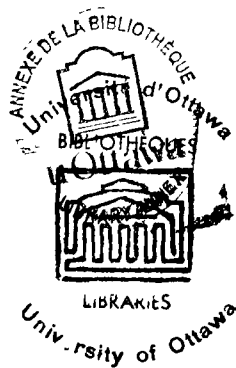


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TRANSCENDENT HUMAN EXPERIENCE AS CHRISTIAN PRAYER

by Edwin M. McMahon

Thesis presented to the Department of
Religious Studies of the University
of Ottawa as partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy



Ottawa, Ontario, 1972

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This thesis was prepared under the supervision of Professor Jean-Marie Beniskos, Ph.D., Faculty of Education, University of Ottawa, to whom I am indebted for his valuable suggestions. I also want to thank my colleague and friend, Rev. Peter A. Campbell, for his constant encouragement and help.

CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

Rev. Edwin M. McMahon was born May 28, 1930, in Sonora, California. He received the Bachelor of Science degree in Political Science from the University of Santa Clara, Santa Clara, California in 1952. He entered the California Province of the Society of Jesus in 1953 to study for the priesthood and was ordained a Roman Catholic priest in 1965. In 1958 Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington, awarded him the Master of Education degree (M.Ed.) in Counseling and in 1959 he received the Licentiate in Philosophy from Mount St. Michael's Seminary, Spokane, Washington. From 1959 to 1962 he pursued part time graduate study in psychology at San Francisco State College and at the University of Southern California. In 1963 he entered the School of Psychology, University of Ottawa, to do part time study in psychology. The Graduate School of Theology, University of Santa Clara, Santa Clara, California, awarded him the Master of Arts degree in Theology in 1966. He is the co-author of three books, Becoming a Person in the Whole Christ, 1967; The In-Between: Evolution in Christian Faith, 1969; and Please Touch, 1969, published by Sheed and Ward, New York.

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INTRODUCTION

Although the phrase, "Christian prayer", is used in the title of this dissertation, I have never understood nor intended my research project to be a specifically theological undertaking. That is, this study is not theological in the sense that the hypothesis I work with depends on the use of some theological methodology or upon the adoption of a particular confessional or doctrinal position as the basis for attempting to answer the question which is posed.

Rather, I have tried to make my research a psychological study of a significant problem area in religion that could stand independently in its working hypothesis of any denominational or doctrinal position that might have to be researched or proven in order to answer the hypothesis.

This has not been an easy task, because it is difficult to study any problem in Christianity today and situate it in a realistic pastoral context without at least implicitly articulating some theological position. Moreover, such attempts at situating can inevitably be expected to generate controversy, because there would be no problem in the first place unless some Christians were already challenging the status quo of a particular theological, pastoral or administrative position within the Church.

At first glance the reader may be inclined to conclude that all this study does is expose very superficially (from the theological viewpoint) a definite theological position and then attempt to bolster it with psychological data. However, I believe that a more careful examination of the hypothesis in the context of the entire research project will indicate that whatever is said about Christian prayer (which de facto cannot help but contain a theological position) is written, not as a theological dissertation on that position, but rather as a means for situating a psychological study of religion as well as pointing out the relevance of such study for understanding contemporary Christianity. Nowhere in this dissertation do I attempt to research or adequately develop a theological position nor to properly document it using the traditional sources of reference that would be expected in the development of a theological inquiry.

It is for this reason that whatever is written here about Christian prayer and the God-experience of the self-actualizing person, I have drawn principally from personal and pastoral experience, with only the briefest reference to a few other Christian writers or theologians. I have done this because I do not want to appear to be building up a case for a certain theological position, thereby having the goal of my research misunderstood. My purpose in writing about prayer in this personal way is simply to illustrate enough

of what many Christians are saying and writing today regarding their God and prayer orientation that I can then situate this in relationship to Maslow's findings on the motivation and perception of self-actualizing people. Moreover, I want to articulate just enough of this effort so that it will be sufficiently clear that I am addressing myself in this study to a real pastoral problem. My hope is that then the conclusions and implications I will attempt to draw out of working with the Maslow data will not so easily be ignored.

I hope that by presenting only a bird's eye view of some of my own thinking regarding prayer along with brief reference to an easily available theological source in the writing of Karl Rahner that I can thereby illustrate the timeliness and relevance of the God/prayer problem as it has manifested itself at both popular and more academic levels. In a word, then, my goal in using limited theological sources is to situate my psychological study rather than to research a theological question.

My purpose in this dissertation is to try to work sufficiently with Maslow in an original and creative way that I can demonstrate some of the important pastoral implications available to be brought to light when an aspect of religion is studied with reference to this type of psychological data.

I hope that my own contribution will be to highlight and initially spell out some of the rather extensive and

far-reaching implications which I feel can be drawn out of studying this God/prayer question in the light of Maslow's work on transcendent human experience--particularly, the changes in motivation and perception of the self-actualizer.

I hope that by doing this I may help in some way, as a believing Christian and as a clergyman, to point out that Christianity must allow itself to be studied from more than the theological point of view. It should not be so defensive and fearful, but invite the behavioral and social scientist indoors, so to speak, to examine our religious experience and behavior. Christians too, after all, are human beings subject to the same social and psychological development as any other human beings, and there is no indication that they somehow manage to bypass their humanity and its psychological dynamics in the practice of their religion. Their religious behavior and experience is still a human response and therefore open to psychological investigation, no matter what theological interpretation one holds regarding the religious meaning of that response or the nature of the divine object involved.

In this study I have tried to utilize Maslow's research on the developmental nature of human motivation and perception to point out that transcendent human experience is also developmental. When such experience is given religious meaning--indeed, even identified with the God-experience--religionists

must realize that the God-concept, prayer expression and, in fact, everything connected with the human response side of religion, must be placed within a developmental context in order to be meaningful to each person's level of maturity. This is true, especially, if one acknowledges that being human means being potentially capable of becoming more human during the course of life. Human beings are meant to continue to grow even if this growth is often thwarted.

In the developmental setting provided by Maslow I try to articulate, in an introductory way, some facets of the Christian self-actualizer's God/prayer experience as contrasted with the experience of the deficiency-motivated Christian. I do this not as a definitive religious or theological statement. Rather, it is to show that if Christians are also capable of growing more fully human, then, one might expect them to have the same changes in their cognitive and motivational life as any other self-actualizing person.

It is my hope that in working out some of the significant differences between the God/prayer conceptualization and experience of the basic-needer and the self-actualizer I can indicate the pastoral need for a developmental God-concept and prayer expression that recognizes not merely the traditional differences between children and adults, but the evolving motivational and perceptual changes in religion experience between deficiency and growth-motivated adults. I

believe it is crucial that the psychologist of religion work creatively with research in human motivation and perception, making it available to Christian leaders so that in their attempt to better articulate the Christian faith they may more realistically take into account the wide developmental spectrum in religious response of which the Christian population is capable.

CHAPTER I

THE CONTEMPORARY SETTING: A CHANGING SENSE OF SELF AND EXPERIENCE OF GOD

As the presence of Christianity in the family of man moves into the last decades of the twentieth century, the Christian community finds its familiar sign posts turned in many different directions. Varying degrees of confusion, doubt, and searching have become (and apparently will continue to be) the ordinary way of life as the pain of change increases.

As we begin to move through the 1970's, however, enough hindsight has emerged to help us recognize that in much of what we are now experiencing religion-wise, history is simply repeating itself. Once again the profusion of religious gimmickry, evangelical and mystical sects, esoteric cults, etc., crowd in to fill the emptiness in meaning, religious experience and community left by the continuing ineffectiveness and impotence of most so-called 'organized religion'. Over and over again throughout history the vested interests, the inevitable bureaucracy, the prestige and power of seniority, together with entangling cultural and political ties have all made for sclerosis within the Christian communities. They have too often been hamstrung in their effort to provide effective leadership for timely and constructive evolution.

Moreover, now that centuries of reformation history are behind us, it is clear that this problem is obviously a universal one in Christianity and not just indigenous to Roman Catholicism.

Division, drifting and the appearance of a variety of Christian and other mystical and evangelical religious enthusiasts may be the more obvious external signs of this periodic growth paralysis both in the past and again today. However, there is now enough evidence available to show that not only is the impact of 'organized Christianity' going into another period of cold storage, with the resultant proliferation of ecstatic religions appearing to fill the vacuum, but that in the midst of all this confusion there are signs scattered here and there that simultaneously a far more profound and quiet revolution is taking place. This revolution, which might better be called an evolution, is grounded less within people's reaction to a void caused in them by the present church decline, but is more deeply rooted in their shifting self-perception and consequent God-perception. Perhaps for the first time in twenty centuries of Christianity sufficient philosophical, theological and psychological foundations have developed so that the closing decades of this century may lay a new cornerstone for the emergence of an open ended, evolutionary and human growth-oriented Christianity. It will include a way of understanding

and living Christianity based upon a sense of self and of God that will hopefully provide more support for a religion of continuing change, growth and on-going conversion.

If, as many scholars point out today, a major change in human perception is under way, and we in the West are gradually shedding the two predominant perceptual patterns of the Platonist and the Aristotelian which have so dominated Christianity's view of reality and approach to God, then perhaps we are on the threshold of a new way of understanding ourselves and consequently of perceiving God.

It seems to me that it is not premature to speculate that the impact of modern scientific research, developments in communications media and some half century of human behavioral studies have already significantly changed contemporary man's sense of self with the result that a corresponding sense for God and all that has to do with religion is struggling to be born.

There is much in the closing decades of this century's religious response that resembles previous declines of 'institutional religion' throughout history. However, there also appears to be present a far less ostentatious development rooted not so much in the decline of religion and the corresponding reaction of people who need 'meaningful religious experience'. Rather, it is a kind of slow evolution growing out of a profound aspiration simply to understand

and live Christianity as a man or woman of this century. Life today is revealing so much to us about who we are as human, that for many the old God-concepts feel strangely out of place within this developing experience of self.

This widespread need to bring one's former religious categories and experiences into alignment with an evolving sense of self represents quite a different undercurrent than that advertised by more theatrical responses to the current religious crisis. Such a change in the sense for self and for God may share some common ground here and there with certain contemporary fads and superficial attempts at renewal. But for the most part, the grass roots movement I want to describe is far more profound and could ultimately change the whole face of Christianity in a positive and constructive way. Its impact may well modify Christianity's first two thousand years of understanding God by resolving the inevitable tensions that arose within a spirituality nourished by Platonic and Aristotelian traditions. The excesses which these two ways of knowing frequently spawned in religion may be greatly diminished, if not altogether disappear from the Christian religious scene at the close of this century.

In his later years, George Bernard Shaw is reputed to have said that by the end of the twentieth century, creative evolution would have become a religion. What was shrugged off then by most people as mere wishful thinking

is beginning to look more and more like prophetic insight as we approach the year 2000. The 1970's already manifest in a surprisingly extensive way the growing number of people who value as the most sacred and religious dimension of their lives, their own growth into a fuller possession of their humanity. Their rejection of defensive and self-alienating patterns of living, learning and relating to the world and to themselves is evident within every major institution in society from the 'marriage relationship' to the 'learning environment in education'. And so too are religious values and life styles changing in order to center around the deeply held belief that every step forward along the path of human growth and unification, both collectively and individually, is really at the heart of mankind's journey into God.

It is highly probable that the aspiration for transcendence, expressed in the movement toward unity and oneness, so penetrates every fibre of our existence and constant becoming, that it is the most fundamental and deeply rooted need we humans have--a need that creates both religion and science. When fragmentation, dissociation, alienation, both within and without, happen on a wide scale in society, it is a sure sign that religion is in trouble and that its positive and constructive presence among men has gone into a slump. When the force of religion in men's lives fails to move them

toward greater communion in all aspects of their lives, then religion's primary instrument for this unification--prayer--has fallen into bad times. Prayer no longer serves as an effective catalyst for greater oneness. This situation is certainly characteristic of Christianity today.

Many Catholics, living almost exclusively within their own milieu prior to Vatican II and its encouragement of ecumenism, and social action groups that spanned denominational lines, were not really aware of how much the "age of anxiety" had made deep inroads into Christianity. But suddenly, almost overnight, the impact hit Catholicism. What had been slowly developing behind the scenes, un verbalized for the most part, quietly at work within the privacy of many lives, exploded onto the surface. The tension that had been building found a respectable open door in 'dialogue', renewal meetings, updating programs and 'aggiornamento'. The volcano finally erupted and ancient stability was shaken.

Much like the aftermath of a big earthquake, Catholics now stand amid much rubble and weakened buildings about to fall or waiting to be demolished. Many wonder which way to turn, not sure what to strengthen, and what they should finish tearing down. Perhaps a whole new blueprint needs to be drawn up.

In particular, a strange thing happened to the prayer-building in that earthquake. It was the first to

fall, almost totally destroyed. Many feel that what is left has little salvage value and that a whole new architectural plan must be found. This is as true for Protestants as it is for numerous Catholics in the 1970's.

But whether most Christians belong to the group that wants to salvage some of the old building or to the group that feels a new design must be created, the hopeful and important observation is that a strong movement to rebuild is afoot. Christians, like all men, want communion in their lives. They want a guide for rebuilding broken lines of communication. They want the prayer-building back on the landscape, meaningful, and functioning, because most Christians instinctively connect the value of prayer with their need to somehow grow in their capacity for communion. Even if the level of their prayer is predominantly focused on their own unanswered needs, they still want to keep doors of communication open in their petitionary posture toward the Divine. Deeply rooted within the 'Christian instinct', both at the theoretical and practical levels, is the desire to connect growth in God-communion with growth in a self-communion, that includes union with the world around us. Such an interrelationship has always been implicitly present in Christian life. The interplay between these two aspects of communion inevitably generate the age-old problem--"which comes first the chicken or egg". We can oversimplify by

saying that whenever growth in God-communion is not simultaneous with growth in self, others, and world communion or when these latter are not intimately related to God-communion, the breakdown of religion is inevitable. This is because religion has become divorced from a supportive role in the evolution of man toward greater humanness. I will return to this problem in greater detail later.

There was a period after the Catholic quake in the 1960's during which many Catholics weren't too interested in rebuilding. They seemed glad to get rid of the old monstrosity that secretly had 'bugged them' for so long. The relief at its disappearance from the horizon gave them a feeling of freedom, of new elbow room, of a better view, even though at times they may have felt a bit nostalgic and even guilty for having such feelings. That period, however, appears to be coming to an end for many, who now feel the need to put some kind of prayer back in their lives. But what kind of prayer? Can a way of Christian prayer that is both psychologically and theologically sound, as well as relevant to contemporary man's sense of self be articulated? Hopefully this dissertation may contribute to answering such a pressing need.

Christian Prayer Renewal and the Contribution
of Abraham Maslow

It may seem strange to the reader that as a Christian I would turn to the behavioral sciences and especially a humanistic psychologist like Abraham H. Maslow for enlightenment concerning prayer. Such a move hardly takes one to the traditional source for Christian renewal in the realm of prayer. Custom has dictated that the believer should look for direction from renowned spiritual writers and theologians past and present, rather than venture "outside the fold", let alone to a non-Christian humanist. I must admit quite frankly that I did not intentionally go to humanistic psychology or Maslow for any insights regarding the present malaise in Christianity or the area of prayer. Rather, it might be said that Third and Fourth Force psychology--and Abraham Maslow in particular--came to my concern for Christian life and prayer providing a richness, fascinating horizons, and an exciting applicability that could not be avoided.

Humanistic psychology, and especially Maslow, speaks to me about what Christian prayer should be in a way that I do not find in the traditional Christian sources. Rather, these new tendencies have emerged for me in the deeply human work and influence of such men as Carl Rogers and Abraham Maslow. Their way of looking at all of reality has profoundly touched my life. These men, as well as many of their

colleagues, have inspired me to search more carefully into Christianity hoping to find deeply embedded there what I believe are the same humanistic values concerning man's dignity, potential, and a way of life that 'saves' and moves us all toward greater wholeness. These men have helped me understand how prayer can be a dynamic and inseparable part of human growth. They have taught me that prayer must be redefined in broad enough terms to include the whole sweep and thrust of what it means to struggle to be more fully human in the family of man, and that an understanding of prayer that is not deep enough to tap into the dynamisms at work in man's evolution toward greater integration and self-realization places such a religious practice on the periphery of genuine human values. For prayer to have real meaning in a person's life, it must be able to speak to his self-experience and touch his dreams with the hope of fulfillment.

I have chosen to emphasize the thought of Abraham Maslow, rather than any of the other prominent names in Humanistic Psychology, because I feel that his many contributions toward an understanding of human transcendence provide the richest source material for a creative contemporary articulation of Christian prayer.

Moreover, he has developed a new, comprehensive theory of human motivation which touches on every aspect of human behavior. It is a theory which challenges some of the basic premises that have dominated American behavior theory for at least the last four or five decades. Called "Third Force Psychology"--a name Dr. Maslow coined to distinguish his work and that of others from the two major theories of human behavior (Freudianism and Behaviorism), the new theory is centered on man himself--his needs, his goals, his achievements, his success.¹

Not only does the psychological research of Maslow provide valuable insights for a development of prayer that is psychologically sound, but along with Carl Rogers Dr. Maslow has really captured and verbalized within psychology the spirit of a new world view that is upon us. His work represents a very basic change in thinking that not only characterizes a movement within psychology, but epitomizes a shift in perception that is happening along the total front of man's endeavors. Maslow has contributed significantly to this emerging philosophy of man. As he himself once wrote in a letter:

¹ Frank G. Goble, The Third Force, New York, Grossman, 1970, p. xi.

What is happening now is a change in the image of man. From the philosophy of human nature that people have tucked away in their bones everything follows. In the case of the humanistic and Third Force image, which shows so clearly that we have been selling human nature short throughout the whole of recorded history, this is certainly [...] a revolution in terms of its consequences. It can and will change the world and everything in it. I feel so privileged to be at a turning point in history and to be helping with it and to know the others who make up the Third Force--Rogers, Goldstein, Allport--people like that.²

In a word, Maslow not only expresses what it means to be human, but researches the development of human potential. What he has revealed about the horizons of healthy self-realization is an expression not only of modern man's values, but his deepest aspirations and hopes as well. Dr. Maslow speaks to the highest contemporary value--man's developing sense of his own potential for transcendence. What he has to say about man and all that is psychologically involved in his moving toward the fulfillment of his aspirations, will give us clues not only to what is relevant in today's shift in self-perception (this new world view), but also furnish data about where modern man looks for religious experience and value. If then this process and these humanistic values correspond to basic Christian values and goals, then once again Christianity will be all the richer from these insights. Another attempt to understand this age old

² Ibid., p. 14.

faith as it is fleshed in man's continuing evolution, should also benefit all men through the renewed Christian commitment to fundamental human goals.

Abraham Maslow's philosophy, his research, and his writing center around and express some of the loftiest strivings and human values of contemporary man. As such he is an important source for understanding what many people mean when they speak of religious values and religious meaning in their lives. For, as we will develop later in this paper, men understand God, religion, and religious experience in terms of how they understand and perceive themselves. In a very real sense for many people today, Maslow speaks of religion when he writes of man and his growth. He is a 'religious' writer without intending to be so, especially since he speaks for no 'church', but only for the fuller human development of all men.

Although Dr. Maslow's untimely death in June of 1970 brought an end to his creative research, his seminal writing will continue to inspire and nourish what has been called, "the new Copernican Revolution".

The basic tenet of this revolution, which Maslow articulated so well during the last twenty years of his life, holds that the potentialities of each human being are far greater in extent and diversity than we imagine them to be. In fact, they are far greater than the current in-vogue

models of man would lead us to believe possible. Over and over again his studies forced him to conclude that we have undersold man, underestimated his possibilities, and misunderstood what is needed to move beyond our limitations. It is the vision of human transcendence that this dissertation wants to examine as the basis for a richer understanding of Christian prayer.

Wide-scale evidence seems to indicate that the primary focus of man's attention on the conquest of nature, exploration of outer space, and the search for material security, at least in the affluent countries, will soon be balanced by an exploration into 'inner space'. The effects of imbalance have become so painful that the exaggerated 'living outside one's self' is spawning a new search for inner wholeness, peace, oneness and community. There is now widespread realization that a tragic paradox of twentieth century affluence is that it has not brought with it an effective religion to help people get in touch with themselves, those around them and their environment in a way that promotes genuine personal growth and the utilization of technology for greater humanization. Material security, vastly expanded knowledge in all areas of human endeavor, and superior technology do not in themselves appear sufficient to create a more fully human person nor a more humane society. It is to this foremost concern that Third and Fourth Force psychologists

have turned their attention.

Moreover, almost without any exception the foremost thinkers in this field have abandoned the traditional organized religions as having little or nothing to contribute toward alleviating this problem. Maslow himself is a good example.

Because of this kind of thinking many Christians will no doubt feel a kind of repulsion at the prospect of turning to the behavioral sciences--and especially to men who have rejected organized religion--for enlightenment and guidance in the deepening of prayer in their lives. This is understandable, because for anyone who at some time in life has had a satisfying experience in prayer, the area of communion with God seems so filled with mystery, and is of such a personal and beautiful nature that it is not something to be tampered with using the methods and research tools of modern psychology. Utilizing science to deepen one's communion with God may seem as out of line and in as poor taste as computer dating trying to program real love or friendship.

There may be a good deal of truth to this instinctive reaction. But it seems to me from my own experience, as well as research, that the behavioral sciences and especially a psychology of religion grounded in the contributions of Third Force psychology, can help us understand more clearly the psychological dynamics and setting supportive of religious

experience that contributes to human growth. In other words, I believe that Christians can be helped to understand and appreciate not only what contributes to healthy religion in their lives, not only the pathologies that may creep in, but also certain things that they can work at in order to support and create an atmosphere within which maturing religious experience might take place.

When we realize that the common ground, the very foundation of religious experience, is rooted within the dynamism of human nature itself, within our own intrinsic movement toward self-actualization as an evolving being-in-the-world, then our religious efforts and energy, ascetical exercises and religious education can all be focused on the right area, namely man's continuing humanization. Our practice of religion can be turned toward the unfolding of one another's potential to become more fully human and alive, a source of life and growth, of integration and wholeness. As St. Irenaeus put it so well, it is precisely in this process of maturation itself that God is known and worshipped, because "The glory of God is man fully alive".

This common ground of our own on-going human self-realization, which all men share simply by being human, provides the basis for an articulation of religion. In other words, the human growth-experience, which is the ground of religious experience, what we are calling, transcendent

experience, can be interpreted, symbolized, ritualized, and theologized upon from different religious viewpoints and from very historically and culturally conditioned modes of expression as well. In this dissertation I intend to use my own understanding of the Christian religious tradition to reflect at times very briefly upon transcendent human experience as Christian prayer. Working mainly out of Maslow's insights on transcendent experience which have been drawn from his research in motivation and perception, I will try to show the relevance of his thought for the study of religious experience in general and for a contemporary articulation of Christian prayer in particular. In this study we might therefore formulate our basic hypothesis this way:

Does the creative thought of Abraham Maslow on transcendent human experience provide significant data for a theory of religious experience relevant to a contemporary articulation of Christian prayer?

Psychological study of religious experience has much to offer religionists of all theological traditions. It is not surprising then that men, like myself, from a particular religious tradition, would want to continue to investigate the contributions of psychology (in this case Third and Fourth Force) in order to bring greater understanding of the human psyche into their own religious practice and environment.

Religion begins in experience. It is this fact that makes it a proper subject for psychological study. This has now been accepted by many who in earlier decades rejected the possibility that religion could be made the subject of psychological analysis without serious harm. It is now realized that even theological presentations of religious experiences (whatever the creedal or revelatory criteria) proceed from common psychological motivations, from man's natural impulse to record, communicate and interpret experiences that have an all-compelling and unique significance. [...] It is significant that today some of the most stimulating studies in the psychology of religion come from men with established theological loyalties who have not hesitated to use the contributions of the two greatest psychologists of this century (however diametrically opposed their views on religion may be) as the means of elucidating man's responses to the Divine.³

Origins of the Research Project

But how did my study of Maslow's research on transcendent human experience become involved with Christian prayer? What caused me to believe that a possible relationship between the two justified further study?

Primarily, I suppose, this question derived its initial thrust from my own personal experience and intuition-- a factor that has importance in any investigation that has caught the fascination of the researcher. Life's experience and the web of all that has gone into former study, reading, research, personal quest and the like have revealed

³ G. Stephen Spinks, Psychology and Religion, Boston, Beacon Press, 1967, p. xv.

intuitively at first, a pattern. Then a thirst grows to follow through with this insight, this 'feeling' about something. One has an intense desire to find if it can be deepened, if the pattern is really there and can be confirmed in a way that is more substantial than one's initial 'feeling' about it.

As initial investigation proceeds, the lines of demarcation, the sign posts, the outline of a clearer shape begin to surface and one can then take up this better defined image to examine it more closely.

What becomes immediately evident about the subject discussed in this study is that it is part of a continuum of Christian probing that has been going on since around the time of the Renaissance. The basic question lies squarely within the mainstream of what Peter Berger has called the "secularization of consciousness".⁴ As the old, inherited God-concepts become less and less meaningful, they increasingly fail to provide support for a way of praying that enables people to discover and foster the religious aspect of the newer sense of self evolving in people today. The widespread modern Christian's confusion and disillusionment with prayer is intimately tied up with several hundred years

⁴ Peter L. Berger, A Rumor of Angels: Modern Society and the Rediscovery of the Supernatural, New York, Doubleday, 1969, p. 4.

of an increasing suspicion on the part of increasing numbers of Christians that somehow their religion has been growing more out of step with the world as each decade opens new vistas of previously hidden knowledge.

But often what is not recognized by many who regard this change as a direct attack upon Christianity leading to an inevitable "decline of the Church", a "loss of faith" and an ultimate "secularization of consciousness" is that while on the surface men seem to reject church orientation in their lives, nevertheless, they continue to espouse many of the most basic Christian values. For example,

... Looking back in history, we can find repeated examples of how a measure of humanitarianism originally due to religion, and arising in the first place from religious conviction, is transferred to the world, and there, naturally, laicized. An obvious example: when his consciousness was still young and vestigial man did not sense that a sick person had a right to be looked after and cared for by society. This sensitivity arose out of religion; evangelical love took pity on the weak. The evangelical spirit compensated for the lack of moral human insight. Nowadays the situation is altogether different: people regard it as a matter of course that society and its state should concern themselves with such matters. In other words, we have arrived at a stage in which Christian charity has been secularized; and in its laicized form it has now struck deep roots into human consciousness--so much so that social welfare takes on the form of an inalienable human right. [...] In its secularized form this part of what was formerly Christian charity is now known as "social justice." Thus what was done at one time by the religious man out of his religious philanthropy is being progressively translated to the profane, the human sphere, where, laicized and humanized, it continues to exist under a new and more worldly name.⁵

⁵ Edward Schillebeeckx, God and Man, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1969, p. 20.

Schillebeeckx then continues, attempting to evaluate this trend.

This particular form of laicization edges religion out of a certain essentially worldly sphere, but this is not necessarily a bad thing, or in itself a loss. On the contrary, we can even regard it as a definite gain, as a fruit of the redemption. This translation of values means no more than that this or that profoundly human outlook, or way of life, which was at one time necessarily the fruit of a religious belief in God, has now grown beyond the sphere of the Church and has become a generally acknowledged human achievement. Redeeming grace, the theme of Christianity, has become a secular reality in Christ and his Church; it has spread, and is still spreading, in all directions. It has influenced Western thought and behaviour for centuries. The specific consequences of the evangelical spirit which appeared miraculous and unparalleled twenty centuries ago have been so thoroughly socialized, so interiorized in the secular world-outlook of mankind, that the profoundly humane pronouncements of the staunchest modern atheist concerning love and justice towards his fellow human beings would be unthinkable without the historical premise of Christianity--on which, in the meantime, man is turning his back. Secularized it remains a boon for humanity, even for Christianity as such. For this secularization means only that the core of religiousness lies elsewhere, although it will always be expressed in our worldly life.⁶

He finally concludes his appraisal with these words:

In all this, secularization, and in this sense the absence of God, represents a plus rather than a minus factor. It does no more than indicate the worldly maturity of modern man, who has taken the ordering of this secular sphere into his own hands. When the supplementary functions of religion in the world gradually fall away altogether [...] the proper soil of religion in the heart of man will necessarily reveal itself even more significantly.⁷

6 Ibid., p. 20-21.

7 Ibid., p. 22.

I relate this process of secularization to the genesis of my own thesis hypothesis, because it seems to me that only when a person has become comfortable enough as a Christian with this kind of secular development, does the possibility of the religious challenge and its radical relation to the question of human growth really begin to unfold. A shift in perception is necessary before one can realize that the 'face' of Christianity is undergoing a fundamental change without the annihilation of its profound values which have already become deeply rooted in the family of man. Moreover, such a development simultaneously presents both a need and an exciting challenge. It calls for a commitment to search for "the core of religiousness elsewhere" than in the more traditional places if once again Christianity is to penetrate mankind and move the evolution of man forward as it has done for many centuries. Perhaps, as numerous scholars indicate today, the process of secularization which is now several centuries old, indicates the end of an era. The cardiac arrests are coming more frequently now as the speed of change accelerates.

One gets the feeling when viewing Christianity through its 'organized' expressions in the Churches that a moment of crisis, of life-decision-making is at hand. The early Christian decision taken nearly twenty centuries ago to speak to the world about the mystery of God in Christ by

using the Greek and Roman categories of philosophy, law, and the hierarchical structure drawn from a monarchical model has had its day. Men no longer see reality through Greek and Roman eyes. Neither do they continue to view the Christian God through these same eyes. Contemporary man's sense of self has radically changed from the anthropologies of the ancient and medieval worlds. This cannot be stressed too much, for it was in these earlier centuries that the Christian theological categories and concepts of God originated and were passed on within the Church down to the present time. They are the legacy that modern man has inherited for expressing Christian religious experience and belief. Within the Roman Catholic Church the heritage of centuries of tradition, expressed in theological, philosophical, liturgical, catechetical and other formulations, represents a vast and learned patrimony--the fruit of some of the most brilliant minds in Western history.

But at the same time, this legacy is the expression of an historically conditioned sense of self which is rapidly disappearing.

The implications of this development for established Christianity and for the contemporary Christian's growing need to look for "the core of religiousness elsewhere" makes this research project quite timely. This is true, simply because man's self-experience directly conditions and

influences his God-experience or what he considers religious experience.

Man's Sense of Self Influences his Sense of God

Let us reflect on this for a moment. As our view of the nature of man expands to include a sense for the developmental character of human existence, more respect is paid to the fact that the image of God at any point in a person's life history is directly proportioned to their own life experience and 'sense of self' at that given moment in time.

For example, it doesn't take too much background in psychology to realize that the person who has a negative self-image tends to see God as severe or hurting or demanding or unloving. Because a person views the world through the eyes of his own sense of self, if that self is seen as unlovable and worthless, then it deserves a severe or unloving God. As psychologists point out, many people eagerly embrace an asceticism of self-hatred and are suspicious of human fulfillment. This happens when they are unconsciously caught up within the iron grip of their destructive and negative self-image. However, since this is the only self-image they have, they seek to justify and preserve it with an aura of religious acceptability and approval.

While Christianity has placed great emphasis on warning men against the destructive element in their

self-centeredness, it has failed to also reveal how a hidden self-hatred and negative sense of self can lead such a person into creating a God of his own making ready to lend support to his hidden desire to be miserable. If the importance of the truth that man's self-experience directly conditions and influences his God-experience were more widely understood within religion, the value of helping each person to more honestly get in touch with his own sense of self would become obvious.

The insights of depth psychology and in particular the discovery of the unconscious, including the death impulse, have considerably modified the traditional understanding of how men enter into growth and holiness. There is overwhelming evidence drawn from clinical observation and personal experience for claiming that the reason why people do foolish and destructive things is not simply their exaggerated self-love but also their hidden self-hatred. The sins and crimes of men are due not simply to the trend towards self-elevation but also to an unconscious trend toward self-destruction.⁸

Baum continues:

⁸ Gregory Baum, Man Becoming: God in Secular Experience, New York, Herder and Herder, 1970, p. 145-146.

Though there are hints in the New Testament [...] that man is to be redeemed also from his self-hatred, the traditional ascetical teaching has recognized only man's exaggerated self-love and made man's desire to elevate himself the source of his sinful or destructive action. Traditional ascetical teaching recommended that men, trusting in the divine help, fight against this self-centeredness on every level of their lives, without warning them that by fighting the exaggeration, they might fall into the devouring trap of their hidden self-hatred. Resisting self-aggrandizement, men could back into an equally destructive trend, all the more dangerous because it is largely unconscious, which makes them seek pain and unhappiness. The ascetical tradition has often enkindled in people the hidden love of death.⁹

A second reason why the image of God the punisher has flourished in the Christian and even post-Christian imagination is drawn from personal pathology. The idea of God as judge on a throne, meting out punishment, corresponds to a self destructive trend of the human psyche [...] The person who is dominated by his superego--and no one is able to escape it altogether--has the accuser, judge, and tormentor all wrapt in one, built into his own psychic make-up. When such a person hears the Christian message with the accent on God the judge, he can project his superego on the divinity and then use religion as an instrument to subject himself to his court and, unknown to himself, to promote his own unconscious self-hatred.¹⁰

The British psychologist of religion, G. Stephens Spinks, indicates the relationship between religious expression and the psychological 'posture' of the person in his distinction between authoritarian and humanistic forms of religion.

9 Ibid., p. 147-148.

10 Ibid., p. 223-224.

The essential characteristic of all forms of authoritarian religion is that it demands the surrender of the individual to some power thought of as transcending the human person. [...] By voluntarily submitting to a higher authority man loses his sense of personal dissatisfaction and frustration, and by willingly associating himself with a Divine Power he achieves an exhilarating sense of fulfilment. In contrast to the authoritarian kind of religion, the humanistic type emphasizes the fact that the individual 'finds' himself by being in loving association with his fellows. Religious experience for the humanistic type is an experience which receives its significance from one's relationship with other men. The distinction between these two types of religion refers not only to the particular beliefs which men hold collectively but also to the individual's own psychological 'disposition'.

We are familiar with the distinction made by William James between the religion of what he called the 'sick soul' and the religion of the 'healthy-minded.' This is no pejorative classification but a distinction which applies as much to those who are Christians, Muhammadans, Hindus, Buddhists, as it does to those who belong to other religious allegiances. Human beings interpret their experiences not only in terms of belief but also in terms of their own personality, whether it be sick or healthy, introverted or extraverted.¹¹

William James in The Varieties of Religious Experience,¹² returned again and again to this same basic truth of the intimate relationship between a person's self-experience and how this influences his God-experience. In a long chapter on "The Sick Soul" he illustrated his point by describing numerous cases of people who lived on the "dark side of their

11 G. Stephen Spinks, Op. Cit., p. 153-154.

12 William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, Mentor, New York, The New American Library, 1958.

misery-line".¹³ He wrote of them as having a low "pain-threshold" or "fear-threshold" or "misery-threshold".¹⁴ Such people lived more or less habitually under the cloud of such an experience. A propos of this dour modus vivendi, James asked the question,

Does it not appear as if one who lived more habitually on one side of the pain-threshold might need a different sort of religion from one who habitually lived on the other?¹⁵

He gave an affirmative answer later in the chapter when noting that,

No prophet can claim to bring a final message unless he says things that will have a sound of reality in the ears of victims such as these. But the deliverance must come in as strong a form as the complaint, if it is to take effect; and that seems a reason why the coarser religions, revivalistic, orgiastic, with blood and miracles, and supernatural operations, may possibly never be displaced. Some constitutions need them too much.¹⁶

During his research on peak-experiences Abraham Maslow found that there was a close relationship between the kind of religion and God-concept that seemed characteristic of the person who allowed "peak-experiences" into his life and the type of person Maslow spoke of as the "non-peaker".

13 Ibid., p. 117.

14 Loc. Cit.

15 Ibid., p. 118.

16 Ibid., p. 137.

He attempted to describe these two types and then draw his conclusion about their corresponding religious development.

Any person whose character structure [...] forces him to try to be extremely or completely rational or "materialistic" or mechanistic tends to become a non-peaker. That is, such a view of life tends to make the person regard his peak and transcendent experiences as a kind of insanity, a complete loss of control, a sense of being overwhelmed by irrational emotions, etc. [...] [he] seems to be frightened by peak-experiences and tends to fight them off. For the compulsive-obsessive person, who organizes his life around the denying and the controlling of emotion, the fear of being overwhelmed by an emotion (which is interpreted as a loss of control) is enough for him to mobilize all his stamping-out and defensive activities against the peak-experience[...] (I suspect also that extremely "practical," i.e. exclusively means-oriented, people will turn out to be non-peakers, since such experiences earn no money, bake no bread, and chop no wood. So also for extremely other-directed people, who scarcely know what is going on inside themselves. [...])

If you will permit me to use this developing but not yet validated vocabulary, I may then say simply that the relationship between the prophet and the ecclesiastic, between the lonely mystic and the (perfectly extreme) religious-organization man may often be a relationship between peaker and non-peaker.¹⁷

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¹⁷ Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1964. p. 22-24.

If you look closely at the internal history of most of the world religions, you will find that each one very soon tends to divide into a left-wing and a right-wing, that is, into the peakers, the mystics, the transcendents, or the privately religious people, on the one hand, and, on the other, into those who concretize the religious symbols and metaphors, who worship little pieces of wood rather than what the objects stand for, those who take verbal formulas literally, forgetting the original meaning of these words, and, perhaps most important, those who take the organization, the church, as primary and as more important than the prophet and his original revelations. These men, like many organization men who tend to rise to the top in any complex bureaucracy, tend to be non-peakers rather than peakers. Dostoevski's famous Grand Inquisitor passage, in his *Brothers Karamazov*, says this in a classical way.¹⁸

From the standpoint of his research on the relationship of peak-experiences to the corresponding kind of religion the peaker or non-peaker needed Maslow concluded:

To sum it up, from this point of view, the two religions of mankind tend to be the peakers and the non-peakers, that is to say, those who have private, personal, transcendent, core-religious experiences easily and often and who accept them and make use of them, and, on the other hand, those who have never had them or who repress or suppress them and who, therefore, cannot make use of them for their personal therapy, personal growth, or personal fulfillment.¹⁹

What Maslow has written here, it seems to me, represents not only an interesting insight in itself, but also makes a valuable contribution to the understanding of religion and the role of prayer. Although the main point of this

18 Ibid., p. 25.

19 Ibid., p. 29.

dissertation is to show how his data on transcendent experience helps us formulate a more comprehensive theory to support a contemporary articulation of Christian prayer; nevertheless, he indicates good psychological reasons for always having available within religion a prayer-response that fits the "non-peaker".

In other words, there is always need for a religious response which fits the psychological posture of a person who is primarily concerned with satisfying "basic needs", for security, food, shelter, self-respect, etc. Such fundamental needs tone such a person's approach to religion with the result that he needs an expression of prayer that is proportionate to his level of satisfaction of those needs. I plan to develop a fuller explanation of Maslow's specific contribution to the study of this particular problem later. But let it suffice for now to say that his theories on basic needs and motivation point out the legitimate role of religion, not only for satisfying these fundamental needs of men (because only in terms of their satisfaction can they grow humanly-religiously), but in order to provide people at this level of human development with a complementary and fitting religious response.

I am, of course, not talking about supporting a neurotic or psychotic response, and neither is Maslow. Rather, I am concerned with recognizing and providing a way of

praying, that 'fits' a person's psychological preoccupation with basic need gratification. Although Maslow's research was not with the non-gratified "basic needer", he recognized that this was a proper stage of human development (and many never grow beyond it). Therefore, man's religious needs had to be met at this level. Hopefully, for Maslow, a person's basic needs would eventually be gratified and he could grow out of his former religious posture, and begin wanting to find religious meaning within the area we are principally concerned with in this study--transcendent human experience. Further development of Maslow's theories later in the dissertation should shed more light on this, so let us return to the theme of this section.

Continuing, then, to explore the intimate relationship between man's sense of self and his religious orientation with its corresponding God-concept, Gordon Allport in The Individual and His Religion,²⁰ made frequent reference to this basic insight. For example, it was implicit within the development of his reflections on the kind of security-centered religion that was appropriate to the security oriented person. It was also implicit in his chapters devoted to the religion appropriate to youth and the growth-centered

²⁰ Gordon W. Allport, The Individual and His Religion, New York, Macmillan, 1967.

religious expression appropriate to maturity, where a person developed more openly and with less fear.

It is obvious that any self-image, concept, or sense of self is not only brought into being within the unique history of each person's own developmental process--something proper to just this person alone--but also that there is a kind of collective self-image that influences men and consequently their understanding of God. This collective sense of self we absorb from our time and place in history, our culture, level of education etc.

The threads of religion are lockstitched into the social and economic fabric. Agricultural peoples worship deities of fruition. In India the caste system has been closely bound to the belief in the transmigration of souls; for if one's deeds in a previous existence are responsible for the state of one's life in this world, there is little point in protesting against one's present placement in a caste. And our own Protestantism, as Max Weber makes us see, is inextricably related to the rise of capitalism in the West.²¹

Briefly tracing the development of the God-concept in relationship to man's changing self-concept Allport concluded that:

21 Ibid., p. 27.

... the God-concept changes according to the condition of man. Viewing the history of religion in perspective one notes how in the beginning there were a multiplicity of deities. Monotheism came later. Originally the gods were limited in nature and capricious in conduct. Jehovah, by contrast, was supreme and steadfast. The first gods had to do primarily with nature, but then came a God of persons who prized individuality. Earlier deities, indifferent to man, were throned afar, but were displaced by an indwelling God of profound moral concern. As man became increasingly aware of himself, God was seen as coming closer to man.²²

Without further references then, let us assume that we may rightly say that, "man sees God the way he sees himself".²³ The importance of such an insight is clear when we realize that the contemporary Christian's sense of self has radically changed since the time when an earlier community of believers formulated the God-concepts which have been passed down to the church of today.

Thus, it would be well for us to examine the more important changes in the sense of self that have occurred in the evolution from ancient and medieval to contemporary man in order that we may better understand both the modern Christian's problem with prayer as well as the reasons why we have undertaken this study.

²² Ibid., p. 121.

²³ For further development see chapter I, Edwin M. McMahon and Peter A. Campbell, The In-Between: Evolution in Christian Faith, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1969, p. 17-53.

The Self-Image of Medieval Man

The Ptolemaic world-view provides a good starting point, because of its profound impact on ancient and medieval man's understanding of himself in the world. Claudius Ptolemaeus was a Greco-Egyptian astronomer, mathematician and geographer who lived during the second century of Christianity. He developed his conception of the universe at precisely the time that the early Christian intellectuals were searching for a framework within which to articulate Christian teaching. Through the Church, the impact of his views continued down the centuries and dominated the world view of medieval man.

Adrian Van Kaam in contrasting medieval man's sense of self with that of modern man writes that,

Medieval man had reached the confidence, coherence, and naive certitude that we observe in mature childhood. This inner stability, simplicity, and forthrightness was linked with an image of the world that manifested reality as one great, well-ordered construction which did not hide unexpected surprises and possibilities. This image, however, was not the fruit of experience or empirical exploration; it was communicated to him by tradition and authority. The world vision of contemporary man, on the contrary, is wide open. Far from being a closed and final structure it is experienced as an ever-expanding field of exploration. Every new empirical finding, instead of answering man's question, opens up an overwhelming number of new problems. The world image of Ptolemaeus dominated the world view of medieval man. Ptolemaeus envisioned the cosmos as a well-organized structure of which the earth, an enormous, flat disc, was the immovable center. He neatly distinguished nine spheres above the earth

which sustained clouds, moon, stars, and sun. The last sphere carefully closed off the universe. Above this sphere was heaven in which God resided. Heaven also was exceedingly well-organized by medieval man who structured his image of heaven and of himself in tune with the traditional vision of Ptolemaeus. For the heaven beyond the nine spheres he fancied nine choirs of angels. If you passed them all by, you would arrive before the transcendent God. His world picture encompassed also the underworld, consisting of purgatory, limbo, and hell which were not imagined to be situated next to one another but as going down vertically in spirals. An excellent topography of hell can be found in the Divine Comedy of Dante. Medieval man was inclined to see even his inner life as a mirror of this peculiar organization of the world. This inclination is not as strange as it may seem at first sight if we realize in the light of modern psychology that man is known from his world. Man is the being who stands out into a world of meaning and who discovers himself in the light of the world and the world image, that has been devised by the culture into which he is born as a child. Medieval man fancied himself as an upstairs and downstairs structure like the outer world. Up was the soul, down was the body. In the soul one could find God, in the body, evil. In order to find God at the summit of the soul man had to pass by three spheres called the ways of purgation, illumination, and union. He also had to climb all kinds of ladders of virtues. Engaged in these religious acrobatics and climbing on, he fancied himself as leaving behind him all rumors of the world.²⁴

This simplistic view of the cosmos was a very determining factor in how ancient and medieval man understood himself.

²⁴ Adrian Van Kaam, "Motivation and Contemporary Anxiety", in Humanitas, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring, 1965, p. 66-67.

The average person of that time did not entertain the slightest suspicion about the complexities which make up the human personality. Everyone was more or less supposed to dwell within the great cosmos as an equally well-structured little cosmos of clear objective knowledge and free self-possession. Everyone could be judged according to clear, objective norms about which no doubt was possible. There was very little awareness of unconscious drives and motives, of the impact of one's personal past, of the influence of an overwhelmingly strong and violent environment. Everything was perfectly simple, distinctly formulated, logically structured and unquestionably clear. Man and world were governed by immutable laws regulating everything.²⁵

This world view which was used to explain man in his world for countless centuries survived principally within the educational system of the Roman Catholic Church. During the post-Copernican years it still continued in existence, but not because the Ptolemaic astronomical or geographic theory was generally accepted in the scientific world, which, indeed, it was not. Rather it was because the Church's theological positions and understanding of God, religious education, growth, asceticism, etc. depended upon theories and modes of expression which had grown out of this ancient world view and anthropology, with its philosophical underpinnings rooted in Platonic and Aristotelian thought. There is little wonder that a system of religious thought and expression which grew out of this kind of world view would have difficulty in speaking meaningfully to contemporary man.

25 Ibid., p. 67.

Medieval man conceived of space and time as absolutes. Now they are understood as relative concepts. The relationship between matter and energy, cause and effect, matter and consciousness, consciousness and the unconscious all differ today from what medieval man thought them to be. Modern man sees himself as the builder of a new image of the world which he does not create on the basis of authority and tradition but on the results of science and experience. The unknown is not feared as it was when it appeared in the consciousness of even a century ago. Modern man does not want to hide or escape from the mysterious dimension of reality, but creatively sees himself as an explorer who thrusts into the unknown and uncharted. The unexplored beckons to modern man and appears as the place where he must rightfully exercise his creative inquisitiveness as the universe is understood more and more in terms of natural laws. It was not this way, however, when the world was seen as governed by mysterious forces which incited fear and held out the possibility of dire punishment for the intruder. Modern man sees himself as a confident researcher demanding a sense of self which is a long way from the anxiety-ridden stance of earlier men who faced the probability that it was gods and demons and not simply natural laws with which they grappled.

Men today place great value on their own uniqueness as persons. Life is understood as an experience within which

one assumes responsibility for the unfolding and the possessing of one's own personhood. This process of becoming a person has taken on great dignity in the eyes of modern man and has even become the focal point for much of what men call the sacred and religious today. This is in sharp contrast with the predominant sense of self experienced by many peoples of the past.

Primitive man was almost submerged within his tribe. The tribal consciousness in which he shared was far more powerful than his personal consciousness. The semi-tribal medieval man was more aware of the existence of the individual than was primitive man. But this awareness of individuality in the average medieval man was still very elementary. The consciousness of the orientation of the group was still far more influential in the life of the average man than the power of his personal thought and feeling. Artists, for example, experienced themselves as the mouth pieces of their medieval community. They did not think about inscribing their personal names on their masterpieces. Conversions to a religious faith were usually not individual affairs but a whole group of the population would convert together. This was still true at the time of the Reformation when it was not so much a question of isolated individuals but of whole cities, towns or countries which would shift to one or the other denomination.²⁶

One cannot help but reflect on how this particular facet of medieval self-experience has persisted down to this day within the religious orders of the Roman Catholic Church, where until only very recently the individual was almost totally submerged (and this was considered a religious value)

26 Ibid., p. 73.

within the group and the group goals. Much of this thinking still persists today, as a kind of atmosphere and attitude toward the development of individual personality. It is also very strong in theoretical writing about the values, principles and goals of religious life. Many abuses which openly conflicted with contemporary human values have been mitigated. However, there still remains the more fundamental difficulty that the basic blueprint of religious life as it is expressed within the Catholic Church is the flowering of medieval man's expression of himself and of what he consequently saw as religious. This is but one more aspect of the shake-up that bewilders so many Christians today. All the inherited meanings about Christian life and prayer which have come down to us out of a self-experience from bygone centuries often seem powerless and irrelevant in the face of the massive shift in consciousness taking place today.

The gradual erosion of a Medieval view of reality was quickened following the vast landslide which the separation of Church and state represented. At this point it became evident to many Christians that laws and governments were not divinely instituted but designed by men. It was man himself who contained within his own creative abilities the capacity to blueprint and mould the body-politic. There was no need for constant reference to a divine (and monarchical) model.

Inevitably, the theory of the divine right of kings soon fell into disrepute. Along with the development of trade and commerce in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries wealth moved from the control of the Church into the hands of the mercantile class. The principle of supply and demand soon placed so much pressure on the ecclesiastical prohibition against usury that it too had to give way. It was thus that vast areas of Church authority and teaching were eaten away as previously accepted and supported viewpoints succumbed to the forward sweep of history.

This same relentless process has continued now for several centuries into every area of life. From the philosophers of the Enlightenment like Hume and Montesquieu, rational systems of behavior were developed that did not require Church sanction but appealed directly to reason. The great potential and dignity of the human capacity to use one's own mind, to think things out for one's self flourished during the Enlightenment and became part of the fabric of modern man's sense of himself.

The French and American revolutions idolized the freedom of man as a necessary condition for human dignity. Responsible self-determination became the primary value, not submission and obedience to some monarchical authority, whether Church or State.

Even the documents of the Second Vatican Council took note of this change.

In every group or nation there is an ever-increasing number of men and women who are conscious that they themselves are the artisans and the authors of the culture of their community. Throughout the world there is a similar growth in the combined sense of independence and responsibility.²⁷

The note by the commentator on this document remarks in regard to the above text that:

The Constitution recognizes that the general move toward awareness of personhood and of the self as a responsible agent is something that affects the thinking of whole peoples. The worldwide phenomenon of the "emerging nations" and the drive for national independence that has swept across the earth since the close of World War II are events that have had profound impact on the human spirit everywhere.²⁸

The Impact of Citizenship on the Sense of Self

Probably the impact that citizenship has had on the contemporary sense of self, as well as Christianity, is yet to be evaluated, since its more explicit implications, like those described in the Declaration on Religious Freedom (Dignitatis Humanae),²⁹ have only recently come out of the Second Vatican Council within the Roman Catholic Church.

27 "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World", in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, America Press, Association Press, 1966, p. 260-261.

28 Ibid, p. 261.

29 Ibid., p. 675-696.

However, it is clear today after several years of post Vatican II developments that the sense of self as conditioned by many Christians' participation in civil society has profound implications most especially for how such a person comes to understand God and prayer. This has been so crucial for development of the self-image of many western nations like the United States, Canada, Great Britain, countries of the Commonwealth, etc., that further enlargement on its implications is called for.

What I am about to write may seem strange, but perhaps future historians of Christianity will, in retrospect, be able to verify it once the present evolution Christianity is in the midst of now has sufficiently matured. The opinion I would like to propose is that a significant change in the sense of self flows from the experience of being a citizen rather than a subject. Such an experience, especially as it is happening within many emerging nations today, is in no small way due to the effects of the American experiment in democracy and to British colonization. The implications that these historical circumstances may eventually have on the evolution of the Christian God-concept via the self-concept of modern man as citizen has yet to fully unfold in history. But there is already some indication that where citizenship has been around for several centuries, its impact is already being felt in religious evolution.

The man growing up and living within a monarchical, authoritarian type of government, usually thinks of himself as "a subject" rather than as a person with authority vested in himself who can directly delegate this authority to elected representatives at various levels of government. But wherever the American or British influence has been present within peoples who have been allowed the freedom to develop a similar form of government the predominant sense of self has not been that of subject-superior or subject-king. This is even true in Great Britain where despite the fact that the royalty is maintained, the British situation with its figurehead royalty contrasts dramatically with those absolute dictatorships that have allowed only figurehead parliaments. The sense of self of the peoples who live in both of these situations is bound to be dramatically different.

At the time of the great colonizations the Netherlands, France, Portugal and especially Spain remained highly paternalistic until the demise of the colonial system. Their highly centralized governments simply extended the monarch's power out into the colonies. Spain, through the viceroy system perpetuated in the colonists as well as natives their self-image as subjects.

However, something quite different happened in England. The Industrial Revolution radically changed the

entire tone and power center in British colonization. As sources of raw material the colonies moved out from under direct monarchical influence and into the sphere of English business, banking, industrial exploitation, which became the real power behind the throne. This shift brought with it wider freedom for the colonizers to develop the natural resources on their own. Along with this came the capitalistic system, free enterprise, expansion of world markets and with it all a growing and significant self-experience in which greater self-determination and autonomy naturally resulted. The emergence of the Commonwealth after the period of colonization was the logical outcome. Here the preservation of some ties with even greater self-determination became the trend.

The United States, however, is the best example of development in the sense of citizenship. Prior to American independence Great Britain had allowed almost a century and a half of relative self-government. This was exercised through free expression in the town hall meeting and the growth of local capitalism, plantations, locally owned small industries, commerce etc. There was little interference from the Crown. Hence, during this period a sense of self in relationship to government had time to sink its roots deep enough so that by the time of the revolution an entire movement and political party had been born in direct

opposition to being subjects of the king. With the repressive taxation imposed by George III, this new sense of self came into open conflict with the monarchy's effort to restore a sense of self as 'subject' in the colonists, and eventually the feeling for 'citizenship' expressed itself in the American Declaration of Independence and the United States Constitution. This experiment, the first truly democratic, non-parliamentary form of government in the world's history, has profoundly affected the rest of the world and enormously influenced men's self-image. Where a long tradition of authoritarianism has taken root as in Latin and South America the influence even at the present time appears minimal. Attempts at democracy are not successful, and the average Latin's need for a 'caudillo' (strong king-like leader) still predominates. Although there is considerable church oriented agitation for social and economic reform, it is interesting to note that within the area of religion there is a notable absence of creative expression or interest in the whole movement of the changing concept and experience of God that has so characterized the English speaking world and much of northern Europe. One might speculate that a certain 'ripeness' has not yet occurred in the sense of self among peoples recently emerged out of or still strongly within the paternalistic tradition. They have not yet felt the need for a corresponding God-orientation shift as well.

In the United States once the old world, immigrant self-concept had died out Christians were bound to become "Americanized" and to be influenced in their religious quest by their own experience of themselves as citizens together with all that this implied of personal integrity, self-determination, responsible participation, freedom for self-realization. These had become values that were part of their own self-experience in a very practical and concrete way. Among a large percentage of American Catholics this sense of self had matured more than was realized and needed only the setting of Vatican II to set it in full motion. For example, within religious orders the democratization is probably the first basic step that will bring about even more change as such members become aware of themselves as 'citizens' within the religious order. This will eventually have profound consequences for the future expression of Catholicism, especially within such areas as the interpersonal relationships between laity, priests, religious, and bishops, the expression of Christian obedience, and ultimately the very experience and concept of God.

It is fascinating to discover how Maslow's research in transcendent experience (i.e. his study of basic and meta-needs, self-actualization, cognition, motivation and peak-experiences) speaks so meaningfully and religiously to a 'citizen' whose self-experience is characterized by the values

we have spoken of above. Freedom for and growth toward responsible self-determination and self-realization within the 'democratic community' are the warp and woof of his sense of self, and therefore indicate where he will look for religious experience, values and meanings. One might say that for many maturing Christian citizens there is an almost 'instinctive' need to connect religion, and especially prayer as we will speak of it, with so much of what Maslow's research has uncovered about transcendent human experience. One senses a certain 'ripeness' emerging from several different sources that are due to be brought together.

Science and the Self-image of Man

Without doubt the rise of science is another of the more influential factors affecting modern man's changing self-experience as it has changed from ancient and medieval times. The history of modern science is the story of a series of revolutions, each of which has transformed man's understanding of himself and his universe. It began with Copernicus in the sixteenth century. The proposal of a heliocentric universe shattered the old cosmological scheme of the first fifteen centuries of Christianity where man held the central position in a three deckered universe. Close on the heels of this view, which threw into question many interpretations of the New Testament, came realization

of the fact that the orbits of the heavenly bodies, once explained as the work of God, were to be understood in terms of Newtonian mechanics.

Subsequently, the development of Biblical studies as a science in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries served to further erode the simplistic and literal interpretation of the Bible men had taken for granted for centuries. It was shown that Biblical texts were subject to human error, authorial prejudice, and editorial decision. The average Christian's understanding of himself is still in the process of change as current Scripture scholarship and demythologizing filters down to the man in the street, often coming into sharp contrast with the naive kind of anthropology and cosmology that had grown up in the past.

From the very beginning of its widespread publication, Charles Darwin's evolutionary theory (brought to light in On the Origin of Species and The Descent of Man) came into bitter conflict with the inherited Christian view of man. The Church at that time looked on man as a "special creation", both in the universe and in his relationship to God. In a sense the Church was right for the wrong reasons insofar as it placed the "special" quality of human existence upon a literal interpretation of the seven day creation account in the Bible rather than on what Teilhard de Chardin wrote of as the evolutionary place of man in nature.

Today Biblical scholarship and most contemporary theologians have tried to resolve this antagonism, recognizing the validity of evolution, and modern man's understanding of himself is certainly evolutionary. Contemporary man experiences himself as process, as a becoming.

As an aside, I might add that not only the theory of evolution, but existentialism and psychology have all contributed to this changing self-experience, Sartre's, "man's essence is his existence" and existence is dynamic not static sums up well this facet of man's developing sense of self.

The overall effect of the growth of science on man's changing self-concept was made not so much because of any particular theory, but because of the impact of its methodology. Gradually the highly rational, speculative method of the Greeks which had predominated as the way to truth was replaced by a different model--the empirical method of observation and measurement. Moreover, this new method undercut the popular Christian reliance on "faith" to explain the unknown. Such an approach as interpreted from Hebrews excessively held that "Only faith [...] prove[s] the existence of the realities that at present remain unseen".³⁰

³⁰ Alexander Jones, Gen. Edit., The Jerusalem Bible, New Testament, New York, Doubleday, 1966, p. 383.

Experimental science soon became the arbiter of truth itself, pushing back the frontiers of the unknown and captivating the imagination and attention of all men by taking the human race within four centuries all the way to the moon. The method of empirical verification spilled over into every area of contemporary life and thought, so that men today put little veracity on any approach to the truth that has not somehow been arrived at "scientifically".

There is no doubt that a strong reaction is now setting in against the dominance of a rigidly empirical "scientific method" as the only way to arrive at the truth. Research in many disciplines, especially psychology, has made men aware that large areas of human experience are simply not available for "scientific" study, if by "scientific" one means that research must be limited to the all-embracing empirical method alone. Whether the method of science has or has not turned into a new idol, scientism, there can be little doubt of the effect this method has had on contemporary man's understanding of himself as one whose very humanity demands that he look for the truth. Since modern man thinks of himself as having 'a right' to the truth, 'a way' to it is of utmost importance to him.

Even though today many people will agree that experimentation, observation and measurement are not the only ways to truth, they still do not want to return to tradition or

authority for their validation. They believe that a new, perhaps more flexible, yet still "scientific" method must be found to search into the truth in those areas where the old scientific method could not enter. Third and Fourth Force Psychology, of which Maslow is an outstanding example, are urgently concerned with this problem and trying to develop a new "scientific" methodology that will be open to investigate the entire area of transcendent experience.

Man today sees himself as requiring some kind of verification to justify his belief, and so he puts great stress on that which in some way he can directly experience. Maslow's research into transcendent human experience therefore seems timely and relevant for modern man, especially, as I hope to show in this study, for a clearer contemporary articulation and understanding of prayer. The growing emptiness and confusion which characterizes this area badly needs a positive transfusion of creative insight.

Change in the sense of self, perhaps more than any other factor, has brought the religious dilemma into sharp focus. It represents a fascinating and exciting development that in one sense parallels a growing experience of the scientific community. Serious scientists often become so involved with their search that a widespread phenomena of highly personal and subjective responses rise up in their lives that are unapproachable for study or explanation from

the vantage point of their own restricted method. Through such experiences, which have been likened to the mystic encounter, many have been opened up to realize that a whole new method must be devised to explore this area of their more profound subjective experiences with the reality they study.

At the same time that this has been happening on an increasing scale within the scientific community, the average educated Christian suffers a similar dilemma as well. On the one hand, alienation between himself and organized religion's ability to speak meaningfully to him deepens; on the other, he often still wants to believe in God, to have religion as a significant part of his life, and to be able to pass on to his children some heritage of Christian belief and religious practice. But for the educated Christian he too, like the scientist, wants to have whatever he calls "God" and "religious" articulated within his own deepening and highly subjective experience of himself in this century. Somehow, whatever represents a viable religious expression grows out of man's evolving experience of himself. And this self-experience today demands some kind of scientific verifiability within human experience. A viable religion for today must grow out of and be a part of the self-experience that science has helped create in modern man. That is why nothing could be more relevant to the continuing

effective presence of Christianity in the family of man than the emerging new "science" of subjective experience. It is not surprising that theologian-philosophers of the caliber of Bernard Lonergan and Leslie Dewart see the necessity of an entirely new method for Christian theology.

Finally, regarding the impact science has had on man's changing sense of self, I might mention that the extensive process of demythologizing a direct causal relationship between God and natural phenomena has certainly brought contemporary men to realize that history is not in the hands of the gods or a God, but in our own. Modern man looks for the meaning of his existence in terms of this world. He is not concerned with a world "out there" populated by supernatural beings who somehow control his destiny from afar. Even a Christian theologian like Lonergan reflects this viewpoint when writing that, "revelation is God's entry into man's making of man..."³¹ The Council Fathers of Vatican II also mentioned this change.

Thanks primarily to increased opportunities for many kinds of interchange among nations, the human family is gradually recognizing that it comprises a single world community and is making itself so. Hence many benefits once looked for, especially from heavenly powers, man has now enterprisingly procured for himself.³²

³¹ Bernard Lonergan, "Theology in its New Context", in Theology of Renewal, Vol. I, (Proceedings of the Congress on the Theology of the Renewal of the Church Centenary of Canada, 1867-1967), Montreal, Palm, 1968, p. 41.

³² "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World", p. 231.

Another important support for the changing self-experience of modern man is the growing awareness of himself as a source of untapped potential. Dr. Herbert Otto's life-long research and writing in this field is a good example of the widespread interest and acceptance of this understanding of human potential. In fact, the development of "humanistic psychology" is often referred to as the "human potentiality movement" and there exists in the United States a National Center for the Exploration of Human Potential.³³

In the past two decades, an increasing number of behavioral scientists have concluded that man is functioning at 10% or less of his potential. This observation is by no means new, having been formulated by William James at the turn of the century. What is new is that with our advanced knowledge and technology both the scientific community and the public appear ready to accept the fact, with all its implications, that man functions at a small fraction of his capacities.³⁴

The vision of man's seemingly unlimited potential has caught the imagination and fascination of the whole world from the "outer" explorations of the Russian and American space adventures to the "inner" space searching of the behavioral scientists at Esalen:

33 The National Center for the Exploration of Human Potential, 8080 El Paseo Grande, La Jolla, California (92037), Herbert Otto, Ph.D., Chairman.

34 Herbert Otto, Ed., Human Potentialities: The Challenge and the Promise, St. Louis, Warren H. Green, 1968, p. 3.

A new conception of human nature is emerging in the field of psychology, a conception that is gradually superseding the views of classical psychoanalysis and strict behaviorism, a conception oriented toward health, growth and the exploration of our potentialities, pointing toward a profounder human possibility [...] Some scientists and philosophers believe that this quiet reformation of psychological thought will bring the greatest change in the vision of Western man since Copernicus and the Renaissance.³⁵

Medieval man interpreted human growth in terms of moving up certain ladders of perfection, acquiring special virtues, "rising above the body" and allowing the soul, the "spiritual powers" to soar toward the goal of human life, --God. Modern man thinks of himself as a dynamic unity, an organic whole. He does not understand himself in terms of a dualism of body and soul, placing primary value on the "non-material" part of himself, the soul, as that which must be "freed" from the body. Rather, growth today is understood as the on-going process of integration wherein all the expressions of the human personality move toward greater wholeness. In prior writing, I have used the phrase, "maturing-body-person" to try to grasp both the dynamic as well as holistic aspect of the person.

³⁵ Esalen Programs (excerpt), Vol. 1, No. 1, Fall, 1962, Esalen Institute, 1776 Union Street, San Francisco, Calif. 94123.

... When we use the phrase, "maturing-body-person," we are referring to man's continuous growth into active possession of the capacity for a more unified, incarnate-expression of his unique "self." Such growth derives its dynamism from an inner orientation toward greater openness and wholeness in contacting reality.³⁶

Man instinctively wants to respond to the world with the totality of his humanity. He yearns to be more whole in his response. He deeply desires to bring everything that he is and is capable of being into play according to the needs of the moment.³⁷

We might call this process whereby we continue to extent outward in more integral self-expression our "developmental integration into personhood."³⁸

Human becoming is dynamic. But the dynamism that prepares every human being for change and growth also directs us simultaneously toward a greater integration and more orderly expression of the evolving, ever more complex and mutually inter-acting patterns of behavior and thought that are found in each one of us.³⁹

The life-time task of healthy, human growth is primarily meant to be a continuous and progressive development toward an open, integrated and "whole" expression of our unique and evolving personhood through the various stages of life.⁴⁰

As we bring to a close this brief survey of some of the more important changes in modern man's sense of self as

36 Edwin M. McMahon and Peter A. Campbell, The In-Between: Evolution in Christian Faith, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1969, p. 183.

37 Ibid., p. 184.

38 Ibid., p. 186.

39 Ibid., p. 187.

40 Ibid., p. 188.

compared to those of ancient and medieval man, let us conclude by simply listing several others that are influential but need little comment:

a) Modern man is aware that he only comes to know himself through experience--experience that is personal and involves more than his mind or intellectual capabilities. He is increasingly aware that his whole "body-person" is capable of reflective knowledge in contrast to a former perception relegating reflexivity to the faculties of the mind alone. For each new generation the gap continues to close between the former sense of the body as object to awareness of the body as subject.

b) Modern man sees himself as an expression of the complexity and multifaceted world that he is a part of and is discovering--not the simplicity of the medieval world and its self-awareness which was largely derived from tradition and authority.

c) McLuhan contends that the modern media and television in particular have returned man to a search for meaning within himself. He sees this to be part of the process of implosion or turning in which stands in contrast to the explosive or external processes of the past. He feels that the current interest in drugs and in Eastern religions is

motivated by this quest for inner experience.⁴¹

d) Modern man is primarily "here and now" oriented as the way to move him more profoundly into the future, rather than preoccupied with the past, tradition, inherited customs, mores etc.

e) Communication and technological changes bring shifts in self-experience:

Medical care and industrial and technical achievements provide us with the means to stay young physically. Our youthful appearance and the opportunity to be and to stay quite active extend beyond what was customary in former days. Automobile and airplane give extension, so to speak, to our body. Car and plane are reaching-out extensions of my arms and legs. We cross borders and shift our horizons physically in no time at all.⁴²

The average man during the medieval period lived about thirty-five years. Today his calendar life is twice that, with increasing time both in retirement and in leisure activity during his working years.

f) The advent of the computer is bringing about a changing concept of the human mind as not primarily a storage receptical for facts. Younger generations therefore look upon education to bring them an experience, thereby relegating

41 John Culkin, S.J., "A Guide to McLuhan", in Religion Teacher's Journal, Vol. 3, No. 7, October, 1969, p. 28.

42 Nicholas Beets, "Historical Actuality and Bodily Experience", in Humanitas, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring, 1966, p. 27.

the acquisition of factual knowledge to a secondary place.

These then are but some of the more important shifts in perception that have affected modern man's sense of self as contrasted with that which predominated centuries ago when Christianity's God-concepts and religious expressions were formulated. Today the chasm grows wider between 'organized Christianity's' self-expression and contemporary man's sense of self as the pace of change is accelerated. Since this speed-up has been gaining momentum for several centuries, it is a source of never ending surprise to realize that it is only relatively recently that Christian scholars have moved out of the condemnatory approach to those whose discoveries and research seemed to contradict Christian teaching. It is only within the last few years that some recognized scholars have attempted to describe the dilemma posed by the shift in the sense of self we have been describing. At the popular pastoral level the whole question unfortunately still lies almost untouched, if not largely unrecognized.

What then might we conclude from this brief look at some of the more obvious changes in modern man's sense of self as it has evolved from that of classical and medieval man?

Recalling an earlier statement that man's self-experience directly conditions and influences his

God-experience or what he considers religious experience, we might then ask, where does modern man's self-experience point him for religious experience? What do the changes in the sense of self that I have described indicate about the appropriate area of human awareness that contemporary man might turn to for the experience of God? What area of human experience has prime value for contemporary man and is therefore open to be given religious valuation and meaning? If relevant religious experience is going to be connected with relevant human experience, where do we look today in terms of man's changing self image?

Without doubt man-the-transcender seems to capsule the focal point of modern man's sense of self. In other words, man 'going-beyond', actualizing his potential for growing, becoming more fully human--the whole area of transcendent human experience--dominates modern man's sense of self. The heightened awareness and value placed upon all that is involved individually and collectively in "becoming more a person" comes through "loud and clear" as an almost universal theme in human endeavors throughout the globe today. Men are both oriented toward and identify with their "transcendentality" as never before in human history.

It is not surprising then that psychology would turn to the study of human transcendence. One would also expect religious study to research more deeply the religious

implications of this focal point of human consciousness. It is clear that much of the tension in organized religion seems to arise between people who are growing and people who for various reasons are not growing as fast or are fixated at some point. Such persons often harden their defensive shells and maintain that the historically conditioned religious expressions of the past are still meaningful and must be defended against any agitation for change. It is indeed unfortunate that organized religion tends to legalize and make sacrosanct modes of religious expression that frequently don't 'fit' the religious needs of 'growing people'. All religions need to better understand and incorporate into their teachings, religious expressions, and value systems the rich religious dimension intrinsic in human growth. This area of human awareness, which we have called transcendent experience, is the most predominant characteristic of modern man's sense of self. Let us now explore it in the writings of Abraham Maslow, especially in its relationship to Christian prayer.

CHAPTER II

TRANSCENDENT HUMAN EXPERIENCE AND THE CONTRIBUTION OF ABRAHAM MASLOW

Abraham Maslow once penned some interesting and rather humorous lines when remarking about a co-relation he had noted between the 'sense of self' and the God-concept. He was writing about his and anthropologist Ruth Benedict's findings on what they called, "high and low synergy societies", which might be described as secure and insecure societies. He said,

You will find that the god or gods or the ghosts or the supernaturals in the secure or high synergy societies tend uniformly to be rather benevolent, helpful, friendly, sometimes even in a way that some in our society call sacrilegious. Among the Blackfoot, for instance, the personal ghost that any man would have for himself privately, the one he had seen in a vision perhaps on a mountain, could actually be invoked at a poker game. There was so much comfort with these personal gods that it was perfectly all right for a man with an inside straight to call a halt to the game and go off in a corner and commune with his ghost to decide whether to draw or not. In the insecure or low synergy societies on the other hand, the gods, the supernaturals and the ghost were uniformly ruthless, terrifying and so on.

I checked this relationship with some students at Brooklyn College in a very informal way (around 1940). There were a couple of dozen youngsters whom I had tested as secure or insecure in a questionnaire that I had constructed. I asked those who were religious in a formal way one question: Suppose you woke up out of your sleep and felt somehow that God was either in the room or looking in at you, how would you feel? The tendency was for the secure people to feel comforted and protected; and for the insecure to feel terrified.¹

¹ Abraham H. Maslow, "Human Potentialities and the Healthy Society", in Human Potentialities, Herbert A. Otto, ed., St. Louis, Warren H. Green, Inc., 1968, p. 73.

Strange as it may seem to anyone in the behavioral sciences, perhaps the most radical challenge facing Christianity today is simply to recognize the developmental nature of man and to realize that man's religious experience, which is an expression of that nature, is going to be developmental as well. The sense of self at any given moment directly influences the experience and conceptualization of God.

A key theme emphasized throughout this study will be that prayer too must be understood as an organismic, developmental response rooted within the human growth process which, if healthy, is constantly undergoing change. Therefore, I will try to show that where individuals or groups of people have matured to some degree of self-actualization, prayer must be growth or transcendent oriented in a way that expresses their proper level of perception and motivation.

This suggests that Christianity now faces the challenge of recognizing that the unique transcendent experiences involved in each person's becoming more himself are considered by religious people today to be the medium of God's Self-communication in the fullest and most intense way that is available to an individual at this moment in his history. Moreover, this innate sensitivity is being picked up and voiced by many theologians who today are saying that the

fuller the humanness the fuller the Self-communication of God, which would seem to imply that the actual expressions of fuller humanness through organismic transcendent experiences would be the proper existential content for the prayer of many self-actualizing Christians.

An ultimate paradox affecting Christianity in the latter half of this century might be that if and when renewal finally takes place, its origins may well lie not with professional churchmen, theologians and religious revivalists, but with the contribution of dedicated scientists like Abraham Maslow whose quiet probing of the profound mysteries of human nature and of our world nourishes all of us in the search for fullness of life.

Such a turn-about would not be without its precedents, however, for it was in turning to the Gentile nations that St. Paul was able to find a fruitful environment within which to spread his own deeply religious experience of life. The day may not be far off when professional religionists will have to confront the painful realization that, as James V. Clark has noted, "There is reason to believe that the pedagogy of religious experience has advanced far beyond what many religionists are aware of".²

² James V. Clark, "Toward a Theory and Practice of Religious Experiencing", in Challenges of Humanistic Psychology, James F. T. Bugental, ed., New York, McGraw-Hill, 1967, p. 258.

The Psychological Exploration of Transcendence

It is strange that even psychology itself has so neglected the phenomenon of transcendent human experience. Sidney Jourard once speculated on a possible reason for this when he wrote:

One reason we have no science of transcendent-behavior may lie in the relationship between the individual and the social system. Man, as we encounter him, is fundamentally estranged from much of his possible experience, and from the experience of his possibilities. He has repressed his experience of freedom and renounced his freedom to experience. In order to fit the social systems in which he exists, he feels obliged to conceal much of his experience from others. To conform to sclerosed concepts of himself, he tries to deny dissonant experience. If he conceals too effectively, he finally becomes alienated from his experience.

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Those persons who have transcendent experience are seldom studied because they seem to defy the 'laws of behavior.' Thus the possibility arises that our psychology is only a report of the behavior and experience of human beings who have complied with social and biological pressures (including pressure from the experimenter) and have reduced their experience of themselves and their world in order to 'play it safe' and conform. If this is true, there is all the more reason for developing a psychology of transcending. If man functions typically in the 'reduced' state, but has the potentiality for transcending it, then we are called upon to explore the conditions under which such potentiality can be fulfilled.³

At the present time only a handful of psychologists have turned their efforts toward exploring a psychology of

3 Sidney M. Jourard, Disclosing Man to Himself, New York, Van Nostrand, 1968, p. 206.

human transcendence. But even with the few insights they have turned up to date, they have opened wide the fascinating and profound relationship between transcendent experiences and growth-filled religious experience. This still remains a relatively untouched area by Christian religionists so that this present study will, of necessity be breaking new ground as we attempt to explore the Christian prayer possibilities of human transcendence.

Although some who write of their psychological insights in this area seem to describe human transcendence as if it were restricted only to the category of the extraordinary, the "peak-experience" type of occurrence, I will understand it in this dissertation to refer to any experience of going beyond one's limitations or fragmentation, however small or seemingly insignificant. The actualization of human transcendence is found in the ordinary day by day effort to release our potential for becoming more integrated and fully functioning persons, not just in moments of unusual 'break-through'. It can be viewed from the standpoint of a change in perception, however small, within which one 'sees' or experiences one's self in relationship to reality (or some facet of reality) as less apart, less isolated, more in communion or oneness and consequently expanded, enriched, opened up etc.

In this study I do not wish to tone the meaning of "transcendent human experience" in the direction of some kind of fadish short-cut to "instant salvation". Rather, I use the phrase to describe a most profound need and capability in man that can only be actualized within a process of human growth and integration itself that involves a good deal of application, discipline and intelligent effort. Maslow described the short-cut problem well when he wrote:

Impatience (especially the built-in impatience of youth) dictates shortcuts of all kinds. Drugs, which can be helpful when wisely used, become dangerous when foolishly used. The sudden insight becomes 'all' and the patient and disciplined 'working through' is postponed or devalued. Instead of being 'surprised by joy,' 'turning on' is scheduled, promised, advertised, sold, hustled into being, and can get to be regarded as a commodity [...] More and more exotic, artificial, striving 'techniques' may escalate further and further until they become necessary and until jadedness and impotence ensue.⁴

The identification of transcendent human experience with the religious and the sacred is universal. It always involves a 'going beyond' the more or less routine and daily experience of self into the unknown within which the person feels 'gifted' with this new sense of self. Obviously, when writing of such experiences, people tend to concentrate attention on the more dramatic, intense and

4 Abraham H. Maslow, "New Introduction: Religions, Values and Peak-Experiences", in The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1970, p. 85.

radical shifts in perception which would be easier to recall as well as to attempt to describe. However, my understanding of transcendent human experience as described in this dissertation, will not be limited to the extraordinary. To do this would inevitably distort the evolution of man and his religious growth which is a dynamic, but nonetheless, gradual becoming. As Abraham Maslow put it:

The search for the exotic, the strange, the unusual, the uncommon has often taken the form of pilgrimages, of turning away from the world, the "Journey to the East," to another country or to a different Religion. The great lesson from the true mystics, from the Zen monks, and now also from the Humanistic and Transpersonal psychologists--that the sacred is in the ordinary, that it is to be found in one's daily life, in one's neighbors, friends, and family, in one's back yard, and that travel may be a flight from confronting the sacred--this lesson can be easily lost. To be looking elsewhere for miracles is to me a sure sign of ignorance that everything is miraculous.⁵

By transcendent human experience we also want to highlight that potential in man, which though often neglected and lying dormant, is really what most characterizes our humanity--our ability to never be totally encapsulated, closed or determined by the forces within and around us. Sidney Jourard tried to describe this quality in human behavior when he wrote:

5 Loc. Cit.

Transcendent behavior, in contrast with habitual behavior, carries with it an element of surprise or unpredictability. In transcendent behavior, the person is literally "rising above" forces thought to be determinants, e.g., social pressure, habit, physical limitations, such as blindness or lameness, all of which predispose some highly probable range of responses. In transcendent behavior the individual adds his own latent powers to the array of impersonal forces affecting him, and thus the behavior he manifests may impress the observer as unexpected. Transcendent behavior implies a release of latent potentialities, of capabilities to perceive, invent, create, achieve, endure or perform. In most people these capacities lie buried under the "crust" and inertia of habit, rigid role definitions and confining self-concepts.⁶

Another way of putting this might be to say:

We are most human
(and most divine)
when standing at the edge
unsatisfied....
ourselves a taking-off point.⁷

Historically speaking, with reference to the pre-suppositions of a classical, dualistic epistemology, the phrase transcendent human experience as understood in this study signifies a way of knowing which is holistic, integral, moving toward a breakdown in the split between soul and body, mind and matter, etc. It also indicates a diminishment in the subject-object way of knowing so that the knower does not

6 Sidney M. Jourard, "Toward a Psychology of Transcendent Behavior", in Explorations in Human Potentialities, H. A. Otto, Ed., New York, Charles Thomas, 1966, p. 352-353.

7 Edwin M. McMahon and Peter A. Campbell, Please Touch, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1969, p. 31.

relate to realities around him as a spectator but rather as a participant, more aware of his oneness and 'tied-in-ness' than of his distinct separateness. With the breakdown of a dualistic mode of perception there naturally follows a shift in perception and a more unified experience of relating to the environment.

In our present study, transcendent human experience obviously refers to a more integral kind of experiential knowing, rather than exclusively intellectual or philosophical. Moreover, broadly speaking, we mean by transcendence every experience of ourselves within which we recognize that we are going beyond our previous limitations, isolation, untapped potential and into an expanding sense of self. Transcendent experience can embrace the most simple experience

... of being able to do more than one thought one could do, or more than one had done in the past, e.g., simply to be able to run faster than one used to, or to be a better dancer or pianist, or a better carpenter, or whatever.⁸

Human transcendence can also reach to the most profound heights of the unitive and 'being' experience.

The wider sense of self present within all levels, stages, or degrees of intensity in transcendent experience, is primarily characterized by what may be described as a

⁸ Abraham H. Maslow, "Various Meanings of Transcendence", in The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1969, p. 61.

deeper knowing of one's self as 'being-in-communion'.

I will often speak of this as, a sense of self as organism-environment. Within such an experience there is an ever-present perception that may be described as an intensifying experience of simply 'existing', 'being', which matures as an integral facet of one's self-experience or identity. We might try to describe this identity with phrases like 'being in', 'one with', 'tied into', 'flowing out of' or 'in communion with' the environment, some particular aspect of it, or the whole cosmos. In other words, transcendent human experience is characterized primarily by a going beyond former limitations and isolation into greater 'being-one-with' and secondly, a more intense sense of existing, being, or aliveness.

This experience of transcendence is what Evelyn Underhill has called 'natural mysticism which, like 'natural religion,' is latent in humanity, and at a certain point of development breaks out in every race..."⁹

So much for a kind of general introduction. Now, let us turn our attention to the work of a man who, during his years as a psychologist, dared to break with many of the sacrosanct traditions in his field. Dr. Maslow's point of

⁹ Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism, New York, E. P. Dutton and Co., 1961, p. 105.

departure was not pathology, but man at his best, his highest, his most magnanimous. He chose to begin with the best he could find, hoping that by approaching his subject from such a transcending vantage point he might make a significant contribution to the world's knowledge of the phenomenon of man. In a sense, I believe that he wanted to challenge us to broaden our own horizons and realize that our niggardly pathologies were only one small aspect of what it means to be human.

In the remaining pages of this chapter we shall examine Dr. Maslow's reflections on the perception and motivation of self-actualizing persons for whom transcendent experience has become an important value in life. This development will also involve our looking at the motivation and perception of those persons whose goals, values, and near constant preoccupation in life is largely governed by unanswered basic needs. All this material will then serve as a point of departure and provide a framework for my own attempt to develop some of the implications and evolving directions that I believe apply to the study of Christian prayer.

1. The Perception of "Transcending Self-Actualizers".

In the introduction to the last (posthumously published) book of Maslow's writings, Henry Geiger, whom Maslow

regarded as an accurate interpreter of his thought, wrote,

A peak experience is what you feel and perhaps 'know' when you gain authentic elevation as a human being [...] [It] [...] is a coming into the realization that what 'ought to be' is, in a way that requires no longing, suggests no straining, to make it so. It tells human beings something about themselves and about the world that is the same truth, and that becomes the pivot of value and an ordering principle for the hierarchy of meanings. It is the merging of subject and object, involving no loss of subjectivity but what seems its infinite extension. It is individuality freed of isolation. An experience of this sort gives the idea of transcendence an empirical ground. Its typical recurrence for his [Maslow's] self-actualizers became for Maslow scientific evidence of what may be the normal psychological or inner life of persons who are fully human.¹⁰

With these words, we are plunged into the heart of our study, because the very effort to focus on Maslow's psychological research in human transcendence and to indicate its relevance to Christian prayer is the primary goal of this project.

a) Transcendent or "Peak" Experiences

What did Maslow mean by the phrase, "transcendent experience"? To begin with, it must be stated that there is no clear cut definition of this term available, as far as I can ascertain, although Maslow often used the expression. Therefore, for the purposes of research such as this,

¹⁰ Abraham H. Maslow, The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, New York, The Viking Press, 1971, pp. xvi-xvii.

it is only by careful study of the context within which Dr. Maslow used this phrase, by familiarity with all his relevant material, (including the works just prior to his death), and most of all by an open attempt to enter into his thought and acquire a 'feel' for his work that one can eventually arrive at an understanding faithful to his meaning. Hopefully, we will not distort the insights of this distinguished and creative human being.

Dr. Maslow seemed to presume that his readers would understand that this expression, transcendent experience, was an alternate phrase for the whole area of human experience which he more frequently referred to as "peak-experiences". Such a presumption on his part seems partly adequate. However, for the sake of a little more clarity, I believe it is necessary to search out a more precise meaning if it is available in his work. Although there may be other ways of trying to delineate Maslow's understanding of transcendent experience, I have chosen the following analysis.

In Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, Maslow titled one of his chapters, "The 'Core-Religious,' or 'Transcendent,' Experience".¹¹ In this same chapter and in many other works--as already mentioned--he used the term

¹¹ Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1964, p. 19.

transcendent experience as synonymous with "peak-experience". "By my usage [...] they are often having 'core-religious experiences' or transcendent experiences when they report having peak-experiences."¹² In other words, all three expressions are at times used synonymously and interchangeably to refer to the same type of experience. One would then think that by finding some definition or description of "core-religious experience" and/or "peak-experience", that the meaning of transcendent experience would be clearer. This is partially, but not completely accurate.

The phrase, core-religious experience was used most often by Maslow to express a certain perception of reality ("B-cognition") which he felt went deeper than the usual culturally-conditioned, habitual perceptions that so often characterize religious response in organized religion. He used this term in much the same way that John Dewey used the word "religious" in contrast with "religion" to describe in the former a certain "... quality of experience [...] that may belong to all experiences", a particular cluster of "... attitudes that may be taken toward every object and every proposed end or ideal".¹³

¹² Ibid, p. 31.

¹³ John Dewey, A Common Faith, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1967, p. 10.

However, Maslow went considerably beyond Dewey's insight by 'getting into' more of what is psychologically involved in the experience of the "religious", or as he preferred to call it, the "core-religious experience". This came about through investigation of what he chose to refer to as peak experiences and B-cognition. Therefore, let us first see what he found out about peak-experiences in order to determine whether this may help us better understand his meaning of transcendent, since he appears to have used the terms synonymously.

In peak experiences there is:

... a shift in attention, in the organization of perception, in noticing or realizing, that occurs.

In peak-experiences, several kinds of attention-change can lead to new knowledge. For one, love, fascination, absorption can frequently mean 'looking intensely, with care,' [...] For another, fascination can mean great intensity, narrowing and focusing of attention, and resistance to distraction of any kind, or of boredom or even fatigue. Finally, what Bucke called Cosmic Consciousness involves an attention-widening so that the whole cosmos is perceived as a unity, and one's place in this whole is simultaneously perceived.

This new 'knowledge' can be a change in attitude, valuing reality in a different way, seeing things from a new perspective, from a different centering point. Possibly a good many instances could come under the head of gestalt-perception, i.e., of seeing chaos in a newly organized way--or of shifting from one gestalt to another, of breaking up an imbeddedness or creating a new one, changing figure-ground relationships, of making a better gestalt, of closure, in a word, of the cognition of relationships and their organization.

Another kind of cognitive process which can occur in peak-experiences is the freshening of experience and the breaking up of rubricizing. Familiarization dulls cognition, especially in anxious people, and it is then possible to walk through all sorts of miraculous happenings without experiencing them as such. In peaks, the miraculous 'suchness' of things can break through into consciousness.¹⁴

Although Maslow stated that, "peak-experiences could be considered as a transient self-actualization of the person",¹⁵ nonetheless, he also believed these passing moments actually contributed to the on-going growth of the person and therefore had a lasting value. Peaks "can therefore be understood as lifting him (the peaker) 'higher,' making him 'taller,' etc., so that he becomes 'deserving' of more difficult truths, e.g. only integration can perceive integration, only the one who is capable of love can cognize love, etc."¹⁶

Non-interfering, receptive, Taoistic perception is necessary for the perception of certain kinds of truth. Peak-experiences are states in which striving, interfering, and active controlling diminish, thereby permitting Taoistic perception, thereby diminishing the effect of the perceiver upon the percept. Therefore, truer knowledge (of some things) may be expected and has been reported.¹⁷

14 Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, p. 77-78.

15 Ibid., p. 80.

16 Loc. Cit.

17 Loc. Cit.

It is in the peak experiences that Being-cognition is most likely to take place.¹⁸

A peak experience is an episode

... in which the powers of the person come together in a particularly efficient and intensely enjoyable way, and in which he is more integrated and less split, more open for experience, more idiosyncratic, more perfectly expressive or spontaneous, or fully functioning, more creative more humorous, more ego-transcending, more independent of his lower needs, etc. He becomes in these episodes more truly himself, more perfectly actualizing his potentialities, closer to the core of his Being.¹⁹

Although Maslow's writing on peak-experiences (of which the above-quoted selections are just a brief sampling) can give us some idea of what he meant by transcendent experience, a careful study of his research would seem to indicate that the term "peak-experience" would more accurately be used to describe a certain kind of transcendent experience, rather than being used synonymously with this phrase. Transcendent experience would better apply to a whole general thrust of human endeavor characterized by Maslow as "... overcoming the limitations of a self-limited ego, relating in harmony to the cosmos, attempting to become all that a human being can..."²⁰ In other words, all

18 Abraham H. Maslow, The Psychology of Science, Chicago, Henry Regnery Company (Gateway Edition), 1970, p. 137.

19 Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, New York, Van Nostrand, 1962, p. 91.

20 Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, p. 44, footnote 2.

experiences of becoming "... actually what he (one) is potentially (what we call healthy growth)";²¹ all experiences wherein the subject-object dichotomy in perception is diminished and greater unity with all of reality is organismically known (sense of self as organism-environment); and all experiences of growing into a sense of self characterized by the experience of 'being' rather than 'doing' or 'having' might be considered a more adequate description of the meaning of transcendent experience. This more comprehensive understanding, we believe, is more consistent with the totality of Maslow's thought and writing, rather than the more superficial definition one might arrive at from studying a specific quote in which he used transcendent experience interchangeably with peak or core-religious experience. We tend to think that if Maslow were alive today and faced with the task of trying to be more precise in articulating his meaning of transcendent experience (as we are here), he would appreciate this refinement and clarification and not find it contrary to his thought.

Since Maslow spoke of peak experiences as "transient moments of self-actualization", and as "moments of ecstasy",²²

²¹ Ibid., p. 49.

²² Abraham H. Maslow, "Self-Realization and Beyond", in Challenges of Humanistic Psychology, J. F. T. Bugental, Ed., New York, McGraw-Hill, 1967, p. 283.

it would seem misleading to equate them completely with either the core-religious or transcendent experience, although both the core and transcendent experience can be associated with a peak and have many of the same characteristics. As Maslow himself says,

... having such 'core-religious' or transcendent experiences is also to some extent under our own control, even apart from peak-experiences. (Having enough peak-experiences during which B-cognition takes place can lead to the probability of B-cognizing without peak-experiences.)²³

However, peak experiences, "cannot be bought, cannot be guaranteed, cannot even be sought. One must be, as C. S. Lewis wrote, 'surprised by joy'",²⁴ even though one can set up certain conditions under which they are more likely or less likely to occur. Whereas, "when we are well and healthy and adequately fulfilling the concept 'human being,' then experiences of transcendence should in principle be commonplace".²⁵

As one works through the writings of Maslow it becomes increasingly clear that transcendent experience is a term that should not be thought of as synonymous with

²³ Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, p. 32.

²⁴ Abraham H. Maslow, "Self-Realization and Beyond", p. 283.

²⁵ Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, p. 32.

peak-experience, even though at times he used both terms interchangeably. He himself stated that the kind of knowledge gained in peak-experiences "... may become independent of peak-experiences, and thereafter be available under more ordinary circumstances".²⁶ He referred to this kind of knowledge not solely dependent on peak-experiences as B-knowledge or B-cognition. Moreover, in 1964 he wrote, "It is also possible that there is a kind of 'serene,' non-ecstatic B-cognition, but I am much less sure of this".²⁷ However, by 1970 he wrote with more assurance in this area and had even given this mode of B-cognition a name--"plateau-experience".

This is serene and calm, rather than poignantly emotional, climactic, autonomic response to the miraculous, the awesome, the sacralized, the Unitive, the B-values. So far as I can now tell, the high-plateau experience always has a noetic and cognitive element, which is not always true for peak-experiences, which can be purely and exclusively emotional. It is far more voluntary than peak-experiences are. One can learn to see in this Unitive way almost at will. It then becomes a witnessing, an appreciating, what one might call a serene, cognitive blissfulness which can, however, have a quality of casualness and lounging about it.

There is more an element of surprise, and of disbelief, and of esthetic shock in the peak-experience, more the quality of having such an experience for the first time. I have pointed out elsewhere that the aging body and nervous system is less capable of tolerating a really shaking peak-experience. I would add

26 Ibid., p. 74.

27 Ibid., p. 75.

here that maturing and aging means also some loss of first-time-ness, of novelty, of sheer unpreparedness and surprise.

Peak and plateau-experiences differ also in their relations to death. The peak-experience can often meaningfully itself be called a 'little death,' a re-birth in various senses. The less intense plateau-experience is more often experienced as pure enjoyment and happiness, as, let's say, a mother sitting quietly looking, by the hour, at her baby playing and marveling, wondering, philosophizing, not quite believing. She can experience this as a very pleasant, continuing, contemplative experience rather than as something akin to a climactic explosion which then ends.

Older people, making their peace with death, are more apt to be profoundly touched with (sweet) sadness and tears at the contrast between their own mortality and the eternal quality of what sets off the experience. This contrast can make far more poignant and precious what is being witnessed, e.g., 'The surf will be here forever and you will soon be gone. So hang on to it; appreciate it; be fully conscious of it. Be grateful for it. You are lucky.'

Very important today in a topical sense is the realization that plateau-experiencing can be achieved, learned, earned by long hard work. It can be meaningfully aspired to. But I don't know of any way of bypassing the necessary maturing, experiencing, living, learning. All of this takes time. A transient glimpse is certainly possible in the peak-experiences which may, after all, come sometimes to anyone. But, so to speak, to take up residence on the high plateau of Unitive consciousness, that is another matter altogether. That tends to be a lifelong effort. It should not be confused with the Thursday evening turn-on that many youngsters think of as the path to transcendence. For that matter, it should not be confused with any single experience. The 'spiritual disciplines,' both the classical ones and the new ones that keep on being discovered these days, all take time, work, discipline, study, commitment.

There is much more to say about these states which are clearly relevant to the life of transcendence and the transpersonal, and to experiencing life at the level of Being. All I wish to do here with this brief mention is to correct the tendency of some to identify experiences of transcendence as only dramatic, orgasmic, transient, 'peaky,' like a moment on the top of Mt. Everest.²⁸

28 Abraham H. Maslow, "New Introduction: Religions, Values and Peak-Experiences", p. 88-89.

It becomes increasingly clear, then, that a more comprehensive and accurate understanding of Maslow's meaning of transcendent experience will come from his research on "experiencing life at the level of Being", or as he coined a phrase for it, Being-cognition or B-cognition for short in contrast to cognition organized by the deficiency needs of an individual, which he called D-cognition.

b) "Being-Cognition"

The reader must understand that by B-cognition Maslow did not mean abstract, purely conceptual, or exclusively intellectual knowledge. Rather, he intended what might be called "experiential knowing"--i.e. knowledge that is organismically known by the whole person.

What we will do now is to select descriptions of B-cognition from various sources in Maslow in order to help the reader understand his meaning of transcendent experience. Maslow found B-cognition in his study of both the climactic peak-experience as well as in more serene "plateau" living. We will simply gather from various sources sufficient quotations which seem to be brief and clear enough in themselves to create for the reader a general understanding without need for subsequent clarification.

1) In B-cognition the experience or the object tends to be seen as a whole, as a complete unit, detached from relations, from possible usefulness, from expediency, and from purpose. It is seen as if it were all there was in the universe, as if it were all of Being, synonymous with the universe.²⁹

In some reports, particularly of the mystic experience or the religious experience or philosophical experience, the whole of the world is seen as a unity, as a single rich live entity. In other of the peak experiences, most particularly the love experience and the aesthetic experience, one small part of the world is perceived as if it were for the moment all of the world. In both cases the perception is of unity [...] the B-cognition of a painting or a person or a theory retains all the attributes of the whole of Being...³⁰

It is useful to understand the concrete perceiving which takes place in B-cognition as a perception of all aspects and attributes of the object simultaneously or in quick succession. Abstracting is in essence a selection out of certain aspects only of the object, those which are of use to us, those which threaten us, those with which we are familiar, or those which fit our language categories. Both Whitehead and Bergson have made this sufficiently clear, as have many other philosophers [...] Abstractions, to the extent that they are useful, are also false. In a word, to perceive an object abstractly means not to perceive some aspects of it. It clearly implies selection of some attributes, rejection of other attributes, creation or distortion of still others. We make of it what we wish. We create it. We manufacture it. Furthermore, extremely important is the strong tendency in abstracting to relate the aspects of the object to our linguistic system.³¹

29 Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, p. 70.

30 Ibid., p. 83.

31 Ibid., p. 84.

Let us take for example the perception of a painting or of a person. In order to perceive them fully we must fight our tendency to classify, to compare, to evaluate, to need, to use. The moment that we say this man is, e.g. a foreigner, in that moment we have classified him, performed an abstracting act and, to some extent, cut ourselves off from the possibility of seeing him as a unique and whole human being, different from any other one in the whole world. In the moment that we approach the painting on the wall to read the name of the artist, we have cut ourselves off from the possibility of seeing it with complete freshness in its own uniqueness. To a certain extent then, what we call knowing, i.e. the placing of an experience in a system of concepts or words or relations, cuts off the possibility of full cognizing.³²

B-cognition, then, is characterized by this ability to perceive the whole in itself rather than certain parts in a kind of pragmatic or utilitarian way. Maslow makes this interesting observation, which although it doesn't directly describe B-cognition, has nevertheless, important implications. He notes that only through some capacity for more "holistic" B-cognition

32 Ibid., p. 85.

... can one know a person in the fullest sense of the word, it is not surprising that self-actualizing people are so much more astute in their perception of people, in their penetration to the core or essence of another person. This is also why I feel convinced that the ideal therapist, who presumably should be able as a professional necessity, to understand another person in his uniqueness and in his wholeness, without presupposition, ought to be at least a fairly healthy human being. I maintain this even though willing to grant unexplained individual differences in this kind of perceptiveness, and that also therapeutic experience can itself be a kind of training in the cognition of the Being of another human being. This also explains why I feel that a training in aesthetic perceiving and creating could be a very desirable aspect of clinical training.³³

It is extremely interesting to me that all people behave at times as if they wanted to be B-cognized. They resent being classified, categorized, rubricized. Ticketing off a person as a waiter or a policeman or a 'dame' instead of as an individual often offends. We all want to be recognized and accepted for what we are in our fulness, richness and complexity. If such an acceptor cannot be found among human beings, then the very strong tendency appears to project and create a godlike figure, sometimes a human one, sometimes supernatural.³⁴

When a person is more able to perceive another with B-cognition

... then he can be all-loving, all-forgiving, all-accepting, all-admiring, all-understanding, B-amused, lovingly-amused. But these are precisely the attributes assigned to most conceptions of a god (except for amusement--strangely lacking in most gods). In such moments we can then be godlike in these attributes. For instance, in the therapeutic situation we can relate ourselves in this loving, understanding, accepting, forgiving way to all sorts of people whom we normally fear and condemn and even hate...³⁵

33 Ibid., p. 85-86.

34 Ibid., p. 87-88.

35 Ibid., p. 87.

In B-cognition, then, the reality perceived is seen or experienced as if it were the whole of the universe, as well as being absolutely unique (idiographic and non-classificatory).

2) When there is a B-cognition, the percept is exclusively and fully attended to [...] What I am trying to describe here is very much akin to fascination or complete absorption. In such attention the figure becomes all figure and the ground, in effect, disappears, or at least is not importantly perceived. It is as if the figure were isolated for the time being from all else, as if the world were forgotten, as if the percept had become for the moment the whole of Being [...] This kind of perception is in sharp contrast to normal perception. Here the object is attended to simultaneously with attention to all else in the world, and as part of the world. Normal figure-ground relationships hold, i.e., both the ground and the figure are attended to, although in different ways. Furthermore, in ordinary cognition, the object is seen not so much per se but as a member of a class, as an instance in a larger category [...] it is a kind of taxonomy, a classifying [...] a kind of automatic comparing or judging or evaluating. It implies higher than, less than, better than, taller than, etc. [...]

B-cognition may be called non-comparing cognition or non-evaluating or non judging cognition [...]

A person can be seen per se, in himself and by himself [...] The healthy mother, perceiving her infant in love, approaches to this kind of perception of the uniqueness of the person. Her baby is not quite like anybody else in the world. It is marvelous, perfect, and fascinating (at least to the extent that she is able to detach herself from Gesell's norms and comparisons with neighbors' children).

Concrete perceiving of the whole of the object implies, also, that it is seen with 'care.' Contrariwise, 'caring' for the object will produce the sustained attention, the repeated examination that is so necessary for perception of all aspects of the object. The caring minuteness with which a mother will gaze upon her infant again and again, or the lover at his beloved, or the connoisseur at his painting will surely produce a more complete perception [...] We may expect richness

of detail and a many-sided awareness of the object from this kind of absorbed, fascinated, fully attending cognition. This contrasts with the product of casual observation which gives only the bare bones of the experience, an object which is seen in only some of its aspects in a selective way and from a point of view of 'importance' and 'unimportance.' (Is there any 'unimportant' part of a painting, a baby, or a beloved?)³⁶

3) In B-cognition the person

... can more readily look upon nature as if it were there in itself and for itself, and not simply as if it were a human playground put there for human purposes. He can more easily refrain from projecting human purposes upon it. In a word, he can see it in its own Being ('endness') rather than as something to be used, or something to be afraid of, or to be reacted to in some other human way.³⁷

This particular description of Maslow's has come to have special validity for me in recent years as I have become aware of the two quite different ways I can look at my garden. For several years I have been involved each spring and summer in continuing to landscape portions of a large area around my studio. There has always been and continues to be much planning, planting, pruning, watering, weeding, fertilizing, etc., etc. At the same time that these needs are very much present to me, the whole point of my garden project has not been primarily to decorate around my studio but to develop an atmosphere for contemplation, using the garden --its flowers, shrubs, wood and rock--as the focal points

36 Ibid., p. 70-72.

37 Ibid., p. 72.

for meditation. The radically different perceptions that Maslow is trying to describe between his B-cognition and D-cognition (deficiency or need-cognition) immediately became very real to me as I struggled to bring both perceptions into balance in my relationship to the garden. I became very sensitive as to how I could perceive my garden in two quite different ways and the corresponding effects that these two modes of perception had on me. If D-cognition was not balanced with sufficient B-cognition, then symptoms of restlessness, anxiety, fatigue, and the inability to truly enjoy my surroundings, together with subsequent boredom and irritability seemed to surface. In other words, I could experience in myself many of the symptoms of what Maslow called "metapathologies",³⁸ which he said can result from deprivation of B-cognition, when "metaneeds" are frustrated.

4) "B-cognising seems to make the perception richer [...] rather than it producing the usual effects of repeated experiencing, i.e., boredom, familiarization effects, loss of attention and the like."³⁹

38 Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Metamotivation: The Biological Rooting of the Value-Life," in The Journal of Humanistic Psychology, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1967, p. 93-127.

39 Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, p. 72-73.

5) ... Western psychology, in what I consider to be an ethnocentric way, assumes that human needs, fears and interests must always be determinants of perception. The 'New Look' in perception is based upon the assumption that cognition must always be motivated. This is also the classical Freudian view. The further assumption is implied that cognition is a coping, instrumental mechanism, and that it must to some extent be egocentric. It assumes that the world can be seen only from the vantage point of the interests of the perceiver and that the experience must be organized around the ego as a centering and determining point.

I consider this point of view ethnocentric not only because it arises so clearly as an unconscious expression of the Western world outlook, but also because it involves a persistent and assiduous neglect of the writings of philosophers, theologians, and psychologists of the Eastern world, particularly of the Chinese, Japanese, and Hindus, not to mention writers like Goldstein, Murphy, C. Buhler, Huxley, Sorokin, Angyal and many others.

(My findings indicate that in the normal perceptions of self-actualizing people and in the more occasional peak experiences of average people, perception can be relatively ego-transcending, self-forgetful, egoless.) It can be unmotivated, impersonal, desireless, unselfish, not needing, detached. It can be object-centered rather than ego-centered. That is to say, that the perceptual experience can be organized around the object as a centering point rather than being based upon the ego [...]. It is possible in the aesthetic experience or the love experience to become so absorbed and 'poured into' the object that the self, in a very real sense, disappears. Some writers on aesthetics, mysticism, on motherhood and on love, e.g., Sorokin, have gone so far as to say that in the peak experience we may even speak of identification of the perceiver and the perceived, a fusion of what was two into a new and larger whole, a super-ordinate unit.⁴⁰

40 Ibid., p. 73-74.

6) In B-cognition there is present an "intrinsic self-justifying, self-validating worth of the experience [...]" That is to say it is an end in itself, what we may call an end-experience rather than a means-experience. It is felt to be so valuable an experience, so great a revelation, that even to attempt to justify it takes away from its dignity and worth. This is universally attested to by my subjects as they report their love experiences, and their bursts of insight. Particularly with the moment of insight in the therapeutic situation does this become obvious [...] not only [are they] valuable intrinsically, but also so valuable that they make life worth while by their occasional occurrence.⁴¹

7) In B-cognition

... there is a very characteristic disorientation in time and space. It would be accurate to say that in these moments the person is outside of time and space subjectively. In the creative furor, the poet or artist becomes oblivious of his surroundings, and of the passage of time.⁴²

This aspect of B-cognition is not unusual for many people. I remember one example in particular from my own background that stands out. While on a camping trip some years ago, I wandered off for a hike by myself through the unspoiled wilderness of mountain meadows and peaks in the high Sierra Nevada range in California. The elevation was around ten thousand feet where magnificent granite peaks and canyons glistened against the intense blue sky. Patches of snow here and there contrasted their pure whiteness

⁴¹ Ibid., p. 64.

⁴² Ibid., p. 63.

against lush green outcroppings of grass and a profusion of wildflowers. Small clear lakes were tucked between the crevices of these gigantic outcroppings of granite and volcanic rock whose stark and craggy lines were softened by the twisting roots and branches of high Alpine Junipers and other trees arranging themselves like giant Japanese Bonsai.

Climbing to the top of a little grass covered knoll I suddenly found myself looking out toward an unusually large and brilliant green meadow. A sparkling stream zigzagged through it and on all sides high granite peaks and sheer cliffs were turning gold as the late afternoon sun touched them. Shadows and patterns of darker green were forming along one side of the canyon walls. The whole effect simply captured me completely and I recall quite vividly years later how I instinctively felt a deep sense of awe and reverence, physically needing to respond to this presence in some way that 'felt right'. I recall that my immediate reaction was to go forward a few steps toward a fallen log and to drop to my knees and bend forward, head down on my hands in a position of semi-prostration. The next thing I recall was that in this semi-prostrate position I suddenly became aware of myself again, where I was and what I was doing and began feeling self-conscious and embarrassed about the whole thing. Bent over this way and not having moved yet, I also felt someone or something was there

watching me and this frightened me, so I cautiously lifted my head to find myself face to face with a huge buck that had grazed to within about two feet of me on the other side of the log. I don't know who was more startled by this sudden eye-ball to eye-ball encounter, for neither of us could move for a few seconds from the shock. Then the buck snorted and fled into the shadows, leaving me there a bit shaken and confused by the whole experience. Evening was already upon me and the sun had disappeared; a chill had settled over the valley and I was a good hike from camp.

What had happened? How long had I been there like that? Bewildered and a bit disoriented I shook myself, re-established my bearings and hurried back to camp.

Years later as I look back on this particularly vivid experience it strikes me that it certainly gives evidence to the characteristic of loss of normal sense of time. Before this happened I was aware that it was late afternoon and that I must turn back. Yet the next thing I knew the sun had set and it was evening. Not only that, but I must have been in that prostrate position long enough for the deer to have come into the meadow when I was out of sight behind the log and grazed all the way up to within a couple of feet of me (since the wind was blowing toward me, he could not pick up my scent). That must certainly have taken anywhere, as I recall, from a half hour to an hour. Yet, I

was completely unaware of what later seemed a time lapse within which I could not recall being aware of the time that was going by nor what I was doing--only that initial experience of total involvement and response to this overwhelming presence.

Perhaps the following description of transcendence helps explain this particular facet of the experience.

Transcendence [might be spoken of] in the sense of loss of self-consciousness, of self-awareness and of self-observing of the adolescent depersonalization type. It is the same kind of self-forgetfulness which comes from getting absorbed, fascinated, concentrated. In this sense, meditation or concentration on something outside one's own psyche can produce self-forgetfulness and therefore loss of self-consciousness, and in this particular sense of transcendence of the ego or of the conscious self.⁴³

Maslow speaks of this kind of B-cognition as the "narrowing-down kind" to contrast with cosmic consciousness. In the former, B-cognition

... comes from narrowing down consciousness and zeroing in on an intense and total absorption and fascination with one person or one thing or one happening which somehow then stands for the whole world, the whole cosmos.⁴⁴

Maslow found, however, that even in this narrowing-down type of B-cognition

⁴³ Abraham H. Maslow, "Various Meanings of Transcendence", p. 56.

⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 64.

... it can also rise to the very highest sense in which one is identified with the whole human species and therefore in which one's brothers on the other side of the earth are part of oneself, so that in a certain sense one is on the other side of the earth as well as being here in space. The same is true for the introjection of the B-values since they are everywhere.⁴⁵

For example, simplicity, uniqueness, aliveness, wholeness, goodness, beauty, truth, etc...⁴⁶ Since they can become defining characteristics of the self in B-cognition, then one feels identified with or "sees one's self" wherever they are present as well.

8) Normal experience is imbedded in history and in culture as well as in the shifting and relative needs of man. It is organized in time and in space. It is part of larger wholes and therefore is relative to those larger wholes and frames of reference. Since it is felt to depend upon man for whatever reality it has, then if man were to disappear, it also would disappear. Its organizing frames of reference shift from the interests of the person to the demands of the situation, from the immediate in time to the past and the future and from the here to the there. In these senses experience and behavior are relative.⁴⁷

From this point of view, then, it appears that in B-cognition there is a more "absolute" and less "relative" quality to the perceptions, in the sense that what is known is experienced "... as if they were perceptions of a reality

45 Ibid., p. 63.

46 Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, p. 92-94.

47 Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, p. 79-80.

independent of man and persisting beyond his life".⁴⁸

"To perceive the world objectively", as a facet of B-cognition, "... implies a transcendence of one's ego, lower needs [...]; i.e. [...] of one's selfish within-the-skin demands, of one's egocentric judgments upon extra-psychic things as being dangerous or not dangerous, edible or not edible, useful or not useful, etc."; and "to accept the natural world, [...] to let it be itself in the Taoistic fashion..."⁴⁹

9) Ordinary cognition is a very active process. It is characteristically a kind of shaping and selection by the beholder. He chooses what to perceive and what not to perceive, he relates it to his needs and fears and interests, he gives it organization, arranging and rearranging it. In a word, he works at it. Cognition is an energy-consuming process. It involves alertness, vigilance and tension and is, therefore, fatiguing.

B-cognition is much more passive and receptive than active although, of course, it never can be completely so. The best descriptions that I have found of this 'passive' kind of cognizing comes from Eastern philosophers, especially from Lao-Tzu and the Taoistic philosophers. Krishnamurti has an excellent phrase to describe my data. He calls it 'choiceless awareness.' We could also name it 'desireless awareness.' The Taoistic conception of 'let be' also says what I am trying to say, namely, that perception may be undemanding rather than demanding, contemplative rather than forceful. It can be humble before the experience, non-interfering, receiving rather than taking, it can let the percept be itself.⁵⁰

48 Ibid., p. 80.

49 Abraham H. Maslow, "Various Meanings of Transcendence", p. 58.

50 Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, p. 81.

An entirely different, though equally unfashionable, way of communicating the feeling of this characteristic of B-cognition, is to call it, with D. H. Lawrence and other Romantics, non-voluntary rather than volitional. Ordinary cognition is highly volitional and therefore demanding, prearranged, and preconceived; (whereas in B-cognition) [...] the will does not interfere. It is held in abeyance. It receives and doesn't demand [...] It happens to us.⁵¹

10) In B-cognition there is a kind of transcending or resolving of many dichotomies, polarities, and conflicts.

The more we understand the whole of Being, the more we can tolerate the simultaneous existence and perception of inconsistencies, of oppositions and of flat contradictions. These seem to be products of partial cognition, and fade away with cognition of the whole.⁵²

11) In B-cognition there is present varying degrees of loss of fear, anxiety, inhibition, defense and control. "This too implies a greater openness of perception since fear distorts."⁵³

12) In B-cognition

... as the essential being of the world is perceived by the person, so also does he concurrently come closer to his own Being (to his own perfection, of being more perfectly himself). This interaction effect seems to be in both directions, for as he comes closer to his own Being or perfection for any reason, this thereby enables him more easily to see the B-values in the world. As he becomes more unified, he tends to be able to see more unity in the world. As he becomes B-playful, so is he more able to see B-play in the

51 Ibid., p. 82.

52 Ibid., p. 86.

53 Ibid., p. 89.

world. As he becomes more strong, so is he more able to see strength and power in the world. Each makes the other more possible [...]

Perhaps this is part of what is meant by the fusion of lovers, the becoming one with the world in the cosmic experience, [...] etc.⁵⁴

13) Two attitudes toward one's past are possible. One attitude may be said to be a transcendent attitude. One can have a B-cognition of one's own past. That is, one's own past can be embraced and accepted into one's present self. This means full acceptance. It means forgiving one's self because of understanding one's self. It means the transcendence of remorse, regret, guilt, shame, embarrassment and the like.

This is different from viewing the past as something before which one was helpless, something that happened to one, situations in which one was only passive and completely determined by outside determinants. In a certain sense this is like taking responsibility for one's past. It means 'having become an agent as well as now being an agent.'⁵⁵

14) In B-cognition there can be a kind of reconciliation with death, pain, etc., and "... bitterness, rebelliousness, anger, resentment may all disappear or at least be much lessened".⁵⁶

15) As B-cognition develops as a more frequent mode of perception, a person is better able to transcend the opinions of others.

54 Ibid., p. 90.

55 Abraham H. Maslow, "Various Meanings of Transcendence", p. 57-58.

56 Ibid., p. 58.

This means a self-determining Self. It means to be able to be unpopular when this is the right thing to be, to become an autonomous, self-deciding Self; to write one's own lines, to be one's own man, to be not manipulatable or seduceable. [...] Resistance to being rubricized, to be able to be role-free, i.e. to transcend one's role and to be a person rather than being the role.⁵⁷

16) In B-cognition there is movement toward, "... transcending the Freudian superego and coming up to the level of intrinsic conscience, and intrinsic guilt, deserved and suitable remorse, regret, shame".⁵⁸

17) In B-cognition there is greater ability, ... to rise above dichotomized nationalism, patriotism, or ethnocentrism, in the sense of 'them' against 'us,' or of we-they, or Ardrey's enmity-amity complex. For example, Piaget's little Genevan boy couldn't imagine being both Genevan and Swiss. He could think of being only either Genevan or Swiss. [...] My identification with nationalism, patriotism, or with my culture does not necessarily mitigate against my identification and more inclusive and higher patriotism with the human species or with the United Nations. As a matter of fact, such a superordinate patriotism is, of course, not only more inclusive, but therefore more healthy, more fully-human, than the strict localism which is regarded as antagonistic or as excluding others.⁵⁹

As B-cognition develops, there is often present an experience which has been called "cosmic consciousness", using the term coined by Bucke in the early 1900's. This

57 Ibid., p. 59-60.

58 Ibid., p. 60.

59 Ibid., p. 61.

mode of perception seems to be similar to that described by Lancelot Law Whyte as characteristic of the "unitary man", i.e., of the more fully integrated personality; also of Teilhard de Chardin's description of the consciousness of future man where "complexity-consciousness" has evolved to the point where individual-consciousness and species-consciousness somehow blend with one another. Maslow writes of this way of "knowing" as follows:

This is a special phenomenological state in which the person somehow perceives the whole cosmos or at least the unity and integration of it and of everything in it, including his Self. He then feels as if he belongs by right in the cosmos. He becomes one of the family rather than an orphan. He comes inside rather than being outside looking in. He feels simultaneously small because of the vastness of the universe, but also an important being because he is there in it by absolute right. He is part of the universe rather than a stranger to it or an intruder in it. The sense of belongingness can be very strongly reported here, as contrasting with the sense of ostracism, isolation, aloneness, of rejection, of not having any roots, of belonging no place in particular. After such a perception, apparently one can feel permanently this sense of belonging, of having a place, of being there by right, etc.⁶⁰

From these selected texts describing P-cognition, it is evident how Dr. Maslow has enriched our understanding of human transcendence. His descriptions have a "ring" of realness to them that helps us locate within our own limited experience in life what it is he is talking about and studying

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 63-64.

from a much wider sampling of people. His research helps us arrive at a more comprehensive and clearer picture of transcendent human experience than we might suspect or try to deduce from our own limited knowledge.

c) The "Self-Actualizing" Person

It is interesting to note that the genesis of Abraham Maslow's research on transcendent experience originated with his curiosity about two professors and colleagues. As a young teacher he continued to do post-doctoral research in New York City and during this time began to take notes on two of his teacher-colleagues whom he thought stood apart from the run of the mill. After a time he began to see similarities, then a pattern of sorts, and finally intuited that they represented a 'type' of more fully developed human being than the average person he came across. Could this type of person be found elsewhere? Why couldn't fully functioning and healthy human beings be studied psychologically? Since contemporary psychology,

has mostly studied not-having rather than having, striving rather than fulfillment, frustration rather than gratification, seeking for joy rather than having attained joy, trying to get there rather than being there...⁶¹

⁶¹ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, p. 69.

Maslow became fascinated with the possibilities this new area of research opened up. His intense intellectual curiosity and brilliant mind then began to structure the research that would expand, deepen and occupy him with its unlimited horizons for the rest of his life. He commenced selecting public figures, college students, friends, historical persons, etc. -what appeared to be the healthiest, "growing tip" of the population--to find out if and how they differed from the ordinary person. He looked for what he called, "the best possible specimens of the human species". These people he came to call, "self-actualizing", or "self-actualized" if they seemed to have reached a kind of fullness in later life.

Self-actualizing or self-actualized is a rather technical term in Maslow's theoretical structure and cannot be used carelessly as synonymous with a general term like growth, development, maturation or health at any age level. The reason for this is that Maslow uses self-actualizing to refer specifically to those persons who are more matured by virtue of their having been suitably gratified in their basic needs (e.g. physiological, safety, belongingness, esteem). His term refers to those persons whose basic needs (as he defines them) have been sufficiently satisfied that they (like his research subjects) are developing a motivational and cognitive life observably different from that of

less evolved people whose basic needs are not yet gratified. We have already described in some detail the B-cognition of self-actualizers and in the second part of this chapter we will go into the quality of their motivation as Maslow discovered it. By definition (Maslow's) and by the criteria he used, "self-actualization does not occur in young people".⁶² Given his theoretical structure and the gratification of basic needs as prerequisite for his meaning of self-actualization, Maslow preferred to speak of healthy growth prior to the level of maturity he called, self-actualized, as "good-growth-toward-self-actualization..."⁶³

In 1967 Maslow tried to give a comprehensive definition of the self-actualizing person by saying that such a person was, a) sufficiently free of illness, b) sufficiently gratified in his basic needs, c) positively using his capacities, and d) motivated by some values which he strives for or gropes for and to which he is loyal.⁶⁴ "Sufficient freedom" here refers to the achievement of adequate maturity so his motivational and cognitive life demonstrate the qualitative differences that Maslow was able to isolate and describe

⁶² Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, 2nd ed., New York, Harper and Row, 1970, p. xx.

⁶³ Loc. Cit.

⁶⁴ Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Metamotivation", p. 94.

as "metamotivation" and "being-cognition".

By the early 1960's, with the growing uncertainty in psychology around such concepts as "psychological health" and "psychological illness" and the erroneous interpretations given by some to his meaning of self-actualizing, Maslow decided to use some alternate terminology. For self-actualizing he often preferred in later years to use "full" or "fuller-humanness", while using "human diminution or stunting" as a better substitute for psychological illness. "At least these terms are more useful for general psychological and social theory if not for psychotherapeutic practice",⁶⁵ he said.

Moving toward fuller humanness or the actualization process meant for Maslow the development or discovery of the true self and the development of existing or latent potential. It meant a growing

... freedom to embrace and to love one's own destiny, which is certainly determined at least in part by the discovery and the understanding of what and who one is, of one's Real Self (a la Horney), and of being eager to surrender to it.⁶⁶

This deepening self-possession is sometimes expressed as "... the experience which permits a person to say legitimately

⁶⁵ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, p. iii-iv.

⁶⁶ Abraham H. Maslow, The Psychology of Science, p. 43.

'I'--'I' as an organizing active center of the structure of all my actual or potential activities".⁶⁷ Maslow tried to describe the experience of self-actualizing as,

The feeling of being an active subject (or agent) [...] We are involved, we try, we strive, we make efforts and we get tired, we can succeed or fail, we can feel strong or weak [...] These are the experiences of willing, of being responsible, of being a prime mover, of being able, of being in command of oneself, self-determined rather than other-determined, caused, helpless [...] or manipulated. Apparently, some people are not aware of having such experiences or have them only weakly, although I am sure it would be possible to teach an average person to be conscious of such experiencing.

Difficult or not, it has to be done, otherwise we shall be unable to understand the concepts variously called individuation, the real self, self-actualization, and identity. Furthermore, we shall never be able to make any headway with the phenomena of willing, spontaneity, fully functioning, responsibility, self-esteem and confidence.⁶⁸

We are describing Maslow's understanding of self-actualization or the process of fuller-humanness because he concluded from his research that maturation in this experience of self-possession is the normal foundation upon which frequency and facility in B-cognition rests. He wrote,

67 Erich Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, Bantam, New York, Grosset and Dunlap, 1968, p. 86.

68 Abraham H. Maslow, The Psychology of Science, p. 54-55.

I wish to underscore one main paradox I have dealt with [...] which we must face even if we don't understand it. The goal of identity (self-actualization, autonomy, individuation, Horney's real self, authenticity, etc.) seems to be simultaneously an end-goal in itself, and also a transitional goal, a rite of passage, a step along the path to the transcendence of identity. This is like saying its function is to erase itself. Put the other way about, if our goal is the Eastern one of ego-transcendence and obliteration, of leaving behind self-consciousness and self-observation, of fusion with the world and identification with it (Bucke), of homonymy (Angyal), then it looks as if the best path to this goal for most people is via achieving identity, a strong real self, and via basic-need-gratification rather than via asceticism.⁶⁹

It would be hard to underscore enough the importance of this conclusion. So much that Maslow himself did not find time to fully develop follows from it, especially in regard to understanding the relationship between psychological maturation and the appropriate forms of prayer and meditation that would correspond to the individual's psychological readiness. At a time in history when there is so much experimentation with altered states of consciousness, with various techniques in meditation, etc., an invaluable contribution to the psychology of religious growth is contained in the insight that the sound psychological foundation for ego-transcendence, for the experience of fusion or oneness (which is given such religious valuation) lies within

⁶⁹ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, p. 107-108.

the human organism and its maturation into this stage of experience and perception. It seems to me that Maslow opens wide many questions and the need for much further research concerning the ultimate human growth value of many of the age-old as well as new techniques for altering consciousness when there is not present a 'ripeness' or organismic readiness. We will return to this question later, because of its relationship to basic need gratification. However, it seems to me that one of the first and most general conclusions that one can articulate in developing a sound psychological theory of religious experience out of Maslow, is that the "higher" levels of awareness or transcendent human experience, naturally flow out of the self-actualizing person as he achieves fuller humanness and as the whole human organism becomes ready, available, and open to grow beyond former limitation. We can come to this conclusion from his two significant contributions which were the isolating and describing of the observed differences between the motivational and perceptual life of self-actualizing people and of most others. (We will go into the material on motivation later.) What Maslow found most characteristic of self-actualizing people was that their perception was more distinctively B-cognitive, i.e., they lived more with B-cognition, could and did B-cognize frequently, and with ease.

What seems to distinguish those individuals I have called self-actualizing people, is that in them these episodes (cognition of Being in the peak-experiences) seem to come far more frequently and intensely and perfectly than in average people.⁷⁰

Moreover, self-actualizers seem to be more frequently capable of B-cognition in their love, which Maslow called Being-love.

... if you love something or someone enough at the level of Being, then you can enjoy its actualization of itself, which means that you will not want to interfere with it, since you love it as it is in itself. You will then be able to perceive it in a noninterfering way [...] you will be able to see it as is, uncontaminated by your selfish wishes, hopes, demands, anxieties or preconceptions [...] Therefore, you may then see it (or him) as it is in its own nature, untouched, unspoiled, i.e., objectively. The greater your Being-love of the person, the less your need to be blind.

[...] The ability to B-love is characteristic of a higher level of personal maturity. Therefore personal maturity is a precondition for this kind of perspicuity, and one way to improve this kind of knowing would be to improve the maturity of the knower.⁷¹

Maslow found that self-actualizers had learned to balance their more "contemplative" B-cognition with the ordinary task or problem-oriented perception. He called this latter perception deficiency-cognition or D-cognition because it grows out of and is determined by various deficiencies in a person's life that must be taken care of and answered.

⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 91-92.

⁷¹ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, p. 116-118.

Self-actualizing people, Dr. Maslow discovered, are more likely to recognize and prize experiences of transcendence than less fully actualized people. Also, they are in a kind of continual state of transcending themselves, actualizing more of their potential and living more with B-cognition. The more fully human person, he found, is able not only to experience life "at the level of being" more than the less developed person, but this non-utilitarian, non-judgmental type of perception, this "desireless awareness" becomes integrated with his need for healthy D-cognition. The "transcending self-actualizer", (which Maslow considered the more fully human person than a small percentage of self-actualizers that did not cognize or prize experiences of transcendence) had learned a proper balance between B-cognition and healthy more decisive task-oriented D-cognition. An excess in either direction and lack of proper balance, he frequently cautioned, results in diminution of human development and sometimes pathology.⁷²

What Dr. Maslow found in the self-actualizing person he postulated as possible, at least theoretically, for all human beings. The only reason, he held, that they are

⁷² Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, see Chapter 8, "Some Dangers of Being-Cognition", p. 109-118.

not self-actualizing is because of various pathologies.⁷³

It seems to me that Maslow's discovery that a very high percentage of self-actualizing people are characterized by that quality of transcendent human experience which he called B-cognition, situates the process of individuation, identity, etc. in perspective in relationship to religious experience and prayer. Maslow found--and our brief selection of texts on B-cognition would indicate also--that the quality of B-cognition of self-actualizing people parallels remarkably the descriptions of perception as recorded by the great sages, saints, mystics, holy men, etc. of the higher world religions. In other words, the psychological dynamics and maturation in the process presently known and described by various psychologists as individuation, real self, identity, fully functioning person or self-actualization plays an intimate and apparently for most people, an indispensable role in the quality of perception which Maslow termed B-cognition. Moreover, the characteristics of B-cognition, so remarkably similar to the descriptions of reality and insights of the great religious teachers, Maslow found could also be viewed from the standpoint of human values. He discovered that B-cognition becomes B-valuing

⁷³ Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, p. 32.

for the self-actualizing person; the values flowing out of the B-cognition of the organism. The self-actualizer identifies himself with these values to such a degree that in a very real sense they come to describe him rather well. These values, Maslow concluded, can be spoken of as the defining characteristics of fuller humanness.⁷⁴

d) "B-Values" in the Self-Actualizing Person

Any full definition of the person or of human nature must then include B-values as part of human nature.

If we try to define the deepest, most authentic, most constitutionally based aspects of the real self, of the identity, or of the authentic person, we find that in order to be comprehensive we must include not only the person's constitution and temperament, not only anatomy, physiology, neurology and endocrinology, not only his capacities, his biological style, not only his basic instinctoid needs, but also the B-values, which are also his B-values [...] They are equally part of his 'nature' or definition, or essence, along with his 'lower' needs, at least in my self-actualizing subjects. They must be included in any ultimate definition of 'the human being' or of full-humanness, or of a 'person.' It is true that they are not fully evident or actualized (made real and functionally existing) in most people. And yet, so far as I can see at this time, they are not excluded as potentials in any human being born into the world.⁷⁵

These B-values, Maslow found, also turn out to be the ultimate values or the "spiritual values" that the higher

⁷⁴ Ibid., p. 91-96.

⁷⁵ Abraham H. Maslow, "A theory of Metamotivation", p. 106.

religions have always affirmed through the centuries. Maslow realized that what he was isolating and describing, creating vocabulary to explain, etc., in the cognitive and motivational life of his self-actualizing subjects was precisely in the area of what most religions called "the spiritual life". His research led him to believe that what the great world religions try to do for their members is to mature them in the spiritual life, which is to bring them to B-cognition and to integrate B-values into their lives so that they are able to live out these values toward themselves, others, and the world around them. This achieves not only fuller humanization in the person, but also helps others to achieve the same. Of course, different religions have various theological interpretations of this process and all that is involved experientially. But Maslow felt that fundamentally he had isolated and attempted to explain psychologically the common, core-religious experience of the human race which transcends the doctrinal differences and interpretations of the various religions.

Moreover, the predominant characteristic of B-cognition Maslow described as the ability to perceive more of the intrinsic nature or being of the person, thing or cosmos.⁷⁶

⁷⁶ Abraham H. Maslow, The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, p. 105-125; Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, p. 67-96.

This is significant for our study, because such perception is an almost universal value sought after in prayer and meditation. It contrasts sharply with ordinary cognition.

Ordinarily we proceed under the aegis of means-values, i.e., of usefulness, desirability, badness or goodness, of suitability for purpose. We evaluate, control, judge, condemn or approve. We laugh-at rather than laugh-with. We react to the experience in personal terms and perceive the world in reference to ourselves and our ends, thereby making the world no more than means to our ends. This is the opposite of being detached from the world, which means in turn that we are not really perceiving it, but perceiving ourselves in it or it in ourselves. We perceive then in a deficiency-motivated way and can therefore perceive only D-values.⁷⁷

However, with the development of B-cognition, "then and only then can we perceive its values (i.e. of person, thing, cosmos) rather than our own. These I call the values of Being, or for short, the B-values".⁷⁸ Briefly, without the various other synonyms he chose to help describe them, Maslow listed the B-values as:

⁷⁷ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, p. 77.

⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 78.

wholeness
perfection
completion
justice
aliveness
richness
simplicity
beauty
goodness
uniqueness
effortlessness
playfulness
truth
self-sufficiency⁷⁹

These are obviously not mutually exclusive. They are not separate or distinct, but overlap or fuse with each other. Ultimately, they are all facets of Being rather than parts of it. Various of these aspects will come to the foreground of cognition depending on the operation which has revealed it, e.g., perceiving the beautiful person [...] experiencing insight, creativeness...⁸⁰

Now, having considered certain aspects of the perception which characterizes transcending self-actualizers, let us turn our attention to the dynamics and quality of motivation and its gradual development in the lives of such people.

2. The Motivation of Self-Actualizing People.

"What a man can be, he must be."⁸¹

⁷⁹ Loc. Cit.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p. 78-79.

⁸¹ Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, p. 46.

This sentence captures, for me, at least, both the primary insight and main contribution of Maslow's theory of motivation. That is, redirecting the basis of motivation away from the homeostasis theories onto what might be called the emergence in healthy growth of a "hierarchy of needs". No sooner are certain needs satisfied, according to Maslow, than other "higher" needs arise, which is to say the awareness of other deficiencies, possibilities, untapped potentialities, new horizons, etc., come on to the center of the psychological scene to play a leading role. Men, Maslow believed, are not motivated primarily to bring equilibrium out of disequilibrium, but by the constant awareness of their needs, which continually change in healthy human development as satisfaction of previous needs and the transient experience of equilibrium becomes the foundation and stepping stone for the emergence of new needs. The resolution of disequilibrium is really not the primary source of human motivation, Maslow held, but rather the over-riding, ever-changing, unique expression of each man's need to become more human.

This insight, it seems to me, roots human motivation in man's capacity for transcendence, for becoming, or, to use Rahner's term, his transcendentality. It thus gives strong theoretical support, at least, for emphasizing transcendent human experience as a profoundly important focal

point in human awareness and consequently for turning in this direction to study prayer.

Moreover, from both a psychological as well as an ascetical point of view, Maslow brings considerable clarification to an understanding of need-gratification. His general conclusion in this regard is that need-gratification, although essential in the process of healthy growth, is, nevertheless, not an end in itself, but a means, a foundation or "launching pad" from which another step in the unfolding of man's transcendence takes place. Need-gratification is a necessary stepping-stone into the continuing revelation and actualization of man's potential for becoming more human. Gratification is thus not something to be feared or avoided, nor is it to be placed upon a pedestal nor looked upon as bringing with it ultimate answers to human striving. Least of all, Maslow discovered, does need-gratification at any level ultimately satisfy the self-actualizing person who has had some taste of what he can become. Need gratification in itself from the lowest to the highest levels of human transcendence does not automatically bring human fulfillment, happiness or psychological health.

However, in exposing this conclusion Maslow in no way meant to depreciate the importance of need-gratification in healthy human growth. What he has done, I believe, is to put need-gratification in a more balanced perspective,

revealing both its indispensable role in growth as well as the possibilities of pathology.

In brief, what I have observed is that need gratifications lead to only temporary happiness which in turn tends to be succeeded by another and (hopefully) higher discontent.⁸²

... if we can give up the dream of permanent and uninterrupted happiness, if we can accept the fact that we will be only transiently ecstatic and then inevitably discontented and grumbling for more, [that] then we may be able to teach the general population what self-actualizing people do automatically, i.e., to be able to count their blessings, to be grateful for them, and to avoid the traps of making either/or choices.⁸³

In a word, then, Maslow taught that the most profound source of motivation is the human tendency or thrust to become actually what one is only potentially, to become more of what one is capable of being. He found this motivation most clearly evident in his self-actualizing subjects, whose needs seemed to be "different" from the needs of the average person. From the fascination with this initial discovery he went on to develop a more extensive theory of motivation out of the concept of a "hierarchy of needs".

82 Ibid., p. xv.

83 Ibid., p. xvii.

Most frequently, as is typical in the history of scientific theorizing, this probing into the unknown first takes the form of a felt dissatisfaction, an uneasiness over what is missing long before any scientific solution becomes available. For instance, one of the first problems presented to me in my studies of self-actualizing people was the vague perception that their motivational life was in some important ways different from all that I had learned.⁸⁴

Basic to Maslow's understanding of motivation is the position that the whole person is motivated, not just a part of him; and that this "hierarchy of needs" are the determining factors in motivation. Maslow attempted to explain motivation, and especially the motivation of self-actualizing people, in terms of the predominant needs psychologically present in their lives. He first noticed that their "different" needs emerged after the satisfaction of other prior needs, which he called "basic needs".

⁸⁴ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, p. 68.

The concept "basic need" can be defined in terms of the questions which it answers and the operations which uncovered it. My original question was about psychopathogenesis. 'What makes people neurotic?' My answer [...] was, in brief, that neurosis seemed at its core, and in its beginning, to be deficiency disease; that it was born out of being deprived of certain satisfactions which I called needs in the same sense that water and amino acids and calcium are needs, namely that their absence produces illness. Most neuroses involved, along with other complex determinants, ungratified wishes for safety, for belongingness and identification, for close love relationships and for respect and prestige. My 'data' was gathered through twelve years of psychotherapeutic work and research and twenty years of personality study. One obvious control research (done at the same time and in the same operation) was on the effect of replacement therapy which showed, with many complexities, that when these deficiencies were eliminated, sickness tended to disappear. Still another necessary long-time control research was on the family backgrounds of both neurotic and healthy people establishing, as many others have also done, that people who are later healthy are not deprived of these essential basic-need-satisfactions...⁸⁵

a) Basic Needs

A basic need, therefore, refers to the presence of a fundamental deficiency within the human organism, either physiological or psychological.

It is these needs which are essentially deficits in the organism; empty holes, so to speak, which must be filled up for health's sake, and furthermore must be filled from without by human beings other than the subject, that I shall call deficits or deficiency needs...⁸⁶.⁸⁶

⁸⁵ Ibid., p. 19.

⁸⁶ Ibid., p. 21.

A need is considered basic, in Maslow's understanding of it, if the absence of that which can satisfy it generates illness and its presence prevents or cures illness. The "basic need" for Maslow is never considered apart from that which can satisfy it. Such a need represents the functional absence of some basic commodity for biological or psychological development. When the basic need is "active", in that it occupies the center stage of attention and striving (conscious or unconscious), Maslow referred to such a person as "deficiency motivated" as well as operating with deficiency cognition (D-cognition).

As the more dominating needs are satisfied, then other basic needs emerge.

At once other (and higher) needs emerge and these, rather than physiological hungers, dominate the organism. And when these in turn are satisfied, again new (and still higher) needs emerge, and so on. This is what we mean by saying that the basic human needs are organized into a hierarchy of relative prepotency.⁸⁷

Gratification became as important a concept as deprivation in Maslow's theory of motivation. "The most basic consequence of satisfaction of any (basic) need is that this need is submerged and new and higher need emerges."⁸⁸

87 Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, p. 38.

88 Ibid., p. 60.

... our needs usually emerge only when more pre-potent needs have been gratified. Thus gratification has an important role in motivation theory. Apart from this, however, needs cease to place an active determining or organizing role as soon as they are gratified.⁸⁹

This does not mean that basic needs, as such, cease to exist in the healthy or higher motivated person. It means, rather, that the need is at a low ebb, because of the presence within the organism of that which satisfied the need and thereby provides the organism with the foundation for advancing toward higher levels of motivation and cognition.

They [the basic needs] now exist only in a potential fashion in the sense that they may emerge again to dominate the organism if they are thwarted. But a want that is satisfied is no longer a want. The organism is dominated and its behavior organized only by unsatisfied needs. If hunger is satisfied, it becomes unimportant in the current dynamics of the individual.⁹⁰

For Maslow, pathology results when the need is not or cannot be satisfied beyond the time when gratification should have occurred.

As the basic needs are satisfied, then higher levels of motivation (and cognition) are able to emerge, because the center of attention is no longer preoccupied with satisfying the prior need. At this "higher" level of human

⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 57.

⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 38.

existence, Maslow felt that the imperative demands of the basic needs were inactive or functionally absent in that the healthy person had satisfied and moved beyond the more primary needs.⁹¹ This is the motivational level of his self-actualizing subjects.

Maslow believed that he could legitimately generalize that the basic needs manifest themselves in a certain order, although there can be exceptions to this hierarchy and one must not assume that a certain need only emerges when the prepotent need is completely satisfied. Dr. Maslow did not intend his research findings to be given such rigid interpretation or precise categorizing.

However, he believed, for example, that his research indicated that in most people the most powerful and therefore prepotent need to any others are the physiological needs for survival. Within this first broad category of basic need, the physiological, he included air, water, food, shelter, sleep and sex.⁹² The second group of basic needs he called the safety needs. He described them with words such as:

⁹¹ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, p. 20.

⁹² Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, p. 35-38.

... security; stability; dependency; protection; freedom from fear; from anxiety and chaos; need for structure, order, law, limits; strength in the protector, etc...⁹³

As a good example of the dominant role Maslow understood the basic needs to play in motivation, he described what sometimes happens when the safety needs are not satisfied.

The organism may equally well be wholly dominated by them. They may serve as the almost exclusive organizers of behavior, recruiting all the capacities of the organism in their service, and we may then fairly describe the whole organism as a safety-seeking mechanism. Again we may say of the receptors, the effectors, of the intellect, and of the other capacities, that they are primarily safety-seeking tools [...] Practically everything looks less important than safety and protection [...] A man in this state, if it is extreme enough and chronic enough, may be characterized as living almost for safety alone.⁹⁴

The third type of basic needs arise,

If both the physiological and the safety needs are fairly well gratified, there will emerge the love and affection and belongingness needs...⁹⁵

Maslow described this general classification as needing affectionate relationships, a place in the group, family, community or with a particular person. It is the need for love in the sense of Carl Roger's definition "of

93 Ibid., p. 39.

94 Loc. Cit.

95 Ibid., p. 43.

being deeply understood and deeply accepted". Love needs in Maslow's meaning, does not refer to sexual relations, but to the need for experiencing mutual trust, diminishment of fear, interpersonal openness and honesty, dropping of defenses, etc., in both a giving and receiving personal context.

Finally, the esteem needs are the last category of basic needs that Dr. Maslow articulated.⁹⁶ These he broke down into two separate groups for the purposes of description. First, the self-esteem need, which includes the desire for confidence, competence, mastery, adequacy, independence, strength and achievement. Second, the need for esteem from others. This includes the desire for acceptance, reputation, status, recognition, importance, dignity and appreciation. This latter would seem to be characterized by the experience of "intrinsic valuation", to use Dr. David Ausabel's phrase, rather than "extrinsic valuation" which would never satisfy the deep need to be accepted and appreciated for one's self, rather than a "role" or gratuitous function one might perform in relationship to others.

The four general areas of need that we have just described are those that Maslow found basic and most often present in his research subjects. However, two other areas

96 Ibid., p. 45-46.

of need he found so strong and so often present that he concluded that, although not universal, they were for many people also basic needs. These two are the need to know and understand and second, the need for beauty (aesthetic needs).

... in some individuals there is a truly basic aesthetic need. They get sick (in special ways) from ugliness, and are cured by beautiful surroundings; they crave actively, and their cravings can be satisfied only by beauty. It is seen almost universally in healthy children. Some evidence of such an impulse is found in every culture and in every age as far back as the caveman.⁹⁷

To round out this brief sketch of what Maslow called, basic needs, it is important to mention that he found certain pre-conditions in the external environment necessary for basic need gratification. He put it this way.

There are certain conditions that are immediate prerequisites for the basic need satisfactions. Danger to these is reacted to as if it were direct danger to the basic needs themselves. Such conditions as freedom to speak, freedom to do what one wishes to do, so long as no harm is done to others, freedom to express oneself, freedom to investigate and seek for information, freedom to defend oneself, justice, fairness, honesty, orderliness in the group are examples of such preconditions for basic need satisfaction [...]. These conditions are defended because without them the basic satisfactions are quite impossible, or at least, severely endangered.⁹⁸

97 Ibid., p. 51.

98 Ibid., p. 47.

During the last years of his life, Dr. Maslow believed that "challenge" or "stimulation" in the external environment should be added to the above list as an important pre-condition, because of the human tendency toward inertia and the conservation of energy.

b) The Needs of the Self-Actualizing Person (Metamotivation)

Perhaps the primary contribution of Maslow's research in motivation and one which is significant for our study of prayer, as well, was his realization that motivation (and growth) is movement along a continuum of need-satisfaction. The gratification of needs not only results in changes in motivation as new needs arise, but also in perception as well, as we have pointed out in the previous section.

As reasonable satisfaction of the basic needs take place, especially the love and esteem needs, then Maslow found that a whole new set of "higher needs" came to the surface. The gratification of the basic needs appeared to have "freed", so to speak, weaker, less powerful needs so that they could emerge with their own demands. Although easily suppressed, distorted or overcome by incorrect learning, habit, tradition or unfortunate personal experiences in life, nevertheless, Maslow believed these "higher needs" to be intrinsic to human nature, always emerging if they are not repressed and if basic needs are gratified. Moreover,

he believed that these "higher needs" indicated an intrinsic "higher nature" in man and that this higher nature with its corresponding needs was dependent upon the foundation of and emerged out of basic need gratification.

Therefore, according to Maslow, men are initially motivated by a series of basic needs (hierarchically ordered in most cases). As these needs are gratified, the person moves into experiencing the higher needs and becomes motivated more and more by them. These latter needs Maslow called meta-needs or growth needs, as contrasted with the basic or deficiency needs. This level of motivation corresponds to the B-cognition and B-value level of perception, as contrasted with D-cognition at the basic need level. Thus the B-value life, the higher life of B-cognition (with the ability to see reality more as it really is), the self-actualizing life of becoming more uniquely one's real self—all of this for Maslow rests upon a necessary precondition: namely, gratified basic needs. Self-actualizing people, he found, were basic need gratified people.

Self-actualizing individuals (more matured, more fully human,) by definition, already suitably gratified in their basic needs, are now motivated in other higher ways, to be called 'metamotivations.'

[...] This is to say that they have a feeling of belongingness and rootedness, they are satisfied in their love needs, have friends and feel loved and love-worthy, they have status and place in life and respect from other people, and they have a reasonable feeling of worth and self-respect. If we phrase this negatively in terms of the frustration of these basic needs and in terms of pathology then this is to say that self-actualizing people do not (for any length of time) feel anxiety-ridden, insecure, unsafe, do not feel alone, ostracized, rootless, or isolated, do not feel unlovable, rejected or unwanted, do not feel despised and looked down upon, and do not feel deeply unworthy, nor do they have crippling feelings of inferiority or worthlessness.⁹⁹

Some other phenomena that he found were in large part conditioned in their emergence by basic need gratification were the following:

- a) Keener, more efficient, more realistic cognition of all types; better reality-testing
- b) improved intuitive powers; more successful hunches
- c) mystic experience with illuminations and insights
- d) more reality-object-and-problem centering; less projection and ego-centering; more transpersonal and transhuman cognitions
- e) improvement in world view and in philosophy (in the sense of becoming more true, more realistic, less destructive of self and others, more comprehensive, more integrated and holistic, etc.)
- f) more creativeness
- g) [...] less compulsive rubricizing; better perception of individual uniqueness through screen of man-made categories and rubrics; less dichotomizing
- h) many of the more basic, deeper attitudes, (democratic, basic respect for all human beings, affection

⁹⁹ Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Metamotivation", p. 93.

- for others, love and respect for children, fellowship with women, etc.); less authoritarian
- i) less preference and need for the familiar, especially for important things; less fear of the novel and unfamiliar
 - j) more equanimity [...] peace of mind, serenity
 - k) kindness [...] sympathy, unselfishness
 - l) friendliness
 - m) greater frustration tolerance
 - n) tolerance of, interest in, and approval of individual differences and therefore loss of prejudice and generalized hostility; [...] greater feeling of brotherhood [...] brotherly love, respect for others
 - o) more courage, less fear
 - p) [...] movement away from neurosis, psychopathic personality, and perhaps psychosis
 - q) more honesty, genuineness [...]
 - r) [...] more enjoyment of responsibility
 - s) [...] religious openness
 - t) changes picture of heaven, hell, Utopia, good life, success and failure, etc.
 - u) move toward higher values; toward higher 'spiritual life'
 - v) movement toward more expressive behavior and less coping behavior
 - w) hopefulness, interest in future
 - x) changes in (character-based) morality, ethics, values
 - z) move away from win-lose, adversary [...] way of life.¹⁰⁰

We will have cause to utilize some of these phenomena in the next chapter when we propose a comparison in the God concept and prayer between the deficiency and growth motivated person. For the present, however, let us continue further with the insights Maslow had regarding metamotivation because they will form the background for our development regarding prayer.

¹⁰⁰ Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, p. 72-75.

Since most of the theorists of motivation prior to Maslow had developed their concepts of motivation around the drives, stimuli, etc., involved in satisfying what Maslow called the basic needs, then to discover a new and higher (in the sense of emerging after basic need gratification) set of needs called for some kind of differentiation and classification.

Clearly we must make an immediate distinction between the ordinary motives of people below the level of self-actualization that is, people motivated by the basic needs and the motivations of people who are sufficiently gratified in all their basic needs and therefore are no longer motivated by them primarily, but rather by 'higher' motivations. It is, therefore, convenient to call these higher motives and needs of self-actualizing persons by the name 'metaneeds' and also to differentiate the category of motivation from the category of 'metamotivation'.¹⁰¹

As Maslow further researched his "metaneeds" he began to see that they were turning out to be the same as the "Being-values" as we have previously listed them. Metaneeds, B-values, growth needs and the "intrinsic needs" of self-actualizing people all overlapped and his data showed as time went on that, in fact, they were identical.

¹⁰¹ Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Metamotivation", p. 94.

... people who are reasonably gratified in all their basic needs now become 'metamotivated' by the B-values, or at least by 'final' ultimate values in greater or lesser degree, and in one or another combination of these ultimate values.

In another phrasing: self-actualizing people are not primarily motivated (i.e. by basic needs;) they are primarily metamotivated (i.e., by meta-needs=B-values).¹⁰²

It is interesting to note that these metaneeds since they are the same as the B-values become identifiable with the personality. However, the very nature of these values (such as goodness, justice, truth, beauty etc.) extend beyond the individual, as well, and so what results is a transcending of the previous limitations of the sense of self. An expanding or extension of the sense of self takes place similar to Gordon Allport's meaning, which Allport considered one of the criteria of maturity.¹⁰³

These B-values or metamotives are, therefore, no longer only intrapsychic or organismic. They are equally inner and outer. The metaneeds, insofar as they are inner, and the requiredness of all that is outside the person are each both stimulus and response to each other. And they move toward becoming indistinguishable, that is, toward fusion.

This means that the distinction between self and not-self has broken down (or has been transcended.) There is now less differentiation between the world and the person because he has incorporated into himself part of the world and defines himself thereby. He becomes an enlarged self, we could say. If justice or truth or lawfulness have now become so

¹⁰² Ibid., p. 102.

¹⁰³ Gordon W. Allport, Pattern and Growth in Personality, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963, p. 283-285.

important to him that he identifies himself with them, then where are they? Inside his skin or outside his skin? This distinction comes close to being meaningless at this point because his self no longer has his skin as its boundary. The inner light now seems to be no different than the outer light.

Certainly simply selfishness is transcended here and has to be defined at higher levels. For instance, we know that it is possible for a person to get more pleasure (selfish? unselfish?) out of food through having his child eat it than through eating it with his own mouth. His self has enlarged enough to include his child. Hurt his child and you hurt him. Clearly the self can no longer be identified with the biological entity which is supplied with blood from his heart along his blood vessels. The psychological self can obviously be bigger than its own body.

Just as beloved people can be incorporated into the self, become defining characteristics of it, so also can beloved causes and values be similarly incorporated into a person's self. Many people, for instance, are so passionately identified with trying to prevent war, or racial injustice, or slums or poverty, that they are quite willing to make great sacrifices, even to the point of risking death. And very clearly, they don't mean justice for their own biological bodies alone. Something personal has now become bigger than the body. They mean justice as a general value, justice for everyone; justice as a principle. Attack upon the B-values is then also an attack upon any person who has incorporated these values into his self [...]

To identify one's highest self with the highest values of the world out there means, to some extent at least, a fusion with the non-self.¹⁰⁴

Metaneeds, Maslow found, are not only on a continuum with the basic needs, but they have the same characteristic of being "needed", i.e., to avoid illness and to achieve fuller humanness as have the basic needs at their own level.

¹⁰⁴ Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Metamotivation", p. 103.

The illnesses resulting from frustration of the metaneeds (deprivation of or frustration of B-values) he called, "meta-pathologies". Since frustrated satisfaction of the metaneeds of self-actualizing people resulted in illnesses and diminution of humanness, Maslow felt that metamotivation too was instinctoid in nature, rooted in man's biology.

Since these metamotivations are the intrinsic values of being, singly or in combination, then this amounts to contending that the B-values are instinctoid in nature.

These 'illnesses' (which come from deprivation of the B-values or metaneeds or B-facts) are new and have not yet been described as such, i.e., as pathologies, except unwittingly, or by implication, or, as by Frankl (1966,) in a very general and inclusive way, not yet teased apart into researchable form. In general, they have been discussed through the centuries by religionists, historians, and philosophers under the rubric of spiritual or religious shortcomings, rather than by physicians, scientists or psychologists under the rubric of psychiatric or psychological or biological 'illnesses' or stuntings or diminutions.¹⁰⁵

A brief selection of some of the "general meta pathologies" that Maslow lists are: alienation, anomie, anhedonia, loss of zest in life, meaninglessness, apathy, valuelessness, desacralization of life, 'spiritual' illnesses often referred to as "dryness or aridity", death wishes, sense of being useless, unneeded, hopelessness, feeling totally determined, ultimate doubts like "does anything matter, is anything worthwhile?", despair, joylessness.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 106-107.

cynicism, aimless destructiveness, resentment, vandalism.¹⁰⁶

For Maslow to be deprived of metaneeds, the B-values, or the intrinsic values of man's higher life is to be deprived of a "... part of the Real Self, of one's identity, of one's inner core, of one's specieshood, of full-human-ness".¹⁰⁷ Yet he frequently stressed the fact that the higher life of metaneeds or the level of metamotivation is not easy to attain nor that common for most men at this time in history.

The lower life is prepotent over the higher life, which means that the higher is just less likely to occur. The preconditions of the metamotivated life are far more numerous, not only in terms of prior gratification of the whole hierarchy of basic needs, but also in terms of the greater number of 'good conditions' which are needed to make the higher life possible, i.e., a far better environment is required, economic scarcity must have been conquered, a wide variety of choices must be freely available along with conditions that make real and efficient choosing possible [...] etc.¹⁰⁸

The metaneeds are potentialities, rather than actualities, and

... it is socially realistic today to bet that most newborn babies will never actualize this potentiality, and will never rise to the highest levels of motivation because of poverty, exploitation, prejudice, etc.¹⁰⁹

106 Loc. Cit.

107 Ibid., p. 113.

108 Ibid., p. 114.

109 Ibid., p. 114-115.

Maslow believed that culture is absolutely needed for the actualization of the metaneeds, but that throughout history rarely has this even been attempted.

And yet it is also unwise (as a matter of social strategy, if nothing else) to give up the possibility of the metalife completely and in principle for any living person.¹¹⁰

... we would be stupid to give up this possibility for future generations.

The so-called spiritual (or transcendent, or axiological) life is clearly rooted in the biological nature of the species. It is a kind of 'higher' animality whose precondition is a healthy 'lower' animality, i.e., they are hierarchically-integrated (rather than mutually exclusive.) But this higher, spiritual 'animality' is so timid and weak, and so easily lost, is so easily crushed by stronger cultural forces, that it can become widely actualized only in a culture which approves of human nature, and therefore, actively fosters its fullest growth.¹¹¹

Moreover, Maslow considered both the basic needs and the metaneeds as human rights. "In order to be fully human, these need and metaneed gratifications are necessary, and may therefore be considered to be natural rights."¹¹²

Dr. Maslow's research into the motivation of self-actualizing people led him to conclude that, "the most highly developed persons we know are metamotivated to a much higher degree, and are basic-need-motivated to a lesser degree than

¹¹⁰ Ibid., p. 115.

¹¹¹ Loc. Cit.

¹¹² Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, p. xiii.

average or diminished people are".¹¹³

Through clinical observation and other research, he found that the motivation of self-actualizing people was "qualitatively different" than the predominant motivation of those whose basic needs were not yet gratified. He termed the former, growth-oriented motivation, while the latter he called, deficiency-need oriented motivation. Basic needs he considered deficiency needs, while the meta-needs seemed to have characteristics so "qualitatively different" that he termed them "growth needs". What is important for the purposes of our study, however, is that,

... the psychological life of the person, in many of its aspects, is lived out differently when he is deficiency-need-gratification bent [than] when he is growth-dominated or 'metamotivated' or growth-motivated or self-actualizing.¹¹⁴

In the following chapter we will go into some of these differences and draw from them our own conclusions as to how they are pertinent data for the study of prayer. Rather than developing them separately in this section and then having to repeat them again in the next chapter to make our own synthesis, we prefer to bring out the remaining research on motivation in relationship to our own contribution

¹¹³ Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Metamotivation", p. 105.

¹¹⁴ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, p. 25.

on prayer.

Since, as we have already shown, man's sense of self influences his religious experience and conceptualization of God, delving into the characteristics and dynamics involved in human motivation and perception can reveal important information about what might be expected regarding the quality and expression of prayer. Obviously, prayer can be considered from many angles, both psychological and theological. Moreover, this study is obviously limited to the psychological research and theory it is based upon. Nonetheless, to approach the study of prayer using some thirty years of Maslow's research as a foundation, can yield valuable and significant insights.

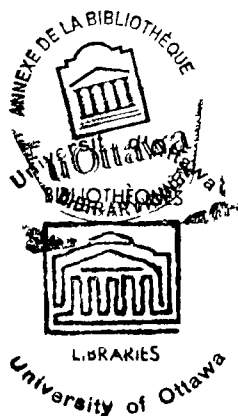
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TRANSCENDENT HUMAN EXPERIENCE AS CHRISTIAN PRAYER

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Thesis presented to the Department of
Religious Studies of the University
of Ottawa as partial fulfillment of
the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy



Ottawa, Ontario, 1972

CHAPTER III

TOWARD A THEORY OF TRANSCENDENT EXPERIENCE AND CHRISTIAN PRAYER

A Prenote: Experiential Language and Panthestic Interpretation

In an earlier mentioned quotation Dr. G. Stephen Spinks formulated the crucial insight that "Religion begins in experience".¹ I would like to make reference to two quite different emphases in human cognition which I will call experiential and philosophical knowing.

By experiential or experientially, I simply intend the ordinary dictionary meaning: "the process or fact of personally observing, encountering, or undergoing something".² This kind of knowing is contrasted with the more abstract, conceptual approach, which we will call, philosophical. Once again the ordinary dictionary usage can serve us well with the description of philosophy as, "the rational investigation of the truths and principles of being, knowledge or conduct".³ Philosophical knowing, refers to knowledge derived from the

1 G. Stephen Spinks, Psychology and Religion, Boston, Beacon Press, 1967, p. xv.

2 Jess Stein, Ed., The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, New York, Random House, 1967, p. 501.

3 Ibid., p. 1082.

systematic investigation of truths and principles of being.

At this point in the development of the dissertation I want to emphasize my belief that the study of Christian prayer is badly in need of an experientially grounded approach, especially since prayer is a human response to reality, not an abstract search for first principles. Nor is it limited to a theological or philosophical investigation. Prayer is a human psychological response and as such needs to be studied from this point of view. This does not mean, of course, that one then goes to the other extreme, neglecting the role of reason, theorization, theologizing, etc. Rather, a balanced and integrated mode of understanding should be striven for. As Abraham Maslow put the question in his new introduction to Religions, Values and Peak-Experiences:

Not only must the experiential be stressed and brought back onto psychology and philosophy as an opponent of the merely abstract and abstruse, of the a priori, of what I have called "helium-filled words." It must then also be integrated with the abstract, and the verbal, i.e., we must make a place for "experientially-based concepts," and for "experientially-filled words," that is, for an experience-based rationality in contrast to the a priori rationality that we have come almost to identify with rationality itself.⁴

⁴ Abraham H. Maslow, "New Introduction: Religions, Values, and Peak-Experiences", in The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, Vol. 2, No. 2, 1970, p. 86.

From my long-term experience of trying to articulate an 'experientially based' approach to Christian prayer, the necessity of distinguishing whether one is speaking from an experiential or strictly philosophic viewpoint when describing religious experience, is of extreme importance. The reason for this is because religious experience is not known at the psychological level of knowing in the same way that the theologian will attempt to get at perhaps the same truth from an abstract, a priori starting point, or attempt to explain it within the theoretical system of orthodox doctrine. Let me illustrate what I mean.

The unitive experience so universally characteristic of profound religious phenomena, when articulated by the subject, frequently sounds like a clear statement of theological pantheism. And, indeed, from such experiences, some have then gone on to develop pantheistic doctrine and to teach it to others.

Unless safeguarded by limiting dogmas, the theory of Immanence, taken alone, is notoriously apt to degenerate into pantheism; and into those extravagant perversions of the doctrine of "deification" in which the mystic holds his transfigured self to be identical with the Indwelling God.⁵

But the point that we are making here is that when one investigates growth in prayer, one is grounded immediately

⁵ Evelyn Underhill, Mysticism, New York, Dutton, 1961, p. 99.

within the experiential, not theoretical, and thus what is an attempt to describe experience in as accurate a way as limited words may convey must not be taken in itself as a theoretical exposition of doctrine, of a position being held and expounded theologically at the level of knowing we have called, philosophical. The common experience of the dissolution of the sharp lines between self and the divinity in religious literature illustrates this problem very well.

In Paul's language, I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me. Only when I become as nothing can God enter in and no difference between his life and mine remain outstanding.

This overcoming of all the usual barriers between the individual and the Absolute is the great mystic achievement. In mystic states we both become one with the Absolute and we become aware of our oneness. This is the everlasting and triumphant mystical tradition, hardly altered by differences of clime or creed. In Hinduism, in Neoplatonism, in Sufism, in Christian mysticism, in Whitmanism, we find the same recurring note, so that there is about mystical utterances an eternal unanimity which ought to make a critic stop and think, and which brings it about that the mystical classics have, as has been said, neither birthday nor native land. Perpetually telling of the unity of man with God, their speech antedates languages, and they do not grow old.

'That art Thou!' say the Upanishads, and the Vedantists add: 'Not a part, not a mode of That, but identically That, that absolute Spirit of the World.' 'As pure water poured into pure water remains the same, thus, O Gautama, is the Self of a thinker who knows. Water in water, fire in fire, ether in ether, no one can distinguish them; likewise a man whose mind has entered into the Self.' 'Every man,' says the Sufi Gulshan-Raz, 'whose heart is no longer shaken by any doubt, knows with certainty that there is no being save only One [...] In his divine majesty the me, the we, the thou, are not found, for in the One there can be no distinction[...]

In the vision of God, says Plotinus, "what sees is not our reason, but something prior and superior to our reason[...] He who thus sees does not properly see, does not distinguish or imagine two things. He changes, he ceases to be himself, preserves nothing of himself. Absorbed in God, he makes but one with him, like a centre of a circle coinciding with another centre." "Here," writes Suso, "the spirit dies, and yet is all alive in the marvels of the Godhead[...] and is lost in the stillness of the glorious dazzling obscurity and of the naked simple unity."⁶

As William James has summarized so well, when one seeks to study religious experience, whether in the Christian tradition of communion with God or from any other religious vantage point, we are confronted immediately with the evidence that personal documents describe such experiences as "on the whole pantheistic".⁷ One need not hold theoretically the doctrine of pantheism, but in articulating experientially the very foundation of religious growth, which is a deepening sense of self as organism-environment, one will sound, like the mystics, if not explicitly pantheistic, at least like a close relative.

Evelyn Underhill puts the problem well in her classic work on mysticism.

⁶ William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, Mentor, New York, The New American Library, 1958, p. 320-322.

⁷ Ibid., p. 323.

This discovery of a "divine" essence or substance, dwelling as Ruysbroeck says, at the apex of man's soul is that fundamental experience--found in some form or degree in all genuine mystical religion--which provides the basis of the New Testament doctrine of the indwelling spirit. It is, variously interpreted, the "spark of the soul" of Eckhart, the "ground" of Tauler, the Inward Light of the Quakers, the "Divine Principle" of some modern transcendentalists; the fount and source of all true life. At this point logical exposition fails mystic and theologian alike. A tangle of metaphors takes its place. We are face to face with the "wonder of wonders"--that most real, yet most mysterious, of all the experiences of religion, the union of human and divine, in a nameless 'something' which is "great enough to be God, small enough to be me." In the struggle to describe this experience, the "spark of the soul," the point of juncture, is at one moment presented to us as the divine to which the self attains: at another, as that transcendental aspect of the self which is in contact with God. On either hypothesis, it is here that the mystic encounters Absolute Being. Here is his guarantee of God's immediate presence in the human heart; and, if in the human heart, then in that universe of which man's soul resumes in miniature the essential characteristics.⁸

The point to be emphasized here is that no amount of correct theological language can adequately portray or be substituted for a profound unitive experience. Indeed, precision in language is often acquired at the expense of those elements in the experience which actually carry its religious meaning for the person.

For a moment, now, let us recall some of the ways of praying with which most Christians are familiar, in order to

8 Evelyn Underhill, Op. Cit., p. 100.

better situate the present study.

Traditional Forms of Christian Prayer

Besides the communal prayers recited or sung together at worship services most Christians have used three basic modes of prayer: the rote recitation of verbal formulae or spontaneous verbalizations they made up themselves; a type of meditation which was basically a reflection or form of personalized theologizing on the life of Christ, truths of Christianity, scripture texts etc.; and thirdly, what was often called "contemplation", a mental recreation of a Gospel scene through creative phantasizing and somehow placing themselves within this developing scenario. Of course, there are variations on all of these, but basically these three methods, plus communal recitations, are what most Christians know about prayer. For many, prayer has been nothing more than the rote recitation of formulae learned long ago as children; its content directed toward 'asking' and 'thanking'.

Within the Catholic Church, whether it was official or not, great value has often been placed on the quantity of prayer by assigning the repetition of various prayers as penances after confession, the wide use of litany type prayers, rosaries, novenas, indulgenced prayers and the like. Catholics were often exhorted to pray until it hurt. If

they were praying as Sodalist, retreatants, or members of religious orders for, let us say, fifteen minutes at a particular session and they found it hurting at ten minutes, then they were told to pray not just fifteen, but seventeen or eighteen so it would hurt a little more. This sacrifice, they were encouraged, would "grace" their prayer and help make it ultimately more fruitful. The more it hurt, the better the prayer. So, for many Catholics prayer became a way of suffering for their sins; a mode of reparation, an expression of atonement.

However, with the first waves of shock from Vatican II, one of the first things to go for many Catholics was prayer expressed in quantity, prayer as penance and suffering, and prayer as rote recitation. Practices like novenas, indulgences, and the widespread saying of the rosary slipped out of focus on the Catholic scene in little more than the time it takes to genuflect. Regular times for rote recitation of prayer, as well as periods for the more reflective type of meditation all seemed to go sliding down the lava flow as the volcano erupted and covered "canned prayers" and mechanical regularity under a layer of pejorative ash that most were loath to remove. Many Catholics were relieved, if not happy, to let the past lie buried.

But almost as soon as these practices were abandoned by large numbers of Catholics, both Religious and lay, there

began to surface signs of increasing anxiety caused by the vacuum that had been left. It was not that these practices had been that profoundly meaningful in people's lives, but they had, at least, provided some expression of communication, some meaning, some chance for reflection and perhaps self knowledge in the midst of a lonely, chaotic and meaningless world. With the opportunity to find some direction and regular moments for quiet recollection of basic truths gone, many Catholics became increasingly anxious as they grew more and more aware of the emptiness in their lives. The backlash of "aggiornamento" had set in and the ship was adrift before a course had been chartered or for that matter before anyone really knew where to go.

As a result, weariness, tiredness, joylessness and a kind of chronic anxiety like a low grade fever now infects much of Christianity, alleviated for some only by their ventures into various 'mystical' and 'evangelical' experiences. But for the vast majority such forays seem an exaggeration, although they may well fill a very real need at a certain time. Something more lasting, more substantial is needed to touch the day by day becoming that is human life.

It now remains to be seen whether the dim outlines of just such an appreciation of Christian prayer is beginning to emerge to be supported both by advances within theology as well as contemporary research stemming from the

sciences of man. Let us for a moment briefly consider the implications of current theological development for an expression of Christian prayer that can express itself both in and as the transcendent experience which we have been discussing up to this point.

Contemporary Theology and Christian Prayer--
Some Preliminary Reflections

I will attempt to initially describe the meaning of prayer I wish to stress by summarizing a few reflections of Karl Rahner who would, in a sense, be representative in Catholic theology of the most widely accepted blend of both valid theological insight from the past as well as creative contemporary thought.

In order to limit the sources for this brief exposition, I will use Rahner's concise compendium of theological thinking, the Theological Dictionary, in order to clarify and compare his meaning of prayer and the one I am attempting to develop.⁹ Such a comparison will serve a twofold purpose, not only to define prayer as it will be understood in this and subsequent sections of the dissertation, but also of situating my thought in relationship to that of a man whom many would consider to be the most outstanding contemporary

⁹ Karl Rahner, Herbert Vorgrimler, Theological Dictionary, New York, Herder and Herder, 1965, p. 403.

Catholic theologian.

The word, prayer, itself provides a good starting point. Rahner writes of prayer as: "Ultimately the loving response--somehow made explicit--which accepts God's will to love"; and "... a request of man for God..."¹⁰ I would describe prayer: as man's endeavor to be in intimate communion with God in such a way that he is able to become more fully human as a source of life and love.

While I prefer to stress the nature of the response to God as "intimate", rather than "loving", because of the connotations of "person to person" that the word "loving" has, the basic understanding of prayer as man's struggle for oneness with God in order that he may love is common to Fr. Rahner's as well as my own understanding of prayer.

Moreover, I also believe that a person's response is inspired by "God's will to love and save him"¹¹ and is thus a gifted response of man to God. However, I would prefer to stress in writing today, without, of course, denying the above, that "God's will to love and save man" is not psychologically perceived as some divine person trying to lead us along the 'straight and narrow'. Rather, the psychological experience of what is theologically termed the salvific will

10 Ibid., p. 370-371.

11 Loc. Cit.

of God, is found within a person's deeply rooted need to become more fully alive, more integrated, more a source of life and wholeness and more capable of communion. Thus, the salvific will of God is experienced as a saving drive for wholeness, integration, self-actualization and fuller human functioning. In a word, to experience our own capacity for transcendence is to experience "God's will to love and save [us]" by tapping into the forces within our own humanity that "save us" from the hell of isolation, disintegration and sterility. As Christian, I would hold that God's will to love and save man is revealed and mediated within the dynamism of such growth as it takes place in human development, and that Christian prayer can and should therefore focus on such experience.

Man needs some degree of communion with "Love" and "Life" in his constant becoming, regardless of what name he gives it or how he interprets it theologically, so that his own humanity may emerge as a continuing source of love and life. Men need this communion to realize within their own growth process the challenge that life itself contains--of becoming more a person.

It is interesting to note that Fr. Rahner in his article on prayer writes that, "... prayer is characterized

by anthropocentrism rightly understood..."¹² Obviously he is not speaking of that anthropocentrism which denies God's relationship to man and regards man as the autonomous measure of all things. Rather he puts it this way:

It is only by a return to oneself that an absolute departure from oneself becomes possible; the absolute dignity and propriety of a moral action derives from the dignity of the subject, who is grounded as such in God, by reason of his own personal transcendence. From this point of view, when both are rightly understood, anthropocentrism and theocentrism are not strict opposites at all.¹³

This is an important point, because in any attempt to articulate a Christian understanding of prayer out of the dynamics of human growth, the constant suspicion, if not accusation of many Christians, will be that "it seems so man-centered, rather than God-centered". When prayer is conceived of as man's focusing on God as object "out there", rather than on an intensifying awareness and loving openness to the presence of God as the experience of human transcendence itself, it is no wonder that there is a radically different perception of prayer--and little room for "a rightly understood anthropocentrism".

Prayer as communion-response is an intensely psychological reality, because we are dealing here with human

12 Loc. Cit.

13 Ibid., p. 25.

awareness. The psychological content of such an "anthropocentric" experience is centered upon a changing sense of self, not on some divine person hovering nearby. Such an "anthropocentric" experience is rooted within that personal transcendence which grounds the experience of God in man's sense of self. However, this focus on the sense of self must not be understood in the popular sense of ego, that is, primarily knowing and identifying myself in terms of what I possess or have. Rather it should be understood as a self-identity most profoundly grounded simply in 'being', or perhaps expressed as 'being-in-communion'. Maslow's Being-cognition describes profound facets of this experience.

This changing perception of myself-in-the-world becomes more and more integrated into a way of existing, of living--something that is gradually happening to one's self-experience. It is not something that suddenly happens, although there may be "peak-experiences". Nor is it necessarily vested with any great emotional content. It is, to use Rahner's description, "a return to oneself" which might be described as on-going growth in self-possession, so that with this wholeness and congruence one may truly become 'gift' of love and life among men.

I initially attempted to capture the so-called anthropocentrism proper to Christian prayer in an earlier publication when I wrote "God is as close to us as we can

risk being close to our real selves".¹⁴ Perhaps Fr. Edward Schillebeeckx tried to get at much the same experience when he reflected that: "Human self-possession is the natural obverse of religious surrender to the living God".¹⁵ In other words, human self-possession is the experiential counterpart, the psychological content, or vantage point in terms of which one can describe surrender to the living God. This is different from a more traditional theological approach which might stress, for example, the gratuity of God's grace involved in the act. Experientially the day by day surrender into actualizing our own unique potential for transcendence, our own capacity for simply 'being' our real self in the world (which is simultaneously the process of self-possession through transcendence of limitation and alienation), is one and the same psychologically with surrender to the God who is "more abundant life".

Fr. Rahner would certainly agree with this, for he has written that an important element of the religious act, is that, "... it signifies a greater self-possession..."¹⁶ My own thinking obviously moves along this same line. I

14 Edwin M. McMahon and Peter A. Campbell, Please Touch, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1969, p. 38.

15 Edward Schillebeeckx, God and Man, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1969, p. 83.

16 Karl Rahner, Herbert Vorgrimler, Op. Cit., p. 13.

wish to identify any experience where people transcend alienation and fragmentation within themselves (i.e. achieving greater personal integration) or outside of themselves (union with others, world, cosmos) as actually being the process of coming into greater possession of our real self-- a self capable of more profound 'being-in-communion'. It is this on-going experience of self-possession which Schillebeeckx speaks of as synonymous with "religious surrender to the living God". In other words, continuing growth in self-possession or surrendering into greater oneness (identification) with one's own humanity is the psychological dynamism I wish to both focus on and include within any comprehensive description of Christian prayer.

Although I do not wish to restrict the meaning of Christian prayer exclusively to this experience of transcendence, nevertheless, I will try to show its relevance for any definition or description of prayer that is grounded within human development. When prayer is understood as a continual organismic, developmental response rooted within our own growth process, then any definition must be dynamic and evolutionary. It must be growth and process oriented, and relative, in the sense of being proper to each person's level of maturation toward fullest humanness and actualization of his potential--i.e. his unique stage in "... becoming

actually what he deeply is potentially".¹⁷

We do not need to have much experience in life to learn that people who have little self-possession (in the sense of personal wholeness) have equally little ability for communion with anyone or anything. Moreover, they have the same inability to be truly present (selfless in the sense of not always having to be present to their own ego as above) in loving creativity. Such persons are seldom capable of Being-cognition as we have described it in Maslow's research.

The focus of a Christian prayer-response within an experience of human transcendence is not ego-centered but characterized by Maslow's "B-cognition" and thus on the growing awareness of simply existing and being "in life". St. Paul was probably struggling to articulate the same experience within a Christian context when he said: "For to me to live, is Christ". (Phil. 1:21)¹⁸ In other words, the intensifying sense of aliveness and oneness can, for the Christian, be an experience of God-with-him, Emmanuel -St. Paul's "in Christ".

¹⁷ Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1964, p. 49.

¹⁸ The New Testament, Confraternity of Christian Doctrine edition, New York, Guild Press, 1967, p. 654.

Along with many Christian theologians today, I believe that the human transcendence involved in possessing our selves simply in 'being', or 'being-one-with-life', or as "Life" IS our experience of God-with-us. It is therefore the primary psychological content or the experiential gestalt for a Christian prayer-response. It is also our personal experience of transcendence, which, according to Rahner, is our experience of being "grounded" in God. For, as he says in the previous quote, our grounding in God is "... by reason of [our] own personal transcendence".¹⁹ Furthermore, he describes religious activity as man finding "... access to the transcendence of his own nature".²⁰ By transcendence (speaking experientially, not philosophically) Rahner means our experience of openness to all of reality, of going beyond our limitations into an identity most radically grounded in simply "being". This experience he speaks of as, "... the mystery above us and within us".²¹

Moreover, "Mystery", for Rahner, "cannot be understood as a defective form of natural human knowledge, but is rather a reality ordered to the act of religion as such [...] in reference to which man constantly rises above himself [...]"

19 Karl Rahner, Herbert Vorgrimler, Op. Cit., p. 25.

20 Ibid., p. 13.

21 Ibid., p. 465.

in transcendence".²²

I don't believe my thinking here differs from Rahner, except in the choice of perspective. I am more concerned with attempting to get 'within' the experience itself and describe it from a psychological rather than philosophical or theological vantage point. It seems to me that every 'going-beyond' our physical and psychological limitations, lack of integration, narrow perceptions, untapped potential, etc., is the psychological content of the experience of human transcendence and therefore man's most radical experience of being grounded in God. This grounding in God is open to a religious communion-response (i.e. prayer) which Rahner would say has "... the unthematic awareness [...] of 'Being simpliciter';"²³ and which I would say is at one and the same time a deeper experience of "being-in-communion" with the "mystery above us and within us".²⁴

Thus, the psychological experience of human transcendence contains within itself a communion experience that involves a more intense sense of self as organism-environment. It is only through such an experience of oneness that I now know myself as having painted this picture, written these

22 Ibid., p. 300.

23 Ibid., p. 465.

24 Loc. Cit.

words, been awestruck by this beauty, loved this person, carpentered this table, sat peacefully doing nothing, or been quieted inside by silence. Moreover, this intensifying sense of simply 'being-one-with', capable of communion, is the basic component of the dynamism of human self-possession, which then in its turn builds up the resources for greater presence, caring, trust, genuine love, creativity etc. within the human personality. There is a mutual flow of supportive experience here, so that one's growing sense of self can be more rooted in simply 'being-organism-environment'. Identification can take place more at this level rather than at the ego-level, where one finds an identity in terms of possessions, roles, power, prestige, wealth, etc.

It is the gradual deepening of 'being-awareness' and 'being-one-with-awareness' (if we may separate them in order to highlight two facets of the same experience) which, however unreflectively known, is integral to every transcendent human act that intensifies the sense of self as organism-environment. Christian prayer is grounded within such an intensifying sense of self. It is inseparable from growth in fuller humanness and therefore should be inseparable from a deepening Christian experience of God. As I have already noted, Fr. Rahner writes that such human development is religious activity for, "The religious act is that by which

man finds access to the transcendence of his own nature".²⁵ Christian prayer is continuing to say "yes" to our potential for transcendence by actually going beyond our limited and fragmented modes of perceiving and behaving, moving more profoundly into experiencing our selves as valuable simply because we can say: "I am".

To support a deepening of our own transcendent self-experience as one with 'being-in-God', Christian prayer should more and more come to be identified with simply being more human, more in possession of all that constitutes me as a person. Prayer, as I understand it, should help the Christian become more fully present to God-with-him by becoming more fully present to himself--a self, which, whether or not he wants to become aware of it, has an absolute dignity in its openness to and capacity for communion with all of reality. It is just such 'openness' which grounds the possibility of receiving God's own Self-communication, for, as Fr. Rahner puts it:

The transcendentality of the human spirit is the essential foundation of the person, of responsibility, of religious experience (including mysticism), and of the possibility of God's self-communication in grace and revelation.²⁶

25 Ibid., p. 13.

26 Ibid., p. 465.

We should note here that Rahner does not understand "human spirit" in a dualistic fashion as some kind of non-material entity operating independently of the body.

In its thinking, knowing and willing this human spirit is referred to the sensuality²⁷ of the whole man [...] and therefore is dependent on experience, which however is the experience of the human spirit itself.²⁸

In this same article Rahner also goes on to further describe the experiential relationship between the transcendental-ity of the human spirit and God as follows:

The knowledge and freedom of the human spirit is encompassed and sustained by this infinite Incomprehensible, which the finite spirit experiences as that by which and for which it has been entrusted to itself and its freedom, and to which the finite spirit is open in its intrinsic being.²⁹

Once again, it cannot be stressed too much that in this study I am focusing on what is experientially known in Christian prayer, thus turning toward the psychological content of transcendental-ity because herein we will find the experience of God's self-communication. Transcendental-ity, then, I would agree with Fr. Rahner, "... is the essential foundation of religious experience".³⁰ Therefore, the

27 Rahner describes 'sensuality' as "... that aspect of human consciousness which is bound up with the body..." Ibid., p. 432.

28 Ibid., p. 445.

29 Loc. Cit.

30 Ibid., p. 465.

experience of transcendentality (what I prefer to call transcendent human experience) would be both the primary content area of religious experience that we focus on in Christian prayer as well as the area of essential and fundamental psychological investigation in the study of prayer as it relates to human development.

Of course prayer may be spoken of as petitionary or thanksgiving, mental or vocal, personal or public, liturgical or private etc. But beneath all these various labels authentic Christian prayer should be expressing the person's endeavor to be in intimate communion with God in such a way that he is able to become more fully human. Some of the psychological dynamics that we can be aware of in this development toward fuller humanness I am calling transcendent experience, and in this study I am relying heavily on Maslow's research in perceptual and motivational change within the experience. It is within the actualization of that most fundamental potential that characterizes man as human, (my "transcendent experience" and Rahner's "transcendentality") that greater self-possession takes place.

It is the actualization of human transcendence that contains within it the self-experience spoken of by Rahner when he wrote that: "... prayer is characterized by

anthropocentrism rightly understood..."³¹ The experience of self-possession and self-transcendence are not mutually exclusive, but mutually supportive, interdependent and compatible. Rahner tries to express it by saying that, "It is only by a return to oneself that an absolute departure from oneself (ego) becomes possible..."³² This process of actualizing our capacity for transcendence is, according to Maslow, an actualization of one's real self (in the sense of K. Horney or Bugental's "authentic self"), a coming into possession of more of one's potential openness to all of being (Being). Only by "returning to simply 'being' one's self" and 'seeing' with "being-cognition", actualizing and possessing one's self, i.e. our on-going transcendence, do we grow in the capacity for, "... an absolute departure from oneself..." (self here understood as we have already used "ego" in this dissertation, i.e. to express a self-experience with a predominantly alienated and fragmented mode of perception-the opposite of "being-cognition").

In conclusion, it should be noted that when I use the word, God, especially in the following pages, it is important to understand precisely what is meant. God in this context means "God-with-us" or God as experientially known

31 Ibid., p. 371.

32 Ibid., p. 25.

by man, not God as existing in himself, or the theological construct or abstract theory about God. Since this study concerns experiential knowing, reference to God should be understood as "God-in limitation" or God as available to or knowable by man.

Even though I may use the word, God, rather than the longer hyphenated God-with-us, I nevertheless intend the latter meaning. However, due to the clumsiness of the phrase at a particular point in the text, I may have chosen to use only the single word. But the reader should remember that whenever I speak experientially about God I intend the meaning God-with-us, simply because the infinite God can only be known by man within limitation and within man's limited mode of recognition.

With these initial, necessarily brief reflections on prayer completed, let us now turn our attention to what might be called the organismic foundations for contemplative prayer as they are rooted in Dr. Maslow's understanding of B-cognition and self-actualization. After that we will attempt to spell out what we consider to be significant implications for the future evolution of Christian prayer which can be derived from our research presentation.

Self-Actualization and Contemplative Prayer

When one takes at face value the descriptions of the psycho-dynamics present in the earlier stages of the self-actualization process, (or the same as described by Horney, Jung, Erickson, Rogers, etc.,) one is immediately struck with how radically opposite its "willing" and "striving" orientation appears from the dynamics and experience of B-cognition and an ego-transcending type of meditation or contemplation. (We are not speaking of a "striving" orientation to satisfy basic needs.) Would this conflict therefore also be present in the psychodynamics and experience involved in meditation, contemplation and mysticism as they are understood in the sense of ego-transcendence? How then do these dynamics in the self-actualization process relate to the contemplative level of prayer-experience? What is the relationship between the two and what distinction has to be made to resolve this apparent paradox? It is simply what we previously mentioned, namely, that Maslow's research led him to conclude that self-actualization is the normal and necessary "rite of passage" or foundation stone upon which the life of B-cognition (not just the rare peak-experience) is built. So, too, then for mediation, contemplation and any type of prayer regularly involving this same quality of perception. A

B-cognitive contemplative life then has as its organismic foundation considerable maturity within the whole stage of development Maslow called self-actualization. Considerable maturity in self-actualization is prerequisite for the contemplative life. Thus, at what might be called the "lower levels" of self-actualization the psychological orientation and self-experience is more oriented toward initiating, creating, striving, actively discovering one's own potential for self-determination etc. Therefore, the primary experience of transcendence (and thus of God's self-communication and of prayer) will be quite different than the experience of transcendence involved either in the gradually developing moments of B-cognition or in a more regular or constant B-cognitive 'way of life'. (The reader will recall Maslow's naming this the "plateau experience" in the previous chapter.) This obviously has enormous and far-reaching implications for the possible role of religion in society, for religious education and for a more accurate psychological understanding of prayer in its relationship to human development.

If a certain maturity in self-actualization is the normal stepping stone into the contemplative life, then, as Maslow himself realized, the "higher or spiritual life" (as he called it) or the mystical, contemplative life, as most religions (including Christianity) have understood it, is

really biologically rooted in the human organism. The capacity for transcendence at all levels of growth is biologically structured into human nature. So too, then, the higher levels of transcendent human experience, such as the quality of perception Maslow called B-cognition, properly belong within man's potential for human maturation and are dependent on previous growth in the organism. Then only the "healthiest", the most fully human people are organismically ready for contemplation. Maslow's research shows how seriously anyone interested in religious growth must consider that prayer, which is a psychological response, should correspond and harmonize with whatever degree of maturity a person has attained. People should not be taught or forced into a way of praying that does not fit their level of personal growth.

There is very little knowledge, at least among western religionists, concerning the psychological foundations of prayer, especially any prayer that moves beyond the petitionary, "I-Thou", dialogue model. Only rarely does one find evidence of some understanding of the relationship between ego-transcending meditation or contemplation (the usual Christian term for, generally speaking, a similar quality of experience) and growth in fuller humanness. William MacNamara, Carmelite director of the Spiritual Life Institute of America, is a welcome exception. In regard to the

goals of his Institute he wrote the following,

... to educate, which is to draw out of every man what is deep, profound, latent and hidden within him; which is his godliness so that when man becomes as human as he can become, when man is properly and thoroughly divinized, so that he thinks and loves like God, then simply and inevitably, he contemplates. He sees things as they really are. He enjoys and finds delight in being, in truth, in reality. And he is no longer simply utilitarian, aggressively, greedily trying to always get something out of everything. Sometimes, he simply stands before being, before the world, before the universe, before another human being, before any single creature. And takes a long, loving look at it. And enjoys it and leaves himself wide open to its revelation, to its disclosure of mystery, of truth, of love.³³

A beautiful, simple "Amen" to so much of what Maslow discovered in his research. Fortunately, his long years of careful study, when finally brought to light in their relationship to Christian prayer, will provide more extensive evidence to support Fr. McNamara's insights. MacNamara also indicates the same relationship between self-actualization and contemplation as Maslow did. He wrote,

Contemplation is the experimental grasp of reality as subjective. Not mine. That would pertain to the external superficial self. But as myself in existential mystery. In other words, if I am contemplative, it means that I have come into the ownership of myself. It means that I have achieved [...] the mastery of my own human instrument.³⁴

³³ Severin Peterson, A Catalog of the Ways People Grow, New York, Ballantine, 1971, p. 63.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 65.

Maslow's remarkable clarification of the relationship between self-actualization and the possibilities of an experience of prayer characterized by B-cognition, contributes greater insight into the difficult statement of Edward Schillebeeckx that we mentioned earlier. We quoted him as saying that, "Human self-possession is the natural obverse of religious surrender to the living God".³⁵ Like so many contemporary Christian theologians, Fr. Schillebeeckx is struggling to articulate the relationship between self-actualization and religious experience in the context of the Christian God. He is trying to get at the religious dimension of the process of self-actualization, the risk and "letting go" involved in, "... the discovery and the understanding of what and who one is, of one's Real Self [...], and of being eager to surrender to it".³⁶ The similarity with MacNamara's, "... if I am contemplative, it means that I have come into ownership of myself" is striking.

The reader will also recall that, as we have just noted in the previous section, Fr. Rahner considers one of the most important elements in any human act which is to be called religious, is that "... it signifies a greater

35 Edward Schillebeeckx, God and Man, p. 83.

36 Abraham H. Maslow, The Psychology of Science, Chicago, Henry Regnery Co., Gateway Edition, 1970, p. 43.

self-possession..."³⁷ Moreover, Maslow's contribution in this area helps clarify as well what Fr. Rahner teaches from a more abstract and philosophical point of departure. Earlier we quoted Rahner as saying that, "... prayer is characterized by anthropocentrism rightly understood...",³⁸ and that, "It is only by a return to oneself that an absolute departure from oneself becomes possible..."³⁹ It seems to me that Maslow's research gives psychological substance to Rahner's insights in regard to the indispensable role of self-actualization as the normal psychological background for growth into a form of prayer that involves "departure from oneself..." "Departure from oneself" being understood in the sense of ego-transcendence, B-cognition, or Fromm's experience of "I" as opposed to the experience of "ego".⁴⁰

A study of Maslow's research has helped me conclude that self-actualization, individuation, identity, etc. is an attempt to name a dynamic process within which, along a continuum, (as Maslow stated) an individual discovers and

37 Karl Rahner, Herbert Vorgrimler, Theological Dictionary, p. 13.

38 Ibid., p. 370-371.

39 Ibid., p. 25.

40 Erich Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, Bantam, New York, Grosset and Dunlap, 1968, p. 86-87.

comes into possession of more of his real self through the development of his potential. What is involved here psychologically may be spoken of experientially by the person as an experience of transcendence or going beyond his previous limited self-experience. This can obviously involve a wide gamut of experience at many levels of development. Maslow concentrated on the "higher levels" of growth after basic needs are gratified, so that he often spoke of "self-actualized" people, referring to a certain level of "achieved human fullness". It was from these more "fully human" people that he came to his significant conclusions about the perception and motivation of more fully matured persons.

The point that we want to make is that not only is a certain maturity in identity or self-possession (self-actualization) necessary for (ego-transcending) contemplation, for ease and frequency in B-cognition (as already indicated) but (as Maslow said) this very achievement, an end in itself, is also a transitional goal, a step into another level of self-possession and identity which develops out of a deepening identification with the experiences and values of B-cognition (or contemplation characterized by B-cognition). Maslow tried to get at this with his explanation of what he called "B-values" and their fusion with "B-facts".

The B-values can equally be called B-facts (or ultimate reality) at the highest levels of perspicuity (of illumination, awakening, insight, B-cognition, mystical perception, etc.) [...] When the highest levels of personality development, of cultural development, of perspicuity, of emotional freeing (from fears, inhibitions, defenses,) and of non-interference all coincide, then there are now some good reasons for affirming that human-independent reality is seen most clearly in its own (human-independent) nature, least distorted by observer-intrusions [...] Then reality is described as true, good, perfect, integrated, alive, lawful, beautiful, etc. [...] That is, the reality-describing words that are most accurate and suitable to report what is perceived are the very same words which have been traditionally called value-words. The traditional dichotomizing of is and ought turns out to be characteristic of lower levels of living, and is transcended at the highest level of living, where fact and value fuse [...]

At this fusion level 'love for the intrinsic values' is the same as 'Love of ultimate reality.'

[...] Contemplation of ultimate values becomes the same as contemplation of the nature of the world. Seeking the truth (fully defined) may be the same as seeking beauty, order, oneness, perfection, rightness (fully defined) and truth may then be sought via any other B-value.⁴¹

... If all of this is so, then our attitude toward the real, or at least the reality we get glimpses of when we are at our best and when it is at its best, can no longer be only 'cool,' purely cognitive, rational, logical, detached, uninvolved assent. This reality calls forth also a warm and emotional response, a response of love, of devotion, of loyalty, even peak-experiences. At its best, reality is not only true, lawful, orderly, integrated, etc.; it is also good and beautiful and lovable as well.

41 Abraham H. Maslow, "A Theory of Metamotivation: The Biological Rooting of the Value Life", in The Journal of Humanistic Psychology, Vol. 7, No. 2, 1967, p. 118.

... If the B-values are identified with and become defining-characteristics of one's self, does this mean that reality, the world, the cosmos are therefore identified with and become defining-characteristics of the self? What can such a statement mean? Certainly this sounds like the classical mystic's fusion with the world or with his god.⁴²

... Not only is man part of nature, but he must also be isomorphic with it to some extent. That is, he cannot be in utter contradiction to non-human nature. He cannot be utterly different from it or else he would not now exist.

The very fact of his viability proves that he is at least compatible with, acceptable to, nature.

[...] This is to say that in some sense he must be similar to nature. When we speak of his fusion with nature, perhaps this is part of what we mean. Perhaps his thrilling to nature (perceiving it as true, good, beautiful, etc.) will one day be understood as a kind of self-recognition or self-experience, a way of being oneself and fully functional, a way of being at home, a kind of biological authenticity, of 'biological mysticism,' etc. [...] Perhaps we can see mystical or peak-fusion not only as communion with that which is most worthy of love, but also as fusion with that which is, because he belongs there, being truly part of what is, and being, so to speak, a member of the family: '[...] one direction in which we find increasing confidence is the conception that we are basically one with the cosmos instead of strangers to it.' (Gardner Murphy.)⁴³

Self-actualization, then, is both an end in itself as well as a "rite of passage" into a higher or more matured level of transcendent human experience proper to man as a maturing human being, which is simply to profoundly "know" with his whole being that "he belongs" just because "he is".

42 Ibid., p. 119.

43 Ibid., p. 120.

It is man's biological/psychological direction in human growth to deeply know himself as "organism/environment", to experience himself in communion and one with all that exists simply because he too exists. Maslow has helped us see that the more intense communion experience, the fusion with "that which is", and an expansion of the self-experience into the realm of "being", is a "biological mysticism" growing out of previous maturity in the process of self-actualization.

In any very profound experience of communion or contemplation there must be a non-manipulative, "allowing what is simply to be" kind of B-cognizing. Or one may describe it as a surrendering, letting go into just "being" or "being-with". However, the depth of merging, of communion, of contemplation or oneness in any experience of transcendence is proportionate to the level of positive 'sense of self' the person has attained. A negative, unsure or fear-filled sense of self does not risk involvement out of the anxiety of losing what little strength or positive value one identifies with. However, there is no real losing of one's self at any level of transcendent human experience that is healthy, only "... a giving of one's self and a finding of one's self..."⁴⁴ newly enriched by this

⁴⁴ Rollo May, Man's Search for Himself, Signet, New York, The New American Library, 1967, p. 210.

experience. "... One can merge one's self in ecstasy only as one has gained the prior capacity to stand alone, to be a person in one's own right".⁴⁵ In healthy, growth producing experiences of transcendence where fuller humanization (self-actualization) results, there is no losing of one's real self, but a coming into greater possession of this self. If one desires to grow in an experience of prayer or meditation that is characterized by more profound communion, then it would seem that Maslow's research indicates that self-actualization is the normal preparation and foundation. Moreover, his studies also shed light on a possible explanation for the rather widespread disaffection among many Christians with prayer. If these people are growing and if they have reached a certain maturity in self-actualization, then, according to Maslow's findings, their perception has changed and they are ready for a corresponding maturity in religious experience and prayer. To a large extent this is not understood even by the well educated laymen or clerics today, and rarely would any kind of pastoral counseling or satisfying religious experience be available through the organized churches to meet their needs.

However, for the maturing self-actualizing Christian, Maslow's investigations indicate that psychologically he is

45 Loc. Cit.

ready to move into an experience of prayer that focuses on a growing awareness of simply 'being in' or existing, of being 'in Life', in God, "in Christ". The self-actualizer is ready for his value-experiences or religious experiences to turn toward an intensifying sense of aliveness and oneness; to direct his Christian faith toward a response to his own transcendence as he comes to possess and identify himself more in 'being', or 'being-one-with-life'. Maslow has indirectly contributed valuable data to the religionist on the primary psychological content or experiential gestalt of the Christian prayer-response in a self-actualizing person. If the ultimate value and reality the self-actualized person identifies with at the highest levels of B-cognition is simply his shared oneness with 'being' or existence, then this research provides religion with important information about the quality of religious experience one might expect in the more fully human Christian.

For the study of prayer from a Christian point of view, it is also of worth to note that Maslow and Rahner both specify human transcendence as the experiential ground of religious experience. For Maslow, the 'spiritual' or higher life is found in the transcendence involved in actualizing one's potential, living more with B-cognition, identifying with, loving, finding satisfaction in and living out a oneness with the B-values. Fr. Rahner, as we have

previously shown, believes that "transcendentality" (psychologically--the experience of transcendence), is man's experience of being "grounded" in God, and that therefore religious activity or experience is in man's finding "... access to the transcendence of his own nature".⁴⁶

For Rahner, this appears to mean the same as Maslow's self-actualization into an identity most radically grounded in simply 'being'. This experience he speaks of as, "... the mystery above us and within us",⁴⁷ calling a man to "constantly rise above himself [...] in transcendence".⁴⁸

Transcendentality, for Rahner, is the essential foundation of religious experience, of personhood, and "of the possibility of God's self-communication in grace and revelation".⁴⁹ Therefore, transcendent experience, at all levels of human development, can be spoken of as having a potential religious dimension for the Christian that is open to a faith-response in prayer.

Maslow's studies concentrated on the quality of transcendent experience characteristic of self-actualized

⁴⁶ Karl Rahner, Herbert Vorgrimler, Theological Dictionary, p. 13.

⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 465.

⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 300.

⁴⁹ Ibid., p. 465.

or self-actualizing persons of "fuller humanness". They have therefore given us valuable experiential insight into Rahner's "transcendentality" at the more developed levels of human growth. This gives both content and direction for a clearer psychological understanding of transcendent human experience in its developmental context. This is true as well in its relationship to prayer and meditation, for the psychological content of Christian prayer, transcendent human experience, is biologically rooted in man's need to become more fully human.

However, it seems to me that from a Christian theological point of view, there is no reason to limit the 'spiritual life', as Maslow appears to do, to only the "higher" levels of transcendent living. Rahner, as far as I can ascertain, would not limit his understanding of the 'spiritual life' (in the Christian sense of life in the Spirit) to only those who have attained "fuller humanness", nor would I. This may be only a matter of semantics, since Maslow obviously does not use the word, "spiritual", as a Christian theologian would. But for the sake of clarity, I would hold theologically that human transcendence as the experiential ground of God's self-communication and of the Christian's life in the Spirit (spiritual life) runs the whole gamut of the developmental process. The "spiritual life" in the Christian theological sense, in other words,

is not limited to the experience of transcendence at only the higher levels of human growth. Transcendentality at all levels of human development is experientially "God's self-communication in grace and revelation". Whether the person who has not reached the maturity characteristic of Maslow's "transcending self-actualizer" is psychologically ready to respond to his own level of transcendence as an experience of God is another question. Whether experiences of transcendence for the person of "human diminution" are an appropriate focal point for prayer is a relevant question for this study, and we will consider it shortly.

However, let us now turn our attention to the implications for a theory of transcendent experience and Christian prayer which our research up to this point has begun to unveil. While the work of Abraham Maslow provides a limited framework for the material that follows, and while, obviously, the discussion of transcendence and Christian prayer cannot be restricted exclusively to such an approach, nonetheless, I believe that fruitful and valid knowledge on a difficult subject can be derived from the unique perspective which Dr. Maslow's research offers us. We will, therefore, use his terminology and point of departure in what follows not because we feel that it is the only one, which it obviously is not, but because it yields substantial data that those interested in Christian renewal cannot afford to

overlook. Using the context of growth and deficiency motivation, B-cognition and D-cognition we can provide a theoretical framework which not only accounts for pathology in religion but also yields fruitful guidelines for constructive and positive renewal.

Significant Differences in the Prayer Experience
of Growth and Deficiency Motivated Persons

Human life will never be understood unless its highest aspirations are taken into account. Growth, self-actualization, the striving toward health, the quest for identity and autonomy, the yearning for excellence (and other ways of phrasing the striving 'upward') must by now be accepted beyond question as a widespread and perhaps universal human tendency.⁵⁰

It is this tendency, what we have chosen to call transcendent human experience, that we are turning our attention toward in the study of Christian prayer. Dr. Maslow provides us with a unique and invaluable setting for this research because his principal contribution lies precisely in opening up, describing, cataloging and clarifying the "higher" levels of the experience of transcendence. His work was an attempt "to enlarge our conception of the human personality by reaching into the 'higher' levels of human nature".⁵¹ What he found there, especially in terms of

⁵⁰ Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, New York, Harper and Row, 1970, p. xii-xiii.

⁵¹ Ibid., p. ix.

characteristic perception and motivation, brings a fascinating body of pertinent information to the much needed research on prayer.

In concluding the last chapter, we mentioned how Dr. Maslow found that,

... the psychological life of the person, in many of its aspects is lived out differently when he is deficiency-need-gratification bent and when he is growth-dominated or 'metamotivated' or growth-motivated or self-actualizing.⁵²

Let us now explore some of those "differences", which might help develop a more accurate and broader understanding of the psychology of prayer.

1) Being-Cognition and Religious Experience

First and foremost, as we already began to indicate in the section dealing with B-cognition, "What may turn out to be the most important difference of all is the greater closeness of deficit-satisfied people to the realm of Being".⁵³

This insight, above all else, has important implications in the study of prayer, for as we have already indicated, the characteristics of B-cognition seem to describe the quality of perception generally associated with mysticism

⁵² Abraham H. Maslow, Toward A Psychology of Being, New York, Van Nostrand, 1962, p. 25.

⁵³ Ibid., p. 37.

and the more developed forms of prayer and meditation. This seems to be as true of the "higher" levels of prayer in the Christian tradition as the same level of development in other religions. That Maslow found basic need gratification to be the normal and "necessary precondition" for 'holistic readiness' and the organismic foundation for "greater closeness to the realm of Being" is very significant data to be considered in any psychological understanding of prayer and the stages of growth involved. From it we can see that prayer like all psychological responses has an organismic basis and foundation which must be considered. If we are not speaking of transient and rare B-cognitive experiences nor of artificially induced B-cognitive experiences, but rather of a mode of perception (used as prayer) that naturally flows out of the self-actualizing person, then Maslow's findings indicate that there is good evidence to conclude that prayer characterized by B-cognition is going to have to be grounded in at least the "necessary precondition" of basic-need gratification. Religious maturation which is holistic growth into the higher forms of prayer and an organismic movement into closer communion with the Divine (however conceived), has--thanks to Maslow's research--this important underpinning, namely, basic-need gratification.

This is not to say that B-cognition inevitably results nor that metaneeds automatically ensue from basic-need

satisfaction, but only that for most people deficiency-need gratification is at least one of the known "necessary pre-conditions" that psychology has been able to discover for a level of fuller human development characterized by transcendent experiences of B-cognition that occur with ease and relative frequency. This would constitute at least one known factor in the organismic and psychological foundation of the 'B-cognitive Life'--a more contemplative orientation which the maturing Christian could utilize as an expression of communion with God.

Moreover, Christian theology has always stressed that the quality of human interpersonal relationship is indicative of one's communion with God. Indeed, St. John identifies the two, so that the implications of what B-cognition means for this most crucial aspect of Christian prayer is also worth considering. In reading Maslow's descriptions of B-cognition one is impressed with the fact that what may be a highly unique and personal experience nevertheless has profound and far-reaching social ramifications. The reader may want to reread some of the descriptions of B-cognition quoted in the previous chapter to clarify this point or to read Maslow's own writings. Here we will only mention in summary fashion how often B-cognition tones the quality of relationship toward one that is healing, "saving", and life-giving.

Because self-actualizing people ordinarily do not have to abstract need-gratifying qualities nor see the person as a tool, it is much more possible for them to take a non-valuing, non-judging, non-interfering, non-condemning attitude towards others, a desirelessness, a 'choiceless awareness.' This permits much clearer and more insightful perception and understanding of what is there. This is the kind of untangled and uninvolved, detached perception that surgeons and therapists are supposed to try for and which self-actualizing people attain without trying for.

Especially when the structure of the person or object seen is difficult, subtle and not obvious is this difference in style of perception most important. Especially then must the perceiver have respect for the nature of the object. Perception must then be gentle, delicate, unintruding, undemanding, able to fit itself passively to the nature of things as water gently soaks into crevices. It must not be the need-motivated kind of perception which shapes things in a blustering, over-riding, exploiting, purposeful fashion...⁵⁴

Realizing the humanizing impact that B-cognition inevitably has on the human environment, on the quality of human life, on man's relationship to nature and its preservation in his culture, on the presence and cultivation of beauty, truth, goodness etc. (B-values), and most importantly on the creation of the person as a life-source within the family of man, one can hardly comprehend the social impact that would result if the incredible amount of Christian energy, love and commitment that is channeled into achieving communion with God "out there" could somehow be directed toward God-communion "here" through living and relating to

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 38.

all of this world with Being-cognition. But how many Christians have ever heard that "closeness to Being" in their moments of B-cognition is closeness to God?

2) "Giving Up The Will" as a Way of Growth in Prayer

In connection with the higher levels of transcendent experience, which Maslow often described with a phrase like "desireless awareness", one might make the following observations on the prayer related Christian exhortation to "give up one's will" in order to be in more perfect communion with God's Will.

Aside from the theological question as to what one can legitimately identify as God's Will, the "giving up of the will" is a way of describing both a technique or method for facilitating B-cognition as well as an attempt to describe a dimension of the experience of "desireless awareness" itself. Within this context then, the "giving up of the will" could be both a kind of post factum realization of what had happened in perception that was different from D-cognition, as well as a method employed to bring about this higher level of ego-transcendence. "Giving up of the will" might then be called a discipline whose goal is to help bring about the shift from D to B-cognition when desired.

People who have reached a certain level of maturity where they 'need' B-cognitive experiences usually have just

naturally 'fallen into' their own way of "giving up the will" to help B-cognition come about. In the various instructions sometimes given to help one learn to meditate, the "giving up of the will" is spoken of as "clearing the mind", becoming passive, learning not to manipulate, organize, judge, analyze or "think about" what one is focusing or "centering" on. One gives up actively willing in relationship to whatever is contemplated, letting it simply "be" or allowing one's whole organism to simply "be" in the environment. Methods of "centering" on the body, on breathing, on sound or on an object are the most commonly used approaches to "giving up the will" in the organized forms of meditation.

However, from Maslow's research I think one can legitimately conclude that the "giving up of the will" used in the above sense cannot be substituted for the healthy "exercise of the will" associated with maturing acts of D-cognition. That quality of perception characterized by "willessness", or "desirelessness", etc. should not be extended out into those areas of human functioning that are proper to healthy D-cognition. Maslow emphasizes the need for balance between B and healthy D-cognition and stresses the dangers associated with excessive B-cognition when extended out into areas of human functioning that demand D-cognition for their proper execution. For example, an

obvious illustration of this might be the mountain climber awe struck by the grandeur of a precipice, who must, however, eventually D-cognize the face of the cliff he is ascending in order to ascertain the safe route or risk an accident. Or again, the architect who must balance the B-cognitive contemplation of line and form in his creation with the necessary engineering analysis of its structural feasibility and soundness.

Maslow has pointed out that a practical, task-oriented, problem-solving kind of cognition, which is a healthy D-cognition, is necessary to do one's job, survive in the world, and to develop a certain degree of responsible involvement by taking risks, making decisions, etc. This should not be confused with that kind of D-cognition that is primarily motivated by ungratified basic needs and after a time may have become pathological. The two are not the same, and indeed, a person needs to continue to exercise healthy D-cognition where appropriate in order to mature in responsible social involvement and to continue the ever-present task of maintaining a proper balance of B and D-cognition. Moreover, without the continuing exercise of healthy D-cognition, it becomes increasingly difficult for a person to share his "enlightenment" (gained through "desireless awareness") with others or to express his insights and values in any concrete and embodied way. Without

the continuing exercise of healthy D-cognition an important facet of the human personality ceases to mature with the result that necessary action, critical judgment, and decision-making are impaired.

How psychologically legitimate is it, then, for religious leaders to create life styles that impair the proper exercise of the will where healthy D-cognition needs to continue maturing? Further, how psychologically dangerous is it for a religious leader, "superior" or "spiritual director" to teach his disciples to perceive his opinions, teachings, orders, judgments, etc. with "desireless awareness", to "give up their will" and extend their B-cognition to his commands? Do the fallible judgments and decisions of men call for the same B-cognizing that the sacredness of the unique human person does? Or when one moves into the area of such opinion and possible error, even malice and manipulation of others, does this demand healthy D-cognition in order to protect human dignity? One cannot help but think of the many abuses throughout history where seriously disturbed leaders have used the "giving up of the will" to create a "blind obedience" to their commands. So often too have they endowed and identified their will with the "Will of God" to justify a non-critical, passive and conforming perception. "Giving up the will" as a means for altering perception is a powerful tool, easily misused, clouded with

considerable naiveté and ignorance, open to abuse by religious fanatics and psychologically disturbed people and requiring a great deal more psychological research. Certainly Maslow's studies provide some basis for beginning a critical assessment of this interesting phenomena so closely associated with prayer.

Moreover, one may also conclude from Maslow that the development of a certain facility in "giving up the will" during prayer or meditation, since it is related to B-cognition, also like B-cognition depends organismically on a certain maturity in self-actualization. And, once again, in its turn, this development in self-actualization (as Maslow and many others have pointed out) is a continuing process of individuation or identity, not some kind of static once and for all achievement that is attained and no longer needs continuing support and further development. In other words, the developmental and holistic nature of man demands that the kind of cognition (healthy D-cognition) which supports continuing maturation in the ability to make decisions, to take action, to assume responsibility, to practically share in the social and interpersonal obligations of belonging to the human family, etc., be nourished as an aspect of human maturity. Thus any life style, religious practice, asceticism, etc., which would interfere with or hinder the proper development and exercise of

healthy D-cognition and its balanced integration with B-cognition would seem to do a disservice ultimately to the person's psychological ability to implement in a practical way and to share with others the values and the "enlightenment" gained from his B-cognition. The "giving up of the will" misused and extended into the D-cognitive areas of life could then undermine the positive personal and social benefits that should come from a B-cognitive type of prayer.

Various religious life styles--for example, those developed in the Roman Catholic Church under the "vow of obedience"--must be more carefully and critically evaluated and researched in view of the applications that can be brought to bear from findings in psychology. So, too, must the growing trend of many Christians and non-Christians to put themselves in varying degrees of obedience under "gurus", "spiritual directors" and the like. The movement toward what is called "directed retreats" must also be subjected to more critical psychological evaluation and research.

3) Meditative Resources

A further important psychological difference in the study of prayer as manifested in the lives of people who are predominantly basic-need-gratification oriented and those who tend more toward growth motivation, might be spoken of in terms of an ability to get in touch with interior resources.

Dr. Maslow found that the metamotivated person, generally speaking, tends to turn inward in a meditative way at times of crisis, conflict, confusion, etc., rather than turning outside himself for answers to his problems. In other words, the self-actualizing person has discovered resources within himself, has developed a facility in contacting these resources and has arrived at a level of personal integration and maturation where frustration and obstacles are overcome to a large extent through intrapersonal searching rather than interpersonal dependence.

As a matter of fact, Maslow's research indicates that, "... many of the tasks of self-actualization are largely intrapersonal, such as the making of plans, the discovery of self, the selection of potentialities to develop, the construction of a life-outlook".⁵⁵ Thus the predominantly growth-motivated individual's natural tendency is toward the intrapersonal and a deeper self-possession, -whether that self-experience is toned more in the direction of willing, striving, self-improvement, and self-searching or toward an ego-transcendence type of experience. In either case, interior resources and one's potential for transcendence are being contacted, rather than bypassing these in favor of turning outward for solutions to a problem. This is surely

⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 35.

an important psychological insight for a more profound understanding of prayer. It indicates that not only are there radically different ways of approaching crises, which flow out of the psychological development of the person, but that these two basically different orientations will also influence one's religious concepts, values and needs.

It is not difficult to see how the religious prayer orientation could be quite different between the deficiency and growth motivated person. For example, the person primarily motivated by ungratified basic needs most likely would find it compatible with his psychological stance to conceptualize and pray to God as a reality 'outside' himself, to turn outward to this object/person for help, to relate (pray) to him in order to have these needs answered, etc. Whereas, the more growth-motivated a person may be, the more one might expect him in times of crisis to find religious strength, God, or faith 'within'—especially within the mystery of transcendence flowing out of his own self-experience, out of the experience of the power of growth within.

In Christian theological terms one can speak of this as the indwelling of God, as one's participation in the Mystical Body of Christ, etc., and there need be no concern that the "graced" or gift aspect of this experience is being denied. Quite the contrary. Psychologically,

growth in transcendence does not take place, nor is it experienced in a vacuum, but flows out of becoming more open to and receptive for the gift of oneness. Human transcendence begets the sense of self as organism/environment that deepens with every experience of communion. The awareness of being "gifted" is integral to the sense of self, especially at the more mature levels of human transcendence.

Interestingly enough, Maslow found precisely this fact through his investigations, although he was not concerned with discovering psychological data to substantiate a theological position. Nevertheless, a greater capacity for what I will call, organismic gratitude, was an evident characteristic of self-actualizing people. He tried to summarize it this way:

Another addition to the description of self-actualizing people emerged from my study of 'grumbles' and the widespread tendency to undervalue one's already achieved need-gratifications, or even to devalue them and throw them away. Self-actualizing persons are relatively exempted from this profound source of human unhappiness. In a word, they are capable of 'gratitude.' The blessedness of their blessings remains conscious. Miracles remain miracles even though occurring again and again. The awareness of undeserved good luck, of gratuitous grace, guarantees for them that life remains precious and never grows stale.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Abraham H. Maslow, Motivation and Personality, New York, Harper and Row, 1970, p. xxi.

Not only does the gratuity or the "graced" aspect of one's gratified basic needs (which by definition are answered from the outside) remain alive and sensitive in the self-actualizing person, but it is precisely because he has arrived at a more integral sense of self as organism/environment that he is able to have a more holistic (not just intellectual) experience of "being gifted". This qualitatively more profound, more total, more 'whole-organism' awareness of being "graced" or "blessed" tones his entire experience of reality. Only the Christian who knows nothing of this level of experience in his own personal life could be concerned about the heresy of Pelagianism becoming rampant among maturing Christians. Psychologically, there is too much experiential knowledge that would call it into question as a tenable doctrine. Just as in so many other areas of life, the maturing human organism develops a trustworthy wisdom which does not lend itself easily to support radical error--error which distorts reality and thwarts the ongoing evolution of the family of man.

"Organismic gratitude", which is known at the experiential rather than conceptual level, is a way of perceiving one's self in relationship to the rest of reality that flows out of the higher levels of human maturation. Because the self-actualizing person has a greater capacity to B-cognize and appreciate persons and things in themselves,

recognizing their own intrinsic value apart from their need gratifying role in relationship to himself, he is better able to experience the "undeserved", the "freely bestowed", the "blessedness" and gratuity of what he receives. The "gift aspect" or grace of everything that touches and continues to create him is brought into clearer focus through B-cognition. There is an organismic readiness for gratitude which can then 'tone' one's entire experience of relatedness.

4) Ego-transcendence

Another of the psychological differences which Dr. Maslow found between the deficiency motivated and meta motivated person was the following interesting phenomenon:

We are confronted with a difficult paradox when we attempt to describe the complex attitude toward the self or ego of the growth-oriented, self-actualized person. It is just this person, in whom ego-strength is at its height, who most easily forgets or transcends the ego, who can be most problem-centered, most self-forgetful, most spontaneous in his activities [...] In such people, absorption in perceiving, in doing, in enjoying, in creating can be very complete, very integrated and very pure.⁵⁷

Maslow found that as a person grew in self-actualization, developing a strong self-identity, the more, paradoxically, he was able to move beyond self-preoccupation, self-consciousness (in the sense of the common meaning of

⁵⁷ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, p. 34.

ego-centric or self-centered). The more growth-motivated the individual, the more capacity he found within such a person for centering and turning his concentration, his total attention onto something besides his own need-deficits.

This ability to center upon the world rather than to be self-conscious, ego-centric and gratification-oriented becomes the more difficult the more the need-deficits the person has.⁵⁸

The relevance this has for the articulation of a sound psychological foundation for prayer which is characterized by ego-transcendence involving full focusing, centering and total absorption--all that would be requisite for the ability to truly contemplate--is obvious. Maslow's research emphasizes so clearly the motivational and perceptual levels of maturation requisite for contemplative prayer (i.e. ego-transcending). There is invaluable data here for a better understanding of the developmental nature of prayer as it flows out of the maturing human organism.

5) Differences in Motivation Resulting from Gratification and their Consequences for a Developing God-Conceptualization

An interesting and significant dissimilarity is found in Maslow regarding the effect gratification has on the motivation of self-actualizing and basic-need oriented

58 Loc. Cit.

people. He wrote:

Deficiency-need gratification tends to be episodic and climactic. The most frequent schema here begins with an instigating, motivating state which sets off motivated behavior designed to achieve a goal-state, which, mounting gradually and steadily in desire and excitement, finally reaches a peak in a moment of success and consummation. From this peak curve of desire, excitement and pleasure fall rapidly to a plateau of quiet tension-release, and lack of motivation.

This schema, though not universally applicable, in any case contrasts very sharply with the situation in growth-motivation, for here, characteristically, there is no climax or consummation, nor orgasmic moment, no end-state, even no goal if this be defined climactically. Growth is instead a continued, more or less steady upward or forward development. The more one gets, the more one wants, so that this kind of wanting is endless and can never be attained or satisfied.

[...] The behaving is itself the goal, and to differentiate the goal of growth from the instigation to growth is impossible. They too are the same.⁵⁹

What Maslow found was that a univocal meaning of gratification could not be applied to deficiency and growth motivated people. Gratification for the metamotivated person (apart from satisfaction of a D-need) only tended to increase motivation. There was a whole new kind of motivation operative at this level of development which did not function in the same way as motivation arising out of basic-need gratification. Metaneed gratification increased motivation.

⁵⁹ Ibid., p 30-31.

... when we examine people who are predominantly growth-motivated, the coming-to-rest conception of motivation becomes completely useless. In such people gratification breeds increased rather than decreased motivation, heightened rather than lessened excitement [...] The appetite for growth is whetted rather than allayed by gratification. Growth is, in itself, a rewarding and exciting process, e.g., [...] being a good doctor; the acquisition of admired skills, like playing the violin or being a good carpenter; the steady increase of understanding about people or about the universe, or about oneself; the development of creativeness in whatever field, or, most important, simply the ambition to be a good human being.⁶⁰

Moreover, Maslow discovered that there was a correlation here in the capacity for enjoying life. In a person who is primarily deficiency-need oriented the goal is gratification of the need which then has its momentary pleasure. However, this soon fades and there emerges the long joyless periods of working toward another desired gratification. Maslow discovered that such activity was generally not enjoyed for its own sake by basic-needers but primarily seen as a means to an end. Since such activity is not the desired end in itself, it is seldom enjoyed or appreciated as such. Whereas, the growth-motivated person has come to value living itself as having intrinsic validity, as being a prized and valuable goal. Daily life itself with its long-term, slow, bit-by-bit growth is an end in itself to be enjoyed. The pot of gold at the end of the rainbow has become the here

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 28.

and now of daily living.

Partly this intrinsic validity of living comes from the pleasurable inherent in growing and in being grown. But it also comes from the ability of healthy people to transform means-activity into end-experience so that even instrumental activity is enjoyed as if it were end activity.⁶¹

When we realize that D-motivation tends to cease or diminish with gratification of a basic need, we might reflect on this in relationship to the concept of God as the omnipotent basic-need-gratifier. Might there not be a possible application here to the further understanding of religious motivation?

One cannot help but think of the age old problem so familiar in Christianity of exhorting people to "keep alive" their relationship to God. Christians are constantly exhorted (sometimes even harrassed) to sustain their God-relationship, to renew it and bring it to greater consciousness, etc. in their daily lives. To this end sermons, retreats, revivals, inspirational reading, missions, renewal programs and many other means are employed. One might even say without too much exaggeration that it appears such activity occupies most of the time, energy and effort of organized Christian denominations and their religiously dedicated people. In fact, various religious life-styles are organized

⁶¹ Ibid., p. 29.

around this goal. However, as we have pointed out in an earlier chapter, if a person's degree of development in perception and motivation directly influences his religious concepts/experience, then Maslow's research in motivation and perception can provide us with important insights into the corresponding levels of religious need and experience.

If pastorally the Christian churches teach and preach a God-concept drawn out of the image of a 'Supreme Basic-Need-Gratifier' or if the God-need and relationship developed by a Christian is primarily deficiency motivated because of his own personal level of development, then what happens when in the course of life his basic needs are gratified? What happens to his religious motivation, to his relationship and desire for God as the gratifier of basic needs? For many people, especially young adults in a more or less affluent society coming out of relatively healthy family life, their motivational and perceptual orientation shifts as they move into a self-actualizing way of life. If their religious motivation and their God-concept have been identified with a need-gratification God-model one would expect such motivation to diminish the more they developed humanly. Could this not be at least a partial explanation, motivation-wise, for the difficulty Christianity encounters today in speaking meaningfully to educated and growing people? Maslow's research would indicate that such

people are growing into being largely metamotivated. Different and higher needs are developing, perception is undergoing change, and consequently religious concepts, values, practices, etc., must grow also. Religion has to make sense to the way a person experiences reality if it is going to have personal meaning. No wonder then that many of the ancient religions like Christianity are in trouble at a revolutionary time in history like the present.

If the Christian churches could articulate a developmental understanding of the God-concept/experience based on a recognition of the dynamic nature of man as process, then hopefully there would be available a sufficiently fluid God-meaning with which the "growing tip" of the Christian community could always feel at home. Religious motivation for the Christian who is developing humanly should not be a pastoral problem if his experience of God can be identified with his own forward development as a human being. Growth, creativity, transcendence, the expansion of the sense of self, more profound experiences of communion, the discovery of new potential--all of this becomes valuable and exciting for a maturing person. Why should it not be valuable and exciting for the believing Christian as the "content" of his growing experience of God? Living in such a way that one can experience such on-going development should become an end and goal in itself. The quality of life, of

one's relationship to all of reality, can take on new meaning, and as Maslow said, "... the more one gets, the more one wants..." The same psychodynamics should apply to religious motivation.

The purpose of this study is not to prove a theological position, but only to point out that Maslow's research provides significant data that must be considered by Christianity in its attempts to make prayer relevant and viable for many people. When psychological research indicates that motivation is developmental and that a certain kind of motivation diminishes in the growth process, and when this type of motivation can be linked to religious behavior, then religionists must seriously consider how they are going to associate their religious goals, values and concepts with the changing sources of motivation that are operative in growing people. To ignore this challenge would seem to choose to relegate the role of religion to children, the underdeveloped and underprivileged.

However, the point that we want to reiterate once again, as further substantiated by Maslow's insights into the developmental nature of motivation, is that transcendent human experience, growth itself, has become the focal point of motivation for the self-actualizing person. This means that the primary source of motivation, the center of organismic valuing is turning toward what we have called

experiences of transcendence. If Christianity can then identify the presence of God in a growing person's life with the experiences that person has come to value and with the sources of his organismic motivation, then God and personal communion with God (prayer) can have the intimacy, invite the enthusiasm, and call out the love that such a person has for life itself. Religious motivation under such conditions should be no more a problem than the person's continuing to grow humanly might be a problem. Whatever is involved in supporting the human growth of the individual would at the same time be fostering the religious development of the person. Frustration of the metaneeds not only bring about possible metapathologies, but these would be recognized also as simultaneously creating hindrances and barriers to religious development, to God-communion, to prayer-growth.

At first glance, these reflections might appear to contradict the Christian theological teaching concerning God as the "Supreme Giver of Gifts" and the question might be raised that if God is the Creator of all and the ultimate gratifier of human needs, then why shouldn't one conceptualize and always pray to Him as the Supreme Need-Gratifier?

In an attempt to deal with this question one must first go back to the distinction we made earlier between experiential and philosophical knowing. The theological

doctrine that God is man's ultimate need-gratifier is a teaching articulated at the philosophical level of knowing and can be subscribed to by anyone capable of rational thought who might agree with it, irrespective of whether he is primarily deficiency-motivated or metamotivated. The quality of perception and the level of motivation characteristic of self-actualizing people does not apparently determine one's capacity for abstract, conceptual thinking as such. However, when we move into the area of experiential knowing it is quite a different matter. Experiential knowing for the basic-needer and for the self-actualizer, as Maslow has pointed out, evidences considerable differences. Religion that is meaningful, operative in behavior, valued, "practiced" with any degree of personal involvement, etc., is obviously functioning in a far more experiential way than merely remaining at the level of abstract knowledge. Thus, for any religiously oriented person who is personally "involved" in the practice of religion his God-concept as well as his mode of communication and relationship with God (prayer) will move beyond the merely abstract into experiential knowing. For anyone who is at all personally identified with his prayer a more total human response is spontaneously called for. Prayer and the God-experience associated with it, as we have stressed previously, is a human psychological response.

The point I would want to make here is that the theological teaching (at the philosophical level of knowing) concerning God as the Supreme Need-Gratifier can remain intact as a doctrine throughout the process of human maturation, but that the experiential knowing of this doctrine will undergo considerable change. For example, if the only acceptable and taught description of God available to Christians is of a "Supreme Being", some kind of super-person "out there" who has the power to gratify basic-needs, then as growth takes place and needs move from being primarily basic (gratified from the outside) to metaneeds (satisfaction or capacity for transcendence coming more from 'within') then this development in perception and motivation makes increasingly irrelevant both the Basic-need-gratifier concept of God as well as the mode of relating to Him in this role. Needs are still present, as they will always be in a growing person's life, but they have changed. Moreover, the whole experiential basis for 'gratification' is no longer the same as with basic needs.

What is needed religion-wise at this stage of growth, however, is a God-concept that can fit the experience of need-gratification coming from within one's own potential for transcendence and identifiable with transcendentality and growth itself. A second requirement would involve development of some way to shift the method of God-communion

onto one's awareness of the rich experiential content that is involved in human transcendence. At no time is there any reason to deny or denigrate the theological teaching about God as the "Supreme Giver of Gifts". There is, however, an urgent pastoral need not to distort a theological teaching by overemphasizing and limiting the attempted description of God as the omnipotent need-gratifier to the image of an 'outside' person playing the role of basic-need-gratifier.

Indeed, the motivational and perceptual development that has taken place in the self-actualizing person provides a more receptive and richer organismic foundation for experientially understanding and deepening belief in various Christian teachings. The indwelling of the Trinity, the individual Christian's "incorporation" into the Whole Christ, and the meaning of the Incarnation itself all come to mind as obvious examples. Much of contemporary theological writing is struggling to articulate Christian teaching in language a self-actualizing Christian might relate to his own experience. For example, the following excerpt illustrates this approach, which is being developed in various ways by different theologians.

By becoming Flesh, the Incarnate Son in whom we are incorporated makes it possible that our psychological experience of God speaking to us is no longer exclusively restricted to hearing a voice from 'outside' as, for example, in the power of nature, the law or the prophetic voice which was an external force guiding men in the path of justice and righteousness. God now speaks to man from 'within' his own experience of himself becoming more a whole person: "... in this final age he has spoken to us in the Son..." (Heb. 1:2, NEB), in whom "... we live and move and have our being." (Acts 17:28, RSV).

In examining the developmental process at work in the movement from Old to New Testament and the evolving quality of Trinitarian revelation, we find that God first prepares and then waits for man to grow before giving a further revelation of himself. Thus, throughout the Old and New Testaments, God gives himself to a developing, evolving, maturing mankind [...]

... Even though we all live in the era of the Incarnation, there is, nonetheless, a sense in which, within our psychological growth as maturing-body-persons, we re-live and pass through an experience of Old Testament revelation into that of the New. By this we mean that each individual progresses psychologically from a reflective faith-awareness of God's presence to him which is proper to that of Old Testament man toward the further experience of a revelation which is specifically "Christian."

... More often than not, we really do not appreciate the radical difference between God's presence in Jesus and the Burning Bush [...] we sometimes fail to see how the Incarnation and the Hypostatic Union tell us something about our own uniquely developing selves. We often think of the Incarnation as an objective 'truth,' when we should be seeking it out as an integral part of our own self-awareness.⁶²

62 Edwin M. McMahon and Peter A. Campbell, The In-Between: Evolution in Christian Faith, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1969, p. 105-108.

6) Further Implications of the "Outside",
Omnipotent, Need-Gratifying God-Model

Closely related to what we have just been discussing is this further dimension which has far-reaching consequences in regard to Christian prayer. I have found over and over again from personal experience with religiously disposed people, as well as from pastoral counseling that adults whose basic needs have not been gratified tend to orient their God-relationship in order to hopefully bring this about. Pastoral experience has made me very conscious of how frequently religiously-inclined people who have suffered deprivation regarding the gratification of their basic needs and who have been 'disappointed', hurt, or simply deprived in their human relationships, turn to a God 'outside' this "vale of tears" in their longing for satisfaction of these needs. Moreover, in doing so they establish deep and set patterns in the quality of their relatedness to the world around them which are often characterized by varying degrees of rigidity, closedness, psychological unavailability, distrust, defensiveness, etc... This is often quite understandable in view of the hardships they have experienced. But what has often complicated any growth out of such ultimately self-destructive patterns of behavior and made change so difficult has been the strong identification they have made with the familiar God-model of an all loving,

omnipotent, need-gratifier, untainted by the ambivalence of this world, who will answer their basic needs if only they persevere at prayer. Such a God and prayer concept has brought religion into a supportive role where there is behavior that is at best dehumanizing and often seriously pathological.

The point to be made here is not one of denying the theological teaching that God is the ultimate gratification source of all man's needs, but rather that there are good grounds for questioning the positive contribution that the God-model under discussion has in the lives of many people. At the experiential level of how men go about living, relating and practicing their religion in order to satisfy their needs, the psychological consequences of such a model have hardly been examined.

The gratification of all needs, whether basic or metaneeds, operates and is experientially known within the human growth process and within the quality of one's relationships in this world. To confuse and turn men's awareness away from this fundamental existential reality by using a particular God-model seems, at best, a disservice to mankind. There appears to be both psychological and theological reasons for saying this.

Basic needs are only answered in and through one's experience of the world and especially of the human family.

We are dependent on other people for the gratification of these needs. As Maslow has written,

The needs for safety, belongingness, love relations and for respect can be satisfied only by other people, i.e., only from outside the person. This means considerable dependence on the environment.⁶³

The 'outside' orientation that is proper to deficiency motivation must be directed toward this world and other human beings, because it is here that the potential experiential source of gratification may be found. 'Outside' cannot mean external to or apart from the human existential order within which the gratification of basic needs takes place.

Secondly, from a Christian theological viewpoint the God who gratifies basic needs does so (in theological language) through the Body of the Whole Christ, namely, the ordinary laws of human growth within the family of man. Without going into the details of a fully developed theological position, let it suffice to simply state that there is ample theological backing to hold that the orientation of Christian faith is to be directed toward the mystery of God-with-us and the continuing Incarnation of the Whole Christ within the ongoing history and evolution of mankind. Specifically Christian faith and the Christian experience

⁶³ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, p. 31.

of God is primarily oriented toward a faith-perception of this world, not of a divine person or persons 'outside' the human family and the world around us. It is this world and the family of man that the Christian is asked to believe has become the recipient of a divine presence and life through its incorporation into and identification with Jesus Christ. Thus, whatever God-concept the Christian churches attempt to convey to their followers should always be oriented toward the fuller revelation of the Community (Trinitarian) presence of God-with-us in the Body of the Whole Christ as this is available to men in one another and in the world around them. This is as true in describing God as the gratifier of human needs as it is in articulating any other divine attribute that a Christian might hope to experience in some limited way as he lives out his life.

If the Christian Churches directed belief in God as need-gratifier to God-with-us in the Body of the Whole Christ, (i.e. to this world and the family of man), then, when a growing person moved into metamotivation, the development and adjustment in God-concept and experience would be far less traumatic than it often is now when the need gratifying God "out there" no longer seems meaningful and there is no other God-concept that the Christian community makes available in its place. If a Christian's understanding of God as basic-need-gratifier had already been oriented

toward his experience of safety, belongingness, love and respect as these were given to him through his parents, family, friends--the human community around him--then the transition from this predominantly stimulus-response kind of 'outside' consciousness to a heightened awareness of the God-experience in his own 'inside' potential for determining his behavior, feelings, capacity for life, etc., would be minimal. The latter naturally flows out of the former. Quality of relationship and capacity for communion would already have been experienced as the key factor either from the giving or receiving point of view in basic need gratification. And the same fundamental ingredient could be expected to apply in the answering of metaneeds as self-possession and self-communion become a value, recognizing that the source of gratification for these new needs resides primarily 'within' because of prior 'gifting' or 'revealing' of these inner resources.

Christian prayer, the experience of God and many other religious practices would in all probability undergo a rather radical change if the traditional God-model were altered in the direction of increased emphasis on God-with-us. The high attrition from the established Christian churches might also be somewhat lessened by such a development.

Of course, no one can guarantee that any person's basic needs will be gratified in the human family no matter what God-concept the churches articulate. Nevertheless, a change in God image and prayer emphasis could help many Christians whose personal history has deprived them of basic need satisfaction and whose tendency might be to close off and escape the pain and further wounding that human relationships bring by establishing a surrogate relationship to the need-gratifying God outside this imperfect world. If the prayer orientation of their religion emphatically identified the quality of their relationship to the world and other people with the quality of relationship they were creating with God, then, at least, the support of religion and their practice of it would be turned in the positive direction of helping them to remain open and available to have their basic needs answered if that should happen in the course of life. Religion in such a situation would certainly be taking a positive step in the right direction by helping to create a psychological posture more receptive to continuing growth. This, of course, would always need to be supplemented by the Christian community's attempt to actually satisfy unanswered basic needs, insofar as this was possible. At least at the level of pastoral teaching, however, the prayer-image projected would not be one that lent itself so easily to escapism.

The D-motivated person has profoundly felt needs that can only be met by other people and which color his perception of all of reality, including his understanding of God. Since his perception and motivation are so strongly oriented toward the gratification of basic needs which have to be answered by an 'outside' person or persons the tendency to conceptualize God as person or persons would seem to naturally follow upon this. Moreover, it follows that if such an individual understands God in any way related to the gratification of his needs, then that God-concept would easily be anthropomorphized into a super need-gratifying person-model with powers beyond those of ordinary men. However, this tendency evidences potential psychological harm, and there is increasing theological research to also call it into question. Such a tendency does not appear to help growth in specifically "Christian" faith, which, many contemporary Christians would hold, has to be directed precisely toward the limitations in the "grain of mustard seed" gifted with the power of transcending those limitations. The test of Christian faith, it might be argued, is not belief in an omnipotent God apart from human experience, but belief in the power of transcendence in one's self and in other people as the living Body of the Whole Christ.

The practice of prayer and the human response involved in Christian faith are not restricted to the level

of philosophical knowing, but involve the whole person at the experiential level. The theological truth that God is omnipotent need-gratifier (which is not being denied here as such) can only be known by man as an abstract concept. In the existential order, this teaching is never experientially known as such, because what we know at this level is always limited. We do not experientially know absolutes and prayer is not meant to be an exercise in theological speculation.

I would submit that Maslow's research adds one more bit of psychological insight to the already growing amount of evidence from many different sources indicating that the Christian churches must energetically counteract the predictable tendency of D-motivated people to orient their prayer and religious activity toward a supreme need-gratifying divina person 'outside' this world and the interpersonal relationships of mankind.

Such a proposal as this will very likely be vehemently opposed by some Christians for many reasons, foremost among them the centuries-old tradition in the liturgy which largely orients worship and prayer in the exact opposite direction. However, fully aware of the radical nature of this recommendation, as well as the many difficulties involved in any such enormous shift in popular understanding, I would still hold that some beginning must soon be made

because the stakes are so high at this juncture in the history of Christianity.

The problems in Christianity that are so widespread and increasing are, at their root source, as profound and fundamental as the very God-conceptualization and model itself. Any attempt to help Christianity make a positive contribution to mankind that does not somehow work with the God-problem is not really at the radical source of the difficulty. As the late Cardinal Pierre Veuillot of Paris is quoted as having said at the 1967 World Bishops' Synod in Rome,

The number one problem of our time is man's relationship with God and how it should be expressed. Are the Christian churches going to be capable of examining in depth the problem of God in the world?⁶⁴

7) An Outline Summarizing the Implications of Deficiency
and Growth Motivation for Christian Prayer
and Religious Experiencing

I believe Dr. Maslow's research provides some important psychological data that the Christian churches must take cognizance of in re-articulating the God-concept and the corresponding modes of Christian prayer. One way of trying to illustrate this position might be to bring together in summary form some of the most important psychological

⁶⁴ Edwin M. McMahon and Peter A. Campbell, The In-Between: Evolution in Christian Faith, p. 17.

differences Maslow found between deficiency and growth motivated people. By briefly describing each and juxtaposing the two different trends in a kind of chart, the reader may be able to get a clearer picture of these two quite divergent tendencies. I have chosen to use this form of presentation for the next several pages rather than continuing with detailed explanations, because I think in the long run it may provide a more understandable grasp of both the Maslow insights that are relevant to our study as well as their applications to religious experience, the God-concept and prayer. Therefore, after briefly outlining some of the most fundamental differences between the deficiency-motivated and growth-motivated person, I will use this same framework to draw out what I consider the likely corresponding differences in the God-concept/experience and prayer.

The reader must bear in mind that this chart-like presentation is being used to give a composite picture, because the Maslow sources are too diffuse and somewhat repetitive to make a detailed, documented description of each statement possible in view of the synthetic goal of this study. Furthermore, the original drawing out of the religious implications are presented here only as initial statements inviting further research, but, nevertheless, of sufficient value that they are worthy of consideration in a

theory of religious experience aimed at a better understanding of the psychology of prayer. The outline form then serves to highlight the probable differences in religious experience by juxtaposing the deficiency and growth-motivated characteristics in areas like perception, goals, relationship to environment, sense of self, etc. Lastly, the reader must read these pages realizing that neither Maslow's findings nor the implications that I draw from them in regard to religious experience are meant as absolutes or apodictic statements. The very nature of what is being studied here--namely, tendencies, trends, general directions in development, movement and stages in human growth--does not lend itself to black and white categorical statements. There are such differences in the composite that is the unique human personality that any attempt to make statements about perceptual and motivational differences must always leave room for possible exceptions and respect the developmental nature of man, remembering that any conclusions apply only relatively to each person.

Deficiency Motivated ←—— Person ——→ Growth Motivated

I. General Trends in Perception of Reality:

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. focus on dangers
minimize attractions | a. focus on attractions
minimize dangers |
| b. reality seen in relation-
ship to gratification of
basic needs, deficiency
awareness D-cognition | b. greater frequency of B-
cognition and closeness
to 'being' and unity
experiences |
| c. reality as objects "out
there" | c. reality as more unified,
dimension of organism/
environment experience |
| d. manipulative, needing,
highly subjective, "vested
interest" perception | d. more "disinterested",
detached, objective,
"desireless" perception |
| e. in times of stress, con-
flict, confusion turn
outward for solution
to problems | e. in times of stress, etc.,
tendency is to turn inward
in a meditative way, to "in-
ner sources" for strength
and direction |

II. Motivation Characteristics and Goals:

- | | |
|---|--|
| a. short term, specific
goals, seek reduction in
tension, restoration of
equilibrium | a. goals tend to be more
long-term |
| b. gratification brings de-
creased motivation | b. gratification of metaneeds
brings increased motivation |
| c. determiners of motivation
more from "outside"
sources | c. determiners of motivation
from "inside" sources, mo-
tivation & goals become more
the experience of growth &
transcendence itself |

Deficiency Motivated ←—— Person ——→ Growth Motivated

II. Motivation Characteristics and Goals (continued)

- | | |
|--|---|
| d. activity more a reaction to external stimuli | d. source of action more self-determined |
| e. behavior usually profoundly influenced by ungratified basic-needs | e. conscious or unconscious awareness of basic needs fades, replaced by metaneeds, B-values influencing behavior, goals |
| f. difficulty in changing, rigidity, lack of openness defensive | f. greater ease in ability to change, less defensive, more open |

III. Emotional Tendency:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| a. fears | a. comfortableness |
| b. less enjoyment of life | b. more enjoyment of experiences and living |
| c. anxieties, hostilities, insecurity | c. more secure and at peace with self and others |

IV. Relationship to Environment:

- | | |
|--|--|
| a. varying degrees of dependency on and fear of | a. more independence from and objectivity toward |
| b. lack of freedom toward | b. greater freedom toward |
| c. more "outside" directed | c. more self-directed |
| d. little or no spontaneity, flexibility toward | d. more spontaneity, flexibility toward |
| e. learning is more the acquisition of habits or associations, coping, "putting on something from the outside" | e. learning is more the freeing of potential, immanent activity, self-discovery, becoming more one's real self, expressive of one's inner nature |

Deficiency Motivated ← Person → Growth Motivated

IV. Relationship to Environment (continued)

- | | |
|--|---|
| <p>f. interpersonal relationships tend to be oriented toward: self-aggrandizement & gratification of basic-needs, manipulative, projective, possessive, anxiety-hostility present, needing, "colored", erroneous perceptions of others, inability to "let other be himself", judgmental, authoritarian</p> | <p>f. more capable of B-love; non-interfering, non-possessive, minimum of anxiety-hostility, more autonomous, truer, more penetrating perception and enjoyment of the unique personhood of another, greater ability to deeply accept & understand, to foster self-actualization of others</p> |
|--|---|

V. Sense of Self:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>a. fragmented, isolated, alone, not personally integrated, separated from others, world</p> | <p>a. more as organism/environment, one with reality, more unified "inside" and with "outside"</p> |
| <p>b. experiences of transcendence rare, if at all, & not strongly identified with self</p> | <p>b. greater frequency and more identified with experiences of transcendence</p> |
| <p>c. little grasp of, knowledge of self, weak self-possession, "who am I" preoccupation, weak identity, struggle to find self makes ego-transcendence difficult, even impossible</p> | <p>c. strong self-identity, possession, enables easier transcendence of ego</p> |

VI. Religious Experience, God Concept, Prayer:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>a. God=object/person "outside" who has the power to gratify basic-needs, relate to Him in order to get needs answered, to be feared</p> | <p>a. greater attraction to, enjoyment of and valuing of B-cognition tends to give unity and being experiences</p> |
|--|--|

Deficiency Motivated ← Person → Growth Motivated

VI. Religious Experience, God Concept, Prayer (continued)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <p>a. (continued)
because He may not gratify needs, can hurt me</p> | <p>a. (continued)
religious valuation if that is important for person; God="Ground of Being" experiences of transcendence, of "life", of B-values like wholeness, truth, beauty, goodness, unity, etc. experiences of becoming more fully alive, more human, self-actualized, ego-transcendence; comfortableness and oneness with self = closeness to God = closeness to real self; experiences of organism/environment = communion with God</p> |
| <p>b. in times of stress and tension over ungratified needs, person turns "outward" to God for help</p> | <p>b. in times of stress seek to find help, God, religious strength "within" own potential for transcendence; religious belief or faith becomes experientially more inseparable from "faith in oneself", in the power of growth within, of the mystery of transcendence flowing out of self as organism/environment, "graced" religious growth tends to be more a faith-deepening in the sense of God "within" so that transcendence continues, communion with the "resurrecting presence" that flows out of being more organism/environment, more whole, more human</p> |
| <p>c. predominant prayer-need is petitionary, thanking, dialogue model; God is a possession like other "things" ego has to gratify needs</p> | <p>c. predominant prayer-need is unitive, to experience one's very existence as "immersed" in God, one's very consciousness to be an experience of the Divine, to be more in union with God by being more organism/environment</p> |

Deficiency Motivated ← Person → Growth Motivated

VI. Religious Experience, God Concept, Prayer (continued)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>d. ungratified basic-needs motivate to conscious or unconscious manipulation of God; anxiety-hostility syndrome directed toward God especially if needs not answered; conception of God "colored" by one's ungratified basic needs; angry, disappointed, "lose faith" in God if he doesn't gratify needs</p> | <p>d. more of "don't expect anything from God" attitude, more enjoyment just "being within" by being more organism/environment; not oriented toward an "asking" God relationship; minimum of anxiety-hostility in God-experience; prayer-experience of God moves more to quality of self-experience as org/env, more identified with self-awareness; quality of God-perception changes as basic needs are gratified, as self-actualization matures</p> |
| <p>e. definite goals, objectives in prayer easier because related to one's needs, circumstances, and verbalizations easily created to express these goals; easier to have specific "times" for prayer; to use "formulas", feel comfortable with "thought" about God, talking to him, etc., type of praying</p> | <p>e. greater difficulty, less and less meaning & value connected with prayer that is verbal, formulated, "thought", organized, "outside" directed to person/object, etc. in terms of specific goals, needs, etc. because goals are now long-term, more diffuse, centered on quality of living itself, quality of relatedness, becoming more organism/environment</p> |
| <p>f. less experientially "jarring" to name the Divine in terms of human analogies, anthropomorphisms, etc. and to use them in expressions of prayer</p> | <p>f. prayer becomes a way of being, rather than a way of speaking; a way of living, growing, transcending, not an exercise or verbalization that can easily be expressed or adapted to a time, place, routine, formula, etc.; anthropomorphic descriptions of God lose meaning and are less satisfying media for prayer, liturgical expressions, etc.</p> |

Deficiency Motivated ←—— Person →—— Growth Motivated

VI. Religious Experience, God Concept, Prayer (continued)

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|---|--|
| <p>g. little or no organismic experience of "gratuitous grace", of "blessings" received and therefore religious gratitude is basically the concept, truth, moral "ought" or religious imperative internalized to some degree; easily lost, awareness of blessings or already achieved need-gratifications fade, undervalued, forgotten; same true of "humility"</p> | <p>g. self-actualizers have developmental basis for "organismic gratitude" that can be a faith-response; ability to B-cognize their blessings and grow in wonder, awe, "organismic humility", "miracles never cease" attitude</p> |
| <p>h. limited transcendent experiences, especially of ego-transcendence provide little or no organismic basis for "knowing mystery" other than the concept, the truth, the theological abstraction</p> | <p>h. organismic basis for the experience of mystery within human transcendence, the personal experience of the <u>transpersonal</u></p> |
| <p>i. ungratified basic needs preclude non-artificial ego-transcendence and therefore the organismic basis for contemplative prayer</p> | <p>i. highly probable that organismic basis for contemplation is present</p> |
| <p>j. emotion of guilt; rising out of fear of what may happen to me; focus of attention on protecting one's isolated sense of self from the pain of vengeance, retribution, punishment, etc.</p> | <p>j. sense of sin: B-cognition has brought organismic identification with others, world, B-values, etc. so that concern is focused on the break in this unity and the <u>other's</u> pain which is felt as your pain, their hurt is your hurt, etc.</p> |
| <p>k. nonholistic, fragmented sense of self easily lends itself to body/soul</p> | <p>k. more holistic, unified & integrated self-experience brings doubts about accuracy</p> |

Deficiency Motivated ←—— Person →—— Growth Motivated

VI. Religious Experience, God Concept, Prayer (continued)

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|--|--|
| <p>k. (continued)
dichotomy & immortality of the soul religious teaching</p> | <p>k. (continued)
of religious practices, concepts & teaching regarding the "immortality of the soul", prayer for "souls", "saving souls", etc. rather than the whole person</p> |
| <p>l. dichotomizing D-cog. will perceive reality as secular vs. sacred, create similar opposing religious concepts, expressions, religionize part of life, secularize rest</p> | <p>l. B-cog. tends to unify; tends to see all of life as sacred; religion penetrates all experience, organismically "sees" mystery, miraculous, sacred in all that is</p> |
| <p>m. in Christian tradition God spoken of as King, Father, Creator, Providential Protector, Provider, etc. is well suited to be meaningful to the D-cognizer; more an "outside" symbol</p> | <p>m. in Christian tradition, God spoken of as Life, Truth, Love, "I am who am", Existence itself etc. well suited to be meaningful to B-cognizer and more mature "inner" experience</p> |
| <p>n. D-love tends to be manipulative, possessive; less true, objective perceptions often colored by needs; more judgemental, analytical, critical, demanding, hard to "let go", share deeply, hostility/anxiety high; often share only at some "safe" level of communication like "ideas", "verbalizations"; D-love can be gratified, then "love" diminishes, motivation disappears; unhealthy dependence often present; these characteristics of D-love tone God-concept, relationship, quality of religious experience, etc., religious needs</p> | <p>n. greater capacity for B-love leads to noninterfering, non-manipulative cognition and relationship, truer perception, less contaminated by preconceptions, projections, etc.; tends to more concrete experiencing, less abstraction, dissecting; with basic needs gratified more able to share, give, involve themselves, "let go" into deeper communion, just "being with"; never sated, only grows; identified with mystic experiences; characterological effects profound; anxiety/hostility minimal or absent; healthy, non-possessive independence--all tones the God-concept, prayer, religious experience</p> |

Deficiency Motivated ← Person → Growth Motivated

VI. Religious Experience, God Concept, Prayer (continued)

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|--|--|
| <p>o. petitionary-thanksgiving posture in prayer lends itself more easily to communal expression; group prayer can be meaningful</p> | <p>o. the highly individualistic, personal, ineffable quality of religious experience, its unique character does not lend itself to communal expression; tendency away from group prayer as meaningful</p> |
| <p>p. paraphernalia of organized religion meaningful and serves useful purpose to express the religious posture, needs, etc.</p> | <p>p. paraphernalia of organized religion (rituals, ceremonials, buildings, specialized personnel, etc.) secondary, peripheral, less meaningful</p> |
| <p>q. dichotomized perception leads to experience of evil more as an object, person or force "outside", attacking or against me; something that is "done to me" to hurt or destroy me; easily colors & predominates in perception of reality, all pervading force or presence everywhere; easily anthropomorphized & creates causality paradox in religion where an all-loving & good God has to be connected in some way to the experience of evil because he is also omnipotent & controls all of universe; explanation that "God permits or allows" evil results; prayer can be largely oriented around the pain-pleasure principle asking God to remove the pain of evil & thanking him for the pleasure of its absence; tends to be manipulative of God, to try to create and</p> | <p>q. non-dichotomizing perception leads to experience of reality as composed of both good and evil, the totality containing a force, power, movement toward life as well as death & destruction; holistic perception allows evil to be seen as only a partial phenomena re people, world, etc.; evil not some "thing" "apart from" the good, but another facet of the whole, the "other side of the same coin", evil not an "outside force" but within all limited reality including one's self; evil experienced in a gestalt & thus as part of an invitation to transcendence, to faith in the possibility of fuller humanization & life coming out of the experience; evil not experienced apart from simultaneous awareness of one's potential for growth, sense of self not divorced from total gestalt involving evil & power of transcendence--thus faith in power of transcendence is</p> |

Deficiency Motivated ← Person → Growth Motivated

VI. Religious Experience, God Concept, Prayer (continued)

q. (continued)
control reality to one's
own liking through prayer,
worship, etc.

q. (continued)
inseparably tied to my ex-
perience of evil so that
growth can result; Christian
prayer can turn to faith in
one's self so profoundly "in
Christ" that transcendence
of evil, frustration, limita-
tion, etc. is enhanced by
practice of religion; lis-
tening & responding in faith
to the power of life (tran-
scendence) in self, others,
world against the ever-
present background of limita-
tion, evil, etc. provides
Pauline paradox (glory in
infirmities, weaknesses) for
heightened awareness of tran-
scendence (i.e. "God-with-us"
because "in Christ")

r. death: implicit or ex-
plicit recognition that
D-cognition exists for
basic-need gratification
& task oriented functions
of the biological organ-
ism & that therefore with
death there is no longer
any need for D-cognition.
For a person whose sense
of self is determined
primarily by D-cognition,
death can then be the
end of their perceptual
world, perhaps the only
or principle mode of
self-identification &
experience; thus death
is feared & can be
traumatic, the end of
what is known and

r. death: maturation in B-cognition
can result in B-values & the
self-identification with these
values, the implicit or explicit
recognition that these values
are transpersonal, i.e., they
not only have become defining
characteristics of my iden-
tity, have become a part of
me, but are transpersonal as
well (i.e. they exist apart
from me, transcend and are
independent of my biological
existence, yet are one with
my organism, my sense of self,
my perception of reality);
B-values live on after bio-
logical death, yet these
values flow out of and are
one with (in varying degrees)
the human organism;

Deficiency Motivated ——— Person ——— Growth Motivated

VI. Religious Experience, God Concept, Prayer (continued)

r. (continued)
familiar, the approach of
the unknown and inexper-
ienced; separation from
what one has identified
as life

r. (continued)
B-consciousness (values)
defines the most human, the
highest in man & continues
to exist after individual
biological deaths; one can
come to perceive intuitively,
often inarticulately, that
this level of consciousness
somehow survives biological
death; less fear of death,
not as much an "unknown"
and the end of everything
familiar, therefore higher
probability of a peaceful,
less traumatic experience
of death

8) The Developmental God-Concept/Experience
and Its Implications For Prayer

As a final comment on the motivation chart just out-
lined, I would like to illustrate a probable development in
religious experience that I believe could be derived from
Maslow's findings. Recalling that in the previous chapters
we have written how religious experience and expression are
deeply influenced by the level of maturation one has achieved
on the continuum of human development, we might try to out-
line that growth as follows:

a) The God/Prayer Experience of the
Ungratified Basic-Needer

For the ungratified basic-needer, the predominant posture assumed in religion would seem to be toward the satisfaction of those needs. This would influence the God-concept/experience as well as the corresponding expression that prayer would take. The prayer orientation and expression would not be one characterized by B-cognition but rather express the basic needs not yet fulfilled in that person's life, e.g., the lack of security, love, etc.

The reader will recall that earlier we posed the interesting question as to whether a person who has not reached the maturity characteristic of Maslow's "transcending self-actualizer" is psychologically ready to respond to his own level of transcendent experience religiously. Is the limited transcendent experience of the D-motivated person appropriate religious 'content' for his God concept/experience and prayer orientation?

On the basis of Maslow's research and the relevant data I believe it provides for studying the psychology of prayer, a negative answer seems to be in order. I would submit this conclusion primarily because the quality of the basic needers growth experiences are so different from the self-actualizers that perceptually and motivationally his transcendent experiences as such do not seem to take on the

value and importance they do for the self-actualizer. There is little evidence that the basic needer is sufficiently motivated and cognitively ready to place religious value on transcendent experiences that flow out of his own growth process. We are not, of course, referring to artificially induced experiences of transcendence which may very well be sought after as an escape from the pain of ungratified basic needs.

Although one must allow for individual differences and not categorically answer the question we posed above, nevertheless, generally speaking, the transcendent experiences (aside from perhaps rare peak experiences) of the basic needer are so oriented to deficit completion, toward "filling up the empty holes" (as Maslow put it) that they are not the kind of growth experiences he would continue to focus on once the gratification has taken place. They are not self-expanding or self-revealing in a way that captures the fascination and continued attention of the person. They are not sufficiently characterized by the experience of personal becoming and potentiality discovery that they are prized and cherished as a way of living and growing. Inner resources are not yet adequately experienced by the basic needer to the degree that their intimate relationship to transcendent experience has been recognized and strongly appreciated. Thus it appears that the quality of the

transcendent (growth) experiences of most deficiency motivated people would not provide them with sufficient organismic incentive and valuation that they would be inclined to turn to them for the experience of divine communion. Nor would there seem to be adequate readiness for altering their God-concept and turning toward a reality as totally dependent on personal organismic maturation as is the experience of human transcendence. Until all of the basic needs are relatively well gratified, the primary motivational energy as well as perceptual focus will be geared toward their gratification, and one would expect religious motivation to follow along with these same dominant needs and goals. Maslow's psychological evidence leads me to conclude that the basic needer would not find very meaningful a prayer shift away from God as need gratifier onto such nebulous and unfamiliar territory as the human experiences we have called transcendent.

Moreover, even among some relatively healthy adults whose basic needs have been gratified there is a type of person who is so job-oriented, so pragmatic, so identified with task completion and activity because of temperament, ingrained habits, cultural milieu or some similar factors that they do not appreciate and value experiences of transcendence. Maslow called them "non-peakers", and he specifically mentioned the "religious organization man" type whose whole approach to life and religion tends to place a disproportionate value on

"doing" with little priority and value on "being". Other psychologists of religion such as William James and G. Stephens Spinks also make note of this type of person. Spinks believes they are more frequently found among authoritarian inclined personalities, often holding responsible administrative positions in religious groups. One might expect that these "non-peakers" should also be included among those unsympathetic, lacking in motivation and uninterested in expressions of religion which do not support their own experience and approach to life. This is understandable and consistent with the intimate relationship between religious meaning and one's sense of self--man sees God the way he sees himself. For such people, transcendent experiences would not be expected to have much religious meaning. One would then expect little inclination on their part to appreciate or personally turn to transcendent experience as an appropriate religious expression of prayer.

Lastly, we might briefly mention those people whose ungratified basic needs have developed into some degree of pathology. As William James says of them, not only are they not drawn to any kind of religious identification with human growth itself--especially at the higher levels of transcendent experience--but demand a need gratification oriented religion that is clothed in as much blood, sweat and tears, as much fire and brimstone, and as much pain and punishment

as they experience life itself to be for them.

Even though I would concur with the theological position that all experiences of human transcendence, no matter at what stage of growth, are the experiential ground of God's Self-communication; nonetheless, it would appear from Maslow's research that psychological readiness is not present in the basic needer for a God and prayer orientation directed toward these experiences. The gratification of basic needs from some 'outside' source is still so dominant that an 'outside' God-image and prayer expression must continue to correspond to this level of need. However, this is not to say, as previously expressed, that the Christian churches should continue to turn their pastoral expression and teaching of the 'outside', need-gratifying God-experience onto a divine person "in heaven out there", but rather toward the experience of God-with-us in the Body of the Whole Christ. Although the 'outside' God-image and corresponding prayer expression appears to be appropriate for the basic needer's level of motivation and perception, I would reemphasize again that this psychological research does not in itself justify the present God-concept and prayer teaching that predominates in most Christian churches. There are also good reasons both psychologically and theologically (as previously discussed) for that 'outside' God-image to be redirected by the Christian churches toward the Body of the Whole Christ.

b) The God/Prayer Experience of the Transcending
Self-Actualizer

When relative maturity in self-actualization is reached with its development of B-cognition and metamotivation, then becoming more one's real self, actualizing more of one's potential, the fascination with growing, initiating, creating, taking on responsibility, etc., assume greater value. Such experiences are primarily growth-oriented, expanding the sense of self and providing a psychological milieu for a more rewarding, intense and personally humanizing type of transcendent activity than the experience of basic need gratification. For the religiously oriented person these transcendent experiences, because they are the most valued, humanizing, and self-expanding, will, at least implicitly and inarticulately, be given religious meaning--perhaps even expression.

Aside from all the practical problems connected with overbeliefs, personal and group fear of change, religious group-pressure toward conformity, rigidity of inherited concepts and practices, etc., nevertheless, for those who may be free enough to listen to their own experience and who are self-actualizing, one would expect the concept/experience of God to become more identified with the kind of transcendent experiences we have just described. The becoming, the going beyond, the more abundant living, the process of self-discovery,

the experience of greater self-possession, the finding of "inner resources"--all this would tend to be identified with the presence of and communion with the Divine. All the dimensions of awareness involved in organismically knowing (experiencing) such transcendence would then quite naturally assume the role of 'content' for prayer. There would no longer be a divine person "out there" as the object of dialogue, phantasms, projected emotions, etc., but rather a more intense experiential knowledge of 'being-in' or immersed within a living Presence as intimate and personal as one's own sense of growing personhood. Once the focus is off the dichotomizing "person-out-there" God-concept that continually reinforces the separation and distinctness between one's experiencing process and God-with-us, then human consciousness itself, which richly penetrates the entire human organism, can become the God-experience, the 'content', so to speak, of divine communion (prayer).

c) The God/Prayer Experience of the Transcending
Self-Actualizer and Higher Levels of
Ego-Transcendence

Once the self-actualizing person has developed a strong enough identity and self-possession and is sufficiently aware of his own inner resources and capacity for transcendence, then the need may arise to transcend and grow beyond even this level of maturity. This is not to be

understood in the sense of losing what has already been achieved anymore than one loses the effects of basic need gratification, but rather that the possibility, the motivational 'push' for achieving new heights of 'going beyond' opens up to be responded to. It is at this stage that meta-needs for more intense communion or unitive as well as 'being' experiences can come to the surface as the person recognizes that he has untapped potential for even a more profound sense of self as organism/environment. Needs may arise to go beyond the striving, willing, initiating posture of the earlier stages in self-actualization, and the process of 'needing' or longing to grow beyond one's present experience of self gains momentum. The former highest levels of self-experience now take on the added dimension of "launching pad" or stepping stone into something higher, more complete, more of "what I can become". It is at this stage of development that the ego-transcending need may be more intensely felt as the person wants to experience himself simply in terms of 'being' or 'being-in-communion'. It is at this point in organismic readiness that the higher experiences of ego-transcendence like "cosmic consciousness", "fusion with the all", etc. (phrases describing the more intense unitive or mystical experience) might be expected to develop as meta-needs.

Thus for the Christian self-actualizer who grows into these metaneeds and who is not frustrated in them but moves into experiencing at the higher levels of ego-transcendence, the more profoundly experienced unitive and being dimensions of his own sense of self as organism/environment can become the focal point of divine communion rather than the transcendence found earlier in the initiating, willing, striving orientation of personal growth.

Not only is the perception at this level not manipulative, judgemental, analytical, etc., which would characterize D-cognition, but the capacity for a quality of B-cognition that is not creativity-oriented has also developed. This might be described with phrases like 'the ability to just be with whatever is'; to appreciate just 'being rather than doing'; to get in contact with reality at the level of existence where one is most deeply bonded together with everything that is; to know one's self in oneness, in communion, flowing out of and into everything that exists.

The distinction that I am trying to develop in regard to a certain emphasis or shift that can take place in prayer within the self-actualizer's growth in B-cognition is simply that for some people the need for further transcendence will not be along the line of further development of their creative potential with its dimensions of striving, initiating, etc., but rather will turn toward intensifying

and deepening the contemplative dimension with its emphasis on a more profound and all-encompassing unitive experience.

A Final Remark

In conclusion we might point out that Maslow's research focuses us squarely on transcendent human experience as an increasing source of motivation in the developmental process. As his studies indicate, the more a person moves into self-actualization the more growth itself and experiences of transcendence increase in value and are frequently held in awe and reverence. The transcendence involved in growing and in deepening the quality of living and relating in this world becomes an end in itself and carries its own reward. The expanding sense of self and the development of B-cognition are experiences of human transcendence that now move onto the center stage of awareness and are open for religious valuation and meaning with the possibility of being integrated into the religious structure of the person's life.

Dr. Maslow's studies of self-actualizing people offers the religionist insight into why the subject-object dichotomy in perception is no longer meaningful for many maturing people, and why, therefore, God-concepts and prayer forms that are based on this perception would also lessen in value. His work helps explain the psychological basis for a

shift in the understanding of divine transcendence from a "person-out-there-image" onto the experience of one's own transcendence. The transcendent God "in heaven" becomes problematic, at least at the level of a very meaningful prayer orientation, because a new value system flowing out of the development of the organism is emerging. Primary value is now moving onto the process of becoming and the corresponding search for its meaning and interpretation. God must somehow be present, known and responded to in the creative act of human transcendence itself. The God-image as a divine person hovering nearby who somehow influences the human act like a puppeteer grows unreal to the experience of the organism as the dynamism of human transcendence becomes more and more the awesome, gratuitously given, profoundly transpersonal locale for religious meaning and valuation. Religious sensitivity and openness to divine transcendence now centers on God's "breaking through" in these moments of personal transcendence. The Mystery of God is now responded to within the mystery of human transcendence. To have faith in Divine Transcendence is to have faith in the dynamism of growth in one's self and the family of man. The Infinite Mystery of Transcendence is somehow 'within', graspable, recognizable, identifiable with one's own self experience; yet also somehow not totally identified, contained or rising out of one's personhood alone. One is always in relationship

(organism/environment). At one and the same time the Mystery of Divine Transcendence is so much more intimate and personal than any 'divine person outside' could be, yet so much greater, so much more vast than one's own limited experience of transcendence. Whatever experiential knowledge man has of the unlimited or infinite attributes of Transcendence is grasped only in the concrete, limited act of transcendence, which contains within itself the Mystery of the Infinite.

CHAPTER IV

FINAL COMMENTS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

As this study draws to an end, possibly the reader has begun to sense the vast implications of which this small segment of research is only a partial glimpse. We have tried to take one of the most representative and articulate voices not only of the new "Third-Fourth Force" in psychology, but of a growing universal image and understanding of man in order to demonstrate some of the rich potential his thinking has for studying the God/prayer problem that highlights the contemporary malaise in Christianity.

However, even the extensive work of Maslow and the specific use of some of his research for our study of the God/prayer question should be seen as only illustrative of an enormous and radical shift in human understanding and perception that is being compared in contemporary writing to the revolution in human thought that followed Nicholas Copernicus. What has been written in this study is a minute expression of the much wider "New Copernican Revolution"¹ in which I have attempted to reach out even into the protected sanctuary of religion, indeed, into the very relationship man

¹ Willis H. Harman, "The New Copernican Revolution", in The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, Vol. 1, No. 2, Fall 1969, p. 21-29.

strives for with the Divine. But this should not be surprising nor alarming for a Christian who has acquired insight and perspective from the thoughtful study of history.

Just as each science was once a part of the body of organized religion but then broke away to become independent, so also it can be said that the same thing may now be happening to the problems of values, ethics, spirituality, morals. They are being taken away from the exclusive jurisdiction of the institutionalized churches and are becoming the 'property', so to speak, of a new type of humanistic scientist who is vigorously denying the old claim of the established religions to be the sole arbiters of all questions of faith and morals.²

A reflection such as this, whether religionists like it or not, represents little more than a sober statement of fact, even though it is still capable of provoking an outraged response from more prejudiced religious supporters whose identity is excessively tied up with the maintenance of traditional ecclesiastical models.

However, what is sometimes missed by these religionists is the possibility that maybe a new dimension of truly religious value is emerging. Paradoxically, it is hidden within the very historical forces that are at work undermining the structures of more traditional religion that no longer communicate with man's continuously developing sense of self. John Dewey recognized this when he made his classic distinction between "religion" and the "religious".

² Abraham H. Maslow, Religions, Values, and Peak Experiences, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1964, p. 12.

It is widely supposed that a person who does not accept any religion is thereby shown to be a non religious person. Yet it is conceivable that the present depression in religion is closely connected with the fact that religions now prevent, because of their weight of historic encumbrances, the religious quality of experience from coming to consciousness and finding the expression that is appropriate to present conditions, intellectual and moral. I believe that such is the case. I believe that many persons are so repelled from what exists as a religion by its intellectual and moral implications, that they are not even aware of attitudes in themselves that if they came to fruition would be genuinely religious. I hope that this remark may help make clear what I mean by the distinction between "religion" as a noun substantive and "religious" as adjectival. (Emphasis mine)³

As I have come to realize myself and have said much to the surprise of my religiously oriented audiences, to simply take on unquestioningly the religious practices or life-styles of any religious group or sect has probably always been a risky undertaking at best, which only a few people have appreciated, because "religion" in general still continues to exist so unexamined under the protective umbrella of myth and overbelief.

Unfortunately, too many people only hear such a statement as a direct attack on religion rather than as a call for the truth. However, if such people really believed that their religion and its practice could actually make a positive contribution to the fuller humanization of mankind,

³ John Dewey, A Common Faith, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1967, p. 9.

one wonders why the fear and hesitancy of clarifying and verifying this through psychological research. I cannot help but be reminded here of a phrase I heard Maslow use once in a lecture to describe the difference between people whose religious values, convictions and practices flow out of their whole being--what I have often called "organismic" in this study--and those whose religion is essentially a cultural, political, circumstantial or basic need motivated introjection of external values, models and practices. He used the wonderfully descriptive phrase "plated with piety" to describe the latter in contrast to "alloyed with piety" to describe the former. Indeed, one goal of this study has been to try to unearth some possible psychological explanations for "plated piety" as well as what psychological factors might be involved in the development of an "alloyed piety".

The presupposition then that runs throughout this study is that religion which truly saves man by further humanizing him and by supporting his basic reason for existence--which is to become as fully human as he has the potentiality for (and there is abundant Christian theological backing for this) -that such a religion has nothing to fear and everything to gain from any truthful psychological or any other scientific investigation. What may in the short run actually undermine the status quo of organized religion, can in the long run be its ultimately renewed strength by

providing a new perceptual framework within which the truly religious nature of human evolution can once again express itself in a contemporary and saving way.

Concluding Reflections on the Background
and Organization of this Study

The reader will recall that in the first chapter I spoke of the changing "sense of self" mainly in a collective and historical context because it seemed to me that this could better bring into focus and situate historically the God/prayer question we were going to deal with. I intended to show that when one compares even a small number of self-image or self-concept or value statements that characterize the articulate and evolving edge of modern society with what we know of ancient and medieval man's self-experience, one is immediately struck by the radical shift in perception. Not only is there a rather remarkable change in the sense of self, but the reoccurring theme of human transcendence dominates today's scene and holds in fascination even those whose lives may still unfortunately permit very little personal experience of it.

Therefore, I felt there might be a valuable contribution in the exciting possibility of working out some of the religious implications of Maslow's research, especially regarding self-actualizing people, because here one finds

(coming out of years of investigation) a whole theoretical and developmental framework within which to locate the contemporary changing sense of self as well as the religious valuation that is so often given to it. This then led us into chapters two and three where this changing sense of self and its relationship to the God/prayer problem was explored not in the former broad social and historical context, but now within the specific research findings of Maslow's work in perception and motivation as it related to his study of transcendent human experience. Within this psychological framework, using Maslow's insights into certain facets of human development, I tried to articulate some elements of what I felt could contribute to a psychologically grounded theory of religious experience which could then be used to seriously rethink and reformulate the pastoral teaching on and expression of Christian prayer. I did this because I don't think the Christian churches can understand what might constitute a meaningful prayer-experience for many self-actualizing persons (who are probably the "growing tip" of modern society) without first understanding something about the perception and motivation of self-actualizing people.

Leslie Dewart has said that to be a believer is to derive meaning from experience. And Gregory Baum develops the thesis that if the Christian Gospel explains, purifies,

and multiplies the significant experiences of human life--what he call's "depth-experiences", those which give direction and unity to life--then people will continue to believe in Christianity and look upon the Gospel as the key to their life. But if Christianity ceases to give meaning to these depth-experiences, then people will find it irrelevant and drift away.⁴ If what these men are saying is even generally true in its insight, then the primary pastoral concern of Christianity today must be to bring meaning to the value-experiences of contemporary and growing people.

This means that the pastoral leadership of Christianity must first be aware of and probably experience personally what the primary value-experience is, not only for modern man but for the self-actualizing person. Then, out of such experience, which would be a 'living Tradition and Revelation' in touch with life and growth where it's actually taking place, the Christian Gospel meaning could be explained and proclaimed relevantly by those entrusted with this pastoral office.

Therefore, I have tried to demonstrate in this study what I believe is the area of "depth-experience" to be explored, namely, transcendent human experience, and to show

⁴ Gregory Baum, Faith and Doctrine, New York, Newman Press, 1969, p. 51-80.

how, at least on the basis of Maslow's research, it characterizes and tones the whole perceptual and motivational field at the higher levels of human development. I have done this because I believe that even if there were proof that what Maslow had found was only just generally accurate, nevertheless, Christianity would still have to take cognizance of the fact that there is a very important change in self-experience that usually emerges once basic needs are gratified and a person moves into self-actualizing. Moreover, I believe that such growing people will continue to drift away from Christianity until the time that Christian meaning can be brought to bear on their growth or transcendent experiences, and until having a Christian meaning or faith connected with these experiences somehow adds a supportive and freeing dimension which helps toward even fuller humanness.

In setting the scene for the God/prayer problem, the earlier chapters spoke often of the changing "sense of self" that characterizes the "growing tip" of modern society as contrasted with the self-image of centuries past. Moreover, I tried to show that if the human religious response is developmental, then a credibility gap is created if a religion like Christianity insists on proclaiming a medieval God (in the garments of medieval or more ancient worship) to growing people in the twentieth century. Perhaps the following words

of Leslie Dewart summarize succinctly the problem I was trying to describe as the background situating this study.

What we are witnessing today might be more accurately envisaged as a resolution of the very problem of which the Reformation was an unfortunately abortive issue, namely, the integration of Christian belief with the post-medieval stage of human development.⁵

Dewart further states that the present Christian dilemma is,

... to integrate Christian belief, and specifically Christian theism, with a human experience which is no longer remotely like that of the world in which that faith was born, or that of the world which that faith fashioned for itself when the world in which it was born collapsed and disappeared.⁶

It is not on science as such, but on the contemporary cultural stage of human self-consciousness, typically manifested in and conditioned by science and technology, that the traditional Christian faith grates.⁷

... the integration of theism with today's everyday experience requires not merely the demythologization of Scripture, but the more comprehensive dehellenization of dogma, and specifically that of the Christian doctrine of God.⁸

Pierre Cardinal Veuillot, the late Archbishop of Paris, said much the same thing at the Bishop's Synod, Rome, 1967, when stating that,

5 Leslie Dewart, The Future of Belief, New York, Herder and Herder, 1966, p. 15.

6 Loc. Cit.

7 Ibid., p. 18.

8 Ibid., p. 49.

The number one problem of our time is man's relationship with God and how it should be expressed. Are the Christian churches going to be capable of examining in depth the problem of God in the world?⁹

This study has been a small first step in direct response to Veuillot's question, using as background the Maslow research on motivation and perception to illustrate that if people are growing--or to use Maslow's terminology, self-actualizing--then on the basis of the evidence of their changing self-experience which he has described so well, the Christian articulation of God (and all that follows on it like prayer, worship etc.) must undergo radical reformation if it is to speak meaningfully to such people. An "examination in depth" of the problem of God in the world, I believe, begins not with new, contemporary language being plastered onto the old theological constructs and models, like a new coat of paint on an old house. Rather, it must begin with the drawing up of an entirely new blueprint from the foundation up, using as the starting point what can be discovered about how men actually grow and experience themselves and the world around them today. I believe that only when this increasing knowledge about the dynamics of human motivation, perception, and all the other facets that help explain the changing world of human experience has matured,

⁹ Edwin M. McMahon and Peter A. Campbell, The In-Between: Evolution in Christian Faith, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1969, p. 17.

do Christians have the necessary experiential data upon which they can theologize and articulate a meaningful Christian Revelation. The new language of God must flow out of the new levels of consciousness which characterize the "growing tip" of mankind today. Only then can Christianity tap into the latent "faith potential" present within the self-experience of growing people and reveal its Christian meaning and the presence of God to them.

As modern man comes to believe more and more that the fundamental values he prizes lie within his own evolving humanity and that if he is going to be "religious" he must somehow find a way to celebrate the 'sacredness' of this revelation with some kind of faith, then the contribution of a man like Abraham Maslow takes on profound significance for a Christianity relevant to the closing decades of this century, and probably for many generations to come. For as basic needs are gratified on a wider and wider scale throughout the family of man, a 'collective sense of self', so to speak, begins to emerge in which more and more men share in the growing awareness that transcendent human experiences are those they most profoundly value and are potentially the source of their most meaningful religious experience.

Pastoral Need for a Developmental God-Concept
and Prayer Expression

As I have studied Maslow's research and tried to develop its implications for a dynamic theory of religious experience and thus a more relevant expression and accurate understanding of the psychology of Christian prayer, the pastoral urgency for a developmental God-image and corresponding prayer expressions has become increasingly obvious. On the basis of what we have tried to demonstrate in the previous chapter it would seem that any religion which attempts to meaningfully appeal to the whole spectrum of humanity--young and old, mature and immature--would be benefited by a flexible, non-rigid God-model and richly diverse modes of prayer so that people at various levels of maturation could find an appropriate expression. Not only the Christian churches, but all religions need to recognize and be open to constant evolution in the self-experience of a healthy growing person.

Prayer forms, expressions of worship, and liturgical celebrations in Christianity are largely determined today by a very rigid God-concept which has become fixated at a level of perception which more often than not seems to correspond to that of deficiency-cognition. As a matter of fact, it appears that most religions in the western cultural tradition express pastorally only a God-concept articulated

in D-cognitive categories of perception, thereby alienating increasing numbers of maturing people. This is an unfortunate disservice, because such ignoring of the developmental perception of God and the canonizing and legislating of only one concept eventually becomes an obstacle to real religious growth for many people. The practice of religion with its various expressions in prayer, liturgy, etc., around a God concept/experience which does not correspond to the B-cognition and nourish the metaneeds of a self-actualizing person can actually contribute to metapathology. The more such a person tries to "regain" his once meaningful religious life by the increased practice of prayer, etc. around a God-concept that no longer fits with his developing sense of self, the more he usually frustrates his metaneeds and gets side-tracked from contact with the religious dimension of his own experiencing process. This unfortunate path or an escape from its confusion and pain by an excursion down the road of artificially induced altered states of consciousness (through the use of various asceticisms, revivals, techniques of meditation, drugs, etc.) too often only bypass what is necessary for both human as well as religious growth at this stage of development.

If the Christian churches could theologically articulate and make available pastorally the option of a God-relationship centering around the quality of self-awareness and

relationship to this world, then many of those Christians who become "transcending self-actualizers" might be prepared intellectually for the advent of their maturing religious needs. And, more importantly, such men and women would find some understanding and acceptance for this kind of religious growth and not have to go through the agonies of thinking they were losing their faith, breaking with the Church, or leaving the fellowship of the community. Religious growth could take place for such people within the Christian communities.

Recognizing the developmental nature of man and of religious concepts, experiences, expression of worship, etc., all Christians should be able to look forward to and be comfortable with changes in the God-experience and the need for different expressions in prayer. For those whose basic needs were gratified, who developed into what Maslow called "transcending self-actualizers", and whose metaneeds and B-cognition motivated them to grow in their experience of God and a kindred way of praying, they should be able to fall back on an earlier-learned theoretical explanation that would support what they would now begin to find had new meaning for them experientially.

It is difficult to imagine how such a situation (if it could exist within Christianity) would not be a cause for joy among all concerned. One wonders how long, if ever, it

will be before such an atmosphere will become reality, since only a few theologians are beginning to openly express their views on the God-problem beneath a cloud of considerable suspicion and in a fear-filled environment where creative searching is greatly hampered. The Christian churches now have several centuries of evidence that they are not nourishing, but alienating, the "growing tip" of humanity. The time is long overdue for a more scientific study of why this has happened and is continuing to happen. It is the purpose of this study to contribute something to answering this question by relating some of Dr. Maslow's insights to the God problem and prayer. Hopefully this initial step may bring to light some of the important psychological research that must be brought to bear on the serious problem of Christianity's inability to religiously nourish so much of the "growing tip" of mankind.

In concluding these reflections, I would want to stress that although I have emphasized the urgency of a developmental God-concept and corresponding prayer forms to meet the neglected religious needs of self-actualizing people, this does not mean that this developmental principle should not also be applied to basic-needers, "non-peakers", etc. where a more accurate understanding of their motivation and perception should help religion meet their particular religious needs.

Answering the Hypothesis

Since there is little point in trying to summarize with the necessary qualifications required for accuracy all the implications that were developed out of Maslow in the preceding two chapters, let an answer to the hypothesis proposed at the start of this study suffice to close this section.

In the first chapter we proposed this research with the following statement: Does the creative thought of Abraham Maslow on transcendent human experience provide significant data for a theory of religious experience relevant to a contemporary articulation of Christian prayer?

I believe that in view of what has been presented in this study an affirmative answer can be given to this question. Maslow's extensive research into the motivation and perception of self-actualizing people, as well as his findings on basic needs, deficiency motivation and deficiency cognition provide, in my opinion, some of the most valuable psychological data yet available with which to explore and better understand the development of man's expression of religion. And I believe this certainly has applied to the contemporary God/prayer problem in Christianity that we have been specifically concerned with in this study.

Furthermore, the various aspects of a theory of religious experience developed here which I feel are relevant to the much needed reformulation of the current pastoral teaching on and expression of Christian prayer, I am sure, comprise only a beginning effort at what might be originated out of the far-ranging and seminal thought of Abraham Maslow. As time goes on and more people explore what lies behind the doors this man has opened, I think he will be recognized as one of the most remarkable men of this century.

This former president of the American Psychological Association, who had the unique distinction of being universally admired and widely loved even by his professional colleagues whom he so often challenged, will be seen in retrospect, I believe, as one of the founding architects of a revitalized expression of religion--one which may well be more universally acceptable to all men, more capable of unifying them and more humanizing than any prior expression of religion in human history. By this I do not mean that Abraham Maslow will be, nor would he have wanted to be, the founder of another religion. Rather, I have tried to show that his creative and synthetic contribution can revitalize religion because it richly reveals the human capacity for transcendence which all religions must recognize as the radical, psychological foundation of organismic religious experience.

The religious life of man is organismically rooted in his transcendentality. When the practice of religion, for example through prayer, helps people get in touch with their own potential for growth, encouraging and identifying such experiences of transcendence as 'God-experiences', then such religion truly unifies and humanizes mankind.

I have indicated that by exploring human transcendentality through his study of the motivation and cognition of self-actualizing people, Maslow has opened up not only for Christianity, but for all religions the most profoundly religious dimension of human experience within which God-communion is possible.

For centuries now, men have devoted most of their time and energy looking outside themselves in exploring and possessing the four corners of this earth and even out recently onto the moon and the planets around our globe. But there is another revolution afoot, one Abraham Maslow was and still is a vital part of, which is gaining momentum each day as more and more people turn their searching into the exploration and possession of themselves.

As people move away from alienating forms of existence; as they accept the risks and hardships involved, not on the "western frontier" or in the colonization of distant lands, but in growing beyond immature ways of identifying themselves; as they take up the challenge of resisting

enculturation and discover the directing power of their lives coming from within themselves--all of this raises a profound question about the ultimate "meaning" of this new energy for life and self-actualization which stimulates and gives them hope. In this year of 1972 looking toward the year 2000, a turning point in recorded time, one wonders if Christianity will have turned its face like Abraham Maslow did toward the "growing tip" in the family of man? One wonders too, what "meaning" will the "growing tip" have found by then?

Suggestions for Further Research

In the remaining pages I would like to draw together some of the possible projects that have come to mind during the course of this present investigation in order that listing them might serve to stimulate further research.

One general, long-term, and rather overwhelming task that has constantly reappeared is the need for a team of Christian theologians and psychologists of religion to spell out and articulate some initial pastoral statements on the developmental God-concept/experience that might be used to inform Christians, at least intellectually, of the possibility that this changing pattern was at work in their lives.

Once this had been done, then, perhaps, the work of practical pastoral application could be undertaken with a

twofold goal in view: (1) spelling out some general guidelines regarding the kinds of prayer, worship practices, "spiritual exercises", God-concept/experiences etc. that would be psychologically sound and supportive of contact with the experiencing process, (2) relating these practices and exercises to some broad stages of growth in the developmental process as psychologically appropriate religious expression for particular levels of maturity. These two goals should be seen as no more than guidelines and suggestions, but they might go a long way toward educating people not only to something of what is involved in the process of human development, but to the fact that their religious expression if healthy and maturing should also be a part and an expression of this development.

This task is monumental, not only because of what would be involved in the effort to create an effective working group of theologian-psychologist-collaborators who could communicate with one another and actually move research forward. But on the theological side, the challenge of what would eventually have to come out of such research would be nothing less than a radical reconceptualization of Christian dogma. Just imagining what would be involved in trying to work such a reconceptualization through all the various governing bodies of the many Christian denominations staggers the mind, because at least the way most churches operate at

present, this would have to be done before any such statements could be officially released to the Christian communities.

Yet, maybe, given the growing urgency of dealing with the problem, some way could be found to simply submit such findings to the churches unofficially in order to expose their people to them for evaluation and response.

More specific research questions for the psychologist of religion that arose during the course of this study are the following:

1) Deficiency and Growth Motivated God/Prayer Expressions

I believe there would be a great deal of fascinating research that could be done by taking various religious groups or people formally involved in the practice of their religion, ascertain their self-image in terms of negative or positive and then correlate that to their religious needs, God-concept, prayer practices etc. These findings could then be compared with the deficiency motivated-growth motivated and corresponding God/prayer expressions that are developed in this study. Further study could be made to see if there was any correlation between the low self-image and ungratified basic needs and positive self-image and the gratification of these needs.

2) Authoritarian vs Humanistic Religion--An Extension of the Self-Image?

G. S. Spinks, the British psychologist of religion, associates a low self-image with authoritarian religion and practices, theorizing that such a person's high level of personal frustration finds some assuagement by surrendering and identifying with some power or institution greater than himself.

The essential characteristic of all forms of authoritarian religion is that it demands the surrender of the individual to some power thought of as transcending the human person [...] By voluntarily submitting to a higher authority man loses his sense of personal dissatisfaction and frustration, and by willingly associating himself with a Divine Power he achieves an exhilarating sense of fulfilment.¹⁰

Whereas, the person with the more positive self-image, Spinks holds, is drawn to what he calls "humanistic religion" in which the emphasis is upon finding himself, "... by being in loving association with his fellows".¹¹

It would be interesting to go further in the verification of this position, comparing it with Maslow's ungratified basic needer and self-actualizing person and then relating it to the developmental God/prayer expressions I have

¹⁰ G. Stephen Spinks, Psychology and Religion, Boston, Beacon Press, 1967, p. 153.

¹¹ Loc. Cit.

proposed in this paper. Or, after ascertaining the low self-image group one could then concentrate the study on exactly how the practice of their religion relates to their low self-image. What seems to be the psychological role of their religious practices? Does their practice of "an authoritarian religion" actually help them get in contact with themselves, their real feelings, facilitate growth toward greater self-possession? Are they helped to become more integrated, more congruent through the practice of their religion or does it seem to be ultimately unproductive in terms of "constructive personality change"?

3) The Spiritual Guide or Director

One of the most timely and important, yet psychologically unexplored, areas in religion closely associated with this study is the role or 'non-role' of the spiritual guide, the "guru", the "spiritual director" or whatever name may be given to those who claim to function in various ways as advisers, experts, or helpers for those who want to grow in the "spiritual life". The various roles these people assume are so varied, of course, that any research would have to be around a specific problem.

For example, since "directed retreats" are increasing in popularity among Christians perhaps a study could be done with some groups as to exactly what psychologically is taking

place. What is the "director" trying to achieve? In the actual psychological order what is happening, what is he doing? In this "direction" are there any means being employed to distinguish between the ungratified basic needer and the self-actualizing person or the transcending self-actualizer at the higher stages of ego-transcendence? Is a univocal God-model being used for all types of people? How much effort is being made to help the retreatant get in contact with his own experiencing process? Is this even a value in such "spiritual direction"? Is the God-model being used and the exercises being employed supportive of greater integration, self-possession, ego-transcendence, B-cognition etc.? Are people being helped to get in truthful contact with themselves and then guided to find the appropriate religious expression for their own level of maturity?

Since an adequate study of the role of the spiritual guide or director represents an extremely important area of needed research, I would like to briefly elaborate on some of my own experience and ideas at this point in the hope that their outline presentation here may be of some use to future researchers in this area.

On the basis of Maslow's development of the motivational continuum and his research into the differences in perception between the deficiency motivated person and the

growth motivated transcending self-actualizer, this dissertation has outlined a corresponding development in religious need and perception. From this we might make the following reflections on some aspects of Christian religious guidance, sometimes called "spiritual direction" and the like.

We are presuming here a person who is not searching for a religion nor mainly troubled by intellectual questions, but can accept the principle teachings of Christianity and considers himself a Christian. However, for one reason or another, this person wants to grow into deeper communion and awareness of the presence of God, and seeks help. Summarized briefly, we would propose the following:

a) The most obvious conclusion that can be drawn from the material already presented is that anyone attempting to help another find deeper religious awareness and more meaningful prayer must try to help that person get in touch with his own experiencing process so that he can more clearly understand and accept the reality of his present level of maturation. This kind of truthful, "gut level" confrontation with one's self would seem to be the foundation as well as the starting point for any further growth.

The methods used for trying to achieve such a goal are so varied and so extensive today that anyone seriously involved in fostering religious growth has ample opportunity for selecting an approach and receiving adequate training.

Among the more superficial ways of approaching this in a more academic setting or with groups in workshops, I have found that even clear instruction on the growth continuum using Maslow's research in motivation and perception acts as a catalyst for self-evaluation, especially if it can be done over a long enough period within which there is time for personal reflection and application.

b) Along with this process of increasing self-knowledge can come an explanation of what is currently known about the religious needs and perceptions that are likely to emerge in correspondence with the different stages in human development. Exposure to the probable shifts in God-concept/experience, the different tendencies in prayer, etc., provide some general background against which the individual can then situate his own religious needs and experience.

c) Another element of this approach would be the supplementing of suggestions in numbers a and b with the following procedure when time and circumstances allowed, namely, small group or individual counseling. I have found that the use of selected readings along with discussion (either small group or private) can be of considerable help. There is no particular schedule that appears better than any other. The important factor seems to be that the reading when consistently done over a period of time affords an opportunity for personal reflection and self-evaluation that

can then be verbalized and rethought again with another person or persons. This reinforces the process of "getting in touch" with personal attitudes, opinions and even feelings if the environment is sufficiently accepting of such expression. The readings may begin with some suggestions from the "guide", but especially when regular sessions can be arranged on an individual basis, the sooner the experiencing process of the person himself can begin to provide the direction of further reading the more growth-producing the whole procedure will become.

One technique that I have used which facilitated this process for some people was the requirement that at each private interview (most effective were weekly or bi-monthly for approximately forty minutes) the person brought some typed reflections centering around his reactions (whatever they might be--feelings, criticisms, personal application, etc.) to the reading he was doing and the material that was concurrently being given (parts a and b) to a larger group of which he was a member. These notes then served as the focal point for discussion or often as the "jumping off point" if the person was ready to go beyond them through the opportunity afforded by this sharing experience.

Not intending that these remarks be considered as anything more than a possible way of using some of the previous theoretical insights within a practical setting for

facilitating religious growth, my limited experience would, however, lead me to conclude that under the above-mentioned conditions when the person had adequate motivation for religious growth that was not psychopathogenic, when religious growth not psychotherapy could take first priority, and when the interpersonal atmosphere was characterized by acceptance and truthfulness, the procedure outlined above helped such people discover and recognize the possible religious dimension of their own present experience of life. I think the main reason for this is that if B-values are truly religious values biologically rooted within our own humanity and waiting to be brought into awareness by the maturation of the human organism, then religious growth is primarily the facilitating of human growth. If these B-values are at least potentially in every person but often lying dormant, and needing to be discovered, then religious development involves the experiencing of these values within one's own organism.

Although these same values may be articulated in the teachings, dogmas, etc. of various religions and may be spoken of in Christianity in terms of "Divine Revelation", these sources all remain 'outside' the person until such time as his own maturation makes it possible for him to recognize that many of these 'external values' correspond to the values that are now being revealed from personal 'inside' sources. It seems to me that Dr. Maslow's research

lends considerable weight to the position that religious growth is primarily the gradual movement toward experiencing and identifying with the values that flow out of B-cognition (unitive, oneness of reality, value of personhood, etc.--refer to previous chapter). Therefore, as the healthy person grows into young adulthood and self-actualization, religious development must move away from emphasizing and over-intellectualizing 'outside' laws, teachings, conformity to a kind of "lowest common denominator" of religious conceptualization/experience etc., and onto whatever is supportive of discovery of those values that can be found within the experiencing process of the maturing person himself. Unfortunately, so-called "religious formation" or education is so often geared to what is basically an internalizing of external rules, models, etc., that aiding the young person to get in touch with the religious values contained within the process of his own human maturation is for the most part neglected.

Since Christian teaching holds that the ultimate source of Divine Revelation is God, this has resulted in the confusion spoken of earlier between the philosophical and experiential knowing of such a "truth". Unfortunately, there has been an exaggerated pastoral educational emphasis on the "sources of Divine Revelation" as contained in Scripture and Tradition, which in the practical order comes to the average

Christian in the form of authoritative interpretations of Biblical texts and doctrinal statements by the Church. Such statements and approved formulations are directed largely to the rational grasp of a truth external to the individual's own experience of that same truth. What is neglected, however, is that God can still remain the ultimate source of Divine Revelation while this revelation is being 'spoken to man' through the experience of his own maturing humanity. The revelation of religious values and truths that wells forth out of the humanity of someone whose basic needs have been gratified and who is a living testimony to the life-giving presence of Love (God/Agape in Scripture) in mankind (the Body of the Whole Christ) should be considered as an experientially valid source of Divine Revelation which the Church could utilize in supporting the religious growth of her members.

Not only from the standpoint of Maslow's research but from other sources in the study of psychology of religion, one cannot help but conclude that the Christian churches neglect this important insight regarding the basis of religious growth at their peril. Too often the interiorizing of external values, norms of behavior, etc., works very well within a restricted or repressive environment. However, once the protective structures fall away in times of stress or under the strain of necessary change that is implicit in all

growth, then it becomes painfully obvious that the religious convictions and patterns of behavior were built on sand. For such a person it becomes evident, usually too late, that their practice of religion was unwittingly self-defeating, self-alienating and an obstacle to real human growth. Instead of their "religious education" helping them find a center of religious values within themselves they have substituted a kind of superficial moralism clothed in religious garb, rather than having found religious integrity within themselves.

Christians are often exhorted to "take on" or become personally identified with the values of Christ. They are encouraged to adopt as their own Christ's way of looking at things, his point of view, and to imitate the quality of his relationship to people. Thus, much of Christian prayer is directed toward bringing about this "Christ-like" transformation in the person praying.

However, one of the conclusions that can be drawn out of the Maslow research is that religious practices such as prayer which are actually going to bring about an identification of the whole person with Christian values do so by helping a person discover that Christ's basic religious values are also the emerging values of the Christian's own maturing personhood. The process of identifying with Christ's values is fundamentally the process of discovering and affirming

these values within one's own organism. "Taking on the mind of Christ", as it is often spoken of, is really not plastering onto the personality certain teachings or a code of ethics, but rather the gradual emerging of a perception of reality flowing out of one's own human maturation that more closely resembles what we know of Christ's understanding and vision. Just like the flower that blooms only when the 'inside' conditions are ripe and matured, so too the Christian has to reach a certain level of self-actualization before identification with Christ's values can become the same as the recognition of his own values.

d) It is for this reason that the last element in this approach to religious guidance, namely, the specific Christian theological interpretation of events/experience, is the one that this writer places least emphasis on. The reason for this is because such conceptualizations can actually hinder the person's recognizing the religious dimension of his own experience by forcing an external meaning structure upon them and by turning attention and the learning process toward intellectualization. Growth in sensitivity and in learning how to listen to the experiencing process can actually be blocked by the guide's anxiety to impose a theological interpretation and to make sure that this is adequately "preached". Anxiety over events being experienced as "merely human" or as "secular" causes many religious

guides to actually stifle the quality of personal experience (let alone the listening process) in others, and therefore obstruct a person from discovering for himself the religious dimension and values he himself wants to find within this same experience.

As a result of the dangers involved and the possibility of actually doing more harm than good in such a delicate and beautiful situation where one has been entrusted with the support of genuine growth that could form the background for a more profound experience of God's presence, considerable restraint and caution must be exercised in the Christian "preaching of the Word". I would suggest that the main emphasis be placed on the facilitating of what was outlined in parts a, b and c, and that the guide's verbalizing of a Christian theological interpretation which could be given to the other's experiences come as natural and spontaneous responses to specific requests for such information. The tone of such a response should be one of simply sharing the personal faith dimension or theological meaning that the guide himself would place on such experiences.

However, one qualification to the above suggestion is in order. After using the approach to "spiritual direction" just outlined, I have found--and I would expect the same might happen to others--that a person's concern about the Christian meaning of things or directly asking the guide

theological questions can be an escape tactic or a defensive maneuver for avoiding getting more in touch with their own experience. Thus the guide has to fall back on his experience of the person and intuitions about how beneficial such responses will be in this particular situation before concluding that such questions truly indicate a readiness to situate personal religious experiences within the Christian context. It is only when the guide's responses do not interfere with another's discovery of religious values from within the experiencing process that I believe they ultimately support growth toward the human maturation required in order to organismically recognize, identify with, and hopefully live out in society the meaning of Christian Revelation.

I have included these more extended comments on the question of the spiritual guide as an area of possible future investigation because I feel that there may be useful elements stemming from my own pastoral experience which might be of interest to some future researcher in this area. Perhaps some of what I have tried to indicate may strike a resonant chord in another and re-enforce a growing conviction that there is some sort of meaningful and significant pattern present in this data.

4) The Relationship of Christian Prayer to Artificially Induced Altered States of Consciousness

Here again, I would like to elaborate my thoughts somewhat, because I am convinced after pastoral and counseling experience that this question of artificially induced states of consciousness which are interpreted as having religious significance, desperately needs to be competently researched in a careful, scholarly manner.

In the material which follows in the next several pages I will be speaking of a kind of prayer within which altered states of consciousness (ASC's) are striven for and interpreted within a theistic context. Although what I will be discussing here is not restricted to a Christian or any other theistic context as such, nevertheless, Christians do use ASC's as a form of prayer, so that what I will say has applicability in the study of Christian prayer.

When I use the phrase, ASC-prayer, I am speaking of shifts in perception that are associated with heightened forms of unitive consciousness which are given the Christian interpretation of being experiences of Divine presence and communion. I am distinguishing this ASC-prayer from such well known expressions of Christian prayer as the recitation of formulae or litanies; the concentrating or reflecting on some theological, Scriptural truth; the conversation or dialogue type of prayer with some Divine Person; personal

theological reflection with the intention of being in the Divine Presence; the verbalizing of petitions and many other prayer-modes which do not have as their goal or as an integral part of the procedure an alteration in consciousness. Whereas, for example, when such asceticisms as fasting, vigils, flagellation, sensory deprivation, revivalistic or pentecostal group techniques and numerous other approaches are used in the context of prayer, the conditions for an ASC are being encouraged and very likely directly desired.

For any further development in the meaning of ASC's the reader is referred to the study noted below, especially chapters two and three.¹² We will let this brief explanation of ASC suffice for what we want to develop in the following pages.

For years, like many others interested in the psychological dimension of religion, I have been fascinated by the observation that very often there is little or no proportionality between the time, effort, apparent sincerity, intensity, even zeal that many religious people put into ASC-prayer and their "character transformation" or growth into "fuller humanness". The question is a puzzling one, because usually such prayer involves considerable discipline,

¹² Peter A. Campbell, Toward a Humanistic-Transpersonal Psychology of Religion, unpublished Doctoral Dissertation presented to the Department of Religious Studies, University of Ottawa, Ontario, 1972.

application and perseverance, which we naturally admire and think will result in the development of a better human being. However, observers of religion for centuries have remarked about this phenomena and my own pastoral as well as religious community experience confirms that there are too few people who by the practice of this kind of prayer are actually helped in "constructive personality change". This phrase, "constructive personality change" is a good, comprehensive and general one for our purposes here and is borrowed from Carl Rogers. Dr. Rogers describes its meaning as,

... change in the personality structure of the individual, at both surface and deeper levels, in a direction which clinicians would agree means greater integration, less internal conflict, more energy utilizable for effective living; change in behavior away from behaviors generally regarded as immature and toward behaviors regarded as mature.¹³

Yet the primary purpose of all Christian prayer is to worship God through personal character and behavior transformation by taking on the values and quality of interpersonal relationship exemplified by Jesus Christ. The Christian prays to worship God and grow more in oneness with God by becoming more God-like himself which ultimately only comes about through "constructive personality change" into greater human wholeness. Thus the presupposition is that

¹³ Carl Rogers, "The Necessary and Sufficient Conditions of Therapeutic Personality Change", in The Journal of Consulting Psychology, Vol. 21, 1957, p. 95.

more God-like character transformation will be facilitated by the practice of ASC-prayer. Drawing upon Maslow's research in motivation I would like to propose a tentative explanation, which still requires much research, but which may begin to shed some light on why the use of altered states of consciousness in prayer does not seem to contribute to the "constructive personality change" of so many religious people.

Let us begin by recalling that earlier in this study we pointed out that Maslow said his research indicated to him that if the goal of religion is organismic ego-transcendence (which would certainly involve ASC's), then the best route to this goal is "... via achieving identity, a strong real self and via basic-need-gratification rather than via asceticism".¹⁴ Why? Because basic-need-gratification is prerequisite for strong self-identity (self-actualization), and self-actualization is prerequisite for the various levels of organismic maturation that can result in ASC's of heightened unitive consciousness and ego-transcendence.

In other words, ASC-prayer which is ego-transcending and not artificially induced flows out of the maturation of the organism which must have grown to the ego-transcending

¹⁴ Abraham H. Maslow, Toward a Psychology of Being, New York, Van Nostrand, 1962, p. 107-108.

level of human development. The ego-transcending organism is thus the psychological foundation for ego-transcending prayer involving ASC's.

Therefore, ASC-prayer which rests on a foundation of ungratified basic needs and has been induced through the use of various asceticisms for altering perception is not provided with the organismic openness and readiness that make such ASC's an integral expression of the maturity of the whole person. Artificially induced ASC's for a person whose basic needs are not yet gratified do not flow out of nor are they integral to the whole organism and thus do not effect intrinsic organismic change.

Neither can the whole person become identified with the values perceived, because these values cannot as yet flow out of the self-actualization (metaneeds) of the organism. The organismic needs are still basic-needs rather than metaneeds which would be characteristic of ASC's of heightened unitive consciousness. In other words, there is a conflict and very fundamental lack of harmony between the real needs of the organism and the artificially created needs brought on by the introduction of ASC's in prayer.

Once again the unhealthy tension that this can create, the untruthful and unrealistic self-knowledge that it perpetuates under the guise of religion, the instability and superficiality of such "apparent" religious values and

commitments are all largely the result of neglecting the religious implications of the developmental nature of man. If such were recognized then there would be less neglect in discerning the degree of maturity and corresponding level of religious need and expression so that what was done in the name of religion might be more supportive of continuing human growth.

Just as it is becoming increasingly recognized that facilitating the positive growth of the whole person is not just a matter of changing his concepts or of introducing will-power techniques or even of plastering on certain good values or goals in an external way, so too, it must be recognized that simply altering perception through artificial means in the name of religion is an inadequate and shallow way to bring about growth into that fuller humanness which is intrinsic to healthy religion. In fact, it is not difficult to see how such practices of artificially inducing ASC's in the ungratified basic needer would be not only dangerous to his mental health, but also not supportive of "constructive personality change".

It is not uncommon today in Christianity to observe people who have dedicated many years to the practice of various asceticisms and to the regular observance of certain forms of prayer and meditation, yet who diminish or even drop these "spiritual exercises" altogether. Moreover, hardly

have they been dropped than a surprisingly high percentage of such people begin to experience that their ungratified basic needs resume a dominant role in their motivation and perception. In other words, once the effect (whether one wants to call it a kind of hypnotism, a repression, a blocking of the experiencing process etc.) of the ASC has lessened, worn off or disappeared altogether, then the ungratified basic needs often return with a vengeance and sometimes explosive force after having been neglected for so many years. Once the defenses are lowered and some contact is made again with the experiencing process of the organism, the religious perceptions, the superficially introjected values--everything connected with the former way of religious living--seems remote and unreal. So often this writer has heard such people describe their years of living under such conditions with a phrase like, "It all seems like a dream, a mirage", as they come more and more into contact with the here and now reality of their experiencing process.

From my experience such people have broken through into a kind of self-possession and truthfulness out of which the prospects for further growth are very optimistic, although extraordinary adjustments have to be made and the religious orientation undergo a radical change.

However, there is so little understanding today of the Christian theological meaning that can be given the

experiencing process and of the transcendent experiences therein, that pastoral guidance is rarely available for such people. Given their pain, confusion and inherent religious orientation such needing people in their search for some new religious meaning in their lives can once again take a dead-ended and dangerous turn in the road by joining some "renewal" assembly of people who are naively using group rather than the former individual techniques (the old religious practices) to achieve the ASC's to which they give religious meaning.

Most often such groups today are composed of people not living together in the kind of all-encompassing "religious environment" supportive of the ASC's that could be achieved and maintained, for example, within the "closed" atmosphere of Protestant communities like the Shakers of the last century or the orders of priests, brothers or nuns in the Catholic Church. Moreover, such groups come together only once or twice a week and the participants have to live and work the rest of the time in an entirely different atmosphere. There is usually no daily schedule of religious practices and no "monastery atmosphere" to sustain the ASC.

If, for example, a deficiency motivated person (whose level of development necessitates D-cognition) uses such artificial means as those employed by many so called "charismatic" groups (or any other inducements) to attain

ASC's, and within such alterations in perception he has revealed something of the unitive dimension of reality, then when he must return to his ordinary daily perception (which flows out of his ungratified basic needs) a potentially hazardous psychological situation has been created. The conflict, tension and dichotomy between the day in and day out world of D-cognition with its alienation and separateness, and the taste of unitive consciousness brought on by the ASC could create so traumatic a disparity within the person (depending, of course, on many variables like the degree of pain involved, intensity of feeling ungratified basic needs etc.) that the use of ASC-prayer under such conditions might serve as an occasion for bringing on serious mental disorder like schizophrenia.

One cannot help but wonder what the social and mental health consequences are that result from religion's widespread use of various techniques for altering consciousness among the deprived people's of the world whose basic needs remain largely ungratified. As a matter of fact, the revivalistic and pentecostal orientation in Christianity which uses group techniques for altering consciousness ironically seems to have special appeal among the deprived. This poses an interesting question for further research as to exactly what the psychological function of such a religious orientation is for such people.

Within the more affluent portions of society ungratified basic needs seem to be found mainly in the last two general areas of need which Maslow described as the love, affection and belongingness needs and the esteem needs. My personal experience in counseling religious people over the years leads me to conclude that an alarmingly high percentage of the Christians I have worked with, especially priests, brothers and sisters in the Catholic Church, try to build a communion superstructure with God characteristic of the ASC's typical in B-cognition upon the shaky foundation of unsatisfied basic needs. Many impose on this basic-need syndrome both the above God-communion-goal and ascetical methods for altering perception to achieve this goal (of which the vows of poverty, chastity and obedience are a part) before B-cognitive ASC's are the expression of their organismic growth.

Along the same line I have found numerous Christians who pursue the following pattern. Counseling, personal observation or clinical evidence will indicate that they are obviously deprived in basic need gratification, but that, nevertheless, they have taken upon themselves a style of life or certain B-values and ideals as if these were truly the expression of their organismic development. In other words, they sincerely believed and were trying to live as if they were really growth-motivated, had metaneeds and were motivated by B-values which flowed from within, while at the

same time not consciously realizing the conflict and disparity between this self-image (and life style chosen to express it) and what the true needs and values of their organism were.

The reasons for this are many, a typical example being that because the important people in such a person's life (usually authority figures such as parents, priest, religious teacher at school etc.) will give him a measure of respect and acceptance if he appears to be operating at the level of meta-motivation, then if his basic needs have or are not being gratified outside of this relationship, it is extremely easy for the young person to begin playing a premature value and behavior role in an attempt to have these needs gratified. Unfortunately such a choice and its behavior only succeeds in cutting the person off from truthful contact with himself, integration is blocked and deep within the person lies the gnawing force that continually reminds him that he himself (as he really exists with his ungratified basic needs for love or esteem or both) has never really been loved, wanted or esteemed for being exactly what he is, a basic needer. Only when that experience happens in a person's life are the basic love and esteem needs gratified.

However, so often in situations like the above, the practice of religion, the very commitment to a religious way of life, in fact, the very prayer and worship practices that

are often intensified at times of crisis--all of this, stands as the major block keeping such a person out of truthful contact with himself, his own experiencing process and the accepted realization of what his real needs are so that he might open up to others and invite their gratification. My counseling experience has repeatedly shown me how often the above type of person making a "retreat" under the direction of some "spiritual guide" or director-priest has been more rigidly closed off to their experiencing process by such a well-intentioned religious exercise. In fact, the more intense and prolonged the retreat, for example, a "closed, directed retreat" of some thirty days, the more the damage that can be done, especially if the priest or guide is what Lancelot Law Whyte calls a "dissociated man" who tries to find balm for his own disunity in the service of others.¹⁵

Since people following a similar religious orientation tend to cluster together and create subcultures and varying degrees of closed community in order to foster their particular life style and beliefs which often have metamotivation, B-valuing and B-cognition as the goal, there needs to be careful discernment whether the real reason which impels a person to try to live these values and perceptions is not

¹⁵ Lancelot Law Whyte, The Next Development in Man, Mentor, New York, The New American Library, 1962.

fundamentally his ungratified basic need for acceptance or respect rather than true metaneeds and the organismic maturity for B-cognition and B-valuing. A paternalistic or maternalistic system of approval or advancement in religion can easily re-enforce on a widespread basis this kind of duplicity and unhealthy practice of religion.

Moreover, the intense suffering and confusion that has been prolonged for years--often whole lifetimes--in the lives of countless sincere religious people by the erroneous "spiritual guidance" they receive when they are experiencing the psychological effects of this conflict could, I believe, be helped by the insights this study is attempting to bring to light.

Take, for example, a common situation which anyone doing counseling or therapy with religiously inclined people often experiences. During the course of the developing relationship, it becomes obvious that this person has a very negative self-image. At the same time this person is convinced that if he or she can love Jesus Christ enough and establish a deep enough friendship with Christ whatever it is that is causing them trouble in life will be taken care of by this relationship. Often they are already deeply identified with Christ and speak of this relationship as the only thing that makes it possible for them to keep functioning at all. The situation is a very difficult one for the

the religious counselor, because the Christian churches all exhort their people to develop a relationship with Christ and an identification with Him on a simplistic, humanly analogous I-Thou interpersonal model. Why should the person with ungratified basic needs do otherwise given the instruction and model placed before him?

Yet the growing body of psychological data cannot help but raise many questions regarding the effect of such a procedure. We know that the ungratified basic needer, who, let us say in the extreme case of a schizophrenic, identifies with Napoleon, is really making a desperate effort to balance his strong, organismic, negative self-experience and bring some equilibrium into the self-structure by picturing himself as Napoleon or as his friend or confidant etc. Such identification or relationship is generally thought to be abnormal, an expression of illness and socially unacceptable. Yet, when the Christian churches with social approval provide the Savior-Lover-image of Jesus Christ and exhort their people to identify with Him and to establish an interpersonal one-to-one-love-relationship etc., the person with a negative self-image and ungratified basic needs is being led into an unhealthy psychological situation where the more he throws himself into creating this relationship the more dead-ended and blocked his human growth becomes. This is especially true if through the use of asceticisms like the vows, group

prayer, fasting etc. the person is able to create a kind of 'total environment' of altered perception within which he or she develops their "spiritual relationship" to Christ.

The tragedy of this situation is that in reality, the more this whole way of religious life is pursued, the more it can succeed in cutting off a person from his own organismic experiencing process and consequently from the possibility of "constructive personality change".

The Christian might then ask, is there a way of "relating to Christ" or "identifying with Christ" that seems to be at least open for the possibility of "constructive personality change" if conditions etc. are favorable?

Fundamentally, this would be a theological interpretation or development taking into consideration, for example, the data that this study has revealed. Such an explanation written adequately from a theological point of view is not the task of this research. However, I have at various times in this paper briefly given a bird's eye view of the explanation and position I would take as a Christian theologian in responding to this question. I have said that I believe my approach could be shown to have theological value and that it is soundly based on a foundation of psychological insight, especially what I have tried to show can be derived from Dr. Maslow.

This explanation, once again, is simply that I believe the Christ-relationship-identification-goal of Christian

spirituality must be directed toward the continually developing self-experience of the Christian. This on-going and fluid stream of the experiencing process which is holistic, organismic human consciousness itself can be opened to in Christian faith as the "Christ-experience"--or better theologically, the God-with-us-experience, since God's presence to man is Trinitarian after the Ascension and Pentecost. This self-experience is meant to be deeply relational within this world, beginning from the very particularized dependency relationships to parents, family etc. in the gratification of basic needs to (if maturation continues) an ever-expanding, more cosmic and universal relationship of profound oneness in "Being". This entire relational dimension of human consciousness, undergoing continual change if healthy growth is taking place, is open to the possibility of a Christian God-experience and faith-response.

No doubt throughout history the great religious "spiritual guides", teachers and founders have probably stumbled across the connection between ASC's and the B-values. Very likely they came to realize this experientially in their own lives, and since their teachings were essentially these same B-values and since these leaders wanted others to adopt and live these values (their teachings), they therefore reasoned that if they could somehow alter the perception of their disciples that in turn this would result in a

realization of and commitment to their teachings. Thus, it is not surprising that so many different asceticisms and techniques have been devised to induce altered states of consciousness within the traditions of religions which persist down to the present time.

However, as anyone who has attempted to study religion from a psychological vantage point soon learns, such procedures as well as most of the practices of organized religion are simply assumed to be beneficial to their adherents because they are done in the name of religion. The point that we are trying to make here is that today there is growing evidence to at least call into question the indiscriminate use of ASC's in religion because there is good reason to believe that for those who have ungratified basic needs such practices can be dangerous to their mental health and very likely frustrate "constructive personality change". Evidence increasingly points to the fact that religion should try to bring people to B-values through organismic maturation, not through asceticisms and other techniques for altering consciousness when the organism is not yet ready for what we previously termed, "biological mysticism". Whether or not the various disciplines and asceticisms for altering consciousness are actually beneficial for continuing "constructive personality change" in self-actualizing people, I have not been able to find any clear leads that would justify taking

a position on the question. The best indication that I know of out of which an hypothesis might be constructed for further research in this area can be found in the concluding chapters of the doctoral dissertation footnoted below.¹⁶ My purpose here is only to propose an explanation of the relationship of ASC's (in the religious context) to the "constructive personality change" of ungratified basic needers.

My hunch, however, regarding the above question is that transcending self-actualizers who value the altered awareness of B-cognition have already developed some personal habits and disciplines necessary to support the conditions under which they have found that such perceptions continue to be a part of their lives. Moreover, in order to arrive at the level of maturity they have reached, increasing closeness to their own experiencing process has had to become a practical, daily value and a way of life. This, I believe, would not readily incline them to depart from the patient waiting and listening for the clues to future growth which they would expect to come once again out of their own developing organism, the "biological mysticism" that they would be aware of continuing to develop in them. To use methods that would bypass letting the organism itself initiate and indicate how growth in transcendent experience might take place, would seem to me to "go against the grain" of someone whose religious life had grown out of closeness

¹⁶ Peter A. Campbell, Toward a Humanistic-Transpersonal Psychology of Religion.

to his own experiencing process.

My intuition would be that if some asceticisms and methods for ASC's could be used to further the "constructive personality change" in the self-actualizer, they would have to be such that they enhanced and intensified the experiencing process that the organism itself was already into or was ready to move into. Such procedures would involve augmenting and supporting growth as it was appropriate for the level of organismic readiness at which each person had arrived. For example, a person who had matured organismically to the point where he naturally appreciated but irregularly practiced what scholars call "extrovertive mysticism" by B-cognizing the beauties of nature, might be helped to grow in this capacity and regularize such perception through the use of some of the techniques for heightening his focus or "centering". This would simply be intensifying and making more frequent (and ultimately laying the groundwork for the organismic need to move on to higher levels of transcendent experience) the shifts in perception appropriate to his level of self-actualization.

It would be a fascinating study to find out if transcending self-actualizers are actually the least inclined toward using any artificial means for altering their perception. My conjecture would be that the years of experience involved in learning how to continue their own growth process

would have taught them patience, respect for the wisdom of their own organism's readiness to transcend and grow and the absolute necessity of balancing their altered B-cognition with healthy D-cognition. Thus, it seems to me, they would be more cautious than others of tampering with the natural rhythm of their own growth process, knowing that the delicate balance which the organism itself will try to make based on its own "ripeness" can too easily be upset and lost if ASC's are allowed or encouraged to become the highest value or goal in life. Rather, I think that life itself will have taught them that ASC's are not an end in themselves but only a valuable means for enriching the total relational dimension of human existence if they are truly an organismic, holistic expression of the transcendental of the person.

However, the main point that I have tried to make in these last pages is to explain the relationship between ASC prayer and "constructive personality change" in the ungratified basic need as I believe it might be explained using some of Dr. Maslow's research.

Lastly, on the basis of what has already been said, I would like to make a final brief comment from the standpoint of a Christian theologian.

If, theologically speaking, God's salvific presence is being experienced wherever real life is developing, wherever a person is becoming more human, whole, and more a

source of life to the world around him; if God's Saving Presence and Self-communication is most radically experienced in the very actualization of each man's potential to grow into "fuller humanness", then I think the Christian churches must seriously ask themselves just exactly what connection there is between God's Saving Presence and so many of the prayer and worship practices which, (it can be more clearly seen today), contribute very questionably to the "constructive personality change" of those who practice them. An on-going, serious psychological research program into the prayer, worship and "spiritual direction" practices of Christianity sponsored by the various Christian churches themselves is long, long overdue. The questions we have been able to raise in this study as well as some of the possibilities for further research represent only a fraction of what could be and needs to be done in this area.

5) The Deficiency and Growth-Motivated Experience of Evil

Maslow's contributions regarding the motivational and perceptual characteristics of self-actualizing people provide Christianity with valuable psychological background for articulating many important teachings and theological concepts in a way that might be more meaningful for growing people. One of the most challenging of these where research might profitably be conducted is an approach to the experience

of evil in a person's life and its relationship to God and prayer. In the chart presented in Chapter III we have already briefly sketched how the perception of the growth-motivated person will tend to provide a changing psychological milieu for the experience of evil as contrasted with that of the deficiency-motivated person. This then leads to the possibility of a quite different religious interpretation and meaning more compatible with this higher level of psychological maturation. The following comments offer a little more elaboration on a possible approach to evil that would seem more congenial to the experience of a self-actualizing Christian and which might serve as a helpful point of departure for future research.

Since the less dichotomizing perception of the self-actualizer leads him to experience reality more as a unity, all of limited reality can be religiously conceived of as containing both good and evil. Moreover all human growth (which is inseparable from religious growth) takes place within the limited world of human evolution and involves a recognition and acceptance of the whole--that is, the simultaneous awareness and acceptance of the presence of limitation, evil and death, as well as the possibility of always going beyond it, transcending it and not being overcome by this destructive force. Indeed, this ever-present energy that can frustrate and destroy life and growth can also

serve as the experiential "backdrop", so to speak, in front of which the power of transcendence is spotlighted. However, the key to both human and religious growth in the face of adversity is faith in the power of life (transcendence) within one's self and others which the Christian can believe in as the Body of the Whole Christ.

Thus it would seem that meaningful prayer for the self-actualizing Christian would not emphasize and focus so much on the continual petitioning of God to protect him from the experience of the destructive tendency in all of reality, because not only would this be perceived as a part of human existence, but as offering (when inevitably experienced in many ways during the course of life) a potential opportunity for greater humanization and Christian faith. The conceptualization of God as the "Master Mechanic of the Universe", able to prevent breakdowns in the machinery of human living and patch up the mistakes, would seem to be an image of diminished significance as the experience of transcendence in the human growth process became more a focal point of value--indeed, a potential God and Christian faith experience. One would expect prayer to shift from the God "outside" controlling human destiny onto the transcendent God "within" the self-experience of growing and going beyond the frustrations and destructive force of evil.

Such a God and faith-experience has for its content the same psychological phenomena that are the catalysts for greater self-confidence and self-possession, for ego-transcendence and for increased contact with all of reality. Its implications for mental health, for avoiding escapism in religion, and for social progress are clearly apparent. The more holistic perception of the self-actualizer is advantageous in many areas of growth.

But none seem more striking than the possibilities such human maturation brings with it for a more profound understanding of Christianity. Only through a more unified perception can one grasp the gestalt that simultaneously contains evil as well as the possibility and/or the actuality of transcending it, which brings the Christian directly into the paradoxical experience that reveals the living presence of God-with-him. The self-actualizing Christian who can turn his faith toward this paradoxical situation and can focus his prayer on its experiential content, it seems to me, holds better promise of assuming a more responsible role in society and in human history. Could more extensive research be done to demonstrate this?

6) Transcendence for the Extrovertive and Introvertive Mystic

In the last chapter I made a subtle distinction between the God/prayer experience of the transcending

self-actualizer and the God/prayer experience of the transcending self-actualizer at the higher levels of ego-transcendence. Is there some relationship between these two stages which I have tried to distinguish and what scholars speak of as extrovertive and introvertive mysticism? Does the distinction scholars make between extrovertive and introvertive mysticism make a further precision of two stages of development that would fall within my last category, namely the experience of transcending self-actualizers at the higher levels of ego-transcendence?

Extrovertive mysticism usually refers to heightened external focusing, centering, total absorption, creative fascination, letting go into something, simply being with or in something, letting whatever is B-cognized come into the whole organism etc. While in introvertive mysticism the sensory input is inhibited, movement is inward, sensation is cut off in order that there may be a heightened unitive experience within the organism.

Is introvertive mysticism an expression of self-actualization at a higher level of ego-transcendence than extrovertive or is it simply a method or an orientation for attaining ego-transcendence that flows out of and is better suited to certain temperaments, cultures, personality types etc.?

Are the two stages I distinguish a more valid psychological and developmental way of specifying actual stages in growth than the introvertive-extrovertive categories, which may be more a way of classifying methods or techniques used in ego-transcendence?

7) Christian Faith for the Self-Actualizer
and the Ungratified Basic-Needer

Because this study has shown that there appears to be such a qualitatively different organismic capacity for religious response between the ungratified basic needer and the transcending self-actualizer, further research needs to be done on precisely what bearing this has on the pastoral teaching of the meaning of Christian faith.

I have indicated at various times in these pages that the perceptual and motivational field of the self-actualizer creates such a different experiential background which he brings to the phrase "Christian faith" that there are hardly any, if any, ground for a common meaning that the ungratified basic needer and the self-actualizer can share. The self-actualizing person is usually capable of a holistic religious response flowing out of the organismic experience that his very being is rooted in and opens out into the mystery of infinite transcendence. This is known precisely through his consciousness of transcendent experiences

within which the real self is revealed as 'within' or as 'one with' Infinite Transcendence, which in the Christian context can be given the meaning of "God-with-us" or "in Christ".

The real self is that facet or dimension of personhood which becomes consciously known and identified with through the experience of one's own being ("being-awareness") and the profound unity that exists at this level within all of reality. The real self, revealed through "being/unity awareness" roots the self-actualizer in the universal and eternal and allows him to experience that he is integrally fleshed into a reality which has never had a beginning and can therefore never come to an end; a reality which ties him into the world, other people and all that exists at the experiential level of existence itself. This can provide the organismic experience of continuity from the past to the present and from the present into the future. The existence of "Unlimited Transcendence" known only, of course, through the Christian self-actualizer's own limited transcendent experiences can be responded to as God. Such a response is an organismic faith-experience flowing out of the whole organism's awareness of 'immersion' in eternal and infinite Life and Transcendence.

Such an experiential background is going to provide quite a different "meaning-context" for Christian faith from

that which the deficiency motivated D-cognizer will have. Therefore, can the word, "faith", be accurately used to refer to the Christian response of both the self-actualizer and the ungratified basic needer? Moreover, what is the "faith" proper to the healthily developing child as contrasted with the primarily D-motivated and D-cognizing adult?

8) The Relationship between Religious Revivalism
and Ungratified Basic Needs

A growing phenomena in the Catholic Church in North America and one which has always been present to some degree within the various branches of Protestantism is what is usually referred to in historical literature as the 'cult of enthusiasm' or revivalism. Today it is commonly called, pentecostalism. Since this religious phenomena is currently in vogue and appears to be spreading again, it would be timely and relatively easy to find such groups for the purpose of research in the psychology of religion.

One possible approach might be to simply try to find out what percentage of these people still have ungratified basic needs; or another approach might be along the lines of trying to ascertain their predominant motivation--either deficiency or metamotivation. This could be followed with one or more comparative samplings of other religious groups

and an analysis made of these results, which could then be compared with the positions taken in this present study to ascertain whether or not there was any corroboration. The above suggestion might be much more feasible than trying to determine the degree of self-actualization, because there are so many other factors that would have to be measured besides basic need gratification in any inventory of self-actualization. However, I have been told that at least one such inventory for measuring self-actualization exists, although I have never followed through on this information in any way.

9) Conversion for the Self-Actualizer and
Ungratified Basic-Needer

Another interesting project might be the study of religious conversion using the present research as a framework within which to propose certain questions.

Gordon Allport identified as one of the characteristics of the maturing person an expanding sense of self.¹⁷ William James has written that the positive content of religious experiences are saving experiences which come into a person's life through the fact that at any point in time one's self-awareness is potentially open to and continuous

¹⁷ Gordon W. Allport, Pattern and Growth in Personality, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1963, p. 283-285.

with a wider self.¹⁸ Or, in other words, that self-awareness is not limited to or ultimately contained within one's present consciousness or self-experience.

This paper has pointed out that the expanding or widening of the self to the point where the person is organismically capable of going beyond his own skin and identifying as a real dimension of himself values that are transpersonal flows out of the maturing perception and motivation of the self-actualizing person.

Does Christian metanoia mean the kind of conversion where there is this psychological turning outward and personally identifying with the Divine or with certain religious values that are transpersonal? Is therefore such conversion only possible psychologically for the self-actualizing person not the ungratified basic needer? Moreover, is metanoia an ongoing process that is dependent on the continuing self-actualization of the person? What are the psychological dynamics of ongoing conversion for the self-actualizer as contrasted with the conversion experiences of the ungratified basic needer? What is the psychological relationship of organismic transcendent experiences to conversion; of artificially induced transcendent experiences to conversion?

¹⁸ William James, The Varieties of Religious Experience, Mentor, New York, The New American Library, 1958, p. 388.

If one can legitimately identify metanoia with the kind of religious conversion that can take place psychologically only when the person has matured to the point where B-cognizing, B-valuing and metaneeds are operative, then what psychologically are the "conversion experiences" of D-cognizers and D-motivated people? What psychological criteria might be developed to evaluate whether or not a "religious conversion" actually contributes to "fuller humanness" or "constructive personality change"?

These then are a few of the future research projects that have come to mind during the course of this study. Others have been mentioned at various places within the text where it seemed more appropriate to mention the possibility of researching a particular point further.

If "organized religion" ever seriously undertakes the psychological study of itself, perhaps by then the psychology of religion will itself have matured to the point where it can make a valuable contribution toward the constructive evolution that must continually be a part of healthy religion.

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An original, highly creative expression of religious experience coming out of the influences of Tillich, Rogers, and encounter group research and participation. Thought provoking for leads into further research.

Dewart, Leslie, The Future of Belief, New York, Herder and Herder, 1966, 223 p.

A scholarly, contemporary effort by a Roman Catholic to recast traditional theological doctrine in a way designed to speak meaningfully to the self-experience of modern man. Brilliantly original and has served as inspiration for pursuing this research project from the psychological perspective, rather than the theological.

Goble, Frank G., The Third Force, New York, Grossman, 1970, xii-201 p.

An easy reading, overall view of some of Maslow's most important insights. Suffers from being superficial for academic research, but has certain synthetic contribution.

Harman, Willis H., "Old Wine in New Wineskins", in Challenges of Humanistic Psychology, New York, McGraw-Hill, 1967, p. 321-332.

-----, "The New Copernican Revolution", in The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, Vol. 1, No. 2, Fall 1969, p. 21-29.

Both articles have not only provided inspiration for undertaking this research project, but are so thought-provoking, so seminal and so synthetic as to be valuable basic reading for much future research in the area of this study.

James, William, The Varieties of Religious Experience, Mentor, New York, The New American Library, 1958, xviii-406 p.

The classic American contribution to the psychology of religion. Valuable insights that are still relevant in almost every area of psychological research in religion.

Jourard, Sidney M., "Toward a Psychology of Transcendent Behavior", in Explorations in Human Potentialities, H. A. Otto, Ed., New York, Charles Thomas, 1966, p. 349-377.

Seminal work exploring various psychological factors involved in the study of transcendent behavior. A valuable beginning for further research and an essential contribution in this area.

-----, Disclosing Man to Himself, New York, Van Nostrand, 1968, viii-245 p.

Chapter seventeen contains valuable insights toward a psychology of transcendent behavior.

Kwant, Remy, "The Human Body as the Self-Awareness of Being (An Inquiry into the Last Phase of Merleau-Ponty's Philosophical Life)", in Humanitas, Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 1966, p. 43-62.

An important approach to the holistic (experiential, rather than conceptual) awareness of the self-actualizing person. This treatise is dealing with the same unitive consciousness from a philosophical viewpoint that Maslow described in his research on being-cognition.

Maslow, Abraham H., Toward A Psychology of Being, New York, Van Nostrand, 1962, ix-214 p.

This work not only collects several years of Maslow's continued research after his initial book on motivation, but it is the primary source that balances his prior study on the motivation of self-actualizing people with an invaluable section on their cognition. The section on motivation is an excellent supplement to what was written in his main volume on motivation.

-----, Religions, Values and Peak Experiences, Columbus, Ohio State University Press, 1964, xx-123 p.

For the purposes of this research project this book was mainly useful as a supplement in obtaining descriptive material on being-cognition, because the goal of his lectures reproduced in this volume were not the same as the goal of this study. The Appendix has valuable material on B-cognition and B-values.

-----, Eupsychian Management: A Journal, Homewood, Illinois, Irwin-Dorsey, 1965, xvi-277 p.

The chapter entitled, "On Low Grumbles, High Grumbles, and Metagrumbles", contains some suggestions for ascertaining the level of motivation (e.g. humor, projective tests like the Rorschach, the content of "grumbles" or complaints etc.) which might be applicable to the future research projects suggested in the last chapter of this study.

-----, "Self-Actualization and Beyond", in Challenges of Humanistic Psychology, J. F. T. Pugh, Ed., New York, McGrawHill, 1967, xiv-362 p.

A clearly written and brief view of his basic insights on the perception and motivation of self-actualizers, but mainly valuable for his description of eight ways in which one self-actualizes.

-----, "Various Meanings of Transcendence", in The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1969, p. 56-66.

This article is mainly useful for the psychological study of transcendence, clarification of terms and for the investigation of this aspect of human consciousness.

---, "Theory Z", in The Journal of Transpersonal Psychology, Vol. 1, No. 2, Fall 1969, p. 31-47.

Presents some of his later conclusions differentiating two kinds of self-actualizers--those with little or no experiences of transcendence and those in whom such experiences frequently occurred and were important.

---, Motivation and Personality, (Second Edition), New York, Harper and Row, 1970, xxvii-369 p.

This is Maslow's major work on motivation. The second edition not only contains a rich and insightful preface but much updating and the attempt to clarify various points throughout the text that was not present in the earlier edition. This edition is the one that any student should work with, since Maslow spent a great deal of time revising it shortly before his death.

-----, The Farther Reaches of Human Nature, New York, Viking Press, 1971, xxi-423 p.

This posthumously published collection of Maslow's articles really contains little that was not already available in various sources. Its value lies in bringing together under one cover a very representative selection of some of his best insights.

McMahon, Edwin M., and Peter A. Campbell, Becoming a Person in the Whole Christ, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1967, 306 p.

Humanistic psychology, primarily some contributions of Carl Rogers, serve as the basis for the author's first published work synthesizing aspects of Christianity and the Third Force. The theological and prayer implications of "becoming a person" are stressed.

-----, The In-Between: Evolution in Christian Faith, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1969, 189 p.

The author's own effort to articulate a contemporary understanding of Christian faith by drawing the theological position out of the psychological study of human behavior.

Rahner, Karl, and Herbert Vorgrimler, Theological Dictionary, New York, Herder and Herder, 1965, 493 p.

A concise, basic reference work helpful to get at the gist of some of Rahner's thinking.

-----, "The Unity of Love of God and Love of Neighbor", in Theology Digest, Vol. 15, No. 2, 1967, p. 87-93.

A profound article locating B-love and the more unitive, holistic experience of human solidarity within the Christian tradition. Gives theological substance to the shift in God-concept/experience developed in this study.

Tillich, Paul, The Courage to Be, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1952, ix-197 p.

Probably the late theologian's most popular and representative articulation of his existentialist religious thought which has had considerable impact in setting this tone in contemporary theological thinking. Moreover, since Third and Fourth Force psychology are also an American adaptation and contribution to the development of existentialist thought, Tillich has influenced most religious writing that has come out of this movement, as well as this present study.

Underhill, Evelyn, Mysticism, New York, Dutton, 1961, xviii-519 p.

One of the great classic works researching mysticism. A basic resource book in this area.

Van Kaam, Adrian, "Motivation and Contemporary Anxiety", in Humanitas, Vol. 1, No. 1, Spring 1965, p. 59-75.

One of the clearest and best synthesized descriptions contrasting the contemporary and medieval self-concept.

Whyte, Lancelot Law, The Next Development in Man, Mentor, New York, The New American Library, 1962, v-254 p.

One of the books that has most influenced Third and Fourth Force development in psychology. It has had a profound impact in its call for "unitary" experiencing and living. This work, especially chapter ten on "Unitary Man", has served as background reading and as incentive for undertaking this research.

APPFNDIX 1

ABSTRACT OF

Transcendent Human Experience as Christian Prayer

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Transcendent Human Experience as Christian Prayer¹

The Christian conceptualization of God and the traditional prayer forms that follow upon it are largely the expression of a world-view and a self-experience characteristic of Graeco-Roman and medieval man. This earlier "sense of self" stands markedly in sharp contrast with contemporary man's self-experience and especially that of the more "self-actualizing" or maturing person. Thus, today's "growing tip" within the family of man is increasingly alienated from the traditional pastoral articulation of God and finds less and less meaning in the expressions of prayer presented to them by the churches.

After briefly showing that man's self-experience directly conditions and influences his religious experience (God-concept, prayer etc.), this study sought to identify the predominant, personal "value-experience", not only of modern man but of maturing people, concluding that the experience of transcendence had become that focal point.

¹ Edwin M. McMahon, doctoral thesis presented to the Department of Religious Studies, Faculty of Arts, University of Ottawa, Ontario, 1972, v-313 p.

Therefore, in an attempt to help the Christian churches study, pastorally teach, and eventually express approaches to prayer that might speak to the experience of today's growing people, this research project turned to Abraham Maslow's work on transcendent human experience. This was done in order to discover what Maslow's insights might reveal about the self-experience of growing people, since most of his research centered on the motivation and perception of "self-actualizing" persons. The hope was that through the careful study of Dr. Maslow's findings on their motivation and perception valuable insights would be found which could then be used to explain what the probable characteristics of their religious experience might be.

By examining the changes in perception and motivation between ungratified basic needers with deficiency-cognition and transcending self-actualizers with their growing capacity for being-cognition, this study could then present to religionists not only the pastoral need for a developmental God-concept/experience, but begin to spell out what the likely shift in the God-concept/experience would be paralleling the growth in perception and motivation of many self-actualizing Christians.

Thus the hypothesis was formulated: Does the creative thought of Abraham Maslow on transcendent human experience provide significant data for a theory of religious experience

relevant to a contemporary articulation of Christian prayer?

The above mentioned goals were sought by exposing in some detail the perception and motivation of transcending self-actualizers as this contrasted with that of ungratified basic needers. Then the study went on to develop the important religious implications related to prayer that were felt could be drawn out of the Maslow background, emphasizing changes in the God-concept where the "outside", omnipotent, need-gratifying God-model seemed inadequate for the changing self-experience and religious needs of the metamotivated person. Several initial descriptions outlining a possible developmental approach to the articulation of God and the probable prayer expressions that would correspond to each level of growth were also included.

The study terminated with an affirmative response to the hypothesis, concluding that this project had demonstrated that research into Maslow's findings on transcendent human experience provides a rich and important source of data, not only for the psychological study of prayer but furnishes a psychological framework within which the needed reformulation and expression of the Christian God-concept and prayer might be undertaken. Several suggestions for further research, some extensively developed, were also included.