

Psychology For An Updated Church

THEOLOGY OF THE WORLD

(Twenty-eighth in Series)

By **BISHOP FULTON J. SHEEN**

Does not the aggrornamento of the Church demand a reexamining of the philosophical basis of our faith? Not that one should go to the extreme of rejecting from our philosophy the rich inheritance of the Greeks; nor does it mean that we must demythologize Scripture by eliminating the miraculous and the historical. But there remains, nevertheless, the necessity of rethinking some areas of thought.

Take for example, the description of man as composed of body and soul. Even the spiritual life at times appeared to be based on the idea that we had only a soul to save, when really we were saying in the Creed that we believed in the Resurrection of the Body. It is the person who is to be saved, not just the soul. The stress on the soul sometimes went so far as to regard the body as "vile" and a "worm."

Psychosomatic medicine has made us see the close interaction of the psyche, the mind, or soul, and the soma or the body. Ulcers can be caused by worry. Group therapy in which the sick help one another, is healing as well as medicine.

Should we not inquire if our philosophy has been as good as it should be? Take for example, Ethics.

Ethics — the natural science of what is good for man, is far removed from Christian morality which is the science of acting on Love whose basis is the Servanthood and Self Sacrifice of Christ. Man does not have a natural end as ethics too often assumes; he is a complex, frustrated being who acts like a king in exile, which indeed he is.

Our rational psychology too, which is taught in colleges is concerned with natural — man. So it is a far cry from Biblical Theology, just as Moral Theology is quite beyond Ethics. Because we have grown up under the impact of our abysmal separation of nature and grace, creation and the Lordship of Christ, we have kept our ethics and our psychology closeted and ghettoed from Theology.

Our plea here is for a restoration of Biblical Psychology, which was the subject of many studies in the early church. But in the Middle Ages, following the example of Augustine, psychology believed that it should start with self-knowledge. For centuries, Aristotle's distinction of matter and form, body and soul profoundly influence the Scholastics.

Something happened to psychology like that which happened to Theology since the Reformation. In both instances, reason and dialectics took priority over the Biblical.

Biblical Theology

Theologians today are beginning to restore Biblical Theology. This article is a plea for its restoration.

The first attempts to do a Biblical Psychology in modern times were J. T. Beck's — (1843) and J. G. F. Hausmann (1848). Biblical Theology in many areas, but especially in psychology must catch up with modern thinking. It is interesting to note that the subject of "original sin" has been rediscovered by psychiatry. The three tensions in man of pride, lust and avarice have been re-discovered respectively by Adler in his "Inferiority Complex", by Freud with Sex and the Pleasure-Principle, and by Jung with his Drive to Security. It is not always easy to sustain the shock of having been trained in Rational Psychology with its emphasis on body-soul, and then to discover that the Bible has body-soul and spirit. But, aggrornamento means sometimes losing intellectual "capital", but it really means "losing" to find.

Modern psychology has gone beyond the body-soul explanation. Jean de Rougemont, for example, holds that man is like a building with four stories: the physical life, the emotional life, the mental life and the spiritual life. Dr. Stocker compares man to a pyramid, the base of which is the body, midway up the pyramid is the mind, and at the peak is the heart or spirit.

Why do they say man is composed of body and soul, while the Biblical concept describes the authentic person in terms of body, soul and spirit, when St. Paul puts all three together: "May God Himself, the God of peace, make you holy in every part, and keep you sound in spirit, soul and body."

The three Greek words used here, and in other places of Scripture, describe the complete man: soma, which means of or pertaining to the body; psyche, which refers to the mind, or the rational soul which gives life to the body ("psychology" and "psychiatry" are words which have their root in this thinking and willing nature of man); finally, pneuma, or spirit (the word pneumatic today is generally applied to a tire which is full of air. But the original meaning was breathing or spirit) which is a kind of a soul of the soul, and which gives a motivation to man over and above reason.

Triple Consciousness

Man, then, has:

a) A body with its principle of sense-consciousness which relates him to the cosmos and everything which can be seen and touched and smelled, or act upon his body.

b) A rational-consciousness which relates him to what is beyond sense, to self-consciousness and the thoughts of other men, to the world of science, to philosophy, the arts, ethics, moral aspirations and some understanding of the ultimate origin-purpose of life.

c) Over and above these, he may have also the spirit-consciousness which relates him to God. The spirit is the in-breathing of the Godhead Spirit which gives us God-consciousness, as the soul gives us self-consciousness and the body gives us sense-consciousness.

Man is a mystery in three worlds. He has passions and emotions, lusts and feelings like the animals, for his body came from the earth and to the earth the body will return. But man is not gov-

erned by instinct alone, but by reason which controls the appetites and which gives him power to rule the universe, to be a poet and to have some knowledge of the Divine 'Other'.

But over and above both, is the spirit which when "graced" by the Spirit, sees that which reason cannot see, which listens when reason has nothing to offer, which illumines the conscience so that it is no longer an arbitrary ego, which affords a consciousness of a Presence which is as real as the thrust of the sword. The spirit in man lays hold of God, because God has laid hold of him, he has sympathy with the world above, as the soul or mind has sympathy with fellow creatures, and the body has sympathy with the material universe. Whenever communion with the Divine is mentioned in the Scriptures, it is the spirit which is the instrument: "I offered to God the humble service of my spirit by preaching the Gospel of His Son" (Romans 1/9)

Further Illustrations of Body-Soul-Spirit

When we speak of body, soul and spirit, they are not three parts of man, but rather the three principles of operation. The physical organism is clear enough, but the difference between soul and spirit can be illustrated in other ways. For example, the spirit of man may also be called the "new heart" or a kind of heart transplant, in which the "Heart of Christ" in His Spirit becomes the ruling principle of life. The Scriptures often speaks of conversion in these terms as replacing a "heart of stone" with a new heart. (Ezechiel 36/26). The moral transformation is so great that it almost seems a new person had taken the place of the old. Conversion is a reorganization of one's life around a new center, as the result of an impact on it from without by the Holy Spirit.

Just as psychology has only in recent times sounded the difference between the conscious and the subconscious, so there must be a rediscovery of the difference between the soul and the spirit. The Holy Spirit broods over man's inner life, drawing a distinction between "The mind of the flesh," or the soul, and "The mind of the spirit," or the spirit. Furthermore, St. Paul makes a clear distinction between the "psychical man" and the "pneumatic" or spiritual man. (Rom. 7/14; Cor. 2/15, 15; 15/44-46) which will be described later in detail.

Grant that the words body, soul and spirit are not always used with scientific precision they nevertheless are clearly presented in every text of Scripture, not so much as departments of human nature as principles that operate therein. The 'psychical man' lives in the domain of nature, without the operation upon him of the spirit of God, which makes him a spiritual man. For the same reasons St. Paul can speak of the 'natural man' as not receiving the 'things of the Spirit of God' (1 Cor. 1/26; 2/13, 14)

The spirit represents at its best, a possibility rather than a power; in itself it cannot come to its due supremacy for its flesh keeps it in bondage. (Rom 8/3) But once the Spirit of Christ energizes and tones up and actualizes the spirit, it then becomes the regnant element of man, so that he lives not in the flesh but in the Spirit (Rom 8/9) Notice how Mary made a distinction between her soul and her spirit as she became possessed of Christ and brought both captive to Her Son. "My soul magnifies the Lord, And my spirit rejoices in God My Savior".

Why Has Psychology Neglected Spirit?

Why, it may be asked, has our psychology omitted the spirit, or the spiritual consciousness, and narrowed man to the sensible and the rational? Because it has limited itself to the unredeemed, or 'natural' man. Art, music, literature and science perfect man as a thinking-willing being, but without the spirit he is a truncated pyramid. A crown is lacking; his potentialities are undeveloped; he is like fallow earth unresponsive to seed.

Why should not psychology consider man in his highest reaches, and not in a state of tension and pull of body and mind? Does not the very contest between the two presume some higher integrating principle — or pneuma, or spirit? Should there not be a psychology of the spiritual man, or the man with a 'new heart' which has been transplanted into him from the heart of God? Why not a psychology of the redeemed man as well as the psychology of the man with a constant civil war raging in his breast? Is not man without God-consciousness somewhat like a house without a roof? Does not the spirit do for him even more than the gift of reason would do to a monkey?

The early Christian writers understood this, as Irenaeus described: "The perfect man is consisting of these three: flesh, soul and spirit. The soul sometimes follows the spirit and is raised by it, but at other times it sympathizes with the flesh and is drawn by it to earthly passions."

But the best explanation is given in a second century work, sometimes attributed to apostolic inspiration, namely, the Apostolic Constitution:

"The soul is as the chariot of the spirit, and the spirit is its charioteer". The soul sometimes instead of following the spirit, follows the body and then one has a sensual slavery. The spirit often burns under the clinkers of a self governed only by the values of its own making.

It is thanks to the spirit that we have an intuition of Divine mysteries, and this is nothing short of a revolution: "Your mind must be reviewed by a spiritual revolution so that you can put on the new self that has been created in God's way in the goodness and holiness of truth" (Eph. 4/23)

"Turning Off" the Spirit

What part of man does preaching the Word of God touch? Merely his soul? Or does it touch a kind of No-Man's Land between the soul and the spirit? It may, indeed, touch the emotional side of man (soma), and titillate his nerves like a low type of music; or it may affect his mind, drawing

(Continued on Page 3)

A Special Check List

Is Your Parish Communicating?

• Are regular staff meetings scheduled for the clergy of the parish? Are these at least monthly in frequency?

• Does the parish have a parish council? Is one under formation?

• Does the faculty of the parish school and school of religion have a regular opportunity for meetings and communication with the clergy of the parish?

• Are the appropriate foreign language Masses and other activities provided?

• Are the priests available to the people, and in regular communication with the people?

• Do the priests of the parish greet the people outside of church before and after Sunday Masses?

• Do the priests of the parish keep up to date with literature on theology, pastoral methods, etc.?

The past two weeks the priests of the San Francisco Archdiocese have been attending institutes on communications. In connection with the meetings the Archdiocesan newspaper, The Monitor, published this check list designed to encourage communication in the parish.

• Do the priests of the parish attend pastoral institutes, retreats, days of recollection and on-going clerical education programs whenever possible?

• Does the pastor make it a point to give positions of genuine responsibility to assistants and lay leaders, whenever this is possible?

• Do the priests of the parish take an interest in and participate in the work of the school of religion as well as the parochial school?

• Are approved developments in the liturgy introduced to the parish on the schedule set down by Church authority?

• Do the priests, religious and laity of the parish forward suggestions to the diocesan office?

• Are there conscious efforts made and programs planned to encourage vocations to the priesthood and religious life?

• Do the people offer their help even in the difficult and less glamorous jobs which need doing in a parish?

• Do all members of the parish keep clearly in mind that the ultimate purpose of all parish activity is to make Christ's person and His teaching present in their community?

Collegiality and Its Significance

The following excerpt from a homily preached in Washington by Bishop Joseph Bernardin, executive secretary of the U.S. Catholic Bishops' Conference, on July 3, is an interpretation of the controverted term "collegiality".

The concept of collegiality is extremely significant for, while acknowledging the unique position of the Holy Father as the supreme shepherd and teacher of all the faithful and as the foundation of unity of the universal Church, it also recognizes the validity of diversity in those things which are not essential to the faith.

Indeed this diversity is beneficial and must be taken into account by those responsible for guiding the universal Church. This is how the Constitution expressed it:

"This collegial union is apparent also in the mutual relations of the individual bishops — with particular churches and with the universal Church.

"The Roman Pontiff, as the successor of Peter, is the perpetual and visible source and foundation of unity of the bishops and of the multitude of the faithful. The individual bishop, however, is the visible principle and foundation of unity in his particular church, fashioned after the model of the universal Church. In and from such individual churches there comes into being the one and only Catholic Church.

"For this reason, each individual bishop represents his own church, but all of them together in union with the Pope represent the entire Church joined in the bond of peace, love and unity." (#23)

Much of the unrest in the Church today is due to the fact that collegiality is not always understood correctly. While it refers directly only to the relationship between the Pope and the bishops, it is true that indirectly it affects the entire Church. For when the bishops act collegially with the Holy Father, it is understood that they will reflect the needs, hopes and aspirations of the people whom they serve.

Still, it would be incorrect to conclude from this, as some seem to do, that collegiality implies a complete democratization of the Church.

Pope Paul clearly understands the significance of collegiality. The announced purpose of the extraordinary session of the Bishops' Synod scheduled for October is to discuss the relationship between the episcopal conferences of each country and the Holy See and the relationship of the conferences among themselves. This is another important step toward the full implementation of the concept of collegiality.

As the chief pastor, the Holy Fa-

ther presides over the communion of local churches whom the bishops represent. Together with them, he safeguards the interests of the local churches and yet preserves that essential unity which Christ willed for them.

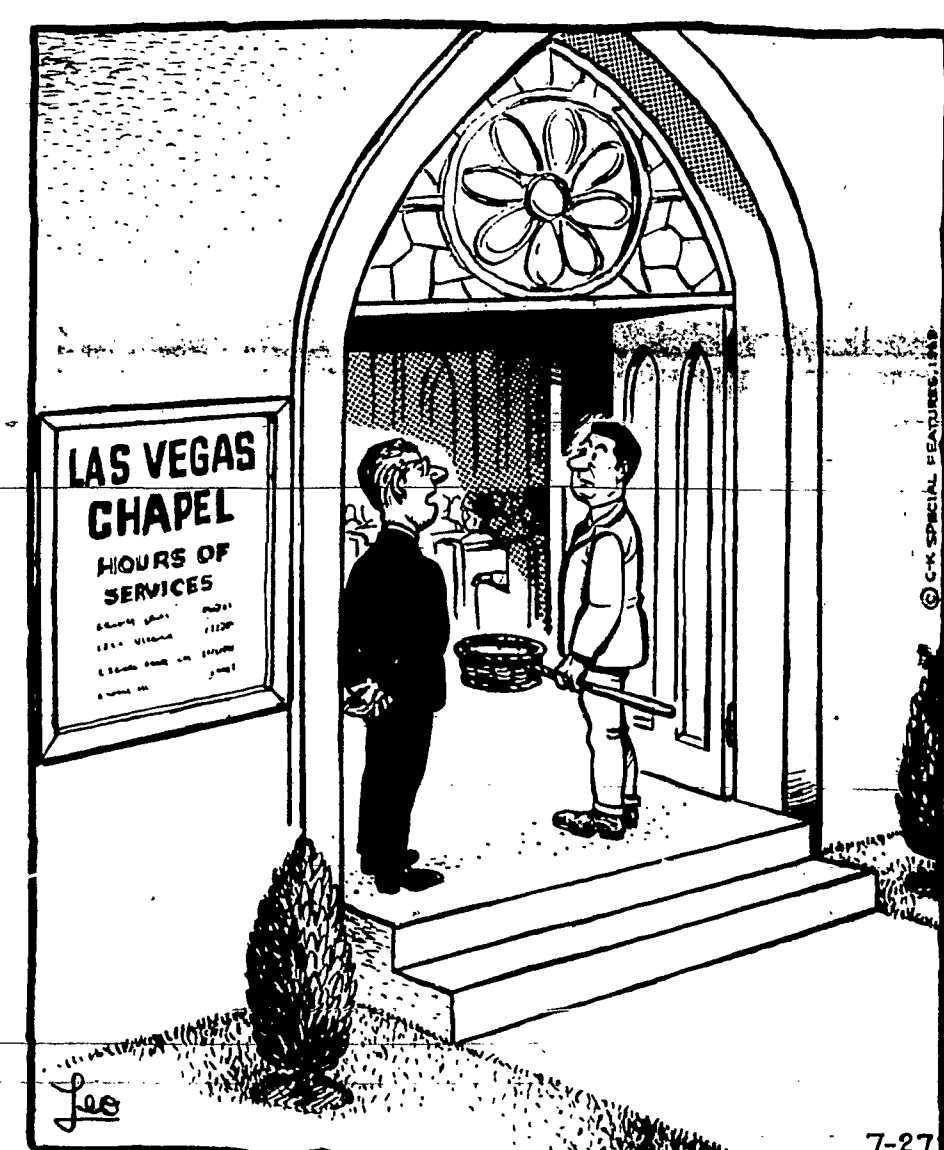
But if this collaboration between the Holy Father and the bishops is to be truly effective, both priests and faithful will have to work closely with their own bishop. On both sides there must be complete openness and full trust and confidence. Honest criticism is needed, but it must be given in charity and the only motive must be to build up the Church, not tear it down.

Above all, this collaboration within the local church must be carried on in a spirit of faith. This faith does not require us to pretend that human frailties and failures do not exist; it does not mean that the human contribution to the work of the Church is unimportant.

The Holy Father serves at a most critical time in the Church's history. For today the Church, like all institutions and society generally, is undergoing profound changes. The Pope, as the "perpetual and visible source and foundation" of the unity of the Church, has the task of guiding the Church in her search for a new synthesis of that unchanging truth which God has revealed to us and the new, changing human situation for which that truth must always have meaning and relevance.

In fulfilling his task, the Holy Father will sometimes be misunderstood. This should hardly surprise us, however, because we know that the demands of the world are not always in harmony with the demands of the gospel. Christ who was himself called a "sign of contradiction" clearly told us that those who preached the Christian message would sometimes be criticized and even abused for their efforts.

6 Courier-Journal — Friday, July 11, 1969



Word for Sunday

In Giving We Receive

By Father Albert Shamon

St. Augustine once wrote: "God has many whom the Church has not; the Church has many whom God has not."

It was the great rhetorician's way of saying that not everybody outside the Church is lost, nor is everyone in it saved.

Our Lord put this in a beautifully simple way: "It is not the man who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' who will enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does my heavenly Father's will." To be a Catholic is good, but it is no good if we do not do the works of a Catholic — the Father's will. What this will is, the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews tells us (Hebr. 10: 24-25).

First of all, the Father wills that we "be concerned for each other." We are Christians not for ourselves only, but for the sake of others. God has called us not for privilege but for mission. No man ever saved his own soul who devoted his whole time and energy to saving it. It is in giving that we receive, in dying that we live. The standing water gets green with scum. The close-shut barn breeds weevils and smut. Only he who works for God lives for God. Only he who gives bread to the hungry shall find food for his soul.

And what shape should our concern-for others take? Stir up in them "a response in love and good works." How can this be done? By the example of our lives. A dying soldier had looked up to Florence Nightingale as she was tenderly nursing him and murmured, "You're Christ to me."

Secondly, the Father's will is that

we "encourage each other." People today need courage even more than comfort. What a wonderful tribute Eliphaz unwillingly paid to holy Job when he told him to do for himself what he had so often done for others, "Your words . . . strengthened every falling knee" (Job 4:4).

It is easy to laugh at men's ideals; it is easy to pour cold water on enthusiasm; it is easy to discourage others. The world is full of prophets of gloom and doom.

Christianity is good news; the Christian must be a prophet of joy. One of the most frequent scriptural expressions put in the mouths of heavenly angels is, "Fear not!"

So, it is not enough to say, "Lord, Lord." Employer must say to employee, "You're doing a great job" (when he is). Or a husband to his

wife, "You're wonderful"—and a wife and mother is. Or wife to husband, "I've got the best husband in the world"—especially if he is a good provider and a good man. Or parents to children, "We love you." In other words, in the short time we have, it is our Christian duty to do all the good we can, to all the people we can, in all the ways we can. For what is Christianity? It is more than simply saying, "Lord, Lord."

In the house, it is kindness. In business, it is honesty. In society, it is courtesy. In work, it is fairness. Toward the unfortunate, it is pity. Toward the weak, it is help. Toward the penitent, it is forgiveness. Toward God, it is reverence and love.

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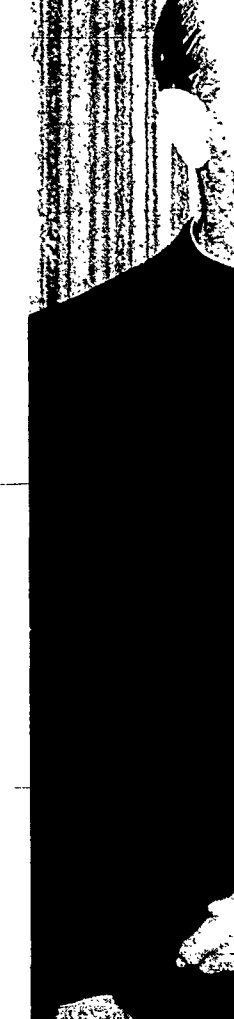
Forty-five Puerto from Rochester's inn pated in a special th here last weekend, — chapter in the on Spanish Apostolate.

Held in Becket Ha college seminary resie Fisher College, it wa retreat to be conduc case, and brought to Puerto Rico a priest who assisted in the p

Retreatants, young



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Rev. Re-e

Mother Agnes Cec General of the Sist of Rochester Dioc elected for a second

She was reelect Motherhouse, East Sister delegates of who comprise the cl councilors were Si McCarthy, Rose Aline Riley and Ann

Chapter delegate during July at Nazareth A cade to consider more than 1,000 proposals sent in by members of the order concerning the best ways to be relevant as religious women in today's society.

Chapters are u every six years, an garded of great in of the many chan of the world, the Ch life. Proposals deal forms of government and the various ap ters are undertaken

The Rochester S has 890 members, f mentary schools, f Nazareth College, St. Joseph's Villa, School, Nazareth E