

If I am nothing else, I am a product of our society. I am a very, very good example of the economic animal. I went to war, too, when I was 18, I went to work when I was 20. I believed then and practiced 00still do, that great old Protestant ethic. I've enjoyed some success. I have practiced the art of accumulating goods, saving for my old age security. and I'm mobile--I fly a hundred thousand miles a year--as a businessman. I'm a pretty good example of some of the things you've heard about today under the heading of tyranny. We know we live in a world that's in a state of upheaval and chaos. I think we have a pretty good fix on the fact that man generally is disoriented and looking for some kind of meaning.

In the social process triangles, which we've looked at for the last 2 or 3 sessions, you know that meaning is supposed to be up here in the cultural part of the social process triangle. Culture is defined in the dictionary as a qualitative word that describes a state of advance of a civilization's wisdom, intellectual progress, educational institutions, its morals, and its general attainment. Culture is the foundation of any civilization. There has never been a civilization in existence without a cultural base or foundation. It is the thread that runs through the entire social process triangles. It runs through every human being that's in that social process, in that community wherever it is.

I just read, last week, culture being described as the final form of the face out of which people react without thinking, without real reason, (in addition to what they do for reason). That culture is like a safety catch, its like the floor that people can bounce off of and react out of, because it's there. It tells a people who they are.

Within culture, the basic dynamics are simple: accumulated wisdom, the knowledge of a people, including their potential to create symbol and myth. Part of the cultural process is where the story is told and the direction is given to the culture. This is the meaning of the cultural triangle. Style is where the wisdom and the symbols and myths that the culture has developed are acted out. Joseph Campbell, who I'm sure most of you read and most of you know, is a current philosopher and expert in the area of mythology, says that what symbols and myths do is tell a vivid story of a people. It tells the philosophy of a people. He calls myths and symbols public dreams, and he calls dreams private myths. He says that when you group symbols and myths, they form a mythology. And what the mythology does for a culture--these rites, these symbols, is to waken and maintain the individual's awe and gratitude and rapture of his own being and his place in the universe.

He says, and this surprised me, that mythology is always current and always viable. For instance, mythology must comprehensively and understandably give an image of the world to a person in a particular culture that is in tune with science--with current science. It places him in his universe at that time. If it doesn't do that it doesn't last. Mythology supports the current social order, as in the Brahmin mythology. Impersonal power supports, and is an integral part of the caste system in India. It so impacts the youth in India that they have accepted the caste system because of mythology. This mythology, says Campbell, is what gives spiritual authority to a people.

Now, the interaction of the different parts of the cultural triangle, beyond what I've said, I would assume are relatively obvious in that, although wisdom is -----, out of wisdom is created the mythology. Mythology also comes back to wisdom, and if it doesn't check (it's just like a computer), it is discarded. If the wisdom of the current age says no to the viability of a myth, it is negated. By the same token, style comes back into wisdom and comes back into mythology. Style is the acting out of a myth, so there's a very strong relationship there. All through history man has created his own culture, developed his own mythology, developed his own symbols. He's used his own wisdom. The style-child of those two has been whatever that culture is or was. The yellow man, as an example, decided and mythologized the fact that life is struggle. He developed the ying-yang to hold that. He's held it a long time.

Western man has a totally different mythology. His was much more rational, much more aggressive, and in recent times the culture of the Western man has become, as we heard today, somewhat distorted in the fact that it is aggressively economic. The danger of our current culture is that our culture, our standard, has been imposed on the rest of the world because of our unbelievable economic power and our unbelievable strength in that particular part of the social process.

The imbalance we just talked about today, which has to do with the economic tyranny and the collapse of the cultural pole, of the uneasiness--the impotence of the political, might allow one to think that the cultural collapse, or the lack of real, viable culture today, is the result of economic tyranny. I don't think that is necessarily where the problem is. The economic power and the gift of our technological wisdom is just that--it's a gift. The fact that it has become a tyranny is not necessarily because of that.

What's happened inside the cultural pole is that it has developed its own tyrant. The abuse of the balance here has resulted from the distortion of the wisdom portion of the cultural entity. Wisdom, which is man's accumulated knowledge and ability to create, has become technical. Wisdom is highly specialized. Within the wisdom pole, for instance, the How totally dominates, and the Why or To What End is not really dealt with. The result is a fantastic How-To-Do wisdom, without philosophical grounding, without any attempt to use wisdom in terms of the ends or the Why of man's use of his wisdom. The result is that, as the old myths have been proven invalid, because wisdom has rejected them in terms of the science and technology of our time, no new myths have been created to replace the old.

There is a story illustrative that is told of what happens when a culture's mythology is proven invalid suddenly and nothing replaces it. In a primitive society the white man intruded, and with his wisdom, his aggressiveness, his style, he put the lie to the local mythology. He discredited it. The old taboos were discarded or became meaningless. The whole society, by and large, disintegrated almost immediately. Campbell says that's where we are today. He's not a pessimist in terms of the long-term future, but he says of Western culture today that Western civilization is literally facing that kind of void and that kind of danger.

He [Campbell] tells some interesting stories about myths. He says that the last myth in this country that held the people together was "Go West, young man, go West," whether it referred to Kentucky, Ohio, or California. It lasted a long, long, time. And perhaps, for a fleeting moment, Pearly Harbon was a myth or a mythology for the United States. In England the last myth was the Battle of Britain, Winston Churchill's "we shall fight in every beachhead." In France, Charles DeGaulle's resurrection of Joan of Arc: France must be great. In China, it was Mao's "Long March." And in Israel, right after W.W.II, re-articulation of the Promised Land.

Since that time, there has been no new mythology in the Western world. Out of the distortion within the wisdom part of the cultural process and its dominance--its huge technical power--has been a basically collapsed void in the symbol-myth area. The offspring of the two: style, has reflected exactly that. The style of our civilization is economic in terms of values, in terms of what we act out: selfish, personal, individual, acquisitiveness, and it is protective. It's no wonder we have ignored telling ourselves any other story.

It isn't that we can't have myths and symbols--we have them, it's just that they aren't freighting our world situation today and it isn't freighting man. Man can't take this kind of empty culture, no matter how rich he is. This disoriented man lives at an historical time here in the 20th century that has, (and I learned a new word), has exhibited axiological failure. Axiology is the study of human values. And basically, our culture has failed to study human values. It has studied human output. Human productivity. We have relegated the study of human values, that is philosophy, to the cellar--way in the back-- to the top shelf. We really don't deal with philosophy any more. Those who do are frequently called unproductive eggheads.

This obviously leaves us in dilemma, because we keep running into situations and we draw on our history, which is the only thing we have, to try to react to a given situation to get us through a particular situation. And the problem is that what we're going back to, to use, isn't valid anymore. That which we bounce off of when we have problems or when we're in a crisis situation isn't valid anymore. So man in a dilemma today turns frequently into a --"I don't want to get involved, I'll play it down the middle of the road, and I will be neutral." You don't have to look very far to find the truth of that, and I'm not criticizing it. This is not a political statement, but that is the mood of America, and you don't have to read too many polls to know that.

This chaos which I suppose we think we see enough of in this country, that we've talked about specifically today--the economic, the political, and a little bit now in the cultural area--certainly isn't peculiar to the Western hemisphere, or whatever. When Allende took over Chile, he had great visions: freedom for his people, and equitable distribution of the world's goods, giving his country back to those indigenous to it, and so forth. One of the things that Allende naturally did was take over the copper mines and begin to relieve the economic tyrants of their foothold in his country. Unfortunately, where that might have worked in the old days, it doesn't work any more. He had rampant inflation, terrible unemployment and internal strife because his economy would not permit his country to be free of the capitalists without some kind of model, some kind of plan that included somebody other than the Chileans. In Uganda, where the third world nation came into being and they, obviously under the rubric of freedom, became a free nation, they are now

putting Rhodesia to shame in terms of racism. If you are not a black Ugandan, you can't be off-color, you can't be white, you can't be Indian. If you are "out"--21 days, 45 jet aircrafts, taking them out just as fast as they can. This is the way the world is today. Things are so interrelated that you can't be unrelated, whether you are a person or a nation.

There are some indices of structures that are under stress and strain. Our educational institutions, in this country and around the world, are under pressure from students and teachers who call into question the curricula, its validity, the structures, the lack of participation that students have in the make-up of the curricula and running of the school. Communities are under pressure. Man and society, since history began, was created in a primal community. The primal community, as we heard this morning, existed for self-defense and survival. They fed each other, they defended each other, they enabled each other. Now man's technology has said that is not necessary any more, everybody can be independent, all by himself. You don't need communities. You have big, urban megalopoli now. You don't have to be a member of anything. You are independent because technology has made you so. Also you are mobile. Anonymity has set in. Alienation.

It might seem that urbanization and technology are the destroyers of the old community style of life. But maybe that is not it either. Maybe it is the fact that there is no story to support the new way people live in clusters that is the real problem, of the problems with community today. And the family, which is the smallest community grouping today (and, by the way, the family--we all know it is under pressure), you would think with a really small structure like that, where the people all know each other, that you would have some hope of controlling change. You can handle ambiguity, and kind of work together. Well, what happens is the roles are all messed up and whatever fabric there was is either replaced or it is torn.

In our own family situation, as in the case of most families I know, there has been great change in the last few years. I have a wife. She is not a woman's revolutionary but she is missional and she is gone. She is not the old style participant in the family structures. As a matter of fact, I have two fears. I will just tell a couple of quick ones. One fear I have is that when I come home I will not find her in the kitchen. The other is that when I come home I will find her in the kitchen. I came home a month ago, and I was too late. She was there. She had washed her watch, ruined her dress, and burned two arms with grease and was crying. Please, better she's asleep.

The kids and I had a secret story we told each other about our family. It was like: there was a certain joy when mother was away, because we didn't have to pick up after her. I feel man has an absolute inherent right to call his child or his wife in question. He has a right to challenge her with the wrongs that are being done to him in this chaos. I learned a lesson with my wife and it took me a long time.

When I used to confront her with a list of things that she had not done and, in a very angry way, demand that she participate, help, and so forth, I found she was calling my anger into question because I said that she was the cause of my problem. I found out that that was not the case. That I was the problem. I want to tell you this very seriously; that was the beginning of the creation of myth in our family. That is, that I am my own problem in this

particular situation.

I think one of the catalytic agents for the kind of unrest that is in education, in communities, in the families, where these structures are all called into question, is really something we have talked about before. It is a force. There is force that is a catalytic agent here, it is a force that isn't there, and has left in its place a hole or vacuum. The force that isn't there is mythology and where there isn't anything there is a void. That void, I submit, is causing the collapse of some of our basic structures in education and communities and families.

There are interior effects, obviously, from these particular situations where the structures are under great stress. One in unintentional consciousness on the part of most men. Man is having a time getting a hand-hold on his effort to climb through his life. And that is the way he envisions his life--just climbing through it. There is a certain aridity or barrenness or desert-like quality to man's life today and there doesn't seem to be as much spark or interest or reliance as he would like there to be. There is a feeling of alienation, or being up against things all the time--people, conditions, thime circumstances. He gets defensive. He doesn't really have much choice right now. He doesn't like all the impingements on what he would like to be his happiness. He gets defensive and he gets critical and he stands apart. Finally, there is despair.

Despair is a very personal thing, very popular, very available. And is encouraged by our society. It is encouraged because finally, before a man drops into despair, the old safety belt, the myth that supports the culture, is gone. There is nothing for him to bounce off of. On the other side of the internal effects, there are certain possibilities. I would like to say, outside that, that for me there are some truths that I cannot explain to anybody else or to myself.

For instance the universe--just the fact of faith in the universe-- we all know is true, but I will be damned if I can explain it, or describe it. I think perhaps one of the possibilities on the other side of despair, relative to the style of life one lives today, is the possibility that within style--let's take one person now, within that person's style, there is the potential of faith style, or the style of faith. And the way I get to that in my mind's journey is that I know that style is the acting out of the wisdom and social mythology, which creates patterns which we call a person's style.

Well, if I know I created the habits, and I know that all through history they have changed, then I have to believe that I can create habits that become the basis of my style, or be how I act. That is my style and I don't see any limit to it. Because style is decisional -----[has to do with missional family] (turn over tape)-----

for something besides the mother and father. Or there is some mission or purpose of their life that transcends their relationship which allows them to break out of that reduced covenant or reduced atmosphere. The 50/50 idea of marriage which seems to me to give people a chance to be objective and look at their marriage and create freely in a union of two equals--a context for marriage that is not consumed with equality and would permit freedom of life to be lived because they are not consumed with that life. And there is a lot more potential to it, because they have given it direction beyond their own reduced covenant or relationship. One other thing, and perhaps a story would illustrate it better.

One of the problems with marriage is that people come into conflict with each other and argue or fight, or there is a separation which takes a long time to heal.

In our own particular, unique marriage, Mary Warren and I have always fought. There is nothing wrong with that. We have always been good at that and have done a lot of it. It used to be that out of those fights there was usually the residual effect of a lingering hurt and anger--emotional feelings that we don't have time for any more. If we have a fifth now, there is no time for us to stew in that negative juice, because it isn't that important. We are just rational enough to understand that that is not what we are about--stewing in some little juice we have cooked up. That is primarily because we have forced ourselves into the kind of covenant where our relationship isn't the end--all of our lives. There is something else there that permits a lot more air to get in and is a much healthier context for any two people.

I think another possibility is in going back to Martin Luther King. I don't know where the old song came from, it may have been before him. But the song: One and one and fifty make a million. And if society is to be saved, or if man is to create a new culture, it is going to come that way. It is going to come from a lot of little fires that start up--fires of renewal and then there is going to be a conflagration. But it is only within the one and the one and the one that that will take place. And that makes me feel that any one person has a part in that because it is the way everything starts, in terms of the history of man.

The being of our sociality or the ontological sociality, has certain givens. When a baby is born, he is spanked, he cries, he is immediately a social animal. There is no way for that kid to escape. He is part of sociality, bingo. And if that is true, objectively, I say to myself, why fight it? If I am using whatever wisdom the Lord gave me, I have to live with society, I have to participate in it; and if I am part of it, it would seem to me that I would like that societal context to be healthy so that I can have happiness. And that is not really a very deep philosophical statement. That is just a hard-nosed, practical German statement of fact.

Then you talk about Dick and Sally or the I-thou or you-me. I have a new formula. It is an ontological formula and it goes like this: One and one make three. I will prove it to you. If I say Dick and Sally and anything else that is three. If I say Dick and Sally and stop, I have said absolutely nothing, right? And it is not three words, because if I say Dick and Sally, if I say you-me, if I say I-Thou, I have to bring into whatever it is I am trying to put on the table, a relationship.

There is no I-thou, there is no you-me, there is no Dave-Sally, if you ever mentioned the words in the first place. There are Dave-Sally relationships, period. If that is true then it is the relationship that is dominant, it is a series of those relationships that is society, that is the being of a community or of a nation.

If that is true, then why shouldn't relationships be intentional? If something is important, why not treat it as if it were important? You know that to be conscious is to be aware and you know that if a man, or human being, is truly conscious, that is a little gift; and you also know that if he is

conscious of his awareness, or his consciousness, that is a rare gift. He is coming down the road to humanness.

The way I want to talk about intentional relationships is that if I am having a relationship with my son and I am intentional about it, there will be a relationship to that relationship. That's not an example that satisfies me because I am hung up on my children. But the story I tell myself is that, if I have intentional relationships with Jimmy Moffett, I will be conscious of the relationship that I am going to have with him--conscious of the relationships to the relationship to the extent that I am thinking through my relationship with Jimmy toward the relationship and the context for the relationship that he is going to have with somebody else--maybe with his son.

If you ~~make~~ a decision to be intentional onee, that is not the end of it, obviously. You have to make the decision to be intentional in your relationship, every time you have a relationship. Over and over and over again. You know you don't like to go through the struggle to be intentional everytime you see somebody. What happens to some people, I am sure (I haven't experienced this yet), but what happens is that you develop a habit that comes easily. It gets easier to be intentional. You know why, of course. It pays off. You are proud of a good relationship so you want to replicate that.

Another area goes back to something I was talking about before, relative to your existence in society. I think it is true that a man wants happiness. We know it is true that he can't take society but in terms of his relationship to that society, he would be intentional, because he would want society to have, in its being, something that he would want to support and that would support him in his quest for happiness. There is a covenant there, or at least the possibility of a covenant between a man and his society, just as there is a very real covenant between a man and his society, just as there is a very real covenant between the man and the woman. I think, for very much the same reason, there are some distortions in the being or the ontology of society and you see them. George talked about several of them this morning, so did Nicki.

There is the naive man. When I say distortions, I am talking about individuals who participate in society in some distorted way. But the naive guy, and he is no matter what his age, the fresh, unknowing innocent, trusting only what he needs to know. No way a decisional depth person. He is in the course and he is defensive against all possibilities of acquiring knowledge. He is afraid of it, he doesn't want to participate in anything outside his own cuckoo's nest of economic security, or whatever he calls it.

Then there is the cynic who stands in the quicksand of his life, however lucid he may be, with un-rose-colored glasses, knowing full well, that the future is NOT open, that all is not possible and the past is no good either. And we have the little fringe elements like the escape artists, you know the massive number of cults, the anti-intellectual intellectual; the people that expound the cause of non-thinking. The businessmen who run away from responsibility. Period. [And then they end up in some job that doesn't require them to be responsible, whatever it is.]

You have the youth who cut out to be in nature communes. They are running (and I love them) but they have been a great gift to you. Then you have the mole, the stay-put. He doesn't run anywhere, but he can't see anything. And he is the intentional drudge of society. He is very very decisional, that

is what he is. He is very much like the other guy I was telling about. (Offensive one to me). I have people I really don't like, evangelical bigtos, ones that literally spew invective. They can't talk about their favorite subject which is hate without spittle. I have to be very careful not to have that happen to me, when I talk about them

One the other side of these distortions, there are some encouraging signs, in terms of what man is doing today. He is searching everywhere for a new life, for new institutions. He is experimenting in all these structures that we were talking about before. He is accepting globality. The middle of the road is accepting globality. This just hints of another world, something that I alluded to awhile back--something equivalent to universal space. I can't describe it- It is unrecognizable and yet it is, perhaps, available. And if it is then the anachronism of our time that this secret is as old as written history, and known that long. It is written on our deed to life and locked up somewhere in the attic of our time.

I am talking about the other world and this possibility. I have to be very practical and I have to make an indicative statement like this: It is possible that man can see his being in life just as it is. Man can because he has no choice. That speaks to me. He has no choice. His life is going to be whatever it is, period. He can be his life in that kind of life situation. In the middle of every crummy meaningless frustrating happening.

If I can hang onto that, there is a wild freedom because I know that, whatever that situation is, is just the way it is going to be, and that I am whole and that I am my life, in that situation.

I know that attachment--any man knows that attachment is futile. To become attached to people, or goods or whatever--really attached to them, is absolutely futile, in that you cannot hang onto all of your attachments. There is no way that that can happen. Therefore detachment is obvious. And I think I can say that it is possible for a man to realize that his only security, is the security of knowing his own personal existence, as an authentic significant existence. Any man.

Why should he spend his energy in areas that are not.....
What I mean is, why should he spend his energy stewing about what is happening to him? Bemoaning his fate, spinning his wheels, dealing with his problems. As soon as one problem has gone away, there are ten more lined up. And it is that way for every man, every day, every year of his life. That (very seriously) is just one little thing that happened to me in my relationship to some of the family structures. In the end, I had to decide that that was not a problem. I had to decide that I did not have the problem that I came home to. That is a little, tiny crummy victory but I love it and I hang on to it. It tells me something.

It tells me that man's problem is the devil in him that says "that is your problem." Because that is what everybody else is doing, having problems, and that devil is in every one of us saying: "You have problems." I know that if any one of us, even the most hardnosed one of us, would be willing to sit down for two minutes (knowing he would come back to his problem in two minutes) I think this would work. He could decide for 120 seconds he doesn't have a problem. I believe that. Then I will say one and one and fifty make a million. What I

mean to say is, if you can do it for a short period of time you can do it forever. When that happens you just--it is the law of supply and demand, which is a silly way to talk about it--I mean joy comes in.

If you are human and you are all consumed with your problems and stewing about them and bitching about them, and reacting to them, and they are gone, something has to come in there. You know it's not going to be more problems that you just got rid of. And so joy is the only thing that can come in. Joy or vacantness, which isn't particularly desirable. It happens when the problem goes way, and maybe it is almost synonymous--when that joy comes in. That freights you through almost any situation, in a most unique way. I am talking about a problem situation. You can actually enjoy or get a kick out of a problem because you have a new way of looking at it. And when you have a situation where there wasn't a problem, like walking down a beach and looking at the water. That can be an empty trip or it can be filled with wonder. I am a pro at that--at walking down the beach and not being filled with wonder. It is a rare thing when I can just walk down the beach and intentionally have that walk and see the water and the sand and the place I love. But it can be gone, and people are missing that.

Man can decide that his life can be happy. One way to prove that is that nobody else can decide that. Without changing one thing, man can make that decision, that is without changing one thing about what is going to happen to him, because he can't decide that anyway. He is happiness and he can waltz through life instead of plodding. He has embodied the fact of his death, he is fearless in front of his life, having died to whatever that life is going to bring him and having decided to bring his life into being, he can then live whatever that life is, and embrace the worth of his life.

And to that extent a man's life is eternal.

--D. Moffett