

My polemic in "The Reality of God" was twofold: on the one hand, against secularism (as distinct from secularity); and, on the other hand, against classical (supernaturalistic) theism (as distinct from Christian theism, or Christian faith in God). Thus I was concerned to challenge what I took to be two untenable assumptions: that one can be wholeheartedly and wholemindedly secular only by being a secularist and that one can believe in God Christianly only by being a classical (supernaturalistic) theist.

Over the years since, I have regretted more than once that I ever used the phrase "supernaturalistic theism" as, in effect, a synonym for "classical theism." And I have even argued—following Hartshorne—especially over against so-called naturalistic theisms, that, affirming, as I do, the all-worshipfulness, and thus the dual transcendence and unsurpassability, of God, I am affirming, in so many words, an understanding of God as, in some important sense, precisely "supernatural."

But even if I still stand behind this argument, I no longer regret the terms in which I developed my earlier polemic. For, if God is understood classically, God is understood supernaturally, or supernaturalistically, in at least two respects that I as unqualifiedly reject now as before. As it happens, these are the very two respects that I singled out for criticism in my 1966 essay, "Toward a New Theism." On the one hand, is the respect essential to traditional mythical, or mythological, ways of thinking about God as alongside nature, albeit "above" everything else, and as miraculously intervening in nature. On the other hand, is the respect essential to (classical) metaphysical ways of thinking about God as "the Absolute," as related to the world only externally.

I say in *The Reality of God*: "[T]he main obstacle to real progress in dealing with the problem of God is the supernaturalistic theism of the metaphysical tradition" (19). Were I to rewrite that sentence today, I should speak instead of "the supernaturalistic theism of the classical theological tradition." But I now see more clearly than I did then that "the main obstacle to progress" is not this supernaturalistic theism as such, but rather the common assumption on the part

of its modernist despisers and its traditionalist defenders alike that it is the only theism there is, in the sense of being the only adequate formulation of belief in God—or, at any rate, of Christian belief in God.

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