction between talents bestowed, between calls heard and followed, and in a corresponding division of social labor as will be outlined in our conclusion.

## V.

In its essentially pragmatic search for clues, science proceeds upon axioms, principles, and assumptions, which prove to be postulates of thought beyond ultimate verification. So, in a way, our Christian thinking bent on religious truth proceeds from postulates of faith of which man cannot be the measure. Yet the advantage is on the side of Christian thinking inasmuch as these postulates of faith are data of revelation. Let a Christian positivism begin right here.

Our Sovereign God, the Creator and Upholder of the universe, sits at the roaring loom of events and reveals Himself in His Creation, in the very texture of history, and in the human soul. There is therefore a Christian view of nature and of human nature; there is more especially a Christian outlook on history, including our own life-history; there is a Christian approach to psychology and human relations; there is a Christian epistemology preparing the way for constructive Christian metaphysics.

Such views appeal to the scientist as a person, if carefully defined. The scientist may pause even in his scien-

tific capacity, as his new friend proceeds to suggest deeper interpretations of available uncolored data, in such fields as history, psychology, and ethics, or to submit further propositions on points where science has nothing to say because it never pauses to consider the deeper "why" issue—for instance, that ours is a *created* universe. Thus we would render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, only to secure a firmer hold on the things that are God's.

While theology, then, attempts to clarify the process according to which the light is being presented to the world, Christian philosophy should remain in the world without being of it, so as to prepare the path of the world toward the light. This movement to Zion is one of the great themes of Bible teaching from Isaiah to Bunyan. The author of *Pilgrim's Progress* may precisely be said to have summed up Christian philosophy in the briefest and yet most pungent form, with Christian's oft repeated statement: "I am a man that am come from the City of Destruction, and I am going to Mount Zion." Precisely.

The Frame of the City may rise higher than the clouds. Yet it is often hidden from view by partial, that is, false perspectives, arising from the experience of mortal man, especially from his failure to acknowledge "the great Doer of redeeming things," and consequently to heed the divine Agency at work in this God-created, God-controlled and upheld universe of ours.

It is the part of the Christian philosopher to help restore the true perspective as he has been given eyes to see it. In doing this he will prepare a path for the theologian, while formulating and applying a good-neighbor policy with the catholicity of science,

through which the thinking of the world of men and affairs is mostly being framed nowadays. We need therefore no longer lend a semblance of motive to Whitehead's contention that any step forward on the part of science *ipso facto* brings about a panic on the part of the Church.

Such convictions have been forced upon me by a twenty years' experience on the American campus. In many instances the Church and the lay world are no longer on speaking terms. A meeting ground must be prepared for them, from which both perspectives, the God-centered as well as the man-centered, may be seen in their true implications. Thus the old invitation, "Choose ye this day," will take on a new meaning for our contemporaries of

good will. What happens then lies between them and the living God.

Let us therefore emerge from the vanity of artifact, of pseudo-theories, and mere dialectical feats. Let our language recover, with a power pertaining to the reality of the things that *are*, a clarity of expression arising from the awareness of a well-assessed and scripturally thought out integration of data.

Precisely because we look for a City beyond this wilderness, let us cast our lot with this matter-of-fact world temporarily assigned to our care, yet without being of it, learning its most perfect techniques, while availing ourselves of the best information yielded by them. Let us boldly come out for a truly Christian positivism.

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## THE CHARGE TO DR. EMILE CAILLIET

HAROLD E. NICELY

EMILE CAILLIET, it is my privilege in behalf of the Board of Trustees to lay upon your mind and conscience the duties of your office as the Stuart Professor of Christian Philosophy in this Seminary.

From the date of its founding this institution has maintained an unswerving loyalty to the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Such loyalty has often been expressed by scholars who were known as defenders of the faith. Defenders are needed, for there are always many adversaries, and indeed one of the glories of the Gospel is the fact that it has always been greatly assailed.

But the real question is always, "What is this truth that we defend?" Do we understand it? Can we give a

reason for the faith that is in us? Can we apply it to the ever changing conditions of this confused and frantic world? There is no time to thresh the old straw of irrelevant questions. There is time only to deal affirmatively with the hope and destiny of men and nations today. As the late Justice Holmes once observed, "Truth isn't such an invalid that it can take the air only in a closed carriage." Its vitality, its authority are within itself. It can stand on its own feet. It can shine in its own light. In a day when the very lights of civilization seem to be falling, it can bring men to the moment of vision when with their Master they can see the forces of darkness shaken, their grip on history broken; when they can ex-



claim, "I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven."

We want you to take the field as a champion of Christian truth, with no limitations except those of a great commitment to Jesus Christ, whose service is perfect freedom.

I speak as the pastor of a church to an eminent scholar. I want to remind you of the needs of simple, everyday people. A dozen years ago the leading best selling non-fiction was the "Boston Cook Book." For the last two years the best selling non-fiction has been Lieberman's "Peace of Mind." There aren't enough hospital beds or enough qualified psychiatrists to take care of the people who cannot find peace of mind in this disordered world.

Where will they find it? By running away from life? After the Seven Years' War, Frederick the Great built a castle in the forest at Potsdam and called it Sans Souci. But it was not "without care."

Sleep can be induced by medicine, but there is no peace of mind until in our waking hours we can "Trust God, see all, nor be afraid."

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Here is a resource, but how can it be apprehended in the workaday world?

"I am not alone, because the Father is with me." These are among the most reassuring words ever spoken, but can we believe them enough to act upon them?

"Why are ye fearful? How is it that ye have no faith?" When the tempest rises about them, simple everyday people would like to have such faith. They know that it is their most pressing need. But before they can accept it and live by it, they must have a reason

for their faith. They must believe that they are dealing with realities. They must be persuaded that here they touch the truth.

What is this world in which we live and move and have our being? If God is a name for the source and ground of our existence, most people believe in God. We did not make ourselves. We are dependent on something beyond ourselves for daily bread. We cannot foresee or control our future. We believe in God. But what kind of a God? Is He a Subject or an Object? Is He a Knower, as the psalmist said? "O Lord, Thou hast searched me and known me. . . . Thou understandest my thought afar off." And is there a wideness in His mercy like the wideness of the sea? Here, as Mr. Montague has pointed out, we are dealing with a momentous possibility. "If we could not only believe it but act upon it, life would suddenly become radiant." And we could answer the question of a young mother who said in the hospital, "We aren't sure that we should have brought this little child into the world."

Moreover, we need to know the truth about man. There are great Christian duties, but we shall be confused by them and we may even take them lightly until we make great Christian discoveries. What is man? An animal—which tells us nothing. He is an animal that laughs, draws pictures, uses tools, cooks his food. An ancient philosopher called him a "two-legged animal without feathers." Is he nothing else? Is he a barbarian not too far removed from the brute, lightly touched with a civilizing veneer? Is he rival, alien, competitor, adversary, and nothing more? Then with a bow to the conventions, which I am bound to respect,



why not brush him aside, or get on his back and hold him down?

Or is he, as Jesus said, a child of God? And if I stand under God, and say, "O God, Thou art my God," then this other man stands in the same relation, is endowed with the same rights, and he is not merely rival, alien, competitor, or adversary. He is my brother in the eyes of God. And if every man is a child of God, then wherever I encounter a human being and in whatever condition I find him, the ground whereon I stand is holy ground.

Therefore I must search out the meaning of justice under God who made the earth and sky and sea. I must know man's right to live, to toil, to rest, to love, to provide for his children in a land where they shall dwell every man under his vine and under his fig tree, and none shall make them afraid. Surely I must be militant in his behalf. I must know why I stand for his freedom, and I must know that whatever philosophy begins with the belief that there is something worth more than a human life will end in some kind of tyranny over human life, whether it is the tyranny of materialism or a feudal society or a police state. I must know his rights and understand his needs and be very tender in my concern for his welfare. These are imperatives if he is a child of God. For that also, I must have a reason—the reason of Christ: "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto Me."

Let no one suppose that the only serious dangers that we face are those that threaten world peace. It is not yet clear that even a constructive use of atomic energy will free us from all ills in this world and the next. Our Lord

spoke often of the foolishness of fear. But once, and I think only once, he told men what to fear. "Fear not those who can destroy the body, but rather fear those who can destroy the soul."

A young chemist appeared for employment at the Eastman Kodak Company. He was asked why he was interested in that organization. He answered, "Because I think you have the best retirement plan of any that I know." At twenty-five he was thinking about retirement.

What becomes of people when initiative fails? When effort is something to be avoided? When a man relates himself to life only in terms of his unredeemed desires, for pleasure, wealth, power, indulgence, ease? When a man makes himself the center of his world and uses all of God's gifts of mind and strength and talent for nothing more than to have his way? There will always be some. And in the absence of a reason for resolute, strenuous, hopeful effort, there will be many who drift into the various expressions of self-love. But it is still true that "he that loveth his life shall lose it," as Jesus said.

We must have a reason for living, for seeking the pearl of great price, for a will to spend and be spent, and to be measured not by the wine drunk but by the wine poured out in loving and faithful service to God and man.

What is the truth about God? What is the truth about man? What is the meaning of life? What does Christian philosophy have to say? To this chair we call you, and to your labors we pledge our support, praying that this new relationship may be, in a phrase of Cromwell, "a birth of Providence."