

My question is whether something like the distinction between having a world view, on the one hand, and having faith, on the other—as well as, possibly, the distinction between acting morally and having faith—isn't essential to the very concept of religion. If Geertz's concept is essentially sound, it would appear necessary that any religion simply as such be the symbolic expression of a self-understanding or faith, as distinct from both metaphysical belief and moral action

In that case, there must be in any religion something like the problem to which Bultmann calls attention when he says, "for every concept of God there is the same problem, which is not a theoretical, conceptual problem at all, but a problem of practical life: the relation between the demands of God and the demands of the world" (*Urchristentum und Religionsgeschichte*: 11; cf. 14 and 18, where Bultmann draws the same distinction by contrasting "conceptual insight" with "obedient deed," and "theoretical insight" with "faithful, obedient deed," respectively).

Because no religion is merely metaphysics, it has to deal somehow with the problem of reducing faith to metaphysical belief—as well as, possibly, since it is not merely morality, either, the analogous problem of reducing faith to moral action.

n.d.; rev. 11 February 2005