

CHAPTER VIII DISCERNING LIFE: TYPE AND FAITH DEVELOPMENT

In I Corinthians 12 Paul speaks supportively of the legitimacy and value of variety, in the same letter in which he has dealt with the difficulties that variety can produce for the church. The source and purpose of variety can be deceptive. Variety can cause one to think that the phenomena in the variety are merely the expression of the life of the person for the good of the person, thus producing differences without responsibility to origin and social context.

In I Corinthians 1 Paul points to the source from which diversity comes and the purpose which it serves. There is a misunderstanding of the church when one says: "I belong to Paul, or I belong to Apollos, or I belong to Cephas." It is even wrong to say, "I belong to Christ."³⁷⁹ By such words one forgets the *source* of the life which manifests itself in Paul, Apollos, Cephas and even in Christ. The church does not belong to any of these, but to *God*.³⁸⁰ God is

the source of your life in Christ Jesus, whom God made our wisdom, our righteousness and sanctification and redemption; therefore, as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast of the Lord."³⁸¹

It is *God* who gives growth and "we are *God's* fellow workers; you are *God's* field, *God's* building,"³⁸² and in the end Christ will return all things to *God*.³⁸³

In the church's variety it is the *same* Spirit which gives gifts, it is the *same* Lord that the variety serves, and it is the *same* God who works in all persons with regard to all things. All of this is not merely for the individual, but for the "*common* good."³⁸⁴ To illustrate this Paul draws upon the metaphor of the body with its many members, each of the same value and sharing the same life.³⁸⁵

Variety contributes to the common good and is only destructive or misused when its common source in and responsibility to the origins of life (in biological and psychological variety) and God (in spiritual variety) are neglected. Variety is produced both by individual differences and by cultural differences which call out one's potential in varying ways. If one takes seriously the activity of God in the origins of variety, then the Transcendent is another factor, bringing into being that which the nature and mission of the Transcendent calls forth.

In dealing with the appropriate forms into which the Gospel is to be cast, Paul believes variety needs to be addressed and respected. His concern to address the Jew as a Jew, the Gentile as a Gentile, and the "weak"

379. I Cor. 1:11-12

380. I Cor. 1:2

381. I Cor. 1:30-31. The quotation is from Jer. 9:23-24 where "Lord" is "Yahweh."

382. I Cor. 1:6-9, italics mine.

383. I Cor. 15:28.

384. I Cor. 12:4-11, italics mine.

385. I Cor. 12:14-31, Romans 12:3-8.

as "weak" is a clear expression of this. Jew and Gentile express cultural differences, but the "weak" evidence a difference in or limitation of understanding: a different way of seeing things.³⁸⁶

How much pain and suffering would have been avoided if only we had remembered that all are not cast from the same mould and all cannot be forced into the same pattern. Political, social and religious systems have struggled with the legitimacy of variety, often seeking to bind persons together by conformity to some authority. Though the religious traditions with which all of us live express standardized and corporate traditions and perspectives, the individual cannot incorporate and integrate the Gospel into personal life unless it becomes in some sense individualized.

David Kiersey and Marilyn Bates, who discuss differing personal temperaments, begin their book *Please Understand Me* with an eloquent plea for the respect of differences:

If I do not want what you want, please try not to tell me that my want is wrong.

Or if I believe other than you, at least pause before you correct my view.

Or if my emotion is less than yours, or more, given the same circumstances, try not to ask me to feel more strongly or weakly.

Or yet if I act, or fail to act, in the manner of your design for action, let me be.

I do not, for the moment at least, ask you to understand me. That will come only when you are willing to give up changing me into a copy of you.

I may be your spouse, your parent, your offspring, your friend, or your colleague. If you will allow me any of my own wants, or emotions, or beliefs, or actions, then you open yourself, so that some day these ways of mine might not seem so wrong, and might finally appear to you as right - for me. To put up with me is the first step to understanding me. Not that you embrace my ways as right for you, but that you are no longer irritated or disappointed with me for my seeming waywardness. And in understanding me you might come to prize my differences from you, and, far from seeking to change me, preserve and even nurture those differences.³⁸⁷

In recent years the increasing use of the Jungian *personality type* theory, to which the Kiersey and Bates book is related, and the study of *faith development* have contributed greatly to our appreciation of the variety of faith. These will be explored in this chapter.

Faith

Kenneth Stokes, in his excellent popular summation of the results of faith development studies, characterizes faith as a verb.³⁸⁸ This presents well the dynamic and developmental aspects of faith. We are often used to thinking of faith as a noun: what we believe in. But this does not consider *how* we believe and the *life circumstances* which call forth various aspects of faith, nor the *personality structure* by which we approach our believing.

386. I Cor. 9:19-23.

387. David Keirsesey and Marilyn Bates, *Please Understand Me: Character and Temperament Types*, DelMar, CA: Prometheus Nemesis Books, 1978, p. 1.

388. Kenneth Stokes, *Dynamics of Adult Faith Development: Faith Is A Verb*, Mystic, CN: Twenty-Third Pub., 1989.

James Fowler, in *Stages of Faith*, defines faith in such a way as to apply inclusively to those outside as well as within religious traditions:

Faith is not always religious in its content or context. Faith is a person's or group's way of moving into the force field of life. It is our way of finding coherence in and giving meaning to the multiple forces and relationship that make up our lives. Faith is a person's way of seeing him- or herself in relation to others against a background of shared meaning and purpose.³⁸⁹

He quotes Wilfred Cantwell Smith (*The Meaning and End of Religion*) who defines "religions" as "cumulative traditions" and faith as "the person's or group's way of responding to transcendent value and power as perceived and grasped through the forms of cumulative tradition."³⁹⁰ Smith indicates that until the 16th century faith had the primary meaning of "to set the heart upon". He summarizes the change which culminated in the nineteenth century perspective as a "shallowing" of faith:

There was a time when "I believe" as a ceremonial declaration of faith meant, and was heard as meaning: "Given the reality of God, as a fact of the universe, I hereby proclaim that I align my life accordingly, pledging love and loyalty." A statement about a person's believing has now come to mean, rather, something of this sort: "Given the uncertainty of God, as a fact of modern life, so-and-so reports that the idea of God is part of the furniture of his mind."³⁹¹

This change in perspective has resulted in three broad movements in understanding faith: from the personal to the propositional, from the first person to the third person, and from belief in what is considered true to what is considered neutral. Such "shallowing" of faith often leaves modern persons without faith because its dynamic and verbal dimension is lost, and it is lost as a common element of human existence and experience.

Fowler expresses Smith's major conclusions as:

1. "*Faith*, rather than belief or religion, is the most fundamental category in the human quest for relation to transcendence."
2. "Each of the major religious traditions studies speaks about faith in ways that make the same phenomenon visible."
3. Faith is not a separate dimension of life, but an orientation of the total person.
4. The recognizability of faith among its myriad variants supports a theory of religious relativity in which religions "are seen as relative apprehensions of our relatedness to that which is universal," but without rejecting the need to press the question of truth.³⁹²

Faith as noun, as content, may be described as "the *centers of value* that claim us the *images of power* we hold and the *powers* with which we align ourselves to sustain us in the midst of life's contingencies" and "the *master stories* that we tell ourselves and by which we interpret and respond to the events that impinge upon our lives."³⁹³

389. James W. Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1981, p. 4.

390. *Ibid.*, p. 9.

391. *Ibid.*, p. 13.

392. *Ibid.*, pp. 14-15.

393. *Ibid.* pp. 276-277.

The content of faith and the others with whom our community of faith is formed constitute a triangle of faith with ourselves. Actually, with the broad definition of faith, we are members of many different faith-relational triads. These triads may be integrated or remain unintegrated in various ways:

Polytheism - many centers of value and power without a unifying commitment and identity;

Henotheism - a deep investment in a center of value and power that is not of ultimate concern;

Radical monotheism - the focus of supreme trust in a transcendent center of value and power that is the *source and center of all value and power*.³⁹⁴

Faith may also be seen as *imagination*:

Part of what we mean when we say that humankind - *Homo poeta* - lives by meaning is that from the beginning of our lives we are faced with the challenge of finding or composing some kind of order, unity and coherence in the force fields of our lives. We might say that faith is our way of discerning and committing ourselves to centers of value and power that exert ordering force in our lives. Faith, as imagination, grasps the ultimate conditions of our existence, unifying them into a comprehensive image in light of which we shape our responses and initiatives, our actions.³⁹⁵

Fowler is also helpful in distinguishing the contents of faith and the stages of faith. His approach to the stages is structural: i.e. the development of cognitive and affective structures in the person nuance the styles or stages of faith. His treatment of stages will be explored later. Here I only want to indicate his discussion of the various interrelationships of content and stage. To change content is what is called "conversion." To change a stage is to realize the potential of a particular time in life. The change of stages is a spiral and overlapping process, with thematic and convictional continuities. Changing content may precipitate a change in stage and a change in stage may precipitate a change in content, but one may occur without the other.³⁹⁶

Recognition of faith as a common existential bridges the gap to those whom the religious communities would reach. Recognition of faith as dynamic and varied enables the religious communities to embrace within their support and care persons who are in process and at various stages of faith and unfaith. The demand for religious conformity not only denies individual expressions of faith but forces one to sacrifice faith for community and belonging, or to move on to some other faith community. Thus the recognition of variety has a great deal to do with a faith community's ability to retain its adherents. There should be ways for faith communities to maintain the wisdom of their traditions, i.e. their truth, and still provide for varieties of appropriation and reinterpretation of the traditions. It seems to me that this happens when one learns the lessons of the mystics. Truth and God are mysteries beyond our knowing and conceptualization, though quite real and needing to find some imagic or conceptual expression. There are forms and expressions of this mystery which we may view as central, but even our descriptions of these central affirmations are limited by the very language in which they become incarnate. The point that Paul is making in I Corinthians, discussed at the beginning of this chapter, is that variety is not divisive where there is common commitment to its source. The creative faith community exists where the tradition of wisdom exists along with the encouragement of variety and individual gifts -- and the spirit (Spirit ?) of the community, along with its common and growing tradition, creates its unity.

394. Ibid., pp. 19-23.

395. Ibid., pp. 24-25.

396. Ibid., pp. 269ff.

Jungian Personality Type and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

Carl Jung, in his *A Psychological Theory of Types*, describes two attitudes and four functions which provided him with a basis for comparing persons and describing their orientations and responses.³⁹⁷

Introversion or Extroversion are described as *attitudes*. An attitude

means an essential bias which conditions the whole psychic process, establishes the habitual reactions, and thus determines not only the style of behavior, but also the nature of subjective experience. And not only so, but it also denotes the kind of compensatory activity of the unconscious which we may expect to find.³⁹⁸

However, these two *attitudes* were not adequate to explain the variety of behavior in extraverts and introverts. Thus Jung described four *functions* with terms "from the notions expressed in current speech" and says he "used them as my criteria in judging the differences between persons of the same attitude-type."³⁹⁹

Thinking and *Feeling* are chosen as terms designating two different types of *rationality* (what is called in the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, *Judgement*). He distinguishes *Feeling* from *Sensation* and *Intuition*, which are the other two functions, and by *Feeling* intends a way of forming values and making judgements that is as "discriminating, logical and consistent as thinking."⁴⁰⁰ *Sensation* and *Intuition* are functions that are *perceptive* - they make us aware of what is happening, but do not interpret or evaluate it. They do not act selectively according to principles, but are simply receptive of what happens."⁴⁰¹ Together the four functions provide a completeness. Where functions remain undeveloped they remain primitive, infantile, and largely unconscious:

Sensation establishes what is actually given, *thinking* enables us to recognize its meaning, *feeling* tells us its value, and finally *intuition* points to the possibilities of the whence and whither that lie within the immediate facts.⁴⁰²

Jung's views would result, then, in eight distinctive personality types, various combination of the prominence (or dominance) of one of the four functions with Extroversion or Introversion.

397. "A Psychological Theory of Types" published, among other places, in *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, transl. by W.S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes, NY: A Harvest Book, Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1933, pp. 74ff.

398. *Ibid.*, p. 86. Jung also characterized the action of Introverts as given to forethought, hesitation, or drawing back a little from the world before they are able to react. pp. 84-85.

399. *Ibid.*, p. 89.

400. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

401. *Ibid.*, pp. 91-2, italics mine.

402. *Ibid.*, p. 93, italics mine.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator⁴⁰³ develops further Jung's theory to include a focus on the *Dominant* function, something that Jung mentioned but did not develop, and then the importance of the *Auxiliary* (helping) function, as they affect personality type. The Dominant function is the one most strongly developed and is indicated by the J/P (Judgement/Perception) preferred attitude, a new category Briggs adds to Jung's theory. One needs not only a Dominant, but a complimentary Auxiliary: in other words one needs to develop ways of both Perceiving and Judging and these two functions, plus Extroversion/Introversion, affect one's personality type. Thus where Jung came up with eight personality types, the Myers-Briggs produces sixteen combinations: Extroversion and Introversion joined to various combinations of Perceiving and Judging functions.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator has become one of the most used, researched, and validated psychological instruments. A qualifying program and examination is required for those administering and interpreting it, though it may also be used under the supervision of one qualified. Those interested in its use have the support of the Association for Psychological Type which publishes a journal and newsletter and provides qualifying programs, and the Center for Applications of Psychological Type which maintains a library, a computerized bibliography, a data bank of the scoring of various audiences, and serves as a center for research.⁴⁰⁴ There is an excellent *Manual* written by Isabel Briggs Myers and Mary H. McCaulley which discusses the theory, validity, administration, scoring, and use of the Indicator in various contexts.⁴⁰⁵

Further developments on the theory behind personality type may be found in *From Image to Likeness*, which provides a theory of the development of the dominant to the lesser functions at various age levels, and in *Please Understand Me*, previously quoted.⁴⁰⁶ Whereas those who follow Jung usually see the attitudes and functions as basically innate, developing individually and then integrated in the life process, Kiersey and Bates see the basic constituent of the individual as a temperament out of which the various attitudes and functions are differentiated. The temperaments, with their Jungian equivalents, are:

- Dionysian -- SP -- free, not confined, impulsive;
- Epimethian -- SJ -- conservative, emphasis on duty and usefulness;
- Promethian -- NT -- drive for competence, passion for knowing;

⁴⁰³. The Myers-Briggs Type Inventory is an instrument with a long history of development, based upon Jung's theory. Katharine C. Briggs, noting personality differences, read biographies to develop her own system of typology for the patterns she found. However, when she discovered Jung's Psychological Types she gave up her own theory and, with her daughter Isabel, engaged in the study of psychological types which formed their major occupation for the rest of their lives. Isabel Briggs married Clarence Myers, and thus the name Myers-Briggs. The Type Indicator was developed in the years following World War II. Over the years it was widely tested among varied audiences and underwent various developments, resulting in the widely used shorter G Form. Since 1975 Consulting Psychologists Press has become the publisher for both the G Form and the later developed AV Form, an abbreviated self-scoring version. The Myers-Briggs is not designed to be used below the junior High level, and so recently the Murphey-Meisgeier Type Indicator for Children was developed, available with a Manual from Consulting Psychologists Press. In 1980 Isabel Briggs Myers, with her son Peter, published *Gifts Differing* (Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1980), their treatment of type theory and its application.

⁴⁰⁴. CAPT and APT are located at PO Box 5099, Gainesville, FL 32602-5099.

⁴⁰⁵. Isabel Briggs Myers and Mary H. McCaulley, *Manual: A Guide to the Development and Use of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator*, 2nd ed., Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press, 1985.

⁴⁰⁶. W. Harold Grant, Magdala Thompson, Thomas E. Clarke, *From Image to Likeness: A Jungian Path in the Gospel Journey*, NY: Paulist Press, 1933.

David Keirse, Marilyn Bates, *Please Understand Me: Character and Temperament Types*, Del Mar, CA: Prometheus Nemesis Books, 1978.

Appolonian -- NF -- drive for self-realization, meaning, seeks people rather than things.

Kiersey and Bates also provide the Kiersey Temperament Sorter within their book, thus making it available without needing to qualify. Because they provide for mixed types, where scoring on two alternatives within a category are equally weighted, they list thirty-two mixed types besides the sixteen of the Myers-Briggs.

Interpreting the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator

It is hoped that the following will be helpful in the interpretation of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator.

What is indicated in the scoring is the strength of preference between pairs of opposites:

E/I S/N T/F J/P

- *E/I Attitude: Extroversion or Introversion*
- *P - Perception (S/N) Function: Sensing or Intuition*
- *J - Judgment (T/F) Function: Thinking or Feeling*
- *Attitude to external world (J/P): Perception or Judgment*

EXTROVERSION/INTROVERSION has to do with whether one's primary investment of interest and energy is in the outer world of people, things, and events or in the inner world of mind and inner experience.

PERCEPTION: SENSING/INTUITION has to do with whether persons perceive their world primarily through sensory reception and observation (Sensing) or through inner awareness (Intuition) by which the world is viewed, understood, and ordered.

JUDGMENT: THINKING/FEELING has to do with the rational process one uses, how one decides, one's Judgment. Thinking examines abstractly and intellectually what is perceived and makes decisions on that basis. Feeling takes into account the way things and persons matter according to personal values (having nothing to do with emotional feeling).

JUDGMENT/PERCEPTION ATTITUDE: This has to do with one's preferred attitude toward the external world. Judgment means that one relates to the external world through a judging process (T or F), giving the world its order and structure from within oneself. Perception means that one relies on a perceptive process (S or N), responding to the world primarily in terms of the way the world presents itself and is perceived. In simplest terms this means that a J prefers a structured world and a P prefers an unstructured, more spontaneous world. This preference is also used to determine one's **DOMINANT** function (see below).

DOMINANT, AUXILIARY, TERTIARY, INFERIOR functions

The **STRENGTH OF PREFERENCE** for the four functions:

P - PERCEPTION: S,N;
J - JUDGMENT: T,F is indicated by the terms:

DOMINANT - the strongest J or P function

AUXILIARY - the second strongest developed function which helps the Dominant, opposite it

in function category (a J if Dominant is a P, or a P if Dominant is a J)

TERTIARY - the next strongest developed function, opposite the Auxiliary and within the same category as the Auxiliary (e.g. S if Auxiliary is N)

INFERIOR - this is opposite to the Dominant function within the same category as the Dominant (e.g. T if Dominant is F)

Beyond the Dominant and Auxiliary functions, the remaining two reside more in the Unconscious rather than the Conscious because of their less developed nature.

The JP scoring, which determines the primary attitude towards the external world, only establishes the Dominant function for the Extravert. The **INTROVERT'S DOMINANT** operates in the internal world. Thus if the JP preference for an Introvert indicates he/she is a J in relationship to the external world (T or F), in the internal world the Dominant would be the preferred P function (S or N). This would mean that only when one got to know an Introvert closely and the preference of his/her inner world was disclosed, would one get to experience the Dominant. What shows on the outside is really the Auxiliary.

Though it makes sense to speak of one function being developed more strongly (Dominant) than others, there is never a time that one can get along without both a P and J function. One needs both to perceive and make decisions. So both in the inner and external worlds one must think of one using both. If a person has not developed some skill in using both a P and a J function, they can be severely handicapped.

It is important to:

1. **Accept what is innately and developmentally yours as a gift.** There is no implication whatsoever that one type is better than another. Types in the totality of the human race or in the totality of the church compliment each other. By being aware of our variety we become aware of our need for each other and our contributions to each other. It is true that the development of the whole person is a life goal, meaning that all of us need to probe and seek development in the attitudes and functions in which we are least developed. Though we are called to development, it is a Christian insight that we are not "saved" or made acceptable to God by the accomplishments of our development. Acceptance from God comes before the challenge to development.

2. **Your scores on EI, NS, TF, and JP indicate PREFERENCES, not SKILLS in a particular attitude or function.** Thus you may prefer a function in which you have not yet developed skills or you may have developed skills in a function which is not your preference. Sometimes preference and skill go together. Sometimes skills you may have developed can affect your preference score for they may have influenced your preference. The relationship of PREFERENCE to SKILL should be explored as you think about the meaning of your "score".

3. **No "testing" instrument or indicator is perfect and its results are affected by a number of factors, including:**

- a) what is going on with you when you take the Indicator;
- b) your concern to appear a certain way and thus to answer a certain way (both familial and cultural environments idealize certain types of behavior so that you may intentionally answer in an "acceptable" mode, or you may subconsciously have adopted certain modes of behavior which are not innately yours).

THEREFORE, you should look at the description of personal tendencies related to your preferences as indicated by the Myers-Briggs Indicator and see if the description sounds correct. This should be particularly the case if your PREFERENCE STRENGTH in an area is LOW.

You may wish not only to check descriptions of your preferences but **descriptions of the combination of your preferences as a Personality Type**. If you have access to the **Type Table** reproduced on the back of the Report Form printed by Consulting Psychologists Press, see how accurately the description of your Personality Type matches what you experience of yourself. Look at adjacent personality types in the Myers-Briggs Type Table and see if they match better.⁴⁰⁷

4. Be cautious, where your PREFERENCE STRENGTH is LOW, about quick conclusions as to what this means.

The absence of clearly indicated preference may be due to a number of factors:⁴⁰⁸

- a) the circumstances of the day when you took the Indicator which affected preferences;
- b) neither opposite attitude or function having been developed as a clear preference;
- c) both opposite functions or attitudes having been developed and therefore there is no strong preference for one or the other;
- d) part of you responding to one preference and part to another.

Some believe that additional clarity regarding preference can be achieved by:

⁴⁰⁷. The Type Table is arranged as follows for the sake of locating similar types next to each other:

SENSING		INTUITION		
THINKING	FEELING	THINKING		
I				
N	IST J ISF J	INF J	INT J	The "J"s are done in bold type to distinguish their location from the "P"s which are located in the two central horizontal rows. The "J"s are located in the top and bottom rows.
T				
O	ISTPISFP	INFP	INTP	
V				
E				E
R	ESTP ESFP	ENFP	ENTP	X
T				T
				R
				O
				V
	EST J ESF J	ENF J	ENT J	E
				R
				T

⁴⁰⁸. Jung believed that as a part of development it was necessary to develop the use of one function before trying to develop its opposite. Otherwise perception or judgment may become confused. Thus to have a clear preference is to be "preferred", and lack of preference could, *in his view*, indicate an undeveloped personality. This would seem far too simplistic an explanation.

examining the **scoring on Section 2** of the Indicator for preferences in the **word pairs**. It is felt that responses to word pairs are more spontaneous, less affected by conscious processes and attempts to answer in terms of what you think others expect, and thus they provide a clearer indication of **natural** preference. You may find information on this included in your report if your word-pair preferences came out differently than the preferences you indicated on the whole Indicator.

5. Remember that **THERE ARE MANY REASONS FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PREFERENCE**. Thus, though one has a preference, this does not mean that each person has the same reasons for this preference. For example:

-Introversion

- some are introverted because of an innate preference
- some are introverted because of family or cultural influences
- some are introverted because of the need to solve inner problems or because of the way their neurological system functions (it is harder to focus attention and they must pay greater attention to the way they function).

-JP Preference (indicating the desire for a structured or spontaneous way of life)

Some want structure because they psychologically must have it while others merely prefer it; some are spontaneous and unplanned because they are comfortable with life that way and others for various reasons are this way because they have little choice: they cannot easily provide structure for life.

6. Realize that **PREFERENCE STRENGTHS differ for many persons of the same Type** and thus persons of the same Type will differ. One must also take Type descriptions with a grain of salt for they usually describe Types where the preferences are fairly strong and clear.

7. Explore low scores on functions or attitudes as indicating **POSSIBLE AREAS FOR GROWTH**. Have you been able to develop some skill in using any of these even though you do not have a preference for them? What can you do as part of your personal development to increase your skills in these? Remember to pick your areas of development and to not try to develop too much at one time.

The Myers-Briggs Indicator and Spirituality

A great deal has been written on the relationship of the MBTI to spirituality. Perhaps because of the potential relationship of Jungian psychology to the Ignatian Exercises, the Jesuits have made good use of it. One outstanding book is *From Image to Likeness* by Grant, Thompson and Clarke, subtitled *A Jungian Path in the Gospel Journey*.⁴⁰⁹ Human development is seen as a journey from the image of God towards likeness to God, hence the title of the book, and compared to the Jungian process of individuation. The development of the Jungian functions are then correlated to biblical, theological and spiritual themes. The functions are seen not merely in the service of the individual, but in service of human relationship and society. Sensing is related to simplicity, thinking to justice, feeling to gratitude, and intuiting to hope,

⁴⁰⁹. See previous footnote.

while individuation is related to charity. The book comes out of extensive use of its content in retreats, and contains numerous suggestions for spiritual life and individual growth.

Another book is *Prayer and Temperament: Different Prayer Forms for Different Personality Types* by Chester Michael and Marie Norrisey.⁴¹⁰ Michael and Norrisey not only administered various types of Jungian personality type indicators to 400 persons of various churches, male and female, clergy and lay, but also followed their progress and reactions to various suggested approaches to prayer. After a brief treatment of the history of Christian spirituality in relationship to personality types, chapters are devoted to Benedictine Prayer - *Lectio Divina*, Ignatian Prayer, Augustinian Prayer, Franciscan and Thomistic Prayer, with chapters of suggested exercises for each. Additionally there are chapters on Using the Shadow and the Inferior Function in Prayer, Temperament and Liturgical Prayer. There is an Appendix to assist in Discovering Your Type which consists of a half page of description for each attitude or function by which persons can identify themselves without the use of a testing instrument. Appendix II contains prayer suggestions for the sixteen types indicated by the MBTI, including the development of the "shadow" of each type. The approach of Michael and Norrisey is to begin with areas of stronger preference and then move, for enrichment and wholistic development, towards the exploration of the possibilities in the Inferior function for one's spirituality.

Perhaps it would be helpful to briefly indicate the spirituality preferences which belong to the different attitudes and functions:

Extroversion = preference for spiritual interests in the external world of action, persons (if an F), things, and nature;

Introversion = preference for spiritual interests in the inner world of mind, imagination, privacy and solitude;

Intuition = preference for meaning, the pattern of things, intuited meaning of events and life, the inner voice of God;

Sensation = preference for the experienced world, meditative imaging, for the Extrovert the world of creation, action and people;

Thinking = preference for more abstract, conceptual treatment of religion and principled treatment of life;

Feeling = preference for people and groups, religion as relational, personal, and social;

Judgement = preference for a structured religious and moral life;

Perception = preference for a more spontaneous religious life.

Of course, type is not the only thing that affects religious preferences. There are the conditioning that comes from one's background and tradition and the particular personal issues with which one deals which call upon one's religious tradition in differing ways.

⁴¹⁰ Chester P. Michael, Marie C. Norrisey, *Prayer and Temperament: Different Prayer Forms For Different Personality Types*, Charlottesville, Virginia: The Open Door, 1984. Michael and Norrisey are both students of Jungian psychology. He is a priest. Together they manage the Open Door, Inc., P.O. Box 855, Charlottesville, VA 22902, which provides retreats and workshops on spirituality and publishes a quarterly bulletin which deals with spirituality in its broadest sense, including justice issues.

Faith Development

There are a number of perspectives from which faith development could be considered. Religious educator John Westerhoff, in his book *Will Our Children Have Faith*, uses the analogy of a tree with growth rings to describe the growth of faith. Each new ring added retains and grows upon the previous. The terms he uses describing stages are self explanatory: Experienced Faith, Affiliative Faith, Searching Faith, and Owned Faith.⁴¹¹

Neill Q. Hamilton

Neill Q. Hamilton, New Testament professor at Drew School of Theology, with experience that comes out of a deep involvement in Drew's D. Min. program, has published *Maturing in the Christian Life: A Pastor's Guide*. He seeks to provide a biblical-theological version of the maturing of faith as an alternative to what he sees as Fowler's psychological version.⁴¹² He says:

My way of giving structure to the Christian life shares with faith development the ideas of stages or eras and a particular sequence to them, but that is all. As I read the New Testament, the life of faith is drawn ahead by the Spirit rather than driven from behind by the self. Indeed, so long and insofar as the journey is driven by the self, faith is inauthentic. The self's idea of faith is so laced with illusion that its quest must be displaced by the Spirit's drawings in order for authentic faith to emerge and mature. In the Christian life there is no completion of the journey in this life under the conditions of this world. Maturity comes finally in a new body in the setting of a new heaven and a new earth. In this life we are ever in the process of maturing; we never arrive.⁴¹³

The master role of ministry is then to be prophetic guide to maturing in the Christian life, and this provides its distinctiveness over against all other helping professions and it provides a way of integrating all of the subordinate roles in ministry. How this works is discussed extensively in Hamilton's last chapter.⁴¹⁴

The initial *phase*, a term he prefers to *stage*, in Hamilton's schema is *discipleship*: identification of oneself with Jesus' way of life and destiny in an intimate following of him. The Gospels which portray this provide only a description of faith's puzzled beginnings, its collapse before the cross, and intimations of a new beginning in the resurrection:

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John all portray Christian faith in terms of discipleship up until the resurrection. Matthew recommends that metaphor as valid to the close of the age, but does not give content for Jesus' continuing presence. How baptism in the name of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit makes a difference is never spelled out.⁴¹⁵

The problems in discipleship lay in the central role of the ego and one's natural resources, and in "reparenting", becoming children under God's parenting. These are legitimate in themselves as part of the "childhood of faith", but they are incomplete.

411. John Westerhoff, III, *Will Our Children Have Faith*, NY: Harper & Row, 1983.

412. Neill Q. Hamilton, *Maturing in the Christian Life: A Pastor's Guide*, Phila.: The Geneva Press, 1984.

413. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

414. *Ibid.*, pp. 141ff, "Organizing for Maturing."

415. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

The cross presents us with a crisis and an opportunity for transition to the next phase.

The cross stands athwart the path of the journey of faith, barring the way to further development until we come to terms with our illusions about what God was up to in Jesus of Nazareth. Sooner or later, disciples must face the fact that a crucified Christ cannot be made to be the patron of the misfit dreams of discipleship.⁴¹⁶

The new phase of the Christian life comes in the Spirit.

The Counselor (Paraclete) fills the vacuum left when Jesus rose to the Father. The limited energy of a self misguided by illusion drove the life of discipleship. Now the life of faith is driven by the unlimited energy of the Holy Spirit. The raising of consciousness that accompanies this shift of focus is the difference between living as an alienated slave who moves in sheer obedience to commands that a slave has no way of understanding, and living as a friend who works out of understanding sympathy with another friend who explains everything as they go. The slave brings no heart to the task. The friend works from the heart. This change in the quality of relationship inaugurates an intimacy that removes all distance between the believer and God... The contrast in mood between discipleship faith as a burden to be borne and transition faith which bears one up by the grace of the Comforter-Paraclete justifies the drama in the metaphor of rebirth.⁴¹⁷

There are three major moves in this transition to life in the Spirit: "an acute consciousness of the worldly illusions that dominated our discipleship and a turning from the religious selves constructed upon them an acceptance of the forgiveness made possible in the crucifixion the departure of the risen Christ opens the way to fresh intimacy through the gift of the Spirit."⁴¹⁸ It is out of the life in the Spirit that the maturing of the life of the church and the church's mission comes. Hamilton offers helpful suggestions in the application of this New Testament perspective to lay "soma" groups in the church and to the pastor's own professional life. The tragedies of professional burnout and merely institutional churches are avoided when life comes not from self or institution but from the Spirit, and when it is realized that maturing is only to be achieved within God's end-time.

Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle Project

Between 1981 and 1986 The Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle Project, sponsored by the Religious Education Association and several denominations, engaged in extensive research involving over 1000 persons in North America. Its work consisted of two modules. In module 1 telephone calls were made by the Gallup Organization to randomly chosen households representing a cross-section of the population. In Module 2 forty-one men and women were interviewed in depth and invited to set out a "tapestry" or historical overview of their lives. In the initial stages of the project nearly 300 persons gathered on the campus of the College of St. Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota, for a Symposium which resulted in a publication ed. by Kenneth Stokes, the Project's Director: *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle*.⁴¹⁹ Following the completion of the Project its results were shared in regional meetings across

416. Ibid., pp. 72-73.

417. Ibid., p. 85.

418. Ibid., p. 103.

419. Kenneth Stokes, Ed., *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle*, NY: W. H. Sadlier, 1983.

the country. Out of the whole process has come a Report.⁴²⁰ The Princeton Religion Research Center has also published *Faith Development and Your Ministry*, based on the work of the project, and Kenneth Stokes has produced an excellent study book for laity: *Dynamics of Adult Faith Development: Faith Is A Verb*.⁴²¹

The key findings of the Project are stated in seven hypotheses:

1. The dynamics of faith development are different for men and women.
2. Faith development does not occur at a consistent rate or in a uniform way throughout adulthood, but rather in varying patterns of activity and quiescence directly related to specific chronological periods of the adult life cycle.
3. There is a relationship between periods of transition, change and crisis in one's life and his or her faith development.
4. Faith development is positively related to one's involvement in organized religion.
5. Faith development is positively related to one's involvement in social issues and concerns.
6. Faith development involves struggle leading to both cognitive and affective change.
7. Faith development is positively related to one's involvement in educational experiences.⁴²²

Under the name of Adult Faith Resources the office of the project, directed by Kenneth Stokes, is providing a variety of workshops, originating publications, and publishes a quarterly newsletter. Let us now then proceed to a discussion of the perspectives of Fowler and the Eriksonian model.

James Fowler, Stages of Faith

James Fowler, whose understanding of faith was previously discussed, is director of the Center for Faith development at Emory University in Atlanta. His book on *Stages of Faith* was preceded by a book done with Sam Keen: *Life Maps: Conversations on the Journey of Faith*.⁴²³ Fowler takes a structural approach, based upon the work of Jean Piaget and Lawrence Kohlberg. Piaget was a Frenchman influenced by biology and the legacy of Kant's critical philosophy. He developed a psychological theory which sought to characterize the structures which constitute thinking at different stages in life. Kohlberg, a citizen of the U.S., was influenced by the work of Piaget and others. He focused on the development of moral reasoning, and is also a structuralist. The particular contribution of these two men helps us to understand how we know or the way we know according to the structures of knowing inherent in certain stages of life, and how this affects the content of our knowing.

Fowler's stages are:

1. *Intuitive-Projective Faith* age 3-7 yrs.

The "fantasy-filled, imitative phase in which the child can be powerfully and permanently influenced by

⁴²⁰. *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle: The Report of a Research Project*, Religious Education Association, 1987. This is obtainable from the office of the Project: Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle, 9709 Rich Road, Minneapolis, MN 55437.

⁴²¹. *Faith Development and Your Ministry*, The Princeton Religion Research Center, PO Box 682, Princeton, NJ 08542, n.d.. Kenneth Stokes, *Dynamics of Adult Faith Development: Faith Is A Verb*, Mystic, CN: Twenty-Third Publications, 1989.

⁴²². *Faith Development in the Adult Life Cycle: The Report of a Research Project*, op. cit., pp. 27ff.

⁴²³. James Fowler and Sam Keen, *Life Maps: Conversations on the Journey of Faith*, Word, 1978.

James Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning*, NY: Harper and Row, 1981.

examples, moods, actions and stories of the visible faith of primal related adults."

2. *Mythic-Literal Faith* age 7-12 yrs.

The "stage in which the person begins to take on for him- or herself the stories, beliefs and observances that symbolize belonging to his or her community." Beliefs and morals are appropriated literally.

3. *Synthetic-Conventional*

Since the person's experience transcends the family, other social/cultural spheres demand attention. "Faith must provide a coherent orientation in the midst of that more complex and diverse range of involvements. Faith must synthesize values and information; it must provide a basis for identity and outlook."

***From this point on no ages can be assigned to stages. This "conformist" Stage 3, tuned to the judgement of significant others, is the stage where faith development may stop for many adults.

What happens with Stage 3 and beyond depends on several factors:

- 1) The understanding of faith and faith development allowed within a certain tradition.
- 2) The life experiences which produce growth and provide new experience.
- 3) The resolution of early life issues which give one the personal freedom to grow.

4. *Individuative-Reflective Faith*

The person takes responsibility for his/her own commitments, life-style, beliefs and attitudes. Such issues need to be dealt with as: individuality vs. group influence, subjectivity and feelings vs. objectivity, self-fulfillment vs. being for others. A capacity for critical reflection is developed.

5. *Conjunctive Faith*

This "involves the integration into self and outlook of much that was suppressed or unrecognized in the interest of Stage 4's self-certainty and conscious cognitive and affective adaptation to reality." One's past is reworked and reclaimed. Personal depths are plumbed. This Stage is frequently connected with a working through of the mid-life crisis.

6. *Universalizing Faith*

Fowler describes this State as "exceedingly rare. The persons best described by it have generated faith compositions in which their felt sense of an ultimate environment is inclusive of all being. They have become incarnators and actualizers of the spirit of an inclusive and fulfilled human community." They are open to relationships with persons and traditions other than their traditions and representing other faith stages. Some religious traditions would see this stage as contrary to their perception of faith.⁴²⁴

The Eriksonian Approach

Erik Erikson studied in Vienna under Anna Freud, emigrated to Boston where he became the first child psychoanalyst in the city. He moved beyond Freud's interest in childhood and pathology to psychosocial development beyond puberty and concern for the growth and development of the healthy personality (viewed in terms of eight stages). In each stage the person confronts a developmental task posed in terms of a favorable resolution of conflicting attitudes called "negative" and "positive". Though the resolution is in favor of the positive, the negative is not eliminated. Even when there is a favorable resolution of the attitudes within a developmental stage, one continues to deal with these attitudes throughout life and new crises may make old resolutions come unstrung.

The stages, with their accompanying attitudes, are:

Positive

Negative

⁴²⁴. James Fowler, *Stages of Faith*, op. cit., pp. 122 ff.

1. Early Infancy	Trust	Mistrust
2. Late Infancy	Autonomy	Shame & Doubt
3. Early Childhood	Initiative	Guilt
4. Middle Childhood	Industry	Inferiority
5. Adolescence	Identity	Identity Confusion
6. Young Adulthood	Intimacy	Isolation
7. Middle Adulthood	Generativity	Stagnation
8. Older Adulthood	Ego Integrity	Despair

Carol Gilligan in *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, criticizes much psychological theory as ignoring a different pattern in feminine development:

"While in Piaget's account (1932) of the moral judgement of the child, girls are an aside, a curiosity to whom he devotes four brief entries in an index that omits "boys" altogether because "the child" is assumed to be male, in the research from which Kohlberg derives his theory, females simply do not exist."⁴²⁵ In Erikson, the primary tasks of the first five stages is individuation, a male pattern, although the first stage is anchored in Trust/relationship. Though Erikson does observe that the female holds Identity in abeyance until dealing with Intimacy in terms of relationship with a man, this does not change his schematic.⁴²⁶ Thus these developmental schemes do not consider that a woman's moral judgements and developmental pattern is early on more oriented to relationships and interdependence. "The elusive mystery of women's development lies in its recognition of the continuing importance of attachment in the human life cycle. Woman's place in man's life cycle is to protect this recognition while the developmental litany intones the celebration of separation, autonomy, individuation, and natural rights. Only when life-cycle theorists divide their attention and begin to live with women as they have lived with men will their vision encompass the experience of both sexes and their theories become correspondingly more fertile."⁴²⁷

With this in mind it is important for women to reflect on how they fit the life-cycle pattern provided by the major theorists. Shortly there will be a discussion of the instrument developed by Gwen Hawley to measure the resolution of the tasks of Erikson's psychosocial stages. Gilligan's critique should be applied to the results of this instrument when used by women. I also have the suspicion that Gilligan's critique may apply more to women raised in somewhat traditional contexts and that some men will fit her description when raised in a context where attachment is important. Thus there should be some correlation between life histories and the task resolutions of the various stages and care should be taken not to idealize resolution patterns. Gilligan seems to realize this.⁴²⁸

Evelyn and James Whitehead utilize the Eriksonian model in *Christian Life Patterns*, and focus primarily on the last three adult stages.⁴²⁹ One of the special values of their book is the relating of the issues of adult life to biblical materials and theological issues. In the conclusion of their book they argue quite effectively that psychological development and religious growth are not enemies. Religious growth has often been seen as necessitating a negative view of the world, self and flesh. Thus Christian growth has been seen as the attainment of perfection unrelated to or inimical to "natural development" and not

⁴²⁵. Carol Gilligan, *In A Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U. Press, 1982, p. 18.

⁴²⁶. Ibid., p. 12.

⁴²⁷. Ibid., p. 23.

⁴²⁸. Ibid., p. 2

⁴²⁹. Evelyn Eaton Whitehead and James D. Whitehead, *Christian Life Patterns: The Psychological Challenges and Religious Invitations of Adult Life*, Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Co., 1979.

normally involving meaningful stages. The consequence of separating psychological development and religious growth has been that "Holiness as the goal of religious maturity was often epitomized in eccentric personalities -- persons whose careers departed from rather than illuminated the patterned challenges of human growth." We often have the same problem when discussing the spirituality of biblical personalities: e.g. Jesus' holiness cannot be seen as related to personal process or development. This has resulted in the "mystification of religious growth" and our having difficulty identifying our normal life experience with this growth, sensing ourselves to be not very religious because we do not easily transcend our humanness.⁴³⁰ The dynamics of adult life are identified as:

1. Active and passive mastery: an asceticism of letting go, learning how to prevail and how to lose.
2. Life choices: "growth from the general to the particular, expressed in specific and specifying life choices," focusing one's possibilities.
3. Self-transcendence: moving beyond the self-focus of earlier life, something that is powerfully supported in biblical images.⁴³¹

Gwen Hawley's Measure of Psychosocial Development

Dr. Gwen Hawley has in recent years developed an instrument called *Measures of Psychosocial Development* (MPD).⁴³² This instrument measures the eight positive and negative stage attitudes and the degree of resolution of the conflict between the positive and negative in each stage. Thus it provides an important tool for examining one's own developmental process and the issues which affect behavior and needs.

Since the MPD measures psychosocial development, it focuses on normative development rather than pathology. As with the preferences shown by the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator, there is no right or wrong way to be. We are the product of our innate potential and our life history. The MPD really points to what has happened to our developmental process in our interaction with our life history. It also points the way for personal growth where there has not been favorable resolution of the tasks in life's various stages.

The rich Christian tradition, the fullness of the Gospel, provides perspectives and resources which may be drawn upon to deal with resolution of various of the opposing attitudes. As one develops one's spiritual discipline, besides the many other issues which may determine its design and intent, one needs to consider the unresolved psychosocial tasks or those that have become crucial because of what is presently going on in one's life. One must also consider how certain understandings of the Christian tradition may contribute to an unfavorable balance towards the negative attitude.

Trust vs Mistrust

Here the issues are relational and bad experience with one's early environment. Working on relationship with God and others becomes important, but we need to remember that the anxieties that lead to mistrust belong to levels of life that reason often cannot touch. We need not just new thoughts, but new experiences of life. Frequently an "existential anxiety", an anxiety about life as a whole, is a problem. Thus centering life in God experientially becomes important in finding an experienced and dependable reality which transcends the uncertainty and risk of life. Sometimes relationship with another human will

430. Ibid., p. 191.

431. Ibid., pp. 191ff.

432. *Measure of Psychosocial Development*, Odessa, Florida: Psychological Assessment Resources, 1988.

provide a window into a new experience of reality as trustworthy. However to learn to trust is for many a long process or sorting out old experience, gaining new perspective, and appropriating new experience. It is not that one should become naively trusting, for there is much in life that cannot be trusted. Rather, mistrust should be situationally appropriate, rather than pervasive. The Lord's Prayer, with its opening address of God as "Abba, Father" (an intimate form of address to one who is dependable and loving) could be important in working on trust. So is planned and intentional experience of others within the Christian community. Legalistic and perfectionistic expressions of Christianity may only provide opportunity for transference from childhood of experience of an unaccepting environment.

Autonomy vs Shame and Doubt
Initiative vs Guilt

Here the issue is whether in early life one has been given permission to be oneself and initiate one's own actions. If not, then doubt about oneself and guilt for making mistakes or even for initiating successful actions may be the consequence. The way that God affirms us and gives us freedom in the Gospel is important here, but one needs to be cautious about using some elements of the Christian tradition. The emphases on sin, self-denial, and flesh (as leading to sin) only reinforce shame, doubt and guilt. Too much emphasis on God's sovereignty and surrender to God, with diminishment of ego, undercut Autonomy. Some forms of Christianity produce weak, dependent and frustrated persons as do some parents. Here one needs to be "wise" about how the Christian tradition is used. Gal. 3-5 is very helpful in speaking of how God brings humankind to maturity and freedom in Christ. Behind the pages of the Gospels one also finds a Jesus who encouraged autonomy and freedom from guilt.

Industry vs Inferiority

Industry is an active orientation towards producing. The ability to produce depends on one's Trust, Autonomy and Initiative ... and it also depends on Identity. Identity before adolescence is more a sense of oneself given from early environment (significant others) and intuited. We produce out of what we are through freedom to be and act .. and to make mistakes. Though production is often seen by the individual as a way of solving the unresolved tasks of earlier life, this works with difficulty, and frequently successes are not appropriated. Industry is then best dealt with by working on the other tasks of development while engaging vigorously in the process of living and doing. Though the approach to life in the Gospel of Matthew is very much that of doing and obeying the commands of Jesus, seeking purity and perfection, such an approach does not deal with the issues underlying difficulty in performance. Because of the complexity of being human, it is also important to accept one's humanity as well as one's performance failures, to accept what it means to be human. The Pauline understanding of productivity as the result of the acceptance of God's love and the new inner dynamics introduced by the presence of God's Spirit are important here.

Identity vs Role Confusion

Identity implies knowing who one is, where one is going, and who one is in relationship to others; an integration of self-understanding and the views of one by others; and an at-homeness with oneself. As indicated above, there is an identity which one early receives from others and which is intuited. But the identity of which we speak here is more reflective and conscious. It is also more whole, rather than fragmented by the many expectations of others. Biblically we are presented with two aspects of identity: we are made in the image of God and we are called to put on Christ, becoming children of God. These are gracious givens, but need to be worked with and integrated into our lives in ways that respect individuality (e.g. Paul's treatment of the variety of gifts which expresses variety of personality). The Christian tradition

then calls upon us to appropriate God's givens as support or counterpoint to givens from significant others in childhood, and the exploration of the meaning of our individuality through living it out in concrete ways. God's givens are crucial as is the living out of our individuality in the context of a supportive community which calls us to be what is possible. However, we are not "saved" by our identity, by our psychosocial well-adjustment, as we are not saved by our industry. We dare not become developmental perfectionists, psychological Pharisees.

Intimacy vs Isolation

Intimacy is the capacity to commit oneself to concrete relationships, and to do so not merely on the basis of personal need, but learning how to care (and if need be sacrifice) for others. Relevant here is the Christian concept of love, reflecting the gracious love of God which goes beyond self-need and even suffers for the other. It is no accident that Christianity sees human intimacy as dependent on the reception of the intimacy of God. Contemplation and meditation become important here, but particularly contemplation - allowing God to be intimate with us. Though relationship with God followed by human relationship is the correct theological order (the first tablet of the Ten Commandments is the basis for the second), yet growth in relationship with God and humanity seems to be reciprocal, each becoming ground for the other. Thus in the exploration of human relationship we also discover the possibilities of relationship with God. The church should be the place where intimacy is explored as it should be the place where God is explored. Thus the church must be careful about concern for righteousness, holiness, and purity which does not allow intimacy in terms of our human reality and thus only allows for an artificial and stylized intimacy.

Generativity vs Stagnation

Generativity expresses concern for the world and the future and opens new avenues of self-fulfillment. Related to it is what the Bible says about the place of humanity in creation and the call to ministry and vocation inherent in the Gospel. Here we need to explore the biblical traditions with an awareness of the way context influenced generative possibilities. Jesus addressed and acted within his society as an OT prophet while the early church, having moved from Palestine into the vast Greco-Roman world, could do little to change society. Their expression of generativity was often the transformation of the human situation within the Christian community rather than without. Eschatology provided them with a vision of a future transformed world, but often caused them to leave this to God's future transformation of the cosmos. Their world was often regarded pessimistically as the domain of Satan. We need their vision and concern for transformation, with revision of some of their presuppositions and recognition of our living in a different context. We need a new appraisal of creation as God's, as reflected in creation spirituality, rather than interpreting the world dualistically through the perspective of the Fall, the dominance of Satan and the problems of the flesh. Liberation theology has called attention to elements of the biblical tradition calling to world involvement and God's concern for the marginal persons. Thus there are significant resources within the tradition, rightly interpreted. Also important is the role of the Spirit as the contemporary dynamic of God operating in history according to the paradigm of Christ, leading to service and compassion.

Ego Integrity vs Despair

Integrity is defined as the acceptance of one's own unique life, experience and meaning -- a sense of satisfaction with one's accomplishments. This is a task of the maturing individual. However, one senses in this definition some of the Western ideals of success and accomplishment. The course of life is not always towards wholeness and integration, not all are successful. Some persons' lives are one tragedy after

another. Some are biologically limited, as in the case of retardation. It is true that one can learn to accept one's own unique life as meaningful whatever it has contained, but this can only be done from a transcendent perspective and with a transcendent vision which gives wholeness that may not exist in immanent experience. Depression and despair can come from disappointment with life, but are frequently conditions of one's life context and sometimes related to body chemistry (as in endogenous depression). One needs the transcendent vision of wholeness which puts one's life together beyond the limitations of context and creates some unity even in dis-integration. Thus faith, philosophy of life, and experience of transcendent integrity, through experience of God, is important.

Childhood Religious Experience

With all of the analysis of faith development there is liable to be a neglect of the legitimacy of the religious experience of the child which would seriously affect educational processes and our respect for the child -- as well as our understanding of adult experience. For two reasons the limitation of real religious experience to the adult is deficient. One is that if religious experience is at all a result of the action of the Transcendent upon us, it does not happen only to adults. It is a gift of God to whom it is given. In the language of the Moravian Zinzendorf, it is the gifted relationship of the heart with the Saviour, an intuitive knowing, and not dependent upon mental development. The second is implied in the previous comments. There are other ways of knowing than the intellectual, conceptual synthetic. Zinzendorf's comment is worth including here:

- 1) Religion can be grasped without conclusions drawn by reason, otherwise no one could have a religion except the one who has an enlightened mind, and they would be the best students of God who had the greatest rational capacity; however, that is not believable and wars against our experience.
- 2) Religion must be something which is obtained without any concepts, through mere experience; otherwise no one deaf, or still less someone born blind, or even less an insane person, or a child, could have the religion which is necessary for salvation. The first could not hear the truth, the second lacks the sensual perception which would awake his mind and incite his thoughts, and the third type lacks the ability to understand concepts, relate and test them.
- 3) Truth in concepts is less important than truth in experience, errors in teaching are not as bad as in essence, an ignorant person is not as badly off as one impervious (to God).
- 4) The conceptual meanings vary with age, education and other conditions. The experienced meanings are not so much subject to these variations; they remain firmly established in the face of time and circumstances.⁴³³

Edward Robinson has done extensive research on the religious experience of childhood. He is the director of the Religious Experience Research Unit at Manchester College, Oxford. Sir Alister Hardy, a British scientist, had founded the unit and in 1979 published *The Spiritual Nature of Man*, which John Westerhoff calls "the most seminal analysis of the phenomena of religious experience since that of ... William James."⁴³⁴ Robinson's own publication, *The Original Vision*, contains research and reflection on the religious experience of childhood, taking as a starting point some of the research of Sir Alister Hardy. Hardy had invited some 4,000 persons to write an account of an experience wherein they "felt that their lives had in any way been affected by some power beyond themselves." Of these 500 cited childhood

433. Count Nicholas L. von Zinzendorf, *Der teutsche Sokrates*, "Gedancken von gelehrte und doch gutwillige Schueler der Wahrheit", Samuel B. Walter, 1732, pp. 35f.

434. Edward Robinson, *The Original Vision: A Study of the Religious Experience of Childhood*, NY: Seabury Press, 1983.

experience, and from these 500 Robinson was able to gain later responses from 360. His understanding is that religious experiences are not properly termed by "peak experiences", but are really quite ordinary. What he calls "the original vision" is "no mere imaginative fantasy but a form of *knowledge* and one that is essential to the development of any mature understanding." He believes that such experiences may be described as *mystical*, that they "can only properly be understood when studied *over a period of time*" (i.e., that the later reflection of the adult on earlier experience is to be taken seriously), that they are *self-authenticating*, that they bring to the person an awareness of true *self*, that they can only be understood in *purposive* terms (e.g., "destiny"), and that they are essentially *religious*.⁴³⁵

Robinson feels that the picture of childhood which emerged under the influence of Piaget and others is inadequate. Though the child may not see the world as an adult and have not developed the ability to *synthesize* thought, this does not mean that the child does not have real experience nor that the child's more *holistic* comprehension should not be taken seriously.⁴³⁶ That the experience of the child has been affected by the world and needs of the child and the reflection of the adult does not deny the validity of the experience.⁴³⁷

After the discussion of many insights and cases, Robinson concludes:

The great majority of those whose experience led me to make this study are men and women in whom the original vision of childhood has never wholly faded. But are they typical? And what of the rest of us who have no such memories? If the child within me dies a little more each day, how, asks Marcel, am I to be faithful to myself? And when I cannot do this, "I am no longer there, I do not exist any more." In Brancusi's words, when we cease to be children, we are already dead. But if childhood in the wider, timeless sense is in some mysterious fashion connected, or even to be identified with, that kind of awareness that is truly to be called religious, it could be that by learning once more to respond to the demands made upon us by the something-more-than situation we may discover that there is still a spark of life in the child within each one of us.⁴³⁸

435. Ibid., pp. 7-17.

436. Ibid., p. 20.

437. Whereas Robinson has researched childhood experience as remembered and reflected upon by adults, Robert Coles, in *The Spiritual Life of Children* (Boston: A Peter Davison Book, Houghton Mifflin Co., 1990) shares extensive research done with children.

438. Ibid., p. 148.