

# **MINEOLA BIBLE INSTITUTE AND SEMINARY**

## **Theology III**

### **Radical, Biblical, Apostolic, Christianity**



Bishop D.R. Vestal, PhD

Larry L Yates, ThD, DMin

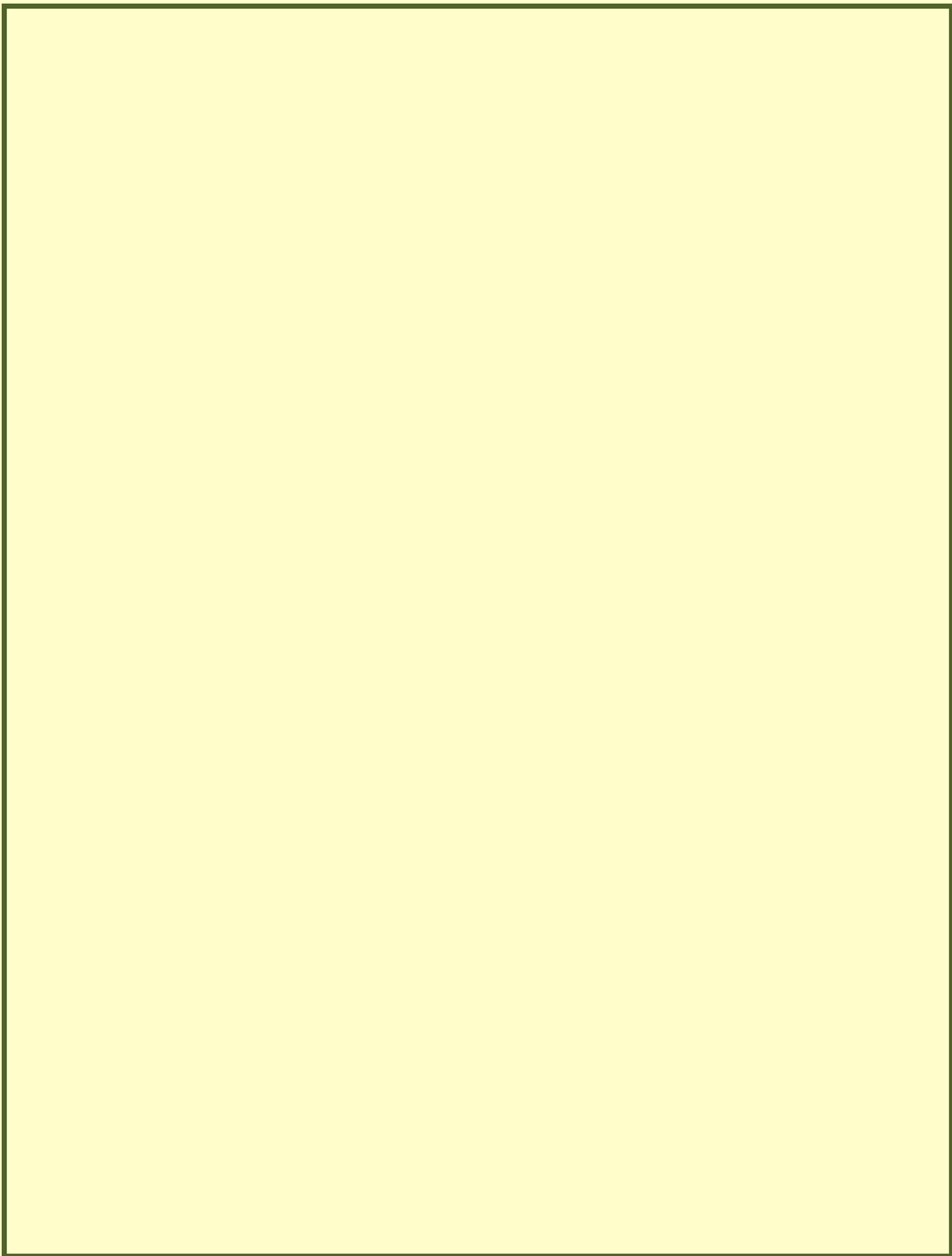
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# THEOLOGY III

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**Absolution**, (Latin *absolvere*, “to release from”), in Christian theology, most often used to refer to the act in the sacrament of penance, by which the priest, as the minister of God, grants to confessing penitents for forgiveness of their sins. In the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, the practice is based on John 20:22-23. To be effective, absolution pre-supposes a true contrition for sin and a firm purpose of amendment on the part of the penitent. Absolution is also a part of the Anglican ritual, but penance is not considered one of the sacraments instituted by Christ. Most Protestant denominations do not regard penance as a sacrament, and therefore, do not acknowledge the necessity for sacramental absolution. They recognize a broader interpretation of absolution -- namely, the remission of the sins of a repentant sinner. They believe this remission is achieved, not by the mediating judicial act of a minister or priest, but only through the direct acknowledgment of transgressions by the penitent to God and humble entreaty for his forgiveness. Although the term, *absolution*, is confined to Christian theology, the practice of penitently beseeching a deity’s forgiveness for individual offenses is common to almost all religions.

In the Roman Catholic Church, absolution can also mean release from ecclesiastical censure (penalty imposed on one who commits any of certain extremely serious sins, specifically condemned as crimes in canon law) or the rite, immediately following, a funeral mass, in which the mercy of God is implored for the soul of the dead.

**Adoptionism or Adoptianism**, heresy akin to Nestorianism, originating about the 3rd century and later revived about the end of the 8th century in Spain. Elipandus, archbishop of Toledo, and Felix, bishop of Urgel, held that, although Christ was the Son of God in respect to his divine nature, as man he was only adopted to be the firstborn Son of God. The moment of Christ’s adoption was identified with his baptism, when a dove descended from heaven and a divine voice announced that Christ was the Son of God (Mark 1:9-11). This doctrine gave occasion to three synods -- at Ratisbon (792), Frankfort (794), and Aix-la-Chapelle (799) -- at each of which adoptionism was condemned as heresy.

**Advent**, (Latin *adventus*, “coming”), in the Christian ecclesiastical calendar, a season starts on the feast of St. Martin, November 11; this period is still observed in the Orthodox Church. About 600, Pope Gregory I, decreed that the season should start on the fourth Sunday before Christmas, but the longer period was observed in Lutheran, Anglican, and Episcopal Churches, and the first Sunday of Advent is regarded as the commencement of the Christian ecclesiastical year. The season is also a preparation for the second coming of Christ at the end of the world.

**Altar**, surface or structure upon which a religious sacrifice is offered. Although the term is sometimes used simply to designate a center for religious ritual or for the worship of deities, and although, in many societies, sacrifices are offered without an altar, altar and sacrifice, are generally, connected in the religious history of humanity.

Although common in many cultures, the altar is not universal. It is rarely found in indigenous religions of South America and Africa. Islam seems to be the only world religion that does not use it. Altars vary in size, shape, and construction. Places of offering or sacrifice may take the form of a mound of earth; a heap of stones; one large slab of stone, wood, or metal; or a trench dug into the ground, like the *vedi* (altar) of ancient India.

The altar has been ascribed - deep religious and symbolic significance. It has been considered a holy and revered object, a place hallowed by the divine presence, where contact and communication with deities and other spirits could be achieved. So sacred was its power, often protected by taboos, that it served, at times; as an asylum for those seeking refuge. At the heart of all altar symbolism, lies the idea that it is the center or image of the universe. Particularly in India, the cosmic significance of the altar was fully explored. The ancient sages saw its different parts as representing the various sections of the universe and concluded that its construction was a repetition of creation. The altar, as a heaped-up mound of earth, also symbolized the sacred mother; its very shape could be compared with the body of a woman.

The earliest and most reliable evidence of an altar, dating from about 2,000 B.C., is a horned limestone structure excavated at the ancient Palestinian city of Megiddo. In the ancient Mediterranean world, altars were not necessarily associated with temples. In some Greek and Roman cults, for example, the altar stood in front of a sacred building, and it was the altar, not the temple, that was the focus of religious ceremony. Very often the form and position of an altar reflected its function: whereas a raised altar was used for sacrifices to the celestial deities of Mount Olympus, for example, pits or trenches served as receptacles for offerings to gods of the earth or the underworld.

In ancient Hebrew religion, altars were used both for animal sacrifice and for offerings of grain, wine, and incense. The function of these altars was the same as in many other religions of the ancient Near East, although there were some important differences. For example, the common pagan belief that sacrifice is a way of feeding the gods, acquires a strictly metaphorical meaning in Judaism.

In Christianity, the altar held far-reaching religious meaning. Starting from a simple communion table, the altar became a symbol of Christ, and was marked with five symbolic wounds at its consecration. Many passages of Scripture lend themselves to symbolic interpretation in connection with the altar. For example, the stone of which the altar is constructed could be viewed as symbolic of Christ, the “cornerstone” of the Church (Matthew 21:42). By the Middle Ages (5th century to 15th century), the Christian altar had become a richly decorated throne on which lay the consecrated host (bread and wine) for the purpose of adoration. As in many other religions, the altar table in Christianity has been the focal point of unity, reverence, prayer, and worship.

**Anointing of the Sick**, in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, a sacrament of spiritual comfort for the seriously ill or aged, formerly called extreme unction. The rite consists of biblical readings, prayers, and the anointing by a priest of the five senses (eyes, ears, nose, lips, and hands) of the sick person with oil normally blessed by a bishop on Maundy Thursday. In cases of emergency, the fore-

head, alone, is anointed. The rite may be celebrated, either individually, or in a group service. The effects are believed to include, not only, spiritual healing, but also the restoration of bodily health, if God so wills.

The early Church practice of anointing the sick was based on two New Testament texts (Mark 6:13; James 5:14-16). After the 8th century, the anointing came to be associated, almost exclusively, with rites for the dying. The term, *extreme unction*, or *last anointing*, was introduced at that time. The 12th-century Italian theologian, Peter Lombard, listed the rite among the seven sacraments; that listing was recognized as official by the Council of Trent (1543-63).

Since the time of the Reformation, Protestants, have generally, rejected the sacramental nature of the rite, and some, even the practice itself. The Anglican Communion makes provision for an anointing of the sick, but many Anglicans consider it a rite instituted by the Church, rather than a sacrament established by Christ.

**Antichrist**, opponent or antagonist of Christ; also, a false Christ. In the Bible, the word is used only in the epistles of St. John, but the concept of an opponent of the Messiah appears in the Old Testament. Its earliest form, is probably, that of the warrior, King Gog, in the Book of Ezekiel. The term, *Antichrist*, was variously applied, by the early Christians, to any opponent or enemy of Christ, whether a person or power, or to a false claimant of the characteristics and attributes of Christ. The “false Christ’s,” were predicted, by Jesus, to precede the coming of the Son of man (see Matthew 24). Opposition to Christ’s teaching on the part of the anti-Messiah was also prophesied (see 1 John 2:18). The development of this conception of active hostility is apparent in the Epistles of St. Paul, who bore the brunt of Jewish opposition (see 1 Thessalonians 2:15). The “man of sin,” as Paul saw him, was a Jew, because he would regard the temple at Jerusalem as the seat of God’s worship (see 2 Thessalonians 2:3, 4).

In the Book of Revelation, Antichrist is identified with paganism. Different interpreters,

have at various times, identified the Antichrist with the Roman emperors, Nero, Diocletian, Julian, and Caligula; with the Samaritan sorcerer, Simon Magus (see Acts 8:9-24); and with Muhammad, the founder of Islam. At the time of the Reformation, Protestants, quite generally, held the Pope to be the Antichrist, and Roman Catholics regarded, Martin Luther, similarly. In the controversy between the Roman Church and the Greek Church, the name was applied, by those who opposed them, to Popes and Byzantine emperors.

**Apostle**, (Greek *apostolos*, “one sent forth”), messenger, especially one of the 12 disciples, whom Jesus Christ sent forth, to preach the Gospel and to act in His name. Jesus may have selected 12 apostles, because of the 12 tribes in Israel, thus, signifying that the Christian community is God’s Israel (see Gal. 6:16), which inherits the privileges of ancient Israel. The Twelve were Peter, Andrew, James the Great, John, Philip, Bartholomew, Thomas, Matthew, James the Less, Thaddaeus, Simon the Canaanite, and Judas Iscariot. Matthias was chosen in place of Judas (see Acts 1:26). In the early Church, the title, *apostle*, was extended to others who spread the Christian message, such as Paul, Barnabas, and Timothy.

The founder of the Christian Church, in a country, is usually spoken of as the apostle of that country; thus, Gregory of Armenia, is the apostle of Armenia. Other apostles, so identified, include St. Boniface, of Germany; St. Augustine, of England; St. Patrick, of Ireland; St. Columbia, of Scotland; St. Cuthbert, of Northumbria; and St. Denis, of France.

**Apostasy**, (Greek *apostasia*, “insurrection”), the total abandonment of Christianity by a baptized person. In the early Church, it was considered one of the three unpardonable sins, with the other two being, murder and fornication. Apostasy is to be distinguished from laxity in the practice of religion and from heresy, the formal denial of one or more doctrines of the Christian faith. In Roman Catholic canon law, the term also refers to the abandonment of the religious state by a monk or nun, who has taken perpetual vows and leaves the religious life without the appropriate dispensation.

**Archangel**, an angel, or heavenly being, of higher rank than angels. In Jewish and Christian literature, the four best known are Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and Uriel. In Islam, it is believed that four archangels guard the throne of Allah. According to Christian tradition, archangels belong to the eighth of nine choirs of angels. Arranged, according to their importance, in descending order, these choirs are seraphim, cherubim, thrones, dominations, virtues, powers, principalities, archangels, and angels.

**Atheism**, (Greek a, "not;" *theos*, "god"), doctrine that denies the existence of deity. Atheism differs distinctly from agnosticism, the doctrine that the existence of deity can be neither proved nor disproved. Many people have incorrectly been called atheists, merely because they rejected some popular belief in divinity. To the Romans, the early Christians were atheists because they denied the Roman gods. Adherents of various Christian sects have applied the term to anyone unwilling to accept every tenet of their doctrine. Freethinkers, such as the French philosopher and writer, Jean Jacques Rousseau, the French writer, Voltaire, and the Anglo-American political philosopher and author, Thomas Paine, although subscribing to a form of deism, may frequently be referred to, as atheists. The Sankhya philosophy -- one of the great systems of Hindu thought -- Buddhism, and Jainism, have all been described as atheistic, because all deny a personal God.

With the increase in scientific knowledge and the consequent scientific explanation of phenomena, formerly considered supernatural, atheism has become a less controversial philosophical position.

**Atonement**, in Christian theology, the expiation of sin and the propitiation of God by the incarnation, life, sufferings, and death of Jesus Christ; the obedience and death of Christ on behalf of sinners as the ground of redemption; in the narrow sense, the sacrificial work of Christ for sinners. In the theology of many, including nearly all Universalists and Unitarians, atonement signifies the act of bringing people to God, in contradistinction to the idea of reconciling an offended God to his creation.

The three principal theories, by which, theologians attempt to explain the atonement are the following: (1) the Anselmian or sacrificial, that the atonement consists fundamentally in Christ's sacrifice for the sins of humanity; (2) the remedial, that God, through the incarnation, entered into humanity so as to eliminate sin by the ethical process of Christ's life and death and make the human race, at one, with himself; and (3) the Socinian or moral influence, that Christ's work consists in influencing people to lead better lives. The sacrificial theory takes two general forms: (a) the governmental, that Christ's work was intended to meet the demands of the law of God and make such a moral impression upon humans in favor of the divine government, as to render their forgiveness safe; and (b) the satisfaction, that, it was intended to satisfy divine justice and make the forgiveness of humanity, possible and right. Each of these theories has been further developed many times.

**Baal**, (Hebrew *ba'al*, from the Phoenician *ba'al*, "owner," "lord"), among ancient Semitic peoples, name of innumerable local gods, controlling fertility of the soil and of domestic animals. Because the various Baal's, were not everywhere, conceived as identical, they may not be regarded as local variations of the same deity. In the plural, *Baalim* means, idols or Baal's collectively.

The name, *Baal*, formed a part of the names of various gods, as Baal-berith (the lord of the covenant) of the Schechemites, and Beelzebub (the lord of flies) of the Philistines. The Hebrews learned the worship of Baal from the agricultural Canaanites. Except for the offerings of fruits and the first born of cattle, little is known of the rites employed. Canaanite shrines were little more than altars, with the symbol of the Canaanite and Hebrew female deity, Ashtoreth, set beside them. Sacred pillars were often erected near the altars. These shrines were objects of Yahweh's wrath (Leviticus 26:30; Psalms 78:58). The Israelites were commanded to destroy them on entering the land of Canaan (Numbers 33:52; Deuteronomy 33:29), but the shrines were eliminated completely only under King Hezekiah in the 7th century B.C.

The name, *Baal*, was compounded with many Hebrew, Chaldean, Phoenician, and Carthaginian personal and place-names, such as Baalbek, Ethbaal, Jezebel, Hasdrubal, and Hannibal.

**Baptism**, Greek *baptein*, “to dip”), in Christian Churches, the universal rite of initiation, performed with water, usually in the name of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit), or in the Name of Christ. Orthodox and Baptist Churches require baptism by total immersion. In other Churches, pouring (affusion) and sprinkling (aspersion) are more common. Most Churches regard baptism as a sacrament, or sign of grace; some regard it simply, as an ordinance, or rite, commanded by Christ.

### **Antecedents to Baptism**

Water was used as a symbol of purification in many religions at a very early date. In the ancient world, the waters of the Ganges in India, the Euphrates in Babylonia, and the Nile in Egypt were used for sacred baths. The sacred bath was also known in Hellenistic mystery cults.

### **Jewish Baptism**

Jewish law provided for the use of water in ritual cleansing (see Leviticus 11:25, 40; 15:5-7); and Elisha commanded the Syrian commander, Naaman to dip himself in the Jordan River to be cleansed of leprosy (see 2 Kings 5). Well before the 1st century A.D., converts to Judaism were required to bathe (or baptize) themselves as a sign of entering the covenant (*tebilath gerim*). Some of the later prophets envisaged that Jewish exiles returning home would cross the Jordan and be sprinkled with its water to cleanse them of sins prior to the establishment of the Kingdom of God (see Ezekiel 36:25). In this tradition, Jesus’ older contemporary, John the Baptist urged Jews to be baptized in the Jordan for the remission of sins (see Mark 1:4 ).

### **Christian Baptism**

Jesus was baptized by John at the beginning of his public ministry (see Mark 1:9-11). Although it is uncertain that Jesus Himself baptized, the risen Christ, commanded his

disciples to preach to and baptize the nations (see Matthew 28:19), as the sign of God's coming rule. Thus, from the outset, baptism became the Christian rite of initiation (see Acts 2:38).

Like the baptism of John, Christian baptism is "for the remission of sins." Largely, under the influence of St. Paul, it came to be understood also as participation in the death and resurrection of Christ, (see Romans 6:3-11). It is also the sacramental means, by which, converts receive the various gifts of the Holy Spirit (see Acts 19:5-6; 1 Corinthians 12). Baptism was often called illumination in the early Church. It came to be, regarded also, as the renunciation of the world, the flesh, and the devil, and as the act of joining the community of the New Covenant.

### **Development of the Rite**

The rite of baptism was gradually embellished. The earliest Christian writings, such as the *Didache*, describe a very simple service. By the 3rd century, however, baptism had become an elaborate liturgy. The *Apostolic Tradition* (circa 215; trans.1937), by the theologian, St. Hippolytus, describes, as parts of the rite, a preparatory fast and vigil, a confession of sins, the renunciation of the devil, and a washing with water, followed by a laying on of hands of an anointing with oil. In the West, the laying on of hands and anointing, evolved into the separate sacrament of confirmation.

### **Infant Baptism**

Infants were probably baptized in the early Church, following the Jewish understanding, that even the youngest children belong to the covenant community. Indeed, the *Apostolic Tradition*, explicitly provides for it. Nonetheless, because post-baptismal sins were regarded as unforgivable (or could be forgiven only once), baptism was often postponed as long as possible. Between the 4th and 6th centuries, however, as the attitude toward post-baptismal sin relaxed (because of the development of the penitential system), and the fear of dying un-baptized increased, infant baptism began to be required.

## **Baptism in Protestant Churches**

Most Protestant Churches adopted traditional views and practices regarding baptism, although often stressing its covenantal character more than its relation to sin. Baptists and Anabaptists, however, insisted on adult baptism, on the ground that only adults can be guilty of sinful acts, repent, and understand salvation -- a view also adopted by Pentecostal Churches and neo-Pentecostal groups.

**Benediction**, formal invocation of the divine blessing upon people or things. Benedictions are mentioned frequently in the Old Testament -- as in the blessing of Isaac (see Genesis 27), of the Israelites by Aaron and his sons (see Numbers 6:22-26), and of objects like food (see 1 Samuel 9:13) -- and have been used by the Jews in public worship since biblical times. Benedictions are also important parts of services in Christian Churches. In the Roman Catholic Church, the most solemn form of benediction, is the Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament. This Eucharistic rite, during which a priest or bishop makes the sign of the cross over the congregation with a monstrance or ciborium containing the consecrated Host, grew out of a 14th-century custom of exposing the Host for public adoration.

Less solemn benedictions, usually called blessings, are given by making the sign of the cross with the right hand, while invoking the blessing of the Trinity. The Roman rite contains blessings for many objects, ranging from devotional aids, such as rosaries, to homes, and automobiles. Most Protestant Churches have abandoned the practice of blessing objects, and the benediction of the congregation, is generally, pronounced simply with the hands extended.

**Blasphemy**, in common law, crime of speaking or publishing words that vilify or ridicule God, the Bible, or religious beliefs. It is a misdemeanor, and two reasons formerly underlay its being a crime: (1) it tended to cause a breach of the peace between the blasphemer and those outraged by his or her words, and (2) because Christianity was a part of common law, blasphemy tended to undermine the law. Only the first reason

remains, for Christianity is no longer a part of the law. The manner, rather than the content of the utterance or publication, renders it blasphemous; a statement of opinion, however, heretical to a religion, is not punishable as blasphemy. Thus, scurrility and a resultant tendency to provoke a public disturbance, are the criteria for blasphemy, and statutes condemning it are held to be in consonance with the laws that protect freedom of speech and religion. It is still a crime in Great Britain and in most of the United States, but prosecutions are now rare.

**Cabala**, (Hebrew “received tradition”), generically, Jewish mysticism in all its forms; specifically, the esoteric theosophy that crystallized in 13th-century Spain and Provence, France, around *Sefer ha-zohar* (The Book of Splendor), referred to as the *Zohar*, and generated all later mystical movements in Judaism.

The earliest known form of Jewish mysticism dates from the first centuries A.D., and is a variant on the prevailing Hellenistic astral mysticism, in which the adept, through meditation and the use of magic formulas, journeys ecstatically through and beyond the seven astral spheres. In the Jewish version, the adept seeks an ecstatic version of God’s throne, the chariot (*merkava*) beheld by Ezekiel (see Ezekiel 1).

### **The Medieval Period**

Medieval Spanish Cabala, the most important form of Jewish mysticism, is less concerned with ecstatic experience than with esoteric knowledge about the nature of the divine world and its hidden connections with the world of creation. Medieval Cabala is a theosophical system that draws on Neoplatonism and Gnosticism and is expressed in symbolic language. The system is most fully articulated in the *Zohar*, written between 1280 and 1286 by the Spanish Cabalist, Moses de Leon, but attributed to the 2nd-century Rabbi, Simeon bar Yohai. The *Zohar* depicts the Godhead as a dynamic flow of force composed of numerous aspects. Above and beyond all human contemplation, is God, as he is in Himself, the unknowable, immutable *En Sof* (Infinite). Other aspects or attributes, knowable through God’s relation to the created world, emanate from

*En Sof*, in a configuration of ten *sefirot* (realms or planes), through which the divine power further radiates to create the cosmos. Zoharic theosophy concentrates on the nature and interaction of ten *sefirot*, as symbols of the inner life and processes of the Godhead. Because the *sefirot* are also archetypes for everything in the world of creation, an understanding of their workings can illuminate the inner workings of the cosmos and of history. The *Zohar*, thereby, provides a cosmic-symbolic interpretation of Judaism and of the history of Israel, in which, the Torah and commandments, as well as Israel's life in exile, become symbols for events and processes in the inner life of God. Thus interpreted, the proper observance of the commandments, assumes a cosmic significance.

### **Lurianic Cabala**

This cosmic aspect of the *Zohar* is developed dramatically and with great consequence in 16th-century Lurianic Cabala (named for its formulator, Isaac ben Solomon Luria). The Lurianic system represents a response to the cataclysmic experience of Jewish exiles expelled from Iberia in the 1490's; it projects this experience onto the divine world. In this system, the *En Sof* withdraws into itself (*tzimtzum*) at the outset of creation, making room for the world, but also for evil. A cosmic catastrophe occurs during emanation, when vessels of the divine light, shatter and the sparks are imprisoned in the world in shards of evil (*qelippot*). The human task, through prayer and proper observance of the commandments, becomes nothing less than the redemption (*tiqqun*) of the world and the reunification of the Godhead. The Cabala, was thus, transformed into a popular messianic movement, which later, generated Sabbatian messianism and 18th-century Polish Hasidism.

**Calvary**, (Latin *calvaria*, "skull," translated from the Aramaic, *Golgotha*), hill outside ancient Jerusalem where the crucifixion of Jesus Christ took place. It has been identified as a place of execution where malefactors were flung from cliffs or stoned to death. It owes its name, either to the perception that it resembled a human skull, or to the traditional belief that the skull of Adam was found there.

In Roman Catholic countries, a Calvary is representation, either in a chapel or outside a Church, of the scenes of the passion and crucifixion of Jesus Christ. The representation, is usually, of three crosses with the life-sized figures of Christ and the thieves, surrounded by figures of the various personages, who took part in the crucifixion. Representations of Christ's sufferings on his way to be executed, known as Stations of the Cross, line the way to Calvary. The Via Dolorosa (Latin for "Way of Sorrow") is the name given to the approach to Calvary.

**Canon (religion)**, in Christian usage, a rule or standard. By the middle of the 3rd century, the word had come to refer to those doctrines recognized as orthodox by the Christian Church. It was later used to designate collectively, the list of books accepted as Scripture.

The term, *canon* is also used to denote the catalog or register of saints. The use of the plural form, to denote Church precepts, originated about the year 300; this form began to be applied specifically to the decrees of the Church councils about the middle of the 4th century. The term is also applied to the part of the Roman Catholic Mass that opens with the Preface, or prayer of thanksgiving, and closes just before the recitation of the Lord's Prayer. In some Christian Churches, *canon* is also an ecclesiastical title, given to the clergy, attached to a cathedral Church or to certain types of priests, living under a semi-monastic rule, such as the Augustinians.

**Celibacy**, the state of being unmarried, with abstinence from sexual activity. Considered a form of asceticism, it has been practiced in many religious traditions: in ancient Judaism, by the Essenes; and in Buddhism, Jainism, and Hinduism, by the members of monastic groups.

In Christianity, celibacy has been practiced by monks and nuns, in both the Western and Eastern Churches. In the Eastern Church, parish clergy are permitted to marry before ordination, but bishops are selected from among the unmarried clergy. In the Roman Catholic Church, celibacy is required of all clergy in the Latin Rite. The Church

holds that this practice is sanctioned, although not required, by the New Testament, basing this claim upon what it avers to have been the constant tradition of the Church and upon several biblical texts (notably, 1 Corinthians 7:6-7, 25; Matthew 19:12). The principles upon which the law of celibacy is founded are (1) that the clergy may serve God with more freedom and with undivided heart; and (2) that, being called to serve Jesus Christ, they may embrace the holier life of self-restraint. This statement does not imply, it is said, that matrimony is not a holy state, but simply that celibacy is a state of greater perfection.

Having no doctrinal bearing in the Roman Catholic Church, celibacy is regarded as a purely disciplinary law. A dispensation from the obligation of celibacy has occasionally been granted to ecclesiastics, under exceptional circumstances, for instance, to provide an heir for a noble family in danger of extinction.

The celibacy of the clergy was rejected by the Protestant reformers, Martin Luther, setting the example to his followers, by marrying a former nun. Both the marriage of ministers and the abolition of monastic vows, became common features of those bodies that withdrew their allegiance from the Roman Catholic Church. According to the articles of religion, of the Church of England, "bishops, priests, and deacons are not commanded by God's law, either to vow the estate of single life, or to abstain from marriage; therefore, it is lawful for them, as for all other Christian men, to marry at their own discretion, as they shall judge the same to serve better to godliness."

The history of priestly celibacy has been a stormy one, since it became law for the clergy of the Latin Rite, in the 6th century. Although Pope Paul VI, in his encyclical of June 24, 1967, reaffirmed the traditional position, the requirement of priestly celibacy remains a much-disputed ecclesiastical question.

**Charismatic Movement**, (Greek *charismata*, "spiritual gifts"), international, inter-denominational Christian revivalist movement, also referred to as Neo-Pentecostalism. The individuals, who make up the movement, believe that they have been "filled" or

baptized,” with the Holy Spirit, through the laying on of hands. The signs of this baptism, include such spiritual gifts as speaking in tongues, or glossolalia, prophecy, healing, interpretation of tongues, and discernment of spirits (see 1 Corinthians 12:8-10).

The Pentecostal Churches had their origin in a similar movement in the early 20th century, as small groups of believers withdrew from Protestant denominations in order to pray, study the Bible, and practice their gifts.

The Full Gospel Business Men’s Fellowship began among Pentecostals in 1951. Its members introduced laity from other denominations to their practices, but the charismatic movement, as such, is usually considered to have begun in 1960, with a group of Episcopalians in Van Nuys, California. Distinct charismatic networks and organizations soon arose within the Baptist, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian, and other Protestant denominations. A small element exists within Eastern Orthodoxy.

The most striking recent development, is the Roman Catholic charismatic renewal, which originated in 1967, on university campuses in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; South Bend, Indiana; and East Lansing, Michigan. In 1969, the U.S., bishop’s conference, issued a cautiously, favorable statement, regarding the re-natal, and in 1975, Pope Paul VI, gave an appreciative speech at a special audience for 10,000 charismatics, attending a Rome conference. Cardinal Leon Joseph Suenens, of Belgium, a progressive at the Second Vatican Council, became the movement’s sponsor within the Roman hierarchy, but many important leaders were laypeople.

As has Pentecostalism, the charismatic movement has produced myriad groups, independent preachers and healers, and a few near-cultic offshoots. Most charismatics, however, are orthodox in doctrine and emphasize activity within their own denominations. They are ecstatic in worship, although generally, more subdued than Pentecostals, and they align themselves with other Evangelicals in their emphasis on evangelism and personal faith in Christ.

**Cherubim**, winged celestial beings similar to angels. In ancient Hebrew thought, angels themselves, are anthropomorphic, or humanlike, while the cherubim have wings and are zoomorphic, or animal-like. In the developed system of Hebrew angelology, how-ever, the cherubim form one of the nine classes of angels.

God placed cherubim, at the east side of Eden, to prevent human beings from re-entering the garden and gaining access to the tree of life (see Genesis 3:24). Cherubim also support or function as God's throne or chariot (see Psalms 80:1; 18:10). Ezekiel's fantastic and detailed descriptions of the cherubim (see Ezekiel 1:4-28; 10:3-22), however idiosyncratic, are largely responsible for their entry into the history of art. Seraphim, mentioned only in Isaiah 6, are similar creatures.

**Christianity**, the most widely distributed of the world religions, having substantial representation in all the populated continents of the globe. Its total membership may exceed 1.7 billion people.

Like any system of belief and values -- be it Platonism, Marxism, Freudianism, or democracy -- Christianity is, in many ways, comprehensible only "from the inside," to those who share the beliefs and strive to live by the values; and a description that would ignore these "inside" aspects of it, would not be historically faithful. To a degree, that those on the inside, often fail to recognize, however, such a system of beliefs and values, can also be described, in a way that makes sense, as well to an interested observer, who does not, or even cannot, share their outlook.

### ***Doctrine and Practice***

A community, a way of life, a system of belief, a liturgical observance, a tradition -- Christianity is all of these, and more. Each of these aspects of Christianity has affinities with other faiths, but each, also bears, unmistakable marks of its Christian origins. Thus, it is helpful, in fact unavoidable, to examine Christian ideas and institutions comparatively, by relating them to those of other religions, but equally important to look

for those features that are uniquely Christian.

### **Central Teachings**

Any phenomenon as complex and as vital as Christianity, is easier to describe historically, than to de-fine logically, but such a description, does yield some insights into its continuing elements and essential characteristics. One such element is the centrality of the person of Jesus Christ. That centrality is, in one way or another, a feature of all the historical varieties of Christian belief and practice. Christians have not agreed in their understanding and definition of what makes Christ distinctive or unique. Certainly, they would all affirm that His life and example should be followed and that His teachings about love and fellowship should be the basis of human relations. Large parts of His teachings have their counterparts in the sayings of the Rabbi's -- that is, after all, what He was -- or in the wisdom of Socrates and Confucius. In Christian teaching, Jesus cannot be less than the supreme preacher and exemplar of the moral life, but for most Christians that, by itself, does not do full justice to the significance of His life and work.

What is known of Jesus, historically, is told in the Gospels of the New Testament of the Bible. Other portions of the New Testament summarize the beliefs of the early Christian Church. Paul and the other writers of Scripture believed that Jesus was the revealer, not only of human life in its perfection, but of divine reality itself.

The ultimate mystery of the universe, called by many different names in various religions, was called "Father," in the sayings of Jesus, and Christians, therefore, call Jesus Himself, "Son of God." At the very least, there was, in His language and life, and intimacy with God and an immediacy of access to God, as well as the promise that, through all that Christ was and did, His followers might share in the life of the Father in heaven and might, themselves, become children of God. Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, to which early Christians referred when they spoke about Him as the one who had reconciled humanity to God, made the cross the chief focus of Christian faith and devotion and the principal symbol of the saving love of God the Father.

This love is, in the New Testament and in subsequent Christian doctrine, the most decisive among the attributes of God. Christians teach that God is almighty in dominion over all that is in heaven and on earth, righteous in judgment over good and evil, beyond time and space and change; but, above all, they teach that "God is love." The creation of the world, out of nothing, and the creation of the human race, were expressions of that love, and so was the coming of Christ. The classic statement of this trust in the love of God, came in the Words of Jesus, in the Sermon on the Mount: "Look at the birds of the air: they neither sow nor reap, nor gather into barns, and yet, your heavenly Father feeds them. Are you not of more value than they?" (Matthew 6:26). Early Christianity, found in such words, evidence both of the special standing men and women, have as children of such a heavenly Father, and of the even more special position, occupied by Christ. That special position led the first generations of believers to rank him together with the Father -- and eventually, "the Holy Spirit," whom the Father [sent] in [Christ's] name"-- in the formula used for the administration of baptism and in the several creeds of the first centuries. After controversy and reflection, that confession took the form of the doctrine of God, as Trinity.

Baptism "in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit," or sometimes perhaps more simply, "in the Name of Christ," has been, from the beginning, the means of initiation into Christianity. At first, it seems to have been administered chiefly to adults after they had professed their faith and pro-mised to amend their lives, but this turned into a more inclusive practice with the baptism of infants. The other universally accepted ritual among Christians, is the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, in which, Christians share in bread and wine and, through them, express and acknowledge the reality of the presence of Christ as they commemorate him in the communion of believers with one another. In the form it acquired as it developed, the Eucharist became an elaborate ceremony of consecration and adoration, the texts of which have been set to music by numerous composers of masses. The Eucharist has also become one of the chief points of conflict among the various Christian Churches, which disagree

about the “presence” of Christ in the consecrated bread and wine and about the effect of that presence upon those who receive.

Another fundamental component of Christian faith and practice is, the Christian community itself -- the Church. Some scholars question the assumption that Jesus intended to found a Church (the word, *Church* appears only twice in the Gospels), but His followers were always convinced that His promise to be with them “always, to the close of the age” found its fulfillment in His “mystical body on earth,” the holy Catholic (Universal) Church. The relation of this holy Catholic Church to the various ecclesiastical organizations of worldwide Christendom is the source of major divisions among these organizations. Roman Catholicism has tended to equate its own institutional structure with the Catholic Church, as the common usage of the latter term suggests, and some extreme Protestant groups have been ready to claim that they, and they alone, represent the true visible Church. Increasingly, however, Christians of all segments have begun to acknowledge, that no one group has an exclusive right to call itself “the” Church, and they have begun to work toward the reunion of all Christians.

### **Worship**

Whatever its institutional form, the community of faith in the Church, is the primary setting for Christian worship. Christians of all traditions have placed a strong emphasis on private devotion and individual prayer, as Jesus taught. But He also prescribed a form of praying, universally known as the Lord’s Prayer, the opening words, of which, stress the communal nature of worship: “Our Father, who art in heaven.” Since New Testament times, the stated day for the communal worship of Christians has been the “first day of the week,” Sunday, in commemoration of the resurrection of Christ. Like the Jewish Sabbath, Sunday, is traditionally, a day of rest. It is also the time when believers gather to hear the reading and preaching of the Word of God in the Bible, to participate in the sacraments, and to pray, praise, and give thanks. The needs of corporate worship have been responsible for the composition of thousands of hymns, chorales, and chants, as well as, instrumental music, especially for the organ. Since the 4th century, Christian communities have also been constructing special buildings for their worship,

thereby, helping to shape the history of architecture.

### **Christian Life**

The instruction and exhortation of Christian preaching and teaching concern all the themes of doctrine and morals: the love of god and the love of neighbor, the two chief commandments in the ethical message of Jesus (see Matthew 22:34-40). Application of these commandments to the concrete situations of human life, both personal and social, does not produce a uniformity of moral or political behavior. Many Christians, for example, regard all drinking of alcoholic beverages as sinful, whereas others do not. Christians can be found on both the far left and the far right of many contemporary questions, as well as in the middle. Still it is possible to speak of a Christian way of life, one that is informed by the call to discipleship and service. The inherent worth of every person, as one who has been created in the image of God, the sanctity of human life, and thus, of marriage and the family, the imperative to strive for justice, even in a fallen world -- all of these are dynamic moral commitments that Christians would accept, however, much their own conduct may fall short of these norms. It is evident already from the pages of the New Testament, that the task of working out the implications of the ethic of love, under the conditions of existence, has always been difficult, and that there has, in fact, never been a "golden age," in which it was otherwise.

### **Eschatology**

There is in Christian doctrine, however, the prospect of such a time, expressed in the Christian hope for everlasting life. Jesus spoke of this hope with such urgency, that many of His followers clearly expected the end of the world and the coming of the eternal kingdom in their own lifetimes. Since the 1st century, such expectations have tended to ebb and flow, sometimes reaching a fever of excitement, and at other times, receding to an apparent acceptance of the world as it is. The creeds of the Church speak of this hope in the language of resurrection, a new life of participation in the glory of the resurrected Christ. Christianity, may therefore, be said to be an other-worldly religion, and sometimes, it has been almost exclusively that. But the Christian

hope has also, throughout the history of the Church, served as a motivation to make life on earth conform more fully to the will of God as revealed in Christ.

## **History**

Almost all the information, about Jesus Himself and about early Christianity, comes from those, who claimed to be His followers. Because they wrote to persuade believers, rather than to satisfy historical curiosity, this information often raises, more questions than it answers, and no one has ever succeeded in harmonizing all of it into a coherent and completely satisfying chronological account. Because of the nature of these sources, it is impossible, except in a highly tentative way, to distinguish between the original teachings of Jesus and the developing teachings about Jesus, in early Christian communities.

What is known, is that the person and message of Jesus of Nazareth, early attracted a following of those who believed Him to be a new prophet. Their recollections of His Words and deeds, transmitted to posterity through, those who eventually composed the Gospels, recall Jesus' days on earth in the light of experiences identified by early Christians with the miracle of His resurrection from the dead on the first Easter. They concluded that what He had shown Himself to be, by the resurrection, he must have been already, when He walked among the inhabitants of Palestine -- and, indeed, must have been, even before He was born of Mary, in the very being of God, from eternity. They drew upon the language of their Scriptures (the Hebrew Bible, which Christians came to call the Old Testament), to give an account of the reality, "ever ancient, ever new," that they had learned to know as the apostles of Jesus Christ. Believing that it had been His will and command that they should band together in a new community as the saving remnant of the people of Israel, these Jewish Christians became the first Church in Jerusalem. There, it was, that they believed, themselves, to be receiving His promised gift of the Holy Spirit and of a new power.

## **The Beginnings of the Church**

Jerusalem was the center of the Christian movement, at least, until its destruction by Roman armies in A.D., 70, but from this center, Christianity radiated to other cities and towns in Palestine and beyond. At first, its appeal was largely, although not completely, confined to the adherents of Judaism, to whom it presented itself as “new,” not in the sense of novel and brand-new, but in the sense of continuing and fulfilling what God had promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Already in its very beginnings, therefore, Christianity manifested a dual relation to the Jewish faith, a relation of continuity, and yet, of fulfillment, of antithesis, and yet, of affirmation. The forced conversions of Jews, in the Middle Ages and the history of anti-Semitism (despite official condemnations, of both, by Church leaders), are evidence that the antithesis, could easily overshadow, the affirmation. The fateful loss of continuity with Judaism has, however, never been total. Above all, the presence of so many elements of Judaism, in the Christian Bible, has acted to remind Christians that, He whom they worshipped as their Lord, was Himself, a Jew, and that the New Testament did not stand on its own, but was appended to the Old. An important source of the alienation of Christianity from its Jewish roots, was the change in the membership of the Church that took place by the end of the

2nd century (just when, and how, is uncertain). At some point, Christians, with Gentile backgrounds, began to outnumber Jewish Christians. Clearly, the work of the apostle, Paul, was influential. Born a Jew, he was deeply involved in the destiny of Judaism, but as a result of his conversion, he believed that he was the “chosen instrument,” to bring the message of Christ to the Gentiles. He was the one who formulated, in his Epistles, to several early Christian congregations, many of the ideas and terms that were to constitute the core of Christian belief. He deserves the title of the “first Christian theologian,” and most theologians, who came after him, based their concepts and systems on his Epistles, now collected and codified in the New Testament.

From these Epistles, and from other sources in the first two centuries, it is possible to gain some notion of how the early congregations were organized. The Epistles to Timothy and to Titus, bearing the name of Paul (although, many biblical scholars, now find his authorship of these letters implausible), show the beginnings of an organization,

based on an orderly transmission of leadership, from the generation of the first apostles (including Paul himself), to subsequent “bishops,” but the fluid use of such terms, as *bishop*, *presbyter*, and *deacon* in the documents, precludes identification of a single and uniform policy. By the 3rd century, agreement was widespread, about the authority of the bishop as the link with the apostles. He was such a link, however, only if in his life and teaching, he adhered to the teaching of the apostles, as this was laid down in the New Testament and in the “deposit of faith,” transmitted by the Apostolic Churches.

### **Councils and Creeds**

Clarification of this deposit became necessary when interpretation of the Christian message arose that were deemed to be deviations from these norms. The most important deviations, or heresies, had to do with the person of Christ. Some theologians sought to protect, His Holiness, by denying that his humanity was like that of other human beings; others sought to protect the monotheistic faith, by making Christ a lesser divine being, than God the Father. In response to both of these tendencies, early creeds began the process of specifying the divine in Christ, both in relation to the divine, in the Father, and in relation to the human, in Christ. The definitive formulations of these relations came in a series of official Church councils during the 4th and 5th centuries -- notably the one at Nicaea in 325 and the one at Chalcedon in 451 -- which stated the doctrines of the Trinity and of the two natures of Christ, in the form, still accepted by most Christians. To arrive at these formulations, Christianity had to refine its thought and language, creating in the process, a philosophical theology, both in Greek and in Latin, that was to be the dominant intellectual system of Europe for more than a thousand years. The principal architect of Western theology was Saint Augustine of Hippo, whose literary output, including the classic, *Confessions* and *The City of God*, did more than any other body of writings, except for the Bible itself, to shape that system.

### **Persecution**

First, however, Christianity had to settle its relation to the political order. As a Jewish sect, the primitive Christian Church, shared the status of Judaism in the Roman Empire,

but before the death of, Emperor Nero in 68, it had already been singled out as an enemy. The grounds for hostility to the Christians were not always the same, and often, opposition and persecution were localized. The loyalty of Christians to “Jesus as Lord,” however, was irreconcilable with the worship of the Roman emperor as, “Lord,” and those emperors, such as Trajan and Marcus Aurelius, who were the most deeply committed to unity and reform, were also the ones who recognized the Christians as a threat to those goals and, who therefore, undertook to eliminate the threat. As in the history of other religions, especially Islam, opposition produced the exact contrary of its intended purpose, and, in the epigram of the North African Church, father Tertullian, the “blood of the martyrs,” became the “seed of the Church.” By the beginning of the 4th century, Christianity had grown, so much, in size and in strength, that it had to be either, eradicated or accepted. Emperor Diocletian, tried to do the first and failed; Constantine the Great, did the second and created a Christian empire.

### **Official Acceptance**

The conversion of Constantine the Great assured the Church, a privileged place in society, and it became easier to be a Christian, than not to be one. As a result, Christians began to feel that standards of Christian conduct were being lowered and that the only way to obey the moral imperatives of Christ, was to flee the world (and the Church that was in the world, perhaps even, of the world), and to follow the full-time profession of Christian discipline as a monk. From its early beginnings in the Egyptian desert, with the hermit, St. Anthony, Christian monasticism spread to many parts of the Christian empire during the 4th and 5th centuries. Not only in Greek and Latin portions of the empire, but even beyond its eastern borders, far into Asia, Christian monks devoted themselves to prayer, asceticism, and service. They were to become, during the Byzantine and medieval periods, the most powerful single force in the Christianization of non-believers, in the renewal of worship and preaching, and (despite the anti-intellectualism, that repeatedly asserted itself in their midst), in theology and scholarship. Most Christians, today, owe their Christianity ultimately, to the work of monks.

## Eastern Christianity

One of the most influential acts of Constantine the Great, was his decision, in 330, to move the capital of the empire, from Rome to "New Rome," the city of Byzantium at the eastern end of the Mediterranean Sea. The new capital, Constantinople (now Istanbul), also became the intellectual and religious focus of Eastern Christianity. While Western Christianity became increasingly centralized, a pyramid, the apex of which was the Pope of Rome, the principal centers of the East -- Constantinople, Jerusalem, Antioch, and Alexandria -- developed autonomously. The emperor at Constantinople held a special place in the life of the Church. It was he, for example, who convoked and presided over the general councils of the Church, which were the supreme organ of ecclesiastical legislation, in both faith and morals. This special relation between Church and state, frequently (but with some over-simplification) called Caesaropapism, fostered a Christian culture, in which, (as the great Church of the Holy Wisdom at Constantinople, dedicated by Emperor Justinian in 538, attests) the noblest achievements of the entire society blended the elements of Christianity and of classical antiquity in a new synthesis.

At its worst, this culture could mean the subordination of the Church to the tyranny of the state. The crisis of the 8th century, over the legitimacy of the use of images in Christian Churches, was also a collision of the Church and the imperial power. Emperor Leo III, prohibited images, thus, precipitating a struggle, in which, Eastern monks became the principal defenders of the icons. Eventually, the icons were restored, and with them a measure of the independence for the Church. During the 7th and 8th centuries, three of the four Eastern centers, were captured by the dynamic new faith of Islam, with only Constantinople, remaining unconquered. It, too, was often besieged and finally fell to the Turks in 1453. The confrontation with the Muslims was not purely military, however. Eastern Christians and the followers of the Prophet Muhammad, exerted influence on one another in intellectual, philosophical, scientific, and even theological matters.

The conflict over the images was so intense because it threatened the Eastern Church

at its most vital point -- its liturgy. Eastern Christianity was, and still is, a way of worship and, on that basis, a way of life and a way of belief. The Greek word *orthodoxy*, together with its Slavic equivalent *pravoslavie*, refers to the correct form for giving praise to God, which is finally inseparable from the right way of confessing true doctrine about God and of living in accordance with the will of God. This emphasis gave to Eastern liturgy and theology, a quality that Western observers, even in the Middle Ages, would characterize as mystical, a quality enhanced by the strongly Neoplatonic strain in Byzantine philosophy. Eastern monasticism, although often hostile to these philosophical currents of thought, nonetheless, practiced its devotional life under the influence of writings of Church fathers and theologians, such as St. Basil of Caesarea, who had absorbed a Christian Hellenism, in which, many of these emphases were at work.

All these distinctive features of the Christian East -- the lack of a centralized authority, the close tie to the empire, the mystical and liturgical tradition, the continuity with Greek language and culture, and the isolation as a consequence of Muslim expansion -- contributed also to its increasing alienation from the West, which finally produced the East-West schism. Historians, have often, dated the schism from 1054, when Rome and Constantinople exchanged excommunications, but much can be said for fixing the date at 1204. In that year, the Western Christian armies on their way to wrest the Holy Land from the hand of the Turks, attacked and ravaged the Christian city of Constantinople. Whatever the date, the separation of East and West has continued into modern times, despite repeated attempts at reconciliation.

Among the points of controversy, between Constantinople and Rome, was the evangelization of the Slavs, beginning in the 9th century. Although several Slavic tribes -- Poles, Moravs, Czechs, Slovaks, Croats, and Slovenes -- did end up in the orbit of the Western Church, the vast majority of Slavic peoples became Christians in the Eastern (Byzantine) Church. From its early foundations in Kyiv, Ukraine, this Slavic Orthodoxy permeated Russia, where the features of Eastern Christianity outlined above, took firm hold.

The autocratic authority of the Muscovite czar derived some of its sanctions from Byzantine Caesaropapism, and Russian monasticism took over the ascetic and devotional emphases cultivated by the Greek monasteries of Mount Athos. The stress on cultural and ethnic autonomy meant that, from its beginnings, Slavic Christianity had its own liturgical language (still known as Old Church Slavic, or Slavonic), while it adapted to its uses, the architectural and artistic styles imported from the centers of Orthodoxy in Greek-speaking territory. Also, in the Eastern Church were some of the Balkan Slavs -- Serbs, Montenegrans, Bosnians, and Slavic Macedonians; the Bulgars, a Turkic people; Albanians, descendants of the ancient Illyrians; and Romanians, a Romance people. During the centuries-long rule of the Ottoman Turks in the Balkans, some of the local Christian populations were forced to embrace Islam, as, for example, some of the Bosnians, some of the Bulgarians, and some of the Albanians.

### **Western Christianity**

Although Eastern Christianity, was in many ways, the direct heir of the early Church, some of the most dynamic development took place in the western part of the Roman Empire. Of the many reasons for this development, two closely related forces deserve particular mention: the growth of the papacy and the migration of the Germanic peoples. When the capital of the empire moved to Constantinople, the most powerful force remaining in Rome was its bishop. The old city, which could trace its Christian faith to the apostles, Peter and Paul and which repeatedly acted as arbiter of orthodoxy when other centers, including Constantinople fell into heresy or schism, was the capital of the Western Church. It held this position, when the succeeding waves of tribes, in what used to be called, the "barbarian invasions," swept into Europe. Conversion of the invaders to Catholic Christianity, meant at the same time, their incorporation into the institution of which the bishop of Rome was the head, as the conversion of the king of the Franks, Clovis I, illustrates. As the political power of Constantinople over its western provinces declined, separate Germanic kingdoms were created, and finally, in 800, an independent Western "Roman Empire" was born when Charlemagne was crowned Emperor by Pope Leo III.

Medieval Christianity in the West, unlike its Eastern counterpart, was therefore, a single entity, or at any rate, strove to be one. When a tribe became Christian in the West, it learned Latin and often, (as in the case of France and Spain), lost its own language in the process. The language of ancient Rome, thus, became the liturgical, literary, and scholarly speech of western Europe. Archbishops and abbots, although wielding great power in their own regions, were subordinate to the Pope, despite his frequent inability to enforce his claims. Theological controversies occurred during the early centuries of the Middle Ages in the West, but they never assumed the proportions that they did in the East. Nor did Western theology, at least until after the year 1,000, acquire the measure of philosophical sophistication evident in the East. The long shadow of St. Augustine continued to dominate Latin theology, and there was little independent access to the speculations of the ancients.

The image of cooperation between Church and state, symbolized by the Pope's coronation of Charlemagne, must not be taken to mean that no conflict existed between the two in the Middle Ages. On the contrary, they clashed, repeatedly, over the delineation of their respective spheres of authority. The most persistent source of such clashes, was the right of the sovereign, to appoint bishops in his realm (lay investiture), which brought Pope Gregory VII and Holy Roman Emperor, Henry IV, to a deadlock in 1075. The Pope excommunicated the emperor, and the emperor refused to acknowledge Gregory as Pope. They were temporarily reconciled when Henry subjected himself, in penance, to the Pope at Canossa in 1077, but the tension continued. A similar issue was at stake in the excommunication of King John of England by Pope Innocent III in 1209, which ended with the king's submission four years later. The basis of these disputes was the complex involvement of the Church in feudal society. Bishops and abbots administered great amounts of land and other wealth and, were thus, a major economic and political force, over which the king had to exercise some control, if he was to assert his authority over his secular nobility. On the other hand, the papacy could not afford to let a national Church become the puppet of a political regime.

Church and state, did cooperate, by closing ranks against a common foe in the Crusades. The Muslim conquest of Jerusalem meant that the holy places associated with the life of Jesus, were under the control of a non-Christian power; and even though, the reports of interference with Christian pilgrims were often highly exaggerated, the conviction grew that it was the will of God, for Christian armies to liberate the Holy Land. Beginning with the First Crusade in 1095, the campaigns of liberation did manage to establish a Latin kingdom and patriarchate in Jerusalem, but Jerusalem returned to Muslim rule, a century later, and within 200 years, the last Christian outpost had fallen. In this sense, the Crusades were a failure, or even (in the case of the Fourth Crusade of 1202-04, mentioned above) a disaster. They did not permanently restore Christian rule to the Holy Land, and they did not unify the West, either ecclesiastically or politically.

A more impressive achievement of the medieval Church, during the period of the Crusades, was the development of Scholastic philosophy and theology. Building, as always, on the foundations of the thought of St. Augustine, Latin theologians turned their attention to the relation between the knowledge of God attainable by unaided human reason and the knowledge communicated by revelation. Saint Anselm took as his motto, "I believe in order that I might understand" and constructed a proof for the existence of God, based on the structure of human thought itself (the ontological argument). About the same time, Peter Abelard was examining the contradictions between various strains in the doctrinal tradition of the Church, with a view toward developing methods of harmonization. These two tasks dominated the thinking of the 12th and 13th centuries, until the recovery of the lost works of Aristotle made available, a set of definitions and distinctions that could be applied to both. The philosophical theology of Saint Thomas Aquinas sought to do justice to the natural knowledge of God, while at the same time, exalting the revealed knowledge in the Gospel, and it wove the disparate parts of the tradition into a unified whole. Together with such contemporaries as St. Bonaventure, Aquinas represents the intellectual ideal of medieval Christianity.

Even by the time Aquinas died, however, storms were beginning to gather over the Western Church. In 1309, the papacy fled from Rome to Avignon, where it remained until 1377, in the so-called Babylonian Captivity of the Church. This was followed by the Great Schism, during which, there were two (and sometimes even three) claimants to the papal throne. That was not resolved until 1417, but the reunited papacy could not regain control or even respect.

### **Reformation and Counter Reformation**

Reformers of different kinds -- including John Wycliffe, John Huss (Jan Hus), and Girolamo Savonarola -- denounced the moral laxity and financial corruption that had infected the Church, "in its members and in its head" and called for radical change. Profound social and political changes were taking place in the West, with the awakening of national consciousness and the increasing strength of the cities, in which, a new merchant class came into its own. The Protestant Reformation may be seen as the convergence of such forces as the call for reform in the Church, the growth of nationalism, and the emergence of the "spirit of capitalism."

Martin Luther was the catalyst that precipitated the new movement. His personal struggle for religious certainty led him, against his will, to question the medieval system of salvation and the very authority of the Church, and his excommunication by Pope Leo X, proved to be an irreversible step toward the division of Western Christendom. Nor was the movement confined to Luther's Germany. Native reform movements in Switzerland, found leadership in Huldreich Zwingli, and especially, in John Calvin, whose *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, became the most influential summary of the new theology. The English Reformation, provoked by the troubles of King Henry VIII, reflected the influence of the Lutheran, and then, of the Calvinistic reforms, but went its own "middle way," retaining Catholic elements, such as, the historic episcopate alongside Protestant elements, such as, the sole authority of the Bible. The thought of Calvin, helped in his native France, to create the Huguenot party, which was fiercely opposed by both Church and state, but finally achieved recognition with the Edict of Nantes in 1598, (ultimately revoked in 1685). The more radical Reformation groups,

notably the Anabaptists, set themselves against other Protestants, as well as, against Rome, rejecting such long-established practices as infant baptism, and sometimes even, such dogma as the Trinity, and denouncing the alliance of Church and state.

That alliance helped to determine the outcome of the Reformation, which succeeded where it gained the support of the new national states. As a consequence of these ties to the rising national spirit, the Reformation helped to create the literary monuments -- especially translation of the Bible -- that decisively shaped the language and the spirit of the peoples. It also gave fresh stimulus to biblical preaching and to worship in the vernacular, for which a new hymnody came into being. Because of its emphasis on the participation of all believers in worship and confession, the Reformation developed systems for instruction in doctrine and ethics, especially in the form of catechism, and an ethic of service in the world.

The Protestant Reformation did not exhaust the spirit of reform within the Roman Catholic Church. In response, both to the Protestant challenge and to its own needs, the Church summoned the Council of Trent, which continued, over the years 1545-63, giving definitive formulation to doctrines at issue and legislating practical reforms in liturgy, Church administration, and education. Responsibility for carrying out the actions of the council, fell in considerable measure, on the Society of Jesus, formed by St. Ignatius of Loyola. The chronological coincidence of the discovery of the New World and the Reformation, was seen as a providential opportunity to evangelize those who had never heard the Gospel. Trent, on the Roman Catholic side, and the several confessions of faith on the Protestant side, had the effect of making the divisions permanent.

In one respect, the divisions were not permanent, for new divisions continued to appear. Historically, the most noteworthy of these, were probably, the ones that arose in the Church of England. The Puritans objected to the "remnants of popery," in the liturgical and institutional life of Anglicanism and pressed for a further reformation. Because of the Anglican union of throne and altar, this agitation had direct -- and, as it turned out

violent -- political consequences, climaxing in the English Revolution and the execution of King Charles I in 1649. Puritanism found its most complete expression, both politically and theologically, in North America. The Pietists of the Lutheran and Calvinist Churches of Europe, usually managed to remain within the establishment as a party, instead of forming a separate Church, but Pietism shaped the outlook of many, among the Continental groups, who came to North America. European Pietism also found an echo in England, where it was a significant force in the life and thought of John Wesley, the founder of the Methodist movement.

### **The Modern Period**

Already during the Renaissance and Reformation, but even more in the 17th and 18th centuries, it was evident that Christianity would be obliged to define and to defend itself in response to the rise of modern science and philosophy. That problem made its presence known in all the Churches, albeit, in different ways. The condemnation of Galileo Galilei, by the Inquisition on suspicion of heresy, was eventually to find its Protestant equivalent in the controversies over the implication of the theory of evolution for the biblical account of creation. Against other modern movements, too, Christianity frequently found itself on the defensive. The critical-historical method of studying the bible, which began in the 17th century, seemed to threaten the authority of Scripture, and the rationalism of the Enlightenment was condemned as a source of religious indifference and anticlericalism. Because of its emphasis on the human capacity to determine human destiny, even democracy could fall under condemnation. The increasing secularization of society, removed the control of the Church from areas of life, especially education, over which, it had once been dominant.

Partly, a cause and partly, a result of this situation, was the fundamental re-definition of the relation between Christianity and the civil order. The granting of religious toleration to minority faiths and then the gradual separation of Church and state, represented a departure from the system that had, with many variations, held sway, since the conversion of Constantine the Great, and is, in the opinion of many scholars, the most far-reaching change in the modern history of Christianity. Carried to its logical conclu-

sion, it seemed, to many, to imply both a reconsideration of how the various groups and traditions calling themselves Christians, were related to one another, and a re-examination of how all of them, taken together, were related to other religious traditions. Both of these implications have played an even larger role in the 19th and 20th centuries.

The ecumenical movement has been a major force for bringing together, at least toward better understanding and sometimes even toward reunion, Christian denominations, that had long been separated. At the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic Church took important steps toward reconciliation, both with the East and with Protestantism. That same council, likewise expressed, for the first time in an official forum, a positive appreciation of the genuine spiritual power present in the world religions. A special case, is the relation between Christianity and its parent, Judaism; after many centuries of hostility, and even persecution, the two faiths have moved toward a closer degree of mutual understanding, than at any time, since the 1st century.

The reactions of the Churches to their changed situation in the modern period, have also included an unprecedented increase in theological interest. Such Protestant theologians as, Johnathan Edwards and Friedrich Schleiermacher and such Roman Catholic thinkers as Blaise Pascal and John Henry Newman, took up the re-orientation of the traditional apologias for the faith, drawing upon religious experience as a validation of the reality of the divine.

The 19th century was pre-eminently the time of historical research into the development of Christian ideas and institutions. This research indicated, to many, that no particular form of doctrine or Church structure could claim to be absolute and final, but it also provided other theologians with new resources for re-interpreting the Church message. Literary investigation of the biblical books, although regarded with suspicion by many conservatives, led to new insights into how the Bible had been composed and assembled. And the study of the liturgy, combined with a recognition, that ancient forms did not always make sense to the modern era, stimulated the reform of worship.

The ambivalent relation of the Christian faith to modern culture, evident in all these trends, is discernible also, in the role it has played in social and political history. Christians were found on both sides of the 19th-century debates over slavery, and both used biblical arguments. Much of the inspiration for revolutions, from the French to the Russian, was explicitly anti-Christian. Particularly, under 20th-century Marxist regimes, Christians have been oppressed for their faith, and their traditional beliefs have been denounced as reactionary. Nevertheless, the revolutionary faith has frequently drawn from Christian sources. Mohandas K. Gandhi maintained that he was acting in the spirit of Jesus Christ, and Martin Luther King, Jr., the martyred leader of the world movement for civil rights, was a Protestant preacher, who strove to make the teachings of the Sermon on the Mount, the basis of his political program.

By the last quarter of the 20th century, the missionary movements of the Church had carried the Christian faith throughout the world. A characteristic of modern times, however, has been the change in leadership of the “daughter,” or mission Churches. Since World War II, national leaders have increasingly taken over from Westerners in Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Protestant Churches in the Third World. The adaptations of native customs pose problems of theology and tradition, as, for example, African polygamists attempt to live Christian family lives. The merger of denominations in Churches, such as the United Church of Canada, may alter the nature of some of the component groups. Thus, change continues to challenge Christianity.

**Christology**, branch of Christian theology that deals with the person of Christ. Because Christology seeks to explain the saving work of Christ by explaining who the person Jesus was, in traditional Christian theology, it logically precedes soteriology, the doctrine of Christ’s saving work. In the actual history of the Church, however, soteriology preceded Christology, because the belief in Jesus’ saving role, led to claims about who He was. Christology is not the formulation of revealed propositions, as much as it is, the Christian response to the phenomenon of Jesus.

## **In the New Testament**

In the opinion of modern biblical critics, Jesus did not teach, explicitly, that He was the Christ (the anointed one, or Messiah); rather, He implemented a Christology through His Words and works. The German scholar, Gunther Bornkamm, has postulated that Jesus presented God's offer of salvation, through his teaching and actions, thereby, evoking the messianic hopes of his followers and the anger and fear of his opponents. After Jesus' death on the cross, the hopes of the disciples were vindicated, by their experience, of Jesus' resurrection, and they responded to what they believed, God had accomplished through Jesus, by formulating an understanding of who Jesus was.

The earliest Christians, expressed their explicit Christology, with titles and mythological patterns borrowed from the religious environment of 1st century Palestine, where both Hebraic and Hellenistic Greek conceptions of God, history, and destiny were at work. Especially important, in a consideration of New Testament Christology, is the pervasive eschatological consciousness of the period; many modern scholars think that Jesus, Himself, shared in this consciousness of living at the end of time.

Four early patterns of Christological thinking can be discerned within the New Testament. The earliest of these, has two focuses -- looking backward to Jesus' earthly life, as that of an eschatological prophet and servant of God, and forward to Christ's coming again as the Messiah, the Son of man (see Acts 3:13, 20-21). In a second two-stage Christological formulation the earthly Jesus was also seen as the prophet-servant of the last days, but at the same time, he was declared to have become Lord, Christ, and Son of God at his resurrection and exaltation (see Acts 2:22-24, 36).

In the third pattern, these post-resurrection titles were applied, retrospectively, to Jesus in his earthly period, in order to articulate the intrinsic connection between Jesus' earthly ministry and his role, as saviour. A "sending formula" developed, with God as subject, his Son as object, and a statement of saving purpose, as in John 3:16: "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life" (see Galatians 4:4). At first, the moment of

sending was identified with Jesus' baptism by John: ". . . and a voice came from heaven, 'Thou art my beloved Son; in whom I am well pleased' (Mark 1:11). In the nativity stories of Matthew and Luke, however, the moment of sending, is pushed back to Jesus' conception or birth. This, is not yet, a Christology of pre-existence and incarnation, nor of metaphysical divinity; it expresses only the role the man, Jesus, was to play in salvation history and God's initiative, in that role.

In the fourth pattern, expression in the Christological hymns of the Hellenistic-Jewish Church, Jesus was identified with the Divine Wisdom, or Logos. Philosophical Hellenistic Judaism had conceived of the Logos, as the personified agent of the divine being, the agent of creation, revelation, and redemptive action. The earthly Jesus was now seen as the incarnation of this pre-existent wisdom or Logos (see Colossians 1:15-20' Hebrews 1:1-3, John 1:1-18). Early Christians appropriated this Jewish speculation in order to emphasize that the God they encountered, in Jesus, was not an unknown God, but was the same God they had previously encountered in creation, in human religious experience, and in Israel's salvation history. In the Johannine writings, Jesus' Father-Son relationship with God, is projected back into eternity, and this equation of the Son, with the incarnate Logos, results in the use of the predicate "God" for the pre-existent Word (see John 1:1), the incarnate Son (see John 1:18), and the risen Christ (see John 20:28). But "God," in this context, is carefully nuanced: The Son of God" and "Son of man," which were originally, terms, expressive of Jesus' role in salvation history, acquire a metaphysical import and come to denote his divine being.

### **In the Early Church**

From Ignatius of Antioch, in the 2nd century, through the Council of Chalcedon in 451, Christian thinkers wrestled with the logical problems presented to the Greek mind by the Christological thinking of the New Testament: If the Son is God, yet, distinct from the Father, how can God be called "one?" If Jesus is divine, how can he also be human? The 2nd-century Docetists (Greek *dokein*, "to seem"), maintained that the humanity of Jesus was apparent, rather than real, for in Greek thought, the deity was held incapable

of change or suffering. Against them, Ignatius insisted on the reality of Jesus' flesh. The outcome was the addition to the creed of the words, "born of the Virgin Mary," to safeguard Jesus' humanity.

A second controversy raged around the endangered concept of the unity of God. Concerned with preserving this unity, the Modalistic Monarchies (or Sabelians) asserted that the one God had revealed Himself in three successive manifestations: Father, Son, and Spirit; the Dynamic (Adoptionist) Monarchians, however, viewed Jesus, as a man, upon whom, the power of God had descended. In the 4th century, Arius and his followers contended that the pre-existent Son, was not identical with God, but was the first of God's creatures. He was *homoiousios*, (Greek, "of like substance") with God, a kind of clone or demi-god. At the Council of Nicaea in 325, Arianism was condemned, and the creed was expanded: The preexistent Son was declared to be "God from God, Light from Light, true God from true God, begotten not made, on one being, (Greek *homousios*, "of the same substance") with the Father."

Questions regarding the nature of God's incarnation in Jesus also proved troublesome. The theologians of Alexandria, Egypt, tended to emphasize the divinity of Jesus at the expense of his humanity, and their frequent opponents, those of the school of Antioch, Syria, emphasized Jesus' humanity at the expense of his divinity. On the Alexandrian side, Apollinarians argued that in the human Jesus, the Logos had replaced his mind or spirit. This view amounted to a denial of the full humanity of Christ. Apollinarianism was condemned at the First Council of Constantinople in 381. From the Antiochene school, emerged the 5th century heresy of Nestorianism. Nestorians held that, two separate persons were united in the incarnate Christ, and they rejected the Alexandrian title of Theotokos (God-bearer) for Mary. For Nestorius, the patriarch of Constantinople, and his followers, Mary had been the mother of the human, Jesus, but not of the divine-human Son. In response to the challenge of Nestorianism, the councils of Ephesus, in 431, and Chalcedon, in 451, affirmed the title Theotokos. At Chalcedon, the incarnation was defined as being of "two natures, one person" -- a formula that has remained standard Christian orthodoxy.

The Chalcedonian definition itself, however, led to further disagreement; an extremist faction, within the Alexandrian school, argued that the incarnate Son had but a single, divine nature, and in this view, again, Jesus' humanity was compromised.

### **Modern Criticism of Chalcedon**

Orthodox Chalcedonian Christology has been assailed on various grounds. Modern theologians have noted its dependence on a pre-critical understanding of the Gospels. The Christological pluralism of the New Testament is not recognized by the Chalcedonian formula, which is supported solely by the Gospel of John and the conception of the virgin birth expressed in Matthew and Luke. Another criticism, articulated by the German New Testament scholar and theologian, Rudolf Bultmann, hinges on the fact that the Chalcedonian conception of Christ is based on antiquated mythologies (Jewish messianism and apocalypticism and perhaps Gnosticism) and on an obsolete metaphysics, in which the terms, *person*, *nature*, and *substance* are understood in ways that are fundamentally different from the way these terms are understood today. The use of Chalcedonian Christological definitions in interpreting the Gospel portraits of Jesus has tended to restrict the access of modern Christians to the man, Jesus, in his historical actuality. Thus, Bultmann has advocated "demythologizing" the New Testament and re-interpreting the mythological elements that lie behind early christological formulations, in order to make the proclamation (kerygma) and Christ's saving work meaningful to modern persons. Some theologians advocate using alternative christological models to explain the doctrines of pre-existence and incarnation, preferring the New Testament metaphor of God's "sending" his Son to the later, entirely intellectualized Christology of the Council of Chalcedon. A few contemporary Roman Catholic theologians, such as Edward Schillebeeckx and Walter Kasper, have chosen to begin their christological inquiry "from below," rather than "from above;" they start with the fully human Jesus and then go on to discover and confess the saving presence of God in Him.

**Church (movement)**, the historical movement that arose from the life and ministry of

Jesus of Nazareth. Christians believe that God founded the Church through the work of Jesus and that it is sustained by the continual presence of the Holy Spirit.

In New Testament Greek, the most common word for Church is *ekklesia*, meaning “assembly.” In the Greek version of the Old Testament, the word, *ekklesia*, was used to render the Hebrew *qahal*, which denoted the gathering of people for worship. In the New Testament, *ekklesia*, refers to a local Christian community. The English word, *Church*, itself, is a corruption of the Greek adjective *kyriakon*, meaning “the Lord’s.” Invading barbarian tribes in the 4th and 5th centuries, understood the word to refer to the Church building -- the “Lord’s house” -- in the towns they occupied. They later applied it to the Christian people.

### **Descriptions of the Church**

The New Testament offers many metaphors for the Church, four of which follow. One, it is the body of Christ. Christ is the head, Christians, the many members. Two, the Church is related to Christ, as branches to a vine. A more intricate and pervasive relationship is implied by this image, than by the image of the body. Three, the Church is the bride of Christ, an image that stresses the personal, intimate

quality of the relationship and the depth of mutual commitment. Four, the Church is the people of God, a description that stresses, on one hand, the continuity of the Church with Israel, and, on the other, the Church’s potential universality.

### **Marks of the Church**

Traditionally, the Church is said to have four marks, or notes: One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic. The Church is affirmed as One, because it confesses One Lord and is animated by One Spirit; as Holy, because God claims it, not because of its moral perfection; as Catholic, because it transcends all the divisions of humanity; and as Apostolic, because it maintains continuity with the Apostolic teaching and mission. These marks are attributed to the Church in faith and hope and in the recognition that the visible condition of the Church, often does not, correspond to them.

## **Theories of Organization**

Three theories of Church structure may be identified. In the first, organic structure, authority is understood to reside in the whole body of Christians -- clergy and laity together -- whose leaders are empowered by the Spirit acting through the whole body. In the second, hierarchical structure, authority originates in the clerical hierarchy, whose ministry to the laity makes laypeople members, and so forms, the Church. In the third, sectarian structure, authority resides in individual Christians, who band together as a congregation. No actual Church perfectly embodies any of these structures but, theoretically, Orthodox Churches best typify the first, Roman Catholic Churches, the second, and Protestant Churches, the third.

**Circumcision**, surgical removal of all or part of the foreskin of the human male or of the corresponding tissues of the female. Circumcision of males has been widely practiced as a religious rite, since ancient times. An initiatory rite of Judaism, circumcision is also practiced by Muslims, for whom it signifies spiritual purification. Although its origins are unknown, earliest evidence of the practice dates from ancient Egypt about 2300 B.C., where it is thought to have been used originally to mark male slaves. By the time of the Roman takeover of Egypt in 30 B.C., the practice had a ritual significance, and only circumcised priests could perform certain religious offices.

## **Tribal Rites**

Male circumcision appears widely among tribal peoples of Africa, the Malay Archipelago, New Guinea, Australia, and the Pacific islands. Some form of genital surgery was ritually performed on males or females among certain South and Central Native American groups.

In tribal settings, circumcision is nearly always associated with traumatic puberty rites. Occasionally, the severed part is offered as a sacrifice to spirit beings. The operation certifies the subject's readiness for marriage and adulthood and testifies to his or her ability to withstand pain. Circumcision may also distinguish cultural groups from their

uncircumcised neighbors.

### **Religious Rites**

In Jewish religious tradition, infant male circumcision is required as part of Abraham's covenant with God. According to the Levitical law, every Jewish male infant had to be circumcised on the eighth day after birth, under penalty of ostracism from the congregation of Israel. Jews employ a *mohel*, a man who has the requisite surgical skill and religious knowledge to perform the rite. After the ritual prayer, the *mohel* circumcises the infant and then names and blesses the child.

Among the Arabs, circumcision existed before the time of Muhammad (before A.D., 570). Although the Koran does not mention it, Islamic custom demands that Muslim males be circumcised before marriage; the rite, is generally performed, in infancy. Some Islamic peoples practice female circumcision (clitoridectomy). This is done for aesthetic reasons and to reduce the female's sexual desires.

In some Mediterranean and Islamic countries, clitoridectomy can be an aspect of family honor. In cases where female chastity is a matter of respectability, public evidence of a bride's lost virginity is an important sequel to marriage: a woman who is unable to demonstrate that she has lost her virginity to her new husband, may be divorced or, in extreme instances, put to death by her own family.

Circumcision is absent from the Hindu-Buddhist and Confucian traditions, and in general, the Christian Church has no specific doctrine about it. At present, the Abyssinian Church, alone among Christian bodies, recognizes circumcision as a religious rite.

### **Medical Aspects**

Since the 19th century, many English-speaking peoples have adopted the custom of circumcision, primarily for medical reasons. In modern medical practice, circumcision of males is a minor operation usually performed, in infancy, for hygienic purposes. It is

currently estimated that 85 percent of North American males are circumcised. The incidence among non-Jewish populations of continental Europe, Scandinavia, and South America is low.

The medical case for circumcision is unproved and controversial. Physicians in the 19th century, advised the operation for many ailments, including hysteria, venereal disease, hyper-sexuality, and even hiccups. Modern proponents suggest that diseases result from the buildup of smegma, a substance secreted under the foreskin. Also cited is evidence that circumcised populations (especially Jews) display low rates of penile and cervical cancer. Critics reject the validity of these claims, arguing that such disorders are more likely caused by poor hygiene and by contact with multiple sex partners.

**Confession (theology)**, in Jewish and Christian theology, acknowledgement of sins to God in order to obtain absolution. The need for confession is mentioned frequently in the Bible, especially in the exhortation of the prophets. In Judaism, Yom Kippur is a day of fasting, confession, and prayer for forgiveness.

In the Christian tradition, confession has taken either of two forms: the private confessions of sin to a priest, known as auricular confession, or the public confession by an individual before the congregation. In Roman Catholic teaching, auricular confession is considered an essential part of the sacrament of penance. Church members are expected to confess their serious sins to a priest at least once a year. The practice of confession and absolution is based on John 20:22-23. The power to loose and bind, that is, to forgive sins, was conferred on the apostles (see Matthew 16:19, 18:18). Although confessing to a priest has ancient roots, the practice was rare in the early Church (it was sometimes put off until death approached) and involved severe discipline.

Confession is also prescribed in the Orthodox, Coptic, and other Eastern Churches. The Church of England and other Anglican Churches have retained the general Roman Catholic doctrine on confession. Although the practice of auricular confession was

revived during the 19th-century Oxford movement, many Anglicans prefer the general (public) confession and absolution of the Communion service. Public confession is also a part of the Lutheran service of worship and is practiced in some Pentecostal and Fundamentalist Churches.

The seal of confession refers to the obligation binding the confessor (priest), interpreter, or bystander, who overhears the confession, not to divulge the secrets of the confessional. This custom of secrecy is traceable to the 4th and 5th centuries, but was only made canonically binding by the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215.

Confession also refers to statements of faith such as the Lutheran Augsburg Confession of 1530.

**Confirmation**, in the Christian Church, sacramental rite admitting baptized persons to full membership. In the ancient Church, the rite was administered immediately after baptism, and this is still the custom in the Orthodox and African Churches. In the Roman Catholic Church, from about 1600 through the 20th century, confirmation was delayed from two to seven years after infant baptism. Since Vatican Council II, it is usually further delayed, until early adolescence. The Church of England has no specific age rule, but the rite is usually administered between the ages of 14 and 16, in the Lutheran Church, the rite is administered at about the same age.

Confirmation is effected by the laying on of hands and, in the Roman Catholic Church, anointing with consecrated oil. In the Roman Catholic Church, the ceremony is performed by a bishop or a specially authorized priest. In the Church of England, only bishops may administer the sacrament. In the Lutheran and Orthodox Churches, the rite customarily, is performed by pastors and priests; the Orthodox Church ceremony, however, omits the laying on of hands.

**Conscience**, in modern usage, term denoting various factors in moral experience. Thus, the recognition and acceptance of a principle of conduct, as binding, is called

conscience. In theology and ethics, the term refers to the inner sense of right and wrong in moral choices, as well as, to the satisfaction that follows action regarded as right and the dissatisfaction and remorse, resulting from conduct that is considered wrong. In earlier ethical theories, conscience was regarded as a separate faculty of the mind having moral jurisdiction, either absolute or as a representative of God in the human soul.

In the Hebrew scriptures, there is little theoretical interest in the conscience. God scrutinizes the human heart (Psalms 139:23-24), but it is fear of God -- not self-knowledge -- that is, the beginning of wisdom (Proverbs 1:7, 9:10). In the classical world, the notion of conscience, first appeared, in the works of Greek philosopher, Democritus, an older contemporary of Plato. Democritus used the Greek word, *suneidesis* to refer to consciousness of wrongdoing. Roman philosopher, Cicero, translated *suneidesis* as *conscientia* from which the English *conscience* is derived. According to Cicero, *conscientia* is an inner voice that speaks with greater authority than any form of public approval. In his work, *Tusculan Disputations*, he used the metaphor of a bite (Latin *remorsus*, from which the English *remorse* is derived) to describe the feeling aroused by a troubled conscience.

Saint Paul referred to conscience as the law written on the human heart (Romans 2:15). For Paul, the scrupulous conscience brings, not only illumination, but also agony: It relentlessly exposes the inner battle that human beings must wage against their own impulses (Romans 7:15-20). The Fathers of the Church -- and Saint Augustine in particular -- maintained Paul's view that conscience is an inner witness to divine law and that it is common to all human beings.

According to theologians of the Middle Ages (5th century to 15th century), the conscience is divided into two parts. *Synderesis* (probably a misreading of *suneidesis*) is the faculty in human beings that knows God's moral law; this faculty remained unaffected by the Fall and the expulsion from the Garden of Eden. *Conscientia* is the faculty by which human beings apply the moral to concrete cases; it dictates what

should or should not be done under particular circumstances. Whereas *synderesis* cannot err, *conscientia* is fallible, but according to Italian theologian, Saint Thomas Aquinas, even erroneous dictates of conscience are binding and must be followed even if they contradict the orders of a superior. At the Fourth Lateran Council, held in 1215, it was decreed that all Christians must make confession and receive the Sacrament once a year, a practice known as the tribunal of conscience.

In the view of the Protestant reformers of the 16th century, the conscience had been oppressed under the Roman Catholic system during the medieval period. German theologian, Martin Luther, for example, identified strongly, with the sense of anguish described by Saint Paul and Saint Augustine, over every action and impulse. The reformers rejected the notion of trying to please God through actions, or “works,” thereby, rejecting the tribunal of conscience. In their view, Christians are liberated by divine grace and are given a clean conscience by God; they are in a position to gain subjective certainty of their spiritual condition by reading the Bible. In place of the medieval notion that conscience was a faculty of which a person could have more or less, the Protestant reformers tended to view the conscience as a psychological organ, infallible and inviolate. These views were upheld by French philosophers, Rene Descartes and Michel de Montaigne.

Whereas 18th-century philosophers, Jean Jacques Rousseau and Immanuel Kant believed that the conscience could provide a basis for deliberate, autonomous moral action, in the 19th century, conscience was widely disparaged. In his work, “annotations to Watson,” English poet, William Blake wrote that “Conscience in those that have it is unequivocal.” German poet, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe portrayed his character, Faust, as laboring to purge himself of conscience. German philosopher, Freidrich Nietzsche, held that conscience merely imitates pre-existing values. In the works of Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard and Russian novelist, Fyodor Dostoyevsky, conscience is obsessively inward and leads to deep despair.

**Consecration**, act of solemnly dedicating or setting apart a person or thing to the

service of God. The Christian term, *consecration* describes the following: (1) the ordination of bishops and the benediction of abbots and abbesses; (2) the giving of sacramental character to the Eucharistic elements of bread and wine, accomplished by various rituals, notably by the words of institution in the Roman Catholic Church, the Church of England, and some other Churches and by the invocation of the Holy Spirit according to the Eastern Orthodox Church; (3) the dedication of Churches; and (4) the consecration of altars, chalices, and patens by the bishop, with or without chrism, or hallowed oil.

**Consubstantiation**, a teaching used to explain the Christian experience and conviction that Christ is truly present with his people in their celebration of the Eucharist. Consubstantiation was developed in the Lutheran wing of the Protestant Reformation during the 16th century. The idea appears in Martin Luther's own writings; the word itself was first employed by his younger contemporary, Melanchthon.

Consubstantiation rests on the same philosophical assumptions as the medieval doctrine of transubstantiation, which it opposed. Both doctrines depend on Aristotle's teaching that matter consists of accidents, which can be perceived by the senses, and substance, which the mind grasps and which constitutes essential reality. Both agree that, in the Eucharist, the accidents of the bread and wine remain unchanged. Unlike the doctrine of Transubstantiation, however, that of consubstantiation asserts that the substance of the bread and wine is also unchanged, the ubiquitous body of Christ co-existing "in, with, and under" the substance of the bread, and the blood of Christ in, with, and under the wine, by the power of the Word of God.

Luther illustrated consubstantiation by the analogy of iron put into fire: Iron and fire are united in red-hot iron; yet, the two substances remain unchanged.

**Council**, assembly convened to deliberate and decide on ecclesiastical doctrine and on other matters affecting the interests of the Christian Church. Before the 12th century, the term, *council* was used synonymously with the term, *synod*. The latter word,

however, is now employed in a restricted sense to designate a diocesan council, a council that comprises the clergy of a diocese and is usually presided over by a bishop. Other councils, in ascending hierarchical order, are provincial, primatial, national, patriarchal, and general or worldwide assemblies.

Twenty-one ecumenical councils are listed in the annals of the Roman Catholic Church, according to the places in which they were held. Members of the Orthodox Church and many Protestants acknowledge the authority of only the first seven of these councils. Martin Luther accepted only the first four councils.

Among Protestant Churches, bodies equivalent in authority to the ecumenical councils of the Roman Catholic Church include the general assemblies of the Presbyterian denomination, the general conferences of the Methodist denomination, and the general conventions of the Protestant Episcopal Church. The term, *council* is also applied by Protestant denominations to assemblies convened to deal with doctrinal and administrative matters. These councils, however, do not have the authority of the councils of the Roman Catholic Church; in the Baptist and Congregational denominations, for example, the national councils are merely advisory assemblies.

The first meeting of Christians that could be called a council is described in Acts 15:1-31. The so-called Council of Jerusalem was a meeting of Peter, Paul, and the leaders of Jerusalem's Christians about A.D., 50. It discussed the means by which Gentiles could be converted.

When the Pope summons representatives of the Church from the entire Roman Catholic world to a council whose decisions he approves by an explicit and formal act, that council, thenceforth, is called an ecumenical council. Before the first Lateran council was called by Pope Callistus II in 1123, the emperors of Constantinople, who were the nominal protectors of the Church, summoned ecumenical councils; since 1123, the councils must be summoned by the Pope and presided over by him or his legates. Theoretically, an ecumenical council is any council whose findings are

explicitly approved by the Pope, but ecumenical councils have usually been called as general councils. This fact has given rise to the use of the term, *ecumenical* (from Greek *oikoumene*, “the inhabited world”) as synonymous with general, when applied to a council.

**Devil**, in later Hebrew and in Christian belief, the supreme spirit of evil, who for immeasurable time, has ruled over a kingdom of evil spirits and is in constant opposition to God. The word is derived, via the ecclesiastical Latin *diabolus*, from the Greek *diabolos*, an adjective meaning “slandering,” used also, in ancient Greek as a noun, to identify a person as a slanderer. The term was used in the Greek translation of the Bible, the Septuagint, not to refer to human beings, but rather to translate the Hebrew *ha-satan* (“the satan”), an expression originally used as the title of a member of the divine court who functioned as God’s roving spy, gathering intelligence about human beings from his travels on

earth. Because aspects of this heavenly figure were probably drawn from experience with agents of ancient Middle Eastern royal secret services, it is not surprising that the Satan should also be seen as a character who attempts to provoke punishable sedition where he finds none, thus, acting as an adversary of human beings, bent on separating them from God. In all speculation about the Satan, the major problem being addressed, is that of the origin and nature of evil.

In later, Jewish tradition, and, thus also, in early Christian thought, the title becomes a proper name; Satan begins to be seen as an adversary not only of human beings, but also -- and even primarily -- of God. This development is probably a result of the influence of Persian dualistic philosophy, with its opposing powers of good (Ormazd) and evil (Ahriman). But in both Jewish and Christian systems, the dualism is always provisional or temporary, the devil being ultimately subject to God. In the writings of the Qumran sect, the devil emerges as Belial, the Spirit of Wickedness.

In some strains of rabbinic thought, Satan is linked with the “evil impulse,” which is thus,

personified to some degree. This personification is a Jewish form of the widespread and ancient assumption that human beings can be subjected to malevolent forces distinct from their conscious minds. Thus, both in Judaism and in Christianity, the belief is found that human beings can be “possessed” by the devil or by his subordinates, the demons.

Perhaps the core of Christian teaching about the devil is that Jesus Christ came to break the grip he and his demons have on the whole of humanity (the “possession” of some, is a symptom of the general domination of all), and that in the crucifixion, the devil and his henchmen, working their worst, were doomed, paradoxically, to ultimate defeat.

In the Middle Ages, the devil played important roles in art and in folklore, being almost always seen as an evil, impulsive animal-human with a tail and horns, sometimes accompanied by subordinate devils. The thought that the latter could take up residence in human beings served, more frequently, to differentiate the possessed, from the normal, than to indicate something about the state of all humanity.

The complexity, mystery, and corporate nature of evil have caused some thinkers to believe that a place must be found for the devil even in modern thought.

**Docetism**, an early Christian heresy affirming that Jesus Christ had only an apparent body. The doctrine took various forms: Some proponents flatly denied any true humanity in Christ; some admitted his incarnation, but not his sufferings, suggesting that he persuaded one of his followers -- possibly Judas Iscariot or Simon of Cyrene -- to take his place on the cross; others ascribed to him, a celestial body that was incapable of experiencing human miseries.

This denial of the human reality of Christ stemmed from dualism, a philosophical doctrine that viewed matter as evil. The docetists, acknowledging that doctrine, concluded that God could not be associated with matter. They could not

accept a literal interpretation of John 1:14, that the “Word became flesh.”

Although docetism is alluded to, in the New Testament, it was not fully developed until the 2nd and 3rd centuries, when it found an ally in Gnosticism. It occasioned vigorous opposition by early Christian writers, beginning with Ignatius of Antioch and Irenaeus early in the 2nd century. Docetism was officially condemned at the Council of Chalcedon in 451.

**Doctrine**, a belief system that forms a part of every religion. Although the word, *doctrine* is sometimes used for such a system as a whole (“Christian doctrine”), it is more commonly used for particular items of belief (“the Judeo-Christian doctrine of creation;” “the Buddhist doctrine of reincarnation”). The particular beliefs constitute a more or less coherent whole, however, and it is in the context of the whole that each doctrine should be understood and evaluated. The Latin word, *doctrina* means “teaching,” and religious beliefs, are often, first, specifically formulated in the process of instructing initiates. Although religious doctrines have sometimes been regarded as unchanging truths, today, it is generally recognized that even if a doctrine contains some permanent core of truth, its expression will always reflect the relativities of a particular age and culture, so that new expressions are constantly needed, if doctrine are to remain intelligible and persuasive. Although in some religions, doctrines have not been precisely formulated, in many others, they have been the subject of sharp controversy, even to the point of disrupting the community of believers. Most of the world religions do, in fact, exhibit doctrinal divisions. When a religious authority proposes one expression of a doctrine to the exclusion of other possible ones, it becomes known as a dogma.

**Dogma**, an authoritative and precisely formulated statement of a religious doctrine that is advanced, not for discussion, but for belief. In its strict sense, the term seems to be peculiar to Christianity. To qualify as a dogma, the formula must fulfill two conditions: It must be derivable from Revelation, as attested by Scripture and tradition; and it must be promulgated by some widely recognized ecclesiastical authority. Dogmas, have usually

been formulated at times of doctrinal controversy, in order to clarify the orthodox teaching in the face of heretical aberrations. Some dogmas formulated by ecumenical councils, in the early centuries of the Church, still command the assent of the great majority of Christians, in both the East and the West. Such, for example, is the definition of the person of Christ by the Council of Chalcedon in 451. Other dogmas come from later times and are binding only with the Roman Catholic Church. Such are the Marian dogmas of the immaculate conception (1859) and the assumption (1950) and the dogma of papal infallibility (1870).

Even the most revered dogmas are, like all doctrinal statements, affected by cultural relativism, and thus, from time to time, must be re-thought and re-stated. Terms such as *substance, nature, and person*, used by the Council of Chalcedon, reflect a philosophical framework that is now obsolete. Nonetheless, the governing intentions of the ancient dogmas, still serve as norms, for theological discussion.

**Doxology**, hymn or formula of praise to God. Many doxologies are found in the Bible, such as in Romans 16:27, Ephesians 3:21, and Jude 25; they are known as biblical doxologies. The “lesser” and “greater” doxologies are two responsive forms that originated in the 4th century and are now used in the liturgies of many Christian Churches. The lesser doxology is named, *Gloria Patri*: “Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.” The greater doxology, *Gloria in excelsis Deo*, is an early Church expansion of the song of the angels in Luke 2:14: “Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men with whom he is pleased.” It is used in the Roman Catholic Mass, except during Advent and Lent, and in certain Masses throughout the year, and in many Protestant services. In the liturgy of the Church of England, the lesser doxology occurs at the end of Psalms and canticles, and the greater doxology is used in certain seasons in the communion service. A special doxology, the Trinitarian doxology, concludes the canon of the Mass, by emphasizing Christ’s mediatorship: “Through Him, with Him, in Him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, all glory and honor is Yours, almighty Father, for ever and ever.” The greater, lesser, and Trinitarian

doxologies are known as, liturgical doxologies.

The last stanza of a hymn by the English bishop, Thomas Ken, beginning “Praise God from whom all blessings flow,” is commonly called, “The Doxology” in Protestant Churches. In Jewish worship, several Psalms and the Eighteen Benedictions close with doxologies.

**Ecumenical Movement**, movement for worldwide cooperation and unity among Christian Churches. The term, *ecumenical* is derived from the Greek *oikoumene* (“inhabited”); thus, ecumenical councils of the Church, the first of which was held at Nicaea in 325, were so designated because representatives attended from Churches throughout the known world. In the 19th century, the term, *ecumenical* came to denote to the Roman Catholic Church, a concern for Christian unity and for a renewal of the Church. To Protestants, who have pioneered in and advanced the modern ecumenical movement since the early 20th century, the term has applied, not only to Christian unity, but, more broadly, to the worldwide mission of Christianity.

Until the 20th century, only sporadic efforts were made to re-unite, a Christendom, shattered through the centuries by schisms, the Reformation, and other disputes. Pressure toward unity was aided in the 19th century by the development of such organizations as the missionary and Bible societies and the Young Men’s Christian Association and Young Women’s Christian Association, in all of which, Protestants of varying denominations, joined in support of common causes. In the early 20th century, the unity movement was almost exclusively Protestant.

### **Purposes of Ecumenism**

The World Missionary Conference of 1910, held in Edinburg, marked the beginning of modern ecumenism. From it, flowed three streams of ecumenical endeavor: evangelistic, service, and doctrinal. Today, these three aspects are furthered through the World Council of Churches, constituted in 1948; in the early 1980’s, it included more than 295 Churches in more than 90 countries.

The evangelical concern of modern ecumenism brought about the formation, in 1921, of the International Missionary Council, comprising 17 national mission organizations. It coordinated mission strategy and aided new Churches.

The service efforts made by Christians across denominational and national boundaries came to fruition in 1925, in Stockholm, when the Universal Christian Conference on Life and Work was convened to study the application of the Gospel to industrial, social, political, and international affairs. This movement proceeded under the slogan, “service unites, but doctrine divides.”

The movement toward doctrinal ecumenism resulted in 1927, in the convening of the First World Conference on Faith and Order. The conference concluded that “God wills unity . . . (and) . . . however we may justify the beginnings of dis-union, we lament its continuance.” A second Conference met at the University of Oxford. Delegates to the two conferences, agreed that their work should be coordinated, and in 1938, a provisional committee was named to establish a “body representative of the Churches.” Formation of the World Council of Churches, which was to have come about in 1941, was delayed for seven years by World War II. In 1961, the missionary stream of Protestant ecumenical endeavor joined with the service and doctrinal currents as the International Missionary Council merged with the World Council of Churches.

The impulse to unity was acted on, almost solely, by Protestants until 1920, when the ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople issued an encyclical, summoning all Christians to reunion. Eastern Orthodox Churches have been members of the World Council since it was constituted.

Ecumenism continued to flourish among Protestants and the Orthodox; for example, in 1950, the National Council of Churches was formed by 29 denominations in the U.S. The Roman Catholic Church, however, remained uncompromising in

its rejection of the movement. From the Roman Catholic viewpoint, Church unity could mean nothing less than the return of schismatic “sects” to the “one true Church.” An encyclical issued in 1928, by Pope Pius XI, had re-emphasized this position, and as recently as 1954, Roman Catholics were forbidden to attend the second assembly of the World Council of Churches.

### **The Second Vatican Council**

Change came in 1959, when Pope John XXIII, proposed the calling of a second Vatican Council to complete the work of the first Vatican Council of 1870. Renewal and reunion were high on the agenda, and the world followed the proceedings closely. The pontiff created a Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. Breaking precedent, in 1961, he permitted Roman Catholic observers, officially, to attend the third assembly of the World Council of Churches.

Also through his influence, when Vatican II opened in Saint Peter’s Basilica in 1962, Protestant and Orthodox observers were accorded places of honor and included in all working sessions. The 2,500 Roman Catholic bishops who attended the four council sessions (1962-65), dealt with Christian unity. Their decree on ecumenism, promulgated in 1964, spoke not of “schismatics,” but of “separated brethren,” and it deplored sins against unity, committed over the years, by Roman Catholics and Protestants alike.

On the death of Pope John, in 1963, his successor, Pope Paul VI, made known his intention to continue ecumenical advances, describing unity as “the object of permanent interest, systematic study, and constant charity.” The policy was emphasized by several major gestures. In 1964, the Pope and the Orthodox ecumenical patriarch had a warm, historic meeting in Jerusalem, the first meeting of the heads of their two Churches in more than 500 years. In 1966, the archbishop of Canterbury, head of the Anglican Communion, visited Pope Paul, and in 1967, the pontiff visited the Orthodox patriarch in Turkey.

At the close of Vatican II, a Joint Working Group was established between the Vatican and the World Council of Churches. Numerous official dialogues were started in many countries between Roman Catholics and Protestants. Significantly, the Joint Working Group declared, in 1967, that not two, but only one, ecumenical movement exists. Furthermore, at the fourth assembly of the World Council, in 1968,

a Jesuit theologian spoke of Roman Catholics as partners with other Christians in the quest for the unity “that is Christ’s will for His Church,” and broached the possibility of Roman Catholic membership in the World Council. That had not occurred by the end of the 1980’s, but the Roman Catholic Church continued to have a good-working-relationship with the World Council, regularly sending observers to its sessions.

### **An Era of Change**

Ecumenism is changing. Consolidation of Protestant Churches has progressed rapidly. During the 1980’s, the ecumenical movement was characterized by increasing consensus on doctrinal questions that had once been highly disputed, and by growing cooperation at all levels. This was due largely to the bilateral dialogues that took place between the various Christian Churches -- Anglican, Orthodox, Protestant, and Roman Catholic -- during the 1970’s.

In areas, such as peace, international development studies, and disaster relief, the Roman Catholic Church and World Council Churches pooled their resources. Furthermore, in the U.S., the urban crisis caused Christian Churches to join with Jewish groups to achieve racial justice.

Ecumenical leaders make clear that they are not seeking a Christian unity that would gloss over basic theological differences. There remain many obstacles, such as the ordination of women, papal authority, Mariology, contraception, and even a general fear of “bigness.” Ecumenists believe, however, that much progress can result from a continuing stress on the many points on which the Churches agree.

**Elohim**, general term, used occasionally, in the Old Testament for any divine being, but more frequently, in reference to the God of the Israelites. Plural of the Hebrew, *Eloah* (“God”), it has been explained as signifying greatness and majesty. The frequent use of the term, in the Pentateuch, has been regarded by biblical scholars, as the key identifying feature, of the second oldest Pentateuch source, known therefore, as “E.” Accordingly, the author of “E,” is sometimes referred to as, the Elohist.

**Eschatology**, literally “discourse about the last things,” doctrine concerning life after death and the final stage of the world. The origin of this doctrine is almost as old as humanity; archaeological evidence of customs in the Old Stone Age, indicates a rudimentary concept of immortality. Even in early stages of religious development, speculation about things to come is not wholly limited to the fate of the individual. Such devastating natural phenomena as floods, conflagrations, cyclones, earthquakes, and volcanic eruptions have always suggested the possibility of the end of the world. Higher forms of eschatological thought are the product of a complex social organism and an increased knowledge of natural science. Often myths of astrological origin, the concept of retribution, or the hope of deliverance from present oppressions, provided the material or motive for highly developed eschatologies. Prolonged observation of planetary and solar movement made possible, the conception of a recurrence, at the end of the present cycle, of the events connected with the origin of the world and a renovation of the world after its destruction.

The development of eschatological speculation, therefore, generally reflects the growth of human intellectual and moral perceptions, the larger social experience of men and women, and their expanding knowledge of nature. The outward forms of the doctrine of eschatology vary, however, according to the characteristics of the environment and of the peoples.

### **Ancient Explanations**

Belief in a life of the spirit, a substance inhabiting the dead body as long as food and drink are furnished, is typical of primitive eschatology. The concept of the future life

grew richer as civilization advanced and cosmic forces became objects of worship associated with departed spirits. The belief in judgment, after death, was introduced when standards of right and wrong were established, according to particular tribal customs; the spirits themselves were made subject to the laws of retribution. Through this two-fold development, the future life, was thus, made spiritual and assumed a moral character, as in the eschatology of ancient Egypt. In Persia and Israel, the old conception of a shadowy existence in the grave, or in some subterranean realm, in general, retained its hold. Escape from such an existence, however, into larger life, with the possibility of moral distinctions among individuals, was provided by the conception of a restoration and re-animation of the old body, thus, ensuring personal identity. In other cultures, as in India, the spirit was conceived as entering, immediately upon death, into another body, to live again and die and become reincarnated in new forms.

This concept of transmigration, or metempsychosis, made possible the introduction into the future life of subtle moral distinctions, involving not only punishments and rewards for conduct in a previous stage of existence, but also the possibility of rising or falling in the scale of being, according to present conduct. In spite of the seemingly perfect justice, thus administered on every level of being, the never-ending series of births and deaths, of the individual, may come to appear as an evil; in which case deliverance may be sought from the infinite wheel of existence in Nirvana. The ancient Greeks arrived at their eschatology, by considering the functions of the mind as a purely spiritual essence, independent of the body, and having no beginning or end; this abstract concept of immortality led to the anticipation of a more concrete personal life after death.

The ideas held throughout history, concerning the future of the world, and of humanity are only imperfectly known today. The belief in a coming destruction of the world, by fire or flood, is found among groups in the Pacific Islands, as well as among American aborigines; this belief, probably did not originate in astronomical speculation, but was rather engendered by some terrifying earthly experience of the past. The ancient Persians, who adopted the doctrines of their religious teacher, Zoroaster, developed the basic idea of the coming destruction of the world, by fire, into

the concept of a great moral ordeal. According to this belief, at the end of the world, the worshipers of the lord, Mazda, will be distinguished from all other people by successfully enduring the ordeal of molten metal, and the good, will then be rewarded. This concept is found in the Gathas, the earliest part of the Avesta, the bible of Zoroastrianism. It is not certain that the idea of a resurrection from death goes back to the period represented by the Gathas. But the Greek historian, Herodotus, seems to have heard of such a Persian belief in the 5th century B.C., and Theopompus of Chios, the historian of Philip II, King of Macedon, described it as a Mazdayasnian doctrine.

Similarities can be seen between the ancient Greek concepts of, heaven and hell, and those of Christian doctrine. The Homeric poems, and those of Hesiod, show how the Greek mind conceived of the future of the soul in Elysium or in Hades. Through the Orphic and Eleusinian mysteries, this thought was deepened. That the future of nations and the world also played an important role in Greek and Roman thought, is evident from the prophecies of the Sibyls. An eschatological philosophy dominated the epoch, ushered in by the conquests of Alexander the Great, and Greco-Roman thought, became suffused with Oriental ideas in its speculation upon the future of the world. In a similar manner, the Scandinavian idea of the destruction of the earth, by fire, and its subsequent renovation under higher heavens -- to be peopled by the descendants of the surviving pair, Lif and Lifthrasir (as set forth in the *Elder Edda*) -- reflects an early Nordic interpretation of the idea of heaven and hell.

### **Jewish and Christian Beliefs**

In early Israel, the "Day of Jehovah," was a coming day of battle that would decide the fate of the people. Although the people looked forward to it as a day of victory, prophets, such as Amos, Hosea, Isaiah, Micah, Zephaniah, and Jeremiah feared that it would bring near or complete destruction, associating it with the growing military threat from Assyria. To Jeremiah, this forecast of judgment was the criterion of true prophet-hood. Later, the books containing their pronouncements, were interpolated with prophecies of prosperity, which themselves, constituted significant signs of the expansion of eschatological hopes. The Book of Daniel, voices the hope that the kingdom of the

world, will be given to the saints of the Most High, the Jewish people. A celestial representative, probably the archangel, Michael, is promised, who, after the destruction of the beast, representing the Hellenistic kingdoms of the Middle East, will come with the clouds, and receive the empire of the world. No Messiah appears in this apocalypse. The first distinct appearance of this deliverer and king, is in the Song of Solomon.

After the conquest of Palestine, by the Roman general, Pompey the Great, in 63 B.C., the Jews longed for a descendant of the line of David, King of Israel and Judah, who would break the Roman yoke, establish the empire of the Jews, and rule as a righteous king over the subject nations. This desire, ultimately, led to the rebellion in A.D., 66-70, that brought about the destruction of Jerusalem. When Jesus Christ proclaimed the coming of the kingdom of heaven, it was natural, therefore, that despite His disavowal, he should be understood, by some, to be a claimant to the kingship of the Jews. His disciples were convinced that He would return as the Messiah upon the clouds of heaven. It is unlikely, however, that the final judgment and the raising of the dead were ever conceived by an adherent of the Jewish faith as functions of the Messiah.

In Christian doctrine, eschatology has traditionally included the second advent of Christ, or Parousia, the resurrection of the dead, the last judgment, the immortality of the soul, concepts of heaven and hell, and the consummation of the kingdom of God. In the Roman Catholic Church, eschatology includes, additionally, the beatific vision, purgatory, and limbo.

Although the great creeds of Christendom affirm the belief, in a return to the son of God, to judge the living and the dead, and in a resurrection of the just and the unjust, Christianity, through the centuries, has shown wide variation in its interpretation of eschatology. Conservative belief, has usually, emphasized a person's destiny, after death, and the way in which belief in the future life, affects one's attitude toward life on earth. Occasionally, certain sects have predicted the imminent end of the world.

Islam adopted from Judaism and Christianity, the doctrine of a coming judgment, a resurrection of the dead, and everlasting punishments and rewards. Later, contact with Persian thought, greatly enriched Islamic eschatology. Especially important, was the belief in the reincarnation of some great prophet from the past. Time and again, the world of Islam has been stirred by the expectation of Mahdi, the Muslim messiah, to reveal more fully, the truth, or to lead the faithful into better social conditions on earth. Iran and Africa have had many such movements.

### **Current Attitudes**

Liberal Christian thought has emphasized the soul and the kingdom of God, more often seeing it as coming on earth in each individual (evidenced by what was believed to be the steady upward progress of humankind), than as an apocalyptic event at the end of time. Twentieth-century theological thought has tended to repudiate what many scholars have felt to be an identification of Christian eschatology with the values of Western civilization. In the second half of the 20th century, eschatology was equated by some theologians with the doctrine of Christian hope, including not only the events of the end of time, but also the hope itself, and its revolutionizing influence on life in the world. The most eloquent exponent of this eschatology, is the German theologian, Jurgen Moltmann.

In modern Judaism, the return of Israel to its land, the coming of the Messiah, the resurrection of the dead, and everlasting retribution, are still expected by the Orthodox, but the more liberal base the religious mission of Israel upon the regeneration of the human race and upon hope for immortal life, independent, of the resurrection of the body.

**Eucharist or Lord's Supper**, central rite of the Christian religion, in which bread and wine are consecrated by an ordained minister and consumed by the minister and members of the congregation in obedience to Jesus' command at the Last Supper, "Do this in remembrance of me." In the Orthodox and Roman Catholic Churches, and in the

Anglican, Lutheran, and many other Protestant Churches, it is regarded as a sacrament, which both symbolizes and effects the union of Christ with the faithful. Baptists and others refer to Holy Communion as an “Institution,” rather than a sacrament, emphasizing obedience to a commandment.

### **The Institution of the Eucharist**

Traditionally, Jesus’ command to his disciples at the Last Supper, to eat the bread and drink the wine “in remembrance of me,” constitutes the Institution of the Eucharist. This specific command occurs in two New Testament accounts of the Last Supper, Luke 22:17-20 and 1 Corinthians 11:23-25. Older theology asserts that Jesus gave this command, on this occasion, to ensure that Christians would break bread and drink wine in his memory as long as the Church endured. A critical approach to the Gospel texts, however, has made this conclusion less certain. The command, “Do this in remembrance of me,” does not appear in either Matthew’s or Mark’s account of the Last Supper. Consequently, a number of scholars have supposed that the undoubted experience of communion, with the risen Christ at meals in the days after Easter, inspired in some later traditions, the understanding, that such communion had been foreseen and commanded by Jesus at the Last Supper. The matter, can probably, never be resolved with complete satisfaction. In any case, the practice of eating meals, in remembrance of the Lord and the belief in the presence of Christ in the “breaking of the bread,” clearly, were universal in the early Church. The Didache, an early Christian document, refers to the Eucharist twice, at some length. The Didache and the New Testament, together, indicate considerable diversity in both the practice and the understanding of the Eucharist, but no evidence exists of any Christian Church, in which, the sacrament was not celebrated.

### **The Development of Doctrine**

The development of Eucharistic doctrine centers on two ideas: presence and sacrifice. In the New Testament, no attempt is made to explain Christ’s presence at the Eucharist. The theologians of the early Church tended to accept Jesus’ Words, “This is My Body,” and “This cup . . . is the new covenant in my blood” (Luke 22:19-20) as sufficient

explanation of the miraculous transformation of the bread and wine into the body and blood of Christ, although some interpretations reflect the influence of Platonic philosophy on the early Church.

During the Middle Ages, a more elaborate doctrine of the Eucharist was developed by Scholastic philosophers, under the influence of Aristotle. Aristotle taught, that earthly things possessed accidents (size, shape, color, texture) perceptible to the senses, and substance, their essential reality, known by the mind. According to Scholastic speculation, the substance of the Eucharistic bread is, by the power of God, wholly transformed into the body of Christ. This view of the presence of Christ, called transubstantiation, was, most elaborately, formulated by the 13th-century Italian theologian, St. Thomas Aquinas. It has been the official teaching of the Roman Catholic Church, since the Middle Ages, although the Council of Trent, which reasserted the doctrine against the Protestant reformers in the 16th century, did not include any philosophical speculation in its statement, asserting simply, that an actual change occurred in the bread and wine.

In the 16th century, Protestant reformers offered several alternative interpretations of the Eucharist. Martin Luther taught that Christ is present “in, with, and under,” the elements. The Swiss reformer, Huldreich Zwingli, denied any real connection between the bread and wine and the body and blood of Christ. He believed that at the celebration of the Supper, which recalls to worshipers, the Words and deeds of the Lord, Christ is with them by the power of the Holy Spirit. According to Zwingli, the bread and wine recall the Last Supper; but, no metaphysical change takes place in them. The Swiss Protestant theologian, John Calvin, argued that Christ is present, both symbolically, and by his spiritual power, which is imparted by his body in heaven, to the souls of believers, as they partake of the Eucharist. This position, which has been called, “dynamic presence,” occupies a middle ground between the doctrines of Luther and Zwingli. The Anglican doctrine affirms the real presence of Christ, without specifying its mode.

Some modern theologians have attempted to recapture the ancient Judaic sense of remembering the acts of God (anamnesis). By invoking the presence of God and by remembering in His presence, the events, by which, He has delivered them, worshipers live through those events, as present events. Thus, just as each generation of Israelites participated, year by year in the exodus, the wanderings in the wilderness, and the crossing into Canaan, so each generation of Christians, week by week, participate in the Last Supper, the cross, and the resurrection.

Eucharistic doctrine also concerns the sacrificial character of the sacrament -- how the Eucharist is related to Christ's sacrifice on the cross. Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and Anglican Churches have traditionally taught, that the Eucharist is a means, by which, believers can partake of Christ's sacrifice and the new covenant with God that it inaugurated. In popular belief, this idea was sometimes, interpreted to mean, that each celebration of the Eucharist, is a new sacrifice, rather than a partaking of the original sacrifice of Christ, as officially taught, by the Church. Protestants, in general, have been hesitant to apply sacrificial categories to celebrations of the Eucharist.

### **The Eucharistic Service**

The service is called the Eucharist, or Lord's Supper, or Holy Communion in most Protestant Churches; the Divine Liturgy in Eastern Orthodoxy; and the Mass, among Roman Catholics and some Anglicans. It is the central and most solemn Christian liturgy.

Normally, the service consists of two parts. The first, the "service of the Word," consists of Scripture readings, a sermon, and prayers. This part of the Eucharist, apparently adapted from Jewish synagogue worship, has been prefixed to the service of bread and wine, at least, since the middle of the 2nd century. The second part of the service, the "service of the Upper Room," consists typically, of an offering of bread and wine (together with the congregation's monetary gifts); the central Eucharistic prayer (a prayer of consecration); the distribution of the consecrated elements to worshipers; and a final blessing and dismissal. This particular part of the service has its roots in the

ancient traditional table prayers, said at Jewish meals.

The central Eucharistic prayer, the Anaphora (Greek, “offering”), typically contains, a prayer of thanksgiving for the creation of the world and its redemption in Christ; an account of the institution of the Last Supper; the oblation, or Anamnesis -- the offering of the bread and wine, in thankful remembrance, of Christ; the Epiclesis, or invocation of the Holy Spirit on the bread and wine and on the congregation; and prayers of intercession.

**Evangelicalism**, a movement in modern Anglo-American Protestantism (and in nations influenced by Great Britain and North America), that emphasizes personal commitment to Christ and the authority of the Bible. It is represented in most Protestant denominations.

Evangelicals believe that each individual has a need for spiritual rebirth and personal commitment to Jesus Christ as saviour, through faith in His atoning death on the cross (commonly, although not necessarily, through a specific conversion experience). They emphasize strict orthodoxy on cardinal doctrines, morals, and especially, on the authority of the Bible. Many Evangelicals follow a traditional, pre-critical, interpretation of the Bible and insist on its inerrancy (freedom from error in history, as well as, in the faith and morals).

The term, Evangelicalism has been a source of controversy, and the precise relationship or distinction between Evangelicalism and Fundamentalism, has been disputed. Liberal Protestants often oppose the use of Evangelical, to refer only, to the strict traditionalists.

In the general sense, evangelical (from the New Testament Greek *euangelion*, “good news”), means simply, pertaining to the Gospel. The word identified the early leaders of the Reformation who emphasized the biblical message and rejected the official interpretation of dogma by the Roman Catholic Church. Thus, Evangelical, often simply

means, Protestant in continental Europe and in the names of Churches elsewhere. In Germany, it once identified Lutherans in contrast to the Reformed (Calvinist) Churches. Nevertheless, the large union body, the Evangelical Church in Germany, today, encompasses most Protestants, whether Lutheran or Calvinist, liberal, or conservative. The term has also been applied to the Low Church wing of Anglicanism, which stresses biblical preaching, as opposed to sacramental and belief in the authority of Church tradition.

### **Antecedents**

Fore-bearers of 20th-century Evangelicalism include, pre-Reformation dissenters, such as, the French merchant, Peter Waldo, early leader of the Waldenses; the 14th-century English theologian, John Wycliffe; and John Huss (Jan Hus), leader of the 14th-century Hussites. The 16th-century Reformers, the 17th-century English and American Puritans, and the early Baptists and other Non-conformists were more immediate forerunners of Evangelicalism. Historical landmarks of the movement include the arrival (1666) of Philipp Jakob Spencer, at a parish in Frankfurt, where he became the leader of Pietism in German Lutheranism, and the 1738 conversion experience of John Wesley, the leader of Methodism within the Church of England. Both Pietism and Methodism taught the necessity of personal saving faith, rather than, routine membership in the national Church, and they had a profound impact on personal devotional life, evangelism, Church reform, and -- in Wesley's case -- broad social reform. English Evangelicalism reached a high point with Wesley and the lay member of Parliament, William Wilberforce. Wilberforce and his associates contributed greatly to education for the poor, the founding of the Church Missionary Society (1798) and the British and Foreign Bible Society (1803), the institution of the British ban on slave trading (1807), and the abolition of slavery (1833) in British territories.

### **Evangelicalism in the U.S.**

Wesley's colleague and, sometime disputant, George Whitefield, linked this English Evangelicalism with revivalism in the American colonies. The Great Awakening developed about 1725, deepened with the preaching and writing of the Congregational

minister, Jonathan Edwards, and reached a peak after 1740, with Whitefield's preaching tours. A Second Awakening, is often identified, in the early 19th-century U.S., and other revivals followed. The Evangelical label began to be applied to inter-denominational efforts at outreach and the establishment of foreign missions. Revivalism was typified by camp meetings and the itinerant ministries of such evangelists as, Charles G. Finney and Dwight L. Moody. Their outstanding 20th-century successor is, Billy Graham, the leading figure in U.S., Evangelicalism, since World War II.

### **Modern Evangelicalism**

The emergence of theological Modernism during the 19th century, particularly historical criticism of the Bible, produced a movement of reaction within many denominations. From 1910-1915, conservative scholars produced a series of booklets entitled, *The Fundamentals*, and in 1920, a conservative northern Baptist journal coined the designation, Fundamentalist for the defenders of orthodoxy.

The term, Fundamentalism gradually came to designate only the most uncompromising and militant wing of the movement, however, and more moderate Protestant conservatives began to adopt the older designation of Evangelical. They created the National Association of Evangelicals in the U.S., (1942) and the World Evangelical Fellowship (1951), the latter, reviving an international body formed under Great Britain's Evangelical Alliance (founded 1846). The constituencies of these bodies, are largely, outside the World and National Councils of Churches, but large numbers of Evangelicals exist within the mainstream ecumenical denominations.

The largest U.S., Protestant body, the Southern Baptist Convention, embraces Evangelical tenets; other components of Evangelicalism include, Pentecostals, the Charismatic Renewal (including its Roman Catholic wing), Arminian-Holiness Churches, conservative confessionalists, such as the Lutheran Church -- Missouri Synod, and numerous black Baptists, as well as independent "faith missions" and inter-denominational ministries, such as, Inter-Var-sity Christian Fellowship,

Campus Crusade for Christ, and World Vision. Current Evangelicalism bridges two elements that were, for the most part, anti-thetical in the 19th century, the doctrinaire conservatives and the revivalists.

Evangelical educational materials are produced by a number of publishing houses, and such publications as, *Christianity Today*, are widely read. Evangelical preachers have long made extensive use of radio broadcasts, and during the 1970's, evangelical programs on television proliferated, reaching an audience of more than 20 million. According to a recent estimate, there are about 157 million Evangelicals throughout the world, including about 59 million in the United States.

**Excommunication**, ecclesiastical censure, whereby, a member of a Church is deprived of the benefits and privileges of membership. Excommunication is the most serious ecclesiastical censure; it is intended, however, as a corrective, rather than, a vindictive form of punishment.

In the time of Christ, excommunication was a recognized penalty among the Jews. A distinction is drawn in the Mishnah, the compilation of Jewish scriptural law, between two degrees of excommunication; of these the milder (*niddui*) involved exclusion from community life for 7 to 30 days, with the performance of penance and the wearing of mourning. Twenty-four offenses leading to this penalty were enumerated, most of them of a civil nature. The heavier sentence (*cherem*) was more formal, involving a ritual of solemn curses and lasting an indefinite time.

A similar power of excommunication was recognized from the inception of the Christian Church. Two degrees of excommunication, major and minor, were defined early in Church history. Minor excommunication involved exclusion from the sacrament of the Eucharist and from the full privileges of the Church. Major excommunication was pronounced upon obstinate sinners, relapsed apostates, and heretics; its form was more solemn, and it was less easily revoked. The duration of the excommunication was decided by the bishop. In Africa and Spain, the absolution of lapsed individuals (those,

who in times of persecution, had fallen away from their Christian profession by actual sacrifice to idols) was, for the most part, forbidden, except at death.

In the early Church, no civil disabilities were connected with excommunication, but as governments became Christian, major excommunication was followed by loss of political rights and exclusion from public office. The 8th-century capitularies, or ordinances, of Pepin the Short, King of the Franks, ordained that major excommunication should be followed by banishment. Other national laws, further extended, the scope of the ecclesiastical censure. Excommunication directed against rulers, deprived them of their rights to govern, and therefore, absolved their subjects of allegiance to them; the Church, thus, became an important temporal power.

The leaders of the Reformation also claimed the power of excommunication. Martin Luther insisted on the inherent right of Church ministers to perform excommunication. The French reformer, John Calvin, asserted that excommunication is of the very essence of the ministry. Civil disabilities followed excommunication in communities permeated by the Reformation, but this practice, eventually, ceased to be the rule. Nevertheless, in England, until 1813, persons excommunicated, were barred from bringing legal actions into civil court, from serving on juries, from appearing as witnesses in any legal proceeding, and from practicing as attorneys in any court of the realm. All these disabilities were removed by statute, and excommunicated persons were declared exempt from penalty, except "such imprisonment, not exceeding six months, as the court pronouncing or declaring such person excommunicate shall direct." This penalty however, is never invoked. By U.S., laws, excommunication cannot involve the loss of civil rights, and the civil courts cannot be used to enforce the restoration of Church membership.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the power of excommunication belongs to those prelates, who possess ordinary or delegated jurisdiction in the *forum extemum* (the court dealing with matters relating to the corporate life of the Church). Parish priests,

who have jurisdiction, only in the *forum internum* (in matters of conscience), cannot excommunicate. The power of excommunication can never be delegated to the laity. Excommunication may also be incurred, without the necessity of a formal sentence, by violation of a law that carries the penalty of “excommunication ipso facto.” Absolution from certain cases of excommunication is reserved to the bishop, having jurisdiction over the offender; absolution, from a more limited number of graver cases, is reserved to the Pope. Anathema, the severest form of excommunication, differs from other disciplinary procedures, in that, it includes certain characteristic formal ceremonies.

**Faith**, an attitude of the entire self, including both will and intellect, directed toward a person, an idea, or -- as in the case of religious faith -- a divine being. Modern theologians agree in emphasizing this total existential character of faith, thus, distinguishing it from the popular conception of faith that identifies it with belief as opposed to knowledge. Faith, indeed, includes belief, but goes far beyond it, and in the history of theology, the distinction has, more often, been drawn between faith and works, than between, faith and knowledge. This distinction was powerfully expressed by the apostle, Paul, who argued that the sinful human being cannot achieve salvation through good works, but only through faith in the free grace of God. In this view, forcefully revived by Martin Luther, at the time of the Reformation, good works are consequences of faith. The faithful relation to God enables the believer to transcend limitations and bring forth good works.

### **New Testament Conception of Faith**

The most evocative description of faith, in the New Testament, is found in Hebrews 11:1, where faith is heralded as, “the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.” Here, the word for faith, is the Greek *pistis*, which denotes the act of giving one’s trust. The New Testament conception of faith involves an amplification and an alteration of the older Hebrew idea of faith, as that quality of stability and trust, that informs the living relationship between two beings. For the New Testament writers, faith has found its center in the believer’s relationship to Jesus Christ. But the New Testament idea of faith, goes beyond that of the Hebrew scriptures in its addition of the

concept of “belief in” or “belief that.” Hence, Christian theology, has traditionally, distinguished between the “subjective” element in faith, which involves the supernatural action of God, upon the human soul, and faith’s “objective” component, which is characterized, as adherence to a body of truth found in creeds, in definitions of Church councils, and especially, in the Bible.

### **Later Christian Conceptions**

During the Middle Ages, Roman Catholic theologians distinguished two kinds of separate, but ultimately, compatible religious truths: those that are accessible to unaided human reason, such as belief in the existence of God; and those that require faith, in order to be grasped, such as belief in the resurrection of the dead. Historically, the Roman Catholic Church has defined faith, as the complete acceptance of doctrine and of the absolute authority of God, in what, He reveals or promises to reveal.

Not all Christians have believed that the demands of faith are compatible with those of reason. Many early Christians, including St. Paul and the 2nd-century theologian, Tertullian, insisted that faith resembles, folly to the eye, that has not been opened by

the grace of God. In a similar vein, the 19th-century Danish thinker, Soren Kierkegaard, felt that a chasm, separates human reason from faith, and that the would-be believer, must make a “leap of faith” across this abyss, in order to find salvation. In general, modern Protestant theologians have emphasized, as Kierkegaard did, the subjective or individualistic aspect of faith, and have concentrated on the risk and moral effort involved in attempting to lead the life of faith, rather than, on the acceptance of creeds, as an expression of faith.

**Fasting**, abstention from food, and often, also from drink, for a longer than usual period. Fasting has been practiced for centuries in connection with religious ceremonies. Fasts are observed among Christians, Jews, Muslims, Confucianists, Hindus, Taoists, Jainists, and adherents of other religious faiths. Although Buddhism stresses moderation in eating, rather than fasting, Buddhists in some countries, not-

ably Tibet, observe certain fasts.

Originally, fasting was one of a number of rites, in which, physical activities were reduced or suspended, resulting in a state of quiescence comparable, symbolically, to death, or to the state preceding birth. Fasts were also part of the fertility rites in primitive ceremonies. Many of these ceremonies were held at the vernal and autumnal equinoxes and survived for centuries. Some scholars connect the symbolic use of matzo, or unleavened bread, by the Jews, during the spring festival of Pesach, or Passover, with these early origins. Traces of these ancient rites, are found also, in the fast observed by many Christians during Lent, as a preparation for Easter.

Closely associated with fasts, to induce fertility, were fasts intended to avert catastrophe or to serve as penance for sin. Native North Americans held tribal fasts to avert threatening disasters. The Native Americans of Mexico and the Incas of Peru, observed penitential fasts to appease their gods. Among the peoples of the Old World, the Assyrians and the Babylonians especially, and others to a lesser extent, observed fasts as a form of penance. Among Jews, fasting as a form of penitence and purification, has been observed annually, on the Day of Atonement, Yom Kippur, since its traditional designation by Moses. On this holy day, neither food, nor drink, is permitted. The fast by day, but not after dark, observed by Muslims, during the month of Ramadan, also, is a form of atonement.

The early Christians associated fasting with penitence and purification (see Matthew 6:16; Mark 9:29). During the first two centuries of its existence, the Christian Church established fasting as a voluntary preparation for receiving the sacraments of Holy Communion and baptism, and for the ordination of priests. Later, these fasts became obligatory, as did others, subsequently, added. In the 6th century, the Lenten fast was expanded from its original 40 hours, the time spent by Christ in the grave, to 40 days, on each of which, only one meal was permitted. After the Reformation, fasting was retained by most Protestant Churches and was made optional in some cases. Stricter Protestants like the Puritans, however, condemned not only the festivals of the Church,

but its traditional fasts as well. The Orthodox Church observes fasts rigorously.

Fasting has been criticized from early times. Many Old Testament prophets and early Christian writers condemned the abuse of fasting as an empty formality, by persons who led, immoral lives. In modern times, criticism of fasting has been based principally on other grounds. Physicians and psychologists have challenged the indiscriminate practice of rigorous fasting, maintaining that it is frequently harmful. Custom, moreover, has greatly modified the manner in which fasting is observed. With marked exceptions, selective fasting, rather than total abstinence, is the rule today. In the Roman Catholic Church, fasting may involve partial abstinence from food and drink (as in the fast before partaking of Holy Communion) or total abstinence. Roman Catholic fast days, now, are Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. In the United States, fasting is observed chiefly by Episcopalians and Lutherans among Protestants, by Orthodox and Conservative Jews, and by Roman Catholics.

In modern times, the hunger strike, a form of fasting, has been employed as a political weapon. Innumerable political prisoners in various parts of the world, including conscientious objectors in the U.S., have engaged in hunger strikes. Mohandas Gandhi, leader of the struggle for India's freedom, undertook fasts, occasionally, to compel his followers to obey his precept of non-violence.

**Glossolalia**, (Greek *glossa*, "tongue;" *lalein*, "to speak"), religious term for the ancient, and modern, practice of speaking in a state of ecstasy and, thus, in a pattern of speech different from normally intelligible patterns.

Two New Testament authors, Paul and Luke, indicate that speaking in tongues was a notable part of early Christian Church life. The descent of the Holy Spirit, at the festival of Pentecost, that followed the first Easter, marked the first exercise of this gift of speech (see Acts 2:1-42) in the Church. Members of the Church founded by Paul in Corinth, spoke in tongues and valued the practice, more highly, than did Paul himself (see 1 Corinthians 12:14). That members of Paul's other Churches experienced glos-

solalia, is suggested in Acts 19:2-7. Moreover, passages in the Old Testament, such as 1 Samuel 19:20-21 and 1 Kings 18:28-29, tell of prophecy among the ancient Israelites that may parallel New Testament practices.

Luke says that the tongues in which the believers spoke, at Pentecost, were foreign languages; doubtless, this was intended to prefigure the intelligible preaching of the Gospel to people of all nations. The glossolalia practiced in Paul's Churches, on the other hand, was unintelligible speech, uttered to God and of use to the assembled congregation, only if interpreted by someone other than the ecstatic speaker.

The consistent element in the New Testament references to glossolalia, is the belief that the Holy Spirit causes Christians to speak in tongues and that the practice is one of the Spirit's gifts. Speaking in tongues, is thus, considered a manifestation of one's being under the direction of the Spirit, rather than of one's own rational faculty, or of, for example, an administrative hierarchy. Accordingly, glossolalia has repeatedly, emerged in Christian history, notably in groups reacting to what they perceive to be - an over-emphasis on rationality and a corresponding failure to celebrate, adequately, the role of the Holy Spirit.

**God**, the center and focus of religious faith, a holy being or ultimate reality, to whom, worship and prayer are addressed. Especially, in monotheistic religions, God is considered the creator or source of everything that exists and is spoken of, in terms of perfect attributes -- for instance, infinitude, immutability, eternity, goodness, knowledge (omniscience), and power (omnipotence). Most religions, traditionally, ascribe to God, certain human characteristics that can be understood, either literally or metaphorically, such as will, love, anger, and forgiveness.

### ***Conceptions of God***

Many religious thinkers have held that God is so different from finite beings, that He must be considered, essentially, a mystery beyond the powers of human conception. Nevertheless, most philosophers and theologians, have assumed that a limited know-

ledge of God is possible and have formulated different conceptions of Him, in terms of divine attributes and paths of knowledge.

### **Philosophical and Religious Approaches**

The philosophical and religious conceptions of God, have at times, been sharply distinguished. In the 7th century, for instance, the French mathematician and religious thinker, Blaise Pascal, unfavorably, contrasted the “God of the philosophers,” an abstract idea, with the “God of faith,” an experienced, living reality. In general, mystics, who claim direct experience of the divine being, have asserted the superiority of their knowledge of God, to the rational demonstrations of God’s existence and attributes propounded by philosophers and theologians. Some theologians have tried to combine philosophical and experiential approaches to God, as in the 20th-century German theologian, Paul Tillich’s two-fold way of speaking of God as the “ground of being” and “ultimate concern.” A certain tension, is probably inevitable, however, between the way that theologians speak of God and the way most believers think of and experience Him.

### **Primary Attributes**

God may be conceived as transcendent (“above” the world), emphasizing His otherness, His independence from and power over the world order; or as immanent (“indwelling” the world), emphasizing His presence and participation within the world process. He has been thought of as personal, by analogy, with human individuals; some theologians, on the other hand, have maintained that the concept of personality is inadequate to God and that He must be conceived as impersonal or supra-personal. In the great monotheistic religions, God is worshiped as the One, the supreme unity, that embraces or has created all things; but, polytheism, the belief in many gods, has also flourished throughout history.

These contrasts, are sometimes, dialectically combined. Thus, while theism emphasizes divine transcendence and pantheism identifies God with the world order, in pantheism, God is understood, as both, transcendent and immanent. The Christian doctrine of the Trinity and similar doctrines in other religions acknowledge both the unity

and the inner diversity of God. Christianity is a form of monotheism, in which, the stark unity of God has been modified. It has also been argued that God has both personal and impersonal aspects, or even that He alone, is truly personal, and that, at the finite level, there is only an imperfect approximation of personal being. These attempts to unite dialectically in God, seemingly opposite characteristics, are common in religious and mystical writers and are intended to do justice to the variety and complexity of religious experience. The 15th-century German philosopher, Nicholas, of Cusa, for instance, believing that God can be apprehended, only through mystical intuition, stressed the “coincidence of opposites” in God; the 19th-century Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, insisted on the paradoxical nature of religious faith. These formulations suggest that the logic of discourse about God is necessarily different from the logic that applies to finite entities.

### ***Judaism, Christianity, and Islam***

In Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the three religions rooted in the biblical tradition; God is conceived primarily in terms of His transcendence, personality, and unity.

#### **The Jewish Idea of God**

The idea of transcendence is introduced in the opening verses of the Hebrew Scriptures, in which, God is presented as Creator, and this conception impresses itself on all Jewish discourse about God. To say the world is created, means that it is not independent of God or an emanation of God, but external to Him, a product of His will, so that He is Lord of all the earth. This explains the Jewish antipathy -- no creature can represent the Creator, so it is forbidden to make any material image of Him. Nonetheless, it is also part of the creation teaching that the human being is made in the image of God. Thus, the Hebrew understanding of God, was frankly, anthropomorphic. He promised and threatened, He could be angry and even jealous; but, His primary attributes were righteousness, justice, mercy, truth, and faithfulness. He is represented as king, judge, and shepherd. He binds Himself by covenants to His people and thus limits Himself. Such a God, even if anthropomorphic, is a living God. It is true that the

name of God, Jehovah, was understood as “I am who I am,” but, this was not taken by the Hebrews of biblical times in the abstract, metaphysical, sense in which it was interpreted later. The Hebrew God was unique, and His command was, “You shall have no other gods beside Me!” (although in some biblical passages, the Spirit of the Lord and the angel of the Lord and, in later Jewish speculation, the divine wisdom, appear to be, almost secondary, divine beings).

### **Christian Conceptions**

Christianity began as a Jewish sect, and thus, took over the Hebrew God, the Jewish Scriptures, eventually becoming, for Christians, the Old Testament. During His ministry, Jesus, was probably understood as a Holy Man of God, but, by the end of the 1st century, Christians had exalted Him into the divine sphere, and this created tension with the monotheistic tradition of Judaism. The solution of the problem, was the development of the doctrine of the triune God, or Trinity, which, although it is suggested in the New Testament, was not fully formulated until the 4th century. The God of the Old Testament became, for Christians, the Father, a title that Jesus Himself has applied to Him and that was meant to stress His love and care, rather than His power. Jesus Himself, acknowledged as the Christ, was understood as the incarnate Son, or Word (Logos), the concrete manifestation of God within the finite order. Both expressions, Son and Word, imply a being, who is both distinct from the Father, and yet, so closely akin to Him as to be “of the same substance” (Greek *homoousios*) with Him. The Holy Spirit -- said in the West, to proceed from the Father and the Son, in the East, to proceed from the Father alone -- is the immanent presence and activity of God in the creation, which He strives to bring to perfection. Although Christian theology speaks of the three “persons” of the Trinity, these are not persons in the modern sense, but three ways of being of the One God.

### **Islam**

Islam arose as a powerful reaction against the ancient pagan cults of Arabia, and as a consequence, it is the most starkly monotheistic of the three biblically rooted religions. The name, Allah, means simply, “the God.” He is personal, transcendent, and unique,

and Muslims are forbidden to depict Him in any creaturely form. The primary creed is that, “There is no god, but Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet.” Allah has seven basic attributes: life, knowledge, power, will, hearing, seeing, and speech. The last three are not to be understood in an anthropomorphic sense. His will is absolute, and all that happens depends on it, even to the extent that believers and unbelievers are predestined to faith or unbelief.

### **Asian and Other Religions**

Despite the differences, the conceptions of God in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam bear an obvious “family resemblance.” The great religions of Asia, however, belong to a quite different realm. Even to use the Word, God, in an Asian religious context, may be misleading, because, it generally, carries the connotation of personality. A broader expression that would include, both the idea of a personal God and the idea of an impersonal or supra-personal absolute, is Holy Being.

### **Hinduism**

In Hinduism, Holy Being can be understood in several ways. Philosophically, it is understood as Brahma, the one eternal, absolute reality embracing all that is, so, that the world of change, is but, the surface appearance (*maya*). In popular religion, many gods are recognized, but, properly understood, these are manifestations of Brahma. Each god has his or her own function. The three principal gods, charged respectively, with creating, preserving, and destroying, are joined as the Trimurti, or three powers, reminiscent of the Christian Trinity. Strictly speaking, the Creator, God, does not create in the Judeo-Christian sense, for the world is eternal and He is simply the God who has been, from the beginning. In *bhakti* Hinduism, the way of personal devotion, the god, Isvara, is conceived as personal and is not unlike the Judeo-Christian God.

### **Buddhism and Chinese Religion**

It is sometimes said that Buddhism, in its Hinayana form, is atheistic, but this is not so. The gods are real, but they are not ultimate. The ultimate reality, or Holy Being, is the

impersonal cosmic order. A similar concept is found in ancient Greek religion, in which, cosmic destiny seems to have been superior to even the high gods. In the Mahayana Buddhism of China and Japan, the Buddha himself was transformed into a divine being, although the connection with the historical Buddha, became very tenuous or even ceased, and these Buddha figures of the Far East, are cosmic beings.

In the indigenous Chinese religions, the ultimate Holy Being also seems to have been conceived as an impersonal order. In Taoism, it is the rhythm of the universe; in Confucianism, it is the moral law of heaven.

### **Polytheism and Animism**

In polytheism, there are many holy beings, each manifesting some particular divine attribute or caring for some particular aspect of nature or of human affairs. Polytheism was the most common form of religion in the ancient world and was well developed in Egypt, Mesopotamia, Greece, Rome, and elsewhere. It tends, however, to develop into a form of religion that has a unitary conception of the divine, either through philosophical criticism or through one of the deities in the polytheistic pantheon acquiring an overwhelming superiority over the others. The gods of a pantheon were usually conceived, in some family relationship, which ensured from the beginning, a sense of their unity. Polytheism, probably developed, out of a more primitive form of religion (still practiced in many parts of the world), called animism, the belief in a multitude of spiritual forces, localized and limited in their powers, some friendly and some hostile. In animism, the sense of Holy Being is diffused throughout the environment.

### **Summary of Major Types**

A range of types, each shading into the other, can be abstracted from this survey. In the monotheism of Judaism and Islam, Holy Being is conceived at its most transcendent and personal level. In Christian Trinitarianism, an attempt is made to synthesize transcendence and immanence. In the Asian religions considered, the immanence and impersonal nature of Holy Being, are stressed (although some forms of Hinduism and Buddhism do not exclude personal aspects of the divine).

### ***Grounds for Belief***

Although conceptions of God have varied considerably, depending on historical period, culture, and sect, a belief in Holy Being, in some sense, has been predominant in almost all societies throughout history. This belief has been challenged, however, since ancient times by skepticism, materialism, atheism, and other forms of disbelief, and the proportion of unbelievers, is higher in modern societies, than in most societies of the past.

### **Varieties of Disbelief**

Arguments against belief in God are as numerous as arguments for it. Atheists absolutely deny the existence of God. Some, for instance, believe the material universe constitutes ultimate reality; others argue that the prevalence of suffering and evil, in the world, precludes the existence of a sacred being. Agnostics believe that the evidence, for and against, the existence of God, is inconclusive; they therefore, suspend judgment. Positivists believe, that rational inquiry, is restricted to questions of empirical fact, so that it is meaningless, either to affirm or deny, the existence of God.

### **The Nature of Belief**

If God is the ground or source of being and, not simply, another being, even the highest or supreme being, then he does not exist, in the sense, in which things exist within the world. It may even be misleading to say, "God exists," although this is the traditional way of speaking. To believe in God is to have faith in the ultimate ground of being, or to trust in the ultimate rationality and righteousness of the whole scheme of things. This way of expressing the matter also leaves open the questions of transcendence and immanence, personal being, and impersonal being, and so on. The primary basis for belief in God is to be found in experience, especially religious experience. There are many experiences in which people have become aware of Holy Being impinging on their lives -- mystical experiences, conversion, a sense of presence, sometimes visions and locutions -- which may come with the force of a revelation. Besides specifically religious experiences, there are others in which people become

aware of a depth or an ultimacy that they call God -- moral experiences, inter-personal relations, the sense of beauty, the search for truth, the awareness of finitude, even confrontation with suffering and death. These, are sometimes, called limit situations (a term used by the 20th-century German philosopher, Karl Jaspers), because those who undergo such experiences, seem to strike against the limits of their own being. In so doing, however, they become aware of a being that transcends their own, yet, with which they sense both, difference and affinity. They become aware of what the 20th-century German Protestant theologian, Rudolf Otto, in a classic description, called, *mysterium tremendum et fascinans*, the mystery that, at once, produces both, awe and fascination.

### **Formal Arguments For the Existence of God**

To many people, these experiences of Holy Being, are self-authenticating, and they feel no need to inquire further. All human experience, however, is fallible. Mistakes of perception, are everyday experiences, and false conceptions of the natural world, the earth, the heavenly bodies, and so forth, have prevailed for thousands of years. It is, therefore, possible that the experience of Holy Being is illusory, and this possibility, has led some believers, to look for a rational basis for belief in God, that will confirm the experiential basis. Numerous attempts have been made to prove the reality of God. The medieval Scholastic theologian, St. Anselm, argued that the very idea of a being, than whom, no more perfect can be conceived, entails his existence, for existence is itself, an aspect of perfection. Many philosophers have denied the logical validity of such a transition, from idea to factual existence, but this ontological argument is still discussed. The 13th-century theologian, St. Thomas Aquinas, rejected the ontological argument, but proposed five other proofs of God's existence, that are still, officially accepted by the Roman Catholic Church: (1) The fact of change, requires an agent of change; (2) the chain of causation needs to be grounded in a first cause, that is itself, uncaused; (3) the contingent facts of the world (facts that might not have been as they are), presuppose a necessary being; (4) one can observe a gradation of things, as higher and lower, and this points to a perfect reality at the top of the hierarchy; (5) the order and design of nature, demand, as their source, a being possessing the highest wisdom. The

18th-century German philosopher, Immanuel Kant, rejected Aquinas's arguments, but argued the necessity of God's existence as the support or guarantor of the moral life. These arguments, for the reality of God, have all been submitted to repeated and searching criticism, and they continue to be reformulated to meet the criticisms. It is, now generally agreed, that none of them constitutes a proof, but many believers would say that the arguments have a cumulative force, which, although still short of proof, amounts to a strong probability, especially in conjunction with the evidence of religious experience. Ultimately, however, belief in God is, like many other important beliefs, an act of faith -- one that must be rooted in personal experience.

### **Grace**

In Christian theology, unearned favor, freely bestowed by God, on individuals, who are thereby, redeemed and sanctified. Grace (Hebrew *hen*), in this sense, is mentioned in Hebrew Scripture. In the New Testament, grace (Greek *charis*) is associated, almost exclusively, with the figure of Christ. By Christ's atoning death, the limitless favor of God was revealed.

### **Pelagius and Augustine**

The first theological conflict over the nature of sin and grace occurred in the later 4th century between St. Augustine and the British theologian, Pelagius. Pelagius argued that every person is free to obey or disobey God. Everyone sins, from time to time, and needs the grace of God. In Pelagius's view, however, grace consists of God's having given the teachings and the example of Jesus, so that, by grace, one can know the right and good. One might further, pray for God's grace, as assistance, in performing the good. Such grace is "resistible," however; one is free to refuse it. Pelagius regarded salvation as God's reward given for a life of freely chosen obedience.

Augustine agreed that God had created humanity free, to obey or disobey him, but argued that the taint of original sin is transmitted to succeeding generations by the act of procreation. Humanity, is therefore, unable not to sin. Only the irresistible grace of God can free his creation from the power of sin, and that grace was

given in Christ. It is made accessible to individuals through the ministry of the Church and especially, through baptism and the other sacraments. Believers may still sin, but those whom God elects persevere, and finally, achieve salvation, not by their merit or good works, but by the triumphant grace of God.

### **The Middle Ages**

Scholastic theologians, especially St. Thomas Aquinas, somewhat altered the Augustinian doctrine of grace, which they intended to affirm. Aquinas introduced a distinction between the realm of nature and the realm of the supernatural. The realm of nature, he argued, can be known by unaided reason. The realm of the supernatural can be understood, only through, the grace of God and by His gracious revelation of truth. Thus, Aquinas made room for both Aristotelian reason in the natural realm and traditional Augustinian theology in the supernatural realm. For him, reason is untainted by sin and yields adequate knowledge within its inherent limitations. Grace does not contradict or supersede nature, but perfects it.

The Scholastics also made a series of distinctions concerning the realm of grace itself. Grace belongs to the supernatural realm; yet, an act of grace is necessary to elevate a person to the realm of grace. This is justifying grace, or grace of elevation. It takes a further act of grace, called sanctifying grace, to make a person holy and sanctified, and thus, able to enter communion with God. In addition, there is gratuitous grace: God's grace cannot be bound to any pre-determined channel. Grace may be permanent, as recognized in the steadfast, virtuous life of its recipient (habitual grace); it may also be received, on rare occasions, to allow certain extraordinary acts of obedience to God (actual grace).

Scholastic theology tied grace, almost exclusively, to the sacramental system. Grace, according to this doctrine, is infused by each of the seven sacraments, so that the proper kind of grace is available when needed.

### **The Reformation**

The 16th-century Protestant reformers dissociated grace, to some extent, from the sacraments. Both Martin Luther and John Calvin emphasized the personal quality of grace. For Luther, grace depends on a personal relationship with God and cannot be imparted to an individual apart from or against that individual's will. Calvin contended that grace is an irresistible force, within the individual, that frees the will from its natural bondage and is given only to those predestined, by God, for salvation.

Protestant reformers also rejected the Scholastic belief in the efficacy of unaided reason in the understanding of the natural realm. Luther and Calvin argued that all creation is corrupted by sin, including nature and reason, as well as, human will and feeling. Thus, they reverted to an interpretation of sin and grace, more Augustinian, than that of the Scholastics.

### **Modern Developments**

Liberal Protestant thought, in the 19th and early 20th centuries developed an optimistic and almost Pelagian view of human nature. After the disillusionment of World War I and its aftermath, however, the most influential Protestant theologians, including Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Paul Tillich, sought to recover a more Augustinian doctrine of sin and grace. This unorthodox movement did not, however, revive Augustine's idea of the transmission of sin by procreation, and it retained the traditional Protestant emphasis on the personal quality of grace without denying the centrality of sacraments. The work of certain 20th-century Roman Catholic theologians, such as Karl Rahner and Hans Kung, moves in similar directions, under the influence of existentialism.

### **Great Awakening**

A general revival of evangelical religion in the American colonies, which reached its peak in the early 1740's. Local revivals had occurred previously, inspired by the teaching of such clergymen as the congregational theologian, Jonathan Edwards. In 1739 and 1740, the English evangelist, George Whitefield, made extended tours along the Atlantic seaboard, attracting large crowds, as he preached the necessity for sinners to be converted. Others followed his example of itinerant preaching, and many small

local revivals merged into a general “great awakening.”

Whitefield, the Presbyterian clergyman, Gilbert Tennent, and other traveling revivalists, were generally welcomed, at first. They stimulated religious zeal, produced conversions, and increased Church membership. Before long, however, the methods of the itinerants and the fervent emotionalism of the revival, drew criticism, being seen by a large proportion of the settled clergy, as a threat to the established order. Revivalists, often accused, settled ministers, of being unconverted and of leading their congregations to spiritual destruction. As a consequence, many Churches split into factions. In New England, separate congregational Churches were organized, and in the Middle Colonies, Presbyterians divided into rival bodies, called the New Side and the Old Side, which remained apart until 1758.

The Great Awakening had varied and, to some degree, contradictory effects on American religion came about. In New England, Calvinism was re-invigorated, and Jonathan Edwards emerged as the leading Orthodox theologian. Opponents of the revival, however, began preaching against the Orthodox doctrines of predestination, election, and original sin. The congregational clergyman, Charles Chauncy of Boston, for instance, attacked revivalist excesses and began to advocate, a theological liberalism, that eventually, developed into Unitarianism. In the Middle Colonies, on the other hand, many Scottish and Scotch-Irish Presbyterians reacted, by reaffirming Orthodox doctrine, which, they argued, was weakened by the revivalists' emphasis on religious experience.

In community after community, the Great Awakening produced tension, discord, and factional rivalry, so that whatever religious harmony and uniformity had existed, was disrupted. Nevertheless, evangelical fervor drew supporters of the revival together, producing a sense of unity transcending denominational and political boundaries. The Great Awakening, was thus, a significant inter-colonial movement, which contributed to a sense of American nationality before the American Revolution.

**Haggada or Aggada**, (Hebrew *haggadah*, from *higgidh* “to relate”), in Judaism, the body of non-legal rabbinical lore, comprising legends, anecdotes, and parables, which exemplifies the religious and ethical principles of the traditional law compiled in the Talmud and Midrash during the first centuries of the Christian era. The Haggada is a complement to the Halakah, or legal sections of rabbinical literature. The Haggada and Halakah were set down concurrently. Although the Talmud contains numerous Haggadic passages, the great bulk of Haggadic lore was assembled in separate compilations known as Midra-shim, that is, homiletic interpretations of the Old Testament. For the most part, the oldest Midrashim reflect Halakah, rather than Haggada. The greatest of the Haggadic Midrashim, is the Midrash Rabbah, or Great Midrash, a verse-by-verse interpretation of the entire Pentateuch and also of the five scrolls (Esther, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Song of Songs) that are read on the various Jewish holidays. The Haggada is the primary source of knowledge of the theology of the ancient rabbinic Judaism. The term, Haggada, denotes also, the prayer books used at the Seder, or ritual dinner, observed at Passover. This prayer book, besides many Psalms, reproduces extracts from the traditional Haggada, chosen for their special relevance to the holiday.

**Hallel**, (Hebrew “praise”), in Jewish ritual, selection from the Psalms, chanted as part of the liturgy during certain festivals. The more frequently used selection includes Psalms 113-118, and is known as the Egyptian Hallel, presumably because Psalm 114 begins, “When Israel went out of Egypt . . .;” it is sung in synagogues on the first two days of Pesach, or Passover, on Shabuoth, on Sukkot, and on each morning of the eight days of Hanukkah. An abridged version is sung on the last six days of Pesach and at the new moon. The Egyptian Hallel is also sung at the close of the Seder, the domestic Pesach service, and is, presumably, the hymn that was sung by Jesus and his disciples at the end of the Last Supper (see Mark 14:26). A second Hallel, the Great Hallel, consists of Psalm 136 alone; it is sung at Pesach and during Sukkot and recited every Sabbath. Originally, the Hallel consisted of either, Psalm 113 or Psalm 114; the Psalms, now included in the ritual are later additions, made about A.D., 160.

**Hallelujah or Alleluia** (Hebrew *halaluyah*, “praise [ye] the Lord”), interjection used in hymns and liturgies of the Orthodox Church, the Roman Catholic Church, and the Church of England. Composers of religious and semi-religious music have made much use of it, notably in the “Hallelujah Chorus,” in Handel’s, *Messiah*.

**Heaven**, in religion, place where God, gods, or other spiritual beings dwell, and the place or condition of perfect supernatural happiness for the redeemed in the afterlife.

In simple societies, the concept of life after death, was substantially that of a shadowy continuation of life on earth. Even in that concept, however, the principle of the necessity for vindication of divine justice was manifested. This principle is illustrated in the distinction between Elysium (a place of reward for the virtuous dead) and Tartarus (a place of damnation where the wicked were punished) in the Greek and Roman religions and in the various depths of Sheol (abode of the dead) of the Jewish Scriptures. Later, Jewish mystics regarded the heavens as contained in the seven spheres of the firmament, and they found in the Persian doctrine of resurrection, a hope of release from Sheol to a new life on earth or in the heavens.

Aristotle declared that all (polytheistic) religions united, in placing the abode of the gods in the most elevated place in the universe. Such regions were, in classical times, considered as closed to ordinary mortals. The Islands of the Blessed, sometimes identified with Elysium, were reached only by heroes, demi-gods, and favorites of the gods. The heaven of later polytheistic religions, was conceived of, as a place where mortals might continue the pleasures of earthly life, as in the Valhalla of the Germans and Scandinavians and the happy hunting ground of the Native North Americans.

The general belief of Christians, is that, since the resurrection of Christ, the souls of the just, who are free from sin, are admitted immediately, after death, into heaven, where their chief joy consists in an unclouded vision of God, known as the beatific vision. Their bliss is eternal, but at the general resurrection, their souls are to be reunited to

their perfected, or glorified bodies. Some Christians believe that, before entering heaven, souls first pass through a state of purification, called purgatory.

Islam, in the Koran, adopts the concept of the seven heavens of the firmament, differing in degrees of glory from the seventh, the abode of the Most High, downward to the first, or most earthly, paradise. Although the Koran portrays the happiness of heaven as the unrestricted and inexhaustible partaking of the joys of physical sense, many writers consider this portrayal to be purely allegorical.

Nirvana, the heaven of Buddhism, is a state of extinction of all desire and of union with Brahma, the creator god, achieved by perfecting the soul in the course of its successive transmigrations.

## **Hell**

In theology, a place or state of punishment and privation for human souls after death. More strictly, the term is applied to the place or state of eternal punishment of the damned, whether angels or human beings. The doctrine of the existence of hell is derived from the principle of the necessity for vindication of divine justice, combined with the human experience that evildoers do not always appear to be punished adequately in their lifetime. Belief in a hell was widespread in antiquity and is found in most religions of the world today.

Among the early Teutons, the term, *hell* signified a place under the earth to which the souls of all mortals, good or bad, were consigned after death; it thus denoted a conception similar to that of the Hebrew Sheol. Among the early Jews, as in other Semitic nations, existence in Sheol was regarded as a shadowy continuation of earthly life where all of the problems of earthly life came to an end. Later, the dictum of the prophet, Isaiah, that the King of Babylon shall be “brought down to Sheol, to the depths of the Pit” (14-15), gave rise to the concept of various depths of Sheol, with corresponding degrees of reward and punishment.

Early Christian writers used the term, *hell* to designate (1) the limbo of infants, where the unapprised enjoy a natural bliss, but are denied the supernatural bliss of the vision of God; (2) the limbo of the fathers, in which the souls of the just, who died before the advent of Christ await their redemption, and which, is mentioned in the Apostles' Creed, "He [Christ] descended into hell;" (3) a place of purgation from minor offenses leading inevitably to heaven and (4) the place of punishment of Satan and the other fallen angels and of all mortals, who die, unrepentant of serious sin. The last of these interpretations has the greatest acceptance today.

The duration of the punishments of hell has been a subject of controversy since early Christian times. The 3rd century Christian writer and theologian, Origen, and his school, taught that the purpose of these punishments was purgatorial, and that they were proportionate to the guilt of the individual. Origen held that, in time, the purifying effect would be accomplished in all, even devils; that punishment would ultimately cease; and that everyone in hell, eventually, would be restored to happiness.

This

doctrine was condemned by the Second Council of Constantinople in 553, and a belief in the eternity of the punishments in hell became characteristic of both the Orthodox Church and the Roman Catholic Church. It also passed into the creeds of the Churches of the Reformation, but the doctrine of hell was rejected by many of the more radical thinkers of the Renaissance.

In modern times, the belief in physical punishment, after death, and the endless duration of this punishment, has been rejected by many. The question about the nature of the punishment of hell is equally controversial. Opinions range from holding the pains of hell to be no more than the remorse of conscience to the traditional belief that the "pain of loss" (the consciousness of having forfeited the vision of God and the happiness of heaven) is combined with the "pain of sense" (actual physical torment).

## **Heresy**

Any religious doctrine opposed to the dogma of a particular Church, especially a doctrine held by a person professing faith in the teachings of that Church. The term, originally meant, a belief that one arrived at by oneself (Greek *hairesis*, “choosing for oneself”) and is used to denote sectarianism in the Acts of the Apostles and in the Epistles of St. Paul. In later Christian writings, the term is used in the opprobrious sense of a belief held in opposition to the teaching of the Church.

With the establishment of Christianity in the Roman Empire, heresy came to be considered a crime against the state, punishable by civil law. Heresy was also, generally, outlawed in countries with an established or state-support Church. After the Reformation, however, the principles of private interpretation of the Scriptures and denial of ecclesiastical authority, in all matters of belief, were eventually, adopted in Protestant countries, and during the 19th and 20th centuries, Roman Catholic countries have also adopted the principle of religious toleration.

**Hesychasm**, (Greek *hesychia*, “quietness”), term designating a contemplative tradition, dating from the 4th century in Eastern Christian monasticism. Hesychast monks, particularly those of the monasteries of Mount Athos, devoted themselves to unceasing mental prayer, in order to achieve union with God. The most popular form of prayer was the Jesus Prayer, also known as “prayer of the heart,” and generally, consisting of the words: “Lord, Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me, a sinner.” Hesychasts repeated the prayer continuously, regulating their breathing to correspond to the recitation of the prayer. Through this physical method of prayer, they hoped to focus and maintain mental concentration on God’s name. The practice was stridently attacked by the Italo-Greek humanist monk, Barlaam, the Calabrian; in response, the Byzantine theologian, St. Gregory Palamas, composed his *Triads in Defense of the Holy Hesychasts*. Palamas’s position was formally endorsed at the Orthodox Church councils at Constantinople in 1341, 1347, and 1351. Hesychasm became very popular in Russia and is still practiced among Eastern Christians. An anthology of hesychast writings, known as the *Philocalia*, was published in Venice in 1782, by St. Nicodemus.

**Holy Water**, water blessed by a bishop or priest and prescribed for use in the liturgies of some Christian Churches. The ceremonial use of water, a natural cleansing agent, symbolizing interior purification, can be found in many religions from ancient times to

the present. In ancient Judaism, the Mosaic Law prescribed that the hands and face of all persons who were ritually unclean, be sprinkled with water. From this Jewish practice was derived, the present custom, of dipping one's fingers in holy water and making the sign of the cross with it, when entering a Church. It is intended to serve as a reminder of baptism -- that through the baptismal waters, a person undertakes the obligation of Christian commitment. In Roman Catholic practice, holy water, is frequently, kept in the home for private devotions.

**Homily**, informal sermon on a portion of the Bible, designed to explain the literal meaning and the spiritual or moral significance of the text. The practice of reading the Scripture, during public religious services, and explaining its lessons in popular form, prevailed among the Jews, even in ancient times, and was adopted by the early Christian Churches. Many collections of homilies were made in ancient times, and much of the literature of the Middle Ages is homiletic.

The *Books of Homilies* are two collections of sermons, published in 1547 and 1563, respectively, and later combined, that are frequently, consulted in controversies concerning the doctrines of the Church of England.

**Idolatry**, (Greek *eidolon*, "image;" *latreia*, "worship"), the worship of a material image that is held to be the abode of a superhuman personality. The concept of idolatry originated in the confrontation between the three great monotheistic religions -- Judaism, Christianity, and Islam -- and the polytheistic religions they encountered along their way. It was first articulated during the clash of ancient Hebrew monotheism with the pagan cults of surrounding peoples. The translators of the Septuagint (the Greek version of the Hebrew scriptures) used the term, *eidolon* to render about 16 Hebrew

words associated with pagan worship; it is in the Septuagint that *eidolon* acquired the pejorative sense of an image that represents a false god.

In Exodus 20:3-5, Jehovah forbids not only the worship of foreign gods, but also the making of images that claim to represent him. The worship of Jehovah, in the form of two bulls (1 Kings 12:26-32), was regarded as a gross apostasy and was projected back into Israel's ancient history as the episode of the Golden Calf (Exodus 32). A larger problem was the persistent tendency of the Israelites to revert to the religious practices of surrounding peoples (Judges 10:6, 1 Kings 11:7; 2 Kings 21:1-9). A succession of Hebrew prophets denounced idolatry: Elijah and Elisha (1 Kings 18:22-40); Amos (Amos 2:4); Hosea (Hosea 4:12-13), and Isaiah (Isaiah 17:7-8). A common theme in the prophetic denunciations, is the emptiness of idols (Jeremiah 16:20; Isaiah 44:14-17).

In Christianity, the issue of idolatry arose in the context of Greco-Roman society, in which temples, altars, and images were ubiquitous. Christians were subject to charges of treason for refusing to offer sacrifices before the emperor's image. In the New Testament, idol worship is sometimes equated with demon worship (1Corinthians 10:19-21; Revelation 9:20). The early Christian apologists also emphasized that images are made of inert matter and that the human form is inappropriate for representing divinity. In his work, *The City of God*, Saint Augustine attempted a comprehensive critique of the Greco-Roman gods, polytheism, and mythology, arguing that the pagan gods were lying angels who were engaged in a struggle against the true God.

Muslim opposition to the worship of images is the legacy of Judeo-Christian practice, which Muhammad traced back to Abraham. The Arab tribes of the pre-Islamic era, worshiped many gods; among the objects of their worship were stones, trees, and statuettes. After the seizure of Mecca in 630, Muhammad had all the idols of the Kaaba destroyed in his presence. The Koran contains many prohibitions against idols and idolatry: Muslims may neither marry a woman idolater nor give

their daughters to idolaters in marriage (2:220-221).

In the 8th and 9th centuries, idolatry, again, became a matter of controversy in the Christian world. Especially in the Greek-speaking Byzantine Empire, the pagan tradition of image worship had survived in the practice of venerating icons. Christians of Semitic origin were particularly wary of idolatry in any form, and their concerns were intensified by the spread of Islam. In 725 and 726, Emperor Leo III, first prohibited the worship of images, then ordered their destruction. Supporters of icon veneration -- called *iconodules* -- argued that, by representing Christ's human likeness, icons reinforced the doctrine of Christ's Incarnation -- a doctrine called into question by the heretical teachings of Monophysitism and Docetism. The use of icons in worship was vindicated in 843, when Theodora, widow of the iconoclast emperor, Theophilus, engineered the election of the pro-icon monk, Methodius, as patriarch. The restoration of icon veneration is celebrated annually in the Eastern Church as the Triumph of Orthodoxy.

**Immaculate Conception**, Roman Catholic dogma holding that from the first instant of its creation, the soul of the Virgin Mary, was free from original sin; this doctrine is not to be confused with that of the Virgin Birth, which holds that Jesus Christ was born of a virgin mother. Despite divergent scholarly opinions, the Roman Catholic Church, has consistently favored, belief in the Immaculate Conception; a festival of that name, the significance, of which, is now indefinite, was celebrated in the Eastern Church, as early as the 5th century, and in the Western Church from the 7th century. Opposition to the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, was conducted in the 12th century by the French monastic, St. Bernard of Clairvaux and in the 13th century, by the famous Italian philosopher, St. Thomas Aquinas. Among those, who supported the doctrine, was the 13th-century Scottish theologian, John Duns Scotus. The theological controversy, over the Immaculate Conception, gained momentum in the 19th century. Finally in 1854, Pope Pius IX, issued a solemn decree, declaring the Immaculate Conception to be a dogma essential for the belief of the universal Church. Under the title, Immaculate Conception, the Virgin Mary is invoked as the patron of the United States, Brazil,

Portugal, and Corsica. The feast of the Immaculate Conception is December 8.

**Immortality**, unending existence of the soul after physical death. The doctrine of immortality is common to many religions; in different cultures, however, it takes various forms, ranging from ultimate extinction of the soul to its final survival and the resurrection of the body. In Hinduism, the ultimate personal goal is considered absorption into the “universal spirit.” Buddhist doctrine promises nirvana, the state of complete bliss achieved through total extinction of the personality. In the religion of ancient Egypt, entrance to immortal life was dependent on the results of divine examination of the merits of an individual’s life. Early Greek religion promised a shadowy continuation of life on earth in an underground region known as Hades. In Christianity and Islam, as well as in Judaism, the immortality promised is primarily of the spirit. The former two religions, both differ from Judaism, in holding that, after the resurrection of the body and a general judgment of the entire human race, the body is to be reunited with the spirit to experience, either reward or punishment. In Jewish eschatology, the resurrection of the soul will take place at the advent of the Messiah, although the reunion of body and spirit will endure only for the messianic age, when the spirit will return to heaven.

**Incarnation**, in religion, the assumption of an earthly form, by a god. In early times, priests and kings were often considered divine incarnations. In the ancient Roman and Greek religions, the gods, sometimes, assumed human form and married mortals. The idea of incarnation, is also known, in many living religions of the world. In Mahayana Buddhism, Buddha has been adored and worshiped as a divine being, who came to earth as a teacher, out of compassion, for suffering humanity. In Jainism, Vardhamana Jnatiputra or Nataputta Mahavira, called Jina, the founder of the religion, was regarded by his followers, as a supernatural being, who descended from heaven. After he was incarnated, he grew up, sinless and omniscient. In Zoroastrianism, many texts have developed the theme of Zoroaster’s celestial pre-existence and incarnation. The substance of his body, was created in heaven, fell to earth with the rain, and passed to his mother, through the milk of heifers. In Hinduism,

avatars are incarnations of the gods, especially of Vishnu.

In Christianity, the incarnation, or union of the divine nature with human nature in the person of Jesus Christ, is a central doctrine. Sharing, completely, in divinity and in humanity (except for sin), Jesus Christ is believed to be the embodiment of God in human form. The doctrine of incarnation is based on scriptural passages such as John 1:14: "And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us.

**Indulgence**, in Roman Catholic practice, the full or partial remission before God, of temporal punishment for sins that have been forgiven. It is granted, by ecclesiastical authority and is considered to be a special form of intercession made by the whole Church through its liturgy and prayers for the reconciliation of one of its members, living or dead.

In the early Christian Church, severe penitential observances, were imposed by the local priest or bishop on all who had been guilty of serious sins. It was believed that sins must be atoned for, at least in part, by the sinner in this world, rather than in the next. Works of atonement consisted of fasts, pilgrimages, floggings, and other penances of greater or less severity imposed for a specified period of time. Gradually, Church authorities substituted lesser works of devotion (such as prayers or almsgiving), accompanied by indulgences equivalent to the corresponding periods of more severe penance.

It was not until the 12th century, that the theological reflection focused on indulgences. At first, there was some opposition to the practice, but toward the end of the 12th century, the attitude of theologians, gradually became, more favorable. At the same time, the granting of indulgences became increasingly a prerogative of the Pope.

During the Middle Ages, abuses surrounded the practice of granting indulgences. Their sale, with what appeared to be automatic spiritual benefits, even without personal

repentance, led Martin Luther and other leaders of the 16th-century Protestant Reformation, to abandon the practice altogether.

The Roman Catholic Church still grants indulgences, but the practice, has been simplified, since 1967. At that time, reforms were introduced, limiting the occasions for obtaining indulgences and dropping the time equivalents.

**Incense**, material, usually consisting of aromatic gums and spices, that produces a fragrant smoke when burned. The term, is also used, to describe the fragrant smoke itself. The ingredients, are usually, frankincense, styrax, benzoin, and cascarilla bark, combined in various proportions. Other substances, often used in incense, include balsam, cinnamon, myrrh, sandalwood, and musk. The burning of incense, has been a feature of sacrificial religious ceremonies, since ancient times. It is mentioned on an inscribed tablet that was placed on the Sphinx at Giza, Egypt, in about 1350 B.C. Incense, was used in the early Jewish religion, and later, by the Romans, both in religious ceremonies and on state occasions.

Incense is widely used, in most Oriental religions, and in ceremonies of the Anglican, Roman Catholic, and Orthodox Churches.

**Infallibility**, in Christian theology, the doctrine that in matters of faith and morals, the Church, both in teaching and in believing, is protected from substantive error, by divine dispensation. The doctrine, is generally associated, with the Roman Catholic Church, but it is also applied by the Orthodox Church, to decisions of ecumenical councils. The doctrine is widely rejected by Protestants on the grounds that only God can be described as infallible.

Roman Catholic theology asserts that the entire Church is infallible (and therefore, cannot err in matters of faith) when, from bishops to laity, it shows universal agreement in matters of faith and morals. Only the following persons in the Church -- those who hold its highest teaching office -- are believed to proclaim Christian doctrine infallibly:

(1) the entire body of bishops, in union, with the Pope, the bishop of Rome, when it teaches with moral unanimity; (2) an ecumenical council that receives papal approval; and (3) under certain conditions, the Pope alone. According to the definition promulgated, in 1870, by the First Vatican Council, the Pope exercises an in-fallible teaching office, only when (1) he speaks *ex cathedra*, that is, in his official capacity as pastor and teacher; (2) he speaks with the manifest intention of binding the entire Church to acceptance; and (3) the matter pertains to faith or morals taught as a part of divine revelation handed down from Apostolic times. The Pope is never considered infallible in his personal or private views. Since the middle of the 19th century, only two *ex cathedra* pronouncements have been made in the Roman Catholic Church: the definition of the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, in 1854, by Pope Pius IX, and the definition of the Assumption of the Virgin, in 1950, by Pope Pius XII.

Infallibility is not regarded by its adherents as something miraculous or as a kind of clairvoyance. Rather, it is considered a grace, or divine gift, that is biblically and theologically grounded. Proponents point to many scriptural passages, such as the farewell discourses in John, especially the promise of the Spirit of truth (see John 14-17; 15-26; 16-13). They hold that the Church derives this gift from God, who alone, is the ultimate source of infallibility. The matters subject to infallibility are doctrines rooted in Scripture and in the ancient traditions of the Church, neither of which, can be contradicted; thus, novel doctrines and other innovations are believed to be excluded. Infallibility, is therefore, seen as a gift that is to be exercised, with the utmost care, in the service of the Gospel.

**Jubilee**, among the ancient Jews, extraordinary Sabbatical year (following every seventh ordinary Sabbatical year), celebrated every 50th year. In the year of Jubilee, the land was completely left to rest, as in the ordinary Sabbatical year. (Ordinary Sabbatical years were celebrated every seventh year). All debts were remitted; land that had been alienated, was restored to its original owners; and all Jews who, through

poverty, had been obliged to hire themselves out as servants, were released from bondage (see Leviticus 25).

The Christian Church adopted the concept of a year of remission and their term, Jubilee from the Jews; the Jubilee year, or Holy Year, as it is officially designated, exists in two forms, the ordinary and the extraordinary, and is still an institution in the Roman Catholic Church. The ordinary Holy Year is celebrated at stated intervals. It was instituted by Pope Boniface VIII, in 1300, and the interval between Holy years was fixed at 25 years by Pope Paul II, in 1470. Observance of the Holy Year involves a pilgrimage to Rome or equivalent works, specified in the papal proclamation. Extraordinary Holy Years, or Jubilees, are proclaimed on special occasions, as, for example, the 50th anniversary of the ordination of the Pope to the priesthood. The most recent Holy Year, an ordinary Jubilee, was 1975.

**Justification**, in Christian theology, the way, in which, the relationship between God and an individual believer, presumed to have been distorted or broken by sin, is set right. The word, *justify* means literally “to make just” or “to make right.”

### **The Biblical Understanding**

Justification has its roots in the Hebrew idea of covenant. In ancient Israel, to enter a covenant with another person entailed obligations upon both of the parties. Those people, who were faithful to the obligations, maintained the covenant and, were said, to be righteous (Hebrew *tsedeq*). In the case of the covenant between God and Israel, God’s obligation is conceived as the defense or vindication of His people. His righteousness is shown by His saving acts (see, for instance, Psalms 98:2; Isaiah 51:5). Israel’s obligation, on the other hand, is to obey the will of God, as disclosed in the Torah, the Law. It, is thus, an obligation to be righteous in a more usual sense of the word -- a moral obligation.

The New Testament assumes that Israel had broken its covenant with God and that the primitive Christian community had experienced the restoration of that covenant

relationship through Jesus Christ. In fact, a “new covenant” had been established. St. Paul, in particular, explained the results of the death and resurrection of Christ, in terms of justification. Christians found themselves in a right relationship to God. In this new situation, however, justification had not come about because of anything believers had done. The new relationship had been established by the power and mercy of God alone. The believer’s roll was simply to believe and trust (see Galatians 2:16; Romans 3:24).

### **St. Augustine**

The great 4th-century theologian, St. Augustine, used Paul’s teachings on justification in his controversy with the British theologian, Pelagius. Augustine, nevertheless, put more emphasis on grace than he did on justification. Insofar as justification was concerned, he took literally, the Latin word, *justificare*, which means “to make righteous.” Augustine understood justification as a process, in which, a person became more just, a virtual equivalent of sanctification.

### **Medieval Theology**

Medieval Scholastic theologians followed Augustine in insisting on the effective priority of God’s grace, without which, no new relationship was possible; but, they allowed for the efficacy of works done by the person before justification in preparing the way for grace. Moreover, although grace was regarded as sufficient for salvation, it could not effect salvation apart from the cooperation of the human will. Besides, grace was dispensed through the penitential system, under which a person had to make a minimal act of contrition before grace could be received.

### **The Reformation**

In the 16th century, Martin Luther sought to recapture Paul’s sense of justification. His teaching constituted a major dynamic of the Protestant Reformation. He had struggled with a guilty conscience, in vain, under the medieval penitential system, and he could not attribute to his will, the power that was required of it. While deeply troubled, he read the Epistle to the Romans. The phrase “He who, through faith,

is righteous, shall live" (Romans 1:17), deeply stirred him. He interpreted this experience to mean that God required him, only, to trust in divine mercy.

Medieval distinctions and subtleties, were thus, swept away. Justification was obtained, by faith alone, (*sola fide*). To be sure, God's grace was the agent, but the human will, contributed nothing. Justification became the center of the whole Christian faith.

Everything flowed from it: the ability to do good works, even participation in the sacramental system. This view came to be regarded, as virtually, embodying the whole issue, dividing Protestants from the Roman Catholic Church.

No significant developments in the understanding of justification occurred, in either, Protestant or Roman Catholic theology during the 18th and 19th centuries. Liberal Protestantism tended to ignore it, and Roman Catholic thought, retained the Scholastic doctrines.

### **The 20th Century**

Protestant theologians in the 20th century, have once more, sought to reinvigorate Pauline doctrines of sin and grace. The doctrine of justification has been re-asserted as part of this revival; indeed, such theology is often called, neo-Reformation theology.

Contemporary theology differs from the traditional theology of grace, in an important respect, however. The context of justification language for both medieval and Reformation theologians was conceived something like a courtroom, in which, the guilty penitent was on trial, whereas, the context of the biblical language was the covenant, which implies a personal relationship. In the 20th century, the influence of a more personal and existential approach to theology, has made theologians, generally, more sympathetic to the reformers' emphasis on the personal experience of grace.

**Kaddish**, (Aramaic “holy”), in Judaism, an Aramaic prayer that glorifies God and asks for the speedy coming of His kingdom on earth. Originally recited at the conclusion of rabbinic scriptural exposition, the prayer now takes a variety of forms and serves several liturgical functions. A brief form, called half Kaddish, concludes each part of the worship service and is recited at the end of the Sabbath Torah-reading in the synagogue. A longer form, whole *Kaddish*, is recited at the end of the *Tefillah*, the major prayer section of each service. A third form, the rabbis’ *Kaddish*, is recited after Talmud study. The best-known form is that, recited by mourners, at the conclusion of the worship service. A fifth form, recited as part of the funeral service, at the graveside, includes a petition for the resurrection of the dead. The medieval association of the *Kaddish* with mourners, is based on a folk belief that, this prayer is efficacious in releasing the soul of the dead from purgatory.

**Kiddush**, ( Hebrew “sanctification”), in Judaism, a prayer recited on the Sabbath, festivals, and the New Year (Rosh Hashanah), acknowledging the sanctity of the holy day and concluding with the formula, “Praised be Thou, O Lord, who sanctifies the Sabbath,” or “who sanctifies Israel and the festivals.” Before a festive meal on the eve of the Sabbath or holiday, the *Kiddush* is recited over a cup of wine by the head of the household. It includes the customary blessing over the wine and is accompanied by biblical verses. The wine benediction and biblical verses are also recited before the large first meal on the morning of the Sabbath or festival. No food can be eaten before the *Kiddush* is recited. It is also traditional to recite the *Kiddush* in the synagogue at the conclusion of the evening and morning services. This custom, originally, was instituted for the benefit of travelers who might be lodging and eating at the synagogue over the Sabbath or festival.

**Lent**, period of fasting and penitence, traditionally observed by Christians, in preparation for Easter. The length of the Lenten fast, during which observants eat sparingly, was established in the 4th century, as 40 days. In the Eastern Churches, where both Saturdays and Sundays are regarded as festival days, the period

of Lent is the eight weeks before Easter; in the Western Churches, where only Sunday is regarded as a festival, the 40-day period begins on Ash Wednesday and extends, with the omission of Sundays, to the day before Easter. The observance of fasting or other forms of self-denial, during Lent, varies within Protestant and Anglican Churches. These bodies emphasize penitence. The Roman Catholic Church has, in recent years, relaxed its laws on fasting. According to an Apostolic constitution, issued by Pope Paul VI, in February 1966, fasting and abstinence during Lent, are obligatory only on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.

**Limbo**, (Latin *limbus*, “border,” “edge”), in Roman Catholic theology, abode of the dead, whose souls are excluded from heaven through no fault of their own. Theologians distinguish two forms of limbo: the limbo of the fathers, where the souls of the just were detained until their redemption was accomplished by Christ; and the limbo of infants, where the souls of un-baptized infants, and others, free of personal sin, enjoy a natural bliss, but are denied the supernatural beatitude of heaven. The name, *limbo* arose from the ancient belief that the place was situated on the edge of hell. Although the existence of limbo, has frequently been discussed by theologians, the Roman Catholic Church has no official position regarding the subject.

**Litany**, in Christian liturgy, form of prayer consisting of a series of invocations and supplications pronounced by the clergy, alternating with responses by the choir or congregation. The litany may form part of the liturgy, of certain feasts, or may be regarded as a separate service, used especially in religious processions.

In the Roman Catholic Church, the principal litany is the Litany of the Saints. Originating in medieval times, it consists of the Kyrie Eleison, that is, the invocation of Christ and the Trinity; a series of supplications for the intercession of specific saints; a series of supplications for deliverance from particular evils; and a series of prayers for the preservation of the Church. The Litany of the Saints forms part of the liturgy for the Feast of Saint Mark on April 25, called the Greater Litany. It also forms part of the ritual,

on such occasions, as the ordination of priests and the consecration of Churches.

The litany is in the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England and in the service books of other Anglican Churches and some Protestant Churches. It is similar to the Roman Catholic form, but contains no invocations for the intercession of the saints. The litany is prescribed for Anglican morning and evening prayer services.

**Liturgy**, body of rites prescribed for formal public worship. It is especially associated with the prayers and ceremonies used in the celebration of the Lord's Supper, or Eucharist. During the first three centuries of the Christian era, the rite of the Church was comparatively fluid, based on various accounts of the Last Supper. In about the 4th century, the various traditions crystallized into four liturgies, the Antiochene, or Greek, the Alexandrian, the Roman, and the Gallican, from which, all others have been derived.

The Antiochene family of liturgies includes the Clementine liturgy of the Apostolic Constitutions, which is no longer used; the Syriac liturgy of Saint James, used by the Jacobite Church and Syrian Eastern Rite Churches; the Greek liturgy of Saint James, used once a year at Jerusalem; the Syriac liturgy of the Maronites; the Syriac liturgy, used by the Nestorian Church; the Malabar liturgy, used by the Saint Thomas Christians of India; the Byzantine liturgy, used in various languages by the Orthodox Churches; and the Armenian liturgy, used by the Georgians and the Armenian Eastern Rite Churches.

The Alexandrian liturgies include the Greek liturgy of Saint Mark, no longer used; the Coptic liturgy, which is used by the Copts in Egypt; and the Ethiopian liturgy, used by the Ethiopian Church.

The Roman liturgy is used almost universally by the Roman Catholic Church. From it, were derived, various medieval liturgies, such as those of Sarum, Paris, Trier, and Cologne, which are no longer in use.

The Gallican liturgy was used in northwestern Europe from the 4th century; it was superseded in France about 800 by the Roman liturgy. From it, developed the Ambrosian liturgy, now used principally in the see of Milan; the Mozarabic or Isidorian liturgy, which was the liturgy of the Church in Spain from the 6th to the 12th centuries and is now, used only, in Toledo and Salamanca; and the Celtic liturgy, which was superseded in the Celtic Church in the 7th century by the Roman liturgy. In the Roman Catholic Church, the use of the vernacular, rather than Latin, was approved during Vatican Council II (1962-65). Pope Paul VI, subsequently, directed that vernacular forms of the Mass, would be obligatory after December, 1971. In the United States, the bishops approve the use of English translations of the Mass, on or after, March 22, 1970. Beginning with the 19th-century Oxford movement, Protestants developed a greater awareness of formal liturgy in their worship, and have increasingly, adopted liturgical forms of worship abandoned during the Reformation, for the liturgy of the Church of England and the Episcopal Church.

**Lord's Prayer or Our Father**, the only formula of prayer attributed to Jesus Christ in the New Testament and the most widely used prayer of Christians. It appears in two forms: A longer form in Matthew 6:9-13, is a part of the teaching on prayer in the Sermon on the Mount; a shorter form, in Luke 11:2-4, is given as a response to the disciples' request, "Lord, teach us to pray."

The prayer consists of an introduction and seven petitions in the Matthew version, which seems to be a liturgical expansion of the original utterance of Christ. The Matthaean form, which has been employed liturgically since very early times, is:

Our Father who art in heaven,  
Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come,  
Thy will be done,

On earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day, our daily bread;  
And forgive us our debts,  
As, we also, have forgiven our debtors;  
And, lead us not into temptation,  
But, deliver us from evil.

A closing doxology, “For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory,” was added to the prayer in ancient times, although it does not appear in most manuscripts of the Bible and is only a footnote in the Revised Standard Version. Its incorporation into the Lord’s Prayer, as early as the 1st century, is attested by the version of the prayer in the *Didache*, a brief manual of instruction for converts, to Christianity. Many Protestants, ordinarily recite, the doxology as part of the Lord’s Prayer; Roman Catholics incorporate it into the recitation of the prayer, at Mass, but generally, do not use it in private recitation.

The seven petitions of the prayer are modeled on the Psalms. The first three petitions are concerned with the glorification of God, and the last four are requests for divine assistance to humankind. The prayer reflects, a community, based on an eschatological hope, that is, a forgiveness, temptation, and deliverance from evil are, in fact, best understood in relation to the end times. The prayer, is actually, a synthesis of the Christian faith; its balanced structure makes it an expression of the biblical hierarchy of values: the first things of God, then human concerns.

After baptism, the Lord’s Prayer is the best-known bond of unity among Christians of every tradition, and, is always, recited in ecumenical gatherings. The following contemporary version of the prayer, used especially in Protestant and Roman Catholic youth services, was approved by an international and ecumenical body, known as the International Consultation on English Texts.

Our Father in heaven,

holy be your Name,  
 your kingdom come,  
 your will be done,  
 on earth as in heaven.  
 Give us today, our daily bread.  
 Forgive us our sins  
 as we forgive those who sin against us.  
 Do not bring us to the test  
 but deliver us from evil.  
 For the kingdom, the power,  
 and the glory  
 are yours now and forever.

**Mass (religion)**, the ritual of chants, readings, prayers, and other ceremonies used in the celebration of the Eucharist in the Roman Catholic Church. The same name is used in high Anglican Churches. Other Protestant Churches, call this ritual, Holy Communion or the Lord's Supper; Eastern Orthodox Churches call it the Divine Liturgy. The word, *mass* comes from the Latin, *missa* ("sent"). It was taken from the formula for dismissing the congregation: *Ite, missa est* ("Go, the Eucharist has been sent forth"), referring to the ancient custom of sending consecrated bread from the bishop's Mass, to other Churches in Rome, to symbolize that Church's unity with the bishop in the celebration of the Mass.

### **Forms of the Mass**

The earliest form of the celebration of the Mass was, the domestic Eucharist. Archaeological evidence shows that from the 3rd to the 4th century, Christian communities celebrated Mass in large homes. The local bishop presided over this Eucharist. After Emperor Constantine the Great's Edict of Toleration (A.D., 313), public buildings -- called basilicas -- were adapted to the celebration of the bishop's Eucharist. As the Church grew and the number of individual Churches increased, presbyters attached to these Churches, came to lead the celebration. Even-

tually, these presbyters became known as sacerdotes (“priests”).

Before the 8th century, the only form of the Mass was the public Mass, celebrated by a bishop or priest with a congregation. In its solemn form, (High Mass), most parts are sung. In its most elaborate form, the papal Mass, the Pope is assisted by the papal nobility,

Latin and Eastern Rite deacons, the papal court, and numerous other functionaries. The pontifical Mass (solemn Mass of a bishop), is less elaborate, although besides deacons, sub-deacons, thurifers (incense bearers), and acolytes, the bishop is also assisted by his *familia* (family), assistants, who are responsible for taking care of his regalia, (solemn vestments), and insignia (miter, crosier, and pontifical cross). The solemn parish, or monastic, Mass, is celebrated with deacon and sub-deacon. The simplest form of sung Mass, is celebrated by one priest, with the assistance of acolytes and thurifer. In daily celebrations, a simpler form is used, in which, all parts of the Mass are read by one priest. This is the *Missa Lecta* (“read Mass”), or Low Mass.

Beginning in the 8th century, the private Mass, evolved in the monasteries of northern Europe. Monks, were originally laity, and they relied on local priests for their sacramental needs or ordained some of their own members for those needs. Beginning in the 8th century, British and Irish monks were ordained for the missionary work of converting the tribes of northern Europe, that had been subdued, by Charlemagne and his successors. By the 11th century (after the great missionary age), the growing monasteries of northern Europe, continued to ordain their monks; so the number of priests, eventually, far exceeded, the sacramental needs of the monks. Thus, the practice of private daily celebration of Mass, grew until, by the 12th century, it was common.

### **Parts of the Mass**

By the 6th century, the parts of the Mass were relatively fixed. Six principal sections can be distinguished.

The Foremass consists of the Entrance (introit), procession, and chant, which are then, followed by the confession, which includes a litany (Kyrie Eleison) and which, ends with the Gloria. The Foremass ends with the opening prayer, or first oration.

The Readings constitute the second part of the Mass. They consist of selections from the Old Testament, or from letters of the New Testament (Epistle), which are followed by a chant for the Gospel procession. This chant is known as the Gradual, so called, because it was chanted from the steps (*gradus*) of the pulpit, where the Gospel was read or sung. The final reading is drawn from one of the four Gospels and is followed by the sermon (homily).

During the third part of the Mass -- the Offertory -- offerings of bread, wine, and other gifts are brought to the altar with processional chants and are dedicated to the service of God with Offertory prayers.

The fourth section of the Mass is the Eucharistic Prayer. This section begins with the Preface, an introductory prayer that concludes with the Sanctus. Then follows, the central Eucharistic prayer, or Canon, which contains the narrative of Jesus' institution of the Eucharist.

The Communion is the fifth, and climactic, section of the Mass. It opens with the Lord's Prayer (Paternoster, "Our Father"), continues with the prayer for peace, and the greeting of peace, and concludes with the communion of the clergy, and the faithful, which may be accompanied by the communion hymn.

The final section of the Mass, the Concluding Rite, consists of a final prayer (post communion), the blessing (benediction), and the dismissal (*Ite, missa est*). A recessional hymn may be sung, as clergy and laity, leave the Church.

## **Liturgical Books**

Before the 13th century, a variety of liturgical books were used in the celebration of the Mass. The choir used the *Graduale* (for the Gradual chant) and *Antiphonale* (for the responsive processional chants at the Entrance, Offertory, Communion, and Recessional). The sub-deacon used the *Apostolus* (letters of the New Testament), the deacons, the *Evangelium* (Gospel), and the presiding celebrant, the *Sacramentarium*, which contained all the prayers of the Mass. As the practice of private Mass grew, the various liturgical texts were gathered into one book, for the priest, who performed all the parts of the Mass, alone. This book, called the missal, contained all the prayers, readings, and chants of the Mass. The various missals, used since the 13th century, were standardized in an official text, the Roman missal (1570), which was issued, by order, of the Council of Trent. Earlier, in 1298, papal and Episcopal ceremonies had been standardized in the Roman pontifical. The Roman missal and the Roman pontifical have been revised several times over the centuries.

The Second Vatican Council (1962-65) introduced a number of changes into the celebration of Mass. The council returned to the ancient practice of calling this sacrament and its celebration by the same name: the Eucharist. The principal liturgical changes include the introduction of vernacular languages into the Eucharist, the return to the custom of allowing the laity to receive both bread and wine, and the re-introduction of the practice of con-celebration.

### **Vernacular Liturgy**

The traditional language for the celebration of Mass, in the Roman rite, has been Latin, although the Eastern Rite Churches have used a number of vernacular languages (for instance, Old Slavic, Greek, and Aramaic). Reform movements in the Western Church from the 14th to the 16th century, called repeatedly, for vernacular liturgies. One effect of the separation of Churches, during the Reformation, was the adoption of vernacular languages for the Mass (or Lord's Supper), in the Protestant Churches. The Council of Trent (1545-63), saw no dogmatic difficulty in using vernacular languages in the Mass, but considered sanctioning their use, inopportune, at that time. Vatican II sanctioned

the use of the vernacular in the Roman rite, and the Mass, is now celebrated, in almost every language in the world.

### **Communion Under Both Kinds**

The same reform movements called for a return to the ancient custom of allowing the laity to receive communion under the forms of bread and wine, a custom that had disappeared from the Western Church by the 8th century (although it has continued, to the present, in Eastern Catholic and Orthodox Churches). The Council of Trent rejected these appeals, but Vatican II, established certain times and conditions, under which, the laity may receive, both bread and wine. The conditions have been broadened, so that the practice has become increasingly common in the Western Church.

### **Con-celebration**

Although surrounded by priests and deacons, the bishop, alone, presided over the celebration of Mass, in its original form. As the Church grew, and priests were needed for the masses in parish Churches, con-celebration -- the celebration of Mass, by more than one priest -- became common, although the practice was restricted to the major feasts of the year. It survived in various forms and with varying frequency into the 13th century. Priests, originally, celebrated silently with the bishop, but the custom of reciting the words of the Canon, aloud, developed in the 7th century. After the 13th century, con-celebration survived, only, in the Mass for the ordination of priests. In this case, the newly ordained priests recite all the prayers of the Canon, aloud, with the bishop. Vatican II, however, restored the rite of con-celebration, for occasions when a number of priests gather together and placed limitations on the times and places in which the Mass can be celebrated privately.

**Messiah**, in theology, the Anointed One, the Christ. It was the Hebrew name for the promised deliverer of humankind, assumed by Jesus and given to him by Christians. The English word is derived from the Hebrew, *mashiah*, meaning "anointed." In the Greek version of the Hebrew Bible, the Septuagint, this word is translated by the word, *Christos*, from which "Christ" is derived. Hence, the name, Jesus Christ, identifies

Jesus as the Messiah, although Jewish religion asserts that the Messiah is yet to come.

The concept of the Messiah combines the Hebrew ideal of a Davidic king, with the priestly tradition, exemplified by Moses. Christians, have also seen, in certain passages in the Old Testament Book of Isaiah, a third characteristic of the Messiah, that of, the suffering servant (see Isaiah 53). In Christian theology, Jesus is seen as the fulfillment of all three concepts.

According to the first three Gospels, the messiahship of Jesus, was proclaimed by angels at the time of his conception (see Matthew 1:20-23), at his birth (see Luke 2:9-14), and during His baptism (see Mark 1:11). It was later acknowledged by demons (see Luke 4:41) and finally, by St. Peter and Jesus Himself (see Matthew 16:16-17). According to the Gospel of Mark (see 14:61-64), it was Jesus' admission, that He, was the Messiah, that led to His crucifixion.

From its theological usage, the term has come to be applied, more loosely, to be any looked-for liberator of a country or people or to an expected saviour in any of the non-Christian religions.

**Millennium**, in Christian eschatology, period of 1000 years, foretold in the New Testament Book of Revelation, in which, the devil will be chained and holiness will prevail on earth. The concept of the millennium, which is based principally on literal interpretation of Revelation 20:3, and other passages, is held by a small number of Protestant denomi-nations, among them the Jehovah's Witnesses and the

Adventists, including the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. The sects believing in the millennium, however, differ over its precise nature. The main disagreement is over the interpretation of the description (see Revelation 20:4-15) of the second coming of Christ. The, more generally, held interpretation, is that of the so-called pre-millenarians, who believe that, the visible second coming, will precede the millennium and will be a mark of it. Christ will descend on the earth and raise from the

dead the so-called chosen ones, or elect, who then, will participate with him for 1000 years in a triumphal reign over the earth. At the end of that time, all other people will be resurrected. The wicked will be annihilated, and the just will live forever, with Christ, in a renewed heaven and earth. The so-called post-millenarians believe, on the other hand, that Christ will not begin his reign until after the millennium, which they see, as a period of gradual spiritual regeneration. The concept of a millennium is rejected by most Christian Churches, but despite disagreement, on particulars, all Christian denominations believe in the second coming.

In popular usage, the word, *millennium* has come to be applied to an ideal or utopian period or situation.

**Miracle**, (Latin *mirari*, "to wonder at"), an event, apparently transcending human powers and the laws of nature, that is attributed to a special divine intervention or to supernatural forces.

Stories of miracles are a common feature, of practically, all religions. In some societies, a shaman is believed to have the power to heal through contact with outside forces. Many religious leaders and founders -- including Zoroaster, Confucius, Lao-tzu, and Buddha -- have been credited with miraculous powers. Moses and the prophets of Israel were said to have performed miraculous acts at God's bidding. Muslim tradition includes accounts of the miracles of Muhammad, such as his extraordinary healings.

More attention has been given to miracles in Christianity, however, than in any other religion. Miracles have been ascribed, not only to Jesus Christ, but also, to several of His immediate followers and to Christian saints, up to the present time. The miracles of Christ, recorded in the Gospels, are an integral part of the New Testament narrative and include raising the dead, transforming water into wine, feeding thousands with a small amount of food, casting out demons, and healing the sick and deformed. The most important miracle of the New Testament is the resurrection of Christ. Under the influence of Greek philosophy, Christian writers came to accept the idea, that miracles

possess evidential value, that is, they provide evidence that God is at work in the world.

More recently, as a result of the historic critical method, the Gospel miracles are widely regarded as having been written more to inculcate religious truths than to record historical events. Thus, the significance of the miracle, lies in its meaning, rather than in the event itself. From this point of view, the primary aim, of a miracle story, is to show that God directs and intervenes in human history.

Miracles have played an important role in the history of religions. The traditionally close connections between miracles and faith, which tend to reinforce each other, explains why in new religious movements and spiritual revivals, the occurrence of the miraculous, especially in healing, plays such a prominent part.

**Nature Worship**, religious devotion paid, either to nature as a deified collective entity, or to all things in nature, including the elements, celestial bodies, plants, animals, and humanity. The worship of the elements does not seem to occur in the most rudimentary religions, but frequently, arises in later stages of religious development. The worship of fire, found among many primitive peoples, reached its highest development in the ancient Parsis sect of Persia. Celestial bodies have been deified in the religious systems of primitive and highly civilized people alike. The Khoikhoi of South Africa, worship the moon; sun worship was practiced by the Iroquois, the Plains peoples, and the Tsimshian people of North America and reached a high state of development among the Native Americans of Mexico and Peru. The sun was also a Hindu deity, regarded as maleficent by the Dravidians of southern India, but considered benevolent by the Munda of the central parts. The Babylonians were sun worshipers, and in ancient Persia, worship of the sun was an integral part of the elaborate cult of Mithras. The ancient Egyptians worshiped the sun god, Ra; they also apotheosized the moon, and the star, Sirius. Other Egyptian deities included the constellations and the circumpolar stars.

Plants and trees have been worshiped, as totems, or because of their usefulness,

beauty, or fear-inspiring aspect. They are considered, either as holy in themselves, or as the dwelling places of spirits. Both the soma plant of India and the cocoa shrub of Peru have been worshiped for the intoxicating properties of products derived from them. Field crops, regarded as harboring spirits of fertility, have been worshiped, both, by primitive tribes and by the peasants of Europe, among whom, traces of the cult may still be found.

**Original Sin**, in Christian theology, the universal sinfulness of the human race, traditionally ascribed to the first sin committed by Adam. Sin, in Christian doctrine, is considered a state of alienation or estrangement from God.

### **Scriptural Foundation**

The term, *original sin* is not found in the Bible. Theologians, who advocate the doctrine of original sin, argue, however, that it is strongly implied by Paul (see Romans 7), by John (see 1 John 5:19), and even by, Jesus Himself (see Luke 11:13). Behind this New Testament teaching, lies the world view of late Jewish, apocalyptic writings. Some of these writings attribute the corrupt state of the world to a prehistoric fall of Satan, the subsequent temptation of Adam and Eve, and the immersion of human history, thereafter, in disorder, disobedience, and pain. In this apocalyptic framework, Paul and other New Testament writers, interpreted the work of Christ, as overcoming the tremendous power of inherited sin and evil, once and for all, reconciling humanity to God, and thus, making peace.

### **St. Augustine**

The decline and fall of Rome, in the late 4th and early 5th centuries, produced a similar apocalyptic atmosphere of crisis and despair. In his controversy with the Romano-British monk, Pelagius, over the nature of sin and grace, Augustine was able to appeal, powerfully and effectively, to the Pauline-apocalyptic understanding of the forgiveness of sin. In his elaboration of the doctrine, however, Augustine imported an idea foreign to the Bible: the notion that the taint of sin is transmitted, from generation to generation, by the act of procreation. He took this idea from the 2nd-century theologian, Tertullian,

who actually coined the phrase, *original sin*.

### **Subsequent Theology**

Medieval theologians retained the idea of original sin, with certain qualifications. It was asserted again, in a more recognizably Augustinian form by 16th-century Protestant reformers, primarily, Martin Luther and John Calvin. In subsequent Protestant thought, the doctrine was diluted or circumvented. Liberal Protestant theologians, developed an optimistic view of human nature that was incompatible with the idea of original sin. The extended crisis of Western civilization that began with World War I, however, has aroused renewed interest in the original, basically apocalyptic, outlook of the New Testament and in the doctrine of original sin. Such neo-orthodox or post-liberal theologians as Karl Barth, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Paul Tillich, however, were unwilling to attribute the transmission of sin to pro-creation, instead attributing it to an already corrupt society.

**Penance**, term referring both, to a sacrament of the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox and other Eastern Churches and to the performance of some specific act of mortification, voluntarily undertaken, as an expression of sorrow and repentance for sin.

The sacrament of penance, also referred to as the sacrament of reconciliation, is a rite, undertaken for the remission of sins, committed after baptism. The sacrament, which involves certain acts of a penitent and the absolution of a priest, is believed to have been divinely instituted (see Matthew 16:19, 18:18; John 20:22-23). The acts of the penitent include contrition (deep, sincere sorrow for sin), confession of serious sins to a priest, when possible, and the sacramental penance, or satisfaction (prayers or works to be performed by the penitent in reparation for the sins committed). The sacrament can be celebrated, either individually, or during a communal service, that includes prayers, hymns, readings from the Scriptures, a homily, and the opportunity for private confession. Although penance has ancient roots, it was not used, as frequently, in the early Church, as it is today and involved severe discipline.

To make a private confession, a penitent enters the confessional box or room and, either kneeling or sitting, tells the priest how long it has been since the last confession. The penitent, then acknowledges, all serious sins committed, since the last confession, and expresses sorrow, and a desire to repent. The priest, may then, offer a few words of advice or encouragement, before discussing with the penitent, some form of reparation, or sacramental penance, for the sins, involving the recitation of prayers or some specific action (for example, restitution of stolen goods in the case of theft). The priest, then pronounces absolution and dismisses the penitent.

**Phylacteries**, (Greek *phylakterion*, “amulet;” Hebrew *tefillin*, meaning uncertain, either “prayers” or “distinguishing marks”), in Judaism, small, square black boxes, containing parchment with scriptural passages, that are attached with black leather straps to the forehead and left arm. Phylacteries, also called, tefillin are worn by adult males during weekday morning prayers, but not on Sabbaths or festivals. The custom of wearing them derives from rabbinic interpretation of the four scriptural passages (see Exodus 13:1-10, 11-16; Deuteronomy 6:4-9, 11:13-21), in which, the Lord tells Israel to bind His Words “as a sign upon your hand” and these four scriptural passages, are inscribed on the parchment inside the boxes. Among traditional Jews, a boy’s donning of phylacteries, for the first time, has become the act, symbolic of his reaching adulthood.

**Prayer**, in religion, both a person’s act of communion with God, or any other object of worship, and the words used. It is the natural result of a person’s belief in God. Prayer may be individual or group formal or spontaneous, silent or spoken. In one or more forms, it is at the center of worship. The inseparable accompaniment of sacrifice, in most primitive religions, prayer occupied a central position, in Jewish religion, from earliest days. The Temple was “a house of prayer” (see Isaiah 56:7), and the Psalms, or Psalter, became the prayer of liturgy of the Temple and the synagogue and formed the substance of prayers in early Christianity.

Christian prayer, normally includes, invocation praise, thanksgiving, petition (for oneself and others), confession, and appeal for forgiveness. It follows the pattern of the prayer,

known as the Lord's Prayer (Latin *Paternoster*), given by Jesus Christ to His disciples (see Matthew 6:9-13; Luke 11:2-4).

Prayer forms of corporate worship vary from the highly liturgical formalized prayers of the Divine Office in the Roman Catholic Church and the Book of Common Prayer of the Church of England and other Anglican Churches, through the extemporaneous spoken prayers of non-liturgical services, to the silent prayer of a Friends' Meeting.

In its narrowest sense, prayer is understood as spiritual communion for the sake of requesting something of a deity. In its broadest sense, prayer is any ritual form, designed to bring one into closer relation to whatever one believes to be the ultimate. In this sense, both the dance ceremonials of the Native American and the meditation of the Buddhist, seeking self-perfection, are forms of prayer. At the highest level, sacrifice is absorbed into prayer in the sacrificial offering, of self, to God through total commitment.

Aids to prayer, evolved through the centuries, include prayer beads, which enable a worshiper to count the prayers he or she is praying; the prayer wheel, a cylindrical box, containing written prayers, believed to become effective as the box is revolved on its axis, used primarily by Tibetan Buddhists; and the prayer rug, used by Muslims.

**Pre-destination**, in Christian theology, the teaching that the eternal destiny of a person is pre-determined by God's unchangeable decree. Pre-destination does not necessarily imply a denial of free-will, however. Most exponents of the doctrine, have maintained that it is only the individual's final destiny that is pre-determined, not the individual's actions, which remain, free. The doctrine, customarily, takes one of two forms: single pre-destination or double pre-destination.

### **Single Pre-destination**

Single pre-destination is the less severe form of the teaching. It is based on the

experience of the presence of God and His love, and on the concurrent understanding, that God grants the gift of His presence, as an act of sheer grace. In order to emphasize that God's gift is, independently willed by Him, and is in no sense, a response to some human act, some Christians, have asserted that their relation to God depends only on God and on God's eternal decree, established before the foundation of the world.

This point of view is implied, only twice, in the New Testament, in Romans 8 and Ephesians 1. "For those whom He foreknew, He also pre-destined to be conformed to the image of His Son. . . . And those whom He pre-destined, He also called; and those whom He called, He also justified; and those whom He justified, He also glorified" (Romans 8:29-30).

These verses imply single pre-destination, because they concern only pre-destination to life with God.

### **Double Pre-destination**

Double pre-destination is a conclusion deduced from single pre-destination. If some are to enjoy God's presence by His eternal decree, others, must then, be eternally separated from God, also by His decree. Because salvation and glory are pre-destined, it follows that condemnation and destruction, must also be pre-destined. The first theologian to enunciate a doctrine of double pre-destination was, St. Augustine, in the 5th century. He has not, however, had many successors. The best-known exponent of double pre-destination was the Swiss reformer, John Calvin: "We call pre-destination, God's eternal decree, by which, He determined, within Himself, what He willed to become of each man. For all are not created in equal condition; rather, eternal life is fore-ordained for some, eternal damnation for others."

After Augustine, Roman Catholic theologians rejected double pre-destination, insisting that no pre-destination, to evil exists, and that those who suffer damnation, bear full responsibility, for it. Anglicans have also adhered to a doctrine of single predestina-

tion. In the 17th century, the Dutch Protestant theologian, Arminius, whose teachings inspired the movement called Arminianism, criticized the injustice of Calvin's doctrine of pre-destination and formulated a modified version of it that allowed for human free will. Liberal Protestant theologians have tended to ignore or deny pre-destination, in either the single or double form. The most influential re-statement of the doctrine of single pre-destination was made by the 20th-century Swiss theologian, Karl Barth, who claimed that God's will is revealed in Jesus Christ, and all are elect, through him. In this form, the doctrine of pre-destination is virtually universalist -- that is, all are promised salvation.

**Prophecy**, religious phenomenon, in which, a message is sent, by God (or by a god) to human beings through an intermediary, or prophet. The message, may contain, a reference to future events, but, it is often, simply a warning, encouragement, or piece of information. Prophecy, in its fullest sense, thus, includes, augury, divination, and oracles, which are techniques, by which, it is believed, the will of the gods can be learned. Prophets have often spoken in ecstasy, a state that may be induced by various methods, including dance or music. The emphasis of the prophetic message, has varied, some prophets stressing the cultic, others the moral, and still others, the missionary aspect of religious life. Prophets have appeared throughout history, and in virtually, all societies.

### **Eastern Religions**

The scriptures of Hinduism contain several prophetic messages. The Buddha's advent on earth, is said to have been, predicted long before his birth. In China, prophecy, particularly the use of divination, was a common religious practice. The use of the *1 Ching*, or *Book of Changes*, remained popular among all classes of Chinese society, even though, the classical Confucian state religion stressed the superiority of reason to inspiration and divination.

### **Judaism and Christianity**

Prophecy was elevated to an unprecedented religious significance in Judaism and

Christianity. According to Judaism, the prophet is an individual, chosen by God, often against his will, to reveal God's intentions and plans to the people. As a bearer of divine revelation, he often experiences God's overwhelming presence and receives the strength to communicate, to others, what God has said, even though this may lead to persecution, suffering, and death.

Christianity inherited the idea of prophecy from Judaism, and Christians interpret Hebrew writings in light of the teachings of Christ, who is considered, the prophet promised in Deuteronomy. Indeed, in many respects, Jesus was a typical Judaic prophet. Prophecy was recognized as a gift in Apostolic times, but it generally, disappeared as the hierarchical structure, of the Church, began to develop toward the end of the 1st century, discouraging individual inspiration.

Christian visionaries throughout the ages, have often been called, prophetic, but they never achieved the status of the great prophets.

### **Islam**

Islam accepts, in principle, the prophetic tradition of Judaism and regards Muhammad as the final prophet, the seal, or culmination, of a line of prophets running from Adam through Christ. Despite this belief, followers of the Islamic mystical movement called Sufism, have at times, assumed a prophetic role.

### **Explanations of Prophecy**

Prophecy has been the subject of much debate among scholars, whose discussion, has often, centered on the question of, whether or not, prophecy derives from some force, external to the prophet. One tendency, is to view, prophecy as an essentially subconscious psychological phenomenon, involving hallucination, wishful thinking, guesswork, and sometimes, forgery. Another theory, also relates prophecy to the subconscious mind, but ultimately, traces it to the workings of God. Some historians of religion, regarded the true prophet, as one who, like the mystic, is raised to a supra-normal psychological state by divine intervention.

**Purgatory**, in Christian theology, state of purgation, in which, according to the Roman Catholic and Eastern Churches, souls after death, either are purified from venial sins or undergo the temporal punishment that, after the guilt of moral sin has been remitted, still remains to be endured by the sinner. The ultimate happiness of their souls, is supposed to, be thus, secured. On the existence of purgatory Greek and Latin Churches are agreed; they also agree, that it is a state of suffering. Although the Latins hold that this is by fire, the Greeks do not determine the manner of the suffering, but regard it as being caused by tribulation. The Council of Florence (1439), left this free, for discussion.

The medieval doctrine and practice, regarding purgatory, were among the grounds for the protest of the Waldenses and were rejected by the Reformers. Protestants held, that salvation had been achieved for humankind by Christ, and was obtained, by faith, in Christ, alone. A belief in an intermediate state and a period of education and probation, on the other side of the grave, has been held and taught in the Anglican Church. The British religious leader, John Henry Newman, drew on the theology of purgatory for his poem, "Dream of Gerontius," which the English composer, Sir Edward Elgar, set to music as an oratorio under the same title.

**Relics**, in Christian usage, remains of the bodies of saints, or objects connected with the life of Jesus Christ or with the lives of the saints. Christians, are known, to have venerated the relics of martyrs, at least, as early as the 2nd century. The influx of relics, from the Middle East, at the time of the Crusades, and the development of superstitious cults around them, led to doubts about their authenticity and value. The practice of veneration, was effectively defended, however, by the 13th-century, theologian, St. Thomas Aquinas, who contended that the bodies of the saints are vessels of the Holy Spirit. The practice was reaffirmed by the Council of Trent after Protestant reformers rejected it.

In the Orthodox Church, the veneration of relics was sanctioned by the Council of

Constantinople (1084), but the veneration of icons has always had a greater importance in the East.

Relics of Muhammad and of Muslim religious teachers are preserved in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina, but the veneration of relics has never been officially approved by Muslim authorities, who have sometimes condemned it as idolatry. The veneration of relics has been traditional in Buddhism, and relics attributed to the Buddha and to the great Buddhist teachers, are displayed in several places.

**Religion**, in the broadest sense, a way of life or belief based on a person's ultimate relation to the universe or God. In this sense, such diverse systems as Buddhism, Christianity, Confucianism, Hinduism, Judaism, and Shinto may be considered religions. In a more commonly accepted sense, however, the term, *religion* refers to faith in a divinely created order of the world, agreement, with which, is the means of salvation for a community, and thus, for each individual, who has a role in that community. In this sense, the term, applies principally, to such systems of Western civilization, as Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, which involve faith in a creed, obedience to a moral code, set down in sacred scriptures, and participation in a cult. In its most specific sense, the term, refers to the way of life of a monastic or religious order.

It is impossible to find a satisfactory definition of religion or a realistic way of classifying the various kinds of so-called religion, because of the important differences of function among the various systems of belief and practice in various parts of the world. A general survey and comparison of religions, would therefore, be misleading if the material, to be examined, were all assumed to be of the same kind. It is a historical accident that the earliest European students of foreign or primitive cultures used the term, *religion* for phenomena, of which, they had only a rudimentary knowledge. They jumped to the conclusion that other cultures must have institutions of the same type and function as Christianity or Judaism in their own culture. This premature assumption is at the root of much of the confusion.

In light of more advanced knowledge, a survey of religions, must therefore, begin by restricting the term, *religion* to those institutions for which it has customarily been used: Judaism and its descendants, Christianity, and Islam. If this restriction, is somewhat arbitrary, it nevertheless, has the merit of giving the word a clearer meaning, by confining it to institutions that have much in common.

The next step must be to examine the so-called religions found in other cultures, noting the degree, to which, they correspond to the term in its restricted sense, and then, employing new ways of classifying them when no correspondence is to be found. Such correspondence is not a matter of doctrinal agreement or disagreement, for example, as to ideas of God or of moral conduct. It is a matter of deciding whether institutions, that have been called religions, have the same function in the various cultural contexts that an institution, such as, Christianity has in the West.

Another difficulty that complicates the attempt to survey religions from the historical standpoint, is the customary notion that so-called primitive religion, is the earliest and most undeveloped form of human religious feeling and practice. It is not safe, however, to assume that non-Western forms of culture, lacking technological development, are necessarily representative, of the first groping of the human race toward spiritual insights. The more that is known about different types of culture, the more difficult it becomes to fit them into any simple evolutionary scheme or even into any clear system of types.

For present purposes, the treatment of religion will be concerned with a comparative account of three principal forms of consciousness about the human relationship to the universe or God: one, found in the primitive religions, one, in the religions, as commonly defined, and one, in the various Asian systems of belief and practice that may be termed ways of liberation. Social and moral rituals lie outside the scope of this article.

### **Primitive Religions**

The varieties of feeling and behavior, known as primitive religion, constitute a type of consciousness that Western civilization has lost.

### *Internal and External World*

The main feature of primitive religious consciousness, as studied among peoples, such as the Polynesians, African blacks, or Native Americans, is the absence of any sharp boundary between the spiritual and the natural world, and thus, between the human mind or ego and the surrounding world. French philosopher, Lucien Levy-Bruhl, called this absence of boundary, *participation mystique* (mystical participation), denoting a sense of fusion between the human organism and its environment. This feeling, is roughly analogous, to the modern Westerner's intellectual grasp of humanity's inter-relationship with nature in the science of ecology. A similar absence of boundary, prevails also, between the worlds of waking experience and dream, and between the individual will, and the spontaneous emotions and drives of the psyche. As a result, the whole external world is charged with powers that may be called mental or spiritual. Material objects do not exist as stable and comprehensible features of the external world, for everything seems to behave as whimsically as the events in dreams. Uncontrolled as the contents of experience may be in this state of mind, they would appear to be so lively, mysterious, and fascinating -- as well as terrifying -- that the whole of nature is suffused with an atmosphere of the awesome and uncanny. German religious historian, Rudolf Otto, referred to such an atmosphere as the "numinous."

### *Numinous Atmosphere*

Basically, the numinous atmosphere pervades the entire natural world and every object within it. A good example may be seen in Shinto, a present-day "primitive" religion practiced in modern Japan. The Japanese term, *Shinto* (Japanese *shin*, "spirit") means "the way of the gods" or "the way of spirit." In the view of Shinto, every rock, tree, animal, and stream has its own *shin* or *kami* (Japanese, "god" or "goddess"). It is, however, misleading to call the *kami*, a god in any Western sense of the word; similarly, the term, *shin* means "spirit" only in an extremely vague sense, for it is often used simply as an exclamation similar to "Wonderful!" Shinto has no system of doctrine, no

creed, and no formulated religious ideas; it is fundamentally concerned with expressing wonder, respect, and awe for everything that exists. This concern involves treating everything as if it were a person, not always in the sense that it is inhabited by some humanlike ghost or spirit, but in

the sense of having a mysterious and independent life of its own that may not be taken for granted.

Obviously some things -- such as the sun, the moon, the ocean, and certain mountains and places of peculiar strangeness or beauty -- seem more highly charged with the numinous than others. As the intensity of the numinous, at particular spots differs, so the qualities or aspects of the numinous itself differ. Anthropologists, commonly use, the Polynesian words *mana* and *taboo* to typify the positive and negative aspects of the numinous. When it appears as *mana*, it is potent and useful, but when as *taboo*, it is fearsome and forbidden.

In primitive religions, not only external things and places, but also human beings are, on occasion, felt to be charged with the numinous in a peculiar way. The type of person gifted with special access to the *mana* or power aspect of the world in such religions, is the shaman or medicine man or woman. This role is significantly different from that of the priest or minister of such a religion as Christianity, for the power of the shaman is not traditional, but personal in origin. It is his or her own peculiar discovery, brought forth in solitude from commerce, with dreams.

The numinous is more than the sensation of awe and mystery in the presence of an uncanny world. The absence of a clear boundary between the human mind and its environment, in a world, in which, both inner and outer events, seem merely to happen, brings ecstasies, as well as, fears. Among the Navajo, for example, this enthralling aspect of the numinous is called *hozon*, a term referring to a sensation of intense beauty and peace that may be evoked by rituals of chanting, dancing, and sand painting. Such rituals of sympathetic magic, whether for evoking *hozon*, rain, or fertile

crops, have their origin in the same sense of fusion between the human and the natural world.

### *Ritual*

Ritual plays a major part in primitive cultures, although it is not recognizable to members, as in any way, different from so-called practical activity. It is rather, an attempt to influence or harmonize oneself, with the course of nature by dramatized or symbolic enactment of such fundamental events as the daily rising and setting of the sun, the alternation of the seasons, the changing phases of the moon, and the annual planting and harvesting of crops. Moreover, ritual is the acting out of the great mythical themes that, in these cultures, take the place of religious doctrines. Ritual, as found in primitive religions, might therefore, be described as an art form expressing and celebrating humanity's meaningful participation in the affairs of the universe and the gods.

### *Myth*

Similarly, such cultures have no religious doctrine or abstract concepts about the nature of the numinous and its divergence from everything else. Spirit is a feeling, rather than an idea; the language most appropriate to its consists, not of concepts, but of images. Thus, instead of religious doctrine, there is myth, or an unsystematic complex of stories handed down from, generation to generation, because such tales are felt, in some undefined way, to represent the meaning of the world. According to the earliest anthropological interpretations of myth, such as that of Scottish anthropologist, Sir James Frazer, the mythical gods and heroes, personify the heavenly bodies, the elements, and the so-called spirits of the crops and herds, and myths are naïve explanations of the ways of nature. A later interpretation, is that of Swiss psychologist and psychiatrist, Carl G. Jung, who suggested that myths are based on dreams and fantasies, giving concrete expression to unconscious psychological processes. According to Jung, the psychological unconscious, like the human body, has more or less the same structure among all peoples; this uniformity accounts for the astonishing resemblances between mythological themes in unconnected cultures throughout the

world. He felt further that these unconscious processes shape people's mental and spiritual growth, and that for this reason, mythological imagery and its enactment in ritual, is a kind of wisdom for the direction of life. Thus, when a tribal dance is believed to assist the rising of the sun, the enactment of the rite, gives the members of the tribe, a sense of meaning -- that is, of playing a significant part in the life of the total universe.

A somewhat similar explanation of myths was offered in the studies of Indian and Indonesian culture by Sri Lankan scholar, Ananda Coomaraswamy, who believed that the great mythical themes are parables of a timeless philosophy, an intuitive knowledge of human nature and destiny that has always been available to those who truly wish to plumb the depths of the human mind. American philosopher, Susanne K. Langer, holds that myth affords the earliest example of general ideas and therefore, of metaphysical thinking. According to Langer, language is better suited to express new ideas, by metaphorical, than by literal means. The assumption that solar and fertility myths are rudimentary attempts to explain natural forces, as science explains them, must probably be abandoned. Just as the myth-making cultures do not distinguish between spirit and nature, or religion and life, neither do they demark symbolic truth or fantasy from literal truth or fact. It is not a matter of confusing myth with fact, for the idea of the literal fact, has not yet arisen.

### **The Religions**

Religions, as defined in this article, arise in cultures, in which, people have acquired a strong sense of differentiating the human mind from the natural environment, subjective consciousness from objective fact, and thus, spirit from matter. This sense of differentiation accompanies the development of settled agricultural civilizations, in which, the division of labor requires that individuals play different roles in the community. In hunting cultures, each individual male is master of all the skills required for survival, but in farming cultures, a much higher degree of cooperation is required between individuals with differing skills and functions. Such cooperation necessitates, in turn, more precise forms of communication between people, and thus, of convention, or common agreement, as to the symbols of communication especially language and

role.

### *Language, Convention, and Roles*

A language becomes more effective as its vocabulary increases. Large numbers of words also indicate a high degree of awareness of distinctions among various things and events. Every word is a label for a class of experience, and the essence of classification is that it divides things from one another. The necessity for playing different roles in the community also divides individuals from one another and, to avoid confusion, requires individuals to identify themselves with their roles. Many names -- such as Smith, Baker, Priest, Taylor, Carpenter, and Fuller -- originally denoted roles performed in society. The word, *person* (Latin *persona*) comes from the word for masks worn by actors in Greco-Roman drama, the different masks identifying the roles to be played by the actors. People develop an awareness of their uniqueness and separateness from others, partly on the basis of their acceptance, of particular roles in society.

The division of individuals, by role, and the increased perception of divisions in the world, by language, come about through convention, which is both divisive and cohesive. Conventions are complex and learned, only with some difficulty, however. Because of this, the differences agreed on by society, have to be enforced, just as children must be disciplined to learn a language and to master the rules of games or of etiquette and morals. The very life of the community depends upon observing the conventions of communication. One function of a religion, is to guarantee the whole system of convention, or the rules of thought, language, conduct, and role. For Judaism and Christianity, the idea of salvation, is inseparable from the idea of belonging to, a community of chosen people -- that is, -- the Church, considered as a body of members, or an assembly (Greek *ecclesia*), whether it be Israel or the communion of saints.

The connection between a system of social convention and a system of beliefs about

the universe, requires further explanation. Social convention comprises such means as grammars, vocabularies, numbers, and signs, without which, a person can feel, but cannot think about the world. American linguist, Benjamin Lee Whorf, suggested that the structure of language -- that is, of a person's thinking instrument, -- determines that person's view of the structure of nature. It is thus, understandable, that both the Semitic and the Indo-Aryan religious traditions, conceive of the universe, as having been created by the Word of God. If the world is explained, managed, and described by thinking, it is natural to suppose that it is created by thinking and that the laws of nature, that thought discovers, are the word or law of God underlying the world as its primordial pattern.

As a culture develops, a coherent and orderly picture of the world, it is natural for its members to believe that the numinous power behind the world, is itself, coherent and orderly, and that, it has unity. Their gradual realization, that the natural order of the world has an intelligent pattern, is accompanied by the conviction that they did not invent, but that they discovered, this pattern, which someone must know in its entirety. They therefore, attribute it to an intelligence other than their own. The more people

appreciate the complexity of the pattern, the more they marvel at the intelligence behind it and so begin to formulate a mature conception of God, as a being who excels, in wisdom and power and is immeasurably greater than a mere mortal. Thus, contemplating the wonder of his own bodily structure, the psalmist in the Bible wrote, "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it" (Psalms 139:6).

### *Theism*

Religion, in this sense, is invariably theistic. It involves belief in a personal, living, and spiritual God, distinct from the world that he has created as the human mind is felt to be distinct from what it knows. Various forms of theism exist, however. The Old Testament of the Bible shows a progress from henotheism (belief that the community must be loyal to one god only) to monotheism (belief that this god is the one and only God). Other forms of theism are polytheism, belief in many gods, which includes,

usually at least, a vague apprehension that the many, are aspects of one; pantheism, the belief that God, is simply, all things in the universe (although this type of belief is historically, a philosophical idea, rather than a religious belief); and pantheism, the belief that every creature is an appearance or manifestation of God, who is conceived of, as the divine actor, playing at once, the innumerable parts of humans, animals, plants, stars, and natural forces.

Religion, is therefore, communal faith in and conformity to the pattern that thought discovers, or has revealed to it, as the will or commandment of the intelligence behind the world. The community binds itself to this pattern as its rule of life consisting of three elements -- the creed, the code, and the cult. Creed, is faith in the revealed pattern and in the divine intelligence that gave it. Code, is the divinely sanctioned and authorized system of human laws and morals comprising the rules of active participation in society. Cult, is the ritual of worship, or symbolic acts, whereby the community brings its mind into accord with the mind of God, either by ceremonial dances or dramatic re-enactments of the deeds of God, or by sacrificial meals, held in common, between God and his people. It is from this last-mentioned type of cult, that, for example, the Christian Mass or communion service is derived.

### *Salvation*

Religious salvation is basically the idea of incorporation in a divine community through conformity to the will of God. In the later phases of the Semitic tradition, salvation began to include the idea of survival beyond death, first through miraculous resurrection of the body, and later, as a result of Greek influences, by virtue of the inherent immortality of the soul. Salvation, however, remained subordinate, to and conditional, upon membership in the divine community. After death, those who remain unincorporated are spiritual outcasts consigned, for example, to the Judaic Gehenna, the Christian hell, or the Islamic Iblis. On the other hand, salvation beyond death, is conceived of, as being a state of the most intimate union with God, in which, however, the distinct per-sonality of each member is preserved.

Although salvation is considered to rest upon observance of a rule of life, all religious traditions recognize that, of their own powers, people cannot fulfill perfectly, the conditions of salvation. The Hebrew Scriptures, which Judaism, Christianity, and Islam hold to be divinely revealed, contain the idea of a primordial Fall, or original sin, committed by the first man and woman. Adam and Eve, as a result of which, the human will is fundamentally perverted by self-love and pride. Salvation, is therefore, impossible without divine assistance. The three religions teach, in common, that God is, above all, loving and merciful, and that his final purpose is the salvation of all humanity. Whenever individuals repent of their shortcomings, God freely offers his grace -- that is, salvation, considered as a gift, to the undeserving. In the Christian tradition, the only mediator or giver of grace is the historic Jesus of Nazareth, who is held to be the human embodiment or incarnation of God himself. Jesus loves the world so much that he comes into it to suffer its pains, bear its burdens, and transform it from within.

In the present scheme of classification, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam may be termed the three "world religions" -- that is, religions, that have as their ideal, the incorporation of the whole human race. A number of other more localized faiths fit the definition of religion, but they are more closely bound to definite patterns of culture. These faiths are Sikhism in India and Zoroastrianism, the religion of the Parsees, in India and Iran. Among certain forms of religion, no longer practiced, are the cults of Ra and Osiris of ancient Egypt and the classic mysteries of the Greco-Roman world.

### **The Ways of Liberation**

In Asia, there are certain clearly recognized types of spiritual experience that occur in the West, only incidentally, and with a minimum of recognition, by the official religious traditions. These types of experience should not always be identified with mysticism, or the sense of union with God, which often occur, in a theistic and religious context. It, therefore, seems best to use the term, *ways of liberation* to describe these forms of spiritual experience, for all are concerned with liberating human consciousness from ideas and feelings brought about by social conditioning -- that is, by the very

systems of convention that a religion, in the usual sense of the term, guarantees. These ways should not be considered anti-religious, however, for they seek not so much to destroy religion and convention, as to use them without being bound by them. They endeavor to go beyond the view of the world acquired through the use of thought and language; they consider that this view overemphasizes the divisions and differences of things and tends to make people neglect their inseparability from the total universe. Among the principle ways of liberation, are those found in Hinduism, Buddhism, and Taoism.

### *Hinduism*

Within the cultural complex of Hinduism, which may be considered pantheistic, are a number of equally legitimate *darshana*, or points of view, which the individual may adopt. The most notable are Vedanta, based on the teachings of the Upanishads, a body of poetic scriptures; and Yoga, a way of meditation, believed to be indigenous to India. Both Vedanta and Yoga, are concerned with liberation from the world, which is considered an illusion of reality.

Ordinarily, neither Vedanta nor Yoga is studied until a man has reached the middle of life, has established himself in his caste (which may be considered his role or vocation), and is ready to transmit his social duties to his sons. Thus, Vedanta and Yoga, usually, are not taught to children, as are the scriptures and beliefs of such a religion as Christianity, but only to mature adults, fully disciplined in the ways of society. These ways, involve precisely, giving up one's role and person and leaving the task of maintaining one's social obligations in order to prepare for death. The reason, is that, death is held to be a calamity when it comes to a person who still believes that he or she is a separate individual.

According to Vedanta, the idea that the world is a multiplicity of distinct things is considered *maya*, or an illusion, resulting from the conventional way of thinking. Derived from the Sanskrit root, *ma*, "measure," *maya* expresses the notion, that the world is measured or marked out by those divisions and classifications of human experience,

that words and ideas, make possible. To describe a complicated curve, one must measure it as if it were a series of distinct points. Similarly, to describe and think about nature, one must break it up into manageable units or terms -- that is, things and events. This procedure, however useful, creates a powerful impression that events are separable from one another, that one could happen without another, and that pleasure could exist without pain or life without death. A similar impression prevails, concerning the separability of things.

Vedanta maintains that all distinctions are relative to each other and that opposites -- such as the knower and the known, the subject and the object -- are distinctions, as inseparable as the two faces, of a coin. In other words, the word can be resolved into independent things, only in thought. The fact is that the world is an inseparable unity or, more exactly, a non-duality, for unity is also a thought or idea, existing only, in relation to the idea of diversity. The true state of the world, is neither unity, nor multiplicity. The state of the world is rather immeasurable, indescribable, and indefinable.

A man, may therefore, recognize that, in his deepest consciousness (*Atman*, in Hinduism), he is not a separate individual, but Brahman, or the indefinable totality. He has been led, however, to consider himself as a separate being by the necessarily divisive character of thinking. It cannot be said what Brahman is, because the basic reality or the world, does not belong in any class, to which a word can be attached. Even though Brahman cannot be grasped, in words and ideas, it can, however, be experienced, and the realization of this experience, is the function of Yoga. This realization consists in the so-called unification of consciousness -- that is, in the temporary renunciation of all divisive thinking and in the abandonment of all ideas and concepts about life. The world, then, may be experienced in its original, real, and inseparable state.

This type of experience, is not, as might be supposed, sheer blank-mindedness, just as the concrete fact of nature, is neither the collection of separate things, that thought

conceives, nor mere empty space. If the student of comparative religions were to ask a Christian and a Vedantist for their ideas of what is ultimately real, the Vedantist would, either be silent or say what is not, whereas the Christian would describe the positive attributes of God, such as his love, wisdom, and intelligence. The student, might therefore assume, that the latter, acknowledges a God, who exists positively, and the former, a God, who is almost nothing at all. The student could conclude that Vedanta, is a religion with an impoverished idea of God, failing to see that because it does not use the language of religion, it cannot be a religion.

Two distinct modes of expression are used to characterize spiritual experiences. The religious way resembles trying to describe color to a blind person, by saying, what color may be compared to -- for example, to variations of temperature. The way of liberation resembles trying to describe to the blind person what color is not. Both ways of speaking would be valid. A religion expresses the ultimate reality, in particular terms, such as those of human thought and imagination, and thus, its view of God, is determined and definite. A way of liberation sets thought aside in favor of direct experiencing and feeling, and thus, its view is indeterminate and indefinite.

### *Buddhism*

Buddhism, the doctrine of Gautama Buddha, arose as a clarification and reform movement of Hinduism.

In many ways, the objectives of Buddhism are the same as those of Vedanta and Yoga. Gautama Buddha avoided, however, giving even the barest name, to that which is ultimately real, both in its universal aspect as Brahman and, in its human aspect, as the deepest self, or Atman. He felt that, such terms, were too easily turned into ideas and forms of thought that would detract from direct experience. His teaching was, that people suffer because of *avidya*, or ignorance, of the total relativity of the world of things and events. Thought is *avidya*, because it is a process of ignoring -- that is, it cannot focus on any one aspect of experience without ignoring everything else. It is a way of looking at life, bit by bit, instead of totally, and leads, in turn, to grasp-

ing (*trishna*, in Buddhism), or trying to wrest the desirable bits of experience away from the whole; however, because the good is always relative to the bad, this separation can never be accomplished. Similarly, one can never experience a solid, without a surrounding space, space and solid being relative to each other. Giving up grasping leads to the Buddhist ideal of Nirvana, which Gautama Buddha refused to define, except in negative terms, as the Vedantist defines liberation.

Gautama Buddha's teaching led to a misunderstanding to which Vedanta is likewise prone -- namely, that liberation may be sought as an escape from suffering or as a permanent state of bliss. Later, Buddhist leaders, especially those of the Mahayana school, corrected this misunderstanding by pointing out that seeking Nirvana, as an escape, was still grasping. Thus, their ideal of the wise individual, went beyond the older Hindu view of leaving the world -- that is, the social world -- to prepare for death. It comprised, returning into the full activity of society, once liberated, so that, free from fear, one could devote oneself to acts of compassion for those still in the bondage of *maya*. Buddhist teaching urges, however, morality and compassion, not as a commandment, but as a voluntary action, to which, the free person commits, himself or herself, without hope of reward or fear of punishment. No thought is found in Buddhism of moral conduct as conformity to a divine pattern, for Buddhism regards moral standards as analogous to rule of grammar -- that is, human conventions, necessary for social existence, but without any absolute authority.

Although Buddha gave no name to what he considered ultimate reality, later Buddhist teachers spoke of the true state of the world as *sunyata*, or "emptiness," meaning more exactly "empty of any definable characteristic" or "unclassifiable." This philosophical attitude, is in no sense, equivalent to Western atheism or nihilism, for what is empty, is not reality itself, but every idea, in which, the human mind attempts to grasp it.

### *Taoism*

Attributed to the Chinese philosophers Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu, who lived in the 5th and 4th centuries B.C., Taoism is the specifically Chinese form of a way of liberation. In

certain respects, it resembles Buddhism, and Taoist terms were, used liberally, in translating Buddhist texts from Sanskrit into Chinese. Like Vedanta and Yoga, Taoism was adopted, ordinarily, by older men, who had played their part in society, according to the basic patterns of convention provided by Confucianism in China. In common with Mahayana Buddhism, Taoism allows for the return of the liberated sage into worldly affairs. Its principal text, the *Tao Te Ching* (Teaching of Tao), attributed to Lao-tzu, was written as a manual of advice for rulers.

Taoism proper, as found in the teachings of Lao-tzu and Chuang-tzu, must be distinguished carefully from the so-called Taoist cult of divination, alchemy, and magic, that is, Taoist in nothing, but name. Pure Taoism has never been organized and has remained the pursuit of independent scholars and philosophers, both in China and Japan, for more than 2,000 years. It regards the natural universe as the operation of the Tao (way), which eludes all verbal and intellectual comprehension. Experience of the Tao is to be realized through *kuan* (silent contemplation of nature) and *wu-wei* (the absence of mental and physical strain), which is equivalent to the Buddhist attitude of not grasping. Taoism, emphasizes strongly, the union of the individual and nature, suggesting that one controls the environment, not by fighting it, but by cooperating with it, as a sailor uses the wind when tacking against it. Taoism is the philosophy underlying jujitsu, the so-called gentle way of defending oneself against opponents, by using the opponents' own strength to defeat them. Similarly, Taoism teaches, that one should control oneself, by trusting, rather than opposing one's natural feelings and instincts, by channeling them in the directions in which one wants them to go, rather than resisting them.

### **Comparative Religion**

The study of the world's religious traditions is coincident with the political and economic expansion of Western Europe.

#### *Early Western Scholars*

The Jesuit missionaries of the 17th century, included especially, Italians, Matteo Ricci in

China and Roberto de Nobili in India, and the Spaniard, Saint Francis Xavier in Japan. During the 18th century, great interest was aroused among Western scholars and philosophers by the first Latin translations of Confucian and Taoist texts by the Jesuits. For a time, Chinese culture was idealized, especially by the Deists, who found in it, proof of their thesis, that morality could flourish without dogmatic religion. Pioneers in this field, included German philosophers, Johann Gottfried von Herder and G.W.F. Hegel and British philologist, Friedrich Max Muller. Their work was followed, by that of British philosopher, Edward Caird in *The Evolution of Religion* (1897-1899), and American philosopher and psychologist, William James in *Varieties of Religious Experience* (1902), the first serious study of the psychology of religion.

#### *19th and 20th Centuries*

In the 19th and 20th centuries, notable specialized contributions to the study of comparative religion, were made in Chinese studies by French scholar, Noel Julien, called Stanislas Julien, and Jesuit missionary, Leon Wieger; in Buddhist studies by Dutch Indologist and philologist, Jan Hendrik Kern and British Orientalist, Thomas William Rhys Davids; in the study of Vedanta by German philosopher and Sanskrit scholar, Paul Deussen; in Taoist and Confucian studies by British missionary and Sinologist, James Legge; and in studies pertaining to India by British Sanskrit scholar, Sir Monier Monier-Williams.

Much of the early work in comparative religions, was undertaken by missionaries seeking points of agreement between alien faiths and Christianity, and also ways of demonstrating the superiority of Christianity. Other work was accomplished by philologists, whose interest lay in the linguistic form, rather than the content of the sacred writings of other cultures. The growing conflict between religion and science in the Western world, during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, however, resulted in widespread dissatisfaction with fundamentalist types of Christian belief. This dissatisfaction led, in turn, to a more sympathetic attitude toward other faiths. In the present century, study of the ways of liberation, in particular, has made enormous

strides, greatly assisted by the work of such outstanding Asian scholars as the Indians, Surendra Nath Dasgupta and Sir Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan, the Japanese, Daisetz Teitaro Suzuki and Junjiro Takakusu, the Chinese, Fung Yu-lan, and the Sri Lankan, Ananda Coomaraswamy.

In the three decades before his death, the name of Romanian-born American historian of religions, Mircea Eliade, became almost synonymous, with comparative studies. He investigated the “sacred” in beliefs, rites, and religious experiences of many peoples and cultures.

**Resurrection**, in religious belief, revival of the body in some form, after death.

### **Non-Christian Doctrines**

Although a belief in the immortality of the human soul or in the resurrection of certain divine beings was part of some ancient religions, the belief in human resurrection, was virtually, unknown. Traces of this doctrine, however, are found in Egyptian religion, in Zoroastrianism, and in later Judaism. By the 1st century A.D., resurrection had become a formal doctrine of the Pharisees and of the general body of the Jewish people, although the Sadducees disputed it. In Islam, the resurrection of all human beings, on the Day of Judgment, is explicitly taught in the Koran.

### **Christian Doctrine**

The Christian belief in the resurrection of the dead, rests on the central doctrine of the resurrection of Christ, which the apostles understood, as testimony to and a guarantee of the resurrection of each individual. The Gospels contain the stories of Christ's resurrection.

Christian teaching, concerning the resurrection, is based on several extended passages in the New Testament. In these, the resurrection of the dead, is ascribed to Christ Himself; it will complete His work of redemption for the human race. All the dead will be

raised to receive judgment, “those who have done good” coming forth “to the resurrection of life; and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of judgment” (John 5:29). The resurrection will take place on the Last day, ushered in by the sound of a trumpet. As to the character of the resurrected body, nothing is explicitly taught in the Bible, except that it shall be like Christ. The possibility of bodily resurrection, was evidently, a subject of argument among early Christians, and St. Paul argues strongly, in its favor, from occurrences in the natural world that seem scarcely less mysterious. The passages most commonly concerned with this doctrine are John 5:21-29, 6:39-40, 11:25-26; 1 Corinthians 15; 1 Thessalonians 4:14-16; and Revelation 20:12.

The Gnostics and Manichaeans, who were condemned by the early Church for heresy, denied the resurrection of the body, maintaining the purely spiritual character of the afterlife. The Roman Catholic doctrine of resurrection was developed by the theologians, St. Augustine, St. Jerome, and Tertullian, who stressed the resurrection of the flesh. A third view, represented, in ancient times, by the 3rd-century Christian theologian, Origen, and in the 19th century, by the German Protestant theologian, Richard Rothe, affirms that the perfected personality in heaven, assumes a spiritual body.

**Revelation (doctrine)**, the self-communication of God; that is, God’s disclosure of divine being or divine will to human beings. Most of the major world religions affirm revelation in some sense as a basis for their doctrines and practices. Revelation may be in the form of a vision, often accompanied by words, or may consist only of words. In the Old Testament, Moses saw a burning bush and heard God’s voice proceeding from it (see Exodus 3). Muhammad, the prophet of Islam, heard a noise like a bell that resolved itself into words. As recounted in the Hindu epic, the *Bhagavad-Gita*, Prince Arjuna saw his charioteer, Krishna, transformed into his true form, as a divine being. Historical events may also be understood as revelation -- for instance, the exodus of Israel from Egypt, or the life of Jesus Christ. General revelation refers to the knowledge of God that comes through specific experiences, such as visions, dreams, or events.

The two kinds of revelation may be complementary. Christianity and Islam both teach that the natural order is revelatory of God, but their emphasis is on the special revelations communicated by their founders. In Judaism, too, the special revelations given to Moses and the prophets, which are described in the Bible, are fundamental to the faith. In all revelation, the primary element, is the encounter with the divine, which it is the task of religious doctrine and of religious tradition to interpret and convey.

**Revivals, Religious,** term widely used among Protestants since the early 18th century to denote periods of marked religious interest. Evangelistic preaching and prayer meetings, frequently accompanied by intense emotionalism, are characteristic of such periods, which are intended to renew the faith of Church members and to bring others to profess their faith openly, for the first time. By an extension of its meaning, the term, is sometimes, applied to various important religious movements of the past. Instances are recorded in the Scriptures as occurring, both in the history of the Jews, and in the early history of the Christian Church. In the Middle Ages, revivals took place in connection with the Crusades and under the auspices of the monastic orders, sometimes with strange adjuncts, as in the case of the Flagellants and the dancing mania. The Reformation of the 16th century, was also, accompanied by revivals of religion.

It is more accurate, however, to limit the application of the term, *revival* to the history of modern Protestantism, especially in Great Britain and the United States, where such movements have flourished with unusual vigor. The Methodist Churches originated from a widespread evangelical movement in the first half of the 18th century. This was later referred to as the Wesleyan movement or Wesleyan revival. The Great Awakening was the common designation for the revival of 1740-42, that took place in New England and other parts of North America under the Congregational clergyman, Joseph Bellamy, and three Presbyterian clergymen, Gilbert Tennent, William Tennent, and their father, the educator, William Tennent. Both Princeton University and Dartmouth College had their origin in this movement. Toward the end of the 18th century, a fresh series of revivals began in America, lasting intermittently from 1797 to 1859. In New England, the

beginning of this long period was called, the evangelical reawakening.

Churches soon came to depend upon revivals for their growth and even for their existence, and, as time went on, the work was also taken up by itinerant preachers, also called circuit riders. The early years of the 19th century were marked by great missionary zeal, extending even to foreign lands. In Tennessee and Kentucky, camp meetings, great open-air assemblies, began about 1800, to play an important part in the evangelical work of the Methodist Church, now the United Methodist Church. One of the most notable products of the camp meeting idea, was the late 19th-century Chautauqua Assembly, a highly successful educational endeavor. An outstanding religious revival of the 19th century, was the Oxford movement (1833-45) in the Church of England, which resulted in the modern English High Church movement. Distinctly a revival, it was of a type, different from those of the two preceding centuries. The great American revival of 1859-61, began in New England, particularly in Connecticut and Massachusetts, and extended to New York and other states. It is believed that, in a single year, half a million converts were received into the Churches. Another remarkable revival, in 1874-75, originated in the labors of the American evangelists, Dwight L. Moody and Ira D. Sankey. Organized evangelistic campaigns, have sometimes, had great success under the leadership of professional evangelists, among them, Billy Sunday, Aimee Semple McPherson, and Billy Graham. The Salvation Army, carries on its work, largely by revivalist methods.

**Religious Liberty**, right of a person to form personal religious beliefs, according to his or her own conscience, and to give public expression, to these beliefs, in worship and teaching, restricted only, by the requirements of public order. Religious liberty differs from toleration, in that toleration pre-supposes preferential treatment of a particular creed, by the state, because it is an established Church, or in some cases, is the predominant religion of the population.

The United States was the first, and for sometime, the only nation to include the principle of religious liberty in its basic laws. The nations of antiquity permitted

tolerance to individuals of minority religions, provided they took part in the public worship of the national gods.

Soon after Christianity became established as the official religion of the Roman Empire in the 4th century, heresy and heterodoxy, became equivalent to treason. After the Reformation, this condemnation of atypical religious beliefs was continued by nations with established reformed Churches, and those who disagreed with the established Church, were punished.

The colonists, immigrating to the New World, brought with them, the same doctrine of religious intolerance, and in many of the American colonies, dissent from the established order of worship, was regarded as sedition. The charter of Rhode Island, granted in 1663, is notable, for being the first to include a declaration of the right to religious liberty. This doctrine, gradually spread to the other colonies, and at the time of the American Revolution, the principle of religious liberty, was explicitly adopted, in various state constitutions. The process culminated in the adoption of the U.S. Constitution, which in Article VI, forbids the establishment of any religious test, as a qualification for federal office, and in the 1st Amendment, forbids the passage of laws, “respecting the establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise, thereof.”

**Sabbath**, (Hebrew *Shabbat*, derived from the verb, *shavat*, “to rest, cease”), a holy day of rest, observed by the Jews and some Christian denominations on the seventh day of the week and by most Christians on Sunday. The origin of the Sabbath is uncertain, but it is apparently connected with the Babylonian *shapattu*, the 15th day of the month, on which, the full moon occurs, and the Babylonian cycle of “evil days,” every seventh day.

The Bible describes the Sabbath as a reminder of God’s rest, after the Creation (see Exodus 20:11), and of the liberation from Egypt (see Deuteronomy 5:15). The prohibition of work (see Deuteronomy 5:12-14), is never fully explained in the Bible. Among the specific kinds of work prohibited, are the kindling of fire (see Exodus 35:3), plowing and harvesting (see Exodus 34:21), and cooking (see Exodus 16:23). The

rabbis of post-biblical times, derived from Scripture 39, categories of prohibited activity. These main categories and their derivative prohibitions, form the basis of modern Orthodox and Conservative Jewish observance of the Sabbath. The Reform and Reconstructionist movements, view the laws, as advisory, rather than binding.

**Sacrament**, any of several liturgical actions of the Christian Church, believed to have been instituted by Christ and to communicate the grace or power of God, through the use of material objects. In the 4th-century, theologian, St. Augustine's definition, the sacraments are "outward and visible signs of an inward and spiritual grace."

### **Sacrament in the New Testament**

The word, *sacrament* does not appear in the Bible, although baptism, Eucharist, and perhaps, other rites that fit the definition, are reported there. The New Testament basis for sacraments is found in its teaching about mystery, which remains the Eastern Orthodox word for sacrament. In the New Testament, the word, *mystery* refers to God's plan for the redemption of the world, through Christ, a plan that is hidden from the understanding of unbelievers, but revealed to those, who have faith (see Ephesians 1:9-10).

In the Christian experience, the saving action of Christ is made known and accessible to the Church, especially through certain liturgical actions, such as baptism and the Eucharist. Therefore, these actions came to be known among the Greeks, as mysteries, perhaps, by analogy, to mystery cults.

### **From Mystery to Sacrament**

In the early 3rd century, Tertullian, the first Latin theologian, translated the Greek word, *mysterion* ("mystery") by the Latin, *sacramentum*, which in pre-Christian use, denoted a pledge of future performance, as in oath of loyalty, taken by soldiers to their commander; emphasis fell on the thing that was given in pledge. In the Christian case, the word, *sacrament* came to focus attention on the water of baptism and on the bread and wine of the Eucharist. These different nuances of mystery and sacrament, account

in part, for the differing character of Eastern and Western sacramental theology.

### **Sacraments and Signs**

Sacraments are sometimes called signs. In Roman Catholic and much Protestant theology, sacraments are regarded as “communicating signs.” That is, the sign itself, actually conveys the reality for which it stands. In some Protestant theology, however, sacraments are not thought to be the vehicles of divine reality; rather, they are “arbitrary signs” that simply call to the believer’s mind, the inner reality of grace.

### **Ex Opere Operato**

If the communicative nature of the sacraments is acknowledged, a sacrament properly performed, is seen, to convey God’s grace independently of the faith or moral character of the celebrant or recipients. Its value, springs from its divine institution, “from the work already done” (Latin *ex opere operato*), in which, the sacrament participates. The opposite position has been maintained by some -- that the value of the sacrament, does depend, in some way, on those who celebrate and receive, *ex opere operantis* (“from the work being done”).

### **Sacramental Character**

Certain sacraments, such as the Eucharist and penance, are to be repeated often. Others -- baptism, confirmation, Holy Orders -- are to be administered to a person, only once. From the time of Augustine, this second group of sacraments has been recognized as having “character.” In other words, because God is faithful to his promises, the gift, in these sacraments, cannot be withdrawn. Grace may become latent, if a person fails to act as the Church intends, but the sacrament need not be repeated, if the person is restored to the communion of the Church.

### **Number of Sacraments**

The New Testament affirms one mystery -- God’s plan for redeeming the world, through Christ. In the history of Christian thought, however, a large number of acts have been called, mysteries or sacraments. In the 12th century, the Italian theologian, Peter

Lombard, summarized a growing consensus, that there should be just seven: baptism, confirmation, Eucharist, penance, extreme unction (Anointing of the Sick), Holy Orders (Orders, Holy), and marriage. These were, in fact, what the Church found necessary for the regular, adequate, liturgical celebration of the Christian mystery. A series of conciliar decisions in the 13th century, made the number, seven, official. Orthodox Churches, also recognize, these seven rites as sacraments, but no official decision enjoins that number. The 16th-century Protestant reformers declared that there, are but two sacraments, baptism and Eucharist -- these having been instituted by Christ. The reformers dismantled the rest of the sacramental system, maintaining that God's grace is more readily accessible, through more personal channels -- prayer, the Scripture, and preaching (Reformation).

**Sacramental**, in Christian theology, a sacred sign, instituted by the Church, as a devotional aid. It is similar to a sacrament, in that, it is a sacred sign; it differs from a sacrament, in not having been instituted, by Christ. Sacramentals span the whole range of words and actions, objects and gestures, and times and places. Included are various blessings, religious objects, (such as holy water, crucifixes, and rosaries), liturgical ceremonies and seasons, and sacred places.

Before the 12th century, the word, *sacramental* was used for any sacred sign, and therefore, included what are now called, sacraments. It was only with the refinement of terms, by the 12th- and 13th-century Scholastic theologians, that the present restricted use of the term, was determined. Although sacramentals, are most often, associated with Roman Catholic practice, Anglicans, and the Orthodox Churches, also recognize their use.

**Sacrifice** (Latin *sacrificium*, originally, "something made holy"), a ritual act, in which a consecrated offering is made to a god or other spiritual being in order to establish, perpetuate, or restore, a sacred bond between humanity and the divine. Offerings may consist of humans or animals (blood offerings) or fruits, crops, flowers, and wine

(bloodless offer-ings).

### **Ancient and Eastern Religions**

Sacrifice played a central role in many ancient religions. The ancient Greeks sacrificed animals (such as goats, sheep, horses, dogs, and cattle), sometimes consuming part of the offerings in a celebratory meal, as a way of establishing communion with the gods. In Mexico, before the Spanish conquest of the 16th century, the Aztecs offered human sacrifices to the sun-god, a practice that took as many as 20,000 lives a year. During the earliest period of Hinduism, the Vedic period, Hindu priests offered humans, animals, and plants in sacrifice at certain stipulated times. The ancient Chinese, also practiced, human sacrifice and made offerings of domestic animals, and of food to gods, and to ancestors. Sacrifice has never been practiced in Buddhism, although devotional offerings of incense, lighted candles, and flowers are made to the Buddha.

### **Judaism**

Sacrifice, was an essential and elaborately prescribed part of Judaism, until the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem in A.D., 70. Among the many sacrificial rites of ancient Judaism, were those for thanksgiving and for expiation of sins (Atonement).

### **Christian Concept of Sacrifice**

In Christianity, the death of Christ on the cross, is considered an exemplary and perfected sacrifice, offered to expiate the sins of humanity. Throughout the writings of St. Paul, Christ is identified as a sacrificial victim (see 1 Corinthians 5:7; Ephesians 5:2; Hebrews 10:12-13). The Eucharist has been associated, from the beginning of the Christian Church, with the sacrifice of Christ, and in some Christian Churches, notably the Roman Catholic Church, the Eucharist is interpreted, as a form of participation, in Christ's sacrifice.

### **Explanatory Theories**

Many theories, concerning the origin of sacrificial rites, have been offered, especially in the 19th and 20th centuries, but no conclusive case has been established.

Contemporary scholars tend to be more interested in the symbolic and functional significance of sacrificial acts. One theory, for example, considers sacrifice, a form of non-verbal communication between human beings and their gods. Another relates sacrificial offerings to the economic value they have in a particular culture. Several scholars have argued that the forms of sacrificial rituals, resemble the structures of human relationships and that the rituals, are therefore, symbolic, not only of religious aspirations, but also of the daily lives of those who take part in them.

**Saint**, name applied, in the New Testament (Colossians 1:2) to the members of the Christian community, generally, but restricted in ecclesiastical usage from very early times to those who have been virtuous to a heroic degree. Saints, are traditionally, distributed into several classes: apostles and evangelists; martyrs; confessors, originally, those who had undergone imprisonment or pains without the final crown of martyrdom and, later, male saints, in general, who were eminent for sanctity; doctors, saints eminent for sacred learning; virgins; and matrons and widows. The title of saint has been conferred, in early and in modern times.

### **Veneration of Saints.**

By the 4th century A.D., the practice of venerating the saints was widespread. During the Middle Ages, however, much superstition surrounded the practice. Even before the Reformation, the Bogomils and Waldenses, objected to the veneration of saints; at the time of the Reformation, the practice, was generally, rejected, as scripturally unfounded. The Roman Catholic Church of Trent (1545-63), affirmed that, it is a good and useful thing to invoke the saints on account of the benefits to be obtained from God, through their intercession. The belief and practice of the Orthodox Church, is basically, the same, as that of the Roman Catholic.

Of the many saints, almost all record, has perished, except their names. The fullest list is found in the general table in the 61st volume of the colossal, *Acta Sanctorum* of the Bollandists, which mentions about 20,000 saints. The catalog that possesses the highest ecclesiastical authority, is that of the *Martyrologium Romanum*. The martyrology

numbers some 2,700 saints, including about 20 saints of the Old Testament, arranged according to the days of their celebration. Many of these saints, were honored annually, with a special feast day; at one time, their feast days filled about two-thirds of the Roman Catholic Church's liturgical calendar, although some of the saints had become, little more, than names. In 1964, Vatican Council II, concluded that, only saints "of truly universal significance, should be extended to the universal Church" and the others, "should be left to be celebrated by a particular Church, or nation, or religious community." Accordingly, in 1969, Pope Paul VI, approved a re-ordering of the liturgical calendar, to achieve the council's wish. In the revised calendar, which took effect on January 1970, only 58 regular, or obligatory, and 92 optional feast days of saints, were retained, in addition, to those of Christ, the Virgin Mary, Saint Joseph, and the apostles.

### **Saints in Art and Patron Saints**

In Christian art, representation of the saints, as well as of Christ, are often marked, by a halo (also known as a nimbus, aureole, or glory), a ring or area of radiance about the head or entire figure, and many of the saints are pictured with emblems, by which, they could readily be recognized. A martyr, who had a special interest in a place, was called, its patron, as early as the 4th century. Trades and professions had their patrons, and for every disease, a saint could be invoked to cure it. Among the widely known patron saints are Andrew of Scotland, Denis of France, George of England, Nicholas of Russia, Patrick of Ireland, James the Great of Spain, and Stephen of Hungary. The term, *hagiology* or *hagiography* is used to denote the branch of literature that is concerned with the lives and legends of the saints.

**Sanctuary**, consecrated or sacred place, strictly a place of worship; largely the term denotes a place that gives refuge and inviolable asylum, or the protection afforded by entering such a place.

Sanctuaries, were formerly recognized, as refuges for fugitives or criminals. In ancient times, the Hebrews had cities of refuge open to those who had committed

unpremeditated crimes. In Egypt, the temples, dedicated to Osiris and Amon, served this purpose, and in Greece, all temples, offered sanctuary. The right of sanctuary, in Christian abbeys and Churches, was first recognized, by law, in the 4th century. It was frequently abused, however, and the right of sanctuary was abolished in England in 1623. It ceased to exist, in most other countries, by the end of the 18th century.

**Sanhedrin**, supreme national tribunal of the Jews, established at the time of the Maccabees. It consisted of 71 members and was presided over by the Nasi (Hebrew, "prince"), at whose side stood, Ab-Beth-Din (Hebrew, "father of the tribunal"). Two similar bodies may have existed: a secular Sanhedrin dominated by the Sadducees, of which, the high priest was the Nasi, and a religious one, governed as a democracy of scholars, according to Pharisaic ideology. It is possible that the latter body was a descendant of the Great Sanhedrin. The limits of the Sanhedrin's jurisdiction, and much else, concerning the ruling body, are not known, but apparently, at one time, the supreme decision, over life and death, was in its hands.

**Second Coming**, also Parousia, return of Jesus Christ, in visible form, to earth. On the basis of certain sayings of Jesus, the early Church expected that, within a comparatively short period, after the ascension, He would come again and usher in the full glory of the messianic age (see Matthew 24:29-31; Mark 13:24-27; Luke 21:25-28). As the years passed, many leaders of the Church, came to feel, that the true meaning of Jesus' Words and realization of His promises, were to be found in the spiritual life, rather than, in an earthly kingdom.

In later times, the doctrine of Christ's return has been held in one of two forms: the first, that it will be pre-millennial, that is, before the age of the great prosperity and triumph of the Church; or the second, that it will be post-millennial -- after this age, and immediately before, the general judgment. The first view is based on certain interpretations of Revelation 20:4-7, supported by other passages of Scripture, and more particularly, by the general conception, believed to be derived from the Scriptures, that the present divine order, does not contain in it, according to the plans of God, the

means necessary, to bring the world to Christ. Thus, it will be necessary, that Christ Himself, come to rule.

**Shema** (Hebrew “Hear [O Israel],” the first word of Deuteronomy 6:4), one of the two major rubrics (the other being the *Tefillah*), of the daily liturgy in Judaism, and the closest approximation to a creedal statement. The *Shema* consists of three scriptural paragraphs (Deuteronomy 6:4-9, Deuteronomy 11:13-21, and Numbers 15:37-41), which are framed by introductory and concluding benedictions. The three paragraphs, together, affirm God’s unity and providence and the Jews’ obligation, to serve him, in love, and perform His commandments. The surrounding benedictions praise God as creator of the universe, revealer of Torah, and redeemer and (in the evening recitation), protector of Israel. In accordance with the rabbinic interpretation of Deuteronomy 6:7, the *Shema* is recited, twice daily, “when you lie down, and when you rise.” It thus, forms a major part, of the morning and evening services. The first paragraph, is also recited, immediately before going to bed at night. Originally, the *Shema* was recited by the individual, on beholding the sunrise and sunset.

**Simony**, the buying or selling of spiritual things. The word is derived from the biblical sorcerer, Simon Magus, who attempted to buy spiritual powers from the apostle, Peter (see Acts 8:18-24).

Simony, was a problem in the Christian Church, from the time of the Edict of Milan (313), when the Church began to accumulate wealth and power, until modern times. This is evident, from the frequent legislation against it. In 451, the Council of Chalcedon proscribed ordination for money; this prohibition, was reaffirmed by the Third Lateran Council in 1179, and by the Council of Trent (1545-63). Simony was rampant from the 9th to the 11th century. During that period, simony pervaded Church life on every level, from the lower clergy, to the papacy. At the time of the Reformation, major abuses centered on the sale of indulgences and relics.

Ecclesiastical law forbids simony and condemns it as a sinful practice that bespeaks a

shallow understanding of spiritual values. Prohibited, are all monetary transactions, surrounding blessed or consecrated religious objects, prayers, and masses (excluding ecclesiastically authorized offerings for the support of the clergy), and Church offices and promotions.

**Sin**, in religion, transgression of a sacred or divinely sanctioned law or practice. Some idea of sin, is found, in most religions. Perhaps, the earliest manifestation of it, was the strong opprobrium attached to violating a taboo. In the ancient religions, Gnosticism and Manichaeism, sin was regarded as a manifestation, of the human spirit's fall, from the divine realm and its imprisonment in the evil material world. In Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism, the concept closest to sin, is that of demerit, the accumulation, through wrong deeds, of evil consequences, which must be purged in the process of transmigration.

### **Jewish and Christian Conceptions**

In no other sacred book is the sense of sin so fully developed as in the Bible. Throughout the Scriptures, sin is the element in humanity, that puts human beings, at enmity with God, requiring repentance and God's forgiveness. In the New Testament, sin is the essential human condition that calls for the redeeming work of Christ. In the Christian Church, however, it was not until the controversies between the British monk, Pelagius and St. Augustine, the great Father and Doctor of the Church, that the doctrine of sin was fully developed. The early Greek Fathers of the Church, regarded sin, as opposition to the will of God. They did not, however, affirm the guilt of the sin of the first man, Adam, or the corruption of his nature, descended to all humanity. The early Christian ecclesiastical writer, Tertullian, in his doctrine of traducianism, held that sinfulness had been propagated from Adam. But, it was reserved for Augustine, to formulate the doctrine of original sin. He maintained, against Pelagius, that Adam's sin corrupted humanity's whole nature; that his guilt and its penalty pass to all his descendants; that all human beings are born in a state of sin; and that because of Adam's original sin, they are incapable of satisfying God and are naturally disposed, to pursue evil. Pelagius emphasized free will and individual moral effort and denied

original sin. The Orthodox Church has continued to affirm, that the human will is as free as Adam's was, before the fall. The 13th-century Scottish Scholastic philosopher, John Duns Scotus, admitted that humanity had lost, by Adam's fall, its *justitia originalis* (Latin, "original righteousness"), but he laid stress on the freedom of the will.

### **Protestantism**

During the Protestant Reformation, the German reformer, Martin Luther, and the Swiss reformer, John Calvin, maintained the Augustinian emphasis on original sin and on God's grace, as the means of redemption. The Swiss religious reformer, Huldreich Zwingli, regarded sin as an inherited disease; Arminians and Socinians denied hereditary sin altogether. The 19th-century German Protestant theologian, Friedrich Schleiermacher, argued that sin is due to the inability to distinguish between one's absolute dependence on God and one's relative dependence on the temporal world.

Roman Catholicism distinguishes between mortal sin, which destroys the individual's relationship with God and merits eternal damnation, and venial sin, which, although serious, does not cut-off the individual from God. Protestants have rejected this distinction.

**Social Gospel**, a liberal movement in American Protestantism, prominent in the late 19th century, which sought to apply Christian principles to a variety of social problems, engendered by industrialization. Its founders and leaders included the clergymen, Washington Gladden and Walter Rauschenbusch, who tried to counteract the effects of expanding capitalism, by teaching religion and human dignity to the working class. Proponents of the Social Gospel, also opposed the tacit support, given by organized religions to unrestrained capitalism.

The Social Gospel movement's views were formally expressed in 1908, when the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America (a forerunner of the National Council of Churches), adopted a "social creed of the Churches." This creed, called for

the abolition of child labor, improved working conditions for women, a day off each week, and the right of all workers to a living wage. Many of the aims of the Social Gospel movement, were espoused by organized labor in the early years of the century, and some were later, incorporated in the New Deal programs of the 1930's.

**Soul**, in many religions and philosophies, the immaterial element that, together with the material body, constitutes the human individual. In general, the soul is conceived as an inner, vital, and spiritual principle, the source of all bodily functions, and particularly of, mental activities. Belief, in some kind of soul, that can exist apart from the body, is found in all known cultures. In many contemporary non-literate societies, human beings are said, to have several souls -- sometimes as many as seven -- localized in different parts of the body and having diverse functions. Disease, is frequently explained, as "soul-loss," which can occur, for example, when witches steal the soul or evil spirits capture it.

### **Eastern Religions**

In the East, belief in a human soul is central to several philosophical and religious systems. Thus, for instance, in early Hinduism, the soul or self (*atman*) was considered the principle that controls all activities and defines one's self-identity and consciousness. The philosophical Hindu writings, the Upanishads, identify the *atman* with the divine (Brahman), adding an eternal dimension to the soul. Bound up with matter, the human soul is caught in the cycle of reincarnation, until it achieves purification and knowledge and merges, once again, with ultimate reality. Buddhism is unique. in the history of religions, because it teaches that the individual soul, is an illusion, produced by various psychological and physiological influences. Thus, it has no conception of a soul or self, that can, survive death.

### **Judaism and Christianity**

Early Judaism considered the human personality as a whole, without making a sharp distinction between body and soul. By the Middle Ages, however, the soul was defined, in Judaism, as the principle of life and was considered capable of surviving bodily

decay. The Christian doctrine of the soul, has been strongly influenced, by the philosophies of Plato and Aristotle. Most Christians believe that each individual has an immortal soul and that the human personality, as a whole, composed of soul and resurrected body, may through faith, be granted God's presence in the afterlife. The Neoplatonic theory of the soul, as prisoner in a material body, prevailed in Christian thought, until the advent of the 13th-century theologian, Thomas Aquinas, who accepted Aristotle's analysis of the soul and body, as two conceptually, distinguishable, elements of a single substance.

### **Islam**

The teachings of Islam on the soul, resemble those of Judaism and Christianity. According to the Koran, God breathed the soul into the first human beings, and at death, the souls of the faithful are brought near to God.

### **Social Significance**

The belief in the existence of souls may have important social consequences, by reinforcing moral obligation and by serving as a guiding principle in life. The cultural significance, of the belief in souls, reflects the universality of the problems, to which, it is a response: the complex question of the human personality, the moral and spiritual experiences of life, and the perennial question, of life, after death.

**Stigmata**, in Christianity, marks on a person's body, resembling the wounds suffered by Jesus Christ in the crucifixion and inflicted, presumably, by a supernatural agency. Observations of stigmata, have included, not only wounds of the hands and feet and of the side, such as those received in the crucifixion, but also those, impressed by the crown of thorns, and by the scourging. In some cases, the stigmata have been, only subjectively, felt and could not be seen by others. The first and most remarkable example of stigmata, is that of St. Francis of Assisi. Many other cases have been recorded, notably those of the German nun, Anna Katharina Emmerick and of Louise Lateau, of Bois d'Haine, Belgium. The latter, was subjected to a thorough medical examination by the Belgian Academy of Medicine, which could not explain the

phenomenon scientifically.

**Sun Worship**, religious devotion, paid to the sun, either as a deity or as the symbol of a deity. Sun worship was practiced by the Iroquois, Plains, and Tsimshian peoples of North America and reached a high state of development among the Native Americans of Mexico and Peru. The sun was also a Hindu deity, regarded as maleficent by the Dravidians of southern India and as benevolent by the Munda of the central parts. The Babylonians were sun-worshippers, and in ancient Persia, worship of the sun, was an integral part of the elaborate cult of Mithras. The ancient Egyptians worshipped the sun-god, Ra.

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In ancient Greece, the deities of the sun, were Helios and Apollo. The worship of Helios was widespread; temples were built in Corinth, Argos, Troezen (no longer in existence), and many other cities, but the principal seat was on the island of Rhodes, in the Dodecanese, where four white horses were sacrificed, annually, to the god. A similar sacrifice was offered on the summit of Mount Hagios Elias, in the Taygetos Mountains, in Laconia. In time, virtually all the functions of Helios were transferred to the god, Apollo, in his identity as Phoebus. Sun-worship persisted in Europe, even after the introduction of Christianity, as is evidenced by its disguised survival, in such traditional Christian practices, as the Easter bonfire and the Yule log on Christmas.

**Synagogue** (Greek “place of assembly;” Hebrew *bet kneset*), in Judaism, an assembly house for communal prayer, study, and meeting; a central communal institution. Central and Eastern European Jews, called their synagogues, *shuls* (Yiddish, “schools”); Reform Jews, sometimes, use the word, *temple*.

### **Features**

Synagogue architecture has never been standardized, but the following elements are almost invariable: of greatest importance, the ark housing Torah scrolls (the Five Books of Moses in Hebrew written in archaic style on parchment), which is always on the wall facing Jerusalem; the *Ner Tamid* (“perpetual flame”), a light always lit, before the ark; a

large desk on an elevated platform (bimah), at which, the Torah is read before the congregation; a small reader's lectern, from which, the service is conducted and, from which, the rabbi may preach; and seating for the congregation. Traditionally, men and women sit in separate sections, but Reform and Conservative synagogues, do not observe this custom. A seven-branched candelabrum (menorah) is a standard ornament.

### **Origins**

The origins of the synagogue, as an institution, are obscure. The earliest archaeological evidence is a 3rd-century B.C., inscription from Egypt. The earliest evidence from Palestine, is a 1st-century B.C., Greek inscription, that stresses the synagogue's teaching function ("for the reading of the Law and the teaching of the commandments"). The earliest synagogues discovered (at Masada and Herodium) are from 1st-century A.D., Palestine and pre-date the destruction of the Temple. Literary evidence of the 1st century (such as the works of the philosopher, Philo Judaeus and the historian, Flavius Josephus, as well as the New Testament), portrays the synagogue as a well-established institution, but its exact origin is uncertain, despite numerous scholarly guesses. The Jerusalem Temple was the center of the Jewish cult as long as it stood, and the synagogue clearly had a different function, serving as a local meetinghouse for study and, probably, prayer. When the Temple was destroyed, the synagogue became its surrogate. Much of the liturgy of rabbinic Judaism -- even the times of statutory prayer and the number of services held on Sabbaths and festivals -- was framed to correspond to the rituals and rhythms of the defunct Temple cult. From early on, the synagogue functioned, also as a communal center, and even, as a hostel for traveling Jews.

**Theology**, a discipline that attempts to express the content of a religious faith as a coherent body of propositions. Theology is narrower in scope than faith, for whereas, faith is a total attitude of the individual, including will and feeling, theology attempts to bring to expression, in words, the elements of belief that are, explicitly or implicitly, contained in faith.

Not every verbal expression of faith is theology, however. The first verbalizations of faith were naïve and mythological. Theology arose out of reflection upon these first naïve utterances. For instance, in the New Testament, the disciple, Thomas, exclaims to Jesus, “My Lord and my God!” but a long process of reflection and speculation came between that simple confession, and the theological declaration, made by the Council of Nicaea (325), that Jesus Christ is “one in substance with the Father.” This example, demonstrates the tendency to move from concrete language (“Lord”), to conceptual language (“substance”).

Although theology, ultimately, concerns God, many theologians maintain that concepts of Him necessarily fall short. In the Judeo-Christian tradition, God is often described, in such negative terms, as invisible or incorporeal. If this negative theology is not to become sheer agnosticism, it has to be supplemented by indirect ways of speaking about God (involving analogy, symbolism, and metaphor), so that the language of theology never becomes purely conceptual, instead retaining some of the imagery from the pre-theological stage of belief. A careful analysis of theological language is a necessary prelude to the theological enterprise. It reveals a language that employs, both images and concepts, and that, is both, critical and confessional.

### **Theology and Science**

Theologians, as diverse as the 13th-century Italian, St. Thomas Aquinas and the 20th-century Swiss, Karl Barth, have held that theology is a science. Both, however, were careful to point out that sciences are of many sorts. Theology resembles a science, to the extent that orderly, critical, intellectual, procedures are employed in the study of its subject matter, but it radically differs from the natural, and even, from the human sciences because, its ultimate subject matter, God, is not accessible to empirical investigation. The problem of establishing a rigorous way of reasoning about God, is therefore, crucial in theology. Aquinas began his theological system, by offering five proofs for the existence of God, as a basis for all his other arguments. Barth, on the other hand, began with God’s revelation or communication of Himself (the Word of

God), believing that, only thus, can one avoid the danger of approaching God, as a mere object, of investigation. Those who follow Barth's method, argue that every science has to begin with some assumptions and that the assumption of a self-communicating God, is the correct starting point for theology; those who follow Aquinas's example, hold that, intellectual integrity, demands that the theologian begin with the question of whether God exists. Clearly, in both views, theology must be concerned, as much with human beings and their capacities, as with God. Indeed, Barth has said, that theology would be more properly called, "theanthropology," because its subject matter is not

God in isolation, but rather, the divine and the human, as they are related to each other.

### **Sources of Theology**

The oldest theology of all -- that of the Greek philosophers, who invented the word, *theology* -- was based on rational reflection on God, the world, and human life. These philosophers, explicitly contrasted, the rational theological approach to the problem of God, with the mythological stories of the gods told by the Greek poets. The rational approach, has continued, to have many adherents, such as Aquinas, but the appeal to revelation as the source of theological truth, has also, been strong in the Christian, Jewish, Islamic, and several Eastern traditions. These religions are traced back to founders, who offered some new and striking insights into the questions of God and human destiny. Subsequent generations of theologians, reflected on the content of these illuminations, drew their implications, applied their insights in new situations, and tested and criticized the interpretations, that had been previously offered. The distinctive insights of the founders, whether or not the word, *revelation* is used, have been stamped on the theologies of the different religions, and it is a testimony to the depth and richness of these insights, that so much, has been drawn from them, and that they still seem inexhaustible.

### *The Role of Scripture*

Most developed religions of the world possess scriptures, or sacred writings. These are

usually taken to be the work of the founders, themselves, or of their earliest disciples. The Torah, long attributed to Moses; the New Testament, much of it attributed to disciples of Jesus; the Koran, attributed to Muhammad; and the voluminous scriptures of Hinduism and Buddhism, are all examples of the transmission of original revelations through written documents. Within the various traditions, the status of scripture varies. Among Christians, Jews, and Muslims, scripture is accorded an authority -- sometimes as the very word of God -- that it does not have in Hinduism or Buddhism. Even in Christianity, however, differences exist between Fundamentalists, for whom the Bible, is divinely inspired, and liberals, for whom, it is the fallible human attestation of revelation, but not revelation itself. Nonetheless, wherever scriptures exist, they provide an important source for theology, even when modern critical methods are applied.

### *Tradition and Experience*

Tradition is another means, by which, the original revelation is conveyed and mediated. Tradition pre-cedes scripture, in the sense, that stories and teachings of the founders, were passed on, by word of mouth, before they were written down and assumed a fixed form. But tradition also follows scripture, for where scripture is unclear or inconsistent, the believing community, has to interpret it, and a whole body of interpretation, may evolve alongside the original scripture and, may even, be written down. This has happened, in both, Judaism and Islam, although the body of tradition, in these religions, is not accorded the same status as scripture.

In Christianity, Roman Catholicism has assigned a high value to tradition, as the living voice of the Church. Protestants have stressed the principle of relying on the authority of the Bible alone, but because the Bible is read and taught in the context of the Church -- especially in the liturgy -- it is virtually impossible, to hear it without overtones of traditional interpretation. Finally, experience has become an important influence on theology, especially in modern times. Respect for the authority of scripture, tradition, and even revelation, has diminished, and consequently, the theologian tends to draw more and more on present experience, either personal or that of the community. The theologian searches for the meaning of God, not only in such religious experiences, as

mysticism and conversion, but also in the general cultural, social, and political experience of the time.

### **Theological Method**

There is no single, universally recognized method in theology. Method varies from one theologian to another and, largely depends, on the degree of importance, attached to the various sources. The 11th-century theologian, St. Anselm, is a good example of a theologian, who used the method of rigorous, logical, argument. In his *Proslogion*, Anselm, sought to prove the existence of God from the concept of a perfect being (the ontological argument), and in *Cur Deus Homo*, he argued that, given the existence, both of a benevolent God and of the sinfulness of humanity, the Christian doctrines of incarnation and atonement, may be deduced by logical necessity. Few theologians have been, as rigorously logical, as Anselm, but most have aimed at logical coherence. A minority, however, including the 2nd-century Church father, Tertullian and the 19th-century Danish philosopher, Soren Kierkegaard, have denied that theology can be conceived as a rational system and have held that the human experience of God, reveals discontinuities and paradoxes.

A quite different method can be observed among Reformation and post-Reformation Protestant theologians, who have attempted to base theology on the Bible, alone. In its crudest form, this has meant, a constant appeal to the Bible, to prove theological assertions. With the development of biblical studies, however, this type of theology has become much more sophisticated. The method is, first of all, to establish the biblical text from the manuscripts and variant readings and, next, to subject this text to the closest scrutiny, taking note, for example, of linguistic considerations, literary sources, and historical background. This constitutes the work of exegesis, which aims at ascertaining, as far as possible, the meaning that the writer intended. The theologian, must then go on to ask, how the original meaning of the text has been developing in the course of doctrinal history, and, what it might be taken to mean, in the theologian's own time and cultural situation. This step involves hermeneutics, the science of interpretation. Some hold that, interpretation, is itself, a creative, innovative

act, not just the transposition of meaning from an ancient to a modern context. Even a transposition, intended to reproduce the exact meaning of the original text, may result in substantial changes. The 20th-century German theologian, Rudolf Bultmann, advocated a method of “demythologizing,” on the assumption, that the essential meaning of the New Testament, is an understanding of human existence that must be disengaged from the mythological language, current at the time, when the New Testament was written. Bultmann’s project involved the translation of this “essential meaning,” into the language of modern existentialist philosophy.

Formally similar to the biblically based theologies of Protestant writers, are those of Roman Catholic writers, who have tried to develop theologies, based on the dogmatic pronouncements of the Church. This was done, somewhat naively, in the older handbooks, but it is now recognized, that hermeneutical questions are as relevant to dogma, as they are to scripture, and that even, the most venerated dogmas, periodically, need reinterpretation and may lead to new insights.

Theologians, who are reluctant to begin with an appeal to authoritative texts, whether biblical or dogmatic, begin the task from the opposite end, analyzing human experience and its problems, and then asking, how traditional wisdom might illuminate or resolve these problems. The 20th-century German theologian, Paul Tillich, has used the expression, “method of correlation,” to describe this procedure in theology. He, and others, have made much use of phenomenology, in their analysis of human experience. The principal types of theological method, are obviously, capable of being combined in different ways. Every major theologian has a method, that in its detail, is unique, but, which nonetheless, involves many procedures, similar to those of other theologians. It is also important, to notice that many of the methods of theology, are the same as those employed by historians, students of language and literature, philosophers, and others.

### **The Branches of Theology**

The word, *theology*, is sometimes used, in a broad sense, meaning not only the study of doctrine, but also, biblical studies and Church history, as when one speaks of a faculty

of theology in a university. More often, however, theology means, systematic theology - - the sense, in which, it has been discussed in this article -- that is, the ordered exposition of the beliefs of a religious faith, as a whole. Christian systematic theology is subdivided into the doctrine of God (theology in the strictest sense); Christology, the doctrine of the person of Christ; soteriology, the doctrine of salvation; anthropology, the doctrine of humanity; pneumatology, the doctrine of the spirit; eschatology, the doctrine of the "last things," or the end of time; and ecclesiology, the doctrine of the Church. Further divisions, are sometimes made, but truly, systematic theology always emphasizes the unity and mutual implication of the various parts.

The distinction between natural theology, which is based on reason and common experience, and revealed theology, which is based directly on revelation, has already been noted. Similarly, a distinction should be made between apologetics -- the attempt to state religious belief, while taking not of, and responding to, objections and criticisms -- and dogmatics, the straight exposition of beliefs. Some theologians, however, reject apologetics, because it seems to allow their opponents to set the agenda, arguing that the best apologetic, is simply, a clear statement of belief.

The rise and development of religious doctrines, is the subject of historical theology, which has important implications for current theological speculation. Somewhat less central to the theological enterprise, are several disciplines, in which, insights are derived from systematic theology, but applied to various specialized problems. In moral theology, the insights of faith are applied to questions of moral conduct. Because of the variety of these issues, moral theology tends to become an interdisciplinary task. When the problems are connected with social and institutional aspects of human life, one may speak of social theology, and even, political theology. Pastoral, or practical, theology has to do with the exercise of ministry, in such matters, as counseling, and the cure of souls.

## **Early Christian Theology**

Although the Bible contains much theological material, it is obviously, not a textbook of systematic theology. Paul's Epistle to the Romans, is perhaps, the nearest approach to a theological treatise in the New Testament; beginning with the sinful human condition, Paul develops a doctrine of justification, by faith, and sketches a scheme of universal salvation. As has already been mentioned, theology began among the Greeks, as a scientific discipline, and it was the convergence of Greek philosophy and biblical faith, that gave rise to the great age of patristic theology. Although the German theologian, Adolph von Harnack, lamented the "Hellenization" of the Gospel, most theologians, would agree with Tillich, that biblical faith had to respond to the intellectual challenge of Greek philosophy.

In the East, the 3rd-century writer Origen, of the school of Alexandria, was perhaps, the most influential theologian of the early Christian era: *De Principiis* (On First Principles), covers the major topics of theology, and *Contra Celsum* (Against Celsus), in which, Origen answers the criticisms of a pagan philosopher, is a notable example of apologetics. The great patristic theologian of the West was St. Augustine. His principal work is *The City of God*, (413-26), a vast study, in which, human history is presented as a struggle between the forces of good and evil. Another profoundly influential theological work of Augustine, is his lengthy treatise, *On the Trinity* (400-16). Both Origen and Augustine, also wrote commentaries on books of the Bible, and both, were much influenced by philosophies derived from Plato. It was during the patristic period, that the major Christian doctrines received their definitive formulation.

### **The Middle Ages**

The next upsurge of theological activity occurred during the Middle Ages. Anselm and his principal works have already been mentioned, but the outstanding figure, in medieval theology, was Thomas Aquinas. His great *Summa Theological* (1265-73), running to 2 million words and still unfinished, at the time of his death, is a detailed systematic exposition of the doctrines of God, human nature and right conduct, and incarnation and salvation. It subtly, interweaves philosophical and theological themes

and has exercised an unparalleled influence, especially in Roman Catholic theology. Aquinas, also wrote, a major work of apologetics, the *Summa Contra Gentiles* (1261-64; trans.1956). He made considerable use of the philosophy of Aristotle, which was being re-discovered about this time.

### **The Reformation**

The Protestant Reformation in the 16th century, marked a return to the Bible and a more practical, ethical, and less speculative tone, in theology, and therefore, an attempt to reduce the role of philosophy in theological work. Martin Luther was not a systematic theologian, but the new teaching was, ably presented, by his colleague, Melancthon in his *Loci Communes Rerum Theologicarum* (1521). By far, the greatest Reformation theologian, was John Calvin, whose *Institutes of the Christian Religion* (1536), remains the classic of Reformed systematic theology. Calvin stressed the sovereignty of God, to the point, of constructing a doctrine of strict predestination, but he tried to base all his teachings on the Bible.

### **Modern Theology**

After the Reformation, a period of theological stagnation, set in, as the Roman Catholic and Protestant orthodoxies, faced one another, in rigidly entrenched positions. In the 17th and 18th centuries, both camps were threatened by the rise of rationalist philosophy and empirical science. The long reign of theology as “queen of the sciences” was ending. In the face of these threats, the 19th century German theologian, Friedrich Schleiermacher, brought new life to theology. The authority of orthodoxy was gone, and the old natural theology had been discredited by two 18th-century philosophers, the English skeptic, David Hume and the German idealist, Immanuel Kant. Thus, Schleiermacher, boldly, made his appeal, to regarding the present experience of the believing community, as the new basis for theology. In his major work, *The Christian Faith* (1821-22; trans.1948), doctrine is treated as the transcript of experience. With Schleiermacher, the focus of theology, seems to shift from God to humanity, and this, was generally, true of the liberal theology that dominated the 19th century. Its development was interrupted by the work of Karl Barth,

whose monumental *Church Dogmatics* (1932-62; trans.1936-62), represents a return to biblical theology. In the last half of the 20th century, a variety of theological schools has coexisted. Notable among them, is the revitalized Roman Catholic theology, springing from the Second Vatican Council (1962-65). Other schools employ the principles of the 20th-century English philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead, the 20th century German philosopher, Martin Heidegger, and even Karl Marx, for theological construction.

### **Theology and Other Disciplines**

Theology's oldest partner, in dialogue, has been philosophy. Successive schools of philosophy have inspired innovative theological thinking, offered categories for elucidating theological ideas, and interpreted the changing interests of society.

Judeo-Christian theology, in particular, has been intimately involved with history, because in the biblical tradition, history is the medium of revelation, and the historical assertions of faith have to be scrutinized and tested like other historical assertions. Psychology, sociology, and anthropology, all involve the study of religion, and although their methods and aims are different from those of theology, they often, throw light on the course of theological development. Theology must also draw on the natural sciences -- for instance, in investigating how the doctrines of creation and providence are related to the world described by science. Finally, during the late 20th century, theologians of the great world religions, have entered into dialogue with one another, establishing a common ground, and exploring differences.

**Theosophy**, (Greek *theos*, "god;" *sophos*, "wise"), designation for any religiophilosophical system purporting to furnish knowledge of God, and of the universe in relation to God, by means, of direct mystical intuition, philosophical inquiry, or both.

### **Precursors of Theosophy**

Early examples of theosophic thought are found in the Sanskrit metaphysical treatises, known as the Upanishads. Hindu philosophy, subsequent to the composition of the Upanishads, (about the 8th century B.C.) has been, predominantly

theosophic, in tone. Indian thought, probably, had some influence in Persia, where theosophic speculation became popular after the Arab conquest in the first half of the 7th century A.D. In China, both the *I Ching* (Book of Changes), one of the so-called Five Classics of Confucianism, and the *Tao-te Ching* (Classic of the Way and Its Power), a major treatise of Taoism, contain theosophic elements. In the West, such systems of thought as, Neoplatonism and Gnosticism, contain theosophic elements. Elements similar to those of Neoplatonism and Gnosticism reappear in the Cabala, a mystical interpretation of Scriptures, current among the Jews of Europe between the 12th and 16th centuries. In the Middle Ages, theosophic teachings were expounded by the German mystics and preachers, Meister Eckhart and Johannes Tauler and by the Swiss physician and alchemist, Philippus Aureolus Paracelsus, and, in later periods, by the German mystic, Jakob Boehme, and the Flemish physician and chemist, Jan Baptista van Helmont.

### **The Theosophical Society**

The term, *theosophy* has been employed with, particular reference, to a system of occult philosophy, set forth, by Helena Petrovna Blavatsky and her followers, in the Theosophical Society, which she helped organize in New York City in 1875. She maintained that she had received her doctrines from Oriental religious teachers, who had reached a higher plane of existence, than that of other mortals. According to her teaching, God is infinite, absolute, and unknowable (an attribute, apparently incompatible with the claim, implicit in the term, *theosophy*). The deity, is also said, to be the source, of both, spirit and matter. Through the operation of an immutable law, spirit is said, to descend into matter, and matter, to ascend into spirit, by cyclical action. In its psychological application, Blavatsky's doctrine, represents all souls, as being the same in essence, although differing in degrees of development. The more advanced souls, are said to be, the natural guardians of the less developed. Human beings are presented as complex, with both a higher and lower nature. The higher (comprising mind, soul, and spirit), has been polluted by the lower (physical and other), and must be purified before it can completely return to the divine.

Purification, is thought to take place, through a series of incarnations.

**Transfiguration**, in the New Testament, event traditionally understood, as the revelation of the glory of Jesus Christ, as the son of God. Described in Matthew 17, Mark 9, and Luke 9, it occurs when Jesus takes his disciples, Peter, James, and John to a “high mountain” (traditionally, Mount Tabor): “And He was transfigured before them, and His face shone like the sun, and His garments became white as light” (Matthew 17:2). At the same time, the prophets, Moses and Elijah, appeared to the disciples and a “voice from the cloud” said, “This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased; listen to Him” (Matthew 17:5).

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The Feast of the Transfiguration originated in the Eastern Church before the 7th century and, was gradually, introduced into the Western Church. Its general observance in the Western Church was established in 1456, by Pope Callistus III, who fixed its date as August 6, to commemorate a Christian victory over the Ottoman Turks at Belgrade. It is a major feast in the Orthodox and Armenian Churches.

**Transmigration**, passing of the soul, at death, into a new body or new form of being. Transmigration and reincarnation, or the rebirth of a soul in a new body (especially in a new human body), are roughly, synonymous. Metamorphosis and resurrection are not synonymous with transmigration. Metamorphosis is the transformation of a living being into another form or substance of life (as a person into a tree); resurrection, especially the Christian doctrine of resurrection, is the rising again, to life of the body, after death.

The ancient Egyptians believed in the transmigration of souls; their dead were embalmed, in order, to preserve the body, so that it might accompany the *ka*, an animating force that was the counterpart of the body, into the next world. Among the

ancient Greeks, transmigration was a doctrine, closely associated, with the followers of the philosopher and mathematician, Pythagoras. According to Pythagorean teaching, the soul survives bodily death, being immortal, and merely, confined to the body. After a series of rebirths in other bodies, each rebirth, following a period of purification in the underworld, the soul becomes, free eternally, from the cycle of reincarnations.

Plato maintained that the soul is eternal, pre-existent, and wholly spiritual. After entering the body, it tends to become impure, through association, with bodily passions; it retains, nevertheless, a minimal knowledge of former existences. Delivery from the body occurs, only after, the soul passes through a series of transmigrations. If the soul has had a good character in its several existences, it is allowed to return to a state of pure being. If, however, its character has continually deteriorated in its transmigrations, it ends in Tartarus, the place of eternal damnation.

The idea of transmigration was never adopted into orthodox Judaism or Christianity. Among Jews, only the mystical Cabalists, adopted it, as part of their system of philosophy. The Gnostics and the Manichaeans, also believed, in transmigration, but early Christians, who adopted Gnostic and Manichaean doctrines, were declared heretics by the Church.

In Eastern religious thought and philosophy, belief in transmigration seems not to have been part of the most ancient religious beliefs of the Aryan conquerors of India; it appears first in doctrinal form in the Indian religious and philosophical collection of the Upanishads. Ever since, however, *samsara* (the Sanskrit term), has been one of the major tenets of three major Eastern religions: Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism. Thus, according to modern popular Hinduism, the state, in which, the soul is reborn, is pre-determined by the good or bad deeds (karma) done in former incarnations; the souls of those who do evil, for example, are reborn in lower states (such as animals, insects, and the spirits of trees). Ultimately, release from *samsara* and karma, is attained after atonement for bad deeds and recognition that the individual soul (*atman*) and the universal soul (*Brahman*) are identical.

Since ancient times, less structured societies, than those embracing major Eastern or Western religions, have, also believed, in various forms of transmigration. They have supposed the body to be inhabited by a single soul, or vital essence, which is believed to separate from the body, at death (and also, during sleep), passing out, and, in through, the mouth or nostrils. Separated, from the body, after the body's death, the soul seeks to inhabit a new body, and if need be, will enter the body of an animal or some other lower form of life. Among these cultures, it is

believed that reincarnation is accomplished by transmigration of the soul of a dead person to the body of an infant of the same family, with the subsequent animation of the child. Family resemblances are traced to this process.

**Transubstantiation**, in Christian theology, dogma that, in the Eucharist, the bread and wine to be administered become, upon consecration, the actual body and blood of Jesus Christ, even though, the external manifestations of the bread and wine -- shape, color, flavor, and odor -- remain. It is thus, opposed to other doctrines, such as, the Lutheran doctrine, that the body and blood of Christ, coexist in and with, the bread and wine, which remain unchanged.

The term, *transubstantiation* was adopted into the phraseology of the Church in 1215, when it was employed by the Fourth Lateran Council. The dogma was reconfirmed (1551), by the Council of Trent, as follows: "If anyone shall say that, in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, there remains the substance of bread and wine together with the body and blood of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and shall deny that wonderful and singular conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, the species of bread and wine, alone remaining, which conversion the Catholic Church, most fittingly, calls Transubstantiation, let him be anathema."

In his encyclical, *Mysterium Fidei* (Mystery of Faith, 1965), Pope Paul VI, restated the

traditional teaching, to correct the views of some modern Roman Catholic theologians, that the change consists, merely, in a new religious finality (“transfinalization”) or significance, (“transignification”), resulting in either case, in little more than, a symbolic divine presence.

Transubstantiation is a doctrine, not only, of the Roman Catholic Church, but also, of the Orthodox Church. At the Synod of Jerusalem (1672), the doctrine was confirmed, as essential, to the faith of the entire Orthodox Church. The dogma was repudiated by the Church of England.

**Trinity (theology)**, in Christian theology, doctrine that God exists as three persons -- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit -- who are united in one substance or being. The doctrine is not taught, explicitly, in the New Testament, where the word, *God*, almost invariably, refers to the Father, but already, Jesus Christ, the Son, is seen as standing in a unique relation to the Father, while the Holy Spirit, is also, emerging, as a distinct divine person.

The term, *trinitas* was first used in the 2nd century, by the Latin theologian, Tertullian, but the concept was developed, in the course of the debates on the nature of Christ. In the 4th century, the doctrine, was finally, formulated; using terminology, still employed, by Christian theologians, the doctrine taught the co-equality of the persons of the Godhead. In the West, the 4th-century theologian, St. Augustine’s influential work, *De Trinitate* (On the Trinity, 400-16), compared the three-in-oneness of God, with analogous structures in the human mind, and suggested, that the Holy Spirit may be understood as the mutual love between Father and Son (although, this second point seems difficult to reconcile, with the belief that the Spirit is a distinct, co-equal member of the Trinity). The stress on equality, however, was never understood, as detracting from a certain primacy of the Father -- from whom, the other two persons derive, even if they do so, eternally. For an adequate understanding of the Trinitarian conception of God, the distinctions among the person of the Trinity, must not become, so sharp, that there seems to be a plurality of gods, nor may these distinctions, be swallowed up, in an

undifferentiated monism.

The doctrine of the Trinity, may be understood on different levels. On one level, it is a means of construing the word, God, in Christian discourse. God, is not a uniquely, Christian word, and it needs specific definition in Christian theology. This need, for a specifically Christian definition, is already apparent in the New Testament, where Paul says, "there are many `gods` and many `lords` -- yet, for us, there is one God, the Father . . . , and one Lord, Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 8:5-6). These words, constitute the beginning of a process of clarification and definition, of which, the end product, is the doctrine of the Trinity. At another level, the doctrine may be seen, as a transcript of Christian experience: The God of the Hebrew tradition, had become known in a new way, first in the person of Christ, and then, in the Spirit, that moved in the Church. On a third, speculative level of understanding, the doctrine reveals the dynamism of the Christian conception of God -- involving notions of a source, a coming forth, and a return (primordial, expressive, and unitive Being). In this sense, the Christian doctrine has parallels, both in philosophy, (the 19th-century German philosopher, G.W.F. Hegel's Absolute) and in other religions (the Trimurti of Hinduism).

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