

be made a test of fellowship in a church of the New Testament order.

This last word: The most telling indictment brought by W. R. Thompson (mentioned above) against those who have been singing so lustily paeans to Darwin is on the count of intellectual dishonesty. "A long-enduring and regrettable effect of the success of the **Origin**," he writes, "was the addiction of biologists to unverifiable speculation." "The success of Darwinism," he goes on to say, "was accompanied by a decline in scientific integrity . . . evident in the reckless statements of Haeckel and in the shifting, devious and histrionic argumentation of T. H. Huxley." He points out the fact that even among scientists there is great divergence as to what evolution really is and how it comes about. Yet these men rally to the defense — and dogmatic promulgation — of a doctrine which they cannot even define. To this I might add that it has long been a favorite avocation of the self-styled "naturalistic" school of scientists — whose conclusions were warped by their predilections against any kind of religious faith — to belittle the philosophers of the Middle Ages for their "blind worship" of Aristotle. Yet I am sure that the medieval veneration of Aristotle was relatively mild in comparison with the uncritical devotion which so many scientists of recent vintage have given to Darwinism. Thompson concludes as follows: "Between the organism that simply lives, the organism that lives and feels, and the organism that lives and feels and reasons, there are, in the opinion of respectable philosophers, abrupt transitions corresponding to an ascent in the scale of being, and they hold that the agencies of the material world cannot produce transitions of this kind." The fact of the matter is, as stated heretofore, **that no one knows just how a new species emerges or could emerge.** With these conclusions this writer is in full accord.

### SPECIAL STUDY ON MAKING GOD REAL

I shall follow the time-honored procedure of dialectic, treating this subject first from the negative point of view, then concluding from the positive point of view.

D. Elton Trueblood, in his excellent text, **Philosophy of Religion**, emphasizes the truth that one's belief in the existence of God is not as potent an influence in one's life as is one's concept of the nature and attributes of God; that is to say, the matter of paramount importance to religious faith is **the kind of God** in whom one believes. It seems to me that this statement is one which can hardly be called in question.

Certainly man needs, and must have, if his worship is of any value, a God who is "real" to him, a God who is in some significant measure understandable by him, a God who is congenial to him, and therefore a God who supplies his human needs and to whom he can commit himself, in body and soul and spirit, without reservation. Where is this God to be found? Where and how has He revealed Himself to man? In reply to these questions we have just three propositions to offer, as follows:

1. Science, despite its achievement in the area of the understanding of the cosmos and its elementary particles, still and all is incapable of making God, or spiritual values of any kind, actually real to us, that is, real in the sense stated above. Science, to be sure, can give us a more comfortable world; it can fill our lives with gadgets which contribute to physical ease — but science cannot tell us much about God. Science points up, of course, the greatest mystery of all — **the mystery of being**. It brings this mystery to our attention and to our wonder, but it remains incapable of penetrating this mystery to its depths. Science can describe processes — in fact, that is its function; but it has little to say about meanings.

Science does contribute, however, one significant truth that has great bearing on our apprehension of the nature of God. That truth is, as stated heretofore in this text, that the framework of the world we live in is a framework of order. Because our world is a world of order, we can live in it; we could not live in an unpredictable world. And because our world is a world of order (a **cosmos**, not a chaos), science is possible: all the sciences are efforts of man to describe the order which he finds in the various areas

of physical being to which he directs his attention. Three facts of the world which science presents to our view stand out in bold relief: (1) that the processes of the physical world are in harmony with, and indeed governed by, strict mathematical norms or principles; (2) that running through out life as we experience it, and governing the cosmic order in its every aspect, is the principle of the interrelationships of ends and means; (3) that standing out clearly through all human experience is the fact of the adaptation of nature to man.

The mathematical character of our cosmos has been a source of awe and wonder to scientists of every field and from the earliest times. Pythagoras (5th century B.C.) was moved to affirm that "things are numbers." Plato in like manner commented: "God ever geometrizes." And in recent years Sir James Jeans has affirmed that our universe appears to be the handiwork of a pure mathematician, and creation an act of thought. Surely the necessary inference is that such precision of mathematical relations, of the interrelationships between ends and means, and of the adaptation of nature to the needs of man, its lord tenant, presupposes a Universal Intelligence, an Orderer of this universal order and design. There are few materialists indeed in the history of philosophy, and the truly great scientists have ever been humble souls. Still and all, science is helpless to make God real to us. Perhaps the highest degree to which the faith of science can attain is well expressed in these words of the late Albert Einstein:

My religion consists of a humble admiration of the illimitable superior spirit who reveals himself in the slight details we are able to perceive with our frail and feeble minds. That deeply emotional conviction of the presence of a superior reasoning power, which is revealed in the incomprehensible universe, forms my idea of God.

(This is quoted by Lincoln Barnett, *The Universe and Dr. Einstein*, p. 106.) This, of course, is the intellectualized God of Spinoza, and not the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2. Philosophy likewise, even though it can become more human and more positive in its affirmation of values as facts of our world, still is incapable of making God real to us. The whole history of philosophy confirms this statement. The simple fact is that our God — the God of the Bible — is not to be tied down to a Procrustean bed of human speculation and opinion.

One who is informed in the history of philosophy will be impressed with the fact that the uninspired thinkers of all ages — those who have depended on the power of reason alone — have failed to reach any apprehension of God that is appealing to the human consciousness or that meets human aspiration and need. Philosophy offers its classic arguments — the Ontological (based on the concept of perfect being), the Cosmological (whatever begins to exist must have an adequate cause), and the Teleological (design in our universe presupposes the Designer), etc. These arguments, based largely on a *a priori* thinking, although having validity of a kind, still do not make God real to us.

Not so long ago I undertook to make a list of the terms that have been coined by the different philosophers to convey their respective concepts of what they call the First Cause, the First Principle, whom believers call God. This list affords some interesting food for speculation, to say the least, as indicated by the following examples (in which the particular philosopher is named first, and his designation for God follows the name): Pythagoras, Unity; Plato, the Form of the Good; Aristotle, Pure Self-thinking Thought or the Unmoved Mover; Heraclitus, Logos (Reason, Law); Anaxagoras, Nous (Mind-Stuff); Plotinus, The One; The Scholastics, Natura Naturans, or Actus Purus; Bruno, World Soul; Spinoza, Substance; Schopenhauer, The Absolute Will; Hegel, The Absolute Idea; Spencer, The Unknowable; Bergson, Elan Vital (Life Force); Matthew Arnold, The Power That Makes for Righteousness; C. Lloyd Morgan, Nisus (of Activity); Emerson, The Over-Soul; William James, M-O-R-E, etc. (Does not this last approximate absurdity?) Obviously, these designations are, for the most part, purely academic and without content in

terms of human experience. They provoke little interest except within the circle of the intellectually "elect." They can never make God real, in any satisfying sense, to the average man.

We are reminded at this point of the words of Zophar the Naamathite to the patriarch Job in days of old, Job 11:7—

Canst thou by searching find out God?

Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?

The most that human philosophy can do in answer to this question is to give a resounding negative. Man, by the light of his own reason alone, can never apprehend God in any measure that is satisfying to his own nature and needs. Human reason must be complemented and vitalized by faith — by faith that turns to divine revelation. God must have revealed Himself to man; otherwise, no man could ever gain any adequate understanding of Him. If God has not revealed Himself to man, then man is back where he was two thousand years ago, utterly ignorant of God's love, and floundering in the muck and mire of human speculation. Of course, we see the manifestations of the power of God in nature all the time, but it is not the Power of God that meets man's deepest needs—it is the Love of God that man must drink of freely, in the Spirit, if he is to become a true saint, meet for the inheritance of all the saints in light. (See Rom. 1:18-23, Ps. 19:1, Rom. 5:5, Col. 1:12.) This leads us to our conclusion which is to be stated in positive terms, as follows:

### 3. Christ Jesus alone makes God real to us.

It was an integral part of the mission of the Son to our world, not only to provide an atonement for sin, but also to show mankind who and what God is. Said He, on occasion: "I and the Father are one" (Jn. 10:30), "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father" (Jn. 14:9), "No one cometh unto the Father, but by me" (Jn. 14:6), etc.

How many huge tomes have been written and published on the subject of understanding God, knowing God, etc.! How many educated men are still laboriously trying to climb the ladder stretching from earth to heaven when all they need to do is to take the elevator, that is, to look on

Christ and so to see God in human flesh! One who desires to apprehend the wisdom of God needs only to listen to the voice of Jesus delivering the Beatitudes. One who would witness demonstrations of the power of God, needs only to look upon Jesus casting out demons, healing the afflicted, stilling the tempest, multiplying loaves and fishes (a miracle of creation), and raising the dead. One who would know something of the love of God needs only to look upon Jesus, our Passover, the Lamb of God, dying on the Cross, the innocent for the guilty, the Savior of all who will come to God through faith in His vicarious sacrifice. To see the God-man, the Anointed, the incarnate Word, is to see God, and to make Him real to men is to make God real to men. For the very essence of our faith is that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19).

In His teaching, Jesus uses two designations for God which make Him a thousand times more understandable and more congenial to us than all the gobbledygook of the scientists and philosophers. "God is a Spirit," said Jesus, "and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth" (Jn. 4:24). Again, said He: "After this manner therefore pray ye: Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed by thy name" (Matt. 6:9). The term "Spirit" gives us insight into the being of God; the term "Father" gives us insight into our potential relationship with God.

"God is a Spirit." Without recourse to metaphysics, let us say that this means that as man is personal, so God is personal. It means that as God in some way similar to man thinks and feels and wills, so man is said to have been created in the image of God. We are not surprised, therefore, that when God revealed His great and incommunicable Name to the saints of old, it was the Name that fairly breathes personality. The polytheistic gods and goddesses of the pagan world were **personifications**; the God of the Bible is pure Personality: He is the I AM; with Him there is no past, present or future, because it is His nature to be timeless. The Divine Principle of Greek philosophy was pantheistic, **THAT WHICH IS**; the God of the Bible is

theistic, HE WHO IS. Only a person can say meaningfully, I am! Personality means vitality, activity, rationality, sociality, uniqueness, and otherness: our God is all these. The devotee of an impersonal deity must elbow his way past the language of Scripture to a kind of god that can never be real or congenial to persons.

"Our Father who art in heaven"—what vistas of faith and hope and love this term opens to our view! I hear someone raising the hue and cry of anthropomorphism: you are creating God in the image of man, is the objection. The old Greek Xenophanes raised this cry some twenty-six centuries ago. "If oxen and lions had hands and could fashion images," said he, "as men do, they would make the pictures and images of their gods in their own likeness: horses would make them like horses, oxen like oxen," etc. The implication is that man does the same: that God did not make man in His image; rather, that man has set up a God who is fashioned in man's image. This, of course, is half false and half true. In the first place, it is false to assume that lions, horses or oxen could even conceive of a being they might call "God," hence it is equally false that man should be placed in the same category with brute animals. The objection is true in the sense that man is compelled by his very lack of omniscience to think of any other form of being than human being in terms of his own experience. The person who argues that the world is just a vast machine is interpreting the physical world in terms of the characteristics which he finds in a machine. The person who will contend that his old dog is dreaming by the fireplace is interpreting animal behavior in terms of his own experience. Hence, man is compelled by the limitations of his intelligence to think of Divine being in terms of his own being—he cannot do otherwise. And the designation "Father" is the one which, above all others, makes God congenial to the commonality.