

'Peace Of Soul' - - - By Monsignor Fulton Sheen

(Continued from Page 1)
By what they believe to be the enemy.
Modern psychologists have done an admirable service in studying anxieties, revealing a phase of human nature which has been to some extent closed to us. But the cause of anxiety is deeper than the psychological.

what one pleases. When such a false god is adopted, religion is rejected as a rationalization or an escape, or even as a fear to affirm one's self as supreme.

SIN OF PRIDE

Atheists commit the sin of pride, by which a man pretends to be that which he is not, namely a god. Pride is inordinate self-love, an exaltation of the conditional and relative self into an absolute. It tries to gratify the thirst for the infinite by giving to one's own attitude a pretension to divinity.

The false god of the atheist can be another person, cherished not as a bearer of human values, but as an object to be devoured; and used for one's own pleasure. In such a case, the vocabulary of religion is invoked to sollicit the object, such as "adore," "angel," "worship," "god" and "goodness." From it is born the sin of lust, or the adoration of another person's vitality as the end and goal of life.

The unbeliever's god can be things by which he seeks to remedy his own sense of nothingness. Some men seek this compensation in wealth, which gives them the false sense of power. External luxury is pursued to conceal the nakedness of their own souls. Such worship of wealth leads to tyranny and injustice toward others, and thus is born the sin of avarice.

UNHOLY TRINITY

Pride, lust, avarice, the devil, the flesh and the world, the pride of life, the concupiscence of the flesh, and the concupiscence of the eyes.

These constitute the new unholy trinity by which man is wooed away from the Holy Trinity and from the discovery of the goal of life. Anxiety and frustration invariably follow when the desires of the heart are centered on anything less than God, for all pleasures of earth pursued as final ends turn out to be the exact opposite of what was expected.

The expectation is vain; the realization is disgust. Out of this disappointment are born those lesser anxieties which modern psychology knows so well; but the root of them all is the meaninglessness of life due to the abandonment of Perfect Life, Truth and Love, which is God.

Let it be not believed that man has an anxiety complex "because he still has traces of his animal origin"; indeed, animals left to themselves never have anxieties. They have natural fears, which are good, but they have no subjective anxieties. Birds do not develop a psychosis about whether they should take a winter trip to California or Florida. An animal never becomes less than it is; but a man can do just that, because a man is a composite of both spirit and matter.

Dread arises because man becomes aware, however dimly, of his contingency and finiteness. He is not the absolute, though he wants it; he is not even all that he is or all that he could be. This tension between possibility and fact, this oscillation between wanting to be with God and wanting to be God is a deeper side of his anxiety.

Alfred Adler has always emphasized that back of neuroses is the striving of man to become like God, a striving as important as the goal is impossible. The root of every psychological tension is basically metaphysical.

NATIONAL SOUL
Despair and anxiety are possible because there is a rational soul. They presuppose the capacity of self-reflection. Only a being capable of contemplating itself can dread annihilation in face of the infinite, can despair either of itself or of its destiny.

Despair, Kierkegaard tells us, is twofold. It is a desperate desire either to be oneself; man wants either to make himself into an absolute, unconditioned being, independent, self-subsistent; or else he wants desperately to get rid of his being, with its limitation, its contingency, and its finiteness. Both these attitudes manifest the eternal revolt of the finite against the infinite; they rebel. By such a revolt, man exposes himself to the awareness of his nothingness and his solitude.

TRUTH LOVE
Man can choose between an earthly love, or the exclusion of Divine Love, or he can choose a Divine Love which includes a healthy, sacramental, earthly love. Either he can make the soul subject to the body, or he can make the body subject to the soul. Consider first those who resolve their anxiety in favor of Godlessness. They invariably end by substituting one of the false gods for the true God of Love.

Work never killed anybody, but worry has. It is assumed by many reformers that the principal and major cause of unhappiness is economic insecurity, but this theory forgets that there are economic problems only because men have not solved the problems of their own souls. Economic disorder is a symptom of spiritual disorder.

FOOLISH WORRIES
Most souls are anxious about the very things they should not be anxious about.

Pontiff Resumes Audiences At Villa

Castelgandolfo - (Radio, NC) - His Holiness Pope Pius XII, now residing at the Papal summer villa here, has resumed his audiences. The long list of those to be received in the near future includes a large pilgrimage of Belgian workmen led by trade leaders and members of the Belgian government.

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The Philosophy of Anxiety

The Old Testament, for example, has one book which is concerned solely with the problem of anxiety—the Book of Job. The Sermon on the Mount is a warning against the wrong kind of anxieties. St. Augustine's writings center around what he called the restless soul. Pascal wrote about human misery. A modern philosopher, Kierkegaard, bases his philosophy on dread, or Angst, and Heidegger has told us Dasein ist Sorge. "Self-existence is worry."

It is important to inquire into the basic reason and ground of anxiety, according to man's present historical condition, of which the psychological is only one superficial manifestation. The philosophy of anxiety looks to the fact that man is a falling being composed of body and soul.

Standing midway between the animal and the angel, living in a finite world and aspiring toward the infinite, moving in time and seeking the eternal, he is pulled at one moment toward the pleasures of the body and at another moment to the joys of the spirit.

He is in a constant state of suspension between matter and spirit and may be likened to a mountain climber who aspires to the great peak above and yet, looking back from his present position, fears falling to the abyss below.

Story of the Mountain Climber

In every human being, there is a double law of gravitation, one pulling him to the earth, where he has his time of trial, and the other pulling him to God, where he has his happiness. The anxiety underlying all modern man's anxieties arises from his trying to be himself without God or from his trying to get beyond himself without God.

The example of the mountain climber is not exact for such a man has no helper on the upper peak to which he aspires. Man, however, has a helper—God on the upper peak of eternity reaches out His Omnipotent Hand to lift him up, even before man raises his voice in plea.

It is evident that, even though we escaped all the anxieties of modern economic life, even though we avoided all the tensions which psychology finds in the unconsciousness and consciousness, we should still have that great basic fundamental anxiety born of our creatureliness.

Anxiety stems fundamentally from irregulated desires, from the creature wanting something that is unnecessary for him or contrary to his nature or positively harmful to his soul. Anxiety increases in direct ratio and proportion as man departs from God. Every man in the world has an anxiety complex because he has the capacity to be either saint or sinner.

Let it be not believed that man has an anxiety complex "because he still has traces of his animal origin"; indeed, animals left to themselves never have anxieties. They have natural fears, which are good, but they have no subjective anxieties. Birds do not develop a psychosis about whether they should take a winter trip to California or Florida. An animal never becomes less than it is; but a man can do just that, because a man is a composite of both spirit and matter.

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VICTIM OF DREAD
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