

Psychological Perspectives in New Testament Literature

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INTRODUCTION

Psychological models are very important in discerning human experience. They help us to understand ourselves and participate meaningfully in the life process. Though they frequently become available to us after we have already undergone major portions of our human development, they do help us better to understand our own adult life and to provide guidance to others. They also offer ways of consciously reshaping the dynamics and influences of our past, over which we previously had little power and choice, and engaging the tasks of our adult development. For this adult task "new birth", "new life", "and resurrection" are significant metaphors.

A psychological model is crucial for spiritual formation because there is need to understand the person who is being formed spiritually, to know the dimensions, possibilities and limits of human formation, and to understand the role of the spiritual in the complex domain of human existence. Such a model must take seriously the spiritual as part of its description.

The models with which we will deal have spiritual dimensions. The spiritual may be seen as a component of the developmental process or as a dimension or atmosphere which impacts the whole human process. It may be seen as related to transcendent elements within the human being or the realm of Transcendence which, at least partially, comes to human life from outside it. Some may object that these models are not *only* spiritual, but encompass the whole life of the person. That is what they are intended to do, for the discernment of life, for which the church is responsible, comprises the whole of life. The church is to speak the Gospel, the words which communicate the Transcendent and interpret the spiritual, to persons living within the many dimensions of their human and historical existence.

The reasons for offering several models include both the different perspectives from which life may be approached and the fact that in describing human life we are dealing with models that are tenuous attempts to describe the mystery behind human phenomena and experience. *No single model is adequate. Perhaps this also helps to make us aware that the person preceeds and transcends the models and there is unique value in the distinctiveness of the person. No one is the sum total of some psychological or existential components. Thus before models are applied one must hear the unique and sacred story of a person, listening with respect. Only then does one begin to know how and in what combination the models are applicable.*

This book originally started as a chapter within my book on Spiritual Formation. My work in this area quickly grew to dimensions which necessitated a separate volume, intended to provide supplementary resources for those interested in psychological models which can be related to Spiritual Formation concerns. However, this book was also influenced by a new course on "Psychological Perspectives in the Early Church" which I designed particularly for students in our Master of Arts in Pastoral Counseling program. Its intent was to provide a course which approached the New Testament materials with a view to their needs, rather than from the customary M. Div. perspective.

I would like first to discuss a psychological model which has become valuable to me and with which I work: "The Four Worlds of the Person." These worlds are really descriptive of dimensions of adult existence and not so much a model of human development. "The New Testament As Resource for Understanding of Human Nature, Life and Process" follows, presenting the New Testament as a resource for our interests. Then I have included a chapter by Ruth Borkowski, a student of mine, "Seeking a Biblical Model for Women's Issues in Counseling," dealing with feminine concerns which ultimately affect us all. A chapter on "Anthropology of the Early Church and Its World" provides perspectives on the explicit anthropological models that were part of the culture of early Christianity. This is followed by the psychological models of Freud and Jung, the "extrovert model" of Adrian Van Kaam, and several "contemplative" models, including that of Gerald May. Two biblical models, that of Paul and Matthew, are presented for comparison with the major contemporary models.

A chapter on "Hypnotism, Suggestion and Neuro-Linguistic Programming" leads to a discussion of suggestion and images of power in personal life. This is followed by "Type and Faith Development," exploring the significance of the model of personality type initiated by Carl Jung and contemporary theories of faith development for understanding the spiritual life of the person. The remaining chapters

focus on significant biblical issues. There are: "Christology and Anthropology in Mark," "The Gospel of John: History, Creation and Anthropology," "Discernment," and "Pastoral Care and the Early Church." These are followed by "Overcoming Dualism Through Healing," a chapter which tackles New Testament dualism as impediment to health and wholeness, concluding with a meditative exercise. The last chapter, "Jung's Approach to the Bible: Answer to Job", provides a comprehensive study of Jung's approach to the biblical materials, beginning with Genesis, continuing through the Intertestamental Period, and moving on through the New Testament to the church's later theological developments. Though Jung's biblical studies are based in the biblical criticism of his time and decidedly influenced by his psychological model, it is helpful to see how one great psychological theorist handled the biblical materials.

Evaluating Psychological Models

Because of the multiplicity of psychological models available it is important to consider some basic questions which could be asked of the model in evaluating its adequacy and completeness. The questions are offered as a way of providing the reader with a perspective for analysis and will not be specifically treated with the discussion of the models.

Models should not be regarded as having final answers, for history is full of the development, modification and even rejection of models. Nor should it be demanded that each by itself treat all of the dimensions of human existence, for some contribute perspectives to a more eclectic model of development. Rather are they ways of approaching and understanding the mystery of the human being. Of the models one might ask:

1. What are the presuppositions of the model? Are they derived from observation of human existence and behavior or are they borrowed from other traditions or sciences? What are the values and limits of these presuppositions? How are they related to the personal history of the theorist/therapist? Are these open to qualification by clinical or experimental observation?
2. Does the model deal comprehensively with human existence and formation or is its perspective limited? What can it do within its limits?
3. What does it see as the "structure" of the person? This might include the physiological organism, the psyche (and its components such as conscious and unconscious, ego, etc.), social relationships external and introjected, cultural and historical components, spiritual dimensions (within and from outside the person).
4. Does it provide a role for human transcendence? This may vary from "free variation" (free elements within the psyche which cannot be accounted for by simple cause and effect) to archetypal influences, action of the will, the issue of freedom, and the stream of human life and consciousness which transcends actions and psychological processes.
5. Does it provide a role for spiritual transcendence, i.e. God and evil?
6. What are the methods by which the components of the person may be engaged and influenced?
7. What are the limits and possibilities of human healing and wholeness?
8. How successful is the model in providing insight and facilitating transformation, healing, wholeness?
9. What foundation does the model provide for action, relationship with others, and ethics? This assumes that the goal of human existence embraces much more than individual well adjustment and modification of intrapsychic conflicts.¹

¹ Don Browning provides a helpful analysis of the ethical implications of psychological models in *Religious Thought and the Modern Psychologies*, Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.

CHAPTER I THE FOUR WORLDS OF THE PERSON

In this chapter I would like to present my own model, "The Four Worlds of the Person," describing the *dimensions* operative within adult existence. This should help persons seeking responsible and conscious involvement in their own process or providing guidance for others. Then I want to describe a process I call "wholing", which I believe is essential for psychological and spiritual growth, and related to the presented model. Lastly, I want to present some principles regarding what is possible in human transformation and comment on the role of the therapist/spiritual director in "wholing."

The Four Worlds of the Person

External and Internal Worlds

We live in several worlds. Modern humanity has lost sight of this. We live in the external world with its laws of nature, its dimensions of space and time, its "objectivities" and personal, social, historical and cultural realities. The birth of scientific and historical methodology since the 17th century has caused us to see this as the real world, consigning other worlds to myth, imagination and, at times, religion. We have demythologized the cosmos and human existence and have assumed a measure of control over life hitherto thought impossible. Whatever of the other worlds we are aware of depends on the extent to which they call themselves to our attention and the extent to which we are inclined to listen to them. If all goes well, we may ignore them.

The external world, often the the primary arena of our awareness, contained and contains the landscape of culture, events and persons which impinge upon us and therefore constitute our environment. Both the opportunities for personal becoming and the perspectives from which we see and understand come from these contexts. An especially powerful part of our environment are the significant others in our early life, but it must be recognized that we continue to be formed in our encounters with persons the rest of our lives.² In contact with persons we meet the mystery of human existence and the presence of the spiritual, both good and evil. In seeking to form relationships we gain skill in openness to our relationship with God, the ultimate relationship. In working at relationship we come to understand the gracious love by which God calls us into relationship. Through relationship we extend the sovereignty (Kingdom) of God in the recreation of God's community and the expression of God's presence in the world.

The second world with which we deal is the inner world of the psyche. This inner world in former days was often projected upon the external world, expressed in myth, fairy tale, and religious traditions. It is Carl Jung's conviction that by demythologizing the external world we have lost a significant way for dealing with the inner world. Thus the rise of psychology is a compensation due to the predicament of "modern man".³

The inner world is much closer to the world as the ancients saw it, full of strange powers and magic, providing life with quite a different landscape than modern science would have us understand. The inner world contains not only our biological urges and the results of the imprinting of our personal histories, but the transmitted psyche of the human race: the archetypal material. Because so much of it is unconscious, it operates by dynamics not in control of will or consciousness. The functioning of this inner world is most affected by what we have experienced, what we believe and what has been suggested to us: what we

² . The recognition of the significance of interpersonal relationship has given birth to various theories of family and interpersonal systems. For example, Heinz Kohut's Self Psychology emphasizes that persons need emotionally responsive persons who become selfobjects from which our sense of self becomes constructed. Murray Bowen, considered to be the founder of the Family Therapy Movement, understands the differentiation attained by a person as developed within the systems of interpersonal relationship.

³ . "The Spiritual Problem of Modern Man", in C.G. Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, transl. by W.S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes, NY and London: A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1933, pp. 196-220.

often consider subjective rather than objective. Here many of the usual limits of time, space and natural law disappear. All of the elements of our life experience live together, side by side, and we are able to perform feats beyond the limits of our external world. It is a world somewhat limited by its biological base, but by and large it operates according to the reality created within it.

Hypnosis provides a clear, though limited, example of how this works. The way one functions, the presuppositions by which one functions, the way one perceives external reality, and even the condition of one's body, can be affected by post-hypnotic suggestions: i.e. suggestion which functions after hypnosis and in the unconscious because the memory of it has been removed during hypnosis. Hypnosis is a limited illustration because a post-hypnotic suggestion can often be removed by making it conscious, while dynamics which have operated within the psyche for some time remain as part of one's psychological structure even after being made conscious, though their power may diminish.

Though this internal world seems at first glance to consist only of neurological traces in the complex human brain and nervous system, it is, nevertheless, quite real and affects the life process of the person. Its contents act and interrelate, conflict and reconcile, with or without awareness, as they are energized. When awareness is present, it may be in the form of a vague awareness of interior dynamics (which may not always be distinguished as clearly interior, i.e., may be projected onto the world) or it may make use of the human ability to image. This latter may bring into being a strange, rich and "wonder-full" inner world whose landscape one may navigate as that of the external world, meeting the dynamics of the psyche in symbolic and personified forms.⁴

⁴. The imagination is a major instrument for getting in touch with complexes of the unconscious. Thus it is important to understand what it is and the way it functions in different persons.

Imagination is a way of letting the structures of the unconscious come to consciousness so that one can be aware of them. The memories and experiences of ourselves and life, and the deeper structures of the psyche inherited as part of our humanity (the archetypes), are all recorded and stored as "traces" within the tremendous complexity of our neurological apparatus, often interrelating in various ways. Some of the experiences represented, and particularly the archetypal information, are there without discernible words and images. Life memories which have words and images connected with them are there with words and images, but encoded in biological form. Thus it becomes the task of the imagination to stimulate the complexes within the psyche so that they can express themselves to us; and if there are not usable words and images, the mind frequently borrows these. Sometimes the dynamics of the complexes within the psyche are so powerful that they rise to consciousness and seize upon available words and images.

Imaging or imagination is thus an important tool. However, it must be remembered that it does not work the same way for everyone. Some persons can "see" images in their mind with eyes closed. Some can even "see" them with eyes open. Some have difficulty forming images and only see vague shapes. Some see images and hear words. Some only hear words rather than seeing images. Some "sense" or intuit what is being said and done by complexes within the psyche without seeing or hearing anything. They just know. All of this variety is, in a sense, the use of the imagination -- though not always in images. One needs to discover how one functions with the imagination and learn to use it in this way. There are also many exercises which one can do to improve one's ability to "see images". These essentially amount to practicing inner visualization with colors, objects and scenes.

Essential to use of the imagination is the relaxation of body and mind so that the structures of the psyche are allowed to come to the surface of consciousness and one can pay attention to them. Tensions of body and mind not only distract one but keep the dynamics of the subconscious restricted. Thus preparation for the use of the imagination is much like preparation for meditation.

The results of the use of the imagination need "discernment". Discernment is a classical term within spirituality for the ability to judge what is valid in spiritual experience. Some information from the use of the imagination may be exact and precise. Other information is more symbolic where the imagination fastens upon convenient and available symbols to express feelings and dynamics of the psyche. Here one must be cautious about taking this "literally", but the meaning behind the symbols is to be sought. Then there is the ability of the imagination to be creative and to invent what it is asked to invent. However, even

Thus the interior world, the psyche, is really a world including the realities of whatever has been introduced into it. It can also be described as a cosmos, sphere or field, to try to express its "breadth" and inclusiveness. Here the components of personality take shape. It probably starts with the archetypal structures (our genetically transmitted human inheritance) and primitive consciousness. On this foundation there are erected structures in various ways according to the life experience and biological conditions of the individual.

One major issue in psyche formation is the matter of continuity and integration. Can the psyche form in such a way that in the development of the person new experience and identity is in continuity with previous experience, or does one need to leave old experience behind in order to develop? For example, can the interior dynamics of anger and sexuality be maintained in continuity with the rest of the psyche, or do they need to be separated from one's identity and consciousness? As the archetypal aspects of the psyche emerge from the unconscious, can they be integrated with the rest of the person? If for various reasons portions of human experience cannot be in continuity and part of a larger integration, then they are frequently left within the psyche as autonomous complexes, functioning on their own.

The classic example of this is the multiple personality,⁵ but other psychologists are indicating this also as a pattern for more normal human development. One interesting example of this is leaving behind within the psyche a childhood identity found to be unacceptable to significant others, as discussed in the literature of Alice Miller and Jack Walters.⁶ Another example is the significant development that takes place in the lives of many in the later teens and the twenties. At this stage in life one's education and reflection on life, one's conscious desire to grow beyond the problems one often experiences within and with oneself, may bring about extensive intellectual development and maturing which, rather than being integrated with previous dynamics of the psyche, now distances itself from other complexes of the psyche.

invented material having little to do with the historic experience of the individual may have symbolic meaning. Thus when the imagination provides information, one needs to consider how one should understand this information.

⁵ Richard P. Kluft, "Multiple Personality Disorder", *Psychiatric Annals*, Jan. 1984. See also Ian Wilson, *Mind Out of Time*, Victor Gollancz Ltd., 1981, which is a treatment of reincarnation claims, but treats reincarnation phenomena in terms of multiple personality. The classic case of multiple personality was that of Clara Fowler, written up in *The Dissociation of a Personality* by Morton Prince, but a better known case is that of "Eve" described in Thigpen and Cleckley's *The Three Faces of Eve*. Multiple personality has now received its own classification in the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual III* published by the American Psychiatric Association in 1980 and is a psychological phenomenon subject to much recent interest and research. Different personalities are formed by disassociation or "splitting off" when abuse or trauma make that part of the person's life unbearable. It is a way of surviving, or going on by leaving behind the pain of past experiences. However, what is left behind by the developing person still remains live within the psyche and now may engage in its own independent process or development or remain hidden within the psyche. Once disassociation is learned as a way of handling difficulties and pain, the person then applies it to other matters that are difficult to handle, such as feelings. In the multiple different personalities take over at different times and other personalities may have no knowledge or memory of what another does. Sometimes the personalities are so different that they engage in conflict with one another. Several recent important studies are Richard P. Kluft, ed., *Childhood Antecedents of Multiple Personality*, Washington: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1985, and Bennett G. Braum, ed., *Treatment of Multiple Personality Disorder*, Washington: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1986.

⁶ Alice Miller, *Prisoners of Childhood: The Drama of the Gifted Child and the Search for the True Self*, Translated by Ruth Ward, Basic Books, 1981; *Thou Shalt Not Be Aware: Society's Betrayal of the Child*, Translated by H. and H. Hannum, Meridian, 1986; and *For Your Own Good: Hidden Cruelty in Child-Rearing and the Roots of Violence*, transl. by H. and H. Hannum, Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1983. Jack Walters, *Healing the Fractured Self*, Seabury Press (now Harper and Row), 1985. Dr. Miller is a Swiss Psychoanalyst whose writings deal with the emotional and physical abuse of children which causes them to reject and split off their true selves. Jack Walters is a Jesuit psychologist who has developed theories to describe fracturing of the developing ego in childhood, with resultant separation from the "central ego", and the introjection of significant others into the psyche. He has techniques to identify these inner remnants of one's childhood by analysis of the person's language and expressions, noting how different elements of the psyche are expressing themselves at different times, and ways to support the "Healing of the Fractured Self". It is interesting Miller has not noted the similarity of her findings to multiple personality. Walters does not mention multiples in his book, but in conversation with the writer has said that reading about multiples started him in the development of his psychological theory.

This can result in an intellectual maturity which leaves behind or represses the rest of oneself and allows this to operate autonomously.

Fantasy also plays its role. In order to deal with the needs and dynamics of life, children (and even adults) often create a fantasy world or fantasy persons which become very real to them. Once given extended life, one must question as to whether these remain purely fantasy. Often they become a part of the persistent inner life of the person.

One other interesting example is what happens to persons whose religious ideals do not allow them to accept their humanity. They thus develop as adults in the direction of their ideals, denying and repressing the parts of themselves that are not supposed to exist. Recently several TV evangelists have gotten into difficulty with the very dynamics of their humanity that their religious ideals would not allow them to integrate.

Depending upon the lack of continuity and integration between the various complexes within the psyche, one as an adult may need to work for the integration of the psyche in a way analogous to trying to create relationships between persons who do not know and understand each other. Thus the process by which the psyche is healed and made whole is much more complex than merely becoming conscious of our unconscious and learning to deal with feelings. The various parts of the psyche also have a persistence, which in the case of the more developed and independent parts may be called a "will to live". Thus they cannot be merely dismissed or removed, but must be dealt with as continuing entities.

An interesting question is whether all that is within is merely the product of human experience and development. Many religious traditions speak of the "soul", the presence of an identity which transcends one's personal history. In Judaism in the period between the Old and New Testaments faith developed in the individual survival of death and the presence of a soul within the person. This has been important within Christianity, though in modern times both Judaism and Christianity have been less convinced. Yet both in the practice of therapy and near-death experience one often encounters a transcendent element of the person. In illness and physical deterioration one sees signs of the presence of a person who transcends the biological and psychological limits and functions within them. It is my impression that to forget the soul is a dangerous amnesia which seriously limits a person's self-understanding and ability to deal with life. One must preserve the rich complexity of what it is to be a human *being*.

A few words should be said about the relationship of the inner world and the outer world. The extent to which one or the other dominate in the functioning of the person depends on the orientation of the person. A person may be very oriented towards the external world and almost completely neglect the internal world. In this situation the internal world still functions, but its impact upon the life of the person depends upon the strength of its dynamics and the unresolved problems that one carries within. The internal world may powerfully influence one who has no awareness of its existence. What usually happens in such a case is that the internal world is projected onto the external world and combined with external realities and the person shows little ability to distinguish between external realities and what is projected (e.g. as in paranoia). One may also withdraw from the external world and live largely within the internal world. This is often called psychosis, but this is a too easy dismissal of the internal world's reality. In such a case the internal world should not be regarded as only fantasy and unreal. It is very real, but has a reality separate from the external world. What happens in the case of most persons is that the internal and external worlds of the person interrelate and affect each other. The external world informs the internal world and provides it with much of its material through the life process and experience of the person. The internal world affects our reaction to the external world and manifests itself in our actions, but also develops as a world of its own which has an internal process that needs attention. In other words, the problems and needs of the internal world need to be dealt with as if they were real, for they are real within their own world -- even if they do not correspond with external reality. The transformation of internal reality then has its impact upon our actions and even our physical condition. This makes sense if one considers the impact of suggestion and hypnosis upon action and physical condition.

Jung has cautioned that the journey within is a task of the second half of life, and this is enabled by adequate rootage in the external world in earlier development, including ego development. Even Jung felt

himself overwhelmed at times as he explored his psyche. A strong ego is thus a prerequisite for the interior journey, though often we cannot wait for this. The world within ultimately calls itself to our attention.

Because of the nature of this inner world it is often regarded as spiritual, and not only physiological, neurological or psychological. As will be suggested in dealing with the "fourth world", the inner world often bears a special relationship to the spiritual world which transcends the human.

The Third World - The Biological

A World Which Enables and Limits

In one sense the biological organism of the person is so bound up with the inner life of the person that at times it is difficult to distinguish between consciousness and the movements of the psyche -- and processes of the biological organism. Yet my observation of the phenomena of human existence insists that some separation be maintained, for however much one is affected by one's biology, a person is more than this. Thus we need to speak of the biological as a third world, one which both enables and limits our life.

One scarcely thinks of the importance of this world when it functions "normally", allowing personality to be shaped within it and enabling the carrying out of various processes, conscious and unconscious. Its absorption of what we learn and experience, together with its tendency to habituate, creates a life-medium which provides a mechanism that handles many of life's tasks without conscious intervention on our part, enabling action to be spontaneous, freeing conscious attention for the most important and new tasks. Yet this very habituation produces an organism at times stubborn and resistant to change. Moreover, our biological processes produce feelings and drives inherent in its nature, which we do not choose. Thus our body may also call itself to our attention and stand over against us.

Though we still think in terms of "normal" human development and capacities, we are becoming more and more aware that each person is the product of a *unique and individual* genetic inheritance and process of biological and psychological development. All persons do not have the same abilities, function the same, and think in the same way. The recognition of personality types, based on Carl Jung's work, has been very helpful in understanding differing personal styles of perception and of thinking.

One clearly discovers the importance of this world when it does not function "normally".⁷ My first wife suffered from sarcoidosis, a disease which not only produced lung and skin lesions, but, according to the autopsy, infiltrated inner organs and her brain. Through this I learned first hand the impact of a damaged neurological system upon the human personality. The early manifestations of this in her functioning were in prolonged periods of depression. The whole gamut of available antidepressants was tried in a cruel game of medicinal roulette. Some drugs would work, usually for only two weeks at a time, before the depression would return. When the drugs would work, affecting the neuro-transmitters, she would become her old self, within a short time to return to the dark tunnel in which she lived (as she described it). In the later stages of her illness there were massive discharges of agitation and anger over which she had no volitional control. Here the use of lithium provided stabilization so that again the exercise of her will could have some effect. She died a person hardly recognizable in relation to what she had once been, though the person she had been still lived in some mysterious way within her damaged organism.

Dyslexia provides a significant illustration of the interrelationship of body and the functioning of the person. As it is coming to be understood it is not merely a reading or learning disability, but related to physiological problems which have much broader ramifications. Significant work has been done on this by Harold N. Levinson.⁸ He argues that Dyslexia is related to damage of the system of the inner ear and cerebellum. This system is not only related to management of balance and muscular activity and involved in motion sickness. Rather is it a system, connected to the cerebral cortex, which monitors and integrates sensory and motor circuits of the nervous system. Thus when it is not working well, not only is reading affected, but the monitoring of all of one's sensory information. This produces a variety of other problems, not the least of which are phobias related not to psychological issues but to the difficulties of the affected person in perceiving and monitoring the world and in communicating to others. Levinson's listing of symptomatology includes: problems with reading and writing, memory instability, speech disorders, direction and right-left uncertainty, difficulty telling time, impaired concentration, impulse disturbances, difficulties with balance and coordination, fears, mood disturbances, and compulsions. Essentially, one is not receiving the normal feedback from one's biological mechanism and one's world to be able to function well: i.e., one's *perceptual field* is disturbed. This lack of functionality then compounds the problem by diminishing self-esteem.

⁷ Rainer Maria Rilke, the German poet, writes in the last year of his life how his sense of oneness with his body (which he became aware of in his trip to Russia) was being changed by the ravages of a disease which turned out to be Leukemia:

Disturbances of a more subjective than really factually or organically discernible kind (so far, at any rate); inroads upon that absence of bodily self-awareness from which harmony with our material stake (in ourselves) so involuntarily results; slight disorders of my body which render me all the more at a loss since I had been used to living with it in so perfect a concord, without a physician, that I was close to thinking of it as a child of my soul. This began at a certain turning point in my life (about 1899 and 1900, which coincided with my residence in Russia). Light and handy as it was and easy to take along into the most abstruse spheres, how often voided, endowed with weight only by courtesy and still visible merely so as not to alarm the invisible! So intimately *mine*; friend, truly my bearer, the holder of my heart; capable of all my joys, disparaging none, making each my own in a more particular way; bestowing them upon me at the precise intersection of my senses. As *my* creature, ready for me and risen in service to my use; as pre-creature, outweighing me with all the security and magnificence of descent. A thing of genius, reared by centuries, glorious in the serene innocence of its not-I, touching in its eagerness to be faithful to the "I" in all its transitions and oscillations. Simple of mind and wise. How much I have to thank it, which, by dint of its nature, reinforced my delight in a fruit, in the wind, in walking on grass. To sum up: distressing, this dissension with it, and too fresh a distress to be ready for compromise yet. And the doctor *cannot* understand what it is that distresses me so profoundly, so centrally, about these handicaps, which after all are tolerable, although they have set up their branch offices all over the body while they were about it. ...

Yevgeny Pasternak, Yelena Pasternak, and Konstantin M. Azadovsky, eds., *Boris Pasternak, Marina Tsvetayeva, Rainer Maria Rilke: Letters Summer 1926*, transl. by Margaret Wettlin and Walter Arndt, New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1985.

⁸ Harold N. Levinson, *A Solution to the Riddle Dyslexia*, New York: Springer-Verlag, 1980; *Smart But Feeling Dumb*, New York: Warner Books, 1984.

Aleksandr Luria: A Romantic Rather Than Reductionist Approach to Life

Two great neurologists have made important contributions to the understanding of the relationship of the neurological system to human functioning, especially in their less technical case studies of the neurologically damaged. They are Oliver Sacks, New York, and Aleksandr Luria, a Russian who died in 1977. Sacks receives treatment in the chapter on Suffering and Death.

Aleksandr Romanovich Luria was author of such works as *The Man with a Shattered World*⁹ and *The Mind of a Mnemomist*.¹⁰ The founder of neuropsychology, Luria has written neurological studies which have become classics: *Human Brain and Psychological Processes*, *Basic Problems of Neurolinguistics*, *The Neuropsychology of Memory*, and *Higher Cortical Functions in Man*. The first two works mentioned above are case studies of two persons done over a 25 year period: one a story about a man with an amazing memory and how this affected his perception of his world, and impacted the functioning of his mind and personality; the other about a man wounded in 1942 by a bullet that penetrated the left side of his head, losing much of his field of vision, awareness of his right side, and the section of his left brain that combined his sensory impressions into a coherent whole and enabled his use of language. Thus whatever he saw appeared in a constant state of flux and he was left to struggle for language the rest of his life. *The Man With A Shattered World* is an amazing collaboration between Luria and Zazetsky, the injured man, whose struggle to think and write produced 3,000 pages of diary, portions of which are used in the book. In the foreword Zazetsky says:

Perhaps someone with expert knowledge of the human brain will understand my illness, discover what a brain injury does to a man's mind, memory, and body, appreciate my effort, and help me avoid some of the problems I have in life. As for the flight of a bullet, or a shell or bomb fragment, that rips open a man's skull, splitting and burning the tissues of his brain, crippling his memory, sight, hearing, awareness -- these days people don't find anything extraordinary in that. But if it's not extraordinary, why am I ill? Why doesn't my memory function, my sight return? Why does my head continually ache and buzz? It's depressing, having to start all over and make sense out of a world you've lost because of injury and illness, to get these bits and pieces to add up to a coherent whole.

The title I decided on for my writing was "I'll Fight On!" I haven't given up hope. I'm trying to improve my situation by developing my ability to remember and speak, to think and understand. I'm fighting to recover a life I lost when I was wounded and became ill. ¹¹

With admiration Luria comments on Zazetsky's diaries:

His only material consisted of fragmentary recollections that came to mind at random. On these he had to impose some order and sense of continuity, though every word he recalled, every thought he expressed, required the most excruciating effort. When his writing went well, he managed to write a page a day, two at the most, and felt completely drained by this. Writing was his one link with life, his only hope of not succumbing to illness but recovering at least a part of what had been lost. In short, this is a book about a person who fought with the tenacity of the damned to recover the use of his damaged brain. Though in many respects he remained as helpless as before, in the long run he won his fight.¹²

Oliver Sacks' foreword to the 1987 edition of *Man With A Shattered World* describes his estimation of Luria and his contributions. Sacks corresponded extensively with Luria in the 1970s. Luria's uniqueness

⁹. Aleksandr Luria, *The Man with a Shattered World*, transl. by Lynn Solotaroff, Harvard U. Press, 1972, reprint in 1987 with Foreword by Oliver Sacks.

¹⁰. Aleksandr Luria, *The Mind of a Mnemomist*, transl. by Lynn Solotaroff, Harvard U. Press, 1968, reprint with new Foreword by Jerome Bruner 1987.

¹¹. Aleksandr Luria, *The Man with a Shattered World*, pp. xxi-xxii.

¹². *Ibid.*, pp. xix-xx.

lay not only in his significant studies in classical neurology, but in his development of a parallel concern for what he called a "romantic" science, described in this way:

Classical scholars are those who look upon events in terms of their constituent parts. Step by step they single out important units and elements until they can formulate abstract, general laws. One outcome of this approach is the reduction of living reality with all its richness of detail to abstract schemas. The properties of the living whole are lost, which provoked Goethe to pen, "Gray is every theory, but ever green is the tree of life."

Romantic scholars' traits, attitudes, and strategies are just the opposite. They do not follow the path of reductionism, which is the leading philosophy of the classical group. Romantics in science want neither to split living reality into its elementary components nor to represent the wealth of life's concrete events in abstract models that lose the properties of the phenomena themselves. It is of the utmost importance to romantics to preserve the wealth of living reality, and they aspire to a science that retains this richness.¹³

The Man With A Shattered World and *The Mind of A Mnemonist* are his contributions to a "romantic" science, seeking to preserve the wealth of human living reality. This living human reality involves the limitations and capacities of the human biological and neurological system as individually expressed, not merely as a static system but as one in which learning and adaptation opens new possibilities and courage and will make a difference. In some ways we are bound to our biology, yet in others we transcend.

The Fourth World - The Spiritual

The external world is most easily understandable and acceptable to the modern person. The interior world of the psyche, though it takes some getting used to, may be eventually accepted because there is verifiable and researchable experience that has to do with this world.

When one deals with the fourth world, that of Transcendence, this is another matter. The Transcendent world was dismissed by modern science because of the demythologization and objectification of the external world, seen as functioning according to "natural laws". Recent science, seeing energy and matter as equivalents, is perhaps moving closer to a "spiritual" world. However, with the world of nature understood scientifically, the reality in which the Transcendent could be experienced was diminished, now left to those experiences of transcendence which many humans report but quickly dismiss because they do not belong to their world view.

Yet this strange, "wonder-full", and "supernatural" world of the inner life of the person remains as the place where the Transcendent may impinge on the world, history, and individual experience.¹⁴ Jung has noted the difficulty in distinguishing between what is within and outside the psyche when dealing with the Transcendent.¹⁵ This very difficulty points up the interesting possibility of some relationship between these two dimensions of reality.

¹³ A. Luria, *The Man With A Shattered World*, p. x, quoted from *The Making of Mind*, p. 174.

¹⁴ The "Transcendent" is defined as the spiritual powers and realms outside us which "transcend" us and cannot be understood as from us - e.g. God and evil powers.

¹⁵ "I have, therefore, even hazarded the postulate that the phenomenon of archetypal configurations - which are psychic events par excellence - may be founded upon a psychoid base, that is, upon an only partially psychic and possibly altogether different form of being. For lack of empirical data I have neither knowledge nor understanding of such forms of being, which are commonly called spiritual." C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Recorded and Edited by Aniela Jaffe, transl. by R. and C. Winston, rev. ed., Vintage Books, 1965, p. 351. This is a statement about the difficulty, according to his scientific methodology, in knowing what is beyond the psyche. Yet this statement also affirms his attraction towards what is beyond. To a young clergyman in 1952 he wrote: "I find that all my thoughts circle around God like the planets around the sun, and are as irresistibly attracted by Him. I would feel it to be the grossest sin if I were to oppose any resistance to this force..." p. xi, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*.

One needs to ask how the Transcendent that is outside the psyche can affect human and historical processes. It is not that God as energy could not affect matter, but when one observes how one experiences the transcendent (good or evil), it seems that the primary agency is the human being. It is my feeling that the complexity within the psyche offers opportunity for the transcendent powers. God may act through us both through the archetypal materials within the psyche and what has been learned or introjected through our religious traditions. God may also use whatever the psyche has been able to become developmentally. Evil may use the parts of the psyche that are susceptible, either the parts the we have refused to integrate and operate autonomously or anger, hurts and fears which originate within our life experience, *though these are not to be seen as evil in themselves and thus necessitating rejection of parts of our humanity*. God and evil may not only use individuals, but groups which share common dynamics.

It is also important to be concerned about what is brought within our psyche from our religious traditions. For example, a harsh and judgmental Christ may become a means of inner dis-integration rather than integration and may ultimately become the servant of evil. One can see this clearly at times in the history of the church.

If the above is so, then attention to the psyche is not merely a developmental task, contributing to human well-being, maturity, and functioning. Nor is it merely spiritual in the sense of encouraging human evolution in a spiritual direction.¹⁶ It is spiritual because through what we are the spiritual powers impinge upon human experience, history, economic and political systems. What tragedies of recent history might have been averted if we had realized this!

A Model for Understanding Life

There is a world where God is and a world where we are, which worlds in mysterious ways intersect. God's world is the spiritual world that transcends space and time. God is present in our world, but ours is not a world under God's control. It is a world that functions by its own powers and dynamics. Sometimes the natural world supports life and meets our needs. At other times it hurts and destroys, but without malice and intent. There are also the realities of Intentional Evil (which opposes God and would use life for its own destructive purposes) and the destructiveness and helpfulness of persons to each other. Yet God is present with us in the world, doing what God can for us, even having experienced its destructive powers in the crucifixion of Jesus. According to the Gospel of John (chapter 20), the resurrected Jesus Christ continues to bear his wounded humanity. This means that the Incarnation, God's becoming flesh and historical in Jesus, was not momentary, limited to the life-time of Jesus, but was taken up into God and continues in the inner life of God. Moreover, the continuing presence of God within the world after the time of Jesus is affirmed in what the New Testament calls "the Spirit of God." The presence of God in Jesus and in the Spirit symbolize the personal presence of God within our world. God is present not as some mysterious substance, but as Person, and this personal presence causes us to recognize the existence of an interpersonal relationship with God by calling God, "Father" (Gal. 4:6).

We come into this world by a birth process. Our soul comes from God's world and our physical body is produced within this world. We are given momentary security in the womb of our mothers, and then by a process that involves pain we are brought into the world and gradually move developmentally towards individual existence, self awareness, and maturity. This process of biological, psychological, and spiritual development forms and shapes us into a person who is able to assume some responsibility in life. It even affects the life of our soul and engages it in a process of growth. However, though we are conditioned by

¹⁶ Ira Progoff, in *Depth Psychology and Modern Man*, McGraw-Hill, 1959, presents his psychological model for his journaling process. He sees the development of the human psyche in the history of evolution as the creation of an instrument by which the biologic process of life could one day transcend itself. Thus the persons who reach a high level of spiritual achievement are carrying "the evolutionary process of life further within their individual existence than nature herself had taken it." Such persons "have also become channels through which the purposes of God's creation could be drawn closer to fulfillment, as they have worked toward the perfectibility of man within their own existence." pp. 260-261. Thus they move human existence in a spiritual direction.

life in this world, we are never completely limited by it. *We have a soul which precedes birth, survives death, and is a significant resource in the midst of life's conditions.*

We might call what has been described, "*the process of our creation as a person.*" However, there is also a *process of decreation* which will ultimately strip us of our physical body and bring us to another birth moment where, not without pain, leaving the womb of the body in which we have been formed, we now *move back to God's world.* The process of life that forms us enables us to bring back to God a person of some wisdom and gifts whom God can use. However, God receives us back not according to our growth and accomplishments, but as persons of ultimate value whatever our accomplishments. Not all will have the physical ability and fortunate circumstances to realize the soul's possibility of formation. God loves all God's children.

There are *several tasks that are part of our life in this world*, besides the usual developmental tasks:

One is *the moral aspect* of the person's formation, engaging us in becoming a person with values and commitments, though not without mistakes and failures. Those who seriously reject the moral nature of this process and reject its ultimate goal may ultimately be rejected by God, though not without sorrow and pain in God. God does not easily let go those whom God sends into the world.

Another is *the spiritual aspect* of formation. It involves the process of discovering our own spirituality and the reality of God and God's world, concerns which are easily neglected as one engages in the tasks of life in this world. It is as if, when we are born and move into the experiences of this life, we begin forgetting from whence we came and to Whom we go. Discovering our spirituality and God is part of our developmental process.

Then there is *the interpersonal aspect* of formation. In the New Testament this is characterized as *love*. Our ability to love affects the possibility of interpersonal relationship, for love has to do with relating to others beyond our own needs, the ability to care for others and to be patient and persistent in relationship.

With our learning to care for others we *need to learn how to care for creation*, a proper love of the world. To develop love for others and creation is necessary if we are to function in meaningful ways in God's world. An interesting aspect of living in this world is that we have learned about creation from within creation, not as something apart from us.

All of this is part of *being for God in the world*. There was a time before modern science when it was felt that the forces of nature and history were the primary ways of God's being in the world. Within the last three centuries we have been developing an understanding of both nature and history which sees them as operating largely by their own dynamics. Thus we have come to realize that the primary way of God's being present is where the world comes to consciousness and can be influenced: in humanity. We need to learn to be willing and open to God, allowing our lives to be formed by God. Therefore we become those who can be used in God's purposes and who can re-present God. Thus the Kingdom of God is within and among us (Lk. 17:21).

That which decreates us is partially the life process. Our physical system will only last so long, gradually aging in a process that cannot be avoided. Nature, history, and disease may decreate before the process inherent in the body runs its course. *Death is built into life as is birth. Death is really birth to a new stage of life.* Death is not always fortunate, but that to which it gives birth is. Unfortunately, our modern technological advances have enabled us to prolong death, thus prolonging its pain and suffering.

The system of life is a good system and much within it sustains life and makes life possible. It is to be enjoyed and celebrated. It has an inherent beauty. There is much built into it which tends towards our well-being, including various systems within our bodies besides the systems within nature. Thus *one must never approach life negatively and dualistically.* And yet its dynamics ultimately return one to whence one

came by the process of decreation. *Thus one must always live life as a bridge from our origin to our destiny.* Both our origin and destiny are God and God's world. We cannot forget from Whom we came and to Whom we are going.¹⁷ *The problems of life become most difficult to understand when we make it the final answer to the meaning of our existence.* It is not only the good of life, but the *pain of life* which contributes to the person we are becoming. The pain of life comes from our ability to feel and be aware of life. To lose the ability to be aware would mean to lose the ability to be formed and shaped by the experience of life.

Wholing

Wholing may seem a strange term, but it seemed the best available to represent the process by which the person's various worlds and dissociations are worked into a *whole*. One might speak of this primarily in terms of the inner world of the person, but it should also involve the external world (both as one lives in relationship to it and as it is interiorized), the biological world and the spiritual world.

The term "integration", previously used, does not seem adequate because at times it seems to mean the disappearance of the parts into an emergent whole. The same is true of "fusion". Both of these terms are utilized in describing what some therapists regard as the goal of therapy in treating multiple personalities: helping, and often hypnotically forcing, the alters¹⁸ to unite into some whole in which the parts disappear.¹⁹

In speaking of *wholing*, what is intended is to bring into relationship the various parts of the person without losing any of them: to create a whole with the parts, not by annihilation of the parts.

Wholing is a term which also can apply to one's relationship with one's biological world and external world because it recognizes that one must stay in meaningful relationship with these worlds which can never be completely integrated or fused with the inner dynamics which constitute one's psyche.

Wholing recognizes that each part of a person, each aspect of a person's life which has a measure of autonomy, has a will to survive -- call it "a will to live." In working with multiples I have been amazed at the desire of each alter to survive, the conflicts between alters often centering around the issue of survival. This seems also to be true of complexes within the psyche which function as autonomous dynamics but would not be classified as persons or alters. Take, for example, dissociated anger or sexuality. Such complexes have a persistence which the host of such a complex often fights and seeks to eliminate, with the consequence that the complex not only more persistently struggles for life but turns on the host which threatens it.

Often the aspects of our life that we wish to eliminate either represent something which we have been taught is unacceptable, such as sexuality, or represent the possibility of destructive behavior (such as anger). Frequently these aspects have developed a life of their own with a history in the form of extended fantasy through which they now live. Such fantasy serves as a vehicle for coping with them. However, it also gives them continued existence, something we may truly desire because the fantasies satisfy conscious or unconscious needs.

¹⁷. That we proceed from God and return to God one finds in Platonism and Neoplatonism and thus in Christian mysticism. There was speculation about the soul coming from God and returning to God in Judaism at the time of the New Testament. In the New Testament this is the model for Christology in Phil 2:5ff and the Gospel of John and seems to be implied as a model for the children of light in John. The New Testament belief in the resurrection of the body, does not at all deny that the soul survives death, something implied in a number of New Testament passages. In Thomas Aquinas' great *Summa Theologiae* procession and return is its organizing structure, which applies both to God and the soul.

¹⁸. "Alter" is a term used for a personality within the multiple's system, derived from the Latin for "other."

¹⁹. Richard Bandler and John Grinder in their book about Neuro-Linguistic Programming describe a method called "squashing" which forces alters together by suggestion: *Frogs Into Princes*, Moab, Utah: Real People Press, 1979, pp. 128ff.

When we seek to eliminate them, we forget that, although they have content that we cannot accept, their vehicle (the complex within the psyche) is a part of our living structure. When we seek to destroy them we are doing something similar to seeking to destroy a child because the child becomes angry or uncontrollable. When dealing with the child we learn that though the anger of the child may be problematic (we must understand its reasons, transform its dynamics, and prevent destructive behavior), the child itself is valued and the gifted complexity of its unique life is acknowledged and preserved. Oddly enough, when we find a part of ourselves that is unacceptable, we do not recognize behind it a unique and valued segment of our psychic apparatus and turn upon it to destroy it as if it were not part of us.

We are often forced to this by moralism. How can we accept our strange fantasied sexual dynamics when its expression could be destructive or may be socially unacceptable? How can we tolerate even the verbal expression of violent anger for its description of what it would do is frightening? One should never have thoughts and feelings such as that! But we do!

Like a child in a dysfunctional family, the part of us that we cannot accept was assigned its function in the economy of the psyche. It did not ask to be the bearer of these fantasies and such frightful anger. For doing the job it was assigned by us, or was given by the accidents of life experience, it is now threatened with extinction. And what we do not recognize is that it cannot be destroyed, for it is part of us. It will only be aggravated, angered and frightened.

In working with multiples one often finds alters which bear responsibility for unacceptable aspects of emotional life. There may be a prostitute or a flirt through whom sexuality is expressed. There may be an angry avenger who has been given responsibility for all the hurt and anger the person could not own in the presence of abusive parents. There may be a protector who will do what is necessary to protect when she is powerless, actions of which the person is not capable.

The way to deal with such an alter is for the therapist to get to know her/him and establish relationship, removing the threat of destruction by other alters. In being understood and heard, in being related to by a real person (the therapist), in being brought into the external world which has a different reality than the internal world of fantasy, the troublesome alter is usually transformed and displays personal characteristics which go beyond its original assignment. For example, the alter whose function was only to bear the anger of the person now enters into relationship, cries, speaks of its hopes, and tells its story. Gradually it and the rest of the person establish relationships. This results in its becoming a part of the person which stays in relationship with the rest of the person, no longer assigned a function which keeps it separate and which the rest of the person perceives as dangerous. To effect this the alter needs to find in the therapist one who will listen and accept, unfrightened by the psychic contents shared, who recognizes the burdens borne by the alter, and (above all) one who will not threaten its existence. The relationship with the therapist then becomes the model for the relationship with the other aspects of its host.²⁰

The question of fusion or integration can then be left to the inner wisdom of the person. The person is *wholed*, i.e. the part has been allowed to be reconciled to the rest of the system of the person. The integrity or life of the part has been recognized and preserved. Its resources are now at the service of the *whole*. In fact, the preservation of the integrity of the part may contribute much to the creative psychic wealth of the person. Where in multiples hypnosis has been used to force fusion of alters, it has been noted that the resultant personality is often "flat". What has happened is that in the interest of integration parts of the

²⁰. There are multiples the development of whose alters are influenced by Satanic cults. This is now becoming a field of specialization in therapy. Here children are given alters by the cult to control them and keep the cult secrets. Both these created alters and alters brought into being by experiences in the cult may have no possibility of being "wholed" with the rest of the person and need to be eliminated, if possible. Here one may be dealing with alters that are related to evil, though in most other cases I prefer not to see any alter as evil in itself.

person's psyche have been "slain", and so the psyche has been deprived of its richness. Whether the slain parts will remain that way is a matter of question. Sometimes they have only been temporarily subdued.²¹

Wholing seeks to bring all the parts and systems of the person into a functional *whole* in which the diversity of the parts is maintained and the isolation and hostility of parts is overcome. The results of this are:

- 1) the energy system of the person is now more efficient, for energy is not consumed in inner conflict, restraining parts of oneself, or emotional outbursts;
- 2) the person now functions more as a *whole*, with some common aspirations and directions, while preserving diversity.

In relationship to one's biological world, this means that the body with its drives, needs, characteristics and limitations must be brought into the *whole* of what one is. Relationship to the body is no longer adversarial because in some way it is not what one or society thinks it should be. It is neither the prison of the soul (Plato) nor the opponent of one's spirituality and psychic life (as in dualism) nor "that body that I can't stand", but the vehicle of both psychic and spiritual life. The *wholing* of the person should facilitate expression of life through the body and foster the health of the body as the body reflects the organization of the psyche through its behavior, posture, and well-being.

In relationship to the external world this means not only bringing the introjects of the external world into relationship with the rest of the psyche, within the psyche, but constantly relating to other persons and the external environment. This means the overcoming of our history of hurts and anxiety about what life and people can do to us. In this way the external world becomes a part of the whole in the person's formative process and contributes its potential. Particularly important is interpersonal relationship, which has always been a primary constituent of the formation of the person since infancy.

Relationship to the external world also involves what Maurice Friedman, one of the foremost scholars on Martin Buber, calls "existential trust." He comments:

Thus at the center of faith of biblical Judaism stands not belief, in the ordinary sense of the term, but trust -- a trust that no exile from the presence of God is permanent, that each man and each generation is able to come into contact with reality. The focal need of our age is not faith as a specific intellectual or religious belief but a general attitude of trust -- a sense of being at home in the universe. Existential trust does not mean trust *in* existence as being constituted in one particular way. It cannot be attained by "positive thinking," and it does not lead to "peace of mind" or "peace of soul." It is not inconsonant with pain, grief, anxiety, and least of all with vulnerability. Where it does not exist, one no longer goes forth to meet others: "The broken heart kens nae second spring again, thae the waeful nae cease frae their greeting." There are some people who continue to live, yet never really go out again as a whole being to meet anyone.²²

In relationship to the spiritual world, the presence of God (the kingdom, the Spirit) is expressed within and through persons. God may better use a *wholed* person; autonomous and disassociated dynamics do not become the tools of evil. An essential part of *wholing* is the appropriate relationship of the person with God so that the person becomes part of a system which transcends her/himself. God Godself becomes a

²¹. It is my impression that therapists working with multiples are moving away from seeking to fuse alters. It is evident that I do not believe it right to remove or destroy parts of the person. However, there is an interesting autobiographical account of a multiple whose alters disappear in a mystical experience and who is then reborn as a new person: Kit Castle and Stefan Bechtel, *Katherine, It's Time: The Incredible True Story of the Multiple Personalities of Kit Castle*, NY: Avon Books, 1989.

²². Maurice Friedman, *Religion and Psychology: A Dialogical Approach*, New York: Paragon House Publishers, 1992 pp. 3-11. Quoted from "Advance uncorrected proofs."

significant aspect within the *whole* of the person and contributes the overarching structure, vision and influence by which the dynamics of the person are directed.

There are several ways to speak of the presence of God within the person. One is the approach of Teresa of Avila who, in the *The Interior Castle*,²³ speaks of the presence of God within the center of the Soul. Thus the journey to God becomes a journey into oneself and the presence of God was always there, though hidden. Another is the language of the Spirit of God coming upon and into one. Two New Testament images are prominent here. In *baptism* the Spirit came upon Jesus and the heavens symbolically opened, disclosing the reality of God. Theologically the New Testament continues to connect the coming of the Spirit with the baptism of the believer.

The other New Testament image is *birthing*, presented in the first chapter of Luke. The angel tells Mary that she has found favor with God and will bear a son. When Mary asks how this shall be, the angel replies:

The Holy Spirit will come upon you and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy, the Son of God.²⁴

The word "overshadow" is very important in understanding what Luke is saying by this story. It comes from the narrative about the presence of God at the tabernacle during the journey of the Hebrews out of Egypt (Ex. 40:34-38). A cloud, indicating God's presence, covered the tent and the glory of God dwelled within. The words of the angel mean that the presence of God (the Spirit) will come upon Mary and the glory of God will dwell within her. *Her womb will become the temple of God, and the child to be born will be holy, will belong to God.*

This event is not only significant to Mary. The angel had implied that it would continue to be significant to all of God's people. Thus Luke places it in the first chapter of his Gospel as an introduction to all that he is to say. The clue to how this event was to be significant to all is to be found in Luke's understanding of the Spirit throughout both the Gospel and its companion volume, Acts.

The Spirit comes upon Mary (1:35); Elizabeth, mother of John the Baptist, was filled with the Holy Spirit (1:41); the Spirit comes upon old Simeon in the Temple who announces that God's salvation has now appeared in the infant Jesus (2:25-27); the Spirit descends upon Jesus in his baptism (2:22); Jesus begins his ministry full of the Spirit (4:1,14); in the Nazareth synagogue Jesus announces that "the Spirit of the Lord is upon me" (4:18). Jesus then promises the coming of the Spirit (24:49, Acts 1:8), and the Spirit comes upon the Church in Acts 2, the experience of Pentecost. From the perspective of Luke, the history of the early church, as written in Acts, is the story of the Spirit.

The coming of the Spirit upon Mary and the birth of her child then becomes the model, the paradigm, of the Christian life. *It is not merely the story of Mary but the story of how God comes to us and what God may birth within us. It is the birth which produces many births.*

*Strange birth!
Who could have guessed
What life could be
Without a Word from God?*

*Mary trembled
Woman
Poor
From Nazareth*

²³. Teresa of Avila, *The Interior Castle*, transl. and Introduction by Kieran Kavanaugh and Otilio Rodriguez, Classics of Western Spirituality, NY: Paulist Press, 1979.

²⁴. Luke 1:35.

*O'er-shadowed by God's Spirit
As creation
Or Exodus,
Bearer of old David's hope,
Salvation-history narrowed
To fragile womb
Birthing and
Growing child.*

"How can this be?"

*"Behold
Thy handmaid.
Let it be to me,"
She said.
Straightway
Womb thought cursed
by Eve's mistake
Tabernacled
God's Glory.*

*Tiny child,
Bearer
of chaos and creation
of humanity's despair and hope,
Probe life's dimensions
Till you and I
Cradling God within our breast
Know what can be.*

*Beloved Mary,
With you I
Magnify the Lord
in flesh exalted,
Bow
With shepherds, sheep and ox
Before the manger's song;
And bear within my heart
The pain and hope
Which pierced your own heart too.*

The Possibility and Nature of Change

There are certain changes which occur as part of one's developmental process. The type of change which is often a concern in the adult's formative process is the transformation of what has already developed. Religion speaks a great deal of conversion and transformation, resulting in new being, while therapy also promises change and healing. The exploration of a psychological model and sensitivity to actual human experience help to assess the change which is possible. This must be a concern for anyone who wishes to deal responsibly with the transformation of self and others.

The following observations are helpful:

1. In the life of each person there are givens from personal history, psychic archetypal structures, biology, historical context and the nature of the spiritual world. Some aspects of context may be changed, God may be invoked in the spiritual world, but as far as the rest are concerned, *by the time one gets to reflecting upon the need for change one already is a specific someone with specific constituents which cannot*

simply be eliminated. For example, there is no easy way to eliminate personal history or to change biology.

2. *While the results of the formative impress of life experiences cannot be erased, they can be decidedly affected* by allowing them to become conscious, by integrating disassociated elements so that they no longer are destructive but contribute creatively to the whole, and by discharging the emotional potency of experiences. This is the process described above as *wholing*. Old experiences can also be balanced by new experiences of a different nature so that in the total psychic structure they no longer have predominance. Thus what has constituted the person is still there, but in a new way, in a new balance, with a different potency.

3. The provision of *new alternatives for response* to persons and situations helps to free the person from conditioned and compulsive responses. Just one new alternative for reaction introduces new possibility and changes habitual structures.

4. *A dynamic vision* of person, life, world, and God can inform both consciousness and the unconscious in suggestive ways. Here full use of the imagination and formative images become important. See below on *body image*.

5. *The process which engages all of the worlds of the person has the best opportunity of effecting change*, both because all of them are involved in the existing set patterns of behavior and because the dynamics of one will potentiate the dynamics of others.

6. *A clear sense of oneself as soul or self* helps to gain some transcendence over one's condition (a person is always more than the description of one's condition and history) and enables a deployment of the *will* as a significant dynamic in one's change. The power of *deciding for* different and new possibilities cannot be underestimated.²⁵

7. Because much of what we are we will in some way always have with us, *acceptance of what one is becomes crucial*. This does not mean acceptance of destructive and antisocial *behavior* or *human limitations* which have some possibility of change, but rather acceptance of *one's being*. There will always be much within and much of personal history which one would have otherwise. We need to learn what it is to be human and to lovingly come to terms with this. It is the message of the Gospel that God's acceptance of us, together with the Incarnation, make this possible because God has lovingly come to terms with us.²⁶ For those who feel that being this way is sinful, such acceptance of humanness might be phrased in terms of forgiveness. The difficulty with viewing our being human in terms of forgiveness is that forgiveness does not stop us from being human. If to be human is sinful, unless there is some possibility of not sinning, a perpetual preoccupation with "sinfulness" and a futile moralistic attempt to eliminate it develops. Unfortunately, this latter perspective is encouraged by the way early Christianity reflects the first century Jewish perception that the problem of life was sin and disobedience to the Law, and that human existence in the "flesh" offered no possibility of resolving this.

8. *God must always be part of our discussion of the possibility of change. Where God enters the unexpected becomes possible* even though limitations to change have been described. Delicate balance is needed to understand the realities of change without destroying the vision of possibilities beyond expectation.

²⁵. Here please see the treatment of Body Image which follows and particularly the discussion of Ronald Melzack's analysis of the phenomenon of "Phantom Limbs" in the *Scientific American*, April 1992, pp. 120-126. Melzak concludes that there is evidence that the image of a limb is created partially by the neurological system, partially by sensory experience, and partially by the higher cortical networks of the brain. Applied to the issue of the possibility of change, this would indicate that though there are some "givens" in what one has come to be, the higher brain can play a major role. Thus understanding, intentional imaging, and above all the exercise of the will can play a role in what is possible.

²⁶. One difficulty with the Incarnation is that some of Christianity has viewed the Incarnation in terms of the Virgin Birth. This means that God did not really become incarnate in and accept a humanity like ours, but a pure and sinless humanity.

Body Image

Paul Schilder in 1950 published an important work on the *body image*, which he terms "one of the central problems of psychology."²⁷ His attention was originally called to this by clinical observations on the affect of brain lesions on body imagery, particularly confusion in differentiation between the right and left side. He was also intrigued by "body phantoms": the retention of image and sensations of a part of the body which had been lost or amputated. When he in his subtitle speaks of the "constructive energies" of the psyche he opposes the centrality of regression to Freud whom he sees as neglecting "the principles of emergent evolution, or, as I would prefer to say, of constructive evolution, which leads to the creation of new units and configurations."²⁸ Thus the body image is always being constructed out of sensory perceptions provided by the body at rest and in motion, along with optical perceptions, which information is layered together to produce the body image, the tridimensional image we have of ourselves. This image is also related to the neurological apparatus which enables it and whose destruction confuses it.

There is a close relation between body image and action. Schilder says:

When the knowledge of our own body is incomplete and faulty, all actions for which this particular knowledge is necessary will be faulty too. We need the body-image in order to start movements. We need it especially, when actions are directed towards our own body. Every trouble in gnosia and in perception generally will lead to a change in the action.²⁹

Schilder's emphasis upon the importance of body image in starting movements is particularly important. The initiation of a movement usually has inadequate sensory information from the body to enable its accuracy. Once the movement is initiated, additional sensations are received from the body because of the movement. The information becomes more adequate and the limbs moved become better defined in awareness. The initiation of the movement is dependent primarily upon the body image. A simple illustration of this is to place your hand at rest upon your desk so that all movement and tension within your arm and hand are diminished. You should then sense your awareness of your hand and fingers becoming very vague. Then start to move your forefinger up and down while leaving your hand on the desk. You will find that the quality of awareness of your finger, and even your hand, immediately changes, becoming more vivid. While at rest, unless you think of the image of your hand you would have little sense of where your forefinger is in the vague sensations you are receiving from your hand. Therefore you locate the forefinger in the body image of your hand in order to initiate movement. Once you begin movement, there is no question of where your finger is.

Something similar is experienced of the whole body when movement ceases. If you relax in a reclining chair you will find that awareness of your body becomes amorphous.

Another simple illustration is speaking. Often before speaking anxiety builds because one is not adequately aware of oneself and the contents of one's speech. Once speech is initiated, if one keeps on talking, the awareness of one's speaking brings awareness of the mechanism of speech and the anxiety diminishes.

If body image is crucial in the initiation of movement in any limb, it is interesting to raise the question of the relationship of body image to the over-all functioning of the person. Here one must recognize that body image and self image are closely related, if not the same. What happens when one has a very negative self or body image? How then can action be initiated when one's image tells one that it will not be successful? Some persons then initiate action with great effort and, at times, to their own surprise find themselves doing what they did not think they could do.

²⁷. Paul Schilder, M.D., Ph.D., *The Image and Appearance of the Human Body: Studies in the Constructive Energies of the Psyche*, New York: John Wiley & Sons, Science Editions, 1950, p. 10. Note that the Preface provides a 1935 date for the original writing of this monograph.

²⁸. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

²⁹. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

It is interesting to relate this to the style of the Introvert. It was noticed by Jung that one of the characteristics of the Introvert is a hesitancy before action. The English psychiatrist Hans Eysenck explored the neurological basis for Introversion in what he called a "weak nervous system": where the nervous system was unable to control the strength of the many stimuli impinging upon it from the senses and elsewhere. The Extravert was then the person whose nervous system diminished the vitality of stimuli so that attention could be paid to the external world and action within this world was simplified. Without this control the Introvert has difficulty staying focused and paying attention.³⁰ Is it also possible that for either Eysenck's reason, or some other, there is confusion in the body image by which action is initiated? Thus the Introvert may hesitate and prefer processing things within because of the uncertainty regarding external actions.

Schilder noted the confusion of actions and perceptions in persons with various types of damage to the neurological system. Is it also possible that there are other reasons for a poorly formed or partially formed body image which affects functioning? For example, I know a person whose body image is deficient where the face should be. This may have been caused by a number of factors, one of which seems to be a long history of allergy and sinusitis which leaves the facial area with some constant pain. This means that normal sensations from the skin surface are overcome, the primary facial awareness being the cloud of sinus pain. This would seem to have had significant results. Actions dependent on the head, such as speaking or even thinking and access to memory, are at times initiated with some anxiety because of the inadequate body image. This also affects body actions because of the perceived lack of connection between the head and body due to the deficiency in the head image. Also, there is little sense of differentiation between what is within the thought field and what is outside, for awareness of the barrier of skin and face is minimal. Thus a person outside is perceived to be inside as well, and in some sense inside and outside merge. Here it is only the world and reality image which indicates to the perceiver that the person is outside, though the person as stimulus may function as if inside. The world outside enters into the world inside and thus affects interior processes in a very immediate way. There is also the strange feeling that the person outside knows what is going on inside since she is not distinct from what is inside. And added to this is the general confusion in awareness caused by the sinus pain.

Oliver Sacks, in *Migraine: Understanding A Common Disorder*, speaks of the impact of migraine auras:

Transient states of *depersonalization* are appreciably commoner during migraine auras. Freud reminds us that "the ego is first and foremost a body-ego ... the mental projection of the surface of the body." The sense of "self" appears to be based, fundamentally, on a continuous inference from the stability of body image, the stability of outward perceptions, and the stability of time perception. Feelings of ego dissolution readily and promptly occur if there is serious disorder or instability of body image, external perception, or time-perception, and all of these, as we have seen, may occur during the course of a migraine aura.³¹

Additional insight about body image comes from the study of multiple personalities. A multiple may have within the body a number of wholly and partially developed persons or "alters". Each alter has its own body image. There are alters of the same sex as the body, but frequently alters of the opposite sex also who see their body as male if the host is female. There are alters of various ages, whose body image is related to their age. There are personalities who have various functions and at times may see themselves in animal form. When different alters are "out" and in charge of the body, the body posture changes. Some alters suffer various ailments which others do not, and respond differently to drugs, in the same physical body.³²

³⁰. Hans J. Eysenck, *The Biological Basis of Personality*, C.C. Thomas, 1967; *Readings in Extraversion/Introversion*, London: Staple Press, 1970.

³¹. Oliver Sacks, M.D., *Migraine: Understanding a Common Disorder*, Expanded and Updated, Berkeley and Los Angeles, U. of California Press, 1986, p. 93.

³². Bennett G. Braun, M.D., ed., *Treatments of Multiple Personality Disorder*, Washington, DC: American Psychiatric Press, Inc., 1986, pp. 109ff.

Ronald Melzack, professor of psychology at McGill University, has provided research which adds significant insights to Schilder and supports what I am arguing about the significance of body image. It is his conclusion that the phenomena of phantom limbs and sensations in such non-existent limbs are only partially the memory of a limb now lost or the stimulation of nerves that once served the limb. In fact he discovered that some persons born without a limb will still have a phantom, indicating that the neuromatrix which produces sensation of the limb is to some extent "prewired." Moreover, he sees the higher cortical networks of the brain as involved in producing the phantom. Thus the body image is partially dependent on prewiring, partially upon sensation, but significantly dependent upon what is created within the higher centers of the brain itself:

Phantoms become comprehensible once we recognize that the brain generates the experience of the body. Sensory inputs merely modulate that experience; they do not directly cause it.³³

I would suggest that there are two values to what I have sought to illustrate. First, I would think that it would be important to query one's client about their body image as a clue to problems and issues with affect functioning. The relationship of body image to personal history and physiological issues should be pursued. Secondly, if the body image is deficient and this is not based in neurological deficiencies, consideration should be given to what might make possible its modification and development so that it provides an adequate foundation for the identity and functioning of the person.

The body image could be enhanced in a number of ways. Activities which involve movement of the body would be helpful in providing sensory stimulation to the formation of an adequate body image. Massage or stimulation of the sensors in the skin would heighten awareness. If the body/self image were affected by trauma, personal history, and low self esteem, therapy might help to rebuild it. Religious faith and exercises could be encouraged which would bring to the person what God has provided for the creation of the image of the person in the image of God. It is the faith of the early church that identification with Jesus (understood in various ways to reflect the image of God) provided rich resources in forming one in God's image. Hypnotism and suggestion could also be utilized for the formation of the image.

Perhaps in the body image we find not only a significant diagnostic tool, but more significantly an image of power to enable not only the functioning of the person but the *wholing* of the person, as previously described.

The Therapist/Spiritual Director and Wholing

It is important that the one who is to help another to healing and wholeness understand the process by which persons come to be who they are and the process by which their worlds, autonomous complexes and disassociations can be wholed. The "four worlds of the person" and a description of the wholing process attempt to assist with this.

It is also important that the person who would heal another have explored the dimensions of his/her own history and present existence, and have intentionally pursued wholeness. If to heal another is a sacred task, then to engage in the journey to which you call others is a sacred responsibility. This must include a journey into the mystery of all that life is, including the Transcendent or spiritual. Such a process does not lead to perfection, for there is no perfection outside of God. The limits of our humanity prevent this. Though one must engage in such a process, the crucial matter is that one have assumed responsibility for such a process, not that one have attained certain levels of integration or wholeness -- or spirituality. The formation and wholing of oneself is a life-long journey and one cannot wait until some high level of attainment to help others. Moreover, there are many elements of the wholing process over which we have little control, for which we must wait. It is not only the level of our attainment that will be of help to others, but that we are seriously engaged in the journey to which we urge them, which life forces upon them, and to which God calls them. Both the responsibility we accept and the wholeness which is forming within us bear witness to a reality and integrity which can communicate to others.

³³. Ronald Melzack, "Phantom Limbs," *Scientific American*, April 1992, pp. 120-126. Quote from p. 126.

The person who would help another to wholeness must also be willing to enter another's world. So did Christ enter our world and associated with all whom his contemporaries judged sinner and impure, excluded from relationship. Philippians 2:5-11 describes Christ's action as "emptying" and "obedience." So should ours be. This means that one must come to terms with perfectionism and moralism, and appreciate what it is to be human. This must be done without judgement and without fear so that persons, with another who has looked into their eyes, can look into their own eyes to see what they would not see before and discover the soul, identity, and possibility they may not have suspected. To accept what is in another, whatever its face, is the first step in helping the person accept what needs integration and transformation. To do this one must both have accepted the strangeness in oneself (one cannot accept in another what cannot be accepted in oneself) and be willing to enter elements of the human predicament which are foreign. This means accepting another's predicament as your own. One must be wise about how far one should go with this: preserving one's identity and values, reserving enough of oneself so that one is not consumed with another's predicament, emotionally expending what one can afford to expend. One must also protect the integrity of the other, seeking the invitation to enter their space, sensitive to their anxiety about the approach of the other. *And yet ultimately, one must enter, if only for the time when their story is heard and their healing explored.* Carl Jung indicated that "attentive entering into the personality of the patient" was important. "The doctor is effective only when he himself is affected. 'Only the wounded physician heals.' But when the doctor wears his personality like a coat of armor, he has no effect."³⁴

³⁴. C.G. Jung, *Memories, Dreams, Reflections*, Recorded and edited by Aniela Jaffe, translated by Richard and Clara Winston, rev. ed., NY: Vintage Books, Random House, 1965, pp. 128,134.

CHAPTER II THE NEW TESTAMENT AS RESOURCE FOR THE UNDERSTANDING OF HUMAN NATURE, LIFE AND PROCESS

Methodological Issues

We often view the Biblical materials as providing us with the raw materials for the construction of theological and institutional systems. We attempt to work its Christology, soteriology, ecclesiology into some uniform advice on what should be believed, how the church should be structured, what worship should be like, what it is to be ethical and righteous, what it means to be saved. This attempt often neglects several important considerations:

1. The Early church in the New Testament does not really provide us with the material with which to do this. It is only beginning to attempt to create anything resembling a coherent system of belief or to define its institutional life. Undoubtedly, it was forced to define belief in the context of its conflicts, just as the second century church was forced to develop a New Testament canon in response to Marcion. Yet it did have a different sort of intention in its literature. How one is to live in responsibility to God with the resources for life was of explicit concern, as in Judaism. Moreover the Christian community's expressed concern for experienced realities, such as Spirit, redemption, and ethics, mark the New Testament materials as reflecting more of a life science. The problems of human existence were analyzed or presupposed, the struggle between "what I would and what I do" was recognized, standards of righteousness and behavior were established -- and the spiritual powers, good and evil, were understood as part of life's dynamics. Above all, the Christ event was seen dynamically, as it affected life. Though body was important in the Judaeo-Christian understanding of life, the fleshly substance of the body was regarded as problematic at best. In the light of the expectation of the end of history, the divine was seen both in terms of the enablement of life and resource for surviving the coming cataclysm.

2. *It is now clear that there was not one church and one perspective in early Christianity.* Though I believe the forms of early Christianity to be a response to a common origin (Christ), and Paul and the mother church in Jerusalem to have been in theological agreement (see Paul's treatment of Jewish Christian theology in Gal. 2 ff),³⁵ the forms of Christianity soon became as varied as the founders/apostles (with their varied backgrounds and perspectives) and the contexts in which Christian communities arose. Thus though one can see the churches dealing with common issues (the meaning of God's action in Christ over against the perceived issues of human existence, the responsibility to Christ as Lord and the approach to his traditions, the need for a Christian life style, the techniques and resources for this, etc.) and experiencing the common realities of the resurrected Christ and God/the Spirit, the approaches to many of the issues differed. Divisions seem to have arisen both within Christian communities (e.g. the divisions mentioned in I Cor. and I John) and between communities (the primacy of Peter within the Matthaean tradition would seem to be used over against the primacy of Paul in the Pauline churches).

Thus our use of NT materials cannot supply singular or simplistic answers. It would be my feeling that the very variety of perspectives in the materials provides us with a wealth of

³⁵. Pauline studies in the last 150 years has often assumed and argued that Paul had no interest in the historical Jesus and was in conflict with Jerusalem and the major streams of early Jewish Christianity. This is in error, from my perspective. Paul does not quote many sayings of Jesus because he rejects the Matthaean approach to Christianity which sees the essence of Christianity as contained in Jesus' sayings, viewed as commandments. Also, Paul in Galatians 2 and following makes a presentation of Jewish Christian theology which he argues was in agreement with his own. It is possible Paul was not telling the truth, but we must listen seriously to what he says.

resources without which we would be impoverished had the early church in canonization of NT literature not chosen to preserve diversity.

With the above in mind the New Testament may tell us more about life than doctrine and the variety of approaches to issues within the literature enrich our understanding of the complexity of the issues and the search for responsible life.

If questions are to be raised about the ability of New Testament texts to reflect psychological perspectives, it should be remembered that the issues here are simpler than research into the faith and history of Jesus and the church to which the documents bear witness. First, the documents arise out of the phenomena of the church's experience and one does not have to deal with what is beyond the experience of the writers. Secondly, the texts themselves, as interpretations of human experience and behavior, mediate the behavior they interpret through calling persons to a pattern of existence. One may then explore their effectiveness. Thirdly, understandings of life exist within the cultures of the early church's world. One may explore the ways in which psychological presuppositions of the culture, explicit and implicit, affect the understandings of the early church, engage and are qualified by the newly emerging life phenomena within Christian communities. An example of this would be the significance of the experience of Christ and the Spirit for the reformulation of the cultural anthropological and psychological traditions by the early church. Regarding our texts,

Later generations can tell from them what interpretations of world and of self once determined life. This is true not only of the great literary and philosophical texts but also of the texts of 'lesser people.'³⁶

The New Testament Literature

What then do we have to work with? We have 27 books, 22 of which were in general acceptance by the end of the second century CE. These books include four Gospels which embody the transmitted traditions about Jesus, translated from the Aramaic and moulded in the churches which treasured them until they received written expression. Matthew used Mark as a source and his treatment and modification of Mark indicates his understanding and remoulding of this narrative material. Common sayings traditions in Matthew and Luke appear in different forms with differing meanings. Even their written expression seems to have gone through a process. Luke evidences three editions. John 21:24 speaks of a beloved disciple written source, while materials within the Gospel show signs of developments which led to different theological perspectives than those of the earlier materials. Moreover, each author of the Gospels, as they now exist, had a different purpose, stated or implied.

The structure of the Gospel tradition follows a basic outline of Christ's brief ministry, but the material also seems to be organized to parallel the experience of Christ with the experience of the believer. Certainly early Christians must have read the Gospels this way. The Gospel of Mark begins with the baptism of Jesus which contains many of the elements of the believer's baptism, then comes the testing (temptation) of the identity established in baptism. This is followed by the "day in the life of Jesus" in 1:14-39 which expresses many of the essential components of the Christian message and experience. Following that one encounters the controversies of chapters 2-3, similar to those experienced by early Christians. Then the problem of understanding and faith is dealt with in 4 in the context of an extended treatment of Jesus' parables. This is followed by the healings of chapter 5 and the description of the Christian mission in 6-8:21, of which the confession of Peter and the Transfiguration is the climax. Then the story turns towards Jerusalem and the crucial events of the death and resurrection which became so important a part of the sacred drama of baptism and eucharist.

The Gospel of John provides rich resources. The Prologue alone speaks of the Word/Wisdom of God, with God before creation, agent of God in creation, and present throughout all history, seeking to bring life and light and to enable persons to become God's children. This Word becomes incarnate in Jesus.

³⁶. Gerd Theissen, *Psychological Aspects of Pauline Theology*, translated by John P. Gavin, Phila.: Fortress Press, 1987, p. 3.

Creation, history, the Christ event are all components of an adequate understanding of Christian life. What is disclosed in the action of the Word is "grace and truth": God's "gracious love and faithfulness."

Following the Prologue John the Baptist proclaims Jesus as the one on whom the Spirit descends and who will baptize with the Spirit. He directs two of his disciples to Jesus by proclaiming, "Behold, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world.!" They follow Jesus and Jesus asks what they seek, inviting them to "come and see", an invitation repeated by Philip to Nathanael. The encounter with Jesus is central. Each pericope in John deals with an encounter and ends with a confession. One may then see the following stories as dealing with what happens in encounter with Jesus to a variety of persons: Nathaniel, the young visionary; the wedding where Jesus was present incognito; the cleansing of the Temple; Nicodemus and his questions of the older years; the Samaritan woman; the official and his son; and the man who didn't want to be healed in chapter 5. One could go on.

The stories of Jesus illumine the human story and the drama of Jesus energizes the Christian life, being introjected into the heart and mind of the believer. This provides clues as to the resources the Gospels might provide. The relationship of Christology and anthropology becomes clear as the drama of Christ unfolds and models the potentials of human existence -- as will be discussed in later chapters.

Then we have the book of Acts, indicated as a companion volume to the Gospel of Luke, though in all manuscripts it is located not with Luke but after the Gospels. It stands after the Gospels as a connecting link to the Epistles. Though called Acts of the Apostles, it is really a limited history of the early church focussing primarily on the process which legitimized the inclusion of the Gentiles and then the Pauline mission. In its theological perspective it sees history as the action of God (i.e. the Spirit) and the proclamation of the Gospel as implementing the fulfillment of God's plan of salvation. It presents a powerful and charismatic perspective on early Christian history -- almost naive -- since it preceded the awful experiences of the mid 60s and 70s (the death of the apostles and the destruction of Jerusalem).³⁷

The New Testament Epistles deal with the practical problems, faith, ethics, social relationships, conflicts and hopes of the early churches. Occasionally, as in Paul, the personal experience and insights of the author are reflected, though one must understand the authors as writing out of community life rather than primarily as individuals. In their discussion of the nature of God's redemption and the role of the Spirit they indicate life as rooted in a reality more than human. In their treatment of ethical issues, and especially in the ethical essays (like I Cor. 13 and Phil. 2), the household codes (in Col., Ephes. and I Peter), the lists of appropriate ethical behavior, and in the handling of discipline (reflected in I Cor. 5, II Cor. 2, and Gal. 6) they provide both potential responses to human predicaments and methodologies for arriving at advice.

In the conservative modification of the treatment of women, apparent in the late 1st century additions to Pauline letters, we discover the church modifying its positions in the light of a changing historical context and the institutionalization of Christianity, often deferring to the contemporary social order. This is then legitimized by adding passages to the Pauline epistles (particularly I Corinthians and I Timothy) and thus providing appeal to Pauline authority. In the Pauline earlier portion of I Timothy widows are just that, those who lost their husband and need support. In the later addition a widow is a part of an order and should be at least 60 because of the undependable nature of younger women. The Pastoral Epistles have long modeled pastoral care and Christian leadership. Many feel they model an approach later than the life of Paul and portray a sterile perfectionism the apostles could not have managed.³⁸ The advice of the seven letters in Revelation calls churches to a rigid exclusivism, separation from their world, faithfulness to the norms, and extends both carrot and stick in promise and judgement. Be faithful is the primary ethic.

³⁷. The dating of Acts has been located anywhere from 62 CE (when Paul is released from prison at its end) to the second century. Its failure to deal with the death of the Apostles in the 60s and the fall of Jerusalem in 70, together with its argument about the continuity between Judaism and Christianity and the friendly attitude of Roman officials, only makes sense before 64 CE. The possibility of there being three editions of Luke, the earliest beginning at chapter 3, the next beginning at 2, and the third beginning with chapter 1, also makes possible an early Acts as companion to the first edition of Luke.

³⁸. See the description of "bishops" and deacons in I Timothy 3.

In the book of Revelation, beginning as letters to seven churches but belonging to the genre of Apocalyptic, we find a flowering of images and terror .. with hope for the faithful. According to Ford's Anchor commentary,³⁹ whose perspective I accept, Revelation 4-11 was originally the preaching of John the Baptist, likely treasured within the Christian community by followers of John who became followers of Jesus. This "treasure" was activated during the Jewish wars with the Romans and basically chapters 12-22 were added. Many of the historical allusions in Revelation belong to this period. Then at the end of the first century this material was reworked by John of Patmos, whose additions were primarily chpts. 1-3 and additions to 22. Revelation is really a Judaeo-Christian piece arising from the troubled psyche of people in troubled times. Because of the prominence of Pharisaic Judaism within Judaism (focused on the Law as sole source of revelation), and the influence of Pharisaism on the Christianity of the Gospel of Matthew along with the loss of the sense of the Spirit in deutero-Pauline Christianity, the repressed collective psyche of Judaism and Christianity gives vent to a rebirth of images. These images are partially traditional and partly archetypal. However, they are not only archetypal. Carl Jung, in his *Answer to Job*, sees the book of Revelation as being the result of the refusal to deal with the darkness of the soul in the Johannine community and thus its horror is the expression of the repressed "shadow." The New Testament, as the Old, offers rich opportunity to understand the psyche from the perspective of its images.

It would also be interesting to explore the meaning of the development of the New Testament Canon. Certainly, this was partially in response to challenges presented by Montanism and Gnosticism in the second century CE. However, there is an implicit meaning in the joining of books representing diverse approaches and traditions, varied theologies, and differering perceptions of life. Matthew, with its Pharisaic legalism, and Revelation, with its apocalyptic eschatology and hostility to all compromise with the world, no longer mean what they once did when standing alone, utilized by the particular communities for which they were written. There was a way these books were understood together, though in the compromises which were part of decisions as to what to include the implicit understandings of various communities likely differed. Thus the church offers us no commentary on how to understand these 27 books as one Canon.

New Testament Themes

Then one may explore the themes of the New Testament as they may inform not only understanding of first century life, but what may be necessary for ours. There are great metaphors which allow life to be grasped and provide a dynamism. There is creation (God bringing light out of darkness, life and meaning out of chaos), with all of its reinterpretation throughout the Old and New Testaments. There is the continual reflection on the meaning of the Exodus and the wilderness experience. The Christ Event is like a many faceted jewel whose derived meanings are almost endless. Christ descends into Sheol and ascends into the cosmos and becomes the integrating, uniting and victorious center (Col. 2). In psychological terms the ascent into the cosmos is an ascent (or descent) into the psyche. New birth marks the start of new dimensions of life while the eschaton draws us into our future with transcendent images and images borrowed from the beginning time (Eden). The riddle-like parables weave their own puzzling tales, absorb us, change us, and confront us with MYSTERY. We live caught between the cosmic, political, social, divine, and evil powers and find ourselves fragmented like "Legion", mistaken dualistic attitudes towards flesh and ego debilitate our psychic structure, and yet a love reaches out from the heart of existence and provides a new transcendent center in weak vessels which in turn binds us in community with others in a love which is without reason, purpose or satisfaction. And the cross reminds us, as we discover ourselves in the crowd railing against the God who has failed us, that the love of God can endure all things. But the cross also reminds us, as the Pauline and Johannine communities struggle with its meaning, that it bears a reality which none, Jew or Greek, expected, most preferring the image of resurrection and Pentecost.

³⁹ J. Massyngberde Ford, *Revelation: Introduction, Translation and Commentary*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1975.

The New Testament and Relationship

Ultimately the New Testament, and Scripture as a whole, is a resource in which we encounter God and Christ. Scripture's reality is personal and not conceptual. What may happen in Scripture primarily happens in the encounter with persons. There is the God who dwells in mystery but who also participates in creation and history. This God Jesus has taught us to call "Abba, Father", a revelation as important as the revelation of God's name to Moses. In Jesus the life of God (Spirit) enters history and flesh. It is not only that by this God binds Godself to us and to our existence, but the mystery that is God becomes concretized so that the person of God may indeed be personal. In the Pentecost experience God again enters life and history in another way which symbolizes God's investment in world and all humanity. For the early church "Spirit" is sometimes the Spirit of God and sometimes the Spirit of the Son, meaning that both the "Father" and Son are experienced in this new phenomenon. The giving of the Spirit is the giving of Godself. The continuing presence of Christ is an expression of Christ's continuing Lordship/Shepherdship and guidance in the ongoing life of the church. Faith (trust and commitment), hope (the embracing of the reality of the future) and love (affective involvement) bind us to these persons and the Transcendent which they represent and mediate. Their love creates the condition for our love, and thus the pattern of their relationship with us is lived out in expanding relationships. Above all, ethics is relational for it is the absence of love that can deny the legitimacy of our spirituality (I Cor. 13, I John 4). The mystery of our oneness with God is also the mystery of our oneness with one another and the mystical marriage creates many relatives. Those who have been united in the common Source of life cannot be divided (I Cor. 1).