

Articles

SCIENCE AND A NEW RELIGIOUS REFORMATION

by Henry Nelson Wieman

Science is the way we achieve knowledge and power; religion is the way we give ourselves in supreme devotion to the best we know. If knowledge and power are not merged with supreme devotion to the best we know, they will not be used effectively to serve the best we know. If supreme devotion is not guided, informed, and empowered by the most penetrating method of inquiry at our command, our devotion will stumble and blunder in relative futility. I think we are generally agreed that the resources of science and the resources of religion must be united if the human race is not to destroy itself or sink to desperate futility just when it reaches its highest peak of power.

Karl Jaspers, in a recent book called *The Origin and Goal of History*, speaks of the axial period in history. It was the time when those insights and convictions entered human consciousness which created all the great world religions now prevailing. At no other time before or since in recorded history have there occurred such depth and power of creative insight in answer to the question asked by the religious consciousness of man. In Israel, in India, in Greece, in China, in Persia men ap-

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peared who proposed answers to the religious question more profound and adequate than any known before that time. The religious question is this: What has such character and power that it will transform man, to save him from the worst and lead him to the best, if he commit himself to it and meet other required conditions?

All the great world religions constantly go back for renewal and purging to their origins in the axial period. No outstanding leader in any of these religions has ever claimed to depart in any radical way from those insights and from the way of life which first appeared in the original sources. It is true that Christianity and Islam do not go back to the time which Jaspers calls the axial period, when religious creativity brought forth the great religions. But Jaspers claims, with much to support the claim, that Christianity and Islam did not introduce anything so radically different from the teaching of the Hebrew prophets as their teaching was from what preceded them. These two religions certainly introduced innovations, but Jesus and St. Paul, on the one hand, and Mahomet on the other, got their most important insights from the Hebrew prophets. Consequently, Jaspers dates the period of revolutionary religious creativity from about 800 B.C. to 200 B.C. The exact dates are not important. If Christians insist on extending the period to include the lives of Jesus and Paul and the first Christian disciples, the main point of the argument is not changed. The main point is that at a certain time in human history the social, psychological, and historical conditions were present which made it possible for the creativity, always latent in human life, to bring forth a better answer to the religious question than any ever before known. Jews and Christians give the name of God to this creativity. Some of the other religions do not. But regardless of names, the actual fact seems to stand that, under certain conditions, human thought and behavior are creatively transformed.

Until recently these religions have dominated and inspired the cultures where they existed. Recently they have lost this power. They continue to attract individuals and sustain religious fellowships. But their power to inspire and direct the course of government and politics, industry and commerce, education and art, science and literature, family and major social groupings has declined toward the vanishing point.

By "axial period," I understand Jaspers to mean the most revolutionary turning point in the history of the human race. The first civilizations arose long before this time, developing in and around the first cities. But the period in history called "axial" is given that name by Jaspers because at that time the moral standards and religious commitments came into being which made possible the subsequent develop-

ment of civilization and culture. These further social developments could scarcely have ensued without some marked change in the evaluation men made of their fellows. The axial period originated the moral standards and religious devotion which made possible this wider distribution of responsibility.

As said before, no idea in the New Testament and no idea in Christian history since the New Testament depart in any revolutionary way from the teaching of the Hebrew prophets. So also with the other great world religions. Any innovation appearing in them is always rooted in the original founders and appears as a further interpretation of the originating insights. Every revival of new vitality in the faith is a return to further appreciation of what arose in the axial period in human history.

This constant return to the originating sources is not to be condemned. On the contrary, the revolutionary transformation during the axial period that occurred in the minds of a few people was of such an order that two thousand years and more have been required to carry it to others and to absorb it into the lives of men generally. Over two thousand years have been required to study and interpret and better understand the way of life which emerged in the axial period—a way of life more fully controlled by creative interchange than was ever before possible. The time extending from the axial period until now has been required to extend this way of life as widely as possible among men and bring the basic institutions of society into some form of conformity to it and service of it.

CREATIVE INTERCHANGE

We use the expression “creative interchange” or the equivalent expression “creativity” to distinguish that kind of interaction between persons and peoples whereby their diverse activities are brought into relations of mutual support by each acquiring some sense of the value in the activities of the others. Each activity has its own value because a value is any goal-seeking activity. But diverse and complex activities which are interdependent and carried on by many different people can be related in three different ways: (1) They may frustrate and conflict and thus nullify their value. (2) They may be brought into relations of mutual support by coercion, deception, exploitation, and unconscious conditioning of the persons involved under the control of a ruling group. (3) Or, again, they may engage in creative interchange so that the valuing consciousness of each is expanded to comprehend the value of the whole system of interdependent activities.

This third way is the way of creative interchange. When it occurs

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with sufficient scope and power, each participant in the total system of interdependent activities becomes a free, sustaining, and creative member with a consciousness of values capable of indefinite expansion.

Doubtless, the first civilizations arose by bringing many diverse and complex activities into a system of mutual support by conquest, deception, exploitation, conditioning, and subordination of the many to the service of a few. But these civilizations could not have continued to develop, and certainly could not have increased the values of life for the vast majority, if the religions of civilization had not arisen in place of the tribal religions to direct the ruling commitment of their adherents to the creativity of creative interchange. The tribal religions did this in a way fitted for tribal life; but they could not do it in a way fitted for civilization when interdependent activities were much more diversified, much more complex, and when the power of technology was greatly magnified.

Religion, when fulfilling its proper function, can now be further defined as those rituals, symbols, and beliefs by which the ruling commitment of human life is directed to what creates our humanity, saves it from its own self-destructive propensities, and transforms it by expanding indefinitely the valuing consciousness of each individual in community with others.

What does this is a creativity operating in human life by way of creative interchange. This creativity is often given the name of God. In Christianity, God is often identified with love. But when love is thus applied to God, the word must be understood to refer to something far more profound, pervasive, sustaining, and creative than what is ordinarily meant by this expression. In short, when love is applied to God, it must be understood to mean that creativity operating by way of creative interchange to create a valuing consciousness capable of indefinite expansion in community with others. This kind of valuing consciousness is the essential nature of our humanity.

The great religions of civilization, arising in the axial period to take the place of the tribal religions, symbolized this creativity in various ways. In Christianity, it was called the "living Christ." St. Paul called it "Christ in you." In Judaism, it was called the "one God," superseding the tribal gods. This one God should be served and worshipped by all peoples in all ages, according to the teaching of Judaism. Other of the world religions arising in this period symbolized this creativity in other ways.

Regardless of the way it was symbolized, the reality symbolized was a creativity operating in human life to widen and deepen the range of

that kind of community wherein individuals and organizations interchange and integrate their goal-seeking activities. Individuals and peoples committed to this creativity live not for themselves alone and not for any established system of values but for what breaks through the limitations of every established system to expand indefinitely the range of values by which and in which and for which human beings live in community with one another. At least this seems to have been what the great founders of these religions had in mind and what is indicated by their outstanding representatives.

But the problem is to have the teaching, the symbolism, and the understanding required to present this creativity in a way to induce people to live for it and in it so that, in times of major decision, they will choose that alternative best fitted to provide the conditions under which this creativity can operate most effectively throughout the whole of human existence. When conditions undergo great change, especially when there is great increase in the diversity, complexity, and power of goal-seeking activities to be brought into mutual support, the teaching, the symbolism, the understanding, and the methods required to present this creativity in a way to induce commitment to it must undergo a corresponding change. That is the reason the tribal religions were unfit for civilization.

The same creativity operated in tribal life as operates in civilization to create the valuing consciousness of individuals in community with one another. But the teaching, the symbolism, and the understanding required to do this for the mentality of tribal life were not fit to do it for the mentality and other conditions prevailing in civilization. Hence, conquest, coercion, control by military organization, deception practiced by the priesthood, all manner of exploitation of the many by the few, were the methods used by the early civilizations to maintain the social order. Of course, these methods have always been used by all people in all ages. But this is a matter of degree. There is evidence to indicate that the early civilizations did this with more deliberate intent and organized power than was possible in the primitive, food-gathering tribe.

The great religions arose to correct this evil condition of civilization. It was evil in the sense that it narrowly limited the range of the valuing consciousness of the masses who were suppressed, coerced, deceived, exploited, and reduced more or less to puppets. It also restricted the range of the valuing consciousness of the ruling few because they had to maintain an organization which obstructed the free, full, and open expression of the values of unique individuality. This limited the range

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and variety of values each could get from others, and thereby impoverished the integrated system of values accessible to the valuing consciousness of each. Not only did it limit creative interchange between members of the ruling group but, what was much more serious, it prevented all other members of society from making their own unique contribution to that integrated system of goal-seeking activities called the "culture" of that society. It also prevented that continuous increase of power exercised *co-operatively* by all segments of society that is necessary to sustain a society in which activities become increasingly diverse and complex.

THE DEMANDS OF POST-CIVILIZATION

With this understanding of the basic problem of human existence, which is also the basic problem of religious commitment, we see how it applies to the revolutionary transformation of human existence now occurring. Just as agriculture and the city transformed primitive tribal life into the life of civilization, so now scientific research and scientific technology are transforming civilization into a way of life as different from the civilization of the past five thousand years as civilization was different from the tribal life which preceded it. Just as the symbolism of tribal religions had to be transformed into the symbolism and intellectual understanding of the world religions to sustain the values of life when that first great transition occurred, so now the symbolism and intellectual understanding of this creativity as found in the religions of civilization must be transformed into a religion fit to sustain the values of human life in post-civilization.

The expression "post-civilization" is taken from the book by Kenneth Boulding, *The Meaning of the 20th Century: The Great Transition*. One may insist that the new way of life now emerging will still be a form of civilization. But that is not the point. The point is that we are midway in a transition as great as the one which brought civilization into existence. Therefore, the way of life now emerging will be as different from that of past civilization as civilization was different from tribal life.

Just as agriculture and the city distinguished civilization from tribal life, so today the magnified power of scientific research and scientific technology distinguish post-civilization from the civilizations of the past. As in civilization creativity had to be symbolized and understood in ways to show how it operated in life dominated by agriculture and the city, so in post-civilization this creativity must be symbolized and

understood to show how it operates in life dominated and controlled by scientific research and scientific technology.

This creativity operates throughout the whole of human existence at all levels from the physical, the chemical, and biological through the psychological, social, cultural, and the historical. In this context "the historical" means the accumulation of symbolized meanings through a long sequence of generations, these meanings carried by language to form a culture in which the values of human life are embodied.

With this understanding of the proper function of religion as directing the ruling commitment of human life to the creativity operating throughout the whole of human existence, it is plain that any religion fit to do this in post-civilization must be united in close co-operation with all the sciences. This is so because only the sciences can search out the conditions at all levels of human existence which must be shaped in such a way that creativity can operate most effectively to expand the valuing consciousness of each individual in community with others. The responsibility of science is to provide this knowledge along with the technology required to use the knowledge effectively. The responsibility of religion is to maintain throughout society a ruling commitment to this creativity—leading individuals, organizations, and institutions to use this knowledge and this technology to provide these conditions for the effective operation of the creativity which creates, sustains, and magnifies the values of human existence.

This kind of religion and this union of religion with science are needed today as they were not in other times because of the enormous power of scientific research and scientific technology. If this power is not used to provide conditions for the effective operation of the creativity which creates and sustains and expands the valuing consciousness of individuals in community of mutual support with one another, it will be used in other ways. As has already been noted, there are two other ways this power can be used. One way leads to the extinction of the human race by conflict, confusion, and chaos of goal-seeking activities equipped with the power of scientific technology. The other way this power of science can be used is to superimpose a mechanized order enforced by tyranny, reducing the mass of humanity to puppets as has been predicted by Aldous Huxley in *Brave New World*, by George Orwell in his book *1984*, by Michael Harrington in *The Accidental Century*, and by David Riesman with his concept of "the other-directed man," which is the first mild beginning of this reduction to puppets.

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A NEW RELIGIOUS REFORMATION

With this understanding of our need for a new reformation of religion in relation to science, let us look at the conditions which must be present for such a development. One of these conditions is a vivid and widely prevalent recognition of the limitation and inadequacy of religion as it now exists and operates.

Another required condition is the emergence of the religious problem from beneath the thick layers of ritual and belief. Religion must begin to appear to many minds, not only as a body of doctrine and a way of life to be accepted or rejected, but as a question to be answered and a problem to be solved. Not otherwise can important religious innovation occur. Unless men search, they will not find; if they do not ask, no answer will be given them.

Doubt and rejection of prevalent forms of religion are not enough to bring forth a more profound and effective faith. Nothing creative can come out of such a negative attitude. Creative insight emerges, not by rejecting a way of life, but by recognizing the problem which underlies it; and, seeing that this problem is incompletely solved, yet of utmost importance for human existence, by calling imperatively for a better solution than any now in practice. Whatever the social and historical conditions may have been in the axial period, they must have produced this state of mind in the leaders who brought forth the great religions of the world. Everything we know about Hebrew prophets, about Socrates and Plato, about Buddha, Confucius, and Zoroaster supports this assertion about the state of mind which possessed them.

If Karl Jaspers is correct in saying that now again, after 2,500 years, we are entering a period when a further advance in religion will occur comparable to that of the axial period, then the first sign and evidence for such a claim must be the appearance and spread of that attitude toward religion which we have just been describing. Religion must again begin to appear to the minds of a considerable number of people, not merely as something to believe or doubt, accept or reject, and not merely as something to reform by going back to the founders of the faith, but as a problem of utmost importance to be solved more completely than any solution now available—by a solution which reaches more deeply into the intricacies of life and higher into its possibilities.

Here, then, we have the first condition which must prevail if our time is to be one of opportunity for further development in religion. Does religion begin to appear to increasing numbers as a problem to solve in the sense indicated? I think we can answer that question in the affirmative.

But, when we speak of religion presenting itself to the mind as a problem, we must distinguish the basic problem from many other problems which engage the minds of men in matters religious. In one sense, religion is always a problem for everyone all of the time. But very rarely does this problematical character of religion reach the level of what is here called the basic problem. Some of these other problems must be noted here in order to distinguish them from that problem which generates the revolutionary religious insights when men struggle with it.

One problem which occupies many religious thinkers at the present time is the problem of formulating and establishing those beliefs which give peace of mind or enable the individual to get what he wants in the form of health, wealth, honor, and other achievement. It is the psychological effect of beliefs which is sought and not any other actuality operating to transform creatively. The most popular books today in the field of religion and the most popular religious leaders are working on this problem; but this is not the one which can bring forth the insight we seek.

Another problem which engages fruitfully the great minds in the field of religion today is that of recovering the whole truth and depth of the teaching and the power of the originators of Christianity and other religions as they are to be found down through history. Certainly there can be no advance in the depth and truth of religious insight and commitment if the best achieved to date is not conserved or recovered. Only by building on the best attained so far in human history can there be any advance over the past. Consequently, the work of scholars and thinkers engaged in this enterprise is a necessary part of what we need. Without their work, the next step in religious development can not occur. But this recovery of the best the past has to offer, indispensable as it is, is not itself the next step. This recovery of the best is one of the necessary conditions which must be present; and the fact that it is being done so effectively in our time is further evidence supporting the claim that another axial period may be on the way. But we must distinguish this problem of recovery from the problem which brings forth the innovation.

Another problem engaging the minds of many religious leaders at the present time is to discover or achieve a ruling consensus of dominant religious thinkers. This effort is called the "ecumenical movement." Viewed as strategy to gain power by closing ranks and uniting forces, this may be a significant endeavor; but it moves in the opposite direction from that struggle with the basic problem out of which may arise a

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religious commitment with more power to transform human life than any now practiced. The Hebrew prophets, Socrates and Plato, Buddha, Confucius, and Zoroaster could never have brought forth the great religions of the world if they had been trying to reach some consensus with other religious leaders of their time. Indeed, if they had been caught into a powerful ecumenical movement, the innovations brought forth by them could never have occurred, and the religions of the world now prevailing for over two thousand years would never have come into being.

The list of problems engaging the minds of religious thinkers and inquirers to which great scholarship and whole lives are devoted might be extended. But the ones mentioned may serve to illustrate those problems which are not to be identified with the basic problem. They cannot give us that fuller understanding of what it is that calls for the ultimate commitment of man.

THE BASIC RELIGIOUS PROBLEM

The most promising development in our time which indicates that we may be entering a period when further creative insights will occur is the increasing awareness of the basic religious problem out of which innovating insights can emerge when men struggle with it. This increasing concern with the underlying religious problem, in contrast to the other religious problems mentioned, might be traced back to Descartes and the seventeenth century. Since Descartes, the outstanding figures who have treated religion as a problem to solve, rather than as a body of doctrine and practice to accept or reject, have been Immanuel Kant, Søren Kierkegaard, and today the existentialists. A progression can be traced from Descartes and Kant to the existentialists of our time in the ever fuller exposure of the problem which underlies religion and the increasing intensity of the realization that the problem is not solved and no answer to date is altogether satisfactory.

This recognition of the problem and the intense concern about it appear most strikingly in the writing of Martin Heidegger and Karl Jaspers in Europe and Paul Tillich in this country. Jean-Paul Sartre rejects all religious solutions but recognizes the problem in all its urgency and struggles with it constantly. According to him, man stands before the abyss of nothingness and creates himself with each act of will. Regardless of agreement or disagreement with Sartre, he does expose vividly and dramatically the religious question, namely, what, in truth, has the character and power to create, sustain, save, and transform the total being of man?

It is true that the existentialists from Søren Kierkegaard down to contemporary figures, while exposing the religious problem in all its depth and urgency, deny that any rational solution of the problem is possible. The only way the problem can be solved, they say, is by an act of faith, where faith is understood to be an ultimate commitment without guidance of knowledge. This rejection of reason and knowledge as a guide at the frontier of religious commitment is not the point we are defending. So far as concerns us here, the important thing about these religious leaders is that they are awakening the minds of men from their dogmatic slumber, to use Kant's expression. They are compelling thinkers in the field of religion to recognize that religion is ultimately a question, rather than a set of answers; and this question, while it has received many answers, has received none which is both rationally defensible and at the same time satisfactory. That is tantamount to saying that religion is an unsolved problem. This state of mind is a necessary first condition for any struggle with the problem which can hope to bring forth the answer we seek.

A RATIONAL ALTERNATIVE TO EXISTENTIALISM

The ability to deal rationally with the ultimate religious problem requires a cultural development of the mind which I believe we are approaching. To understand this cultural development and the state of mind enabling men to deal constructively with this problem, let us trace the stages of this development.

These stages are not stages through which all humanity passes—not by any means. Perhaps the great majority of humankind are still at the lowest level so far as concerns this particular line of development. "Lowest," as here used, does not mean lowest in every particular and does not necessarily carry any suggestion of meanness or contempt. It is simply the level where the mind begins to move toward the level where it is possible to deal constructively and rationally with the ultimate religious problem. Millions, I should judge, are still at the first and second levels to be described. Other millions are at the third and fourth levels. But social processes are now at work which, if war does not overwhelm, will carry many beyond the "lowest" level. That does not mean that they will reach the "highest" level. But they make it possible that an increasing number might reach the level where they can deal constructively and rationally with the ultimate religious question.

At the first level in this cultural development, the mind is obsessed with the struggle to obtain the necessities of biological survival such as food, shelter, reproduction, care of the children. Religion at this level,

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along with all other resources available to man, is chiefly directed to obtain protection from the enemy, food and shelter, health and long life, children and their normal development. Even when material goods are in abundant supply, this state of mind may still persist because the organization of personality, the structure of consciousness, and the traditions of the culture do not change so readily as material conditions. But today rapid development of a powerful productive industry extending throughout the world could reduce the number of people living at this level.

At the second level of cultural development, the mind is no longer obsessed with the necessities of biological survival but continues to live under the dominant control of an authoritative religious tradition which people at this level do not venture to challenge. The dictates of this religious tradition are supposed to have a supernatural source and hence to exercise an authority and contain a rightness which no human mind can question. But powerful forces are at work in the world today to carry people beyond this level. Just as the power and spread of industrial production promises to deliver great numbers from preoccupation with the necessities of life, so communication, travel, and the voluminous interchange and intermingling of all the diverse religious traditions of the world combined with the rising power of science tend to weaken the domination and authority exercised by any inflexible tradition over the minds of any people.

At the third level of cultural development, people are no longer preoccupied with the struggle to obtain material goods and no longer dominated by the unquestioned authority of a religious tradition. Hence, they feel free to decide for themselves what is worthy of man's ultimate religious commitment. But here they are caught by a bondage as confining and misleading as any to be found at the first two levels. It is the bondage imposed by an illusion. It is the illusion that the individual with his own private judgment is competent to solve the most profound and difficult problem which ever confronted the mind of man, namely, the problem of what, in truth, does have the character and power to transform man.

At this third level, there is no intensive study of any great religious tradition. Consequently, the individual is not even so well informed concerning this problem as he might be under the dominant control of one of the great traditions. For this reason, the religious convictions and commitments of people at this level tend to become superficial, uninformed, and relatively irresponsible. These convictions and commitments cease to have any great unifying and directing power for

society because they are so diverse, conflicting, and superficial. As a result of this diversity and superficiality, religion loses its power, although it may become increasingly popular because people can readily flock together to celebrate symbols which have no common meaning and no great power to control and reshape their lives.

Since people at this third level have no depth of communion in shared conviction and shared commitment concerning matters most important for all human living, a sense of loneliness and isolation gradually creeps into the mind. It may be kept out of consciousness by various devices, but it cannot be stilled, and it cannot be stopped so long as this condition of religion continues.

Also the superficiality and diversity of religious commitment produce a sense of insecurity. The most powerfully sustaining security comes only when the individual is very sure that he has given himself quite completely to what creates, sustains, saves, and transforms toward the best possible. But the ordinary person cannot be sure of any such thing unless his beliefs are reinforced by finding that others who truly count in his esteem share with him much the same belief and self-giving. Also, under the conditions now being considered, the individual cannot count on any revered and unquestioned authority to reassure him; the diversity of religious beliefs tends to weaken his convictions about any of them. Hence the creeping insecurity which invades the mind.

Much the same causes which produce the loneliness and insecurity also increase the feeling of personal insignificance. One can feel that his own person and his own strivings have high importance only if he believes that his life is caught into some development or design which includes society and history. But since the individual, for reasons stated, can have no strong convictions or assurance on this matter, and since no deep communion of shared commitment unites him in strong bonds of mutual support with others, the sense of insignificance and relative worthlessness and lack of meaning tend to creep over him.

This state of mind at the third level of cultural development, marked by loneliness, insecurity, insignificance, loss of direction, and lack of meaning, has been called by the existentialists "dreadful freedom." It is the kind of freedom from which men in time try to escape, according to Erich Fromm. Consequently, at this third level of cultural development, we find people recurrently trying to put themselves under the control of the ancient, authoritative, traditional forms of religion.

This brings us to the fourth level of cultural development in dealing

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with the religious problem. At this level, the religious problem is recognized in all its depth and urgency, but it is interpreted to be an unfathomable mystery which the human intellect cannot penetrate. These are the religious existentialists and the neo-orthodox. The reality which concerns religion, so these men say, transcends time and space and all existence; it transcends the reach of human reason. It can be brought to conscious awareness by means of appropriate symbols, but it cannot be brought within the bounds of human understanding. Any attempt to deal with this problem by way of abstract concepts is a species of idolatry, according to men at this level. The most sophisticated, outstanding leaders of religious thought in the Western world today are at this fourth level of cultural development in man's struggle with the religious problem.

The great virtue of this fourth level is that it brings the unsolved religious problem to the forefront of conscious awareness. No longer is religion identified at this level with a system of doctrine giving conceptual knowledge of what determines human destiny at the deepest levels of our existence. No longer can any set of practices and symbols be accepted as authoritative. All of these, doctrines, symbols, rituals, and practices, are subject to revolutionary transformation, since none of them are based upon assured knowledge.

This fourth level is, I believe, the consequence of the psychological conditions produced by the third level, namely, the loneliness, insecurity, insignificance, loss of direction and meaning in life resulting from the attempt to hand over to uninformed private judgment the most profound and difficult problem ever encountered by the human mind. This fourth level is a reaction to the opposite extreme from the assumed self-assured competence of private judgment to settle this religious question. It is a rebound from one extreme to the opposite. But it is, I believe, transitional to a fifth level in the cultural development of the human mind in its struggle with the religious problem.

THE NEW CULTURAL THRESHOLD

Once religion is seen to be a problem and not a set of unquestioned beliefs or assured knowledge or symbols authoritatively imposed, the way is cleared to advance to the fifth level. To be sure, this further step cannot be taken so long as impenetrable mystery is held to be the ultimate concern of religion. At this fifth level, one seeks knowledge to guide religious commitment and so cannot stop with mystery. At this fifth level, mystery is recognized as the frontier of knowledge but not as the barrier beyond which intellectual inquiry cannot pass, even

though there may always remain further mysteries. Transition from the fourth to the fifth level of cultural development is accomplished by redefining the problem of ultimate religious concern. One need not challenge the claim that there is a mystery of Being which never can be fully or finally penetrated by intellectual inquiry; but when one comes up against that blank wall, one can redefine the problem so as to open a way for intellectual inquiry in other directions where something of importance can be discovered. If any satisfaction or virtue is to be had by contemplating the mystery beyond the reach of all knowledge, by all means let us contemplate it. Let us accept everything which this ultimate concern with mystery may have to offer. But let us be on our guard against using this appeal to mystery as a device for holding fast to cherished beliefs which we know can never be sustained by evidence.

Against this background of analysis and survey of conditions, may we summarize the basic religious problem of our time as we see it. It can be put in the form of a question, thus: How can religion and science be united to make human existence at all levels more fit for the effective operation of that creativity which expands indefinitely the valuing consciousness of each individual in community with others when this community must itself expand indefinitely to include all the diverse goal-seeking activities of human existence insofar as they can be brought into relations of mutual support at deeper levels of mutual understanding across wider ranges of diversity?

This will require a change in the motivation of science as well as a change in religion. It will require that scientific research be motivated by commitment to this creativity, seeking out the conditions for its most effective operation. It will require a change in religion, seeking a more intelligent understanding of this creativity by joining with science to get the needed knowledge.

Today, talk about "the death of God" by theologians is symptomatic of the great change religion is now undergoing. What form religion will take in the future we do not know. We have here tried to indicate the direction which we believe this change in religion should take.