

Characteristic of Hartshorne's discussions of "religion" is a distinction between what is essential and valid in religion and other things that are inessential if not also invalid. Thus Hartshorne can say, for example, that "every religious tradition is shot through with human—all *too* human—error. Yet no nonreligious scheme of thought really makes sense of life" ("The Ethics of Contributionism": 106). Or, again, he can say that "religion is much more than worship," because religion is "the particular, social-historical-institutional form of worship found on this planet, and in various countries and cultures." Thus in religion "immensely important empirical factors enter, entirely additional to worship merely <sup>s</sup>as such, and to God merely as such" (*NTOT*: 102, 103). In the case of this second passage, to be sure, his main point seems to be the distinction between all that is properly "metaphysical," i.e., "God merely as such" and even "worship merely as such," and religion as necessarily "empirical," insofar as it has to do with "the noneternal and accidental aspect of God" and with our specifically human relation to God. But even when Hartshorne's point is not so much the difference between metaphysics and religion as rather the nature of religion itself, he characteristically distinguishes between the essential and the inessential, and the valid and the invalid.

This is apparent from the early statement, "In its early stages religion means certainty about many things. But we now see that he is most religious who is certain of but one thing, the world-embracing love of God. Everything else we can take our chance on; everything else, including man's relative significance in the world, is mere probability" (*BH*: 44). But essentially the same distinction is drawn when Hartshorne confesses more recently to making "a sharp distinction between belief in the primordial and everlasting reality of a God of love and the validity of the two great commandments, love God with all your mind and heart and soul and strength and your neighbour as yourself, beliefs capable of reasonable defense according to my standards, and some other traditional doctrines accepted by my truly and wholesomely pious Episcopal parents, doctrines with which I have philosophical and indeed religious difficulties," including "personal immortality as usually understood" ("God and Nature": 58).

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