

Notes: Colleges/Other Campuses: University of Chicago Chapel Address: To Whom Shall We Go, n.d.

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U. of C. Chapel

Ethical healing
of the Church

1. Dawn - July 16, 1945 - partially blind girl in Albequerque N.M. saw a flash of light which momentarily illumined her shadowed eyes. 150 miles away she had seen the reflection of the unearthly light of the first atomic bomb. at the same moment seismographs in various parts of the country shivered as they recorded the shock - a month later the entire civilized world trembled as the news came that two of these bombs had been dropped on key cities in the Japanese islands - the world recovered from its first shock & began to talk about this strange, new power placed into the hands of man at such a critical moment in history - scientists, philosophers, theologians, politicians, journalists, commentators rushed to the ear of the Western world to tell us what had happened - this was, they said, the beginning of a new & wonderful era, the weapon of war that had made war impossible - the power that finally made security equivalent to morality - the end of modern man

incredible
and morally

2. I have neither the desire nor the knowledge to add anything to this discussion - to attempt to discern the meaning of the blinding, flashing light which threw a ghostly gleam over our entire civilization four months ago - here, especially, the veil of historic nearness is too dark & too heavy - I am, however, concerned with the fact that this event, as so many others in our time again points up the great questions which have always troubled the hearts and minds of thoughtful men & women: How can we reestablish the delicate balance between power & responsibility, between scientific progress and human progress? Where lies our ultimate salvation? What is the answer to a world sick with blood & fear & hate, a world of blind desolation from the unhealing scars? Where is the healing of all the

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heartache that follows the evening sun across the world? Western man, ~~Plato~~ once said, lives his life in quiet desperation, but in our time his desperation has become anguished & noisy & fearful. Our need for clear answers is ^{in our nature} greater than ever before. We must know - or we shall die as we have lived - uncertain, afraid & alone -

3. Fundamentally, ^{our} ~~the~~ problem (before us) is one of thought rather than of life - 50 years ago, in his "Will to Power" Nietzsche already wrote: "The whole of European culture has felt the torment of suspense, growing from decade to decade, like an impending catastrophe; restless, all-powerful, headlong like a river, that must break through; unable to reflect & even afraid of anything like reflection". Because of that we have often in our time acted without thought - indulged in a ^{blind} mad activism - we have done the wrong thing and then rationalised it by building a whole structure of thought upon the rotten foundation of a wrong act - because men did wrong, they began to think wrong - it is the task of ^{our} your generation to establish once more the proper sequence between thought and life, between the conclusion of the thinker and the actions of the doer.

4. It is therefore evident [^{today} this morning, written clear against the black horizon of our tragedy, that our ultimate problem & our ultimate answer revolve about the ^{not things} mind & soul of man. But even that is not enough - As soon as we have seen that we realise that there is ^{it} another question behind that - one that must be answered first: "When all is said and done where is the ultimate answer?" Are they to be found in man himself or must we now go beyond man to a source of wisdom and strength and power and gentleness which our world has forgotten these many years?
 Lord, to whom shall we go?

as you
A.H.
has said

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We know that this is not the first time that a generation of men & women beaten to their knees by the horrors of history have asked ^{similar} these questions. In fact, much of the intellectual Odyssey of Western man might be written in terms of the conflicting answers to the ^{real} question: Lord, to whom shall we go? Where shall we

4 turn for certainty & direction & peace? ~~For whom shall~~

5 Now we also know that in all our intellectual & spiritual history there have been finally only two answers to this question - God or man, Athens or Calvary. Once more this seems to be the fateful choice before 20th Cent. man -

God or man Athens or Calvary, the porch or the hill, the primacy of ^{reason} ~~reason~~ or the primacy of faith - finally this question involves all areas & levels of human life and thought.

Great, decisive
ultimate

6. Are we able & ready once more to believe in belief? ^{to believe in the Chr. of God}

6. Nor is it possible to evade the issue by seeking a compromise - it is true that there are great things in man, his science, his ^{philosophy} ~~philosophy~~, his search for truth - philosophy & theology are not opposed in their purposes - both are ways of knowing - both come attentively to the final who or ^{what} ~~what~~ - the ultimate meaning of all reality - but one is ^{context} ~~context~~ ^{centered in man} and the other begins & ends with God - here is all the difference in the world - the primacy of reason

II or the primacy ^{faith} ~~faith~~ ^{Christianity} ~~Christianity~~ ^{our last answer} ~~our last answer~~ to be found in ^{Christ} ~~Christ~~ above & beyond the stream of human thought - in a voice from the Eternal - in a divine & certain revelation - in the downward leap of God to the lost and bewildered souls of men - or shall we continue to

7 All of us are aware of the ^{problem} ~~problem~~ ^{multiple threat} ~~multiple threat~~ ^{Not} ~~Not ^{our} ~~our modern mind faces when it is confronted with~~~~

Once more simply to your soul, OCCASION

+ present the answer - God
Calvary, faith. U. of C. Chapel ^{Now that is difficult}

the claims of faith & theology. We know so much now that it is hard for us to believe - Go off the deep end into the arms of God. [We are afraid of anti-intellectualism, of mysticism] - we are sane, sensible, reasonable people - and so the history of Western thought has been marked again & again by efforts at compromise between ^{God & man} the sacred & the hill between ^{City of God} reason & City of darkness, between ^{between good & evil} tradition & revolution, experience & revolution - ^{evident in their failure} Over against these compromises, so dare & unapproachable, there is the voice of our Lord: "Except ye become" - the mysticism, heavenly imperative that our way to light, breaking thro' through the low door of the mind of a child, humble, believing, wondering - that the road to wisdom begins in the valley of humiliation - that the mind of God has been revealed utterly and finally in the mysterious fact of the Cross, in the person and work of J.C. as the ultimate answer to all the problems that trouble peoples - our salvation lies on the hill - crucifixion.

7. And are we not driven to the hill by the very desperation of our condition? the agony of soul of modern man may persuade him once more to turn, not forward or backward, but upward for meaning & purpose & peace - everything else has failed - We do not need preachers to tell us that. If we look at the world of the past 50 yrs deep & hard we see that beyond the military phase of the postwar era - beyond banks & planes & guns there is our continual neglect of God - our blind forgetfulness of our nature & destiny - we have destroyed the world we now have.

Mr. Edmen "Candle in the Dark": The entire world is really a reflection of the childishness, the savagery, the animality which we have of late discovered in ourselves. We feel that something is wrong, not only

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