

Maurice is right on in what he says about the Creed—that it is “a continual protection against traditions,” when it is “put forward,” which is to say, is rightly used, as “a declaration that what we believe and trust in is not this or that notion, or theory, or scheme, or document; but that it is the Eternal Name into which we are baptized, and in which the whole Church and each member of the Church stands.” To be sure, as the Creed has come down to us, “it must be a tradition. But it is a tradition which we cannot value for its own sake. Not the utterance, but that which is uttered; not the form, but the substance which it sets forth is the object and the ground of our belief” (*The Prayer-Book*: 162).

Of course, *any* tradition, rightly used, i.e., valued not for its own sake but for the sake of the substance of which it is the form, could likewise be such a continual protection. So the Creed itself is not unique, as Maurice might well seem to imply. But the deeper question is, What, finally, is to be understood by “that which is uttered,” as distinct from “the utterance,” “the substance which [the Creed] sets forth,” as distinct from “the form” of the Creed itself? Interestingly, Maurice himself, later in the same book, acknowledges this very question.

It has been a grand question in all ages of the Church, a vital, practical question, whether the doctrine of great and divine men, or whether the Person of the Son of God and the Son of Man, be that upon which our life and fellowship rest. The question is coming before us in many forms, some of them very startling forms. With it is involved the awful doubt, whether Society has any foundation at all—whether it is not a mere mass of atoms, accidentally associated or held together by an external force, or the attraction of self-interest, ready to be dispersed whenever that force shall be removed, or that principle of attraction shall become, what naturally we should conclude it would always be, one of repulsion. If such a fate can be averted, will our belief in certain opinions, handed down by Apostles and Prophets, avert it? Or is it our belief in Christ himself, or is there something yet deeper than both? To such great and terrible questions, so nearly affecting ourselves, brought so home to us by the earthquakes in the world around us, does this subject point (209 f.).

Even so, there is little, if anything, in Maurice’s writings to indicate that he was prepared to go as far as Tillich went in saying what he said about “the religious symbol,” or as I have gone in interpreting what Christian *media salutis* are, finally, means of—namely, ultimate transformation, understood as the transition from inauthentic to authentic existence as an understanding (and, as Maurice would say, “voluntary”) part of the all-encompassing whole. My best guess at this late stage is that, in the end, Maurice,

somewhat like Rahner, is, in his own way, a monistic, because inconsistently constitutivist, inclusivist, whereas my Christian inclusivism is pluralistic, because consistently representativist. But Maurice resembles Rahner not least in that his constitutivist christology is exceedingly subtle; and it's hardly irrelevant that as good a student of his writings as Christensen can argue that, in the end, he comes down on the other side, i.e., *my* side, of the issue.

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