

Whitehead says that philosophy, although "mystical," is concerned "to rationalize mysticism: not by explaining it away, but by the introduction of novel verbal characterizations, rationally coordinated" (*Modes of Thought*: 237). In other words, philosophy's mysticism, in the sense of its "direct insight into depths unspoken," is guided by a concern for the "right" conceptuality/terminology in which to think/speak about them.

With this in mind, I ask: Are all human beings called to love God and all things in God? My answer is Yes and No: Yes, in the sense that, from a Christian (or theistic) standpoint and in Christian (or theistic) concepts/terms, all human beings are indeed called to love God and all that God loves; but No, in the sense that "God-talk," properly so-called, does not provide the only concepts/terms in which to think/speak about the universal human calling, but only one particular set of such concepts/terms among several others. Recognizing this, I think one is well advised to follow Paul's lead and distinguish between "God" in the strict and proper sense, on the one hand, and "what can be known of God," "the invisible things [of God]," and "[God's] eternal power and godness" (Rom 1:19 f.), on the other.

True, Paul provides no more than a lead here, since he is still dependent on "God-talk" on both sides of his distinction—whence the force, I take it, of Whitehead's talk about "*novel* verbal characterizations." But even Paul himself goes further elsewhere when he speaks of God as the one from whom and through whom and for whom are all things (Rom 11:36; cf. 1 Cor 8:6: from whom are all things and for whom we exist"). Whitehead goes still further with his concepts/terms, "the whole," and "the one which is all," as distinct from "the one among the many." And comparably advanced is Hartshorne's insistence that the idea of the strictly ultimate can be formed simply by quantifying the idea of concrete reality universally, so as to yield the concept/term "universal individual." All that remains, then, so far as I am concerned, is to interpret "individual" (as well as all other strictly metaphysical concepts/terms) transcendently.

This, at any rate, is all that remains for metaphysics to do, even if philosophy, in its existential, as distinct from its analytic, function is perfectly free, as is religion, to continue to think/speak in the symbolic, or "analogical," concepts/terms that provide the privileged data of philosophical and metaphysical reflection. In exercising this freedom, however, the burden of philosophy's understanding of the universal human calling will need to be expressed in some such terms as these:

[T]o be human is to [be called] to live as a fragment, albeit a self-conscious and, therefore, responsible fragment of the integral whole of reality as such. In other words, . . . the meaning of ultimate reality for us demands that we [each] accept both our own becoming and the becomings of all others as parts of this ultimate whole and then, by serving as best we can the transient goods of all the parts, to make the greatest possible contribution to the enduring good of the whole ("Process Theology and the Wesleyan Witness," in *Thy Nature and Thy Name Is Love*: 29).

20 December 2003; rev. 5 February 2010