

This is the last session of this particular course on the holy life. We have talked under the categories of universal benevolence, radical integrity and endless felicity--the dynamics of sanctification. Those of you who have been to any of the other initial courses like RS-I or CS-I or LENS, remember that this is the session in the course which talks about who you are. In previous sessions we have described a going-on-ness in the midst of history, in the midst of your life, which describes who you are. From that follows the question: once you see who you are, what are the ramifications? Earlier, we talked about the indicative of your life, how you see what you see and know what you know about the way life is, which you also know about yourself. This session picks up where the others left off and moves beyond. Once you see this process going on, you ask who are we? Who are we being in the midst of history as we manifest this particular process? How do we grasp after being who we are? Do we see ourselves now to be the religious? That is the term usually given to those who wake up in the midst of this process.

I would like to talk this morning about being the religious, about our being the religious in the Church. First, we shall talk about it under the historical role, the whole question of the human necessity of grasping the historical role in the midst of our lives. Secondly, our concern is the basic definitudes, the interior qualities of the religious in the midst of history. Third, we want to talk about the vocation incarnate, the external function of the religious. What are the religious engaged in that manifest the qualities derived from the human dynamic inherent in this historical role. Finally, our concern is the holy life, the spiritual discipline of those who participate in this kind of life style.

Let us begin with the historical role. But before we do, I would like to read to you from someone out of the past who talked about this kind of discovery in this life, albeit in a strange language.

Note that when a man is chosen as High Priest he is appointed on men's behalf as their representative in the things of God--he offers gifts to God and makes the necessary sacrifices for sins on behalf of his fellow men. He must be able to deal sympathetically with the ignorant and foolish because he realizes that he is himself prone to human weakness. This naturally means the offering which he makes for sin is made on his own personal behalf as well as on behalf of those whom he represents.

Note also that nobody chooses for himself the honor of being a High Priest, but he is called by God to the work, as was Aaron, the first High Priest in ancient times.

Thus we see that the Christ did not choose for himself the glory of being High Priest, but he was honored by the one who said:

Thou art my Son,

This day have I begotten thee.

And he says in another passage:

Thou art a priest for ever

After the order of Melchizedek.

Christ, in the days when he was a man on earth, appealed to the one who could save him from death in desperate prayer and the agony of tears. His prayers were heard; he was freed from his shrinking from death but, Son though he was, he had to prove the meaning of obedience through all that he suffered. Then, when he had been proved the perfect Son, he became the source of eternal salvation to all who should obey him, being now designated by God himself as High Priest "after the order of Melchizedek."

There is a great deal that we should like to say about this high priesthood, but it is not easy to explain to you since you seem so slow to grasp spiritual truth. At a time when you should be teaching others, you need teachers yourselves to repeat to you the ABC of God's revelation to men. You have become people who need a milk diet and cannot face solid food! For anyone who continues to live on "milk" is obviously immature--he simply has not grown up. "Solid food" is only for the adult, that is, for the man who has developed by experience his power to discriminate between what is good and what is bad for him. (Hebrews 5, JBPhillips)

You might say the holy life involves a process of maturation. It is as if we finished those first three lectures and seminars to describe the process that is going on. If we did not mature after that, we probably will never have another opportunity, so we just assume from that point on that all of us are mature human beings. Maturity comes out of what you see and out of your grasping of what you see. I am not sure where you begin to say what you see. When you look at the historical role of the church you have the Historical Church. You have the People of God as the caretakers of all history. Every awakened man, wherever you bump into him, is part of this function, but those who bring intentionality into

that function show up in historical forms which usually go by the name of the Historical Church. You are acquainted with the ways in which they grasp themselves. They see themselves as the bearer of the Word in history. However faulty, they know that they bear that Word without which no man, culture or creature lives in this world. All depend up the Word-bearer for life. These people also know that they are keepers of the symbols by which life is addressed, sustained and related to the mystery. That symbolic web which embraces the whole of life is what they maintain, and it is what allows man to have full and meaningful existence in every dimension. So they spin the stories, they keep extant the sacred writings, they enact the sacraments and rites, they hold to special days and seasons whereby we are enabled to grasp all those relationships. They are also the preservers of tradition. Although nations pass away, cultures are the most nearly history-long things that we have today. But each group of people says that it cannot live, that its members cannot be who they are, unless they preserve all of their history; therefore, the intentional religious stand as preservers of the tradition of humanness from the beginning of time until the end. They claim the task of relating all of history, without which they could not relate all to the mystery. Finally, they care for mankind. The church knows that it cannot be faithful to its God unless it loves its neighbor. And again, however faulty, however perverted, that understanding has been burned into the church's existence from the beginning of time. Though it know that it has failed in its particular task, the church knows its essence is being the social pioneer. Without that activity it cannot finally claim to worship the final mystery it bears in the midst of history.

So here is this strange group of people, the historical church, that knows who it should be, but knows also that it wakes up in human frailty and weakness

as witnessed in the Epistle to the Hebrews. In the midst of that, the church runs into itself with a built-in renewal activity going on. This always happens within the establishment of the historical church. It is interesting that when you go to other cultures and other places, you will find people saying about different groups in the midst of history, "It is frozen, and it has no way in which it can renew itself. Something is going to have to break it apart from outside." The strange thing about this particular group that we call the church is that it can only be renewed, and is always being renewed, from within. My own tradition, Presbyterianism, doctrinally grasps itself as the reformed church. I remember once when I found out that piece of data for the first time (that I am a reformed confessional Christian) caught me inflated with this notion and said, "No, you are not reformed, because you cannot be reformed once and for all. You belong to the churches being reformed continuously according to the Word of God." That is the way the church fathers talked about it. You know you are reformed continuously. The church is reforming, always in the process of renewal according to the hammer blows of the Word of God. Whatever way you see it each area of the church, each communion, has talked about it. The great monastic movements saw groups rising up from within to offer the corrective dynamic and then going to the establishment to say, "Here we are. Here we are fresh. Will you recognize us and receive us as that?" This kind of thing goes on. You can say it is always present. God has told his church that He will never leave it without its prophets. His prophets are always there. —

The way that you bump into this renewal, especially in moments of overtness like our day here, is in two phases. The first phase is that of protest, and you can usually describe that as the Protestant Principle. The second phase is that of recreation, and you can usually call that the Catholic Substance. Today we have just finished the time of protest ; we have come through the period of justification which is synonymous with the rebirth of the Protestant Principle. We have recovered the Word in the midst of the twentieth century. The Gospel has

just broken into our day. Here it is. No person ever again has any reason not to hear or be able to understand or grasp the Word of Jesus Christ. We have been in the recovery where the foundations have been shaken, where the historical church has been called to live out of the Word of forgiveness, to recover its role in history and to pick up its mission to the world. Now we are in the time of the recreation. This is synonymous with the period of resurgence, with the period of sanctification. The Word, you might say, has been recovered in our day, and now it has to be funneled into every pore of our being. It is like a searchlight that goes down, or those tracers they put into your blood; and your blood, as it goes all over your being, illuminates before an X-ray fluoroscope what is happening to every vessel of your body. It is that way in which the Word has to be imbued into our lives and indeed is, in this time of recreation.

The whole of the religious life and the social life is being reconstructed. Now, when you say that reconstruction is taking place, that resurgence is coming about, a strange new process is being exposed. An awakened man seems to have his life on his hands all over again. Our fathers termed this the refining fire; our fathers called this strange process the sanctifying process in which you were being set aside for holy purposes, to be the religious. Religious people are what you see yourself being once you see that process is going on in the midst of your life. It is not, "Well, I think maybe I will become religious," or something like that. It is, "My God, this is happening, this is going on, this is taking place in the midst of my life! This is taking place in the midst of history! And therefore, as I participate in history, it is exploding in my being." Therefore, "My God, I am the religious!" It is in that kind of way that you wake up to the discovery of what is going on in your life. When we looked at the first phase, that of protest, we were vaguely aware of something like that. But in an era where we begin to see the second phase, that of recreation, the religious dimension comes more radically into consciousness. As I was saying before, it is

almost as if you are doomed to become self-conscious about the way life is, once you see that process going on. If that is correct, then at the same time you are doomed to become self-conscious about being the religious.

What we now see is that we are participating in the sanctifying process. The alien image is assaulting us. The dark night of the soul is there in the midst of our being, bringing the curtains down. The alien fire of love is burning within us. To know this is to know ourselves as the religious. Or, to shift the metaphors here, the religious are like the crimson line. They are the spirit running through life; they are the aliveness in life running through history. They are embodied in a specific body of people today, pioneers of history that create civilization. All of history rides on the back of these religious people. You might say that the religious impacts the church and acts as a catalytic agent for its renewal. Then, the religious also represent the church in being a religious body in the midst of the world for its reconstruction. What that means, as far as the historical role is concerned, is this: the difficulties that we have had with the word "religious" are past. Before, if someone called us religious, we might have screamed. That meant, even if we had stoically held on to being religious, we had taken off our garb, we had relaxed our rule, we had done everything like that. We had been afraid to say that we were the religious. That is understandable, because the religious have been called radically into question. But the tide/^{has} turned and is moving about now. From the intensification of secular resurgence, we become religious self-consciously. Now, the recovery of the religious means the recovery of the religious order. For the religious becomes the religious order when people self-consciously know themselves to be the religious. Therefore when they join together, they are a religious group. They are a religious order when they bring that kind of self-consciousness into it. This is just the way things are here in the historical role that has been given to us.

Now what are the basic definitudes or the internal qualities of this particular group that we see? The religious today, whatever else they are, are the secular/religious. We have no way to be religious except in the midst of the world. You cannot be religious if you abstract yourself; you would be a joke. Or you would be that which we have pointed a finger at before when we said we were being derided as being the religious. You are never apart from being the religious except in the midst of this world. And there is utterly no way to be authentically the religious except to be a secular person. The religious vocation is always transparent as the transparent calling in the midst of everyday life. You always wake up being something as a secular man. There the secular takes place, that is, the religious takes place. This is true even if you go into a so-called secular order (that is, a religious order), because that religious order is manifested in doing or being something that has a secular function in the midst of life, that is, it is part of the ongoing culture of secular life. The style of the religious will come through the actual given. The dynamic enactment of the world comes through the veil, and dynamic enactment of the Word comes through the veil of your being. I do not know how to say that except to use some of the more ludicrous ways that this comes about.

There is always a movie on the late, late show that has somebody from outer space coming in to take over the world. I remember one a few years ago, and I saw it again just a couple of months ago. I did not mean to see it, but I turned on the TV while I was working late at night and there it was. A guy had just died, and this fellow called in a biologist to come over there. He said, "I think I feel his heart beating. He has been dead at least a half hour, and his heart is beating." So the fellow went over, sat down and looked back where the table was, and the person had disappeared. That started the whole movie off. You see immediately what is going on. A strange pollen, or whatever

it was, came from outer space and landed across the fields. And pods grew, these great big pods like watermelon, and they would wait until somebody's eyes almost closed like that, and they would seize them. So you had to be careful or they would getcha. Or people would just about die, so you would have to be a little careful there too. No matter which way your eyes go; alien pollen! As it got hold of them, people would suddenly be the same people walking around, the cop on the beat doing the same thing, the doctor doing the same thing. Everyone is doing the same thing, but they are different, and you know it when you look into their eyes. And it is there. You try to escape, and you run and you run and you run until you get tired, and then you begin to close your eyes...and you open them again and you run and you run and you run and your eyes get tired. Now you open them again, then you run and you run and you run and...I gotcha! It is sort of like that. That alien image only gets you in the midst of your everyday life where you are running.

Maybe the change is in the midst of consuming, acting out what you are doing and what is going on. So that is where you be the religious. Precisely in the midst of the everyday world in which you find yourself. The interior quality there is just the transparent calling that you are a part of. So once you see that, the rest of your life you have two faces: the face that faces the mystery and the face that faces creation. You are the religious that loves the mystery. You are the secular man that loves creation. And that is where you are; you have one face before the mystery and one before the world. I like what we used to have in all our RS-I courses. What happened to our decor? We used to have beautiful decor. We would have Rouault's "Old King" and Rouault's "Christ" or Van Gogh's "Sunflowers" here, or a cubist painting holding the religious and the secular. We had the cross and the wedgeblade, the cross which holds the symbol of the bitter purgation that brings the dark night to all of life and never lets you go. Or on the other side, we had the circle

that represents space there in the wedgeblade, and that circle means the unlimited space that finally embraces all of the universe. And this kind of theme is present. At the same time, there is the cross that represents the fire of love that holds you present to the dark night so that the purgation takes place. It holds you present to the dark night every moment of your creative activity. And then, in the world, the wedgeblade holds you present to the edge of time. You exist in that.

You find yourself being two kinds of people, and yes, for the rest of your life, you are going to be those two kinds of people. You are going to be those who, in the midst of the night, were in the sewers; you could not find them. They would be down there enacting the liturgy. They would be down there studying, plotting, planning, scheming and going through the religious acts. And then when the sun would come up, they would come up out of the sewers with their business suits on and their briefcases in hand, going out to work here or there. And you never knew whether that alien image was there except maybe as you looked into their eyes and saw what they were doing. That is the kind of presence there, the underground man or the man at work. You see, it is the same thing. You have the same face because you only have one face. But you just face it in two directions. You have only one life made up of the mystery and its creative activity in the midst of your life. And there is only one me, and there is only one you, who is his one life that goes once around the clock. So here is the quality, yes, of the bi-focal posture; but the one face in the midst of history is that one life that you have.

This always implies the quality of sacrificial service. Until death do us part, this alien image has become master of my life. And as the religious and as the church for the rest of your life, you are the servant of the church and the servant of the world. I like the way St. John puts it, as you studied it last night. On the first step of that ladder, he said, that as the religious now you can find no pleasure, no support, no consolation, no abiding place

whatsoever in anything. And then you swoon, you swoon. And you swoon to all things and you swoon to God. And just as John of the Cross puts it, we are now ready to climb up and down that ladder, up and down that ladder, the rest of our lives. The exaltation and the humiliation, the ups and the downs. Or maybe, to use Gogarten's metaphor, once you love the mystery, then you are responsible for the mystery's creation. You are responsible for the care of the world. That is radical care. It is not the care of this thing or that thing, or the care of emotional things, but a radical care in which all boundaries have been burned down by the fire that burns the dross away, and you are free now to give total service to the total life.

I will never forget some of the old movies I used to see as a kid. I remember the ones set in a rural situation where the news would come that the country was at war. The man of the household would hear it, and he would go to his neighbor and ask him to take care of the crops and his family; or maybe he would take the children over to his brother or someone like that. And then he would kiss them all good-bye, and then he would leave. It is that kind of thing. I never will forget when I went into World War II. It had just started and I was a brand-spanking new second-lieutenant and I got sent overseas. I was scared to death. I was in the service four days and got sent overseas. And I was just ready to go, and I told my family, "I do not think I am ever going to come back." And there was all sorts of weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth in my family, including my own. But you know, now, I think if you and I went to anybody and said, "I'll never come back", they might not know quite what you mean, but I think they would emphatically feel after what you were pointing to. They would know; They would know that all your attachments had been severed, that all your cares had been put on the shelf and that there was only one care that you had given to you. And there was only one kind of servant that you were, the rest of your life. That is the kind of interior quality, and that is the definitude it expresses.

Then I think of other instances of the last quality that you, the religious manifest. These people see themselves finally as intentional nothings; they are God's social dregs. Now, by that I do not mean that here I am, a slob, or I have got a victim image, or that I will always wake up with a failure mentality. No, no, no, no! It is almost that you have to say you could be somebody in history. And that is almost the most important statement that you could make. You say, "I see that I could have come off." Then you see that you are not going to come off, but that is an intentional decision.

Unfortunately, sometimes we lose ourselves to the temptation to come off. This is especially true, that sometimes people join the movement, and maybe they have had a failure mentality or a victim image. Suddenly they get rid of their hangups, they get a little priorhood training, and they begin to learn certain methodologies to get things done. Then they say, "My God!" They have a new burst in the midst of their lives.

I know one friend of mine who came into the movement. He was waddling around, he could hardly make ends meet, he had a horrible set of problems. He was making something like six or seven thousand dollars and living like he was making double that...all sorts of problems! Well, after he got in, his hangups began to be removed, and people began to give him some disciplined life and accountability. Suddenly he began to be promoted, promoted, promoted. His family got cleaned up. The children even began to comb their hair. All sorts of things began to come around. Here he is now making about \$25,000 a year over what he was making before, and suddenly he is beginning to lose interest in the movement. He made it, he made it. That is the temptation.

But no! You are the social dregs, and you are intentionally the social dregs. We do not make it; and we won't make it according to the world. And that is precisely who we have chosen to be in the midst of history.

I was reading about a Christian missionary heckled in the midst of an outdoor preaching session in India. Detractors came out and shouted up to him, "Christians, the dregs in the kettle that is bubbling." So he stopped his preaching and he said, "Yes, but the kettle boils from the bottom." The kettle boils from the bottom. Where the dregs are is where the kettle boils.

Well, you can never be the president of your company. You can never be the bishop of your church. You can never own your own company, that is going to challenge Clement Stone's dynasty. You will avoid being somebody at all costs. And I don't mean that you stop wanting to be somebody. You have the propensity within you now, the same as always, of wanting to be somebody. But you never will lose yourself to that struggle. That does not mean you won't make mistakes. God will forgive those. But it means that you always operate over against the intent to lose yourself to the propensity to be somebody. If you are an executive of some company or if you are a Clement Stone or if you are something, you must scream out inside of yourself, "My God, how can I be the religious that I know life is calling me to be, that I am?" And when that happens you say yes; you must stand against the special temptations.

You remember how it was when the rich young ruler came to Jesus, and he sent him away. That is not quite correct. He made the pronouncement, and the rich young ruler left. He could not stand to give something else. And Jesus turned to his disciples and said, "It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than it is for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." All the disciples said uh-huh, yes, yes, yes, yes. Then they paused; and then old Peter (they asked him to be straight man) said, "Well, my God, who can be saved?" For you see, then he was putting it back to the principle that anybody who wants to be somebody can never enter. Then the Word comes back: "With God, all things are possible." So yes, if you wake up in a privileged position, you have a

special temptation.

But the interior quality is still there. This is not some kind of piety, where you and I turn it back in to where we're saying, "Oh boy, I am really going to be something by being nothing." You have seen that, haven't you? People going around saying scratch my spiritual ulcers so I can really look like a spiritual person. That kind of status-seeking has to be bopped over the head. You are not after that. What you are after is a revolutionary principle that is held by this interior quality: that only when you die, you live. Only the symbols of life change the world, and on and on and on. That is what you are holding by daring to hold the interior quality of intentional nothingness.

What is the profound function that is also held there, or the external tasks that are there? One is "being the spiritual guardian", and this is usually preserved by your evangelicals or the preaching orders in the midst of history. These are the spiritual sentinels. They explore the human deeps and share the findings of humanness with the whole body of the People of God around the world. They take the radical divine activity in history and the authentic deep concerns of man and the deeps of the spirit and project that out so that all people can see it. Today, the alien image of the dark night is burning into the center of man's being. Every idolatrous attachment is being burned away, every reduced concept is being burned to pieces, being burned up in this deadly fire. Therefore, humanness is breaking loose anew. It is almost like the walls have been burned down, the chains have been removed, the bars have been broken away and boom! humanness bursts loose. It is being coughed up as it has never been coughed up in our age. The spiritual sentinels go around in our time to name the name, to chart the journey of man and to see that that is manifested in resurgence. They articulate the possibility and relate back to the total humanness into the social process so that everybody, once and for all, can see what

is going on! Concretely and practically, you begin by waking up people and shedding light on their actual situations. You sing songs that reflect the human deeps. You tell stories, you teach courses, or whatever else begins to carry this out. All of us are familiar, more or less, with this kind of task.

Another one of the external tasks that we have is to be the guardians of the liturgical, or the endless rehearsing of life before the Mystery. This is usually done by the contemplative orders in the midst of history. These are the liturgists, and let us use the name liturgy the way it is used in the New Testament. It is the work of the people. It means "the work." The only work that you and I have to do is to dramatically enact humanness in the midst of history, to dramatically enact what it means to live and act and be a human being, so that all people have the possibility to live and act and be a human being. That is what this task is. You do this for secular man. You are not doing it for piety or anything, you are doing it so that all people everywhere can break loose. You symbolize, you act out, you rehearse what it means to be human. The Cabaret dynamic is a spin-off of this. The circus is trying to articulate in secular language what it means to be human. And what a mission to have in history! That task has been selected over and over by people in the past.

You take the depths of life to every last man in the secular world. I remember a number of years ago when we were trying to recapture how to express the liturgy, I read this little book called Mr. Blue, and many of you have probably read it. Mr. Blue is a strange man. He went around being transparent so that the mystery could appear. There came a cataclysmic time in this particular age (our age is where it was cast) when it was said that the next morning at sunrise the world would fly into chaos and oblivion. In the midst of the night, Mr. Blue finds the top of the tallest building in the city and there, just as the sun began to rise, he enacted the liturgy, and the world continued. Rehearsal of the chaos was held to keep the world out of oblivion. The world was held in

being. I submit that is the way to get into the deeps of life. Only you and I and Mr. Blue can enact that liturgy, so the chaos and the oblivion in our own lives are kept from ripping us into a thousand pieces. That is the external task, the mission, the profound function of the religious in one respect.

Another image is the commando whose task is missional leavening. You go around and leaven life wherever you find it. This is usually done by the serving orders in the midst of history. You take the liturgy, the work of the people, to all of civilization. There you put all kinds of forms on it, in the midst of the social process where it can be catalyzed and leavened into a New Social Vehicle. You are now perpetual revolutionaries, working within the structures of society to keep them moving into the future, to break them open, to recreate new ways of balancing the processes, new ways of allowing them to take forms and shapes so that life can go on. And you are servants both in the church and in the world because you are dealing with the needs and the problems of all men, not just this one or that one. You are dealing with the needs and the problems and the contradictions of all society. As you do that, you decide what the world needs, you decide what your fellow man needs, and then you give it to him. You offer it to him. You present him with this gift, so that he can decide how to respond and to live in relationship to that possibility. These commandos, those wagon train scouts, are who we are in the midst of history.

The last image of the profound function would be the "secular illuminati" whose task is transparent rationality. This is usually embodied by the teaching orders in the midst of history. In other words, what you do is to inject the transparent dimension into the rationalities of culture, which occasions the perpetual revolution of humanness. In other words, everything man does, every structure he builds is, and therefore must be, self-consciously grounded in the deeps of humanness itself within the particular historical frame. Once you wake

up to that dynamic in the midst of life, once you wake up and the alien image has become master of you, once you wake up and that divine fire is eating everything up and exploding it into the future, then you take that awareness, that activity as it is present in the resurgence and make it present to every dimension of life. And that is why you and I have been working with every form of human society. That is why we finally created those social process triangles. That is why we finally created those tactics out of which you operate, so they would express ways in which all of life can be present to resurgence and the deeps of that sanctifying process that is in the midst of this moment.

That has always been true. The historians of societies usually are people who create the comprehensiveness of culture. We have talked about the Literati of China taking the comprehensiveness of a global situation, a global civilization and bring it to bear on every situation that we find ourselves in. With internal consistency and rationality in that comprehensiveness, there is no part of our interior deeps that is not related to the whole of society. This is the kind of task that you and I have as a secular illuminati. That leaves us with seeing that those signs are present.

I remember in seminary reading about the church's use of schools during the frontier movement. There was a rapid rise of elementary schools founded by the church in order to meet the need of freighting the comprehensiveness of life to the frontier. As the pioneering edge moved on and society took over the education, the church left the educational process and went into another. There has always been a people who know where they need to be in order to be the perpetual revolutionaries that explode that culture into the future.

In one sense, you and I arrive in being as the religious. You might put it this way: we wake up and have to ask ourselves all over again whether I have been tapped on the shoulder. I see that I have been elected to the holy life.

That has always seemed like a mystical sort of thing. Someone said I was called to do something. And I have always muttered to myself, "How in the hell do you know that?" Usually, they would try to express themselves in some strange way that did not have any meaning to my life. No longer is that true. When you were a kid and playing organizations or clubs or fraternities, they would put you through an initiation and try to frighten you to death. But when you came into the club, there was not anything to it. You had a lot of fun initiating everyone, but that was all. That is like the awful initiation that takes place here. You wake up finding that you are elected.

Sanctification is being what you already are, and being religious is being those people who be what they already are. When this world falls on you, brother, it falls on you! And you have no choice but to deal with it. The universe, you might say, has elected you to carry it. It has either happened or it has not happened. If these last three sessions have described what is going on in your life, then you are elected! You do not have any choice. You have already been through the awe-filled initiation because you have seen the dark night. To be those who grasp their election is to be the sanctified, to be the religious, or to live the holy life.

You saw universal benevolence. You have always known that you care; now that you know you have no other alternative but to care inclusively. And the dark night has ripped every other attachment or care away from you, and the fire of love fills you with sort of an ongoing outwardness toward life that is called care. And when you swoon to the world and swoon to God, you have been driven into utter darkness before all the values and all the causes that you have ever held on to. The only light that bursts in upon you now is that light which shows the final allegiance to the all in all. I am not talking about anything moral here or anything that you ought to do if you were nice, or if

you wanted to be holy. I am just trying to describe the way it is.

One day I was on an airplane sitting beside a sloppy character who slept half the time. When you talked with him you knew that he slept even when he was awake. He smelled, he was not dressed well. A PFC in the army, that is who he was. I did not ask the question whether he was in the army or not. I knew he was in the army. He was one of the great protectors of our country whether or not he could even shoot. I am almost sure that if he aimed his rifle at the other side of the airplane he would have missed it. That is the kind of guy I thought ¹ was sitting by. But I never thought even to ask him the question, was he in the service of his country? He wore that uniform, that is who he was.

That is sort of like radical integrity. I can look at your crumminess. I know all the ways that purgation has burned you up one side and down the other and scarred you. It just shines all over your face. But that is not the question now. You find yourself for the rest of your life always knowing that whatever struggle you are in, the struggle is with allegiance to the All in all. That is just who you are.

And therein is eternal fulfillment. You are ripped from every attachment, and you are snatched into life. Almost screaming and kicking into the profundity of life. Now, for the rest of your life, you are called to live greater humiliation, more desperate weakness, more intense suffering, and more sharp anger and hatred than you've ever known, even in the midst of greater illumination, of greater development, of greater integrity. And this is your fulfillment. This is your happiness. From now on, you are already a religiously disciplined person, a religiously disciplined man with a terrifying burden of living; being set apart is just the indicative of the situation. However else you operate, you are struggling with being disciplined.

Now what in the world does that mean that you are set apart? The forms of human sociality and corporate mission that define the concrete life of the religious are grounded ontologically. In the past, the orders have used the ontology of sexuality as the basis of that organization.

Orders were usually divided into three parts: the first order, the second order, and the third order. Your first order was made up of males; the second order, of females and the third order, of those who were married. Those forms gave expression to detachment. I do not think that in the future, the major cutting edge will come with sexuality. But these orders will probably always stay in being to indicate that if what I am going to describe now does not come off, history will still have the gift of a sign that Religious Life can be disciplined and carried out in its internal manifestations.

Probably, in the post-modern world, it will be an ontology of sociality, or corporateness and corporate living, that we will be talking about, as we see ourselves carrying out the Holy Life. When we talk about the ontology of sociality, in our day, we mean that we are social creatures, probably like we have never been before. Now it's obvious that you and I are social creatures, like a fish is in water, the water being the society that holds and bears and sustains the fish. Society is that which is the context that holds and bears and delineates who we are as human beings. We are human beings only in the midst of our sociality. Now the thing about this that's new in the 20th century, is that we have been given brand new lucidity or self-consciousness about our sociological context. Whereas, historically, chastity and detachment were embodied in the orders, in the future chastity and obedience will be held.

The order will still have three aspects, that is the symbolic or intensive order, the extensive order and the movemental order. What defines the

first two over against the movemental order is the corporate group. This usually involves the polity, goods, mission, symbols, time and study or intellectual life in which that relationship is carried out. Our sociality is spelled out in the way that we are related to our direct assignment. I like the word: direct assignment. In the word assignment, the prefix a comes from the Greek prefix ad which means marking yourself on the forehead or tatooing a mark on you. An assignment is that kind of sign. If you talk about it more broadly, it means the sign that your being leaves in history, the sign or the signature of your life in the midst of history. The method of direct assignment is your sign being build into history. The intensive order, that white-hot group of people (by "white-hot" I mean the way in which they spill out their life in accordance with the self-conscious rule that is present) forges its existence in society by a corporate rule which expresses their internal discipline.

The extended order lives a corporate existence in a non-corporate situation. These are people that do not live in the midst of a total corporate body but are related to it and have the same rule. The movemental order is just as committed and has just as great an assignment in the midst of history, but for the moment, for whatever reason, its members do not live under the same form of discipline and rule in the midst of history. If a rule defines what radical human corporateness is, how is the rule adjusted to these people? How do you go about saying in what manner it ought to be adjusted? Probably you would say fate does it. If you get married, then fate decided if you are going to be in one grouping or another. If you are going to be a United States senator, like Senator Percy is, then fate would put you in the movemental order. In that way, your ontology allows you to get hold of the kind of thrust that you are.

On a deeper level, a corporate rule is after radical corporateness. In

In one sense, you could care less about the external ways in which you grasp your internal life if it thrusts you in the direction of radical corporateness. Corporateness is always beyond your physical colleagues. You are just as obedient to Amos, you listen just as much to Gautama or Luther or Thomas or Augustine and all the saints as you do to your contemporaries. In other words, the invisible grasping of hands across the centuries and across the globe is probably more concrete and actually more specific sometimes than grasping the hand of a next door friend. In other words, now you are no longer an individual. You are a corporate human being. The kind of individual which you and I have been has been all chewed up by that alien master image that attacks us. For you become a corporate human being only when the internal part of your life is expanded to include the whole globe and the whole white hot fire of mystery burning in every part of life. Once the internal dimension of your life has been expanded to include all of the globe and all of the all in all, then you are a unique human being whose being scorches whatever touches you. Then you could talk about being radical individualists. It is that kind of discipline, it is that kind of corporateness that we intend to form in order to manifest and be the religious that we already are.

The New Religious Mode charts grasp the classical historical forms of internal discipline and transpose them into the context of the twentieth century world. Those charts are the inevitable imprint on our being of all relations that we have to any kind of practices or spiritual exercises. Again, we are not talking about the way something ought to be; we are trying to see what is going on and trying to describe that. Now, I do not know how to do that.

Meditation, Poverty, and then Transparent Knowing are all under the knowing rubric here. In the sociology of knowledge, you and I know that the council that we used to talk about having in our mind only exists in the sanctified

prayer, your life goes into the breach of that prayer. You are now directed toward the whole of the external world with the entire internal world of who you are, and you witness explosions and implosions taking place in Transparent Doing. Never again do you order your life outside of Transparent Doing; you bring intentionality into that process. Therefore, you discipline yourself with Prayer and Obedience and Transparent Doing.

The other one is the area of Being: Contemplation, Chastity, and Transparent Being. Here in Contemplation that alien image has become the master image of your life. That alien flame of love now has burned out every image and every idol and has left you willing one thing. When these two things get together, the intellect and the will that have been purged, you come into Transparent Being. Your being is present to the mystery itself. Now I am painting a series of quick pictures just trying to say that the religious can no more escape disciplining his internal life or his spirit life than he can escape from eating in his physical life. That is who he is. The religious is participating in spiritual life; therefore, to intentionalize your life is to bring discipline into it.

The holy life finally means that you and I accept the last burden of history: to be the sign and symbol. Everything up to this point is allowed to anyone. Transparency is always manifest if the other world is present in this world. The everyday, mundane, secular life is displayed as sacred. The sacred is transparent to the mystery everywhere you touch it. The whole world is sacramental. The whole world is alive with the mystery. It is almost as if whatever you touch, you feel it moving, you feel it pulsing, you feel it creeping. Everything has the possibility of being transparent. The religious learns that he can take time and turn it into a happening that dances and bubbles and swells up in the midst of everything coming to form. Finally, everyone's

state, or when the transparency in the mind takes place. It is not just raising up a hunk of individuals that you happen to think of and putting them around you somewhere. Only when you are shoved up against the transparency of life does that council appear. We talk about Jesus being at the head of the council because he is the symbol of utter comprehensiveness and utter transparency. Only when that is present can you talk about Meditation.

The sociology of knowledge also talks about the internalization of our culture. That is an indefinable thing. You wake up in your culture, your culture is who you are. But how can you tell who you are when you wake up in the midst of that which you cannot get outside of to grasp because you are inside of it? Being over against the transparency of life, you know also that you are thrown out having to grasp who you are at the same time you are in the midst of who you are. While totally immersed in your culture, you find yourself standing outside it, trying to get hold of who you are. That is where Poverty comes in. Radical detachment, radical pour soi, is there. When that radical pour soi is present in the midst of your meditative council, over against your internalization of your culture, then Transparent Knowing takes place. This is the struggle that goes on in you and me. Being the religious is bringing self-consciousness or intentionality to that experience. You bring spiritual discipline into that dimension of your life.

Take the doing dimension: Prayer, Obedience and Transparence Doing. Here , no longer do you ever act out of your immediacies again. You know that demand is there because of who you are, not from outside, but because of who you are. You always act out of a decision that is there before the decision. Your comprehensiveness then takes into consideration every little thing you do minus nothing. You owe yourself to the all in all; that is just who you are. Now on the subjective side, this requires that every time you utter any little

time is used up. He learns to take space and turn it into world, a global world, alive with creation itself. And you are nothing, you are nothing but a sign and symbol. Your deed is to explode being and turn it into force and make it transparent. And so, your very being is transparency. Time is allowed to be danced in awe. Space is arranged so it will change man, so the awe creates the basic revolution in his life. Your life is attached to the mystery so that your life style itself becomes a sign and a symbol of transparency.

The style of the religious brings together the disparate parts of the universe and creates wholeness. The style of the religious takes social engagement in the deeps of humanness and brings that into a disciplined focus as a sign of what it means to be radically human. And therefore, they are the people all of civilization depends on for the future. Yet, the religious are transparent. They are symbols of transparency. An earlier lecture talked about Jesus's Transfiguration where suddenly his life became transparent. All of the structures of the universe and those processes that called him into question now become transparent also.

Now you, like him, can say, "I am the door, I am the symbol that people must follow. You must follow me as I follow Christ." To put it secularly, "I am the symbol through which you see what it means to follow what gives life, for I made the symbol for you to become present to the transparent, to see what it means to live." Back in the old psychology days, when we would be talking with one another, someone would get out of hand, and we would say, "Watch it, you're being defensive." In the days when we were trying to produce people, we would sit at the back of the room and say, "I can't hear you back here." Now we would say, "I can't see through you. I can't see through you. You are not transparent. I can't see through you." Maybe that is what we need to do. When someone collapses into their little pettiness, or holds on to their little

idolatrous attractions, or hangs onto a reduced context, you and I shout, "I can't see through you! I can't see through you!" in hopes that that little activity would give everyone an opportunity once again to be a symbol of transparency.

--Joseph A. Slicker