

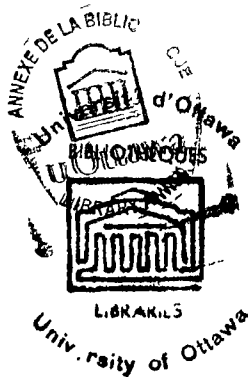
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UNIVERSITÉ D'OTTAWA ÉCOLE DES GRADUÉS

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING
ACCORDING TO VATICAN COUNCIL II, AND THE FIVE BASIC
PSYCHIC NEEDS OF MAN POSITED BY ERICH FROMM:
AN INTERDISCIPLINARY STUDY

by Henry Carl Simmons

Thesis submitted to the Faculty of
Arts, University of Ottawa, as partial
fulfillment of the requirements for the
degree of Doctor of Philosophy in
Religious Studies



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CURRICULUM STUDIORUM

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INTRODUCTION

This is a study of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering from a theoretical psychological point of view. The specific purpose of this study is to determine whether or not, and under what conditions, the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican Council II are conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's five basic psychic needs posited by Erich Fromm.

This is an interdisciplinary study. It uses elements from the disciplines of theology and psychology. As such a study could take several forms, the nature of this present study may be clarified by saying what it is not.

1. It is not a clinical examination of a religious attitude in the style of Lester C. Lee's An Investigation of Erich Fromm's Theory of Authoritarianism, in which the author tested the hypothesis that "persons who were more in agreement with the 'authoritarian' theological doctrines would be more authoritarian [...] in their general attitudes."¹ This present study is theoretical rather than clinical.

¹ Lester C. Lee, "An Investigation of Erich Fromm's Theory of Authoritarianism", in Dissertation Abstracts, University Microfilms, Ann Arbor, Michigan, Vol. 24, 1964, p. 2558; dissertation submitted to The Claremont Graduate School, 1963.

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2. It is not a comparative study in the style of G.B. Hammond's The Idea of Self-Estrangement in the Thought of Erich Fromm and Paul Tillich: A Comparative Study with Emphasis on Implications for Theological Method.² This present study does not compare what Erich Fromm said about suffering with what the Second Vatican Council said about suffering.

3. It is not a critical study of Erich Fromm in the style of John H. Schaar's comprehensive critique Escape from Authority: the Perspectives of Erich Fromm.³ This present study accepts the analysis of man's five basic psychic needs made by Erich Fromm without attempting to determine their validity.

4. It is not a defense against Erich Fromm from a religious point of view in the style of J. Stanley Glen's Erich Fromm: A Protestant Critique.⁴ This present study accepts that Erich Fromm's analysis of man's five basic needs is of value to the theologian in his study of a Christian doctrine.

² G.B. Hammond, "The Idea of Self-Estrangement in the Thought of Erich Fromm and Paul Tillich: A Comparative Study with Emphasis on Implications for Theological Method", in Dissertation Abstracts, Vol. 23, 1962, p. 1433; dissertation submitted to Vanderbilt University.

³ John H. Schaar, Escape from Authority: the Perspectives of Erich Fromm, New York, Harper and Row, 1961, viii-348 p.

⁴ J. Stanley Glen, Erich Fromm: A Protestant Critique, Philadelphia, Westminster, 1966, 224 p.

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Although this study is neither clinical, nor comparative, nor critical, nor defensive, it is an interdisciplinary study. The general perspective within which it is written is this. As both theology and psychology are concerned with man, the theologian may attempt to profit from the insights of psychology to further his understanding of theological man. To the extent that the theologian, religious educator, or pastor is aware of the study of man being undertaken in psychology he may, in spite of differences of vocabulary, methodology, and philosophical presuppositions between the two disciplines, seek to gain a better understanding of man in relationship to God by using the conclusions culled from a psychological study of man.

This thesis uses the five basic psychic needs of man posited by Erich Fromm as a means of achieving a better understanding of the psychological dimensions of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican Council II. Such a methodology does not validate the Christian valuation and significance of suffering from a theological point of view; it tests them from a psychological point of view. It is an attempt to understand what the theologian may learn from a psychologist about the human foundations of the theological doctrine proposed. Psychology does not prove or disprove theology. But it may sensitize the theologian to some human implications of his

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theology that he would not otherwise be aware of. It is in this spirit that the present study poses the question: Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican Council II conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of the basic psychic needs of man proposed by Erich Fromm, and under what conditions?

In distinguishing the nature of this study, four works have already been mentioned. Two other studies may be cited which use Fromm as a psychological theorist in an interdisciplinary study: Ambiguities of Love: an Inquiry into the Psychology of Erich Fromm in which the author contrasted Fromm's views on love with the Christian perspective of Reinhold Niebuhr and the Freudian perspective of Herbert Marcuse;⁵ and Biblical Faith and Erich Fromm's Theory of Personality.⁶ In this study the author showed that "the commitment of faith [...] necessarily involves growth towards human maturity and authentic existence."⁷ He understands human maturity and authentic existence within the context of Erich Fromm's theory of personality. This

⁵ Nicholas J. Yonker, "Ambiguities of Love: an Inquiry into the Psychology of Erich Fromm", in Dissertation Abstracts, Vol. 22, 1961, p. 1245-46; dissertation submitted to Columbia University.

⁶ James J. Forsyth, Biblical Faith and Erich Fromm's Theory of Personality, M.A. thesis submitted to the University of Ottawa, Ontario, 1968, xv-201 p.

⁷ Ibid., p. 173.

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present thesis is distinguished from these two studies both by reason of subject matter treated and by reason of methodological perspective. The first of these studies is a critique of Fromm and the second uses Fromm's analysis of man's five basic psychic needs as a personality model to show that faith is a call to human maturity, whereas this present study is an inquiry into the psychological aspects of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican Council II, using the five basic psychic needs of man posited by Erich Fromm.

Suffering itself has been studied in both clinical and theoretical psychology. Although this present study is not a study in either clinical or theoretical psychology, one author may be mentioned. In Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy,⁸ Viktor Frankl studied the way in which man gives meaning to life, suffering and death. Although he did not do so from a religious perspective this book is an important contribution to the question of the valuation and significance of suffering.

Several Christian studies of suffering may be mentioned which typify three broad categories of Christian writing about suffering. La Souffrance, valeur

⁸ Viktor Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning: An Introduction to Logotherapy, Boston, Beacon Press, 1963, xii-142 p.; similarly, Viktor Frankl, The Doctor and the Soul: from Psychotherapy to Logotherapy, New York, Knopf, 1966, xxi-289 p.

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chrétienne⁹ studied the enigma of suffering, the principle attitudes which modern man takes towards it, and the Christian mystery of the cross and resurrection. Amour, Souffrance, Providence,¹⁰ by Jean Vieujean, is written in a similar, but somewhat more apologetic, vein. Souffrance, Récollecion pascale¹¹ is, as the title suggests, a devotional work. Providence and Suffering in the Old and New Testaments¹² and "The Fellowship of His Sufferings (Phil 3, 10): a Study of St. Paul's Doctrine of Christian Suffering"¹³ treated suffering from a biblical perspective.

As the documents of Vatican Council II contain theological, devotional, and scriptural elements, the perspective of Vatican Council II (and therefore of this thesis) is broader than any one of these three categories.

⁹ , La Souffrance, valeur chrétienne, Tournai, Casterman, 1957, 261 p.

¹⁰ Jean Vieujean, Amour, Souffrance, Providence, Tournai, Casterman, 1964, 118 p.

¹¹ Louis Evely, Souffrance, Récollecion pascale, Brussels, Presto-Print, 1957, 135 p.

¹² Edmund F. Sutcliffe, Providence and Suffering in the Old and New Testaments, London, Nelson, 1953, 175 p.

¹³ Barnabas Mary Ahern, "The Fellowship of His Sufferings (Phil 3, 10): A Study of St. Paul's Doctrine of Christian Suffering", in Catholic Biblical Quarterly, Vol. 22, 1960, p. 1-32.

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Before examining the plan of this thesis, three points should be briefly touched: a definition of the terms 'valuation', 'significance', and 'suffering'; the reason for the choice of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican Council II; and the reason for the choice of Erich Fromm as psychological theorist.

'Valuation', 'significance', and 'suffering' are used in their accepted senses: 'valuation' is "the act of estimating or setting the value of something", "the awareness or acknowledgement of the quality, nature, excellency, or like of something."¹⁴ 'Significance' means "importance, consequence, meaning, import; the quality of being significant or having a meaning."¹⁵ 'Suffering' is the act of undergoing, being subjected to, or enduring pain, distress, injury, loss, or anything unpleasant.¹⁶

The suffering and death of Jesus Christ are a central and significant aspect of the Christian mystery, and suffering is an unescapable reality of the normal human life. The choice of the documents of Vatican Council II as source for the presentation of the Christian valuation

¹⁴ The Random House Dictionary of the English Language, The Unabridged Edition, New York, Random House, 1966, p. 1578.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 1326.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 1421.

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and significance of suffering was recommended because they represent a recent, thorough, and official Roman Catholic examination of the Christian life. No other source considered was found as satisfactory because no other source had the breadth and scope of the documents of Vatican Council II; nor was any other source as representative of an authoritative Roman Catholic point of view.

Erich Fromm was chosen as psychological theorist for several reasons: he is a widely read and popular psychologist; he is understandable without a professional background in clinical psychology; he is concerned not only with man, but also with man as he is shaped by his society; he is critical enough to provide a genuine foil against which to test a theological doctrine. His analysis of man's five basic psychic needs was chosen because it is a central element of Fromm's thought¹⁷ and is basic to Fromm's understanding of man.¹⁸

This thesis is a study of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering from a theoretical psychological point of view. The specific purpose of this study is to determine whether or not, and under what conditions, the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according

17 Cf. Schaar, op. cit., p. 6.

18 Erich Fromm, The Sane Society, New York, Fawcett Premier, 1955, p. 32.

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to Vatican Council II are conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's five basic psychic needs posited by Erich Fromm. The proposed plan of study is this:

Chapter one extracts from The Documents of Vatican II¹⁹ the pertinent statements about the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. These are gathered together into four principles which are then explained within the theological context of Vatican II. The main source used in the first chapter is the documents of Vatican II themselves. The commentary on these documents which was found most useful was the Unam Sanctam series.²⁰ Thus, the first chapter presents, according to Vatican II, the Christian valuation and significance of suffering.

Chapter two presents the five basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm. They are presented in some detail in order to provide a sufficiently broad frame of reference. The basic organization of these principles follows Fromm's presentation in The Sane Society.²¹ The second chapter does not attempt to construct an experimental design (or its theoretical equivalent). It presents one

¹⁹ The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966.

²⁰ Vatican II, Textes et commentaires des décrets conciliaires, in the collection Unam Sanctam, Paris, Cerf 1966, 702 p. (Translation author's.)

²¹ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 29-66.

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area of Fromm's psychology in the light of which it may be asked: What does this say to the theologian about the psychological ramifications of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering?

Chapter three answers the question posed by this thesis: Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's five basic psychic needs posited by Erich Fromm, and under what conditions? The third chapter does not directly apply each of the psychic needs, with its possibilities for progressive and regressive fulfillment, to each of the four principles presented in chapter one, because the material presented in the first two chapters does not lend itself easily to such an approach. Rather, one or more significant and fundamental areas is selected from each of the four principles and examined in the light of whatever dimension of Erich Fromm's analysis of man's five basic psychic needs is applicable. Such a methodology does not attempt to make all possible correlations between the Christian valuation and significance of suffering and the five basic psychic needs of man posited by Erich Fromm. Rather, some significant dimension (or dimensions) of each of the four principles is subjected to one or several areas of the psychological test provided by Fromm's analysis of man's five basic psychic needs. It is

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thus that man's five basic psychic needs posited by Erich Fromm are the psychological criteria of evaluation for the Christian valuation and significance according to Vatican II.

And it is thus that the specific question posed by this thesis is answered, i.e. are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's five basic psychic needs posited by Erich Fromm, and under what conditions?

CHAPTER I

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING

This first chapter presents four principles which group together and summarize what the Council Fathers of Vatican II said about the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. These four principles, with their explanations, are the theological statement about the Christian valuation and significance of suffering which is examined in the light of the five basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm in order to answer the question posed by this thesis: Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican Council II conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's five basic psychic needs as posited by Erich Fromm?

The four principles are:

(i) In spite of the problems posed by suffering, sin, and death, the Christian presses forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope in Christ, who by his death has conquered death. Although this hope is related to the end of time, it does not diminish the importance of intervening duties, but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives.

(ii) The Church recognizes "in the poor and suffering the likeness of her poor and suffering Founder. She does all she can to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ."¹

¹ Vatican II, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church", article 8, p. 23, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as The Church.)

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(iii) Made one in the sacraments with Christ who suffered and is exalted, the Christian offers his sufferings as an acceptable sacrifice before God.

(iv) Christ continues to carry on his redemptive work in the Church, especially through the Eucharist in which the work of redemption is carried on. Christians, by filling up what is wanting in the sufferings of Christ, build up the Church, the sacrament of salvation, for the unity of all mankind.

1. First Principle.

The first principle is: In spite of the problems posed by suffering, sin, and death, the Christian presses forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope in Christ, who by his death has conquered death. Although this hope is related to the end of time, it does not diminish the importance of intervening duties, but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives. This principle is explained, firstly, by a presentation of certain pertinent texts from Vatican II; secondly, by an examination of the significance of the locus of the quotations cited; thirdly, by an analysis of three areas of human suffering: sin, death, and anxiety about the meaninglessness of life; and fourthly, by a consideration of the Christian answer to the problems raised.

A. Certain Pertinent Texts

One facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II concerns the suffering which man feels when he is confronted by the problems of his own existence, the role of Christ in illuminating these problems, and the response of the Christian in hope. The following texts from Vatican II relate to this facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. They are the basis in Vatican II from which the first principle was formed, and are the more significant texts underlying the presentation of the first principle.

In the face of the modern development of the world, an ever-increasing number of people are raising the most basic questions or recognizing them with a new sharpness: What is man? What is this sense of sorrow, of evil, of death, which continues to exist despite so much progress?²

The Church believes that Christ, who died and was raised up for all, can through His Spirit offer man the light and the strength to measure up to his supreme destiny. Nor has any other name under heaven been given to man by which it is fitting for him to be saved.³

For God has called man and still calls him so that with his entire being he might be joined to Him in an endless sharing of a divine life beyond all corruption. Christ won this victory when He rose to life, since by His death He freed man from death.⁴

² Vatican II, "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World", article 10, p. 208, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as The Church Today.)

³ The Church Today, 10, 208.

⁴ The Church Today, 18, 215.

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Man is split within himself. As a result, all of human life, whether individual or collective, shows itself to be a dramatic struggle between good and evil, between light and darkness. Indeed, man finds that by himself he is incapable of battling the assaults of evil successfully, so that everyone feels as though he is bound by chains [...]. For sin has diminished man, blocking his path to fulfillment.⁵

By himself and by his own power, no one is freed from sin or raised above himself, or completely rid of his sickness or his solitude or his servitude. On the contrary, all stand in need of Christ.⁶

He was crucified and rose again to break the stranglehold of personified Evil, so that this world might be fashioned anew according to God's design and reach its fulfillment.⁷

Through [the] Spirit, who is "the pledge of our inheritance" (Eph. 1.14), the whole man is renewed from within, even to the achievement of the "redemption of the body" (Rom. 8.23): "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then he who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also bring to life your mortal bodies because of His Spirit who dwells in you." (Rom. 8.11).⁸

Pressing upon the Christian, to be sure, are the need and the duty to battle against evil through manifold tribulations, and even suffer death. But, linked with the paschal mystery and patterned on the dying Christ, he will hasten forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope [...]. Through Christ and in Christ, the riddles of sorrow and death grow meaningful. Apart from His Gospel, they overwhelm us.⁹

5 The Church Today, 13, 211.

6 Vatican II, "Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity", article 8, p. 595, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Missions.)

7 The Church Today, 2, 200.

8 The Church Today, 22, 221.

9 The Church Today, 22, 221-222.

[The Church] teaches that a hope related to the end of time does not diminish the importance of intervening duties, but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives. By contrast, when a divine substructure and the hope of eternal life are wanting, man's dignity is most grievously lacerated, as current events often attest. The riddles of life and death, of guilt and of grief go unsolved, with the frequent result that men succumb to despair.¹⁰

B. Significance of Locus of Quotations

Although one of the above quotations was taken from The Decree on the Missionary Activity of the Church, and although the theme of hope treated in this first section finds its echo in other Council Documents,¹¹ the first principle enunciated above finds its primary and most extended treatment in The Church Today. In order to understand the significance of what the Council Fathers said in The Church Today about the meaning given to human suffering by its relationship to the sufferings of Christ, it is important to understand the unusual nature of this document itself. Firstly, it is addressed to all men. Although this evidently does not exclude Christians, and although the insights and light which The Church Today brings to bear on the problems of modern man are in fact Christian, the

¹⁰ The Church Today, 21, 218.

¹¹ For example, The Church, 10, 27; 41, 67-68; 48, 49, 79-80; Vatican II, "Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity", article 4, p. 494, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Laity.)

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problems which are treated are problems which belong to all men specifically as human beings of the twentieth century. This in no way implies either that the other documents of the Council are not in contact with real life, or that The Church Today does not have a sound theological basis. The whole work of the Council was focused on the adaptation of the Church to the needs of the world today. However, there may be discerned in the Council two major focal points of attention: the Church in itself, and the Church in its relationship with the world: the Church ad intra, and the Church ad extra.¹² And while certain documents, for example The Church, reflect a more direct concern for the renewal of the Church ad intra, in its own interior life and its doctrinal understanding of itself, The Church Today reflects a more direct concern for the renewal of the Church ad extra.¹³

¹² Marcos G. McGrath, "Présentation de la Constitution: L'Église dans le monde de ce temps", Vatican II: L'Église dans le monde de ce temps, Tome II, commentaires, No. 65b in the collection Unam Sanctam, Paris, Cerf, 1967, p. 26. (Henceforth referred to as Unam Sanctam 65b.)

¹³ Yves M.-J. Congar, "Annexe: notes sur le vocabulaire", Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 327, notes that even in its vocabulary The Church Today wished to avoid the idea that the Church is a people apart, a sort of tertium genus (in a sociological, and not purely religious, sense).

On the question of the construction and intention of the text, cf. Philippe Delhaye, "Histoire des textes", Vatican II: L'Église dans le monde de ce temps, Tome I, texte latin et traduction française officielle de l'Épiscopat français, No. 65a in the collection Unam Sanctam, Paris, Cerf, 1967, p. 215-274, esp. fn. 6, p. 255. (Henceforth referred to as Unam Sanctam 65a.)

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Secondly, the problems of man, rather than the principles of revelation, are the starting point of The Church Today.¹⁴ The Church Today demonstrates a genuine willingness to listen to and understand current thought and the world's needs.¹⁵ The procedure used in the construction of this document is a methodology of empirical analysis of the ideas, movements, problems, and forces at work in the world today. This in no way sacrifices or compromises the Christian message, but it is rather an attempt to incarnate the light of Christ in the flesh of today's world.

[The Bishops] want to purge the church of anything that gives her the appearance of a kind of ideological superstructure on concrete human life, for anything resembling a "superstructure" is unsuitable for clarifying Christianity's real transcendence; on the contrary, it unavoidably draws a wrong picture of the Church which, though endowed with its own special and autonomous vital principles based on God's saving plan and its positive institution by Christ, lives in the people, with the people, and with the world.¹⁶

This does not imply that the Council has affirmed a dichotomy between the natural and supernatural orders-- that whereas in The Church it focused its attention on the

14 Cf. Church Today, 2, 200.

15 Cf. François Houtart, "Les aspects sociologiques des 'Signes du Temps'", Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 169.

16 E. Schillebeeckx, Vatican II: The Real Achievement, London, Sheed and Ward, 1967, p. 21-22.

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things of God, it now turns its attention to solely human realities. The Council explicitly states that "the same God is Savior and Creator, Lord of human history as well as of salvation history."¹⁷ Therefore the anthropology which the Council uses is a Christian anthropology. "The Council wished to construct a concrete 'description' of man. [...] But it is impossible to treat this problem without implying Christ."¹⁸ The special nature of this approach--an attempt to construct a concrete 'description' of man--does not imply that The Church Today is less christian than any other document, but rather that special attention was paid to modern man and his problems.

When, then, the Council Fathers speak of suffering, sin, and death, and the meaning given to them by the sufferings of Christ, their words are of importance not only from a theoretical point of view, but as words which come from and are addressed to real, current problems, of concern not only to Christians in their life within the Church, but of common concern to all men, and therefore to Christians specifically as members of the human community.

17 The Church Today, 41, 240.

18 J. Mouroux, "Situation et signification du chapitre I: La dignite de la personne humaine", Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 231. (Translation of this quotation and those that follow from the collection Unam Sanctam is by the writer.)

C. Three Areas of Human Suffering

In The Church Today there are three areas of human suffering whose solution is "the strength which comes from hope in Christ, who by his death has conquered death."¹⁹ Two of these problems are treated explicitly: SIN, in article 13, and DEATH, in article 18. The third problem is not treated as explicitly. It refers to suffering in general, and especially to the suffering which results from anxiety related to the meaninglessness and purposelessness of life. As is shown below, although this problem is not treated as explicitly, it is also seen as a key problem in the life of contemporary man.

SIN.- The context within which the suffering caused by sin must be understood is given in article 12 of The Church Today: "all things on earth should be related to man as their center and crown [...] for sacred Scripture teaches that man was created 'to the image of God' [...] and was appointed by Him as master of all earthly creatures that he might subdue them to God's glory."²⁰ Although the Council Fathers explicitly state the relationship of man to God, and man's dependence on God, their focus of attention is on man himself to whom all "things on earth should be

¹⁹ Principle I, p. 1.

²⁰ The Church Today, 12, 210.

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related as their center and crown." Taking this as a starting point, the Council makes three major affirmations in article 13 which deal explicitly with sin: (1) the depths of evil that man finds in his heart is not due to God, nor only to original sin, but to the behavior of sinful humanity itself; (2) by sinning, man puts himself out of harmony with all created things; (3) by himself (either individually or collectively) man is unable to battle the assaults of evil successfully, or heal the split within himself. As a result, every man feels as though he is bound by chains.²¹

The Council Fathers do not exclude the notion of sin as an offense against God, but as they are examining phenomena which all men can see, they concentrate on the effects of sin in man--that sin wounds man's liberty, and puts him out of harmony with himself and others. The man who sins says 'no' to his ideals. He shuts himself off, and hardens himself, when openness and self-donation are expected.²² Man feels the effects of this in his own life: sin diminishes man, blocking his path to fulfillment, and destroys his harmony with himself and with others.

The accentuation placed on the split within man, and his inability to free himself from the chains which hold him in unfreedom (chains which are man's own sins),

21 Mouroux, Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 237-238.

22 Cf. P. Riga, Sin and Penance, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1962, p. 20-25.

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highlights a suffering which men capable of a certain level of spiritual reflection are aware of.

Pulled by manifold attractions, he is constantly forced to choose among them and to renounce some. Indeed, as a weak and sinful being, he often does what he would not, and fails to do what he would do. Hence he suffers from many internal divisions, and from these flow so many and such great discords in society. No doubt very many whose lives are infected with a practical materialism are blinded against any sharp insight into this kind of dramatic situation.²³

For those who can see, sin, and the guilt which follows from it are "riddles [which] go unresolved, with the frequent result that men succumb to despair."²⁴ For "by himself and by his own power, no one is freed from sin or raised above himself, or completely rid of his sickness, or his solitude or his servitude"²⁵ no matter how keenly he desires to do so.²⁶

DEATH.- The section entitled "The Mystery of Death"²⁷ is linked to the section on sin by the statement that man would have been immune from bodily death had he not sinned.²⁸

23 The Church Today, 10, 208.

24 The Church Today, 21, 218.

25 Missions, 8, 595.

26 Cf. Houtart, Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 182; The Church Today, 17, par. 1, 214; Mouroux, Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 245.

27 The Church Today, 18, 215.

28 The Church Today, 18, 215.

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The section opens with the words: "It is in the face of death that the riddle of human existence becomes most acute. Not only is man tormented by pain and by the advancing deterioration of his body, but even more so by a dread of perpetual extinction."²⁹ The Council thus states succinctly one of man's most acute sufferings. It is a suffering which has a special poignancy for modern man, who is aware of death not only because of its inevitability, but also for historical reasons: concentration camps, continual wars, nuclear threat, traffic fatalities, political assassinations, as well as the rather constant presentation of death in movies, T.V. etc.³⁰

Although the Council notes that "man rebels against death because he bears in himself the eternal seed which cannot be reduced to sheer matter",³¹ there is no evidence within the text of a dualism between the soul and the body. The Council states explicitly that "God has called man and still calls him so that with his entire being he might be joined to him in an endless sharing of a divine life beyond all corruption."³² The acute suffering of man before death is not limited to a fear that his soul will not survive,

29 The Church Today, 18, 215.

30 Whether or not the presentation of death is so constant that man's sensibility to it is numbed is not discussed here. In any case, it may be said that death is such a personal reality that there is always bound to exist some human anguish before it.

31 The Church Today, 18, 215.

32 The Church Today, 18, 215.

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but extends to the continued existence of his whole being, body and soul.³³ It may be added that the suffering caused by death is not only that of personal death, but is also the suffering which comes from the death of loved ones.

The anguish of man before death is a real, contemporary aspect of human suffering, at least for the man who has the courage to face the radical nature of death.

Man can, of course, (to use a 'Heideggerian' phrase) try to run away from the 'ontological structure of his being' [...] from this 'being made for death' which concerns the whole man. He can try to cover up this his death-situation by talk, by keeping himself busy, by immersing himself in the daily routine, by taking flight into the anonymity of 'everyone'; he can therefore also take the sting out of every Passion--by trying as much as possible to avoid it, by taking flight into amusements, into harmlessness, into bourgeois optimism, by the soporific of a hope for improvement (of an individual or a social kind)--and he can cover up its character of the relentless approach of death and of a 'prolixitas mortis'.³⁴

Nonetheless, for the man who faces death honestly, it poses an unanswerable question, which causes anguish in him.

ANXIETY ABOUT THE MEANING OF LIFE.- Linked to the question of death is the question of the meaning of life. For if life itself seems to have little meaning, or to be wasted, then the fact of death will accentuate this

33 Cf. Mouroux, Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 239.

34 Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, Theology of the Spiritual Life, translated by Karl-H. and Boniface Kruger, Baltimore, Helicon, 1967, p. 72-73.

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purposelessness. Within The Church Today, the suffering caused by an anxiety about the meaning of life can be perhaps best summed up in these lines:

The truth is that the imbalances under which the modern world labors are linked with that more basic imbalance rooted in the heart of man. For in man himself many elements wrestle with one another. Thus on the one hand, as a creature he experiences his limitations in a multitude of ways. On the other, he feels himself to be boundless in his desires and summoned to a higher life [...].

Nor are there lacking men who despair of any meaning to life and praise the boldness of those who think that human existence is devoid of any inherent significance and who strive to confer a total meaning on it by their own ingenuity alone.

Nevertheless, in the face of the modern development of the world, an ever-increasing number of people are raising the most basic questions or recognizing them with a new sharpness: What is man? What is this sense of sorrow, of evil, of death [...]? What can man offer to society, what can he expect from it [...]?³⁵

There is evidence in contemporary literature, both technical and literary, that the problem of the meaninglessness of life is a critical problem.³⁶ When the Council says

35 The Church Today, 10, 207-208.

36 Cf., e.g., Viktor E. Frankl, Man's Search for Meaning, New York, Washington Square Press, 1963, esp. p. 168-169; William Barrett, Irrational Man, a Study in Existential Philosophy, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday Anchor, 1962, p. 278, and Appendix I, "Negation, Finitude, and the Nature of Man", p. 283-294; Glenn Tinder, "Human Estrangement and the Failure of Political Imagination", in The Review of Politics, Notre Dame, Ind., Vol. 21, October 1959, p. 611-630. Note especially his references to contemporary literature.

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that "the experience of past ages proves this, as do numerous indications in our own times. For man will always yearn to know, at least in an obscure way, what is the meaning of his life, of his activity [...]"³⁷ she enunciates "without arguing or analyzing in detail, what is found explained in the philosophical analyses of a Maurice Blondel or a Karl Rahner: man's opening to the transcendent, and the inadequacy of his answers in comparison to his questions."³⁸ The suffering caused by man's anxiety about the meaning of his life is brought out by the Council Fathers in the texts cited above. Their concern for this problem is a reflection of a problem which concerns contemporary man.

D. The Christian Answer

Confident of the revelation which it has received, the Church proclaims that it has nothing more, but nothing less, to offer man than the final sense and the ultimate meaning of what man is as spirit and as person.³⁹ The Church Today states that:

37 The Church Today, 41, 240.

38 Yves M.-J. Congar, "Le rôle de l'Eglise dans la monde de ce temps", Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 322.

39 Ibid.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 16

[...] only God, who created man to his image and ransomed him from sin, provides a fully adequate answer to these questions. This He does through what He has revealed in Christ His Son, who became man.⁴⁰

The Church believes that Christ, who died and was raised up for all, can through His Spirit offer man the light and the strength to measure up to his supreme destiny. Nor has any other name under heaven been given to Him to be saved.⁴¹

This section shows the way in which the three areas of suffering treated in the previous section are given Christian valuation and significance by their relationship to the suffering of Christ. The first point situates the solution which the Council offers within the context of article 22, "Christ as the New Man"--an important and well-reasoned recapitulation of what has gone before, and which gives ultimate sense to the anthropological effort undertaken by the Council.⁴² The second section is a brief explanation of the context of several key Scriptural quotations taken from the Epistle to the Romans which are either cited directly or given as references in this section.

(a) Theological and Scriptural Framework.- Christ is the image (likeness) in which man has been created and re-created. "The mystery of Christ and the mystery of man are ultimately just one mystery [...] and if Jesus Christ

⁴⁰ The Church Today, 41, 240.

⁴¹ The Church Today, 10, 208.

⁴² Mouroux, Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 248-253.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 17

recapitulates in himself the long history of mankind it is in order to lead this history to its total divinization."⁴³

"The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light."⁴⁴ Man's mystery lies in God, and this mystery is that he is loved by the Father, and saved by him in Christ and in His Spirit. For not only is Christ true man and true God, but because of the union between Christ and humanity, Christ is able to save man. The "saving will of God is fully shown and realized in an historic form which we ourselves are able to live."⁴⁵ The death which Christ suffered for all men, and the life to which the Father raised Him, become for all men a dying to sin and a rising with Christ to the glory of His Father. "As an innocent lamb He merited life for us by the free shedding of His own blood. In Him God reconciled us to himself [...] so that as sons in the Son, we can cry out in the Spirit: Abba, Father."⁴⁶

The Scriptural basis of "Christ as the New Man" is especially evident in its use of chapter 8 of the Epistle to the Romans, which is quoted directly three times, and is

⁴³ Ibid., p. 248-249.

⁴⁴ The Church Today, 22, 220.

⁴⁵ E. Schillebeeckx, Dieu et l'homme, Vol. 2 in the series Approches Théologiques, Brussels, CEP, 1965, p. 173.

⁴⁶ The Church Today, 22, 221-222.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 18

referred to five times in the footnotes.⁴⁷ Paul explains that by an act of God, in Jesus Christ, the slavery of sin and death are brought to an end; and by his union with Christ the Christian can be freed from this slavery. For Christ gives his Spirit, and this Spirit ends the rule of sin and death. Paul here contrasts the flesh with the spirit which represents for him the power and presence of God which the primitive Church experienced. The Christian is saved from the slavery of sin and death by Christ, for although he himself never sinned, he underwent the assaults of sin. Taking man's sins on himself, he went down into death, the supreme penalty of sin. But Christ's sinless death was victory over sin, and God put his seal on the victory by raising his son to Spirit-giving life. The Christian, in union with Christ, is forever free from the effects of sin. Before, his interests lay solely in the things of the flesh; now he has been freed from base attachments, freed for a service of love towards God and man. Even though the body (flesh) is still going to die

⁴⁷ In all, vss. 1-11, 15, 23, 27, and 29 are cited or referred to. The following analysis of these texts relies on Barnabas M. Ahern, The Epistles to the Galatians and to the Romans (Number 7 in the New Testament Reading Guide), Collegeville, Minn., 1960, p. 62-66; and C.H. Dodd, The Epistle of Paul to the Romans, London, Collins, Fontana Books, 1959, p. 133-153.

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because it was tainted by sin, what is now his real self--the self in Christ--will never die. In fact, the life of the Spirit will one day overflow into his body, and this resurrection of the body will be the final proof of the power of the Spirit in the Christian. He is already a new creature in Christ, and can address God without servility or slavish fear as "Abba, Father." Already the Spirit of sonship is a foretaste and pledge of the resurrection. But the Christian waits impatiently for this redemption of the body, for it means his full sonship.

(b) Sin, Suffering, and Death.- The link between the conquering of sin and the suffering of Christ is clear: only by himself going down into death did Christ conquer sin. The link between Christian suffering and the death of Christ is that "in Christ" the Christian is dead to sin and presses forward towards resurrection. By the Spirit-giving suffering of Christ, man is freed from sin and its effects: disharmony within himself, with his neighbour, and with God; and a diminishment of liberty. For "the Lord Himself came to free and strengthen man, renewing him inwardly and casting out that prince of this world."⁴⁸ "Through [the] Spirit [...] the whole man is renewed from within."⁴⁹ The man who is "in Christ" because he lives by

⁴⁸ The Church Today, 13, 211.

⁴⁹ The Church Today, 22, 221.

the same Spirit of Christ is freed from the slavery of sin, and even the riddle of guilt is solved.⁵⁰ The disharmony which he felt before becomes harmony within himself and with his neighbour, and between himself and God, for it is the Spirit of God who lives within him. The life to which the Father raised Christ becomes for all men a dying to sin and a rising to Christ. "As an innocent lamb he merited life for us by the free shedding of His own blood. In Him God reconciled us to Himself and among ourselves."⁵¹ The man who lives by the Spirit is no longer a slave of his base attractions, but is freed for the service of love of God and man. "The Christian man, conformed to the likeness of that Son who is the firstborn of many brothers, receives 'the first fruits of the Spirit' (Rom. 8.23) by which he becomes capable of discharging the new law of love."⁵² Before, he was a slave to sin, and incapable of doing the truth; now, in Christ, he is freed for love. Sin had diminished man, blocking his path to fulfillment. But full liberty is given in the Spirit, for Christ has broken the chains that held man captive. He who lives by the Spirit of God is perfectly free; he alone is capable of perfect fulfillment.

50 The Church Today, 21, 218.

51 The Church Today, 22, 221.

52 The Church Today, 22, 221.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 21

In the section on "The Mystery of Death" the Council Fathers affirmed that:

[...] God has called man and still calls him so that with his entire being he might be joined to Him in an endless sharing of a divine life beyond all corruption. Christ won this victory when He rose to life, since by His death he freed man from death.⁵³

In "Christ as the New Man"⁵⁴ the Council Fathers make more explicit what they mean by "his entire being," and the way in which the Christian is saved even to the redemption of the body.

Through [the] Spirit, who is "the pledge of our inheritance" (Eph. 1.14), the whole man is renewed from within, even to the achievement of the "redemption of the body (Rom. 8.23): "If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, then he who raised Jesus Christ from the dead will also bring to life your mortal bodies because of his Spirit who dwells in you" (Rom. 8.11) [...].⁵⁵

It is especially in this section that there is a dependence on the Epistle to the Romans, with its multiple affirmations: he who is in Christ has the Spirit of Christ; patterned on the dying Christ, the Christian presses forward in hope to the resurrection of the body; the Spirit (the power of God) who raised Jesus from the dead will also raise the one who is in Jesus. The Christian will, of course, die;

⁵³ The Church Today, 13, 215.

⁵⁴ The Church Today, art. 22.

⁵⁵ The Church Today, 22, 221-222.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 22

that is, the flesh which he has will die; but what he is in Christ (in his own unique individuality) will never die. And the Spirit of God will triumph even over death, and conquer all corruption; so that, like Christ, the Christian will live again in his body.

The Council also links the question of the ultimate meaning of human life to the suffering of Christ. This affirmation is made at a cosmic level: "He was crucified and rose again to break the stranglehold of personified Evil, so that this world might be fashioned anew according to God's design, and reach its fulfillment."⁵⁶

The same affirmation is made at the individual level (understanding always that Christians are "in Christ" as a people made holy). Christ "blazed a trail, and if we follow it, life [...] [is] made holy and take[s] on new meaning."⁵⁷ "Christ, the final Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and His love, fully reveals man to himself and makes his supreme calling clear."⁵⁸ "Far from diminishing man [the Church's] message brings to his development light, life and freedom."⁵⁹ Man is open

⁵⁶ The Church Today, 2, 200.

⁵⁷ The Church Today, 22, 221.

⁵⁸ The Church Today, 22, 220.

⁵⁹ The Church Today, 21, 220.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 23

to the transcendent, but the questions he asks and the yearnings he feels within himself are beyond his capacity to answer.⁶⁰ The Spirit of God, given the Christian through the suffering of Christ, offers him an opening to and contact with the Divine, who revealed himself as a Father in Christ his Son, with whom the Christian says "Abba, Father." It is in Christ, the Alpha and Omega, that existence takes on its final meaning.

The link between the Spirit-giving suffering of Christ and the human sufferings of sin, death, and purposelessness raise two further points: the difficulty of hope, and its importance for the task at hand. The Council states clearly that the ultimate redemption in glory of the body (and therefore the "solution" to the problems of sin, death, and suffering) is a question of hope.⁶¹

This hope is essentially a difficult virtue. It should not be suggested that the Christian answer to the anxiety caused by death is an easy answer.

Even Christian death remains essentially a Passion, i.e. a threat to the total situation of man which puts it into question, without the dying person being aware of the eschatologically gratuitous saving of his whole being as a reality directly tangible to his experience. This eternal life is believed in and hoped for, and it lies in the situation of faith and hope and of the 'not-yet-possessed' most of all where the whole human being to be saved escapes the personal mastery and

60 The Church Today, 41, 240.

61 The Church Today, 22, 221.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 24

possession by man most radically, viz. in death. Thus death--which can be both the situation of despair and the situation of man's resigning himself into the hands of the incomprehensible God--become also the existentially most radical situation of faith and hope. Dying--at least when it is accomplished in a personal way and by a yes given to the Christian revelation of life--is the most complete and definitive act of hoping faith, and this is the real meaning of Christian death.⁶²

Nor is the hope of the Christian escapist; for the Council "teaches that a hope related to the end of time does not diminish the importance of intervening duties, but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives."⁶³ "Pressing upon the Christian [...] are the need and the duty to battle against evil through manifold tribulations and even to suffer death."⁶⁴ The hope which the Christian has in the saving value of the death of Christ for him lends new strength to the task at hand.

The Christian faith professes that man has an earthly task and that his fulfillment of this task has a fundamental significance even for his eternal salvation. No matter how decisive his attitude to the God of grace and of life hereafter may be for man's final salvation--and however much everything earthly must be incorporated into this decisive task of man--this does not mean that the earthly is merely an intrinsically indifferent material as the setting and attainment of an 'other-worldly' goal. Even for the Christian, humanity, culture, the State, world history, etc., are not merely intrinsically

62 Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 75.

63 The Church Today, 21, 218.

64 The Church Today, 22, 221.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 25

indifferent opportunities which he uses to work out his eternal salvation: they are also valuable in themselves and willed by God [...].⁶⁵

And even if this dedication to the task at hand leads down into death, the Christian is confident that, as he is patterned on the dying Christ, he shall be raised up with him.

In conclusion, this section has considered one facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering by presenting and explaining the first principle: In spite of the problems posed by suffering, sin, and death, the Christian presses forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope in Christ, who by his death has conquered death. Although this hope is related to the end of time, it does not diminish the importance of intervening duties, but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives.

2. Second Principle.

The second principle abstracted from Vatican Council II about the Christian valuation and significance of suffering relates more directly than the first to the suffering of others, and the Christian's reaction to them. The principle is: The Church recognizes "in the poor and

⁶⁵ Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 59.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 26

suffering the likeness of her poor and suffering Founder. She does all she can to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ."⁶⁶ This principle is explained by giving, firstly, a presentation of certain pertinent texts from Vatican II; secondly, an exposition of its biblical background in the Old and New Testaments; and thirdly, a theological exposition of the meaning of this principle in the context of Vatican II.

A. Certain Pertinent Texts

One facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II concerns the suffering of others and the Christian's response to this suffering. The following texts from Vatican II relate to this facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. They are the basis in Vatican II from which the second principle was formed, and are the more significant texts underlying the presentation of the second principle.

Christ was sent by the Father to "bring good news to the poor, to heal the contrite of heart" (Lk. 4.18), "to seek and to save what was lost" (Lk. 19.10). Similarly, the Church encompasses with love all those who are afflicted with human weakness. Indeed, she recognizes in the poor and the suffering the likeness of her poor and suffering Founder. She does all she can to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ.⁶⁷

⁶⁶ The Church, 8, 23.

⁶⁷ The Church, 8, 23.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 27

In our times a special obligation binds us to make ourselves the neighbor of absolutely every person, and of actively helping him when he comes across our path, whether he be an old person abandoned by all, a foreign laborer unjustly looked down upon, a refugee, a child born of unlawful union and wrongly suffering for a sin he did not commit, or a hungry person who disturbs our conscience by recalling the voice of the Lord: "As long as you did it for one of these, the least of my brethren, you did it for me."⁶⁸

It is the duty of all bishops [...] to instruct the faithful in love for the whole Mystical Body of Christ, especially for its poor and sorrowing members and for those who are suffering persecution for justice' sake.⁶⁹

B. Biblical Foundation

This section considers the need for the clear understanding of the biblical background, within the context of which this second principle must be considered; the exegetical problems involved; the background of this principle in the Old Testament, with special attention to the idea of the King in Jewish thought, and the Old Testament concept of the link between poverty and sin; and the background of this principle in the New Testament, with special attention to the three concepts of kenosis, ebed Yahweh, and Christ made sin.

The biblical background of the principle enunciated above is very strong. The key New Testament text upon which

⁶⁸ The Church Today, 27, 226.

⁶⁹ The Church, 23, 45.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 28

the Council builds this principle is the last Judgment scene recorded in Matthew 25.31-46. "To truly understand the teaching proposed by the Council, we must begin with the Gospel passage to which it alludes."⁷⁰ "It is in reflecting on this text that the Council shows the Church surrounding all human distress with its love, and committing itself to serve Christ in the poor and in those who suffer."⁷¹ For this reason a significant part of the explanation of the second principle is concerned with a presentation of the biblical background on which it is based.

There are certain exegetical problems connected with the text itself.⁷² The description of the Last Judgment is interpreted in quite different ways by various exegetes. Certain exegetes think that the passage deals with the way Christians act towards fellow Christians, and towards all men in general: towards all those who suffer. Others say that the passage deals exclusively with the way in which the pagans (those who do not know Christ) treat the disciples; and that the passage was written as a comfort for the early Christians who were under stress,

⁷⁰ Jacques Dupont, "L'Eglise et la pauvreté", Vatican II, la Constitution dogmatique sur l'Eglise: L'Eglise de Vatican II, Tome II, commentaires, Paris, Cerf, 1966, no. 51b in the collection Unam Sanctam, p. 366. (Henceforth referred to as Unam Sanctam 51b.)

⁷¹ Ibid.

⁷² Mt. 25.31-46.

and in tribulation;⁷³ or that it concerns the actions of non-Christians towards all the unfortunate. However, the majority of exegetes believe that there is no reason to limit the text: it speaks of all men, Christians and non-Christians, and their conduct toward their fellow men who are in need. All will come together before the Judge, and will be sentenced on the way they have conducted themselves towards the needy.⁷⁴ From its use in Vatican II, there seems no reason to limit the meaning of the text. In any case, whatever the interpretation chosen, there are certain features which stand out in the text, and which link the passage to both the Old and the New Testaments. The Last Judgment scene is the last section in the Gospel of Matthew before the narration of the Passion, and those to whom the passage is addressed are told to be ready for the Coming of Christ by practising mercy to the poor and suffering, and thus to Christ. They are also reminded that the "King" who hands down the sentence at the Last Judgment is also the King who is about to identify himself with the poor and lowly by entering into his Passion. In the narration of the Passion it is seen "how the King to whom mercy is shown by those who minister to the oppressed identifies himself

73 For example, G.E.P. Cox, The Gospel According to Saint Matthew, a Commentary, New York, Collier, 1962, p. 169.

74 Dupont, Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 366-367; Joachim Jeremias, The Parables of Jesus, New York, Scribner, 1963, p. 207.

with them voluntarily by his crucifixion and death."⁷⁵

This is considered more fully in the section giving the background of the second principle as it is found in the New Testament.

In the Old Testament there are two concepts which must be considered: the notion of the King; and the link between suffering and sin. Jacques Dupont explains the first of these notions:

In declaring himself one with the poor and calling them his brothers, the sovereign Judge acts as King. This recalls that in Israel, as among the neighbouring peoples, the King is above all the defender of justice, and by that title the one who is named to be the protector of the poor, the weak, the oppressed. The justice that he should assure them by reason of his charge is at the same time merciful compassion and tender solicitude. The King who gives the supreme judgment is indeed "he who delivers the needy when he calls, the poor and him who has no helper. He has pity on the weak and the needy, and saves the lives of the needy." (Ps. 72. 12-13). The solicitude with which he surrounds those whom he protects makes them his brothers; the term expresses a solidarity whose basis we must seek in the awareness of his duties and obligations.⁷⁶

As King, within the context of what it meant to be King in the best traditions of the Old Testament, Jesus declares that he is protector of the poor and needy, and that they are his brothers. When no one else will help them, it is he who comes to their aid, for he is their King, and thus they are his brothers.

⁷⁵ J.C. Fenton, Saint Matthew, The Pelican Gospel Commentaries, Baltimore, Penguin, 1963, p. 401.

⁷⁶ Dupont, Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 369-370.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 31

The second notion in the Old Testament which illumines this passage, and its use in Vatican II, is the link in the Old Testament between poverty (or any kind of suffering) and sin. The poor man is considered as a victim of the pride and selfishness of the rich and powerful; poverty reveals the presence and hatefulness of sin, for it is sin which causes every kind of mental and physical suffering. Moreover, the poor man is seen as a living sign of the divine compassion and justice, for God, the King, will not let the sufferings of the poor, sufferings which call out for God's intervention, go unanswered. Sin, and the suffering caused by it, show the radical poverty of man which can only be overcome by the love of God. For although sin does not reach God directly, it does reach God in the poor man.⁷⁷

A final notion may be added to the Old Testament background of this text, and its relation to the second principle. Not only do the sufferings of the poor and needy call out to God for justice, but they are an indictment against those who are rich, and who sin by not offering their assistance to the poor.

⁷⁷ J.-M.-R. Tillard, "Le salut mystère de pauvreté", in La vie spirituelle, Vol. 3, No. 511, December 1964, p. 708-710, 713.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 32

Chapter III, #43 (The Church Today) refers to "the cutting accusation of the prophet Isaiah against churchy pietists" who seek [God] daily, and delight to know [his] ways, but do not choose "to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the thongs of the yoke, to let the oppressed go free [...] do not share [their] bread with the hungry and reject their own brother [...]" (Is. 58. 1-12).⁷⁸

In the New Testament, the promises of the Old Testament become flesh in Jesus Christ. In him the suffering of the poor is not only heard by God, it is taken upon God himself in the person of his Son. Not only will God save these innocent victims of the sins of men in a final Judgment of justice, but by becoming man in his kenosis--in his emptying of himself--he enters fully into their plight. He gathers together in himself everything that the innocent victim can be, and everything that can happen to him; and in this he becomes both brother and Saviour.⁷⁹ For Christ,

who, though he was in the form of God, did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant, being born in the likeness of men. And being found in human form he humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even death on a cross.⁸⁰

78 E. Schillebeeckx, Vatican II: The Real Achievement, London, Sheed and Ward, 1967, p. 73.

79 Tillard, op. cit., p. 713.

80 Phil. 2.6-8, Revised Standard Version, American Bible Society, New York, 1952.

This kenosis refers to the action of Christ in emptying himself of the manifestation of his Divine Glory in his humanity. For the glory which belonged to Christ as Son of God was given up by him.⁸¹

What is meant is that the heavenly Christ did not selfishly exploit His divine form and mode of being, but by His own decision emptied Himself of it or laid it by, taking the form of a servant by becoming man [...]--a genuine sacrifice.⁸²

It is in this kenosis that is seen the degree to which Christ identified himself voluntarily with the poor and suffering. For he identified himself with the poor and suffering not only in his Passion and Death, but even in the very fact of becoming fully man.

In Christ's role as ebed Yahweh, Servant of Yahweh, there is a further link between the Old and New Testaments. As was prophesied in the Book of Isaiah,⁸³ the suffering servant would gather together and teach the people, Israel.

The prophet had depicted the Servant as humiliated, as burdened with the sins of the multitude, suffering even death for their sakes and in their stead [...].⁸⁴

81 J. Dheilly, Dictionnaire biblique, Tournai, Desclee, 1964, p. 642-643.

82 Gerhard Kittel, ed., Theological Dictionary of the New Testament, Vol. III, Grand Rapids, Michigan, Eardmans, 1965. "Kenoō", Th.-K., p. 661.

83 Book of Isaiah, Ch. 49-55.

84 David M. Stanley, The Apostolic Church in the New Testament, Westminster, Md., Newman, 1965, p. 347.

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His patience (50.6) and his humility (53.7) make him capable of offering his life, and accomplishing, by his suffering, the plan of Yahweh (53. 4f, 10); to justify the sinners of all nations (53.8, 11f). By this sacrifice, Sion is consoled, and the sterile spouse is once again united to God by an eternal covenant, and becomes the fruitful mother of all the servants of God (54.1-55.4).⁸⁵

Christ fulfilled his role of Saviour by becoming the suffering servant. Salvation was accomplished in death on the Cross, where Christ, in his abjection, identified himself as completely as possible with those who suffer. In his Passion his body was broken by the sins of humanity, sins which by their nature cause the sufferings of the poor.

As was seen above, in the Old Testament every sort of suffering was considered an effect of sin. It is in this sense that Christ became sin. He took upon himself all the effects of sin.

For the Father's eternal Word has become flesh in Mary, God has already indivisibly assumed the world in the flesh of this Virgin's Son; God's eternal Son has already made His own the destiny of the world in the 'flesh of sin' (Rom. 8.3) (i.e. in flesh dedicated to death), so that this personal existence in the world's sinful flesh led undeviatingly (in this wise or that) to the death in which the guilt of the world is endured to the end and overcome.⁸⁶

The most final effect of sin which is death was accepted by Christ. Born in the mystery of kenosis poverty, living the

⁸⁵ Leon-Dufour et al., Vocabulaire de théologie biblique, Paris, Cerf, 1964, p. 1054.

⁸⁶ Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. I, God, Christ, Mary and Grace, translated with an introduction by Cornelius Ernst, Baltimore, Helicon, 1961, p. 216.

life of the ebed Yahweh, becoming sin even to death, Christ established his absolute brotherhood with all the poor and dispossessed.⁸⁷

Although much of what has been said above is not explicit in the Documents of Vatican II, the importance of the biblical context of the Last Judgment scene, and especially of verse 40, is capital. "The whole Christian attitude as regards the neighbour finds its basis in [this] word of the Lord."⁸⁸

It is in reflecting on this text that the Council shows the Church surrounding with its love all human distress, and committing itself to serve Christ in the poor and those who suffer.⁸⁹

C. Theological Exposition

In this section, what has been said above is used as a basis for a more theological exposition of the use of Matthew 25.31-46 by the Council Fathers; and of the meaning which being Christian gives to the sufferings of others. This is examined in three steps: firstly, the importance of the second principle (i.e. "The Church recognizes in the poor and suffering the likeness of her poor and

87 Tillard, op. cit., p. 715.

88 P. Hauptmann, "La communauté humaine (1re partie, chapitre II)", Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 272.

89 Dupont, Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 366.

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suffering Founder. She does all she can to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ."); secondly, the way in which the poor man is a sacrament of Christ; and thirdly, the way in which it applies directly to the Christian life.

The importance of this second principle in the Christian life is highlighted by the Council:

For it is the duty of all bishops to [...] instruct the faithful in love for the whole Mystical Body of Christ, especially for its poor and sorrowing members and those who are suffering persecution for justice' sake [...].⁹⁰

Within this text, this duty of the bishops is put on a par with their duty "to promote and to safeguard the unity of faith and the discipline common to the whole Church."⁹¹

There are two significant reasons for recalling this duty to the minds of the bishops. Firstly, the poor are those who bear the heaviest and most oppressive burden of the sins of their brothers; it is especially with them that Christ has associated himself in his Passion, and in caring for these sorrowing members the Church cares for the Body of Christ. Secondly, it is especially those victims who are crushed by the sins of humanity who need the Good News of Hope, and need to receive its fruits.⁹² The Good News

90 The Church, 23, 45.

91 The Church, 23, 45.

92 Tillard, op. cit., p. 724.

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of hope cannot be preached in reality unless it is animated by love. The poor who are the heavily burdened and oppressed victims of the sins of humanity should be the first to have the message of redemption preached to them, not only in words, but in love. As was seen in the Scriptural examination of the texts, it is on the basis of love shown to the poor and oppressed that all will be judged. Thus when the Council speaks of the duty of the bishops to safeguard the unity of faith, the notion of the duty of Christians to have a special love for the poor and suffering members of Christ retains a position of capital importance.

Before considering the way in which the poor man is a sacrament of Christ, it should be noted that the "poor man" is not only he who is materially destitute. Poverty is more than material deprivation. It includes sickness, failure, and persecution.⁹³ The Church Today describes some of those who must be considered as "the poor" whom all are bound to help:

In our time a special obligation binds us to make ourselves the neighbour of absolutely every person, and of actively helping him when he comes across our path, whether he be an old person abandoned by all, a foreign laborer unjustly looked down upon, a refugee, a child born of unlawful union and wrongly suffering for a sin he did not commit, or a hungry person [...].⁹⁴

⁹³ Albert Gelin, The Poor of Yahweh, translated by Mother Kathryn Sullivan, Collegeville, Minn., 1964, p. 105.

⁹⁴ The Church Today, 27, 226.

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It should be noted in this text that the biblical relationship between the sin of another and "poverty" is brought out: "[...] a child born of unlawful union and wrongly suffering for a sin he did not commit." The poor are all those who suffer in any way; and the neighbour is this poor man simply by the fact that he needs help.⁹⁵

In what way is the poor man a sacrament of Christ? There are two possible explanations: that the poor man resembles Christ (and therefore is a sacrament-sign of him); and that there is a real, sacramental, identity between the poor man and Christ. Both of these possibilities are examined.

Firstly, the poor man resembles Christ. "There is between Christ and those in need a rapport so close that we cannot help those in need without this concerning Christ in person."⁹⁶ "Jesus has taught us to look on the poor as a sacrament of His own presence. In poverty's various countenances we can have a mysterious encounter with Him."⁹⁷ "Henceforth, each poor man, with his own special kind of poverty is a reminder and, as it were, a sacrament of the great Poor Man proclaimed by the Second-Isaiah."⁹⁸ Indeed

95 Hauptmann, Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 271.

96 Dupont, Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 368.

97 Gelin, op. cit., p. 100.

98 Ibid., p. 112.

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the Church "recognizes in the poor and suffering the likeness of her poor and suffering Founder."⁹⁹

After the Passion, we have one more reason for discovering a link between Christ and the poor: the condition of the poor and of those who suffer makes them living images of the poor and suffering Christ.

For Christ was made sin (2Cor. 5.21). Bearing also the weight of sin and the selfishness of men, the poor also reflect in themselves the sufferings of Christ loaded down with our sins. Victims of human injustice, they share with Christ the malediction of sin; they are always amongst us as witnesses of the redemptive cross.

The love of the Church for her Saviour could never leave her indifferent before the suffering which configures those who suffer to the Servant Who suffered for our sins.¹⁰⁰

In these quotations, the vocabulary used is that of resemblance, mysterious encounter, reminder, recognition, living images, witness, configuration. These words make of the poor man a "sacrament" of the suffering Christ, but the link between Christ and the poor man is basically one of resemblance. "Sacrament", in this sense, means basically sign or reminder.

The word "sacrament" may, however, be taken in a more literal sense. Christ did not say that the King would, at the Last Judgment, count mercy shown to the poor as if it were mercy shown to him. Tillard, in an expanded presentation of an address given at Rome during the Second

⁹⁹ The Church, 8, 24.

¹⁰⁰ Dupont, Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 370-371.

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Session of the Council to the theological committee of The Church of the Poor, explains:

"Consider who the poor are, and you will discover their dignity: they have imitated our Saviour. In his compassion, he has given them his own countenance (prosopon) [...]" (Gregory of Nyssa, "De pauper amandis", P.G., 46, 460.)

For between the suffering of the suffering Servant and theirs exists more than a bond of resemblance; there exists a real community of fate. [...]

There exists an identical link of connaturality between the Body of Christ and these same poor [...]. And we know very well that beyond the Church-Institution, in the most profound reality of the Church-Communion of life of men with the Father in Jesus [...] many poor, who perhaps do not even know Christ, are present, very closely, to the heart of the Father, already filled up with the fulness of his life. [...]

It does not seem to us to be an exaggeration to say that certain types of poverty are equal to a sacramental union with the death of Jesus. [...] And perhaps it is especially these poor who, in this mystery of their union with Christ, redeem the world daily from its abominable sin, by extending over it the shadow of the Cross.¹⁰¹

The Council has not made clear whether or not it wishes to extend the concept of the sacramentality of poverty as far as Tillard has.¹⁰² Nevertheless, in its statement: "in them [the Church] strives to serve Christ,"¹⁰³ the Council leaves open the possibility for a more extended theological

¹⁰¹ Tillard, op. cit., p. 726-727. (Translation author's.)

¹⁰² It does not seem to the author that there is any intrinsic reason within the texts of the Council to forbid Tillard's interpretation.

¹⁰³ The Church, 8, 23.

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interpretation. Some weight is lent to this possibility by a consideration of the role which the second principle plays in the Christian life.

The application of this principle to the Christian life is considered in three points: the direct appeal to Christian sentiments made by the Council; the relationship of the principle to sin and the forgiveness of sin; and the extent to which this principle should be applied.

In article 88 of The Church Today the bishops address Christians more directly than in the other passages of this Document. They make an

express appeal to Christian sentiments. The fraternal construction of an international order is an essential duty of the disciples of Christ.

For it is Christ Himself Who, in the person of the poor, constantly calls out for the charity of his disciples. Without the efficacious exercise of this charity, the prosperity of the rich nations, where Christians are numerous, becomes a scandal to the world.¹⁰⁴

Besides the scandal or counter-witness which will be given if Christians do not practise what they preach, there is a deeper reason for their need to come to the aid of Christ who suffers in the person of the poor. It relates to sin and the forgiveness of sin. "The Church, embracing sinners in her bosom, is [...] always in need of

¹⁰⁴ Dominique Dubarle, "La sauvegarde de la paix et la construction de la communauté des nations", Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 627.

being purified, and incessantly pursues the path of penance and renewal."¹⁰⁵ To the extent that there is sin within the Church, it is the Christian himself who is the cause of the situation of the poor man. The incessant pursuing of penance and renewal of the Church implies, in this regard, an ever-increasing attention to those who are poor, in order to seek forgiveness from God. Secondly, the Christian's awareness of, and gratitude for, the forgiveness of sin which he has received must be expressed in deeds of love.

The son brings the forgiveness of sin, to which man responds with grateful love, and is bound to respond with unconditional readiness to help and forgive his fellow man. [...]

It is the attitude towards Jesus which decides if a man will belong to the world to come. Love that is ready to help the humblest is equivalent to readiness to help the Son of Man, whereas lovelessness is nothing else than despising Him.¹⁰⁶

The disciples of Jesus will be judged on their merciful love which should be abundant, as it reflects their awareness of the forgiveness of sin which they have received in the reconciliation of Jesus.

Lastly, the Council is very explicit to what extent this principle should be applied: to whom, and how much.

105 The Church, 8, 23.

106 Gottfried Quell and Ethelbert Stauffer, Love, Bible, Key Words from Gerhard Kittel's Theologisches Wörterbuch zum neuen Testament, London, Black, 1949, p. 51.

THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF SUFFERING 43

"In our times a special obligation binds us to make ourselves the neighbour of absolutely every person."¹⁰⁷ There is a finality about this statement, which is strengthened by the examples which follow it, and its conclusion: "As long as you did it for one of these, the least of My brethren, you did it for Me." In the light of the Scriptural and theological expositions given above, the Christian may exclude no one from his active love. Likewise, the Council is very clear about how much a Christian should give:

Indeed it is the duty of the whole people of God, following the word and example of the bishops, to do their utmost to alleviate the sufferings of the modern age. As was the ancient custom in the Church, they should meet this obligation out of the substance of their goods, and not only out of what is superfluous.¹⁰⁸

"There is no possible way of insisting too much on this point."¹⁰⁹ The Council is asking more of the Christian than a token good-will gesture. Every Christian has a duty to do his utmost to alleviate the sufferings of others.

In conclusion, this section has considered another facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering by presenting and explaining the second principle:

107 The Church Today, 27, 226.

108 The Church Today, 88, 303.

109 Dubarle, Unam Sanctam 65b, p. 627.

The Church recognizes "in the poor and suffering the likeness of her poor and suffering Founder. She does all she can to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ."¹¹⁰

3. Third Principle.

The third and fourth principles concern the life of the Christian precisely as Christian, that is, as within the Church. As was noted, the predominant focal point of attention in the first two principles was the life of the Christian as one who is a man of his times, burdened by the problems of his age; and the Christian as one who reacts in the face of the suffering of others. The third and fourth principles, however, have as their basic focal point of attention the life of the church ad intra, that is, the life of the Christian specifically as one who is incorporated into the sacramental life of the Church, and sacramentally, into the dying and rising of Christ. The third principle is: Made one in the sacraments with Christ who suffered and is exalted, the Christian offers his sufferings as an acceptable sacrifice before God.¹¹¹ This principle

¹¹⁰ The Church, 8, 23.

¹¹¹ The fourth principle is: Christ continues to carry on his redemptive work in the Church, especially through the Eucharist, in which the work of redemption is carried on. Christians, by filling up what is wanting in the sufferings of Christ, build up the Church, the sacrament of salvation, for the unity of all mankind.

is explained in three sections: firstly, a presentation of the pertinent texts from Vatican II; secondly, an examination of the nature and meaning of baptismal incorporation into Christ; thirdly, an examination of the implications of the Eucharist for Christian suffering.

As both the third and fourth principles consider certain aspects of the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist, it should be noted that in the third principle, the main focus is on the relationship established between Christ and the individual in these sacraments; in the fourth principle the main focus is on the community as a community, constituted as such by these sacraments. Inevitably there is a certain amount of overlapping in these two concepts. Therefore, the third and fourth principles should be read as one unit, divided for the sake of clarity rather than because of an intrinsic division between sacramental incorporation into the Body of Christ and the establishment of a personal relationship with Christ through this sacramental incorporation.

A. Certain Pertinent Texts

One facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II concerns the relationship between the sufferings of Christ and the sufferings of the individual effected by sacramental

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incorporation into Christ. The following texts from Vatican II relate to this facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. They are the basis in Vatican II from which the third principle was formed, and are the more significant texts underlying the presentation of the third principle.

The life of Christ is poured into the believers, who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ Who suffered and was glorified. Through Baptism we are formed into the likeness of Christ [...]. In this sacred rite, a union with Christ's death and resurrection is both symbolized and brought about: "For we were buried with Him by means of Baptism into death." And if "we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be so in the likeness of His resurrection also" (Rom. 6. 4-5).¹¹²

All the members ought to be molded into Christ's image until He is formed in them (Gal. 4.19). [...] Still in pilgrimage upon the earth, we trace in trial and under oppression the paths He trod. Made one with His sufferings as the body is one with the head, we endure with Him, that with Him we may be glorified (cf. Rom. 8.17).¹¹³

Now, Christ has communicated this power of subjection to His disciples that they might be established in royal freedom and that by self-denial and a holy life they might conquer the reign of sin in themselves.¹¹⁴

Incorporated into Christ's mystical Body through baptism and strengthened by the power of the Holy Spirit through Confirmation [Christians] [...] are consecrated into a royal priesthood [...]

112 The Church, 7, 20.

113 The Church, 7, 21.

114 The Church, 36, 62.

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(cf 1 Pet 2.4-10) in order that they may offer spiritual sacrifices through everything they do.¹¹⁵

Taking part in the Eucharistic sacrifice [...] they offer the divine Victim to God, and offer themselves along with It.¹¹⁶

They can offer themselves as "a sacrifice, living, holy, pleasing to God" (Rom. 12.1).¹¹⁷

Through all those works befitting Christian men they can offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him Who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light (cf 1 Pet 2.4-10).¹¹⁸

The partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ does nothing other than transform us into that which we consume.¹¹⁹

This is why we ask the Lord in the sacrifice of the Mass that "receiving the offering of the spiritual victim," He may fashion us for Himself "as an eternal gift."¹²⁰

B. Baptism into Christ

In this section, four concepts are presented: firstly, two antecedents of Baptism in the New Testament;

¹¹⁵ Laity, 3, 492.

¹¹⁶ The Church, 11, 28.

¹¹⁷ Vatican II, "Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests", article 2, p. 535, The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Priests.)

¹¹⁸ The Church, 10, 27.

¹¹⁹ The Church, 26, 50.

¹²⁰ Vatican II, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy", article 12, p. 143, The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Liturgy.)

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secondly, the relationship between Baptism and faith; thirdly, the incorporation of the individual into Christ by Baptism; and fourthly, the implications of this incorporation for the suffering of the Christian. These four points elucidate the first two texts of Vatican II cited above.

(a) Two Antecedents of Baptism in the New Testament.- In the life of Christ, there are two principle antecedents of the Christian sacrament of Baptism: the baptism of Christ by John in the river Jordan, and Christ's death and resurrection. The Church's "authority for baptism is to be found, not so much in the evidence of particular texts [...], but in Jesus' life and ministry as a whole, with particular emphasis upon His baptism and death."¹²¹ The baptism of Jesus by John marked the beginning of the public ministry of Jesus, and the mission of Jesus was both a continuation of and a going-beyond the activity of John.

[John] was the forerunner of Jesus, and in his preaching and baptism, the ministry of Jesus found its prelude. Further, the prominence given by the Synoptics to the narrative of Jesus' own baptism by John shows that the fact that Jesus submitted to John's baptism was regarded as highly significant. [...] It is notable that both in the baptism of Jesus and in the Christian rite a baptism with water is linked with the descent of the Holy Spirit and with divine sonship. [...] Some early Christians found it hard to understand how Jesus could submit to a "baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of

¹²¹ "Baptism", p. 351, in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia, in four volumes, Vol. I, New York, Abingdon Press, 1962.

sins." The difficulty is most satisfactorily resolved as we see Jesus corporately setting Himself alongside those to whom He came to minister. He could not separate Himself from the sinners whom He would save.¹²²

Many of the basic notions of Christian Baptism--water, the Holy Spirit, divine sonship, corporate union of Christ with sinful man to save him--are suggested in the baptism of Jesus by John, but it is principally in Jesus' death and resurrection that Christian Sacrament of Baptism finds its origin and meaning, its basic antecedent in the life of Jesus.

Here the work of O. Cullmann is illuminating. He finds the link with the death of Jesus as far back as the baptism in Jordan, in virtue of the allusion in the voice from heaven to one of the Servant Songs in Deutero-Isaiah. Further, he sees the death of Jesus as [...] a universal baptism, which, lying as it does behind every individual act of Christian baptism, gives the rite its significance and potency.¹²³

For it is by his death and resurrection that Christ has redeemed all mankind, in offering his life "as a ransom for many."¹²⁴ "There is a clear reference in [these words] to the voluntary death of the Servant of Yahweh, which is described in Is. 53.4ff as 'an offering for sin', i.e. as a

¹²² *Ibid.*, p. 351-352.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 352.

¹²⁴ Mt. 20.28; Mk. 10.45.

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sacrifice of atonement."¹²⁵ The context of the Passion-Resurrection in the Gospels makes it clear that "a connection is intended between the baptism 'with a Holy Spirit' brought by Jesus and his death for the sin of the world. Baptism's efficacy stems from this [...] liberation by the Lamb of God."¹²⁶

If Christian baptism is in some sense to be regarded as "the kerygma in action," the gospel of salvation dramatically brought to bear upon the life of a particular person, then it is scarcely surprising to find [...] that special stress is laid upon that divine act which is at the centre of the gospel--the death and resurrection of Christ. The impulse for this linking of baptism with Christ's death and its sequel is to be sought in the utterances of Jesus which speak of His death under the figure of baptism--one of which suggests that it was only through His death that His wider ministry could be inaugurated: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how I am constrained until it is accomplished!" (Lk. 12.50)¹²⁷

These two antecedents of Christian Baptism in the New Testament provide the basic framework for, and give the basic vocabulary of, what is said below about Christian incorporation, by baptism, into the dying and rising of Christ. But first, the subject of the relationship between baptism and faith must be briefly touched.

¹²⁵ Louis R. Hartman, Encyclopedic Dictionary of the Bible, a translation and adaptation of A. von den Born's Bijbels Woordenboek, second revised edition, 1954-1957, Toronto, McGraw-Hill, 1963, article "Sacrifice", col. 2087.

¹²⁶ David M. Stanley, The Apostolic Church in the New Testament, Westminster, Md., Newman, 1965, p. 170.

¹²⁷ Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. I, p. 352; cf. Stanley, op. cit., p. 174.

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(b) Baptism and Faith.- This question is raised to highlight that what is said below about incorporation into Christ through Baptism pertains primarily to the adult believing Christian. Although infant baptism is a common practice, it is not infant baptism which is the archetypal form of baptism, but rather that baptism which is the fruit of, and is accompanied by, faith; for, in its most basic meaning, Christianity depends on a faith response.¹²⁸ Baptism is best considered as a result of coming to believe in Jesus Christ for in the normal situation (that of an adult) both faith and the sacraments are present. They are the "two cornerstones of the Church. The vitality of the first and the vitality of the second condition [the Church's] vitality and efficacy."¹²⁹ They cannot be separated. Faith and the sacraments are so closely linked that they are "but the outside and the inside of the same thing."¹³⁰ In the New Testament they are inextricably linked.

Both from the necessity of baptism (Jn. 3.5; Mk. 16.16) and from the effects which are attributed to this sacrament it follows that in man's sharing in Christ's redemption baptism occupies a special

¹²⁸ O. Gonzalez Hernandez, "La nouvelle conscience de l'Église et ses présupposés historico-théologiques", Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 195.

¹²⁹ Ibid.

¹³⁰ J. Denney, quoted in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. I, p. 351.

position, since, though it presupposes the presence of faith, it cannot be supplanted by faith. Moreover, the N.T. ascribes to faith [...] certain effects, such as the rising to a new life, being born again, becoming the children of God, which are elsewhere ascribed to baptism [...]. Both formulations are correct, because faith has an indispensable function here: it is the basic relationship of man toward the salvation which God offers in Christ and only with this faith does baptism bestow the gift of salvation.¹³¹

In what follows below, then, baptismal incorporation into Christ is never considered apart from faith, although this may not be always made explicit. "Without baptism and the Spirit given in baptism there is no true worship of God. But God is known, confessed and glorified in the acceptance of faith."¹³²

(c) Incorporation of the Individual.- The sacrament of baptism is "the immediate encounter in mutual availability between the living Kyrios and ourselves."¹³³ This encounter has a threefold dimension, or better a threefold historical orientation. It is a commemoration (anamnesis) of the historical sufferings and death of Christ, which because of the Divinity of Christ have an aspect of the

¹³¹ Hartman, op. cit., article, "Baptism", col. 204.

¹³² Aloys Grillmeier, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter II, 'The People of God'", in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, H. Vorgrimler, ed., Vol. 1, New York, Herder and Herder, 1967, p. 157.

¹³³ E. Schillebeeckx, Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God, New York, Sheed and Ward, 1963, p. 62.

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eternal about them. It is a present visible affirmation, in its ritual form and in the meaning given it by the Church, of going down into death and rising with Christ. It is a pledge of the glory to come, "For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his."¹³⁴

More precisely, what takes place in the sacraments is the immediate encounter in mutual availability between the living Kyrios and ourselves. The sacraments are this encounter. And it is this immediate encounter with Christ that explains the threefold historical orientation of the sacraments. For they are first of all an anamnesis or a commemoration of the past sacrifice of the Cross because of the relation of the eternally actual redemptive act, present in the sacraments, to the historical moment in which Christ shed His blood. Secondly, they are a visible affirmation and bestowal of the actual gift of grace inasmuch as the recipient becomes concerned in the enduring redemptive act by which the Kyrios is reaching out to him here and now. In the third place, they are a pledge of eschatological salvation and a herald of the parousia, because the sacraments are the sacramental presence of Christ the Eschaton.¹³⁵

This incorporation into Christ is already clearly spoken of in the Scriptures, especially by St. Paul. "In Pauline theology the death and resurrection of Christ form one act by which the Father effects man's salvation."¹³⁶ Not only St. Paul but all the New Testament regards the effect of baptism as a participation in the death and resurrection of Christ.

¹³⁴ Rom. 6:5, RSV.

¹³⁵ Schillebeeckx, Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God, p. 62.

¹³⁶ Stanley, op. cit., p. 181.

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All the data that we find in the New Testament regarding the effects of baptism can be summed up in the statement that the recipient of baptism, on account of his participation in Christ's death and resurrection, passes from a state of death in sin to one of life in justice by sharing in Christ's Spirit, that makes the baptized man "like in form" (summorphos) with Christ. Baptism "washes sins away" (Acts 22.16) and bestows justice, holiness and immaculate sinlessness [...]; it makes a man a child of God because he is molded in the image of Christ (Gal. 3.26f), and he is born again in Christ by being "renewed" through the Holy Spirit (Tit. 3.5).¹³⁷

In the texts of Vatican II, there are two points to be noted: firstly, the Scriptural tone adopted by the Vatican Council in speaking about incorporation in Christ by baptism.

The life of Christ is poured into the believers, who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ Who suffered and was glorified. Through baptism we are formed into the likeness of Christ [...]. In this sacred rite, a union with Christ's death and resurrection is both symbolized and brought about: "For we were buried with Him by means of baptism into death." And if "we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be so in the likeness of His resurrection also." (Rom. 6. 4-5).¹³⁸

Secondly, in the texts of Vatican II, as well as in the Scriptures and Christian theology, the Holy Spirit is said to be the means by which the individual is made one with Christ. "By communicating His Spirit to His brothers [...] Christ made them mystically into His own body."¹³⁹ It was

¹³⁷ Hartman, op. cit., article "Baptism", cols. 203-204.

¹³⁸ The Church, 7, 20.

¹³⁹ The Church, 7, 20.

by going down into death and being raised from the dead that Christ was established as Kyrios and Spirit-sender. "The connection between Christian baptism and the Holy Spirit [...] is expressly stated in Cor. 12.13"¹⁴⁰ (the text quoted in article 7 of The Church). The Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ, is poured out on the believers in the sacrament of baptism, and makes them live with the same life as Christ, so that they are drawn into the life-circle of Christ. They live from that moment onwards by his grace, a grace which is the free gift of the Spirit of Christ.

This inner correspondence of Christ's life and the life of someone united with Christ is so great that St. Paul also conceives the great decisive events of Christ's life as direct events in the life of the Christian or concludes from an event of Christ's life to some corresponding event in the life of the Christian. Thus, we have died with Christ, have awoken with Him, have risen together with Him, are transplanted with Him into heaven [...]. If Christ is risen, then according to St. Paul it follows necessarily from this that we too rise from the dead [...].¹⁴¹

However, although the Christian is mystically risen with Christ, evidently he does not possess the fulness of this resurrection. Not only does he continue "in pilgrimage upon earth,"¹⁴² but because of his baptismal incorporation into Christ he traces "in trial and under oppression the

¹⁴⁰ Hartman, op. cit., article "Baptism", col. 204.

¹⁴¹ Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 165.

¹⁴² The Church, 7, 21.

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paths He trod."¹⁴³ The next section considers the reason why a Christian must suffer because of his incorporation into Christ.

(d) Baptism into Christ and Christian Suffering.- Suffering, anxiety, and death are the lot of every man, but for the Christian, these realities must not be seen merely as natural misfortunes, but rather as "the consequence and expression of his Christian existence, and of his union with Christ by grace, as a necessary stage he must go through before being glorified with Christ."¹⁴⁴ "Even St. Paul already equates baptism and faith with the idea of dying and sees every experience of suffering as a 'daily dying', a 'stigma Christi', a bearing within oneself of the 'nekrosis Christi'."¹⁴⁵ The Christ into whom the Christian is baptized is the Christ who came to resurrection through the Cross.

It is true, therefore, that as St. Paul says in one place, we are 'appointed unto' suffering (1 Th. 3.3); that because we have grown into Christ by grace, we also grow together with His suffering and death; that He must also be formed in us (Ga. 4.19) as the crucified; that suffering and death are essential characteristics of Christian existence as such, necessary consequences and living manifestations of our being Christ by grace.¹⁴⁶

143 The Church, 7, 21.

144 Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 165.

145 Ibid.

146 Ibid., p. 167.

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In sacramental union with Christ, not only does the Christian suffer, but in some sense Christ suffers in him. "Made one with His sufferings as the body is one with the head, we endure with Him, that with Him we may be glorified."¹⁴⁷ Christians participate "in the destiny of death of the one whose whole structure of life is passed on to us by baptism and faith."¹⁴⁸ The suffering Christian bears within himself the "stigma Christi," and the "nekrosis Christi." Therefore, the Spirit which is poured into the Christian to form him into Christ leads him to full growth into Christ only through suffering and death. These realities must be considered as essential characteristics of Christian living, and not merely as natural misfortunes. For baptism is not only a symbolic participation in the death of Christ, but "in this sacred rite, a union with Christ's death and resurrection is both symbolized and brought about."¹⁴⁹

C. The Eucharist and Suffering

What has been said about baptismal incorporation into Christ is also true of the Christian's incorporation into Christ in the Eucharist. "If the Holy Eucharist is

¹⁴⁷ The Church, 7, 21.

¹⁴⁸ Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 81.

¹⁴⁹ The Church, 7, 20.

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meant to be the increase of the life received in baptism [...] then it develops this life in those directions in which this life had already been moving in germ."¹⁵⁰ In this section five points are considered: firstly, the relationship between the Cross, Baptism, and the Eucharist; secondly, the priesthood of the faithful; thirdly, the implications of the Eucharist for Christian suffering; fourthly, the personal moral regeneration demanded by "being in Christ"; and fifthly, the relationship between the individual and the community. The last point will provide a link with Principle IV.

(a) The Cross, Baptism and the Eucharist.- The relationship between these three realities is, at one level, quite obvious: the Eucharist is, by the very words of the eucharistic prayer, a commemoration (anamnesis) of the sacrificial death of Christ, the body and blood given for many; and, as was shown above, baptism is profoundly rooted in the Cross of Christ, for it is a going down into the death of Christ so that the Christian may rise again with Him.

Within the Scriptures, the Cross, Baptism and the Eucharist are closely linked together, because the Cross is at the core of both Baptism and Christian worship.

¹⁵⁰ Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 165.

Paul's "theology of the Cross forms the basis of his teaching on Christian worship [...] and on the sacraments of the Eucharist [...] and of Baptism."¹⁵¹ Just as baptism is a sacred rite in which "a union with Christ's death and resurrection is both symbolized and brought about,"¹⁵² so too the Eucharist ritually re-enacts the sacrifice of the Cross in such a way that Christ is in the here-and-now a sacrificial offering with whom the Christian is joined.

For Christ offers Himself to the Father in the Eucharistic Sacrifice under two species: of these, by virtue of the words of consecration themselves, one contains the body and the other His blood--precisely so as to point to His bloody sacrifice in which His body given for many and His blood was poured out for the forgiveness of sin. Thus the sacrificial offering of Holy Mass is not merely in fact the same Christ Who was sacrificed on the Cross, but He is a sacrificial offering here which even in the manner of its offering still continues to announce the death of the Lord until He comes.¹⁵³

Finally, at the historical level, Cerfaux offers an insight about the relation of the Eucharist to baptism, in noting that Eucharistic terminology coloured the formation of baptismal vocabulary: "It is said equivalently that we are baptized into the death of Christ, and that we are buried with Him: or that we are baptized into the one same

¹⁵¹ Hartman, op. cit., article "Suffering", col. 2343.

¹⁵² The Church, 7, 20.

¹⁵³ Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 163-164.

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body of Christ, in analogy with the effects of the Eucharist."¹⁵⁴

However, the sacraments of baptism and the Eucharist are not linked simply because of their mutual relationship to the Cross of Christ. Nor is the link between these sacraments based only on the fact that the Eucharist continues and strengthens the life given in baptism. A more casual connection is found in the fact that baptism gives the Christian a fundamental orientation to offer Christ in sacrifice, by reason of his baptismal "character."

The baptismal "character", the "indelible sign", is seen (with St. Thomas) in the perspective of the priesthood, as a participation in the priesthood of Christ. Given outward expression in the sacramental event before the community, it is the permanent appointment to the exercise of Christian worship.¹⁵⁵

By baptism, a person receives a "character" or "indelible sign" which gives him the competence and duty to take an active part in the sacramental activity of the Church, "above all in the Eucharist, in which the mystery of Easter is realized in the fullest sense."¹⁵⁶ "Baptism gives the fundamental and supreme Christian dignity: a share in the priesthood of Christ, the disposition to offer Him in

¹⁵⁴ L. Cerfaux, "Les images symboliques de l'Église dans le Nouveau Testament", Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 254.

¹⁵⁵ Grillmeier, op. cit., p. 160.

¹⁵⁶ Schillebeeckx, Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God, p. 163. On the question of whether this power is given in baptism or only in baptism-confirmation, see ibid., p. 159-164.

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sacrifice and receive Him in the Eucharist."¹⁵⁷ "It imprints a character which delegates [the faithful] for Christian religious cult."¹⁵⁸ Therefore, the link between baptism and the Eucharist is more than the mutual relation of these sacraments to the Cross of Christ. Baptism leads to the Eucharist, and empowers the baptized to take part in Christ's offering of himself to the Father. But this Christ Who offers himself to the Father is the whole Christ-- head and members. The disposition to offer Christ in sacrifice, for the Christian is, in Christ, a part of the sacrifice of praise which is offered to the Father. The meaning and implications of this 'being priest with Christ' or 'being sacrifice with Christ' by reason of the priestly function which is given in baptism are considered in the following section.

(b) The Priesthood of the Faithful.- The idea of priesthood is inextricably linked with that of sacrifice, in both the Old and the New Testaments. Within the New Testament, the idea of sacrifice has a broader and more figurative meaning than either cultic sacrifice or the sacrifice of Christ in his death on the Cross, and it is within the more general sense of the word 'sacrifice' that

157 Hernandez, op. cit., p. 198.

158 E.J. De Smedt, "Le sacerdoce des fideles," Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 417.

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the meaning of the priesthood of the faithful is analysed. In the following explanation is found the basic vocabulary of this more figurative meaning of sacrifice: spiritual sacrifice, offering of one's body to God as a living, holy, and acceptable sacrifice, spiritual service, spiritual temple, sacrifice of praise, death to sin.

The Christian who has died to sin [...] offers up his body to God as a living, holy and acceptable sacrifice, which is a logikē litreía, "spiritual service," that is, divine worship, not in a material, but in a spiritual way (Rom. 12.1). By his holy life a Christian becomes a spiritual temple, in order to offer to God acceptable spiritual sacrifices (1 Pt. 2.5).¹⁵⁹

Although this quotation gives the general meaning of spiritual sacrifice in the New Testament, there is one Scriptural text that is cited, either in whole or in part, several times by Vatican II.¹⁶⁰ Before examining the meaning of spiritual sacrifice and the priesthood of the faithful, then, this text is analyzed briefly. The pericope (1 Pet. 2.4-10) speaks of the believers as the priesthood of chosen people gathered for sacrifice around the living, or life-giving stone, which is Christ. "Come to Him, to that living stone, rejected by men but in God's sight chosen and precious, [...] to be a holy priesthood."¹⁶¹

¹⁵⁹ Hartman, op. cit., article "Sacrifice", col. 2088.

¹⁶⁰ E.g. The Church, 9, 25; 10, 27; 34, 60; Laity, 3, 492.

¹⁶¹ 1 Pet. 2.4-5, RSV.

It is reasonable to think of the stone mentioned here as a spiritual altar to which the Christians come, and on which they place their offerings. The illustration of the living stone consequently has a dual meaning: it is a life-giving and essential stone in the building, but at the same time it serves as an altar for the offerings. If it is remembered that it represents Christ and His significance in the Church, then this duality becomes understandable.¹⁶²

There then follows a reference to Christ's rejection, and ultimate triumph: "The very stone which the builders rejected has become the head of the corner."¹⁶³ This reference is linked to the preceding idea of the 'living stone' which is Christ by shifting the figure so that "the living stones become a holy priesthood which presents spiritual, well-pleasing sacrifices to God."¹⁶⁴ If it is admitted that there is a double allusion here, and that the 'living stone' is not only Christ, but a spiritual altar on which spiritual sacrifices are offered by the new priestly people, the transition becomes understandable.¹⁶⁵

When Paul speaks of such offerings in Rom.xii,¹⁶⁶ he has reference to the commitment of the whole life to God on the part of the believers, entirely independent of the conventional practices of the

162 Bo Reicke, The Anchor Bible, The Epistles of James, Peter and Jude, Introduction, Translation, and Notes, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday, 1964, p. 90.

163 Vs. 7b.

164 Reicke, op. cit., p. 91.

165 Ibid.

166 This text is also cited by Vatican II in Priests, 2, 535.

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world. The author of First Peter probably also regards the offerings as holy living in the service of God.¹⁶⁷

Lastly, it should be noted that the author of First Peter ascribes to the Christian community the privileges of the people, Israel. "But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people that you may declare the wonderful deeds of Him Who called you out of darkness."¹⁶⁸

These themes are taken up by the Vatican Council. The laity "are consecrated into a royal priesthood [...] in order that they may offer spiritual sacrifices in everything they do."¹⁶⁹ "Taking part in the Eucharistic Sacrifice [...] they offer the divine Victim to God, and offer themselves along with it."¹⁷⁰ This priesthood of the faithful is not merely priesthood in a vague, or analogical sense. Although there is certainly a difference between the ministerial priesthood and the priesthood of the faithful, the priesthood of the faithful is the base and condition of all further consecration. "Whoever comes to the Church by the sacrament of Baptism receives by this fact

167 Reicke, op. cit., p. 91.

168 Vs. 9; cf. Exodus 19.5-6.

169 Laity, 3, 492.

170 The Church, 11, 28.

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itself a priestly consecration,"¹⁷¹ which is a share in the priesthood of Christ.

The offering which the faithful make at the altar is first of all the offering of Christ himself, head and members, to the Father. And this is the primary 'acceptable sacrifice'. Secondly, they present themselves along with the divine Victim. All that they do in their lives is presented to the Father when they approach the Eucharist, the summit and source of Christian life; and their sacrifice is an 'acceptable sacrifice' because it is joined to that of Christ.¹⁷²

For all their works, prayers, and apostolic endeavors, their ordinary married and family life, their daily labor, their mental and physical relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, even the hardships of life, if patiently borne--all these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (cf 1 Pet. 2.5).¹⁷³

The offering which the faithful make of themselves, even of the hardships of their lives, become spiritual sacrifices in Christ, by reason of their priestly consecration in baptism. As was noted, however, baptism into the death of Christ creates a similar dying in the Christian. He who walks in the Spirit is led by the same Spirit into the path

171 De Smedt, op. cit., p. 412.

172 Ibid., p. 418.

173 The Church, 34, 60.

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of 'resurrection-through-dying' that Christ trod. So, too, in the priestly offering of Christ in the Mass: Christ offers himself as sacrifice to the Father, and the Christian who is truly offering himself with Christ as a spiritual sacrifice is brought closer to Christ precisely as he who was sacrificed.

But this mystery of the Cross which mysteriously suffuses the celebration of the Mass is thus brought home to us not merely spatially and temporally but, far more than that, it takes hold of us who celebrate this mystery, it draws us into itself and subjects us to its unfathomable laws. For when (and this is true of all of us) we lend Christ, the eternal High Priest, our hands and voice so that he may offer the sacrifice of the New Covenant to the Father through us, then we cannot be his holy 'liturgists' other than by entering into the sacrificial outlook of Christ which alone gives value and dignity to this sacred action. When we sacrifice with Christ, then his inner mind, his resignation and readiness to suffer, his will for the Cross and sorrow and death must take hold of us too, so that we do not merely take part in the external happening but also in his interior intentions, full of terror and sweetness at the same time, in the mystery of the Cross which animates this sacrifice.¹⁷⁴

This offering is not 'automatic'. In two texts, the Council Fathers clarify that the offering of self with the Divine Victim is something which the faithful must learn, and be exhorted to: "By offering the Immaculate Victim, not only through the hands of the priest, but also with him, they should learn to offer themselves

¹⁷⁴ Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 164.

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too";¹⁷⁵ "So priests must instruct them to offer to God the Father the Divine Victim in the sacrifice of the Mass, and to join to it the offering of their own lives."¹⁷⁶ The offering of self, then, which is made possible, and acceptable to God, by baptismal consecration is an offering which the faithful should make consciously when they celebrate the Eucharist.

(c) The Eucharist and Suffering.- Not only in the offering of self with the Divine Victim but in the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ in the Eucharist the Christian is drawn into the mystery of the death of the Lord, for the Eucharist renews the memory of the suffering of Christ even by letting Christ's sufferings flow over into the Christian.¹⁷⁷

We also receive the sacrificed body and the blood of the sacrifice poured out for us, the sacrificial gifts themselves. If, however, this body and blood in their sacramental manner of existence still announce the death of the Lord, is it not inevitable then that this sacrament--if it effectively takes hold of us by its own power--should make us subject to the mystery it announces, which is the death of Christ? And if this food changes us into itself, will we not then also have to learn to bear the signs which proclaim the death of Christ Our Lord, as do this bread and the chalice of salvation which we receive? It is impossible that the mystery of the suffering of Christ should not spread through the life of someone who partakes

175 Liturgy, 48, 154.

176 Priests, 5, 542.

177 Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 167-168.

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of the sacrifice and the sacrificial meal in which is renewed the memory of the suffering of Christ.¹⁷⁸

This 'being taken up into the death of Christ' by the reception of the Eucharist is at the same time a pledge of a future resurrection and glory. But it is such only to the extent that the Christian, who hopes to be raised with Christ, has gone down with him into death, a saving death of which the Eucharist is sign and pledge.

Thus full participation in the Eucharist draws the Christian into the mystery of Christ not against his will, but by his free acceptance of what the reception of the Body and Blood of Christ implies.

(d) "Being in Christ" and Moral Regeneration.- The Body and Blood of Christ which the Christian receives in the Eucharist is that of the glorified Christ. But this Christ came to glory only by submitting his "flesh of sin" to the judgment of God on the Cross. In the Eucharist, then, there is a "submission of oneself to the judgment of God which on the Cross condemned sin in the flesh of the Son (Rom. 8.3)."¹⁷⁹ In Rom. 6.1-4 Paul sees the symbolic representation of baptism by immersion not only as

178 Ibid., p. 164.

179 Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. II, Man in the Church, translated by Karl-H. Kruger, Baltimore, Helicon, 1963, p. 174.

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"dying, being buried, and rising again with Christ. This 'dying' is further explained as a death to sin, and this 'rising again' as a resurrection to a new moral life."¹⁸⁰

This view of baptism as a moral death and resurrection has sometimes been unwittingly regarded as a form of personal teaching peculiar to Paul, but a careful reading of the context suggests that Paul must here be appealing to a rather common Christian testimony (cf. "Do you not know. . .?").¹⁸¹

This Christian teaching is reiterated, in different words, by Vatican II: "Through all those works befitting Christian men they can offer spiritual sacrifices and proclaim the power of Him Who has called them out of darkness into His marvelous light."¹⁸² All the works of the Christian, if carried out in the Spirit, become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ.¹⁸³ The connection between 'being in Christ' and moral regeneration is quite obvious: By baptism a Christian is given the Spirit, who is a Spirit of holiness and truth. "Every Catholic must therefore aim at Christian perfection [...] so that the Church [...] may daily be more purified and renewed."¹⁸⁴

¹⁸⁰ Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, Vol. I, article "Baptism", p. 350.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

¹⁸² The Church, 10, 27.

¹⁸³ Cf. The Church, 34, 60.

¹⁸⁴ Vatican II, "Decree on Ecumenism", article 4, p. 348-349, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Ecumenism.)

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In both baptism and in the Eucharist the Christian is called to an ever greater 'being in Christ', and this call requires, often at great cost to the Christian, the sacrifice of a holy and upright life. The difficulty and value of the individual moral life of the Christian and its relationship to the Cross of Christ and the community are examined in the following section.

(e) The Individual and the Community.- Firstly, it must be said that although the Christian people is redeemed by Christ precisely as a people,¹⁸⁵ "the individual in the dimension of the spiritual and personal and of supernatural grace is not opposed to and does not constitute any threat to the community in that same dimension."¹⁸⁶ And although the individual Christian cannot live in isolation from the community, the community is built up by those acts of individuals which are truly personal and supernatural. Just as Christ 'built' the Church, created the community of the redeemed, by a personal, individual act, so too individual Christians continue to build community by what they do within that act by which Christ founded the Church.

For what happens in this way is, in the body of Christ which is the Church, a direct blessing and grace to others who belong to that same body of Christ. Christ's acts conveyed salvation; acts

185 Cf. The Church, 9, 25.

186 Karl Rahner, Mission and Grace, Essays in Pastoral Theology, Vol. 1, translated by Cecily Hastings, London, Sheed and Ward, 1963, p. 123-124.

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which were all integrated into the one act in which [...] abandoned His whole being, in love and obedience, to the bottomless abyss which is silence and mystery, and, in the act of doing so, called that Incomprehensible by the name of "Father." [...] Hence the abiding truth; the Church lives by the acts of individuals done within that act by which she is founded. Because the human acts which we mean can only be done in the grace of God, all such acts derive from that one act.¹⁸⁷

The relationship of the individual to the community, then, is understood at its deepest level in the light of the sacrificial act of Christ. The baptized, in union with Christ, offers "spiritual worship for the glory of God and the salvation of men,"¹⁸⁸ and this act is constitutive of community. This concept continues that of the priesthood of the faithful, and is implied in it.

In conclusion, this section has considered another facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering by presenting and explaining the third principle: Made one with Christ who suffered and is exalted, the Christian offers his sufferings with Christ as an acceptable sacrifice before God.

4. Fourth Principle.

The fourth principle considers the meaning of suffering for the Christian community as community. Like the third principle, it concerns the life of the Church

¹⁸⁷ Ibid., p. 138-139.

¹⁸⁸ The Church, 34, 60.

ad intra, but more directly than the third principle it is concerned with this life within the Church as a sign to the unbeliever, and as a means to the world's unity in Christ. The fourth principle is: Christ continues to carry on his redemptive work in the Church, especially through the Eucharist, in which the work of redemption is carried on. Christians, by filling up what is wanting in the sufferings of Christ, build up the Church, the sacrament of salvation, for the unity of all mankind. This principle is explained, firstly, by a presentation of certain pertinent texts, secondly by an examination of the Eucharist as a reality where the redemption is carried on; and thirdly, by an analysis of the redemptive, or unity-producing, nature of suffering within the Church. These second and third points correspond to the first and second sentences of the fourth principle, and are an elucidation of them.

A. Certain Pertinent Texts

One facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II concerns the Church as sign and sacrament of salvation through union with Christ and redemptive suffering. The following texts from Vatican II relate to this facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. They are the basis in Vatican II from which the fourth principle was

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formed, and are the more significant texts underlying the presentation of the fourth principle.

By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind. She is also an instrument for the achievement of such union and unity.¹⁸⁹

[The] inauguration and [the] growth [of the Church] are both symbolized by the blood and water which flowed from the open side of the crucified Jesus (cf. Jn. 19:34) [...]. As often as the sacrifice of the Cross in which "Christ, our passover, has been sacrificed" (1 Cor. 5:7) is celebrated on an altar, the work of our redemption is carried on. At the same time, in the sacrament of the Eucharist bread the unity of all believers who form one body in Christ (cf. 1 Cor. 10:17) is both expressed and brought about. All men are called to this union with Christ, Who is the light of the world, from Whom we go forth, through Whom we live, and toward Whom our journey leads us.¹⁹⁰

Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and under oppression, so the Church is called to follow the same path in communicating to men the fruits of salvation. Christ Jesus, "though He was by nature God . . . emptied Himself, taking the nature of a slave" (Phil. 2.6), and "being rich, He became poor" (2 Cor. 8.9), for our sakes. Thus, although the Church needs human resources to carry out her mission, she is not set up to seek earthly glory, but to proclaim humility and self-sacrifice, even by her own example.¹⁹¹

So it is that this Messianic people, although it does not actually include all men, and may more than once look like a small flock, is nonetheless a lasting and sure seed of unity, hope, and salvation for the whole human race. Established by Christ as a fellowship of life, charity, and truth, it is

189 The Church, 1, 15.

190 The Church, 3, 16.

191 The Church, 8, 23.

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also used by Him as an instrument for the redemption of all, and is sent forth into the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth.¹⁹²

This mission is a continuing one. In the course of history it unfolds the mission of Christ Himself, Who was sent to preach the gospel to the poor. Hence, prompted by the Holy Spirit, the Church must walk the same road which Christ walked: a road of poverty and obedience, of service and self-sacrifice to the death, from which death He came forth victor by His resurrection. For thus did all the apostles walk in hope. On behalf of Christ's body, which is the Church, they supplied what was wanting of the sufferings of Christ by their own many trials and sufferings (cf. Col. 1.24).¹⁹³

Those who are oppressed by poverty, infirmity, sickness, or various other hardships, as well as those who suffer persecution for justice' sake-- may they all know that in a special way they are united with the suffering Christ for the salvation of the world.¹⁹⁴

B. Communitarian Dimensions of Salvation

This section is divided into three points: firstly, a consideration of the fact that Christ's Passing-over is for the salvation of a people; secondly, that by baptism an individual is joined to a community of the Spirit; and thirdly, that the Eucharist is a communal celebration of redemption.

As was noted in the introduction to the third principle, the third and fourth principles form one unit.

¹⁹² The Church, 9, 26.

¹⁹³ Missions, 5, 590.

¹⁹⁴ The Church, 41, 70.

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In the explanation of this principle there is less emphasis on the biblical background of the principle than in the preceding principles because much of the biblical background of the third and fourth principles is the same. In the presentation of this fourth principle there is more emphasis placed on liturgical and theological dimensions.

(a) Christ's Passing-over, Salvation of a People.-

"Fifty years ago man's salvation was thought of primarily in an individualistic sense."¹⁹⁵ The documents on the liturgy and the Church have helped re-focus the spirit and awareness of the communitarian dimensions of Church. In The Church the Council Fathers state unequivocally: "It has pleased God, however, to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals without any mutual bonds, but by making them into a single people."¹⁹⁶ In order to differentiate this section from what was said about the redemptive death of Christ in the previous section, and in order to stress precisely the communitarian aspects of salvation, the Passing-over of Christ is considered here especially as the event by which he became Spirit-sender, for it is the Spirit who is the bond and the soul of the

¹⁹⁵ O. Rousseau, "La Constitution 'Lumen Gentium' dans le cadre des mouvements rénovateurs de théologie et de pastorale des dernières décades," Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 49.

¹⁹⁶ The Church, 9, 25.

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Christian community. Although this theme is more of the Johannine than of the Synoptic tradition, all the traditions teach that it is because of his obedient submission to the Father in going down to death that Christ was raised by the Father and established as Kyrios. The Synoptic tradition separates the Passover events temporally, but they may be considered theologically as one event.¹⁹⁷

In the first days, the primary event which caused the divergence of the Christian faith from the Jewish point of view was "a firm faith in the presence of their risen Lord among them through the Holy Spirit."¹⁹⁸ "This creation of what had been merely a group of Jesus' loyal adherents into the Church of the New Testament was the immediate result of their 'baptism with a Holy Spirit'.¹⁹⁹

[...] the real novelty of the Christian notion of salvation lies in the primitive Church's realization of her possession of the Holy Spirit, whose presence had formed her into the new Israel and had revealed to her the divinity of the exalted Lord Jesus. Accordingly it is to the pentecostal experience of the first disciples that the explicitation of their specifically Christian beliefs must be ascribed.²⁰⁰

In the first Christian sermon, Peter declared to his hearers:

197 Cf. Stanley, op. cit., p. 180-181.

198 Ibid., p. 141.

199 Ibid., p. 184-185.

200 Ibid., p. 141.

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Men of Israel hear these words: Jesus of Nazareth [...] delivered up according to the definite plan and foreknowledge of God, you crucified and killed by the hands of lawless men. But God raised Him up, having loosed the pangs of death, because it was not possible for Him to be held by it. [...] Being therefore exalted at the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He has poured out this which you see and hear.²⁰¹

This is the basic proclamation of the Passing-over of Christ to his Father. Within it, the death of Christ is an essential step, for it was because of his faithful obedience unto death that Christ was exalted. "He humbled himself and became obedient unto death [...]. Therefore God has highly exalted him and bestowed on him the name which is above every name."²⁰²

(b) Baptism into the Community of the Spirit.- But the death of Christ cannot be separated from the whole of Christ's glorification for "by that term we understand the mysteries of His death, resurrection, ascension, enthronement as Kyrios, and the consequent sending of the Spirit to create His kingdom, the Church."²⁰³ The Apostles were conscious of themselves as the New Israel precisely because they had received the Holy Spirit. Their consciousness of the unique character of their Pentecostal experience led them

201 Acts 2, 22-24, 33.

202 Phil. 2.8-9 RSV.

203 Stanley, op. cit., p. 192.

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to impart Christian baptism to those who wished to be added "to the number of the saved" (Acts 2:47). In fact, we may say that the apostles looked upon the reception of this sacrament as reproducing, so far as that was possible, their own pentecostal experience.²⁰⁴

Thus, it is that the Church, the kingdom of God which is clearly visible "in the very person of Christ, Son of God and Son of Man Who came 'to serve, and to give His life as a ransom for many',"²⁰⁵ becomes visible among men, and accepts new members by baptism, which is a sharing in the Spirit of adoption. The ecclesial nature of salvation, made visible in the Church by baptism, is based on the common Spirit which Christians share²⁰⁶ in the fellowship of believers.

Those who are members of the Church of Christ are enabled to enter into the most intimate union with God and into a deeper fellowship with men, not founded merely on the usual basis of human relationships but also on the unifying force of the self-communication of God in Christ and in the Spirit. And here we can see at once an essential characteristic of the salvation bestowed in Christ. To enter the Church is to be accepted really, though for the present only initially and invisibly, into the eschatological family of the Children of God, of which the centre is God and Christ, the unifying bond the Holy Spirit.²⁰⁷

204 Stanley, op. cit, p. 185.

205 The Church, 5, 18.

206 Cf. Schillebeeckx, Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God, p. 161.

207 Aloys Grillmeier, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, Chapter I, The Mystery of the Church", in Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II, Vol. I, H. Vorgrimler, ed., New York, Herder and Herder, 1967, p. 140.

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Thus it is that baptism has a distinctly ecclesial nature; it is not only a going down into death and rising again with Christ; it is an acceptance into, and making real of, these mysteries within the community which has received the Spirit sent by Christ in his Passing-over to his Father.

(c) Eucharist, Communal Celebration of Redemption.-

"In the wealth of Eucharistic symbolism it is not easy to disengage the primary theme; but it appears to be the Eucharist as the Christian Passover."²⁰⁸ The word 'Pass-over' is rich in biblical symbolism: formation of a chosen people, the sacrificial lamb, departure from the land of sin, 'baptism' in the passage through the Red Sea, annual ritual celebration or memorial as an act of faith in God's continuing redemption. This symbolism is continued in the New Testament. However, in the Eucharist, Christians celebrate their creation as a new people of God, on a different level than the ancient Israel. "It is something new inasmuch as it has been acquired by Christ as His own possession by His death on the Cross, enriched with the grace of His Spirit, [...] and perpetually held together by Him."²⁰⁹ By their separate consecrations, the bread and

²⁰⁸ John L. McKenzie, Dictionary of the Bible, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1965, article "Eucharist", p. 250.

²⁰⁹ Grillmeier, "The People of God", in Commentary, p. 155-156.

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wine which become the body and blood of Christ into which the believer enters actively. At the Last Supper, Christ clearly gave his death the significance of a sacrifice. Christian tradition, reflecting on the Last Supper and the subsequent events of Christ's Passing-over, sees the Eucharist as a 'memorial' in the sense of cultic recital and ritual re-enactment of the saving event. In it each participant "experiences the event and is personally integrated into the death and the resurrection of Jesus."²¹⁰ The death which "sanctifies mankind, reconciles, establishes peace, redeems, constitutes the Church, and therefore unites man in communion with God and his fellow men"²¹¹ is sacramentally present to the believers; not because Christ dies again, but because the sacramental sign is history-centered: a commemorative sign of the past sufferings of Christ, and a witness to the effects which these sufferings have in the present and will have in the future. Thus, the Church comes "together to celebrate the pascal mystery [...], celebrating the Eucharist in which 'the victory and triumph of His death are again made present'."²¹² This celebration is "a communal act of all the faithful. For in the

210 McKenzie, op. cit., p. 251.

211 Schillebeeckx, Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God, p. 22.

212 Liturgy, 6, 140.

Eucharist Christ gives Himself to the 'Church'."²¹³ And this Church exists "so that the sacrifice of praise offered by the great eternal priest to the Father will be made actual always."²¹⁴

But the Eucharist is not only a making present of the Passing-over of Christ, and a proclamation by the Church of this presence in mystery. The Eucharistic bread is also an effective sign of union among the believers who form one body in Christ.

The Eucharist too brings about, in the first place a deepening of the inner belonging to the Eucharistic People of God: it is the sacrament of unity of the Church, the bond of which is love. Now Christ is present in the Church's Eucharist precisely as the bond of her unity, for it is His real presence under the covenant of the consecration. The individual becomes personally united with Christ in His sacrifice of the Cross to the extent that, by taking part in the Eucharist and especially in receiving Communion, He enters into the sacrificial community of the Church.²¹⁵

Not only, then, does the Eucharist effect union among the believers, but this union is the condition of union with Christ, "for the Church, the People of God, is the community of the Eucharistic Covenant."²¹⁶ The bread which is

²¹³ Grillmeier, "The People of God", in Commentary, p. 160.

²¹⁴ O. Semmelroth, "L'Église, nouveau Peuple de Dieu", Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 406.

²¹⁵ Schillebeeckx, Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God, p. 175.

²¹⁶ Ibid.

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shared is a sign of this union, and as the bread is the Body of Christ, the union is effected by the Spirit which Christ shares with those who are joined to his glorified, Spirit-sending, Body. If it is remembered, however, that Christ was glorified only after his death, and that the believers are joined together as a People who share a common hope that their present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to come, their union with one another in the Spirit is indeed an act of common hope, and a celebration of the death of the Lord until he comes. "The Spirit and the Bride both say to the Lord Jesus, 'Come!'"²¹⁷ Thus, Christian hope in the face of suffering and death is not only a personal act on the part of each believer; it is also a communal act of hope, that as the believers have been joined together in the Sacred Bread, so they will be joined with the glorified Christ. "It is absolutely true to say that if we have died with Him, we will also live with Him [...]. We share everything with Him--both death and life--because we live in Him through His Sacrament."²¹⁸

Lastly it may be noted that bread, as a life-giving substance, is in the Eucharistic context a sign of the life

217 The Church, 4, 17.

218 Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 170.

of the Spirit which is given by the risen Lord in the Eucharist.²¹⁹ The Spirit is not given, however, except where there is an active entering into the Eucharist. And as the Eucharist is a sign of the Passing-over of Christ, with all that implies of suffering, the reception of the Eucharist is a pledge on the part of the believing community to enter into this same Passing-over, and become, itself, the Spirit-sending Body of Christ, by following the same path which Christ trod.²²⁰ It is this aspect of the Christian meaning of suffering which is considered in the following point.

C. Redemptive Suffering in the Church

This section is divided into three points: firstly, a consideration of the way in which the Church is a "sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind;²²¹ secondly, the way in which the sacraments, especially baptism and the Eucharist, are an expression and cause of this union; and thirdly, a consideration of how the sufferings of the faithful fill up what is wanting in the sufferings of Christ, for the salvation of mankind.

219 Cf. Stanley, op. cit., p. 181.

220 Cf. The Church, 8, 23.

221 The Church, 1, 15.

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(a) The Church as Sacrament of Unity.- Within Roman Catholic usage, the word, 'sacrament' usually refers to one of the seven sacraments. The Church takes up a more ancient usage of the word, and applies it to the Church, which Vatican II calls a "sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind." The Church, 1, 15.

To understand the Church as "the universal sacrament of salvation" we must have recourse to the biblical mysterium [...] as the whole economy of salvation, that is, the eternal plan and decree of God to bring the world into the fellowship of salvation with Himself in Christ. From the Latin translation of the Bible, which rendered mysterion by sacramentum, it became usual in patristic theology to designate Christ Himself, sacred scripture, the liturgical rites and also the Church as mysterion or sacramentum. It is thus the intention of the Council to take up once more this ancient usage, and to ascribe to the Church the value of a sacramental symbolism and instrumentality in the whole of the divine economy of salvation for all mankind and its history.²²²

However, whatever is said of the Church as sign, instrument, or sacrament of salvation must first be explained in terms of Christ, for the Church has no life-giving power apart from what she has received from Christ. If, then, it is said of the Church that she is the instrument of salvation for mankind, and its sacrament of unity, this is only said because Christ has shared with the Church what he is, what he has, and what he won through his Passing-over to the Father. In what follows, the Church's

²²² Grillmeier, "The Mystery of the Church", in Commentary, p. 140.

role as sacrament of unity is analysed in terms of Christ's mission to bring all things to unity, to recapitulate all things, in himself. Then it is shown that Christ has shared this mission and power with the Church.

Christ's basic mission in coming forth from the Father was to recapitulate in himself the whole of humanity.²²³ The primordial object of Christ's mission is not the individual, despite the fact that God's call is always directed towards the individual person. God turned toward mankind with love, and shared his grace with them in order to create a unity among them, a unity between men separated from each other and from himself by sin.²²⁴ Christ came forth from the Father to gather together mankind which had been torn apart by sin.

Christ, love-agape made visible, incarnation of the saving will of the Father, began among us the gathering together of the children of God, torn apart by sin, and dispersed throughout the world. He did this by means of His agape, called also the peace of Christ.²²⁵

The recapitulation of all things in Christ comes about by his incarnation, first of all, for in his incarnation the fulness of the Godhead began to dwell bodily in

223 J.L. Witte, "L'Église, 'Sacramentum unitatis' due cosmos et du genre humain", Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 467-468.

224 Ibid., p. 471.

225 Ibid., p. 466.

the man-Jesus; and this indwelling is the basis of all unity.

The development of this process of unification between 'Jew and Greek', between the whole of humanity, is, according to Saint Paul, the following: by the incarnation, the humanity of Christ, from the instant of its creation, is so intimately linked with the divine nature of the Son that it shares, in this nature, in all the fulness in which a creature may participate, that is to say in the fulness of grace. And this dwells in the incarnate Son 'somatikos', in a human way. That implies that the fullness of grace, since the kenosis, has already made the love and peace of God dwell in the humanity of Christ, and has made it the sign and instrument of our justification, of our sanctification, and of our resurrection.²²⁶

However, the unity-producing fulness of the Godhead exists bodily in the man-Jesus not only by reason of his incarnation, but also by his death and resurrection, for it was in his Passing-over to the Father that Christ was established in power as Kyrios and Spirit-sender.

The fulness (pan to pleroma) in Christ is the creative element of unity for the salvation of humanity and the cosmos. And St. Paul specifies this by these words "making peace by the blood of His cross." To bring peace is for Christ [...] to create a pneumatic unity by the acceptable offering of His life.²²⁷

By his incarnation, by being he in whom the fulness of Godhead dwells, Christ is in his humanity the sign and instrument of justification. But as, in his kenosis, Christ put aside the glory of his Godhead, it was not until after the death-resurrection, the Passing-over of

226 Ibid., p. 476.

227 Ibid., p. 473.

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Christ to the Father, that he sent his Spirit upon humanity, and gathered together for himself a community to which he gave this fulness (pleroma) which was his.

In his Passing-over to the Father, and his sending of the Spirit, Christ transmitted to mankind, in the community of his faithful followers, the fulness that was his as Son of God. And it is in this gift from Christ that the Church becomes the sacrament of union with God and of the unity of mankind, and takes up his task of recapitulating all things in himself.

In effect, the love which came from the cross and death of Christ, and which received its significative force in the resurrection, put the unfolding of God's saving plan in its final stage: the first visible realization of the unifying work of Christ was the young community, a human community, based on love for the glorified man-Jesus, and thus a community of both visible and invisible love. Above all by the institution of Baptism and the Eucharist and by the out pouring of the Holy Spirit, Christ had gathered in himself this community, into a pneumatic unity which Paul would call the Body of Christ.²²⁸

And now, after the resurrection of Christ, this grace is spread forth on the Church, on humanity and on the cosmos, for the fulness in Christ is nothing else than the love of God for the whole of creation, incarnate in a human nature, tending to unite in Christ not only souls but men, in their own framework the cosmos. And at the heart of a creation in evolution, Christ has infused his Spirit in the Church and has made it full of grace, a sign and an instrument of the unity in Himself of humanity and of the cosmos.²²⁹

228 Ibid., p. 467.

229 Ibid., p. 476.

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The Church is the earthly prolongation, or better the visibility, of Christ. She is "the visible sign on earth of the eternal mystery of passover or resurrection from the dead."²³⁰ As Christ is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation, so he is the Head of the Body which is the Church, its beginning, the first-born of the dead.²³¹ Christ has sent the Spirit, which is at the same time his Spirit and the Spirit of the Church.²³² This Spirit is at the same time the fulness of the Godhead, the principle of unity within the Church, and the power by which the Church is the sacrament of union with God and of the unity of all mankind; for the Church is the People of God which Christ, through his Spirit, uses as sign to the world of an already existing union with God, and as a sacrament or instrument for the unity of all mankind. This is the framework within which Vatican II explains the nature and mission of the Church in The Church,²³³ and it helps complete the basic frame of reference within which the redemptive nature of suffering within the Church must be understood.

230 Schillebeeckx, Christ the Sacrament of the Encounter with God, p. 159-160.

231 Witte, op. cit., p. 472; cf. Col. 1.15-20, and the use of this text in The Church, 2, 15 and 7, 21.

232 Hernandez, op. cit., p. 193.

233 The Church, 1-8, 14-24.

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(b) Sacraments and Unity.- Before turning directly to the question of suffering in the Church, a word must be said about the way in which the sacraments, especially baptism and the Eucharist, are an expression of the Church's union with God and a means to create the unity of the world in Christ. These two sacraments have been discussed above, both as a personal incorporation into the dying and rising of Christ, and as a communal celebration of redemption. Here the sacraments are considered as witnesses to the Church's belief that she has been given the fulness of the Spirit, the pleroma of Christ, and as means by which the Church "tries to make the whole of humanity participate in the pleroma, and thus to reunite it in the unity of its Head."²³⁴

The Christian gospel "consists in the fact that what in the O.T. was future expectation has now, because of what Christ ~~was~~ and did, become--at least in part--present realization."²³⁵ It is in the sacrament of baptism that the pledge (the seal or Spirit) is given to the Christian that he has already entered into the age of Messianic blessings.

The stark realism of the idea that the Christian has already been admitted to heavenly glory through baptismal union with the glorified Christ stresses Paul's realization of the Christian's present possession of the Messianic blessings and his definitive triumph over the forces of evil.²³⁶

²³⁴ Witte, op. cit., p. 461.

²³⁵ Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible, p. 350.

²³⁶ Stanley, op. cit., p. 183.

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As this sacramental incorporation takes place within the community of the Faithful, the Body or pleroma of Christ,²³⁷ it constitutes an act of faith not only of the individual but of the community that it is the locus of redemption: i.e. the place or moment of union with God by unity and cohesion within itself. "Above all by the institution of baptism and the Eucharist and by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit, Christ has gathered this Community into a pneumatic unity."²³⁸

The awareness of being the fulness of Christ through whom unity is to be brought to the world is perhaps more clearly seen in the Eucharist, where the Church realizes most fully that she is assembled (called together) in the sharing of the Spirit-giving bread, for the efficacious symbolism of the Eucharist comes "above all, from the glorification of His sacred humanity endowing it with the power of communicating the Spirit"²³⁹ and equally that she is called together precisely in order to be sent.²⁴⁰ Not only in apostolic works, but even in the act of Eucharist itself, the Church tries to make the whole of humanity share in the pleroma of Christ.

²³⁷ On the equivalence of these terms, cf. Witte, op. cit., p. 478.

²³⁸ Witte, op. cit., p. 467.

²³⁹ Stanley, op. cit., p. 147-148.

²⁴⁰ Hernandez, op. cit., p. 203.

By its continued witness to the death and resurrection of Christ (especially in the Eucharistic action), the Church tries to make the whole of humanity participate in the pleroma, and thus to reunite it in the unity of its Head.²⁴¹

In conclusion, it may be said of both baptism and the Eucharist, as communal acts of the Spirit, taking place within the corporality of the here-and-now community, by means of the Spirit-giving corporality of water, bread and wine, that these sacraments are both witness to, and causes of, the 'alreadiness' of the recapitulation of all things (humanity and the cosmos) in Christ.

(c) Suffering in the Community.- The 'alreadiness' of the recapitulation of all humanity and the cosmos in Christ, and the evident incompleteness of this recapitulation of all things in Christ creates in the Christian community the tension of becoming what in fact it is. This theme is taken up rather explicitly in article 7, paragraphs 4-8 of The Church, which "follows the later Pauline Epistles, especially Colossians and Ephesians, in the second stage of the analogy, where the place of Christ as head of the body is described."²⁴²

1. According to Col. 1. 15-18, Christ the incarnate, the first-born of creation, and the first-fruit of the resurrection from the dead, is He to Whom the cosmos and the Church belong. His perfection and his activity form the fulness of the Church.

²⁴¹ Witte, op. cit., p. 461.

²⁴² Grillmeier, "The Mystery of the Church", in Commentary, p. 144.

2. Since Christ took upon Himself the whole weight of human destiny, it is the first duty of the members of the body to be assimilated to the destiny of the head in suffering and exaltation. The notion of putting on the form of Christ is indissolubly connected with that of membership of the body of Christ. Full conformity to Christ is only possible for the whole body of Christ, and for the individual only as part of that whole.

3. The head, however, ceaselessly imparting of His fulness in ever greater measure, brings about the growth of the body and its development in a manifold unity: it is built up by Christ through the graces which enable the members to serve it, and by the members through their personal activity in the mutual service of salvation.²⁴³

This quotation sums up much of what has been presented in the explanation of the fourth principle, and situates the Pauline basis of this part of The Church. It also clarifies the question of building up the Church for the unity of all creation in Christ through "personal activity in the mutual service of salvation."²⁴⁴ In what follows, two main points are elucidated: firstly, the difficulty of the Pauline text Colossians 1.²⁴⁵ which forms the basis of much of what is said by the Vatican Council about the meaning of suffering; and secondly the theological meaning and actual application of the notion of filling up what is wanting in the sufferings of Christ in the documents of Vatican II.

243 Ibid., p. 144-145.

244 Ibid.

245 Cf. Missions, 5, 590, and The Church, 11, 28.

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(i) Colossians 1.24.- The text under consideration is: "Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of His Body, that is, the Church."²⁴⁶

Norbert Hagedé cites Toussaint who classifies five opinions about this text:

1) Those who understand by this text the personal sufferings of Christ: Paul completed by his own sufferings those of Christ, not as satisfaction, but as a means of building up the Church before continuing the work of Christ; 2) those (especially Lightfoot) who say: as Christ could not suffer as minister of the circumcision (Rom. 15.8), He had to be supplied for by Paul as regards the Gentiles; 3) others (Catholics) find in this text an argument in favour of the communion of saints; 4) others (Protestants) say that the sufferings are those of the Church, the Mystical Body of Christ; 5) Toussaint proposes himself that the sufferings were simply the personal sufferings of the Apostle.²⁴⁷

Without question, it is a difficult text. According to Hagedé himself, the idea to retain from the text is that his "captivity has not ended the apostolate of Paul, that he exercises it in another way--not less useful--for the Church."²⁴⁸ Hartman goes slightly further in providing a possible answer to the question raised by the text, for although he says that according to Paul "his sufferings as an apostle, on account of their connection with the

²⁴⁶ Col. 1.24 RSV.

²⁴⁷ Norbert Hagedé, Commentaire de l'Épître aux Colossiens, Genève, Editions Labor et Fides, 1968, p. 85-86.

²⁴⁸ Ibid., p. 88.

sufferings of Christ, are of profit to all the members of the Mystical Body,"²⁴⁹ he admits that the few passages where this thought is expressed "are not explicit or clear enough to establish in an absolutely unquestionable manner the full extent of Paul's teaching on this point."²⁵⁰ Finally, Witte, in dealing with this question within the framework of what the Council said about the Church as the sacrament of unity of the cosmos and of the human race,²⁵¹ offers a temperate judgment which respects both the text, and the use of the text within the framework of Vatican II.

Col. 1.24 (a difficult text to interpret which speaks of the 'filling up' of the sufferings of Christ for his Body which is the Church) [...] suggests to us the idea that it is possible for us to cooperate with Christ in the work of redemption. This possibility is a gift of the fulness of the gift of Christ to his Church.²⁵²

It is this interpretation which is followed, for it takes into account not only one particular text but also the whole of Vatican II and its interpretation of Christian tradition.²⁵³

²⁴⁹ Hartman, op. cit., article "Suffering", col. 2344.

²⁵⁰ Ibid.

²⁵¹ Witte, op. cit., p. 457-492.

²⁵² Ibid., p. 475.

²⁵³ The same idea occurs elsewhere in Paul, and in the Apocalypse; cf. Stanley, op. cit., p. 311.

(ii) Suffering for Humanity.- The idea that the Christian is able to cooperate with Christ in the work of redemption brings together many of the themes which have been treated so far: incorporation into the dying and rising of Christ, the fulness (pleroma) of grace given to the Church by Christ; the pledge given by the Christian in baptism and the Eucharist to be fully part of Christ, even in suffering; the Spirit-sending nature of Christ's suffering--and therefore of those who are his members. Karl Rahner provides a theological analysis of the nature of suffering as a means of building up the Church and the whole of humanity to the fulness of total union of all in Christ.

The law of life of the Mystical Body of Christ demands, however, that this Body should be the fullness, i.e. the fulfilment and completion, the revelation of Christ Himself in and through the whole of humanity, in which is to be effected through all peoples and through all times that overflowing wealth of grace which lay hidden in Jesus Christ, the head of redeemed humanity. This spirit of grace works in all the redeemed to the building up of the Body of Christ until it reaches the full maturity of the manhood of Christ (Ep. 4:13), until it is fully built up in love (Ep. 4:16). But the things in which the Church is the fulfilment and completion of Christ include also His sufferings. For according to the Apostle's teaching, the sufferings of Christ too still lack something which it has been left to the Body of Christ, the Church, to fill up (Col. 1:24). And rightly so, for if according to the teaching of the Apostle all the members suffer with it if one member suffers anything (1 Co. 12:26), then how should the members be without suffering, when the head suffers or has suffered? Thus, just as Christ

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the Head could enter into His glory only through suffering (Lk. 24:26), so His members too continue these sufferings unto glory, and He suffers in them until the end of time; His Cross is still mysteriously present where a member of Christ is crucified. Since they are, however, sufferings of the members of one body, these sufferings are not merely a blessing and grace for the individual person who suffers--since they are the effect of his personal measure of grace--but they also benefit and bless the whole Mystical Body of Christ, since they are also the effect of the law of life governing the whole Body. Hence it is true what the Apostle says: I rejoice now in the sufferings I bear for your sake, and what is lacking of the sufferings of Christ I fill up in my flesh for His Body, which is the Church (Col. 1:24). Thus it becomes possible to have a Communion of Saints in suffering for one another, so that one can say to the other: thus death is at work in us, but life in you (2 Co. 4:12). By these sufferings we help to make the Body of Christ, the whole redeemed humanity, ever more like its Head Who is Christ the Crucified.²⁵³

The theological framework provided by Rahner gives perspective to certain texts of Vatican II which stated clearly: "Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and under oppression, so the Church is called to follow the same path in communicating to men the fruits of salvation."²⁵⁴ Without treating each text separately, it may be noted that the Vatican Council applies the concept of suffering as redemptive (for the unity of the world) to the Church as a whole, to bishops, priests, religious and laity.²⁵⁵

²⁵³ Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 168-169.

²⁵⁴ The Church, 8, 23.

²⁵⁵ Some key texts are to be found in Missions, 5, 590, and Church, 8, 23; 9, 26; and The Church, 41, 70.

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Those who are oppressed by poverty, infirmity, sickness, or various other hardships, as well as those who suffer persecution for justice' sake-- may they all know that in a special way they are united with the suffering Christ for the salvation of the world. The Church, 41, 70.

A point of considerable importance in this regard is that the Church is shown to be missionary--for the salvation of the world--by its very nature. And this word 'missionary' does not just imply the relationship of the Church to those countries which are commonly called 'The Missions'. Speaking of the nature of the Church, the Vatican Council says:

So it is that this Messianic people [...] is nonetheless a lasting and sure seed of unity, hope, and salvation for the whole human race. Established by Christ as a fellowship of life, charity and truth, it is also used by Him as an instrument for the redemption of all, and is sent forth into the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth.²⁵⁶

If this text is compared with the following text, two things are clear: firstly, the similarity between the Church's mission of unity, in general, and its mission to the 'Missions'; and secondly, the place of suffering in creating the unity of all things in Christ.

This mission is a continuing one. In the course of history it unfolds the mission of Christ Himself, Who was sent to preach the gospel to the poor. Hence, prompted by the Holy Spirit, the

²⁵⁶ The Church, 9, 26.

Church must walk the same road which Christ walked: a road of poverty and obedience, of service and self-sacrifice to the death, from which death He came forth victor by His resurrection. For thus did all the apostles walk in hope. On behalf of Christ's Body, which is the Church, they supplied what was wanting of the sufferings of Christ by their own many trials and sufferings (cf. Col. 1.24).²⁵⁷

Thus it is seen that, according to Vatican II, suffering Christians fill up what is wanting in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of the re-unification of all things in Christ.

There are three further points to be considered: the importance of this concept for ecumenism; its relevance to the Christian struggle to lead a virtuous life; and finally the special consecration of suffering in the sacrament of the anointing of the sick.

It is evident that not only has the Church not yet fulfilled its work of bringing to completion (or making actual) the unifying of all humanity and the cosmos in Christ, but also that the Church itself is split into many factions. The counter-witness given by this has been appraised by the Council, as also the remedy.

For although the Catholic Church has been endowed with all divinely revealed truth and with all means of grace, her members fail to live by them with all the fervor they should. As a result [...] the growth of God's kingdom is retarded. Every Catholic must therefore aim at Christian perfection [...] and, each according to his station, play his rôle

²⁵⁷ Missions, 5, 590.

so that the Church, which bears in her own body the humility and dying of Jesus [...] may daily be more purified and renewed, against the day when Christ will present her to Himself in all her glory, without spot or wrinkle [...].²⁵⁸

This passage brings out that the Church which bears in her own body the humility and dying of Jesus must actively seek self-purification in order to prevent the retardation of the growth of the kingdom of God.

It also highlights that this work of purification is one of personal searching for Christian perfection. For, although God's call in Christ is to the whole Church and all humanity, the call must still be received by the individual. The Council's emphasis is on the realization of the Gospel in daily living; through blameless conduct each Christian must play his part in spreading the Kingdom, and giving witness to the pleroma of Christ who is all in all. It is, of course, through the power of Christ that the Christian is able to conquer the reign of sin in himself, for by the death of Christ sin was conquered once and for all. But this process is not automatic; and the Council states as a fact that the members of the Church fail to live the grace they have received with all the fervor they should.²⁵⁹ "Participation in the prophetic

²⁵⁸ Vatican II, "Decree on Ecumenism", article 4, p. 348-349, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Ecumenism.)

²⁵⁹ Ecumenism, 4, 348.

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mission of Jesus Christ presumes and demands a continued conversion, so that evangelical perfection may appear in all its purity."²⁶⁰

Lastly, there is the question of the sacramental consecration of suffering for the salvation of the world, not only in baptism or in the Eucharist, but in a special sacrament, the anointing of the sick.

By the sacred anointing of the sick and the prayer of her priests, the whole Church commends those who are ill to the suffering and glorified Lord, asking that He may lighten their sufferings and save them [...]. She exhorts them moreover, to contribute to the welfare of the whole People of God by associating themselves freely with the passion and death of Christ (cf. Rom. 8:17; Col. 1:24; 2 Tim. 2:11-12; 1 Pet. 4:13).²⁶¹

The Council here appeals directly to those who are sick to contribute to the welfare of the whole People of God by associating themselves freely with the passion and death of Christ. The Council indicates its awareness of its universal mission as sacrament of salvation by saying "the whole People of God," rather than just 'the People of God', and also by its reference to Col. 1.24, the text analysed above. Even, or especially, in suffering do Christians build up the whole People of God, provided that they freely associate themselves with the passion and death of Christ. This word 'freely' indicates, once again, the appeal of the

²⁶⁰ De Smedt, op. cit., p. 419.

²⁶¹ The Church, 11, 28.

Council to a mature faith and hope, founded on a free and conscious choice.

All aspects of Christian suffering, to the extent that they are related to the Spirit-sending suffering of Christ, become the means by which the Christian builds up the Body of Christ as a sacrament of union with God, and of the unity of all mankind in Christ. The Christian people, aware of their existence before God as those who are saved precisely as the People of God, and aware that they are the pleroma of Christ, come together in the Eucharist in which the redemption of the world is carried on, and there pledge their willingness to cooperate with Christ in the making actual of what Christ is and has won; thus they consecrate their sufferings freely, in faith and a common hope. This is the meaning of the fourth principle taken from the Vatican Council's statements about the Christian valuation and significance of suffering: Christ continues to carry on his redemptive work in the Church, especially through the Eucharist, in which the work of redemption is carried on. Christians, by filling up what is wanting in the sufferings of Christ, build up the Church, the sacrament of salvation, for the unity of all mankind.

In conclusion, this first chapter has presented four principles which group together and summarize what the

Council Fathers of Vatican II said about the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. These four principles, with their explanation, are the theological statement about the Christian valuation and significance of suffering in the light of which may be answered the question posed by this study: Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican Council II conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's five basic psychic needs as posited by Erich Fromm?

The following chapter presents these psychic needs as a basis for answering this question.

CHAPTER II

ERICH FROMM'S ANALYSIS OF MAN'S FIVE BASIC PSYCHIC NEEDS

This chapter presents Erich Fromm's analysis of man's five basic psychic needs: relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, sense of identity, and the need for a frame of orientation and devotion. In each of these five sections, there is given a rather detailed presentation of the positive and negative (humanizing and dehumanizing) ways in which man can seek to fulfill these needs: relatedness vs. narcissism, creativeness vs. destructiveness, brotherliness vs. incest, individuality vs. herd conformity, reason vs. irrationality. These five needs, with their positive and negative possibilities for fulfillment, serve in chapter three as a basis for a psychological study of the material presented in the first chapter, i.e. Vatican II's understanding of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering.

The material in this chapter is drawn from many of Fromm's books, although the basic organization of the material is patterned on Fromm's presentation in The Sane Society.¹ A serious attempt has been made to remain

¹ Erich Fromm, The Sane Society, New York, Fawcett, 1955, x-320 p.

faithful to the spirit and context of each of the books cited, but the reader is cautioned to take into consideration the development of Fromm's thought over the thirty-eight years during which the books cited were written.

1. The Human Situation.

This first section provides the setting for the analysis of man's five basic psychic needs by sketching the framework in which Fromm presents them, especially in The Sane Society.² Three points are considered: firstly, the nature and genesis of human suffering; secondly, the role of suffering; and thirdly, the impact and role of society in the solution of man's psychic needs. It shows that Fromm considers the human situation as one of alienation and aloneness; that this aloneness is a force driving man to overcome or escape his suffering; and that the shape of the society in which man lives will determine, to some extent, the way in which he recognizes and tries to overcome his suffering.

A. The Nature and Genesis of Human Suffering

As John H. Schaar has pointed out in Escape from Freedom: the Perspectives of Erich Fromm,³ Fromm first

² Ibid., p. 29-66.

³ J.H. Schaar, Escape from Freedom: the Perspectives of Erich Fromm, New York, Harper, 1961, 348 p.

arrived at a clear, detailed and orderly elucidation of man's five basic psychic needs in The Sane Society. Fromm was searching for certain precise norms to evaluate whether or not a society is sane; thus he needed objective criteria against which to measure the sanity of a society. Fromm, examining man's nature, concluded that man had five basic psychic needs, which arise from and are rooted in the conditions of his existence. As Schaar says:

The appearance of the list in this volume is probable due to the fact that Fromm was undertaking a full criticism of the social order. For that task, he needed a standard by which to judge the goodness of the society, and the degree to which the society fulfilled the needs became the standard. In any case, what matters is that Fromm has consistently moved away from social determinism toward the position that there is a basic human nature with basic needs, stemming from the existential condition.⁴

From himself states quite clearly that man's needs can be ascertained by the study of man.

This book [...] is based on the idea that a sane society is that which corresponds to the needs of man--not necessarily to what he feels to be his needs, because even the most pathological aims can be felt subjectively as that which the person wants most; but to what his needs are objectively, as they can be ascertain by the study of man, and what are the needs which stem from this nature.⁵

In Chapter III of The Sane Society, a chapter entitled "The Human Situation--the key to humanistic psychoanalysis", Fromm analyses the situation of man by comparing man to the animal kingdom, especially to the

⁴ Ibid., p. 46.

⁵ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 28.

higher primates. He notes that animal function is determined by instinct, and by specific action patterns "which are in turn determined by inherited neurological structures."⁶ Even though the animal might appear to show a certain amount of intelligence--an ability, for instance, to fulfill a certain task, to achieve certain limited goals--the animal neither chooses his goals nor chooses whether or not he will strive for these goals. His biological life is patterned in such a way that he instinctively goes towards what is good for him. And in this sense Fromm says that "the animal 'is lived' through biological laws of nature; it is part of nature and never transcends it."⁷

Man, on the other hand, transcends nature, because he is the one animal who has reflective awareness of who he is, of what he is doing, and of the goals he will choose. Fromm speaks of this self-awareness as making man a freak of nature. For man grows into an awareness of how radically homeless he is in the world: in nature but above nature by reason of his self-awareness.

Self-awareness, reason and imagination disrupt the "harmony" which characterizes animal existence. Their emergence has made man into an anomaly, into the freak of the universe. He is part of nature,

6 Ibid., p. 29.

7 Ibid.

subject to her physical laws and unable to change them, yet he transcends the rest of nature. He is set apart while being a part; he is homeless, yet chained to the home he shares with all creatures. Cast into this world at an accidental place and time, he is forced out of it, again accidentally. Being aware of himself, he realizes his powerlessness and the limitations of his existence. He visualizes his own end: death. Never is he free from the dichotomy of his existence: he cannot rid himself of his mind, even if he should want to; he cannot rid himself of his body as long as he is alive-- and his body makes him want to be alive.⁸

Again in distinction to the animal, man has needs which go beyond his physiological needs of hunger, thirst and sex. Man is also an animal, and he too must fulfill these needs; and yet, even when these needs are fulfilled, man finds that they are not even sufficient to make him sane.

The archemedic point of the specific human dynamism lies in the uniqueness of the human situation; the understanding of man's psyche must be based on the analysis of man's needs stemming from the conditions of his existence.⁹

Unlike the animal, man's life cannot "be lived" by repeating the pattern of the species. He himself must live. Man is the only animal who finds his existence a problem which has to be resolved. This, for Fromm, is the human condition-- a condition in which man finds that he has lost his original home, nature, and that he can never return to it without becoming (in the pejorative sense) an animal again. "There

8 Ibid., p. 30.

9 Ibid., p. 32.

is only one way he can take : to emerge fully from his natural home, to find a new home--one which he creates, by making the world a human one and by becoming truly human himself."¹⁰

For Fromm, man's birth is basically a negative event. Man is cut off from the foetal oneness which he had with his mother, and is cast into the world. Man must transcend the ties which he had with his mother; he must go beyond these to establish new ties with family and soil; and when he has grown out of these he must take the further step of going from the state of a child to that of a fully born adult: to the state of a man who has established for himself a fully human rapport with himself, with nature, and with his fellow men, based not on an animal oneness with nature but on a relationship of creative or productive love which is far more than an animal attachment to another.

While we find love, or rather the equivalent of love, in animals, their attachments are mainly a part of their instinctual equipment; only remnants of this instinctual equipment can be seen operating in man. What is essential in the existence of man is the fact that he has emerged from the animal kingdom, from instinctive adaptation, that he has transcended nature--although he never leaves it; he is part of it--and yet once torn away from nature, he cannot return to it.¹¹

¹⁰ Ibid., p. 31.

¹¹ Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving, New York, Bantam, 1956, p. 6.

Fromm describes how critical and how traumatic is the situation of aloneness in which man finds himself, and to what extent this threatens man and is "the source of all anxiety."¹³

Man is torn away from the primary union with nature, which characterizes animal existence. Having at the same time reason and imagination, he is aware of his aloneness and separateness; of his powerlessness and ignorance; of the accidentalness of his birth and of his death. He could not face this state of being for a second if he could not find new ties with his fellow men which replace the old ones, regulated by instinct. Even if all his physiological needs were satisfied, he would experience his state of aloneness and individuation as a prison from which he had to break out in order to retain his sanity.¹⁴

Therefore, according to Fromm, "The deepest need of man [...] is the need to overcome his separateness, to leave the prison of his aloneness."¹⁵

Fromm further points out that there is not an infinity of ways in which man can try to overcome his psychic aloneness. He says that although many ways have been tried, basically these ways can be reduced to five, corresponding to what Fromm calls man's five basic psychic needs: relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, sense of identity, and the need for a frame of orientation and devotion.

13 Ibid., p. 7.

14 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 35.

15 -----, The Art of Loving, p. 8.

In summary, then, it may be said that Fromm views man's five basic psychic needs as arising from the situation in which he finds himself, that of being part of nature yet being cut off from nature--a situation in which man discovers by self-awareness that he cannot satisfy himself simply by taking care of the physiological needs he has in common with animals. Man needs something more. Feeling himself cut off from nature, he must try to build new bonds which are not a regression into an inhuman way of life, but bonds which lead man to a relationship of productive love with himself, with his fellow man and with nature. An analysis of the nature of man in his existential situation has led Fromm to posit five basic psychic needs. These needs provide the framework for Fromm's analysis of man's basic suffering, the suffering of being alone.

B. The Role and Value of Suffering

Before turning to the analysis of these five basic needs, there are two points which must be considered: firstly, the role or value of suffering; and secondly, the way in which society conditions the responses man will give to the fulfillment of his basic psychic needs. Under the first point, three things are considered: firstly, the rather minimal importance which physical suffering is accorded in the writings of Fromm; secondly, suffering as a

motivational force driving man to overcome his own suffering and that of others; and thirdly, the ability of man to run away from, rather than face up to, his suffering.

Fromm does not evince much concern for physical suffering. When Fromm uses the expression "human suffering" it normally refers to that which concerns the "welfare of man's soul".¹⁶ It would appear understandable that the problem of physical suffering is not of critical importance for Fromm: he is a psychoanalyst, and treats suffering from a psychological rather than a physical point of view. His basic concern is the suffering of man's mind, especially the suffering which results from man's alienation and loneliness. The discussion that follows, then, of Fromm's perspective on the role or value of suffering, should be understood as referring primarily--although not exclusively--to psychological suffering.

The role or value of suffering is to awaken man to his plight and to provide him with the incentive to free himself from this suffering. Before human suffering can be alleviated it must be recognized as such: as suffering, first of all; and then as suffering which can be alleviated. It is here that Fromm sees the value or the role of suffering, for unless man can suffer and recognize that he

¹⁶ Erich Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, New York, Bantam, 1950, p. 103.

suffers, there is no possibility of his liberation from this suffering.¹⁷ Fromm brings out this idea in several of his works. In You Shall Be As Gods¹⁸ Fromm discusses the story of the liberation of the Israelites from the bondage of Egypt.

If we try to sum up the analysis of the essential features of this story, several things become clear. The possibility of liberation exists only because people suffer and, in biblical language, because God "understands" the suffering and hence tries to relieve it. Indeed, there is nothing more human than suffering, and there is nothing that unites men more than suffering. Only a minority of men throughout all of past history have had more than a glimpse of happiness during their lifetimes, but all have experienced suffering: the less sensitive only their own; those with greater sensitivity, that of many around them. But man's suffering does not mean that he knows where to go and what to do. It creates only the wish that the suffering may stop. And this wish is the first and the necessary impulse for liberation.¹⁹

In analysing this text, it becomes clear that the question of the recognition of suffering is of capital importance for Fromm: it is the basis of and prime necessity for an impulse towards liberation. "The beginning of liberation lies in man's capacity to suffer [...]. If man has lost the capacity to suffer he has also lost the capacity for change."²⁰ However, all suffering is not

17 Erich Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods: a radical interpretation of the Old Testament and its tradition, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966, p. 15.

18 Ibid., p. 87-115.

19 Ibid., p. 106-107.

20 Ibid., p. 92.

necessarily the beginning of liberation, because there is a phenomenon which has been repeated often in history-- that "there is a degree of suffering that deprives men even of their wish to end it."²¹ Suffering can be so deadening that man gives up even his desire to overcome it.

And yet sensitive men who recognize suffering in themselves and others are given two things: a sense of unity with each other in their sufferings, and a thrust or drive to overcome these sufferings. This, then, is the value or role of suffering: it is a thrust towards liberation, and a challenge to man to alleviate his own sufferings and those of others.

As has been indicated, there are certain types of suffering which are so strong that their effect is deadening; man is beaten down to such an extent that he is no longer capable of recognizing his suffering. But Fromm broaches a further point: that many people do not wish to face their suffering; rather they try to escape or run away from all suffering. This attitude is not, according to Fromm, a healthy one. The goal of human life is not to avoid all suffering. There are some types of suffering which are necessary for the achievement of a chosen goal; there are some risks that have to be taken. Such suffering will, of course, cause tension in the person's life. But

²¹ Ibid., p. 100.

the object of human existence is not merely security or lack of tension. "The psychic task which the person can and must set for himself is not to feel secure but to be able to tolerate insecurity, without panic and undue fear."²²

There is a type of person who is dissatisfied, bored and anxious, and yet who spends most of his energy in the attempt to compensate for or just cover up this boredom and dissatisfaction rather than trying to cure it.²³ For this man, suffering will be accentuated by a sense of guilt, because he will realize that he has wasted, or is wasting, his power for a productive life.

[Another source] of guilt feeling is man's own conscience; he senses his gifts or talents, his ability to love, to think, to laugh, to cry, to wonder and to create, he senses that his life is the one chance he is given, and that if he loses this chance he has lost everything. [...] He cannot help feeling guilty for the waste, for the lost chance.²⁴

Life cannot be lived without risk, without the possibility of tragedy, without suffering. Nothing in life is achieved without effort, daring to take risks, and often some suffering.²⁵

22 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 174.

23 Cf. ibid., p. 237.

24 Ibid., p. 182.

25 -----, Beyond the Chains of Illusion: My Encounter with Marx and Freud, New York, Simon and Schuster, Credo Perspectives, cf. p. 139.

In Man For Himself Fromm points out that men often erroneously consider that happiness is the logical opposite of pain or grief, and so the logical opposite of suffering.

Physical or mental suffering is part of human existence and to experience them is unavoidable. To spare oneself from grief at all cost can be achieved only at the price of total detachment, which excludes the ability to experience happiness. The opposite of happiness thus is not grief or pain but depression which results from inner sterility and unproductiveness.²⁶

In this regard Fromm offers an interpretation of one of Freud's principles. Freud had called attention to the fact that the lack of expenditure of sexual energy was a cause of suffering, and recognized that the blocking of sexual energy can be the cause of neurotic disturbances. Fromm interprets this principle in a slightly different light. He accepts it as a symbolic representation of the fact that "man's failure to use and spend what he has is the cause of sickness and unhappiness."²⁷ Man has certain capacities, and if these capacities or powers are blocked or completely thwarted man suffers. Man may have the misfortune to try to ignore his suffering by all sorts of rationalizations; man may try to live a life in which there is nothing but happiness or pleasure. But in this feverish attempt to

²⁶ Erich Fromm, Man For Himself: An Inquiry into the Psychology of Ethics, New York, Fawcett, 1947, p. 192.

²⁷ Ibid., p. 221.

avoid all suffering man increases his suffering, not only by feeling guilty about the fact of a wasted life, but by blocking his own power for a productive life--which is based to a certain extent on his willingness to risk tragedy and endure a certain measure of suffering for the sake of a goal to be attained.

Man has the power to love, and if he cannot make use of his power, if he is incapable of loving, he suffers from this misfortune even though he may try to ignore his suffering by all kinds of rationalizations or by using the culturally patterned avenues of escape from the pain caused by his failure.²⁸

Fromm stresses that the attempt to avoid all suffering is a symptom of serious illness in man. In fact he defines evil as "man's loss of himself in the tragic attempt to escape the burden of his humanity."²⁹

For Fromm the ultimate way of overcoming the suffering of alienation or aloneness is a productive love which does not necessarily exclude conflict.

One other frequent error must be mentioned here. The illusion, namely, that love means necessarily the absence of conflict. Just as it is customary to believe that pain and sadness should be avoided under all circumstances, they believe that love means the absence of any conflict.³⁰

28 Ibid., p. 221.

29 Erich Fromm, The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil, New York, Harper and Row, Religious Perspectives, Vol. 12, 1964, p. 148.

30 -----, The Art of Loving, p. 86.

Love is not the absence of any conflict. Nor is happiness the absence of any suffering. The role or value of suffering, according to Fromm, is to alert man to the need to overcome his suffering. Although Fromm concedes that there are situations which are so oppressive that the ability even to recognize the possibility of liberation from this suffering has been deadened, Fromm is more concerned with the fact that many people try to escape suffering by avoiding the reality that certain goals and ideals can be achieved only if one is willing to risk whatever inevitable suffering comes along.

C. The Impact and Role of Society in the Solution of Man's Psychic Needs

In order to facilitate his study of the impact of society on man, Fromm abstracts from the factors which differentiate people in a group, and concentrates on the common characteristics which all members of a group share. Fromm describes these common characteristics as the societal character: "a selection of traits, the essential nucleus of the character structure of most members of a group which has developed as the result of the basic experiences and mode of life common to that group."³¹ As, for Fromm, man's

³¹ Erich Fromm, Escape From Freedom, New York, Avon, 1941 (Forward II 1965), p. 304-305.

ability to face suffering is dependent on the way in which society has culturally prepared him to see himself and his goals, the following section deals with the role which society plays in conditioning the responses man gives to the fulfillment of his basic psychic needs--whether these responses be healthy or unhealthy, the forms they take, and whether the society itself can so deaden man that he will be incapable of seeing his suffering as something which he can overcome by productive love.

Although Fromm is concerned with the individual, he never separates the individual from the social context in which he lives.

The basic entity of the social process is the individual, his desires and fears, his passions and reason, his propensities for good and evil. To understand the dynamics of the social process we must understand the dynamics of the psychic processes operating within the individual, just as to understand the individual we must see him in the context of the culture which molds him.³²

In order to distinguish those societies which will help man grow from those which will retard his growth, Fromm gives simple definitions of healthy and unhealthy societies. His two definitions are given in full, in order to clarify the basis from which Fromm begins his analysis of society itself, and as a starting point for his study of possible responses which man will have, in these

32 Ibid., p. viii.

societies, to his five basic psychic needs.

A healthy society furthers man's capacity to love his fellow men, to work creatively, to develop his reason and objectivity, to have an experience of self which is based on the experience of his own productive powers. An unhealthy society is one which creates mutual hostility, distrust, which transforms man into an instrument of use and exploitation for others, which deprives him of a sense of self, except inasmuch as he submits to others or becomes an automaton. Society can have both functions; it can further man's healthy development, and it can hinder it [...].³³

In Chapter II of The Sane Society, a chapter entitled "Can a society be sick?--the pathology of normalcy," Fromm describes the relationship between an individual and an individual-within-society. His point of view is not an exclusively biological one--that man is completely determined by his biological make-up--nor is it entirely a sociological one--that man is exclusively determined by the society within which he lives. He would rather transcend this dichotomy and say "that the main passions and drives in man result from the total existence of man, that they are definite and ascertainable, some of them conducive to health and happiness, others to sickness and unhappiness. Any given social order does not create these fundamental strivings but it determines which of the limited number of potential passions are to become manifest or dominant."³⁴

³³ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 71.

³⁴ Ibid., p. 22.

A whole society may be so sick (and this point is of concern to Fromm) that the failure of an individual within a society--or even, perhaps, most of the individuals within a society--to attain the ideal of the productive life will go unnoticed. Men will not attain freedom, spontaneity or a real expression of themselves, but because their society is such that these things are not noticed these people will be considered normal. To a certain extent man will not even feel threatened by this, because he will, in judging himself by the standards of his society, find himself quite normal. For Fromm the norm of mental health is not conformity to the society in which an individual lives if that society is a sick society. Mental health is not conformity to a socially patterned defect. Mental health is characterized, rather, by the ability to love and create. And if the society is one which is not conducive to productive, creative love, then conformity to this society cannot be construed as a sign of mental health. 35

Fromm is not overly optimistic about the way in which western civilization fulfills man's need for a society in which he can live and love productively. In fact, Fromm says that even to ask the question whether or not western culture and the spirit resulting from it are conducive to

35 Cf. Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 180.

the development of love is to answer it in the negative.³⁶ Western man, caught up in his feelings of powerlessness, aware that in his work he is merely a cog in a machine, aware that his life has become empty and has lost its meaning³⁷ has become deadened even to his own suffering. Modern western man is so desensitized to the human reality of suffering that he even describes this human suffering in a language and vocabulary which should be reserved for commodities in the market-place. For example, a newspaper headlines a flood "Million Dollar Catastrophe," and thereby de-emphasizes the concrete aspects of the human suffering and tragedy involved.³⁸

Although Fromm points out in strong terms the way in which society so dulls man's sensitivity to his own pain that he is no longer capable of fulfilling his own psychic needs in a human way, Fromm is not entirely pessimistic. He does see, however, that to make a radical change in man's approach to reality the society itself must be changed. If society is not changed man will not even recognize how much or from what he is suffering. Fromm points out that if a man violates his moral and intellectual integrity he runs the risk of weakening or even of totally paralyzing his

36 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 70.

37 -----, Escape from Freedom, p. 302.

38 -----, The Sane Society, p. 107.

personality. This man is unhappy and he suffers, but if his way of living is approved by the culture in which he lives he may not recognize the root of his unhappiness.

"If his way of living is approved by his culture, the suffering may not be conscious or it may be felt as being related to things entirely separate from his real problem."³⁹

Radical changes, therefore, must be introduced into society. Fromm states clearly:

It follows that man will obtain the full capacity for objectivity and reason only when a society of man is established above all particular divisions of the human race, when loyalty to the human race and to its ideals is considered the prime loyalty that exists.⁴⁰

Just as one of the conditions for the cure of individual pathology is the change of the realistic life-situation in which these tendencies were developed and by which they were fostered and strengthened, so too the change of the realistic situation of human values and norms is necessary for the cure of social pathology.⁴¹ The society of which Fromm speaks is not one in which man is merely free from external constraints. For, as he points out, internal restraints (in the form of compulsions and fears) can undermine the real sense of the victory which freedom has

³⁹ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 72.

⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 58.

⁴¹ -----, The Sane Society, p. 241.

won against its traditional enemies. For example, modern man thinks that his acquisition of freedom of speech is a final victory. Fromm points out that freedom of speech is a real victory only if man has the internal freedom to think his own thoughts, to believe his own beliefs, to feel his own feelings, without these thoughts, beliefs and feelings being dictated to him from outside, however subtly.⁴²

A healthy man exhibits a genuine concern for the things that really matter. But "modern man exhibits an amazing lack of realism for all that matters. For the meaning of life and death, for happiness and suffering, for feeling and serious thought."⁴³ Fromm's view is that man has covered up the whole reality of human existence, and has replaced it with an artificial and false set of ideas which have very little to do with the genuinely basic realities of human existence, without even being aware of what he has done.⁴⁴ As a result man is alienated from himself, from his fellow men, and from nature. People try

⁴² Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 125-126.

⁴³ -----, The Sane Society, p. 153.

⁴⁴ -----, May Man Prevail?: An Inquiry into the Facts and Fictions of Foreign Policy, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday Anchor, 1961, p. 18. Fromm says that the lack of understanding of one's own society is rooted "in emotional factors which blunt or deform our instruments of thought to such an extent that they can become useless for the purpose of uncovering reality."

to remain as close to others as is possible, but in reality everybody remains utterly alone, "pervaded by the deep sense of insecurity, anxiety and guilt which always results when human separateness cannot be overcome."⁴⁵

Society should have a positively creative function. Only in a sane society can man protect himself from self-destruction.⁴⁶ But, as has been indicated, Fromm is not overly optimistic about the shape of current society. It is against this background that Fromm discusses the possible ways, humanizing and dehumanizing, in which man can fulfill his five basic psychic needs, and so overcome his alienation. The solution of the suffering of man's separateness is of fundamental concern for Fromm; man will overcome his separateness when he fills his basic psychic needs in a human way.

For Fromm the basic question of life is: "How can we overcome the suffering, the imprisonment, the shame which the experience of separateness creates: how can we find union within ourselves, with our fellow man, with nature?"⁴⁷

What has been presented in this section is important for the discussion of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, for Christians live within a society and

⁴⁵ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 72.

⁴⁶ -----, "The Present Human Condition", in The Dogma of Christ and Other Essays on Religion, Psychology, and Culture, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday Anchor, 1955, p. 105.

⁴⁷ Schaar, Escape from Authority, p. 53.

are shaped by their society. Their perception of and reaction to their own suffering do not function in isolation from this society. The influence of society on man is discussed in relationship to the four principles in the third chapter.

2. Relatedness vs. Narcissism.

Even after man has satisfied his physiological needs, he has still a hunger which is not satisfied, for man's specifically human hunger is much deeper than that which can be satisfied by food, drink, or sex: it is rooted in his aloneness. In his self-awareness man realizes that he has been torn away from the primary ties with nature, a union which characterizes animal existence. He is aware of his aloneness and his separateness, or his powerlessness and his ignorance. "He could not face this state of being for a second if he could not find new ties with his fellow man which replace the old ones, regulated by instincts."⁴⁸

In this section two main points are considered: the negative ways and the positive way in which man can attempt to achieve a union which overcomes his sense of aloneness: negatively, by a union which destroys man's

⁴⁸ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 35.

freedom and the integrity of his individual self; and positively by a genuine union with the world which enhances his power for love and productive work. Fromm refers to the first or negative way of achieving interpersonal fusion (a desire which is extremely powerful in man) as a symbiotic union. This type of union has its biological pattern in the relationship between mother and foetus,⁴⁹ and is characterized by fusion without integrity. In contrast to symbiotic union, there is another form of union: mature love under the condition of preserving one's integrity, one's individuality. This type of union permits man to be himself, to overcome his sense of aloneness without destroying his individuality. This section, then, considers these two types of union: symbiotic union--fusion without integrity; and mature, productive love--oneness with integrity.

A. Negative Ways of Union

In the first section three points are considered: firstly, symbiotic union or what Fromm calls a relationship of moral masochism; secondly, alienation and the "magic helper"; and thirdly, the authoritarian character: authoritarian vs. humanistic conscience.

⁴⁹ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 15; cf. The Heart of Man, p. 104-105.

(a) Symbiotic Union - Moral Masochism.- As was mentioned, Fromm has taken the term 'symbiotic union' from the biological relationship which exists between the pregnant mother and the foetus. In this relationship the mother and foetus are two, and yet they are at the same time one; they live together and need each other; the mother feeds and protects the foetus; and the mother's own life is enhanced by her pregnancy. This is the biological pattern which Fromm has used to analyse a psychic condition which has similar characteristics. Psychic symbiotic union is a union in which the two bodies are physically independent, but between whom the same type of attachment exists psychologically as exists physically between mother and foetus.⁵⁰ Symbiotic union in the psychological and pejorative sense in which Fromm uses it means "the union of one individual self with another self (or any other power outside of the own self) in such a way as to make each lose the integrity of its own self and to make them completely dependent on each other."⁵¹

There must be some strong psychological reason for a person to wish to submit himself to this type of union. Fromm analyses the reason for it by showing that it represents an inability on the part of certain people to bear

50 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 15-16.

51 -----, Escape from Freedom, p. 180.

their own aloneness. This inability drives these people to enter into a symbiotic union with someone else.⁵² In order to illumine the phenomenon of symbiotic union Fromm draws a parallel between it and masochism. Moral masochism, or masochism as a character trait, is an indulgence in feelings of dependence and limitedness, in an attempt to rid oneself of the unbearable feeling of powerlessness. Fromm is not concerned with masochism as a sexual perversion, but as a character trait which can exist in people who are not necessarily neurotic. Physical masochism is a perversion in which the person wants to consciously suffer in some way or another, and enjoys this suffering. "In the masochistic perversion, the person feels sexual excitement when experiencing pain inflicted on him by another person."⁵³ Moral masochism is an indulgence in feelings of dependence and limitedness.

I have spoken of the masochistic perversion because it proves beyond doubt that suffering can be something sought for. However, in the masochistic perversion as little as in moral masochism suffering is not the real aim; in both cases it is the means to an aim: forgetting one's self. The difference between the perversion and masochistic character traits lies essentially in the following: In the perversion the trend to get rid of one's self is expressed through the medium of the body and linked up with sexual feelings. While in moral masochism,

52 Ibid., p. 180.

53 Ibid., p. 169.

the masochistic trends get hold of the whole person and tend to destroy all the aims which the ego consciously tries to achieve [...].⁵⁴

There are, of course, genuine feelings of limitedness and dependence. There is a realistic and sober understanding of the limitations of human powers. However, "to worship [this limitation] is masochistic and self-destructive."⁵⁵

The character trait of moral masochism cannot be understood without an analysis of why a person wishes to submit to another, for the person who indulges in moral masochism must imagine that he has something to gain by it. He gives up his individuality in order to become part of something greater, and thus to overcome his feelings of powerlessness.

The annihilation of the individual self and the attempt to overcome thereby the unbearable feeling of powerlessness are only one side of the masochistic strivings. The other side is the attempt to become a part of a bigger and more powerful whole outside of oneself, to submerge and participate in it. This power can be a person, an institution, God, the nation, conscience, or a psychic compulsion [...]. One surrenders one's own self and renounces all strength and pride connected with it [...] but one gains a new security and a new pride in the participation in the power in which one submerges.⁵⁶

The indication is that the person who has this masochistic character trait is driven by an unbearable feeling of

⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 176-177.

⁵⁵ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 52.

⁵⁶ -----, Escape from Freedom, p. 177.

aloneness and insignificance, and attempts to overcome this by losing his own self in something which is greater than himself. It must be remembered that Fromm is discussing "normal" people in this analysis of moral masochism. He points out that in certain cultures this character trait can be quite typical. It may be acceptable in a particular society, depending on a person's social situation and "what patterns of feeling and behavior are present in [his] culture."⁵⁷ He notes, for example, that in his estimation, for a great part of the lower middle class in Germany and other middle European countries the sado-masochistic character is typical.⁵⁸

A problem arises in this connection, therefore, about the recognition of this character trait, for Fromm concedes that not only is its recognition difficult--but that it can even be praised as an expression of great love.

Masochistic phenomena, especially, are looked on as expressions of love. An attitude of complete self-denial for the sake of another person and the surrender of one's own rights and claims to another person have been praised as examples of "great love." It seems that there is no better proof for "love" than sacrifice and the readiness to give oneself up for the sake of the beloved person. Actually, in these cases, "love" is essentially a masochistic yearning and rooted in the symbiotic need of the person involved. [...] [If love] is based on

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. 185.

⁵⁸ Ibid. It should be noted that this book was written in 1941 in order to explain, psychologically and sociologically, how the phenomenon of totalitarianism is possible. Certain elements may be regarded as influenced by then current Nazism.

subordination and loss of integrity of one partner, it is masochistic dependence, regardless of how the relationship is rationalized.⁵⁹

A point of particular note arises in this regard: the question of sacrifice, or of willingly and freely embraced suffering. Fromm says that the masochistic perversion "proves beyond doubt that suffering can be something sought for."⁶⁰ It may be asked, then, what is the meaning of sacrifice, and what are the conditions under which it is a healthy and normal phenomenon. Giving, or sacrificing oneself, requires a considerable degree of maturity if it is not to be simply an attempt to lose oneself, to enter into a symbiotic relationship with another person. Sacrifice may mean "the utmost subordination of the individual self to something higher, not assertion of one's mental and moral self."⁶¹

The most widespread misunderstanding is that which assumes that giving is "giving up" something, being deprived of, sacrificing. The person whose character orientation has not developed beyond the stage of the receptive, exploitative or hoarding orientation, experiences the act of giving in this way [...]. Some people make a virtue out of giving in the sense of a sacrifice. They feel that just because it is painful to give, one should give; the virtue of giving to them lies in the very act of acceptance of the sacrifice. For them, the norm that it is better to give than to receive means that it is better to suffer deprivation than to experience joy.⁶²

59 Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 182-183.

60 Ibid., p. 176.

61 Ibid., p. 306.

62 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 18-19.

Although Fromm's perspective in the passage just cited is slightly different than the perspective of the passages previously quoted, the analysis of the widespread misunderstanding surrounding the nature of giving or sacrificing has a certain positive parallel in what he has said about masochism parading as love. Precisely what Fromm understands as healthy giving will become clearer in the second part of this section. For the moment it may be noted that "giving is the highest expression of potency. In the very act of giving, I experience my strength, my wealth, my power."⁶³ This positive description contrasts sharply with the negative concept of the annihilation of the individual self implied in moral masochism or psychic symbiotic union.

Sacrifice, however, even the sacrifice of one's life, is not necessarily a manifestation of an unhealthy mental attitude. Fromm maintains that man can be "drawn to the experience of suffering or submission. There is no doubt that suffering, submission, or suicide [...] can be subjectively experienced as gratifying and attractive."⁶⁴ Yet sacrifice may be the ultimate assertion of the integrity of the spiritual self.

It is one of the tragic facts of life that the demands of our physical self and the aims of our mental self can conflict; that actually we may have

63 Ibid., p. 19.

64 Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 293.

to sacrifice our physical self in order to assert the integrity of our spiritual self. [...] True sacrifice presupposes an uncompromising wish for spiritual integrity [...]. Masochistic sacrifice sees the fulfillment of life in its very negation, in the annihilation of the self.⁶⁵

(b) Alienation and the Magic Helper.- In this discussion, Fromm has been speaking of more-or-less normal people, people whose moral masochism fits well enough into the social patterns in which they live that they are not considered neurotic. He notes that the term moral masochism denotes a common way of trying to escape into a symbiotic relationship, but may also indicate an even milder form of dependency which is so general in contemporary culture "that only in exceptional cases does it seem to be lacking."⁶⁶

I am referring to the kind of persons whose whole life is in a subtle way related to some power outside themselves. There is nothing they do, feel, or think which is not somehow related to this power. They expect protection from "him," wish to be taken care of by "him," make "him" also responsible for whatever may be the outcome of their actions. Often the fact of his dependence is something the person is not aware of at all.⁶⁷

The essential quality of the "thing" on whom the person is dependent is that it represents a certain function: namely to "protect, help, and develop the individual, to be with

65 Ibid., p. 294-295.

66 Ibid., p. 196.

67 Ibid., p. 196-197.

him and never leave him alone."⁶⁸ Fromm refers to that which exercises this function as the magic helper. He points out that the magic helper may often be personified: it may be thought of as God, or as some real person such as a parent, husband, wife, or superior.

In order to understand the concept of the magic helper, two allied concepts must be mentioned. The first is that of alienation; the second, the existence in contemporary society of the "oral-receptive character." By alienation, Fromm means that man does not experience himself as the active bearer of his own powers and richness, but rather experiences himself as an impoverished thing, dependent on powers outside himself--powers on to whom he has projected his living substance.⁶⁹ The power outside the person is not real (although the person to whom the powers are attributed may be a real person) but is created by the projection of the person himself. This alienation appears in both religious and non-religious forms. In the religious form, the authoritarian God becomes "the sole possessor of what was originally man's; of his reason and his love."⁷⁰ In the non-religious sphere, man projects his powers onto something other than that which he calls

68 Ibid., p. 197.

69 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 114.

70 -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 48.

God: a leader, a parent, a superior. When real persons assume the role of magic helper (the one to whom the alienated powers are attributed) they are endowed with magic qualities.⁷¹ It may also be noted that there is a close relation between the concept of alienation and the concept of the masochistic character, because, as Fromm points out, "this mechanism of projection is the very same which can be observed in interpersonal relationships of a masochistic, submissive character, where one person is awed by another and attributes his own powers and aspirations to the other person."⁷²

The second concept which illumines what Fromm means by the magic helper is his analysis of the oral-receptive character. A person of this type of orientation feels that the source of all good is outside himself, and "he believes that the only way to get what he wants [...] is to receive it from the outside source."⁷³ In a specifically religious sphere, this type of person has a concept of God in which he expects everything from God and nothing from his own activity. In a non-religious sphere, this type of character forms a relationship to persons or institutions which have the same characteristics. Such people are always in search

71 Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 197.

72 -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 49.

73 -----, Beyond the Chains of Illusion, p. 75.

of a magic helper, of someone to provide for them what they will not try to achieve by their own activity. The person who is of an oral-receptive character does not rely on his own actions but looks to outside sources for help. And when the magic helper does not cure a person's problems, this person falls "into the mistaken posture of accusing others, defending himself, and/or praying to God, when the only thing he should blame is his own lack of courage to face the issue, and his lack of reason in understanding it."⁷⁴

A point of interest in this regard is the potential link between the magic helper and an unhealthy concept of sacrifice. In some more extreme cases, a person's whole life can consist in an attempt to manipulate the magic helper in order to get what he wants. "People differ in the means that they use; for some obedience, for some goodness, for others suffering is the main means of manipulation."⁷⁵

To sum up: to this point, two negative ways in which a person can attempt to escape from his aloneness have been indicated: firstly, by entering into some kind of symbiotic union with another (a phenomenon which Fromm

⁷⁴ Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 142.

⁷⁵ -----, Escape from Freedom, p. 199.

links to moral masochism); secondly (a milder but far more widespread phenomenon), by a form of alienation in which a person projects his own powers on to something outside himself, and then expects all help and good to come from this magic helper.

(c) The Authoritarian Character: Humanistic vs. Authoritarian Conscience.- In his discussion of moral masochism in 'normal' people, Fromm uses the expression the "authoritarian character." He says that this phrase (the authoritarian character) is particularly apt because the morally masochistic person is especially marked by his relationship to authority. It would be profitable at this point to clarify precisely what Fromm understands by the term 'authority.' Fundamentally, he distinguishes two types of authority (although, of course, these two types can be blended in varying degrees): inhibiting and rational authority.

Authority refers to an interpersonal relation in which one person looks upon another as somebody superior to him. But there is a fundamental difference between the kind of superior-inferior relationship which can be called rational authority and one which may be described as inhibiting authority.⁷⁶

Rational or humanistic authority has its source in competence. "The person whose authority is respected functions competently in the task with which he is entrusted by those

76 Ibid., p. 186.

who conferred it upon him."⁷⁷ In The Sane Society⁷⁸ and again in Escape From Freedom⁷⁹ Fromm gives as an example of humanistic authority the relationship between teacher and pupil. Authority in this relationship is characterized by a tendency to dissolve itself: the more the student learns the more narrow is the gap between the teacher and the pupil. Further, there is a community of interest between teacher and pupil: the teacher wants the pupil to learn; he is satisfied if he succeeds in furthering the pupil's interests. "The interests of the teacher and pupil lie in the same direction."⁸⁰

In contrast, irrational authority always has its source in a power over people.

This power can be physical or mental, it can be realistic or only relative in terms of the anxiety and helplessness of the person submitting to this authority.⁸¹

An example of this type of authority is the relationship between slave owner and slave. Like the relationship of teacher to pupil, it is based on the superiority of one

77 Fromm, Man For Himself, p. 19.

78 -----, The Sane Society, p. 90-91.

79 -----, Escape From Freedom, p. 186-187.

80 Ibid.

81 Fromm, Man For Himself, p. 19.

over the other. The slave owner, however, "wants to exploit the slave as much as possible; the more he gets out of him the more he is satisfied."⁸² The interests of the slave and the interests of the slave owner are definitely antagonistic, and what "is of advantage to one is detrimental to the other."⁸³ The relationship of this authority is not self-dissolving; it depends, rather, on the continued power of one over the other.

Allied to the distinction between rational and humanistic authority is the distinction between authoritarian and humanistic conscience.

[Humanistic conscience is not] the internalized voice of an authority whom we are eager to please and afraid of displeasing; it is the voice of our total personality expressing the demands of life and growth. "Good" for the humanistic conscience is all that furthers life; "evil" is all that arrests and strangles it. The humanistic conscience is the voice of ourself which summons us back to ourself, to become what we potentially are. The person whose conscience is essentially autonomous does the right things not by forcing himself to obey the voice of the internalized authority, but because he enjoys doing what is right, even though often he will need some practice in following his principles before he can fully enjoy his action.

He does not do his "duty" (from *debere* = to owe) by obeying an authority, but he is "responsible" because he "responds" (from *respondere* = to answer) to the world of which he is a part as an alive, inwardly active human being.⁸⁴

82 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 91.

83 -----, Escape from Freedom, p. 187.

84 -----, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 55-56.

Rational authority represents "the aims of growth and expansion of the individual. It is, therefore, in principle never in conflict with the individual and his real, and not his pathological, aims."⁸⁵

Authoritarian conscience, on the other hand, is more or less what Freud meant by superego.

Authoritarian conscience, or superego, is the internalized power of the father, originally; later it is the internalized authority of society. [...] This concept of the internalized authority of father and of society is valid for what many people call their conscience. Freud's explanation of the psychological mechanism, I think, is most ingenious and very true.⁸⁶

Irrational authority is allied to the reverse side of the coin of masochism, i.e. sadism. Fromm points out that because sadistic tendencies are usually less conscious, and more highly rationalized, than the socially less harmful masochistic trends, they are often covered up by "reaction formations of over-goodness or over concern for others."⁸⁷ Fromm gives a few examples of common cover-ups for the rationalization of this sadistic element in irrational authority. "I rule over you because I know what is best for you"; "I am so wonderful and unique that I have a

85 Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 296.

86 -----, "Medicine and the Ethical Problem of Modern Man", in The Dogma of Christ, p. 176-177.

87 -----, Escape from Freedom, p. 166.

right to expect that other people become dependent on me"; or, "I have done so much for you, and now I am entitled to take from you what I want."⁸⁸

This rather lengthy exploration into the nature of authority and conscience has been made in order to clarify certain traits of the authoritarian character. As was noted above, in the discussion of moral masochism in "normal" people, Fromm said that the authoritarian character was especially marked by his relationship to authority: He admires authority and tends to submit to it.⁸⁹ Fromm describes certain traits which he finds in the authoritarian character (that is, in one whose relationship to authority is unhealthy). "The authoritarian character loves those conditions that limit human freedom, he loves being submitted to fate."⁹⁰ Fromm points out that what this fate may be will depend, to a large extent, on the social situation in which the person finds himself: for the business man it might be economic laws; for the soldier, the will or whim of his superior. He notes that "fate may be rationalized philosophically as 'natural law' or as 'destiny of man', religiously as the 'will of the Lord', ethically as

88 Ibid., p. 166.

89 Ibid., p. 186.

90 Ibid., p. 192.

'duty'--for the authoritarian character it is always a higher power outside the individual, toward which the individual can do nothing but submit."⁹¹

The courage of the authoritarian character is essentially a courage to suffer what fate or its personal representative or "leader" may have destined for him. To suffer without complaining is his highest virtue--not the courage of trying to end suffering or at least to diminish it. Not to change fate, but to submit to it, is the heroism of the authoritarian character.⁹²

B. Positive Ways of Achieving Union

In the Forward of The Art of Loving, Erich Fromm explains that the purpose of this book is

[...] to convince the reader that all his attempts for love are bound to fail, unless he tries most actively to develop his total personality, so as to achieve a productive orientation; that satisfaction in individual love cannot be attained without the capacity to love one's neighbor, without true humility, courage, faith and discipline. In a culture in which these qualities are rare, the attainment of love must remain a rare achievement.⁹³

Many of the difficulties involved in achieving interpersonal union without loss of integrity have been explained in the preceding section. In spite of these difficulties, love is not impossible. In this section, three points will be considered: firstly, the nature of productive love, and

91 Ibid., p. 193.

92 Ibid., p. 195.

93 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. vii.

certain requirements of the art of loving; secondly, four characteristics of productive love: care, responsibility, respect and knowledge; and thirdly, the necessarily universal nature of true love. As a conclusion to the whole section (Relatedness vs. Narcissism) the question of narcissism will be briefly treated. It will not be necessary to consider it in great detail, because many of the factors involved in narcissism have already been treated, directly or indirectly. This concluding point permits, however, a recapitulation of the whole preceding section.

(a) Productive Love.- For Fromm, union is the answer to the problem of human existence, i.e., aloneness or alienation. However, as has been indicated, not any sort of union provides true relatedness: neither symbiotic union, nor moral masochism, nor fusion without integrity and independence. For Fromm,

mature love is union under the condition of preserving one's integrity, one's individuality. Love is an active power in man; a power which breaks through the walls which separate man from his fellow men, which unites him with others; love makes him overcome the sense of isolation and separateness, yet it permits him to be himself, to maintain his integrity. In love the paradox occurs that two beings become one and yet remain two.⁹⁴

Here, three points will be briefly noted: love as an activity; love as giving rather than receiving, and the

⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 17.

maturity required for true sacrifice. Love is an activity, not a passive affect. "Love is an activity, not a passive affect; it is a 'standing in,' not a 'falling for.' In the most general way, the active character of love can be described by stating that love is primarily giving, not receiving."⁹⁵ Even the word 'giving,' however, needs some explanation, for giving can mean many things, depending on the character orientation of the person who gives: giving in an exploitative sense, giving only to receive, giving as an impoverishment, giving in exchange for something else, giving solely out of a sense of duty. For the productive character, giving has an entirely different meaning than the idea of sacrificing.

Giving is the highest expression of potency. In the very act of giving, I experience my strength, my wealth, my power. This experience of heightened vitality and potency fills me with joy. I experience myself as overflowing, spending, alive, hence as joyous. Giving is more joyous than receiving, not because it is a deprivation, but because in the act of giving lies the expression of my aliveness.⁹⁶

An example of the type of giving that true love implies is found in mature sexual expression. However, Fromm's considerations on the point, and, indeed, the whole question of erotic love is not treated in this paper.

95 Ibid., p. 18.

96 Ibid., p. 19.

One further condition for true love is a certain maturity on the part of the people who love each other.

Love is possible only if two persons communicate with each other from the center of their existence, hence if each one of them experiences himself from the center of his existence. Only in this "central experience" is human reality, only here is aliveness, only here is the basis for love. Love, experienced thus, is a constant challenge; it is not a resting place, but a moving, growing, working together; even whether there is harmony or conflict, joy or sadness, is secondary to the fundamental fact that two people experience themselves from the essence of their existence, that they are one with each other by being one with themselves, rather than by fleeing from themselves.⁹⁷

A certain amount of illumination is cast on Fromm's concept of love by the very title of the book The Art of Loving. Fromm considers that love is an art, and like any art it needs to be practiced in order to become perfect. Fromm suggests four requirements for the art of loving: discipline, concentration, patience, and a supreme concern for the mastery of the art. Firstly, loving requires discipline. Love cannot be an activity engaged in only if "I am in the mood."⁹⁸ If it were, it would only be a nice or an amusing hobby. But such an attitude would never lead to a mastery of the art. Fromm notes the difficulty of this requirement, because in contemporary civilization there is little discipline outside the sphere of work.

97 Ibid., p. 86-87.

98 Ibid., p. 91.

When man "does not work, he wants to be lazy, to slouch or, to use a nicer word, to 'relax.' This very wish for laziness is a reaction against the routinization of life."⁹⁹

However without discipline in the spheres of life outside work, life becomes "shattered, chaotic, and lacks in concentration;"¹⁰⁰ and the mastery of the art of loving is impossible.

The second requirement is concentration. "Anyone who has ever tried to learn an art knows this. Yet, even more than self-discipline, concentration is rare in our culture."¹⁰¹ The note of concentration applies specifically to love in this: being able to concentrate means being able to be alone with oneself, and

this ability is precisely a condition for the ability to love. If I am attached to another person because I cannot stand on my own feet, he or she may be a lifesaver, but the relationship is not one of love. Paradoxically, the ability to be alone is the condition for the ability to love.¹⁰²

A third element in the art of loving is patience. Fromm observes that anyone who has ever tried to master an art knows that patience is necessary. There is no quick way to achieve mastery of an art. The technology of the industrial age has accustomed man to speed and quickness; yet

100 Ibid., p. 91.

101 Ibid.

102 Ibid., p. 94.

what can be achieved with machine-like speed is not a human art. Patience is required to master the art of loving.¹⁰³ The final condition of learning the art of loving is a supreme concern with the mastery of the art. "If the art is not something of supreme importance, the apprentice will never learn it. [...] This condition is as necessary for the art of loving as for any other art."¹⁰⁴

The precisions noted on love as an activity, love as giving, and the maturity demanded by productive love, as well as the four conditions indicated for the mastery of the art of loving lead to an analysis of the four characteristics of productive love, which touch more proximately the core of real love.

(b) Four Characteristics of Productive Love.- Fromm indicates that the active character of love "becomes evident in the fact that it always implies certain elements, common to all forms of love. These are care, responsibility, respect and knowledge."¹⁰⁵ Underlying these four characteristics of mature love is a presupposition that the ability to love as an act of giving

depends on the character development of the person. It presupposes the attainment of a predominantly productive orientation; in this orientation the

103 Cf. ibid., p. 92.

104 Ibid.

105 Ibid., p. 22.

person has overcome dependency, narcissistic omnipotence, the wish to exploit others, or to hoard, and has acquired faith in his own human powers, courage to rely on his powers in the attainment of his goals. To the degree that these qualities are lacking, he is afraid of giving himself--hence of loving.¹⁰⁶

The first of the elements essential to all productive love is care. "That love implies care is most evident in a mother's love for her child. [...] Love is the active concern for the life and the growth of that which we love."¹⁰⁷ If, for example, a mother does not feed, bathe or give physical comfort to her child, no one would say that she loved her child. "One loves that for which one labors, and one labors for that which one loves."¹⁰⁸ A second basic element of love is responsibility. In this Fromm is not concerned with responsibility in the sense of duty (something which is imposed from the outside), but responsibility as an entirely voluntary act. In this sense responsibility refers to a response "to the needs, expressed or unexpressed, of another human being. To be 'responsible' means to be ready and able to respond."¹⁰⁹

106 Ibid., p. 21-22.

107 Ibid., p. 22.

108 Ibid., p. 23.

109 Ibid.

The life of his brother is not his brother's business alone, but his own. He feels responsible for his fellow men, as he feels responsible for himself. This responsibility, in the case of the mother and her infant, refers mainly to the care for physical needs. In the love between adults it refers mainly to the psychic needs of the other person.¹¹⁰

A third basic element common to all forms of true love is respect. Respect is closely linked to responsibility because responsibility could "easily deteriorate into domination and possessiveness, were it not for a third component of love, respect."¹¹¹ Fromm defines respect, not in terms of fear and awe, but rather as "the ability to see a person as he is, to be aware of his unique individuality. Respect means the concern that the other person should grow and unfold as he is."¹¹² Evidently then, if the person is loved as he is, he can never be seen as an object to be used or possessed. Respect is possible only if the person who loves has achieved independence, and does not depend on the loved one as a crutch for his own weakness.¹¹³ The fourth element of love is knowledge. "To respect a person is not possible without knowing him; care and responsibility would be blind if they were not guided by knowledge."¹¹⁴

110 Ibid., p. 23.

111 Ibid.

112 Ibid.

113 Cf. Ibid., p. 118.

114 Ibid., p. 24.

Knowledge implies self-knowledge, and also knowledge of the other as he is, not as a distorted or rationalized projection of fear or desire.¹¹⁵ True knowledge is possible only if there is a transcendence of self-concern and an ability to see the other person in his own terms. More fundamental to the question of love is the human desire to know the "secret of man." "We cannot help desiring to penetrate into the secret of man's soul, into the innermost nucleus which is 'he'."¹¹⁶ There are several ways in which one can attempt to know the secret of man: by complete power over another person, by making him a thing to be possessed (a phenomenon which is observed in a child's wish to take a thing apart to see what makes it to be what it is; and in a much more extreme form in the desire of the sadist to force this penetration into the secret of the other). Neither of these is a mature type of knowledge of the other.

The only way of full knowledge lies in the act of love: this act transcends thought, it transcends words. It is the daring plunge into the experience of union. However, knowledge in thought, that is psychological knowledge, is a necessary condition for full knowledge in the act of love. [...] Only if I know a human being objectively, can I know him in his ultimate essence, in the act of love.¹¹⁷

115 Fromm, "On the Limitations and Dangers of Psychology", in The Dogma of Christ, p. 200.

116 -----, The Art of Loving, p. 25.

117 Ibid., p. 26.

Fromm notes, in conclusion to this section, that care, respect, responsibility and knowledge are mutually interdependent. They are "a syndrome of attitudes which are to be found in the mature person; that is, in the person who develops his own powers productively, who only wants to have that which he has worked for."¹¹⁸

(c) The Necessarily Universal Nature of Love.-

Further perspective is given to Fromm's notion of productive love by his discussion of the object of love, and the necessarily universal character of true love.

Love is not primarily a relationship to a specific person; it is an attitude, an orientation of character which determines the relation of a person to the world as a whole, not toward one 'object' of love.¹¹⁹

What this means, in effect, is that love is not constituted by the object of the love, but by the faculty of love in the person loving. According to Fromm, there is a common misconception that it is a proof of the intensity of love to love no one except the 'loved one'. In Fromm's conception of the nature of love, love is an activity which, in order to be true, must be universal--extended to all men. Because of this he says, "The most fundamental kind of love, which underlies all types of love, is brotherly love."¹²⁰

118 Ibid., p. 27.

119 Ibid., p. 38.

120 Ibid., p. 39.

By this Fromm understands that a person who truly loves will have a sense of responsibility, care, respect and knowledge for all other human beings.

Brotherly love is love for all human beings; it is characterized by its very lack of exclusiveness. If I have developed the capacity for love, then I cannot help loving my brothers. In brotherly love there is the experience of union with all men, of human solidarity, of human at-onement.¹²¹

What is the basis of brotherly love? It "is based on the experience that we all are one."¹²² Fromm explains that if a person is seen truly as a human being, that is if he is seen not from the outside or merely from the surface, but is seen right to the core of his being, what is perceived is not that which differentiates or separates men, but the identity and brotherhood which make them one. "Love is not primarily a relationship to a specific person; it is an attitude [...] to the world as a whole, not toward one 'object' of love."¹²³

By its nature, brotherly love is love between equals. But Fromm emphasizes that the experience of the other as poor, suffering, and helpless is an incentive to the unfolding of true love. Evidently, it is easier to love those for whom there is a particular affection because of a natural relatedness to them than it is to love someone

121 Ibid., p. 39.

122 Ibid.

123 Ibid., p. 38.

who is perceived as a stranger. "To love one's flesh and blood is no achievement."¹²⁴ But, both by reason of the development of the person who loves, and for the sake of the one who is in need of love, a brotherly love which reaches out to the poor one is better. "Only in the love of those who do not serve a purpose, love begins to unfold."¹²⁵ "By having compassion for the helpless one, man begins to develop love for his brother."¹²⁶

Brotherly love is love between equals; and in the help afforded to those who are in need a certain caution is necessary. The basis of love is not personal superiority, but a recognition of a genuine oneness; and it is on this condition that the help given is an expression of love.

Brotherly love is love between equals; but, indeed, even as equals we are not always "equal"; inasmuch as we are human, we are all in need of help. Today I, tomorrow you. But this need of help does not mean that the one is helpless, the other powerful. Helplessness is a transitory condition; the ability to stand and walk on one's own feet is the permanent and common one.¹²⁷

124 Ibid., p. 40.

125 Ibid.

126 Ibid., p. 41.

127 Ibid., p. 40. On p. 40-41, Fromm cites the Old Testament concern for the poor, the stranger, the widow and the orphan as an example of genuine brotherly love.

This section may be concluded by Fromm's own summation in The Sane Society of what he understands by a productive orientation in the realm of feeling.

In the realm of feeling, the productive orientation is expressed in love, which is the experience of union with another person, with all men, and with nature, under the condition of retaining one's sense of integrity and independence. [...] Love in this sense is never restricted to one person. If I can love only one person, and nobody else, if my love for one person makes me more alienated and distant from my fellow man, I may be attached to this person in any number of ways, yet I do not love.¹²⁸

(d) Conclusion.- Fromm concludes his discussion of relatedness vs. narcissism¹²⁹ by indicating that "man understands fully man's need to be related only if one considers the outcome of the failure of any kind of relatedness, if one appreciates the meaning of narcissism."¹³⁰ Fromm distinguishes two kinds of narcissism: primary and secondary. Primary narcissism is that of the infant, for whom the world outside exists "only as so much food, or so much warmth to be used for the satisfaction of his own needs, not as something or somebody that is recognized realistically and objectively."¹³¹ As the child grows

128 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 37.

129 Ibid., p. 35-41.

130 Ibid., p. 39.

131 Ibid.

in normal development, the state of narcissism is slowly overcome: at first, at the level of sensory perception, things and people are perceived as different entities; later, at the age of seven or eight, people come to exist no longer mainly as a means for the satisfaction of the child's needs.¹³² Primary narcissism, that of the child, is a normal phenomenon. But there is a possibility of what Freud has called secondary narcissism: the possibility that the growing child either fails to develop the capacity for love, or develops it and loses it again. "For the narcissistically involved person, there is only one reality, that of his own thought processes, feelings and needs."¹³³ In its most evolved form, secondary narcissism is the insanity of the person who has lost contact with the world and has withdrawn into himself.

The fact that utter failure to relate oneself to the world is insanity, points to the other fact: that some form of relatedness is the condition for any kind of sane living. But among the various forms of relatedness, only the productive one, love, fulfills the condition of allowing one to retain one's freedom and integrity while being, at the same time, united with one's fellow man.¹³⁴

132 Ibid., p. 39.

133 Ibid., p. 40. Cf. The Heart of Man, p. 62-94. Fromm indicates that he does not restrict the use of the concept of narcissism to that of the infant or the psychotic. Narcissism is able to shade from very mild to very severe. Even "in the case of normal development, man remains to some extent narcissistic throughout his life." The Heart of Man, p. 63.

134 The Sane Society, p. 41.

This quotation sums up what has been the burden of this whole section. Relatedness in some form or another is essential if there is not to be insanity. But man has many options open to him to overcome his aloneness: humanizing and dehumanizing ones: mature, productive love marked by care, knowledge, respect and responsibility toward all men, on the condition of retaining one's integrity; or symbiotic union, moral masochism, or any relationship which achieves union at the price of the loss of personal integrity.

The material which has been presented in this section is important for a discussion of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. In the third chapter there is occasion to return to the concepts of sacrifice, magic helper, moral masochism, rational and irrational authority. These are especially used in understanding the relationship of the individual to Christ on which a considerable part of the four principles presented in the first chapter depend. The meaning and characteristics of productive love are also important for the study being undertaken in this thesis.

3. Transcendence--Creativeness vs. Destructiveness.

The second of man's basic psychic needs of which Fromm speaks is the need for transcendence, which may be defined as man's need to raise himself above the state of passive creatureliness. "Another aspect of the human situation, closely connected with the need for relatedness, is man's situation as a creature, and his need to transcend this very state of the passive creature."¹³⁵ This section will consider two main points: certain precisions about Fromm's vocabulary--transcendence, the "x" experience, and sin; and secondly, transcendence by creativeness and destructiveness.

A. Certain Precisions about Fromm's Vocabulary

Fromm recognizes that the word transcendence is "customarily used in a religious context and it refers to transcending the human dimensions in order to arrive at the experience of the divine."¹³⁶ Such a definition makes sense within a theistic system, but Fromm is not a theist. He believes, however, that the same psychological characteristics which mark the experience of transcendence in a

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 41.

¹³⁶ Erich Fromm, The Revolution of Hope: Toward a Humanized Technology, Toronto, Bantam, 1968, p. 89.

theistic system are to be found "in the act of leaving the prison of one's ego and achieving the freedom of openness and relatedness to the world,"¹³⁷ and he therefore uses the same word, transcendence, but strips away any theological connotation. "If we speak of transcendence in a non-theological sense, there is no need for the concept of God. However, the psychological reality is the same."¹³⁸ In this section, unless otherwise noted, the word transcendence refers to the relationship of man to himself, not to a divine being.¹³⁹

In You Shall Be As Gods Fromm uses the word transcendence in connection with what he calls the "x" experience. The "x" experience refers to a non-theistic religious experience which is characterized by five elements: (1) life is experienced as a problem; (2) there exists a definite hierarchy of values; (3) man alone is an end and never a means; (4) there is an attitude of openness: a letting go of one's ego as if it were an indestructible, separate entity; and (5) there exists a transcendence of the ego which is, in its highest degree, a complete absence of narcissism.¹⁴⁰ Fromm is concerned with a psychological

¹³⁸ Ibid., p. 89.

¹³⁹ The relationship of man to the divine being is treated in Section 6: The Need for a Frame of Orientation and Devotion--Reason vs. Irrationality.

¹⁴⁰ Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 56-60.

analysis of the "x" experience, and the need of an empirical psychological anthropology which would establish rationally the superiority of the "x" way to all others. In this regard he sees transcendence as an essential element; but transcendence within the framework of the "x" experience, not exclusively within a theistic conceptualization.

The third term to which Fromm gives a particular meaning is sin. For Fromm, sin is not disobedience to a higher power; it is not the failure to render reverence, worship and obedience to some higher unseen power which has control over man's destiny.¹⁴¹ Sin, or evil, is the choice of a course of action which is destructive of man's true self. One course of action is better than another not because some authority says it is so but because some paths are destructive.

Those who do not believe in a moral law and its realistic long-range consequences will, of course, never agree that the kind of alternative as announced by the Bible is a realistic alternative and not just a threat. Those, on the other hand, including myself, who are convinced that there are moral laws which have their inescapable consequences for man will examine the biblical alternatives as to their validity.¹⁴²

¹⁴¹ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 34-35.

¹⁴² -----, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 178. Chapter V: "The Concept of Sin and Repentance" spells out in considerable detail Fromm's conception of sin and repentance as human realities. E.G.: "Because we all share in the same humanity, there is nothing inhuman in sinning, hence nothing to be ashamed of, or to be despised for. Our inclination to sin is as human as our inclination to do good and as our capacity to 'return'." (p. 175-176)

Certain alternatives open to men lead to life; others to death. The only validity which Fromm would admit for the use of the word sin is as a term referring to a course of action which of its nature (a nature which is discovered by rational analysis) leads to the destruction of the self. Man may choose sin; and man may choose to return from sin. But the alternative and the choice are human realities which have no necessary connection with a theistic conceptualization.

B. Transcendence--Creativeness vs. Destructiveness

Fromm's treatment of transcendence in The Sane Society is very brief--less than a page and a half. He says, in sum, that when man recognizes his state of being passively a creature he desires to overcome this state. He may do this by creating. Man can create life by having a family and caring for it; by planting seeds, by producing material objects, by creating art, by creating ideas, by loving another. And in these acts of creativeness man "transcends himself as a creature, raises himself beyond the passivity of accidentalness of his existence into the realm of purposefulness and freedom."¹⁴³ Man may also transcend by destructiveness, if he is incapable of creating,

¹⁴³ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 41.

and if he cannot love. "There is another answer to this need for transcendence: if I cannot create life, I can destroy it. To destroy life makes me also transcend it."¹⁴⁴

Fundamental to Fromm's conception of good and evil, creativeness and destructiveness, is that the primary way of transcending is by creativeness; destructiveness is a secondary potentiality.

To say that man is capable of developing his primary potentiality for love and reason does not imply the naive belief in man's goodness. Destructiveness is a secondary potentiality, rooted in the very existence of man, and having the same intensity and power as any passion can have. But--and this is the essential point of my argument--it is only the alternative to creativeness. Creation and destruction, love and hate, are not two instincts which exist independently. They are both answers to the same need for transcendence, and the will to destroy must rise when the will to create cannot be satisfied. However, the satisfaction of the need to create leads to happiness; destructiveness to suffering, most of all, for the destroyer himself.¹⁴⁵

One final precision on the nature of creativity is found in Escape From Freedom where Fromm notes four characteristics of creativity: it is spontaneous, process orientated, ego strengthening, and it gives true security.¹⁴⁶

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 42.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid.; cf.: Man for Himself, p. 212-219; The Heart of Man, p. 17-23; Schaar, Escape From Authority, p. 49-50, 63.

¹⁴⁶ Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 284-289.

Genuine creativity is something which springs from that which is most truly a man's own. Creative action is not a repetition of a learned response; it springs from the self, and is characterized by love (not as a dissolution of the self, but as a spontaneous affirmation of others in which the individual self remains) and work (not as a compulsive activity to escape aloneness, but as a creation in which man becomes one with nature).¹⁴⁷ This activity is not orientated toward the goal to be achieved or the finished product to be produced, but rather implies that "what matters is the activity as such, the process and not the result."¹⁴⁸ It is in the awareness of himself in a creative activity that the person's self is strengthened. And this strength gives the individual a dynamic security which is not based on some outside protection or on the elimination of the tragic quality of life but on the individual's spontaneous, dynamic activity.

Such a conception of creativeness does not imply a narcissistic illusion in which the individual's ego is the only reality,¹⁴⁹ but it does imply that the person rejoices in his creative activity, for transcendence by creativeness leads to happiness.¹⁵⁰

147 Ibid., p. 287.

148 Ibid., p. 288.

149 Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, p. 89.

150 -----, The Sane Society, p. 42.

The concept of transcendence is used in the third chapter especially in assessing some potentially beneficial effects of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering.

4. Rootedness--Brotherliness vs. Incest.

The third of man's basic psychic needs is his need for rootedness. In this section, three main points are considered: firstly, the relationship of child to mother--its positive and negative aspects, and certain features of a matriarchal kind of society; secondly, the relationship of child to father--its positive and negative aspects, and certain features of a patriarchal kind of society; and thirdly, an analysis of the influence of social change on the Christian dogma of Christ.

In The Sane Society Fromm concludes his discussion of rootedness with a sentence which gives perspective to the whole section. He indicates that the type of rootedness which he proposes as the fully human ideal of rootedness is not yet achieved, that it remains still in the realm of a goal to be attained.

Only when man succeeds in developing his reason and love further than he has done so far, only when he can build a world based on human solidarity and justice, only when he can feel rooted in the experience of universal brotherliness, will he have found a new, human form of rootedness, will he have transformed his world into a truly human home.¹⁵¹

¹⁵¹ Ibid., p. 61.

Nonetheless Fromm's analysis of the problem and of the partial solutions which have been attempted offers a series of criteria against which the humanness of man's rootedness can be measured. Although there is a certain negativity in his presentation, he explains with lucidity a problem which man must resolve in order to adequately and humanly fulfill his psychic needs.

Man's birth as man means the beginning of his emergence from his natural home, the beginning of the severance of his natural ties. Yet, this very severance is frightening; if man loses his natural roots, where is he and who is he? He would stand alone, without a home; without roots; he could not bear the isolation and helplessness of this position. He would become insane. He can dispense with the natural roots only insofar as he finds new human roots and only after he has found them can he feel at home again in this world. Is it surprising, then, to find a deep craving in man not to sever the natural ties, to fight against being torn away from nature, from mother, blood and soil?¹⁵²

The above quotation, which opens the discussion of rootedness in The Sane Society, and the preceding one which concludes Fromm's presentation of rootedness, provide a framework which shows this section to be more a discussion of the problems involved in achieving true human rootedness than a prescription for its attainment.

¹⁵² Ibid., p. 42-43.

A. Child, Mother, and Matriarchal Societies

In this section, three main points are considered: firstly, the positive impact which true mother love has on the child; secondly, the negative impact which mother love has on the child (either by its very nature, or because the mother love is imperfect or narcissistic); and thirdly, the transference of the child mother relationship to an 'individual-matriarchal' societal relationship, and the positive and negative characteristics of matriarchal-type societies.

(a) Positive Impact of True Mother Love.- "To be loved by [mother] means to be alive, to be rooted, to be at home."¹⁵³ Mother's love is the basis of the infant's at-homeness in the world, for in his early years, mother is the infant's world. Evidently, during the first nine months of a child's life, there is not even a physical separation between child and mother. But birth does not end physical dependency. As was pointed out in the section on narcissism, primary narcissism is such that at the beginning of its life, the child cannot even perceive a difference between itself and the surrounding world. Mother, for the child, is warmth and care, food and satisfaction. "No full separation between child and mother has

¹⁵³ Ibid., p. 43.

occurred. The satisfaction of all his physiological needs [...] depends on her; she has not only given birth to him, but she continues to give life to him."¹⁵⁴

Parenthetically, it must be mentioned that Fromm is speaking of mother and mother love in an archetypal sense. He does not imply that all mothers love in this way, but refers, rather, to the motherly principle which is represented in the motherly person.¹⁵⁵ Equally, this mother love might be given by someone other than the actual physical mother (a grandmother, for example).¹⁵⁶ In this discussion, the words 'mother' and 'mother love' are used in this archetypal sense.

The impact of mother love on the child can be summarized under three headings: rootedness, aliveness, and the feeling of being unconditionally loved. Of these three, the last is perhaps the basis for the others. All the child's experiences are summed up, crystallized, in the feeling of being loved, not for anything the child has done, but simply because the child is. The sensation of unconditional love is described by Fromm in this way.

All [his] experiences become crystallized and integrated in the experience: I am loved. I am loved because I am mother's child. I am loved

¹⁵⁴ Ibid., p. 43.

¹⁵⁵ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 35.

¹⁵⁶ -----, The Heart of Man, p. 28.

because I am helpless. I am loved because I am beautiful, admirable. I am loved because mother needs me. To put it in a more general formula: I am loved for what I am, and, or perhaps more accurately, I am loved because I am. This experience of being loved by mother is a passive one. There is nothing I have to do in order to be loved--mother's love is unconditional. All I have to do is to be--to be her child. Mother's love is bliss, is peace, it need not be deserved.¹⁵⁷

The experience of being loved in this unconditional way, of being protected, enveloped, nourished and cared for by mother, is the basis of the child's sense of rootedness. Within the protective orbit of mother, he is at home, rooted, in the world. Optimally, the mother who loves the child in this way will also transmit to the child her own love of life. The mother's happiness will be transmitted to the child, and in the critical years of formation he will sense life with the same positive attitude and affirmation that his mother has. Mother's love for life is infectious, and the effect which it has on the child can hardly be exaggerated.¹⁵⁸ "It communicates itself without words, explanations, and certainly without any teaching that one ought to love life."¹⁵⁹ The positive impact which true mother love has on the infant, then, is a sense of rootedness and affirmation of love which spring

¹⁵⁷ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 33.

¹⁵⁸ Cf. ibid., p. 42-43; The Heart of Man, p. 28-30, 51.

¹⁵⁹ Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 51.

from the experience of unconditional love by a mother who loves life herself.

(b) Negative Impact of Mother Love.- The sheer unconditionality of mother love and the sense of rootedness which this gives the child also have negative sides: what is unconditional cannot be deserved or created; and a love which gives such security will be a strong force in the child to remain in a state of helplessness.

Not only does it not need to be deserved-- it also cannot be acquired, produced, controlled. If it is there, it is like a blessing; if it is not there, it is as if all beauty had gone out of life--and there is nothing I can do to create it.¹⁶⁰

By the simple fact that it is unconditional, mother love has this negative aspect. Fortunately for most children, mother love is present, and it gives this child a sense of rootedness. But this deep sense of rootedness itself makes it difficult for the child to leave the protective orbit of mother. According to Fromm, "even in the mature adult, the longing for this situation as it once existed never ceases completely."¹⁶¹ There are, of course, great differences between the child and the adult. But the perdurance in the adult of the same desire as the child has to be enveloped, protected by an unconditional love

¹⁶⁰ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 33.

¹⁶¹ -----, The Sane Society, p. 43.

indicates how strongly the child is affected by the rootedness which he receives from mother. The adult has at his disposal the means to take care of himself physically; he can stand on his own two feet; he can be responsible for others. Yet, because he sees the complexity of his life, the fragmentary nature of his knowledge, and the accidentalness of his existence, he perceives that in many respects his situation is no different than that which existed when he was a child. Just as the child needs and wants its indulging, protecting envelope of mother love, so also the average adult has "a deep longing for the security and rootedness which the relationship to his mother once gave him."¹⁶² It is this longing which is the root of man's psychic need for rootedness.

If the child or the adult does not satisfy his need in a humanizing way, by the rootedness which he has in his solidarity with all men, his at-homeness in the world, he will attempt to satisfy this need in another way. For example, an individual who has not overcome his fixation to mother may try to procure motherly love in a "neurotic, magical way by making [himself] helpless, sick or by regressing emotionally to the stage of an infant. The magic idea is: if I make myself into a helpless child,

¹⁶² Ibid., p. 43.

mother is bound to appear and take care of me."¹⁶³ In this regard, Fromm's interpretation of the Freudian Oedipus Complex (a desire for an incestuous relationship on the part of the child) shows another facet of the negative way in which man can attempt to achieve rootedness.

Freud's theory is a curiously rationalistic interpretation of the observable facts. In putting the emphasis on the sexual aspect of the incestuous desire, Freud explains the boy's desire as something rational in itself and evades the real problem: the depth and intensity of the irrational affective tie to the mother, the wish to return into her orbit, to remain part of her, the fear of emerging fully from her.¹⁶⁴

The irrational affective tie to mother is one of the most fundamental patterns in man. It comprises "the human being's desire for protection, the satisfaction of his narcissism; the craving to be freed from the risks of responsibility, of freedom, of awareness; his longing for unconditional love, which is offered without any expectation of his loving response."¹⁶⁵ In an extreme, or pathological case, this longing may take the form of an incestuous longing for the actual mother.¹⁶⁶ It is possible, however, that a substitute will be found--a socially

163 Ibid., p. 50.

164 Ibid., p. 45-46; cf., The Heart of Man, p. 96-100.

165 Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 97.

166 -----, The Sane Society, p. 46.

acceptable substitute: blood, soil, clan, race, nation, religion. Before considering this possibility, two further possible negative impacts of mother love should be mentioned. Both of these refer to a failure on the part of the mother.

Fromm notes that, while most mothers are able to love their child while it is an infant, a lesser percentage love the child enough to want it to grow up and achieve independence. He sees this as a possible example of narcissism on the part of the mother. When the child is in the womb, and to a large extent when the child is still at the helpless infant stage, the child can hardly be seen as an entity separate from the mother. To the extent that this is so, the mother's love for her child is narcissistic. The proof of whether or not the mother's love is true is seen when the child begins to grow. If the mother actively wants the child to achieve independence, she will not be domineering or possessive towards her child. If she is domineering and possessive, there is a strong indication that the love she manifested for the child in his early years was narcissistic.¹⁶⁷

A second negative impact of mother love is seen by the attitude which the child has towards life. As the

167 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 42-43.

mother is the one closest to the child, it is normal that it will be her attitude towards life that is communicated to the child in his critically formative years. If the mother lacks joy in life, her effect will not be stimulating but deadening. "Often her anxiety will contribute toward making the child afraid of life and attracted to that which is unalive."¹⁶⁸ Love of death is contagious, just as is love of life.

(c) Matriarchal Kinds of Relationships.- As was indicated, certain people satisfy their need for a mother by a relationship to a mother figure (in distinction to an actual mother). In this section, there is considered the way in which some broader group can provide (more or less) the psychological satisfaction, and the same psychological fulfillment of the need for rootedness, as can the primary relationship to mother, or as can a mature, humanizing solidarity with all men. Certain points of vocabulary must be clarified: the words 'incestuous' and 'mother'. In this section the word 'incestuous' (usually in combination with 'fixation') refers to a psychological relationship, rather than a physical (or desire for physical) relationship. The word 'mother', written as such ('mother'), refers not to a physical mother but to the persons or group

168 Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 55.

which fulfill the same psychological needs, which perform the same function of providing a safe, protective orbit, as does the physical mother for the infant.

Just as the child needs and wants its indulging, protecting envelope of mother love, so also the adult--the average adult--has a "deep longing for the security and rootedness which the relationship to his mother once gave him."¹⁶⁹ The longing for rootedness perdures, and in an 'incestuous' sense can extend beyond the direct relationship to mother. It can broaden out to include those who are blood relatives, or to any system which accords a person the same psychological satisfactions which he had in his relationship to mother.

The family and the clan, and later on the state, nation or church, assume the same function which the individual mother had for the child. The individual leans on them, feels rooted in them, has the sense of identity as a part of them, and not as an individual apart from them. The person who does not belong to the same clan is considered as alien and dangerous--as not sharing the same human qualities which only his own clan possesses.¹⁷⁰

It is not of particular importance that a society be matriarchal in structure, for "we can find many examples of the matriarchal kind of relatedness to mother, blood and soil, even where the social forms are not matriarchal any more."¹⁷¹ The size of the group is not of importance:

169 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 43.

170 Ibid., p. 45.

171 Ibid., p. 48.

it can broaden from a real mother to anything which can become a 'mother' figure--a guarantor of protection and love.¹⁷² What is of importance is that, while such an affiliation to 'mother' can have positive effects, it also has clearly negative effects. On the positive side, these societies provide a sense of affirmation of life, freedom and equality. All children, all men, are seen as children of nature and as children of 'mother', and hence they are all found equal. They have the same rights, and the only value that counts is that of life. Within this type of society, as in the relationship between child and mother, what is of value is not talent, gift or particular endowment, but simply the fact that all are children of their mother. All have the same right to love and care.

Negatively, there are certain effects. As was indicated in the passage cited above, those who do not belong to a particular 'mother' are seen as strangers, foreign, alien. Secondly, a matriarchal kind of relatedness blocks man from developing his individuality. Thirdly, this relatedness of 'incestuous fixation' jeopardizes independence and integrity. And lastly, it implies a certain fear of mother which makes the step from dependence to independence all the more difficult.

172 Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 98. Fromm notes: "Empirically the fact can easily be established that there is a close correlation between persons with a strong fixation to their mothers and those with exceptionally strong ties to nation and race, soil and blood." Ibid., p. 99.

Such negative qualities can exist in an infinite number of degrees, stretched along a continuum--from a benign dependence on mother, through an "incestuous fixation" on 'mother', to a pathological form of incest. If the more severe forms are mentioned it is only because they help to illustrate more clearly what is being described, and to highlight certain psychological characteristics which a milder form of 'mother fixation' have in common with them.

The first negative aspect of the matriarchal type of structure is that "by being bound to nature, blood, and soil, man is blocked from developing his individuality."¹⁷³

The individual remains a child, and is incapable of progress as an individual. In his relationship to himself, the person does not see himself as fully human (an individual, separate entity) because his sense of identity or rootedness is so closely linked to 'mother'. As a result, this individual even experiences himself as a stranger.

As a consequence I remain also a "stranger" to myself, since I cannot experience humanity beyond that crippled form in which it is shared by the group united by common blood. Incestuous fixation impairs or destroys--in accordance with the degree of regression--the capacity to love.¹⁷⁴

¹⁷³ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 48; cf.: The Heart of Man, p. 107.

¹⁷⁴ -----, The Heart of Man, p. 107.

The second characteristic is a loss of reason and objectivity. Because the 'child' refuses to cut the emotional umbilical chord, 'mother' (the basis of certainty and protection) may not be approached critically. 'Mother' becomes sacred.

If I fail to cut the umbilical chord, if I insist on worshipping the idol of certainty and protection, then the idol becomes sacred. It must not be criticized. If "mother" cannot be wrong, how can I judge anyone else objectively if he is in conflict with "mother" or disapproved of by her? This form of impairment of judgment is much less obvious when the object of fixation is not mother but the family, the nation, or the race. Since these fixations are supposed to be virtues, a strong national or religious fixation easily leads to biased and distorted judgments which are taken for truth because they are shared by all others who participate in the same fixation.¹⁷⁵

The last of the negative factors associated with 'incestuous fixation' is a fear of mother. Although Fromm indicates that this characteristic refers more directly to a severe, or pathological, state, it seems that Fromm's thinking allows it to be applied even to milder forms of 'mother fixation'. Fromm says that an incestuous tie to mother "very frequently implies not only a longing for mother's love and protection, but also a fear of her."¹⁷⁶ He explains that the fear, in a pathological case, is related to the fact that the need is felt for a deep regression--

¹⁷⁵ Ibid., p. 106.

¹⁷⁶ Ibid., p. 100; cf.: p. 105-106.

that of being a suckling, or returning to the mother's womb. "These very wishes transform the mother into a dangerous cannibal, or an all-destroying monster."¹⁷⁷ The only way in which this fear can be overcome is by cutting the tie with mother, and yet the fear engendered in such a relationship is one more reason why it is difficult for the person to cut the tie. "Inasmuch as a person remains caught in this dependency, his own independence, freedom, and responsibility are weakened."¹⁷⁸ In The Sane Society Fromm mentioned the binding power of irrational needs and satisfactions, and it is in this that there appears to be a similarity between the individual, pathological state, and a broader form of 'mother fixation'.

The famous statement at the end of the Communist Manifesto that the workers "have nothing to lose but their chains" contains a profound psychological error. With their chains they have also to lose all those irrational needs and satisfactions which were originated while they were wearing the chains.¹⁷⁹

To sum up what has been said about the child-mother relationship: basic rootedness, basic aliveness, and basic at-homeness arise from the child's relationship to its mother--a relationship in which the child is

177 Ibid., p. 100.

178 Ibid.

179 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 231.

surrounded by care, warmth, love and protection, without anything demanded from the child to deserve these blessings. Even in the adult, a desire to have the same kind of "free" protective love perdures. The adult can seek to create his own rootedness maturely; or (in varying degrees) by an 'incestuous fixation' to 'mother'. By transferring his relationship to mother to a 'mother' group the person achieves certain positive benefits: a feeling of belonging, an affirmation of life, freedom and equality; but the same person is subjected to certain negative influences: by being too closely bound to nature, blood or soil, by being too deeply locked into a matriarchal rootedness, this person may be blocked from developing his individuality; he may remain a child, incapable of progress and individuality; he may regard all outside his group as alien, as not fully human.

B. Child, Father, and Patriarchal Societies

This section considers the relationship between the child and the father; the nature of the patriarchal society; and a distinction between motherly and fatherly types of conscience.

Inasmuch as this section is basically a consideration of rootedness, and the child has much less connection with his father (again in an archetypal sense) than with

his mother from whom he receives his basic sense of rootedness, this consideration of the child father relationship is brief. The relationship of the child to his father does not have the same intensity as that to his mother, because the father never has the all-enveloping, all-protective, all-loving role which the mother has for the first years of the child's life.¹⁸⁰ The father's "importance for the child in this early period cannot be compared with that of the mother."¹⁸¹

Although the father does not represent the natural world (the natural rootedness which the infant has in its mother), he does represent another and necessary pole of human existence--the world of thought, of order, or man-made things, of discipline, travel and adventure. "Father is the one who teaches the child, who shows him the road into the world."¹⁸²

As was noted above, mother love is marked (in individual and societal forms) by its unconditionality. Father love, on the other hand, especially in its societal form, is marked precisely by selectiveness. The relationship of the child to the father, unlike that to the mother which is based on a sheer 'act of grace', a sheer

180 Cf.: Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 49.

181 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 35.

182 Ibid., p. 35-36.

undeserved givingness, can be controlled by the son. The father "wants the son to grow up, to take responsibility, to think, to build; or/and to be obedient, to serve father, to be like him."¹⁸³ Within a patriarchal type society, this relationship is seen clearly in the fact that the favorite son, the one who has most closely conformed to the father's ideal, is the one to whom the father leaves the inheritance. Father love has to be earned by conforming to the ideal which the father sets for the child. Even if the father's demands on the son are unreasonable--if he demands submission--there is less psychological pressure on the son to bow to these demands because, unlike the relationship to 'mother' which is the continuation of a strong natural tie, "the relationship of the son to the father is one of submission on the one hand, but of rebellion on the other, and this contains in itself a permanent element of dissolution."¹⁸⁴

Whether father's expectations are more on development or on obedience, the son has a chance to acquire father's affection by doing the desired thing. To sum up: the positive aspects of the patriarchal complex are reason, discipline, conscience and individualism; the negative aspects are hierarchy, oppression, inequality, submission.¹⁸⁵

As far as rootedness is concerned the child mother relationship is of more importance than the child father

183 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 50.

184 Ibid., p. 49.

185 Ibid., p. 50.

relationship. But there is a point noted by Fromm which adds a certain perspective and importance to the father relationship. As was noted above, an over-dependence on 'mother' may lead to a loss of objectivity; and one of the positive aspects of a healthy child father relationship is the development of reason, discipline, and objectivity. There are, according to Fromm, two types of conscience: a motherly conscience (loving, forgiving), and a fatherly conscience (calling to duty). For Freud, conscience (understood as superego) relates only to the father figure. For Fromm, there is also a "voice which tells us to love and forgive--others as well as ourselves."¹⁸⁶ While the motherly and fatherly aspects of conscience are illustrated and are originally influenced by the motherly and fatherly figures, in the process of maturation the individual conscience should become more and more independent of mother and father--but both aspects should remain. The father-voice speaks of reason, discipline, duty, and conscience; the mother-voice of love, free forgiveness, tenderness towards others and toward oneself. "Yet the contradiction between the principle of duty and the principle of love, of fatherly and motherly conscience, is a contradiction inherent in human existence, and both sides of the

186 Ibid., p. 50.

contradiction must be accepted."¹⁸⁷ Were a person to follow only the command of duty, his conscience would be as distorted as the person who followed only the command of love. Man must accept both elements which make up human existence: duty, responsibility and love, forgiveness. He must make these his own, personally, not only in relationship to himself, but also as regards his fellow man.

He may judge his fellow man with his fatherly conscience, but he must at the same time hear in himself the voice of the mother, who feels love for all fellow creatures, for all that is alive, and who forgives all transgressions.¹⁸⁸

In conclusion, the achievement of the ideal of a world based on human solidarity, of a rootedness based on the experience of universal brotherliness, and the transformation of this world into a truly human home¹⁸⁹ demands considerable maturity of personality and conscience in a difficult area, for the longing for the same rootedness which was had in mother perdures even into normal adulthood.

C. Societal Influence on the Dogma of Christ

In The Sane Society, Fromm pauses in his discussion of "Rootedness--brotherliness vs. incest" to give a "brief

187 Ibid., p. 51.

188 Ibid.

189 Ibid., p. 61.

description of the various phases of rootedness as they can be observed in the history of mankind."¹⁹⁰ In the course of this discussion he touches briefly the influence of societal change on the Christian dogma of Christ, and specifically mentions the ways in which, depending on their social situation and psychic possibilities, Christians reacted to suffering and oppression.¹⁹¹

In this section, two main points are considered: firstly, the influence of their social situation on the early Christians' perception of Christ; and secondly, the change in this perception at the time when the Roman Empire was beginning to harden into a feudal system. Although the general outline of this section is found in The Sane Society¹⁹² much of the material presented here comes from The Dogma of Christ.

(a) The Influence of their Social Situation on the Early Christians' Perception of Christ.- In this section two points are considered: firstly, the oppressed condition

190 Ibid., p. 51.

191 Ibid., p. 56-57, 59. Fromm had described this phenomenon in an earlier work, The Dogma of Christ, an essay first published in German in 1931 under the title Die Entwicklung des Christus Dogmas, Vienna, Psychoanalytischer Verlag, 1931, and translated in 1955, without any major reworking of the part of Fromm, by Professor James Luther Adams of the Harvard Divinity School. The Dogma of Christ, p. vii.

192 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 56-57, esp. fn. 21.

of the early followers of Christ; and secondly, their identification with the suffering Jesus.

(i) The oppressed condition of the early Christians.- According to Fromm, "every attempt to understand the origin of Christianity must begin with an investigation of the economic, social, cultural, and psychic situation"¹⁹³ of those who first accepted the Christian message. Palestine, at the time of Christ, had impoverished and despairing masses of poor people.¹⁹⁴ "As Roman oppression became heavier and the lowest classes more economically crushed and uprooted"¹⁹⁵ the situation worsened.

In the face of an increasingly intolerable situation, the masses found outlets in two directions: "political attempts at revolt and emancipation directed against their own aristocracy and the Romans, and in all sorts of religious-messianic movements."¹⁹⁶ Whatever the form which the outlet took, there was a common motivating force: "the hatred and the hope of the suffering masses, caused by their distress and the inescapability of the socioeconomic situation."¹⁹⁷ Where it was impossible for

193 Fromm, The Dogma of Christ, p. 22.

194 Ibid., p. 23.

195 Ibid., p. 27.

196 Ibid.

197 Ibid., p. 35.

hatred to take a political expression, and where hope for real improvement was the bleakest, the people found relief for their hatred and hope in religious-messianic movements.

"The bleaker the hope for real improvement became, the more this hope had to find expression in fantasies."¹⁹⁸

Against this background, Fromm describes the economic, political and psychic conditions of the early Christians.

To understand the psychological meaning of the first Christians' faith in Christ [...] it was necessary for us to visualize what kind of people supported early Christianity. They were the masses of the uneducated poor, the proletariat of Jerusalem, and the peasants in the country who, because of the increasing political and economic oppression and because of social restriction and contempt, increasingly felt the urge to change existing conditions. They longed for a happy time for themselves, and also harbored hate and revenge against both their own rulers and the Romans.¹⁹⁹

From this stratum of the poor, uneducated, revolutionary masses, Christianity arose as a significant historical messianic-revolutionary movement. Like John the Baptist, early Christian doctrine addressed itself not to the educated and the property owners, but to the poor, the oppressed, and the suffering.²⁰⁰

(ii) Identification with the suffering Jesus.-

Fromm's view of the identification of the suffering masses with the Christ who suffered hinges on his conviction that the original concept of Christ was contained in the adoptionist dogma--that is that a man had become God.

198 Ibid., p. 36.

199 Ibid., p. 35.

200 Ibid., p. 36.

The original concept of Christ was contained in the adoptionist dogma which said that God had adopted the man Jesus as his son, that is to say, that a man, a suffering and poor one, had become a god. In this dogma the revolutionary hopes and longings of the poor and downtrodden had found a religious expression.²⁰¹

What distinguished the early Christians from their neighbours was not their psychic attitude, but the form of expression it took. "The first Christians were a brotherhood of socially and economically oppressed enthusiasts held together by hope and hatred."²⁰² The difference lay in the sphere in which the early Christians tried to fulfill their hope and vent their hatred. While others tried political revolt, "the complete hopelessness of realization led the early Christians to formulate the same wishes in fantasy."²⁰³ As, according to Fromm, Jesus was seen by his followers as a suffering man who was exalted to the position of God, and who would soon come to execute judgment on those who were oppressing the poor and downtrodden, these poor and downtrodden people could find identification with Jesus who would free them from their oppressors. "A message which would allow them to project into fantasy all that reality had denied them must have

201 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 57, fn. 21.

202 -----, The Dogma of Christ, p. 42.

203 Ibid., p. 43.

been extremely fascinating."²⁰⁴ The faithful could identify with Jesus because he was a suffering human life themselves, and because he promised liberation.

Furthermore, they could identify with Jesus at a deeper level: Jesus was seen as one who had replaced the father (=God, =ruling class, =hated oppressors). In their identification with Jesus who had been exalted to a position of glory they could relieve their feelings of hatred towards the father-figure in any form.

These people hated intensely the authorities that confronted them with "fatherly" power. The priests, scholars, aristocrats, in short, all the rulers who excluded them from the enjoyment of life and who in their emotional world played the role of the severe, forbidding, threatening, tormenting father--they also had to hate God who was an ally of their oppressors, who had permitted them to suffer and be oppressed.²⁰⁵

The belief that a man is elevated to a god was an expression of the unconscious impulse of hostility to the father that was present in these masses. It presented the possibility of an identification and the corresponding expectation that the new age would soon begin when those who were suffering and oppressed would be rulers and thus become happy.²⁰⁶

Fromm finds a secondary (and less important) identification of the poor and suffering with the suffering Jesus in that these Christians felt a need for expiation of the

²⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 46-47.

²⁰⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 48.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 51.

guilt they had in rejecting the father-god. Fromm feels that although this is a secondary identification it was real and necessary. As hatred, aggression and death wishes were very strong and active in the early Christians, they found relief in their identification with the crucified. "They themselves suffered death on the cross and atoned in this way for their death wishes against the father."²⁰⁷ The early Christians needed such expiation, but this form of identification was not as primary as their identification with the Jesus who, because of his exaltation, had replaced the father, and would soon come to end oppression and punish those who were inflicting it.

The focus of the early Christian fantasy, however--in contrast to the later Catholic faith, to be dealt with presently--seems to lie, not in a masochistic expiation through self-annihilation, but in the displacement of the father by identification with the suffering Jesus.²⁰⁸

(b) Effect of the Emergence of the Feudal System.-

According to Fromm, the social situation had changed so much by the fourth century that, in effect, the oppressed class had been defeated to the point where it was no longer possible, psychically, to persist in the attitude of hatred which, he says, had marked the early Christians.²⁰⁹

207 Ibid., p. 50.

208 Ibid.

209 Ibid., p. 67.

The economic development was characterized by a process of gradual but progressive feudalization [...]. The political expression of this declining economy, which was regressing into a new estate-bound "natural economy," was the absolute monarchy as it was shaped by Diocletian and Constantine. A hierarchical system was developed with infinite dependencies [...]. In a relatively short time the Roman Empire became a feudal class state with a rigidly established order in which the lowest ranks could not expect to rise because the stagnation due to the recession of productive powers made a progressive development impossible.²¹⁰

This new order demanded of those who were at the bottom of the pyramid another attitude than the one that had marked the Christians who had lived in a situation of economic oppression and political revolution. When their situation was perceived as hopeless it "would have been futile and uneconomical to persist in the attitude of hatred."²¹¹ Although the aggressive impulses of the oppressed neither disappeared nor even diminished (the oppression which generated them was still present), these aggressive impulses were now turned back on the individual self. "The masses no longer identified with the crucified man in order to dethrone the father in fantasy, but, rather, in order to enjoy his love and grace."²¹² "If it was hopeless to overthrow the father, then the better psychic escape was to submit to him, to love him, and to

210 Ibid., p. 58.

211 Ibid., p. 67.

212 Ibid., p. 66.

receive love from him."²¹³ The psychic situation had changed from one of hostility and aggression which were directed outwards, to one of turned-in aggression, guilt feelings, atonement and expiation.

For the Catholic masses later on the situation had changed. For them no longer were the rulers to blame for wretchedness and suffering; rather, the sufferers themselves were guilty. They must reproach themselves if they were unhappy. Only through constant expiation, only through personal suffering could they atone for their guilt and win the love and pardon of God and of his earthly representative. By suffering and castrating oneself, one finds an escape from the oppressive guilt feeling and has a chance to receive pardon and love.²¹⁴

Evidently this provided a satisfactory form of social control for the ruling class. It diverted the aggression of the masses and assured the rulers of their dependency, gratitude and love. Further, the ruling class did not have to feel guilty about oppression of the poor whose sorry lot was the result of their own sins. As the Son of God had suffered voluntarily, suffering for the masses was a God-sent form of expiation for personal sins.²¹⁵

Fromm notes that just as the dogma of Christ for the early Christians reflected their social situation of revolutionary unrest (adoptionism: a fantasy in which the

213 Ibid., p. 67.

214 Ibid., p. 68.

215 Ibid., p. 69.

suffering man replaces the God-father-ruler), so also the new social order of stability was reflected in a change of the dogma of Christ (identity of God the Father and Jesus).

One year after Christianity was declared the official religion of the Roman Empire, the dogma was officially accepted that God and Jesus were identical, of the same essence, and that God had only manifested himself in the flesh of a man. In this new view, the revolutionary idea of the elevation of man to God had been substituted by God's act of love to come down to man, as it were, and thus save him from his corruption.²¹⁶

To return more directly to the theme of the relationship between rootedness and matriarchal vs. patriarchal societies, Fromm notes that there is a shift in emphasis "from a purely patriarchal to a blending between patriarchal and matriarchal elements."²¹⁷ Fromm had spoken earlier of the Jewish concept of God as being strictly patriarchal.²¹⁸ He notes now that in the development of Catholic dogma the notion of an all-loving and all-forgiving mother is reintroduced.

The Catholic Church herself--the all-embracing mother--and the Virgin Mother, symbolize the maternal spirit of forgiveness and love, while God, the father, represented in the hierarchical principle the authority to which man had to submit without complaining or rebelling. No doubt this blending of fatherly and motherly elements was one

²¹⁶ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 57, fn. 21.

²¹⁷ Ibid., p. 57.

²¹⁸ Ibid., p. 55.

of the main factors to which the church owed its tremendous attraction and influence over the minds of the people. The masses, oppressed by patriarchal authorities, could turn to the loving mother who would comfort them and intercede for them.²¹⁹

By way of recapitulation, this section ("Rootedness --brotherliness vs. incest") has considered the third of man's basic psychic needs. Three main points have been considered: firstly, the relationship of child to mother--its positive and negative aspects, and certain features of a matriarchal kind of society; secondly, the relationship of child to father--its positive and negative aspects, and certain features of a patriarchal kind of society; and thirdly, an analysis of the influence of social change on the Christian's perception of Christ.

What has been presented in this section is important for the discussion of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. In the third chapter the concept to 'mother', especially, is used in the discussion of the relationship between the individual and the Church on which one dimension of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II depends.

²¹⁹ Ibid., p. 57; cf., The Dogma of Christ, p. 7. In this earlier, and more extended, treatment of the same question, Fromm suggests that the notion of the Father has changed as well as that of the Son. "The strong, powerful father has become the sheltering and protecting mother." He points to the importance of the motherly divinity for Catholic Christianity from the fourth century on, which, he says, is evidenced by the cult of the Church and the cult of Mary.

5. Sense of Identity--Individuality vs. Herd Conformity.

One of the characteristics of man which distinguishes him from animals is his ability to say "I". In the animal, nature is lived: the animal does not have awareness of himself as a separate entity. Man, on the other hand, lives: he alone of all the animals can attribute actions, thoughts and feelings to himself as belonging to the "I". In a human child, the awareness of self as a separate entity grows slowly. One of the last words that a child learns to use is "I" in reference to himself. Because man has self-awareness, reason and imagination, because man can say "I" of himself, each man needs to have a sense of personal identity. As with the other psychic needs already presented, the need for identity is so fundamental to man that, according to Fromm, without a sense of identity a man would go insane.²²⁰ Yet in his fulfillment of this psychic need as with the others, man can fulfill his sense of identity in either a healthy or unhealthy way. He can grow to a true sense of personal identity, or he can accept for himself the mere illusion of personal identity.

Fromm indicates what is provided by the proper fulfillment of the need for true self-identity more by negation than by positive affirmation. He shows what

220 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 62.

happens to the person who does not achieve it. His negative method does yield, however, a cluster of positive characteristics of true self-identity: development as a free, self-determining, productive individual;²²¹ inner strength, integrity, security, judgment and "objectivity which will make him much less vulnerable to changing fortunes and opinions of others and will in many areas enhance his ability for constructive work";²²² freeing of capacity for love and reason, and man's experience of himself and his fellowmen in their--and his own--human reality.²²³ It may be noted that these characteristics have been mentioned in relation to the other psychic needs. They apply only to the person who has not neglected any of his psychic needs, and are not simply the result of true self-identity. The specific qualities of self-identity are seen less in the results of self-identity than in the mechanisms of escape that are used to avoid it, and in the illusions which are created to provide a substitute for it.

In The Sane Society²²⁴ Fromm traces a brief history of the development of individual self-identity. In the

221 Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 51.

222 -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 73.

223 -----, The Sane Society, p. 60.

224 Ibid., p. 62-63.

history of human development, there was an age when individual self-identity was not possible: the member of the primitive clan expressed his identity in the formula "I am we"--he found his identity in his identification with the other members of his clan. The man of medieval society was identified with and found his identity in his social role in the feudal hierarchy.²²⁵ Later in the course of its development,

Western culture went in the direction of creating the basis for the full experience of individuality. By making the individual free politically and economically, by teaching him to think for himself and freeing him from an authoritarian pressure, one hoped to enable him to feel "I" in the sense that he was the center and active subject of his powers and experienced himself as such. But only a minority achieved the new experience of "I". For the majority, individualism was not much more than a façade behind which was hidden the failure to acquire an individual sense of identity.²²⁶

Once individuality had become something desirable, each person had either to find a personal sense of individuality or find a substitute for a true sense of identity. Formerly many substitutes were found in nation, religion, class or occupation. In contemporary American society "the sense of identity is shifted more and more to the experience of conformity."²²⁷ The society exerts a positive pressure to keep the individual from sensing himself as "I"; social

225 Ibid., p. 62.

226 Ibid., p. 63.

227 Ibid.

conformity pressures the person to say of himself: "I am as you desire me."

The pressure to conformity is so pervasive and powerful that only a person of inner strength and integrity can resist finding an identity in conformity. Social pressure and social sanction lead to a levelling out of taste and judgment, and therefore to an illusion of self-identity. The alienated person craves for acceptance. He is unable to accept himself (because he is not himself) and so seeks acceptance from others. The price of this type of acceptance is conformity. "Being acceptable really means not being different from anybody else."²²⁸ Within this framework, "virtue is to be adjusted and to be like the rest. Vice, to be different."²²⁹ Where acceptance is bought at the price of conformity the person does not sense himself as the center of his active powers, as the "I"; he has not found true self-identity.

A further difficulty involved in true self-identity is the problem of distinguishing between genuine thinking and feeling (which originate in the subject) and pseudo thinking and feeling (which are not the subject's own, although he believes them to be). It is difficult to test

228 Ibid., p. 140.

229 Ibid., p. 142-143.

any given statement to determine whether it springs from the subject, because the decisive point is not what is thought but how it is thought. Genuine thinking and feeling are always original and new. Although others may have thought and felt the same things before, the person who thinks uses "thinking to discover something new in the world outside or inside of himself."²³⁰ Thought which arises from the true "I" is not an attempt (however logically stated the attempt may be) to harmonize one's own wishes with existing reality. It is an honest expression of reality as experienced by the subject--not as created or rationalized by him. Only careful observation can reveal the possible pseudo character of thought and feeling:

Most people are not even aware of their need to conform. They live under the illusion that they follow their own ideas and inclinations, that they are individualists, that they have arrived at their opinions as the result of their own thinking--and that it just happens that their ideas are the same as those of the majority.²³¹

²³⁰ Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 218-219. Cf. "Medicine and the Ethical Problem of Modern Man", in The Dogma of Christ, p. 175-194, esp. p. 190-191. The second ethical demand of our day is "to arrive at a new sense of 'I-ness,' of self, of an experience of 'I am,' rather than succumb to the automaton feeling in which we have the illusion that 'I think what I think,' when actually I do not think at all but am rather like someone who puts on a record and thinks that he plays the music of the record."

²³¹ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 11.

The illusion of authentic thought and feeling cloaks its absence. Pseudo-thought, bred by social pressure to conformity and reinforced by the token individuality of minor differences in taste and opinion, disguises the lack of true thought--a thought which springs from a true sense of identity. A pathetic need for difference only maintains the illusion of self-identity.²³²

A final note on the difficulty of achieving authentic thought springing from true self-identity: where the individual achieves identity by a narcissistic union with a group, his capacity for objectivity in thought and judgment is impaired. "In the dynamics of group narcissism, we find phenomena similar to those we discussed already in connection with individual narcissism."²³³ Although there are positive elements in group narcissism,²³⁴ from the viewpoint of self-identity group narcissism may

232 Ibid., p. 11-12.

233 Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 78.

234 "From the standpoint of any organized group which wants to survive, it is important that the group be invested by its members with narcissistic energy." The Heart of Man, p. 78. Fromm also notes that where a large group "makes it an object of its narcissistic pride to achieve something valuable in the fields of material, intellectual, or artistic production, the very process of work in such fields tends to lessen the narcissistic charge. The history of the Roman Catholic Church is one of many examples of the peculiar mixture of narcissism and the counteracting forces within a large group." Ibid., p. 80.

blind the individual to objectivity. The wishes of the group may be more important to him than his own, or, indeed, he may not have any of his own. Unless he achieves a sense of personal identity, or where he achieves identity only as a member of the group, he is incapable of independence of judgment--for to judge or think for himself might cut him off from the group. As the group is the source of his identity (and therefore of his life) he cannot afford to risk independence. "Concerning the pathology of group narcissism, the most obvious and frequent symptom, as in the case of individual narcissism, is the lack of objectivity and rational judgment."²³⁵

Such an abdication of personal thought and judgment witnesses to the strength of the desire for a sense of identity.

Behind the intense passion for status and conformity is this very need, and it is sometimes even stronger than the need for physical survival. What could be more obvious than the fact that people are willing to risk their lives, to give up their love, to surrender their freedom, to sacrifice their own thoughts, for the sake of being one of the herd, of conforming, and thus of acquiring a sense of identity, even though it is an illusory one.²³⁶

The difficulty of achieving original thought and the pressure of group narcissism are both concepts which

²³⁵ Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 85. Cf.: The Revolution of Hope, p. 16.

²³⁶ -----, The Sane Society, p. 64.

are used in the third chapter in the analysis of the principles presented in the first chapter regarding the Christian valuation and significance of suffering.

o. The Need for a Frame of Orientation and Devotion:
Reason vs. Irrationality.

The fifth of man's basic psychic needs is his need for a frame of orientation and devotion. In this section three main points are considered: firstly, the need, nature and quality of the frame of orientation and the frame of devotion; secondly, ideals, ideologies, and the deceptive nature of formulas; and thirdly, religion as a frame of orientation and devotion.

A. The Frame of Orientation and Devotion

In The Sane Society, Fromm compares the need for a frame of orientation and devotion with the physical process of orientation "which develops in the first years of life, and which is completed when the child can walk by himself, touch and handle things, knowing what they are."²³⁷ When the child has successfully learned to orientate himself in the world of physical objects, when he has learned to touch things, to walk, and to call things by name, he has a sense of physical orientation. This,

²³⁷ Ibid., p. 64.

however, is not sufficient for his general orientation in the world. He must proceed beyond physical orientation to psychic orientation. He must create for himself, or discover for himself, a framework which gives meaning to the anomalies of life, and which, hopefully, allows him to relate productively to the world and to order his values in a hierarchic form. Further, when he finds an intellectual frame of reference, he will need to express this ordering of values in his devotion to some object. A frame of orientation and devotion, then, may be defined as any "system of thought which try[s] to give an answer to the human quest for meaning and to man's attempt to make sense of his own existence."²³⁸

The terms 'frame of orientation' and 'frame of devotion' are not synonymous, although they are closely related. The term 'frame of orientation' refers to man's intellectual ordering of reality; the term 'frame of devotion' refers more to the experiential ordering of reality: to man's need to react to the dichotomy of his existence in the process (or experience) of living, in his feelings and actions.

(a) Frame of Orientation.- Fromm does not speak at length about the need for a frame of orientation. What

²³⁸ Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 56.

preoccupies him is the quality of the frame of orientation. Although a man may provide a very inadequate frame of orientation for himself, man must satisfy his need for a picture of the world and of his part in the world which is meaningful to him.

The need for a frame of orientation exists on two levels; the first and the more fundamental need is to have some frame of orientation, regardless of whether it is true or false. Unless man has such a subjectively satisfactory frame of orientation, he cannot live sanely. On the second level the need is to be in touch with reality by reason, to grasp the world objectively. But the necessity to develop his reason is not as immediate as that to develop some frame of orientation, since what is at stake for man in the latter case is his happiness and serenity, and not his sanity.²³⁹

As man cannot live sanely without a frame of orientation, the important question is the quality of this frame of orientation. All men must attempt to give an answer to their existence. One answer will be a good and adequate solution, another will be a bad and destructive solution. Although the need to provide a frame of orientation is absolute, the quality of the answer is relative.

The conclusion to which we are led with regard to the general problem of human motivation is that while the need for a system of orientation [...] is common to all men, the particular contents of the system which satisfy this need differ. These differences are differences in value: the mature, productive, rational person will choose a system which permits him to be mature, productive and rational. The person who has been blocked in his

239 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 65.

development must revert to primitive and irrational systems which in turn prolong and increase his dependence and irrationality.²⁴⁰

Historically, the answers given by man to his need for a frame of orientation differ widely in content and form: primitive systems of animism and totemism; non-theistic systems like Stoicism; theistic systems like Judeo-Christianity; secular systems like the search for success and prestige. All these systems are attempts "to give an answer to the human quest for meaning and to man's attempt to make sense of his own existence."²⁴¹ What is important is not the vocabulary used, but the quality of the 'answer-meaning system' employed.²⁴² A good frame of orientation is one which permits the person to be mature, productive and rational; a bad frame of orientation is one which prolongs a person's dependence and irrationality. Man himself is the ultimate criterion of the value of a frame of orientation, but he cannot be mature, productive

²⁴⁰ Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 57-58.

²⁴¹ Ibid., p. 56.

²⁴² Although the word 'religion' is normally reserved for a theistic system, Fromm notes that the force and drive behind the search for a system is the same, and thus he applies the word 'religion' to "any system of thought and action shared by a group which gives the individual a frame of orientation and an object of devotion." (Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 22.) Fromm's vocabulary is important, because a person may claim to believe in a theistic system and yet find the solution to his basic need for answers in a secular system which is "much closer to totemism and worship of idols than to any form of Christianity." (Man for Himself, p. 57.)

and rational unless his frame of orientation is objective. Man is the ultimate criterion of value, but only man in relation to nature, society, other men and himself. The individual who has a good frame of orientation will relate to the world in a productive manner (or generatively) "by conceiving it, by enlivening it and re-creating this new material through the spontaneous activity of [his] mental and emotional powers."²⁴³ The quality of the 'answer-meaning system' depends further on man's objectivity: his ability to see the world, nature, other persons and himself as they are, and not distorted by desires and fears. "The more man develops this objectivity, the more he is in touch with reality, the more he matures, the better can he create a human world in which he is at home."²⁴⁴ Such objectivity must be integral, for reason, man's instrument for arriving at the truth, is indivisible.

By this I mean that the faculty for objectivity refers to the knowledge of nature as well as to the knowledge of man, of society, and of oneself. If one lives in illusions about one section of life, one's capacity for reason is restricted or damaged, and thus the use of reason is inhibited with regard to all other sectors.²⁴⁵

The quality, then, of a frame of orientation depends on and is measured by its aptitude to put man in a productive

²⁴³ Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 95.

²⁴⁴ -----, The Sane Society, p. 65.

²⁴⁵ Ibid.

orientation to nature, society and himself, and by the degree of objectivity which it allows man in his perception of his world.

(b) Frame of Devotion.- The need for a frame of devotion springs from the sensate part of man: his feelings, senses and emotions. Thought systems are not sufficient unless they are realized at the level of sense and feeling. A frame of orientation must be supported by a frame of devotion.

The frame of devotion refers to the level of experience: elements of feeling and sense to be realized in action.

If man were only a disembodied intellect his aim would be achieved by a comprehensive thought-system. But since he is an entity endowed with a body as well as a mind he has to react to the dichotomy of his existence not only in thinking but also in the process of living, in his feelings and actions. He has to strive for the experience of unity and oneness in all spheres of his being in order to find a new equilibrium. Hence any satisfying system of orientation implies not only intellectual elements but elements of feeling and sense to be realized in action in all fields of human endeavor. Devotion to an aim, or an idea, or a power transcending man such as God, is an expression of this need for completeness in the process of living.²⁴⁶

A healthy relationship to the object of devotion provides man with an experience of unity and oneness in all spheres of his being. It reinforces his intellectual grasp of

²⁴⁶ Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 55.

the world, and gives meaning to his existence and position in the world. In contemporary society there is a greater need for a frame of devotion than there is for a frame of orientation because of the "growing split of cerebral-intellectual function from affective-emotional experience; the split between thought from feeling, mind from the heart, truth from passion."²⁴⁷ Man cannot arrive at a true and effective understanding of himself and of his society simply by overcoming his intellectual shortcomings of lack of information. The obstacles lie in emotional factors "which blunt or deform our instruments of thought to such an extent that they can become useless for the purpose of uncovering reality."²⁴⁸

One major form of potentially healthy and integrating experience of a 'frame of devotion' is that found in ritual. The need for ritual and the need for a frame of devotion are not synonymous, although Fromm extends the meaning of the word 'ritual' considerably, so that much of what he says of one may be said of the other. 'Ritual', in Fromm's vocabulary, refers to religious ritual and also to anything which performs the same function in a non-religious sphere as ritual does in a religious sphere.

²⁴⁷ Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, p. 41.

²⁴⁸ -----, May Man Prevail, p. 18.

Fromm uses the words 'ritual' and 'collective art' to denote a response to the world with the senses in a "meaningful, skilled, productive, active, shared way."²⁴⁹ Ritual is an acting out of man's grasp of the world by his senses.

If a man grasps the world and thus unites himself with it by thought, he creates philosophy, theology, myth and science. If man expresses his grasp of the world by his senses, he creates art and ritual, he creates song, dance, drama, painting, sculpture.²⁵⁰

Whether we think of the Greek drama, the medieval passion play, or an Indian dance, whether we think of Hindu, Jewish or Christian religious rituals, we are dealing with various forms of dramatization of the fundamental problems of human existence, with an acting out of the very same problems which are thought out in philosophy and theology.²⁵¹

Ritual is "a symbolic expression of thoughts and feelings by action [...]; [rituals are] expressions of common devotion to our ideals."²⁵² Men cannot do without ritual of some sort, because of the value of ritual for breaking through the surface of routine and "getting in touch with the ultimate realities of life."²⁵³ Because ritual (like symbolism) operates at a level beyond words it has a power to evoke, express and 'resolve' problems that

249 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 302.

250 Ibid., p. 301; cf.: The Forgotten Language, New York, Grove Press, 1951, p. 241-249.

251 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 132.

252 -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 106.

253 -----, The Sane Society, p. 131.

would otherwise remain untouched.

As with every other human experience, words are insufficient to describe the experience. In fact, most of the time words do the opposite: they obscure it, dissect it, and kill it. Too often, in the process of talking about love or hate or hope, one loses contact with what one was supposed to be talking about. Poetry, music, and other forms of art are by far the best-suited media for describing human experience because they are precise and avoid the abstraction and vagueness of worn-out coins which are taken for adequate representations of human experience.²⁵⁴

Ritual thus has an integrative function in life-experiences which an intellectual approach alone does not provide.

Symbolism and ritual have the function of 'acting out', 'keeping in mind' and 'resolving' problems that are otherwise too great to face. Man, faced by the complexity of being human, is moved to express in a shared way his answers to the problems that beset him.²⁵⁵

Religious rites may fulfill man's need for ritual, and thus for an integrative frame of devotion. In judging the value of religious rituals, one must not appeal to God as arbiter of whether or not the ritual fulfills the function it should: "the problem of religion is not the problem of God but the problem of man; religious formulations and religious symbols are attempts to give expression

²⁵⁴ Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, p. 11.

²⁵⁵ Cf. Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 208, on the therapeutic value of one form of 'ritual'--the Psalms.

to certain kinds of human experiences. What matters is the nature of these experiences."²⁵⁶ Ritual can, of course, become harmful if the outer shell becomes more important than the inner reality expressed.²⁵⁷ But equally the over-intellectual expression of a frame of orientation can rob man of a needed integrative experience.²⁵⁸

On the whole, our modern ritual is impoverished and does not fulfill man's need for collective art and ritual, even in the remotest sense, either as to quality or its quantitative significance in life.²⁵⁹

Finally, a frame of devotion may be a private affair, not shared with others. Fromm gives several examples of this as illustrations of the fact that man's need for an object of devotion is so strong that it can blind man's objectivity. Fromm cites the example of a young man who was so devoted to his father that he could not see what others saw: that the father was "a shrewd go-getter, interested solely in acquiring money and social prestige. The son's picture of the father was, however, that of the wisest, most loving, and devoted parent."²⁶⁰

256 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 109.

257 -----, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 48.

258 E.g.: according to Fromm, knowledge of God is through experience of union with God rather than through statements about God. (The Art of Loving, p. 27.)

259 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 303.

260 -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 29-30.

Fromm considers such a frame of devotion neurotic. In Psychoanalysis and Religion, he interprets neurosis as a private form of religion, although his use of the word religion is broad enough to embrace "any system of thought and action shared by a group which gives the individual a frame of orientation and an object of devotion."²⁶¹ The fundamental aims of human existence are independence, and the ability to be productive, to love, and to think. The value of a religion (frame of orientation and devotion) will be judged by its aptitude to lead man to fulfillment of these fundamental aims.²⁶²

B. Ideals, Ideologies, and the Deceptive Nature of Formulas

Man has longings and passions for freedom, equality, happiness and love which are deeply rooted in his nature and in the conditions of his human existence. He must satisfy these honestly, or let them become perverted into irrational passions and strivings. As few societies or individuals openly admit their irrational passions, such as a desire for destruction or conquest, man must "disguise (to himself and to others) his most immoral and irrational impulses, making them appear as though they were noble and

261 Ibid., p. 22, (italics suppressed).

262 Ibid., p. 27-28.

good."²⁶³ In this process, there are both social forces and psychological processes involved.

In speaking of the social forces at work, Fromm distinguishes between ideals and ideologies. An ideology is a set of ideals which is proclaimed to be the goal and motivating force of a society but which has, in reality, little effect on the behavior of that society. An ideology is a socially patterned rationalization.²⁶⁴ The process of rationalization permits the ideals to be proclaimed without having any notable effect on conduct. At the same time an ideology allows the society to believe and proclaim that it upholds the ideals of, for example, freedom, love and equality.

Fromm illustrates the deterioration of ideals into ideologies by speaking of the deterioration of the thought of the great spiritual leaders of the world. Many of these leaders have articulated the deepest longings of man. At first, the ideals presented were able to break through the defenses against authentic experience that people build up because of fear, indifference, and custom. The followers of these spiritual leaders experienced what they thought. But gradually the experience faded, and

²⁶³ Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 122; cf.: The Sane Society, p. 65-66.

²⁶⁴ -----, Man for Himself, p. 53.

people "began to have purely cerebral, alienated thoughts, instead of authentic experiences."²⁶⁵ Fromm suggests several reasons for this deterioration: fear of freedom; the fact that such ideals demand courage, will, and the capacity for making sacrifices. The primary reason, however, is a change in man's environment and a change in man himself. As social conditions deteriorated to a point where the material basis for a dignified life was not available to most, the ability to experience these ideals died. When this happened, man did not abandon his faith in the ideals, but he did reduce them to a form compatible with his social condition.

People could not live without faith in these ideals, and without the hope that in time they could be realized. The priests and kings who came after the prophets made use of this need. They appropriated the ideals, systematized them, transformed them into a ritual, and used them to control and to manipulate the majority. Thus the ideal was transformed into an ideology. The words remain the same, yet they have become rituals, and are no longer living words. The idea becomes alienated; it ceases to be the living, authentic experience of man, and becomes instead an idol outside of him, which he worships, to which he submits, and which he also uses in order to cover up and rationalize his most irrational and immoral acts.²⁶⁶

Fromm cites contemporary society as another example of the way in which "social necessity" (in this case largely an economic system) can lead to the proclamation

²⁶⁵ Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 122.

²⁶⁶ Ibid., p. 123-124. Note the pejorative use of the word 'ritual' in this context--an empty rite which no longer reflects an inner experience.

of an empty ideology which has little affective weight in the daily experiences of life. He says that modern man is alienated from the social forces which determine society and the life of everyone living in it. He notes that although at the social level there is an adherence to the best principles of democracy, yet in his private dealings with his fellow man modern man is "governed by the principle of egotism, 'each for himself, God for us all,' in flagrant contradiction to Christian teaching."²⁶⁷

Ideologies tend to have certain other characteristics. On the positive side, while an ideology may be used as a justification of all sorts of irrational and immoral behavior, it has the function of preserving (in a passive or dormant state) the ideals to which it gives lip service. "An ideology, then, is at the same time a deceptive substitute for an idea and its preservation, until the time has come for its revival."²⁶⁸ Another characteristic of ideologies is that they tend to achieve

²⁶⁷ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 127.

²⁶⁸ -----, May Man Prevail?, p. 124; cf.: Beyond the Chains of Illusion, p. 134; Revolution of Hope, p. 156: "Ideas become powerful only if they appear in the flesh; and idea which does not lead to action by the individual and by groups remains at best a paragraph or a footnote in a book--provided the idea is original and relevant. It is like a seed stored in a dry place. If the idea is to have influence, it must be put into the soil, and the soil is people and groups of people."

a certain 'correct' formulation. The 'correct' idea is repeated endlessly, and "all new ideas can be expressed only by slight changes of words or emphasis within the framework of the ideology."²⁶⁹ In this same line, Fromm suggests that the degree of tenacity with which a society clings to its ideology may indicate well the aliveness or deadness of the society. A dead or decaying society will hold much more tenaciously to its fictions than a society which is trying to create for its citizens an atmosphere of freedom and truth.

Decaying societies and classes are usually those which hold most fiercely to their fictions since they have nothing to gain by the truth. Conversely, societies--or social classes--which are bound for a better future offer conditions which make the awareness of reality easier, especially if this very awareness will help them to make the necessary changes.²⁷⁰

According to Fromm, the social character and the forces at work in a given society will determine the extent to which an idea or ideal will become a powerful force within that society. A radical leader may overestimate the strength of his party because he judges his strength only on the basis of the range of his ideas, and overlooks their lack of weight. "In other words, ideas can become powerful

²⁶⁹ Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 135. Fromm continues in this section with an application of this characteristic to religion.

²⁷⁰ -----, Beyond the Chains of Illusion, p. 130.

forces, but only to the extent to which they are answers to specific human needs prominent in a given social character."²⁷¹

An ideology can lead, furthermore, to a lack of objectivity, to a dulling of the critical sense. According to Fromm, most adults are sufficiently "educated" not to be in a "critical" mood, and hence accept as "sense" ideas which are plain nonsense. People accept and repeat phrases and slogans which, critically examined, show a lack of sensitivity to the cliché, "or so-called 'common sense,' that common sense which repeats that same nonsense over and over, and makes sense only because everybody repeats it."²⁷²

What are the psychic repercussions on those whose conscious values are in contradiction to their unconscious motivations? And what mechanism allows a person to be unaware of the real forces motivating him? The person (or society) who clings to an ideology when his actions give lie to what he professes is not necessarily lying (although what people would like to be usually involves contradictory traits²⁷³). Freud's discovery of the process of

271 Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 308; cf.: ibid., p. 83.

272 -----, "The Revolutionary Character", The Dogma of Christ, p. 164.

273 -----, Revolution of Hope, p. 94-95.

rationalization has shown that "a person can be fully sincere, subjectively, and yet that his thought [...] may be only a cover, a 'rationalization' for the real impulse which motivates him."²⁷⁴

However unreasonable or immoral an action may be, man has an insuperable urge to rationalize it, that is, to prove to himself and to others that his action is determined by reason, common sense, or at least conventional morality. He has little difficulty in acting irrationally, but it is almost impossible for him not to give his action the appearance of reasonable motivation.²⁷⁵

However, although man may succeed in 'justifying' his action to others, and to himself, by the process of rationalization, there is a psychic price to be paid.

This discrepancy between conscious and ineffective and unconscious and effective values creates havoc within the personality. Having to act differently from what he has been taught and professes to abide by makes man feel guilty, distrustful of himself and others.²⁷⁶

In the process of rationalization, people appeal to ideologies or to formulas to disguise their real motivation. The ideal and the ideology use the same formulation; yet, while an ideal is a living force linked to a life-experience, an ideology serves only to cloak the irrationality or immorality of an act.

²⁷⁴ Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 127.

²⁷⁵ -----, The Sane Society, p. 65-66.

²⁷⁶ -----, Revolution of Hope, p. 90.

What criterion of judgment can be used to distinguish between an empty or hollow formula, and an idea which is linked to the substratum of reality to which it refers? The final judgment must be made by analysing the actions of the person. In Psychoanalysis and Religion, Fromm suggests that it is the work of the psychoanalytic process to discover the truth underlying a person's actions.

A person can believe that he acts out of a sense of justice and yet be motivated by cruelty. He can believe that he is motivated by love and yet be driven by a craving for masochistic dependence [...]. In fact most rationalizations are held to be true by the person who uses them [...]. In the psychoanalytic process a person learns to recognize which of his ideas have an emotional matrix and which are only conventional clichés without root in his character structure and therefore without substance and weight.²⁷⁷

The analysis does not necessarily have to be that of the professional psychoanalyst. "Particularly concerning the sincerity of the postulate of love the words hold true: 'By their fruits shall ye know them.'²⁷⁸ Where there is growth, strength, freedom and happiness, it may be presumed that the formula is an ideal rather than an ideology. The main point is, however, that the mere repetition of, or appeal to, a formula is no guarantee that the real source of motivation is the ideal which is proclaimed.

²⁷⁷ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 74-75.

²⁷⁸ Ibid., p. 62.

C. Religion: Frame of Orientation and Devotion or Ideology

At various points in his writings, Fromm applies to religion the ideas presented in the two preceding sections. In applying the psychoanalytic approach to religion, Fromm tries to understand whether the thought system in question "is expressive of the feeling it portrays or whether it is a rationalization hiding opposite attitudes."²⁷⁹ Furthermore, he asks whether the thought system grows from a strong emotional matrix or whether it is an empty opinion. Fromm concedes that although it is easy in principle, it is difficult in practice to distinguish. The thought must be analysed in the context of the whole system. Discrepancies (logical inconsistencies) or a strong divergence between statement and life action must be sought out. This is a difficult process, as most people accept their own rationalizations as true. As they want to protect themselves from recognizing their true motivation, must believe in the rationalization all the more strongly.²⁸⁰

Basically, the final judgment of the validity of a religious system must be human growth and development.

²⁷⁹ Ibid., p. 60.

²⁸⁰ Ibid.

"If religious teachings contribute to the growth, strength, freedom and happiness of their believers, we see the fruits of love."²⁸¹ Fromm certainly concedes that religion--a religion with an effective basis in the hearts and actions of most of its adherents--can be a powerful force for good, but his basic judgment about the effectiveness of religious ideals is quite negative. For example,

This can be observed in all areas--most of all, perhaps, in religion, politics, and philosophy. The vast majority of all Americans believe in God; yet [...] it seems clear that this belief in God has very little consequence for action and the conduct of life. [...] If there is anything to be taken seriously in our profession of God, it is to recognize the fact that God has become an idol [...] of words, phrases, doctrines [...]. We consider people to be "religious" because they say that they believe in God. Is there any difficulty in saying this? Is there any reality in it except that words are uttered?²⁸²

Or again, Fromm says: "While people believe in God, they are not concerned with God."²⁸³

Christianity proclaims the highest ideals. However, if a person is going to rationalize an immoral action, and that person has the vocabulary of religion, he may well use his religious vocabulary as the language in which he will rationalize. For example, while the Bible is the most widely sold book in the West, it fails to have "any

281 Ibid., p. 62.

282 Fromm, Beyond the Chains of Illusion, p. 155-156

283 -----, May Man Prevail?, p. 125-126; cf.: The Sane Society, p. 157-158.

marked influence on the real experience of modern man, either on his feelings or on his actions."²⁸⁴ It does, however, serve the function of saving man from facing up to his own emptiness by providing him with a formulation of acceptable ideas which unfortunately have little connection with his real life. Any religious statement can be expressive of the opposite human attitude.

The answers given to man's need for a system of orientation and an object of devotion differ widely both in content and in form [...]. But whatever their contents, they all respond to man's need to have not only some thought system, but also an object of devotion which gives meaning to his existence and to his position in the world. Only the analysis of the various forms of religion can show which answers are better and which are worse solutions to man's quest for meaning and devotion, "better" or "worse" always considered from the standpoint of man's nature and his development.²⁸⁵

In the following chapter, the concepts of the frame of orientation, the frame of devotion, and rationalization are used in the investigation of the four principles presented in the first chapter concerning the Christian valuation and significance of suffering.

This chapter has presented the five basic psychic needs of man as posited by Erich Fromm in order to have a basis for a psychological investigation of the Christian

²⁸⁴ Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 63.

²⁸⁵ -----, The Sane Society, p. 66.

valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II presented in the first chapter. With these two chapters as a basis, the question posed by this thesis may now be answered: Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the five basic psychic needs of man posited by Erich Fromm, and under what conditions?

CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS OF THE CHRISTIAN VALUATION AND SIGNIFICANCE OF
SUFFERING ACCORDING TO VATICAN II IN THE LIGHT OF
THE FIVE BASIC PSYCHIC NEEDS OF MAN POSITED BY
ERICH FROMM

1. Introduction.

This introduction serves two functions: it both outlines the material presented in this chapter, and sketches the background against which this material should be read. This chapter examines the four principles presented in chapter one in the light of the material presented in chapter two, in order to arrive at a better understanding of some of the psychological dynamisms involved in the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, and to answer the question posed by this thesis: Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs,¹ and under what conditions? The criteria used in this study are psychological rather than theological. The focus of attention is on the potential of one religious doctrine to aid its adherents in human growth and

¹ "Man's basic psychic needs" refers here, as always in this study unless otherwise noted, to those needs as posited by Erich Fromm.

development.² As was noted in the introduction to this thesis, no attempt is made to examine every possible relationship between the four principles derived from Vatican II and the five basic psychic needs of man posited by Erich Fromm. Rather, certain significant points in these principles are selected for examination in the light of healthy or unhealthy possibilities of fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs posited by Erich Fromm.

Before beginning this study, there is a fundamental question that can be raised about the whole of chapter one: the question of the formulation of doctrine. Formulation itself has certain characteristics and certain hazards. A study of these presents a background against which the whole of chapter one may be read. The positive and negative characteristics of formulation cannot be overlooked in asking whether or not the Christian valuation and significance of suffering are conducive to a progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs, and under what conditions, because it is a written statement (or formulation) which is examined in this study. Therefore, as background for all four principles, this introduction presents some reflections on the positive and negative possibilities of

² Erich Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, New York, Bantam, 1950, p. 62.

the statements of Vatican II about the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, considering these statements from the point of view of formulation.

Although this section applies to what the Council said about the Christian meaning of suffering, a cautionary note must be introduced. The precise formulation of the four principles outlined in chapter one, as well as the selection of the material for these principles, is the work of the author. Vatican II did not directly state that these four principles sum up its teaching on the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. However, the documents of Vatican II are a written formulation. And as such they may be examined. Then what is said of the documents in general may be applied with the appropriate distinctions to the formulation of the four principles and their explanation.

A. Change of Formulation

There may be discerned certain positive characteristics in the formulation of the documents of Vatican II, as well as certain potentially negative characteristics. The documents represent considerable change over previous formulations. This change is in itself significant. Fromm notes that ideologies (ideology being, for Fromm, a pejorative term) tend to achieve a certain 'correct'

formulation. The 'correct' idea is repeated endlessly, and "all new ideas can be expressed only by slight changes of words or emphasis within the framework of the ideology."³ In this same line, Fromm suggests that the degree of tenacity with which a society clings to its ideology may indicate well the aliveness or deadness of the society. A dead or decaying society will hold more tenaciously to its fictions than a society which is trying to create for its citizens an atmosphere of freedom and truth. A decaying society has nothing to gain by the truth.⁴ The amount of reformulation of doctrine as well as the serious attempt to provide real answers for modern man indicate that the formulations of Vatican II represent an honest effort on the part of the bishops to create an atmosphere of freedom and truth for the 'citizens' of the Church. There was a conscious effort to speak to modern man, even though it involved abandoning the 'correct' formulations of 'classical theology' in favour of a more Scriptural, pastoral and problem-orientated approach.⁵ If ideologies tend to express

³ Erich Fromm, May Man Prevail? An Inquiry into the Facts and Fictions of Foreign Policy, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday Anchor, 1961, p. 135.

⁴ -----, Beyond the Chains of Illusion: My Encounter with Marx and Freud, New York, Simon and Schuster, 1962, p. 130.

⁵ Df. Chapter I, 1.B.

new ideas only by slight changes of words or emphasis the amount of reformulation by Vatican II is significant.

Change in formulation is not, in itself, a complete criterion, for, in order to be valid, this change must make the perception of reality easier; and the renewed awareness of reality must facilitate the necessary adaptations.

Here, one can only judge the Vatican Council in light of subsequent changes effected in the Church. Such a judgment is beyond the scope of this study. To the extent that the changes in formulation introduced by Vatican II help man to perceive hitherto unnoticed dimensions of reality and to adapt himself to this reality they are good. But such a judgment can only be made by an empirical examination of attitudes after a period of time.

B. Basis in Society

A further precision must be made. The formulations of Vatican II represent the work of a small group of leaders--a miniscule percentage of the Roman Catholic population. Even if the judgment is made that the formulative changes of Vatican II represent real progress for the leaders of the Church, it must be asked to what extent the other members of the Church have been able to accept these changes into their lives. Fromm notes that a radical leader may overestimate the strength of his party because he judges

his strength only on the basis of the range of his ideas, and overlooks their lack of weight. "Ideas can become powerful forces, but only to the extent to which they are answers to specific human needs prominent in a given social character."⁶ If it is conceded that the formulative changes of Vatican II represent an attempt on the part of Church leaders to create an atmosphere of freedom and truth, it must still be asked whether the ideas are answers to specific human needs prominent in a given social character to such an extent that they will or can become real forces.

According to Fromm, there could be many reasons why an idea would not become a force in man's life: fear of freedom; the fact that ideals demand courage, will and the capacity for making sacrifices. Above these, however, there is the need to reduce ideals to a form compatible with man's social condition. People could not live without faith in ideals, and without the hope that in time they could be realized. But unless the material basis for a dignified human life is present, man can only continue to repeat the formulas in which the ideals are being preserved, without actually letting these ideals become forces in his life.⁷ It would appear that the

⁶ Erich Fromm, Escape From Freedom, New York, Avon Discus, 1941, Forward II, 1965, p. 308.

⁷ -----, May Man Prevail?, p. 123-124.

re-examination and reformulation of Christian principles found in Vatican II is a sign of health, and an indication (albeit tacit) that, in the judgment of the bishops, there was a new basis in society for the living of Christian ideals. This is not a conclusive argument, but it may be a useful indication.

The nature of a document is such that the needs, desires and attitudes of the one who writes it may not be the same as those of the people who read it. Such a statement does not deny the possibility of human communication; nor, of itself, does it introduce the caution that there may not exist a common set of principles between the theologian-pastors who wrote the Documents of Vatican II and the theological laymen who read them. It simply notes a possibility, based on the distinction of reader from writer, that the Documents of Vatican II may only represent the thought of the writers, and that these writers may have misjudged the basis in society needed for an acceptance of their ideas.

C. Renewal: Reality or Illusion

There is a further danger in the formulative changes of Vatican II. The renewal of principles and proclamation of ideals may provide man with the illusion that the Church of which he is a part is renewed, simply because

its ideals have been proclaimed in a fresh and pertinent manner. The Council seems to be aware of this possibility.

For although the Catholic Church has been endowed with all divinely revealed truth and with all means of grace, her members fail to live by them with all the fervor they should.⁸

As Fromm indicated, the social adherence to the best principles and the practice of them in his dealings with his fellow man are not the same thing. Nonetheless it is a comfort to be able to proclaim the highest principles, even if they are for the individual only an empty ideology.⁹ The mere repetition of, or appeal to, a formula is no guarantee that the real source of motivation is the ideal which is proclaimed.

Rationalization, whether personal or social, has its psychic repercussions.

This discrepancy between conscious and ineffective and unconscious and effective values creates havoc within the personality. Having to act differently from what he has been taught and professes to abide by makes man feel guilty, distrustful of himself and others.¹⁰

⁸ Vatican II, "Decree on Ecumenism", article 4, p. 348, The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Ecumenism.)

⁹ Erich Fromm, The Sane Society, New York, Fawcett Premier, 1955, p. 65-66.

¹⁰ -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 74-75.

Thus the very positive and renewed formulations of Vatican II could serve to increase man's sense of guilt. To the extent that he sees his own failure in living up to the ideals, he will need to come to grips with his failure. He can do this by admitting his guilt and trying to live better; or he may see the task as so hopeless that he will continue to use the words of the formulation as a guilt-inducing cloak for his irrational acts.

D. Negative Effect of Renewed Formulation

A change in formulation, even when it involves something as strong as a condemnation of heresy, may not do away with the heresy itself, if the heresy has deep psychic roots, or is linked to a psychic need, or has a strong emotional matrix, or especially if it is linked to a societal form. An example of this is found in Fromm's statement that "God had only manifested himself in the flesh of a man."¹¹ While this statement may appear patently docetist, it may be asked whether Fromm has grasped an existing, and even common, religious attitude--whether, that is, the docetist position is commonly held. The condemnation of docetism, or any other heresy, may obviate the verbalization of a heresy, but may not

¹¹ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 57, fn. 21.

necessarily do away with the heretical view. The fact that no orthodox Roman Catholic would subscribe to the statement that God had only manifested himself in the flesh of a man does not necessarily mean that someone who considers himself an orthodox Roman Catholic would not subscribe, at a non-verbalized level, to such an attitude or its consequences. If this is applied to the Documents of Vatican II, it may be asked to what extent the reformulation of Christian doctrine may function as a force which drives contrary attitudes "underground" (in the human psyche). For although Vatican II did not define doctrines, this Council may have re-orientated and refocused Christian teaching to a sufficient extent that certain members of the Church find it unacceptable at a life-level, if not at a level of verbalization. A potentially hazardous effect of this would be that, because of the weight of the Vatican Council, certain people may accept the new formulation without changing their attitudes. Their acceptance and reiteration of the formulas of Vatican II may make it all the more difficult to challenge whichever of their operative principles are contrary to the spirit of Vatican II. The renewed formulation of Vatican II would, then, block development rather than foster it.

A final point may be considered. Some of the formulations of Vatican II are deceptively positive. For

example, "By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of unity for all mankind."¹² While such a statement is theologically correct it may have negative side-effects. For example, it may inhibit those who subscribe to it from asking of what the (largely western) Church is a sign to certain of the third world nations. Especially if this statement is read out of the context of all the Documents of Vatican II, it may not aid a person to take into consideration that there may be certain people for whom the Church is, for example, a sign of colonialism and economic domination. The point here is not to question the theological validity of the statement, but simply to caution that such a formulation may not make a positive contribution to the perception of reality. An ideological statement may lead to a lack of objectivity and to a dulling of the critical sense.¹³

In conclusion, the formulative changes of Vatican II indicate that, from the point of view of formulation, the Christian valuation and significance of suffering

¹² Vatican II, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church", article 1, p. 15, The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as The Church.)

¹³ Erich Fromm, "The Revolutionary Character", in The Dogma of Christ and Other Essays on Religion, Psychology and Culture, Garden City, N.Y., Doubleday Anchor, 1963, p. 164.

according to Vatican II are conducive to the progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs because formulative change helps create an atmosphere of freedom and truth in which reality may be more accurately perceived. This is so under the following conditions: firstly, that there is a basis in society for the acceptance, at a life level, of the ideal; secondly, that renewal is a reality, and not just a guilt-inducing rationalization; and thirdly, that the formulative changes of Vatican II are not accepted without a concomitant change of attitude.

This background material should be kept in mind in reading the analysis of the four principles which follows.

2. Principle One.

The first principle stated: In spite of the problems posed by suffering, sin, and death, the Christian presses forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope in Christ, who by his death has conquered death. Although this hope is related to the end of time, it does not diminish the importance of intervening duties, but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives.

In this analysis of the first principle in the light of the five basic psychic needs of man posited by

Erich Fromm, two main points are considered: firstly, some of the psychological dynamisms involved in the hope which underlies the first principle; and secondly, the idea proposed by Vatican II that suffering is the result of man's own sins.

A. Hope

Central to that aspect of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering set out in the first principle is the nature and quality of Christian hope: In spite of the problems posed by suffering, sin, and death, the Christian presses forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope in Christ, who by his death has conquered death. Although this hope is related to the end of time, it does not diminish the importance of intervening duties, but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives.¹⁴

Hope is also central to the humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs: negatively, because a form of hope which centers too much on the after-life induces a passivity toward the task of relating productively to the world;¹⁵ positively, because a humanizing renewal of

¹⁴ Cf. Chapter I, Principle I.

¹⁵ Cf. Fromm, The Dogma of Christ, p. 30.

man depends on his ability to come to grips with his hopelessness.¹⁶

This section considers the first principle from the perspective of hope. It does this in three points: firstly, a resumé and assessment of the first principle with special attention to the concept of Christian hope which underlies it; secondly, an analysis of some negative (de-humanizing) and positive (humanizing) forms and characteristics of hope; thirdly, an analysis of the impact of the society in creating or destroying a mood of hope.

(a) Christian Hope.- This section briefly recapitulates and assesses the first principle, with special attention to the concept of Christian hope which underlies it.

In spite of the problems posed by suffering, sin, and death, the Christian presses forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope in Christ, who by his death has conquered death. Although this hope is related to the end of time, it does not diminish the importance of intervening duties, but rather undergirds the

¹⁶ Erich Fromm, The Revolution of Hope: Toward a Humanized Technology, Toronto, Bantam, 1968, p. 24-25.

acquittal of them with fresh incentives.¹⁷ Without this hope "the riddles of life and death, of guilt and of grief go unresolved, with the frequent result that men succumb to despair."¹⁸ Christ's death-resurrection, into which man is inserted by baptism, frees man from ultimate death of soul or body. Thus liberated by the Spirit, the Christian is freed for a service of love towards God and man. This service is a continuation of the work of Christ, a gathering together of the children of God, torn apart by sin and dispersed throughout the world.¹⁹

As stated by Vatican II the Christian concept of hope which underlies the first principle should be a positive force for human growth. To the extent that the Christian allows his ultimate hope for total salvation in Jesus Christ to inform his life, he has a sound basis for a mature attitude towards life and death, love of self and neighbour, and for a profound involvement in fashioning anew the world according to God's design that it may reach

17 Vatican II, "Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World", article 21, p. 218, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as The Church Today.)

18 The Church Today, 21, 218.

19 J.L. Witte, "L'Église, 'Sacramentum unitatis' du cosmos et du genre humain", Vatican II, la Constitution dogmatique sur l'Église: L'Église de Vatican II, Tome II, commentaires, Paris, Cerf, 1966, no. 51b in the collection Unam Sanctam, p. 466. (Henceforth referred to as Unam Sanctam 51b.)

its fulfillment.²⁰ Certain of these positive characteristics may be made more explicit. The Council leaves no room for the idea that Christian hope is linked solely to the end of time.²¹ Rather it stresses hope as a virtue undergirding the task at hand. "For the Christian, humanity, culture, the State, world history, etc., are not merely intrinsically indifferent opportunities which he uses to work out his eternal salvation: they are also valuable in themselves and willed by God."²² The Council is aware that such a view may make considerable demands on the Christian: "Pressing upon the Christian, to be sure, are the need and the duty to battle against evil through manifold tribulations, and even suffer death."²³ But it is hope in ultimate salvation of body and soul which gives the Christian the strength to continue to press forward. "Far from diminishing man, [the Church's] message brings to his development light, life and freedom."²⁴ In this Christian framework of hope, the world and every human

20 The Church Today, 2, 200.

21 The Church Today, 21, 218.

22 Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, The Theology of the Spiritual Life, translated by Karl-H. and Boniface Kruger, Baltimore, Helicon, 1967, p. 59.

23 The Church Today, 22, 221.

24 The Church Today, 22, 220.

person (body and soul) are of great importance. Salvation is already present; the Messianic age has begun; it is the task of the Christian to make this salvation present to all by his commitment to his neighbour. Christian hope should free man from the paralysis of the dread of perpetual extinction,²⁵ and so assist him to be free from holding too tenaciously to his own comfort and satisfaction to the exclusion of the needs of others. For the Christian does not live as if material comfort were the highest good of man, but lives for the full development of every fellow human.²⁶

As it is described by Vatican II, there seems no reason to fault the Christian concept of hope. Rather than inducing a passivity towards the task of making the world more human, Christian hope lends strength to the building of a more human world. This is a productive relationship to the world. To the extent that this relationship is a result of Christian hope, that hope is a force for a progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs.

25 The Church Today, 22, 221-222.

26 Cf. Chapter I, Principle IV.

(b) Humanizing and Dehumanizing Hope.- However, as has already been indicated, the proclamation of a Christian ideal does not prove that it is the life-force even of the individual who proclaims it. What was said earlier about rationalization is applicable here.

Of more particular interest are Fromm's descriptions of healthy and unhealthy types of hope. His insights indicate certain characteristics which may be operative even in those who profess a Christian hope. His criticism of false hope can clarify what true Christian hope should not be; his positive descriptive of hope can underline the value of true Christian hope in supporting man's suffering and giving him the courage to press forward toward the recapitulation of all things in Christ. This critique is of value because, although the statements of Vatican II about hope are not faulted, Fromm's analysis may offer some insights into positive and negative attitudes which are motivational forces in those whose profession of the Christian ideal of hope is a cloak for other attitudes.

There are many who feel consciously hopeful and unconsciously hopeless, and there are a few for whom it is the other way around. What matters in the examination of hope and hopelessness is not primarily what people think about their feelings, but what they truly feel. This can be recognized least from their words and phrases [...].²⁷

(i) Negative Possibilities of Hope.- Negatively, Fromm points out that the promise of immortality may weaken man's commitment to his present life. An over-emphasis on the trans-historical ideal of salvation may overshadow "the hope for man's perfection on this earth and for his capacity to build a 'good society'."²⁸ Where the idea of immortality is a denial of the tragic fact that man's life ends in death it may lead to the suppression of an emotion which touches deeply the roots of personality: the sense of tragedy. "The awareness of death and of the tragic aspect of life, whether dim or clear, is one of the basic characteristics of man."²⁹ While ideally it should not be so, there may be a danger that hope in Christ and ultimate personal resurrection will so dull the sense of tragedy that they flatten and sterilize the ability to love life.

27 Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, p. 10-11.

28 -----, May Man Prevail?, p. 9.

29 -----, Escape From Freedom, p. 177.

Instead of allowing the awareness of death and suffering to become one of the strongest incentives for life, the basis for human solidarity, and an experience without which joy and enthusiasm lack depth and intensity, the individual is forced to repress it. But, as is always the case with repression, by being removed from sight the repressed elements do not cease to exist. Thus the fear of death [...] remains alive. [...] But being repressed it remains sterile. It is one source of the flatness of other experiences, of the restlessness pervading life.³⁰

Such a suppression of tragedy is not necessarily inherent in the concept of hope which underlies the first principle. A personal hope that, like Christ, the individual's dying will end in resurrection should heighten his ability to face and integrate a sense of tragedy, and therefore become a strong incentive for life, a basis for human solidarity, and an experience which gives depth and intensity to the individual's experience of joy and enthusiasm.³¹ For the Christian does not deny death. Christian death remains a ^htreat to the total situation of man; the fact of death is faced neither with bourgeois optimism nor with total despair, but in a complete and definitive act of hoping faith in an incomprehensible God. The sense of tragedy is thus neither removed nor allowed to drive man into a sense of hopeless despair.³² However, the

30 Ibid., p. 271.

31 Ibid.

32 Cf. Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. III, p. 75.

negative possibility of an unhealthy form of hope still remains.

A further danger to true hope is a contemporary attitude which disregards the present. "This tendency coincides with a general attitude characteristic of modern man. He lives in the past or in the future. [...] This abstractified and alienated form of love serves as an opiate which alleviates the pain of reality."³³ In this same sense, hope may be passive and have very little relationship to the 'now'.

Time and the future become the central category of this kind of hope. Nothing is expected to happen in the now but only in the next moment, the next day, the next year, and in another world if it is too absurd to believe that hope can be realized in this world.³⁴

It does not seem inconceivable that a too future-orientated concept of hope was consciously, if tacitly, rejected by the Council's statement that true Christian hope, although it is related to the end of time, does not diminish the importance of present duties.³⁵ A tendency to regard this world and this life as only a preparation for another, better life is not unknown in Christian thought.³⁶

³³ Erich Fromm, The Art of Loving, New York, Bantam, 1956, p. 85.

³⁴ -----, The Revolution of Hope, p. 7.

³⁵ Cf. The Church Today, 21, 218.

³⁶ Cf. Fromm, The Dogma of Christ, p. 70.

Of note here is Fromm's insight that there exists an attitude which expects nothing to happen in the 'now', and that it is of no particular importance whether the expectation is linked to the next moment or the next life. Any overly future orientation robs the present of its value and beauty. True hope should enhance the present, for it is in the now that salvation is present and the Messianic age has begun. But if the now is a moment of suffering, it requires a mature hope to maintain a healthy balance between the 'now' and the future. Escape into the future is an easier path than a solid commitment to valorize and redeem the present. But it is a negative (de-humanizing) form of hope.

Fromm notes a further negative form of hope: when an expected salvation fails to occur (in either a political or religious sphere) "the hope that it will occur eventually is not given up explicitly, but it is asserted that salvation has already taken place in a certain provisional sense."³⁷ Christianity proclaims that salvation is already present in the saving presence of Jesus Christ, but there is a danger that an active belief in such salvation will be replaced by hope in an institution.

³⁷ Erich Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods: A Radical Interpretation of the Old Testament and Its Tradition, New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1966, p. 156.

This shift is combined with the building of an organization which itself becomes the carrier of salvation. In the Christian development, the Church became the instrument of salvation; those who joined her were individually saved by their adherence, even though the second coming of Christ would eventually affect all of mankind.³⁸

While the Church sees itself, in fact, as the instrument of salvation, it is not in the closed sense indicated in the above quotation.

By her relationship with Christ, the Church is a kind of sacrament or sign of intimate union with God, and of the unity of all mankind. She is also an instrument for the achievement of such union and unity.³⁹

The difference in the spirit of these two quotations appears to validate Fromm's criticism that the Church may become a replacement for true Christian hope, if it is conceded that Fromm's statement is an accurate analysis of an attitude (which existed, or may continue to exist).

Finally, Fromm quotes with apparent approval a statement of John Dewey.

Men have never fully used the powers they possess to advance the good in life, because they have waited upon some power external to themselves and to nature to do the work they are responsible for doing.⁴⁰

38 Ibid., p. 156; cf. The Revolution of Hope, p. 19.

39 Vatican II, "Dogmatic Constitution on the Church", article 1, p. 15, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as The Church.)

40 John Dewey, "A Common Faith", quoted by Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 20, fn. 10.

If such an attitude is present in the Christian he is not living the spirit of hope described by Vatican II. In this mentality, hope is more a passive expectation than an incentive to work with a full measure of strength at the task before the Christian. But because such an attitude demands less energy and commitment than the contrary attitude, it appears that it would be unrealistic to ascribe true Christian hope to all who profess it.

(ii) Positive Possibilities of Hope.- Fromm indicates the need for and characteristics of a hope which leads to a humanizing fulfillment of man's basic needs. Firstly, Fromm indicates a great need for hope in today's society. "Quite aside from all dangers from without, our inner emptiness and deep-rooted lack of hope will eventually lead to the fall of Western civilization."⁴¹ True hope is an essential ingredient for the building of a sane, human society. Such hope is paradoxical, and it is closely linked to faith.

To hope means to be ready at every moment for that which is not yet born, and yet not become desperate if there is no birth in our lifetime. There is no sense in hoping for that which already exists, or for that which cannot be. Those whose hope is weak settle down for comfort or for violence; those whose hope is strong see and cherish all signs of new life and are ready every moment to help the birth of that which is ready to be born.⁴²

⁴¹ Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 16.

⁴² -----, The Revolution of Hope, p. 9.

More succinctly, Fromm states that "to hope is a state of being. It is an inner readiness, that of intense but not-yet-spent activeness."⁴³ Certain characteristics emerge from these descriptive descriptions. Hope is primarily an inner attitude. It is neither a feverish activism nor a refusal to engage in constructive activity. Hope is not desperate: it accepts that what is begun may not come to fruition in the individual's lifetime. In this regard, Fromm notes the support which was given the Jewish people by their expectation of a Messiah.⁴⁴ It would appear that the Christian's hope in his and the world's ultimate fulfillment in Christ should perform a similarly supportive function. Weak hope leads one to settle down for comfort. Christian hope is not satisfied with calling comfort hope. But evidently a willingness to sacrifice comfort in the here-and-now demands a strong hope infused with faith.⁴⁵

Fromm links hope and faith closely: in periods of disbelief hope vanishes, for nobody cares to devote himself to the unfruitful.

The position of "the paradox of hope" is one of "faith", faith in the sense of certainty based on the inner experience of the goal, even though it has

⁴³ Ibid., p. 12.

⁴⁴ Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 143.

⁴⁵ It may be asked, for example, what percentage of North American Catholics lead lives that speak more of middle-class comfort than of radical hope.

not yet been reached, and no proof exists that it ever will be. Such faith will never be possible in a spectator who "waits and sees" what will happen. It is possible only for the one who with all his energy is tensed toward the goal.⁴⁶

Christian hope is not a spectator activity. There is a potential danger that an over-confidence in God's saving activity will be an excuse to "wait and see." But the Christian whose certainty is based on his inner experience of the goal (salvation in Jesus Christ⁴⁷) will put his full energy into the task of spreading this salvation: that is, into fashioning anew the world according to God's design until it reaches its fulness. Hope, in this sense, is not an unfounded optimism that everything will somehow work out all right. Nor is it a denial of the tragic elements of man's life. There are some types of suffering which are necessary for the achievement of a chosen goal; there are some risks that have to be taken. But the object of human existence is neither security and lack of tension, nor a frantic attempt to cover up boredom and dissatisfaction. "The psychic task which the person can and must set for himself is not to feel secure but to be able to tolerate insecurity without panic and undue fear."⁴⁸

⁴⁶ Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 157.

⁴⁷ This "inner experience of the goal" highlights the need for a mature and personally integrated Christianity.

⁴⁸ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 174; cf. p. 182 and 237.

Christian hope should provide a sound basis for a radical tolerance for the insecurity inherent in human living.

That the earthly and the heavenly city penetrate each other is a fact accessible to faith alone. It remains a mystery, which sin will keep in great disarray until the splendor of God's son is fully revealed. Pursuing the saving purpose which is proper to her, the Church not only communicates divine life to men, but in some way casts the reflected light of that life over the entire earth.

This she does most of all by her healing and elevating impact on the dignity of the person, by the way in which she strengthens the seams of human society and imbues the everyday activity of men with a deeper meaning and importance. Thus, through her individual members and her whole community, the Church believes she can contribute greatly toward making the family of man and its history more human.⁴⁹

Confidence in God's ultimate saving power may be a source of strength. For instance, the death of a loved one may be made more bearable by hope in an after-life. But an over-confidence in God's ultimate saving power may equally cloak a real disregard for the poor and suffering because no matter what the Christian does or does not do God will reward the suffering of the poor in the life to come. A final caution may be added: the ultimate victory in Christ which is celebrated in baptism and the Eucharist⁵⁰ should reinforce Christian hope by constantly renewing the conviction that in Christ "the whole man is renewed from within, even to the achievement of the 'redemption of the

⁴⁹ The Church Today, 40, 239.

⁵⁰ Cf. Principle III.

body' (Rom. 8:23)."⁵¹ But does it? Is the predominant impression given by or received from the liturgy an impression that salvation is in the here-and-now, or in the hereafter. The answer to that question will influence the Christian's hope.

The effectiveness of the conviction that what has happened to Christ will also happen to the Christian depends in some measure, it would appear, on his ability to see Jesus of Nazareth as a man who was also God, rather than as God appearing in the flesh of a man. Does current liturgical expression aid the Christian in his identification with Jesus of Nazareth as a man? Fromm's reflection in The Sane Society is a theological oversimplification, but his underlying insight can raise a question about the value of Roman Catholic liturgical worship as a means of strengthening hope in spite of suffering and difficulties.

The original concept of Christ was contained in the adoptionist dogma which said that God had adopted the man Jesus as his son, that is to say, that a man, a suffering and poor one, had become a god. In this dogma the revolutionary hopes and longings of the poor and downtrodden had found a religious expression. One year after Christianity was declared the official religion of the Roman Empire, the dogma was officially accepted that God and Jesus were identical, of the same essence, and that God had only manifested himself in the flesh of a man.⁵²

51 The Church Today, 22, 223.

52 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 56-57, fn. 21.

The Christian's view of Christ may influence his ability to identify with him. The stronger the sense of identification, the more likely he may be to forego a "get it all now" attitude, and become seriously engaged in the task of renewing the world in imitation of Christ who "was crucified and rose again to break the stranglehold of personified evil, so that this world might be fashioned anew."⁵³ The less the sense of identification with Christ, the less likely is the Christian to be fully involved in a life which speaks of Christian hope. And certainly a normal human being should find it easier to identify with a man, Jesus, who was also God, than with a God who only appeared in the flesh of a man.

In conclusion, true Christian hope should strengthen the Christian's commitment to the area where, according to Fromm, true humanness is exercised: in a mature, productive relationship to the self, to others, and to the world. A personal and healthy conviction of the saving power of Christ should strengthen a love of life in the present--for it is in the present that God promises a beginning of the blessings of the Messianic age. "Faith, like hope, is not a prediction of the future; it is the vision of the present in a state of pregnancy."⁵⁴ Even

⁵³ The Church Today, 2, 220.

⁵⁴ Fromm, The Revolution of Hope, p. 14.

when the individual is faced with situations which do not seem to speak of present Messianic blessings, he should, if he has true Christian hope, be able to face the tension between the 'now' and the 'not yet' with a reasonable equanimity.⁵⁵ According to Fromm, "all genuine ideals have one thing in common: they express the desire for something which is not yet accomplished."⁵⁶ In this sense, the hope which underlies the first principle is a genuine ideal, accepting both the 'now' and the 'not yet'.

(c) Influence of Society on Christian Hope.-

For Fromm, man's ability to face suffering is dependent on the way in which society has culturally prepared him to see himself and his goals. Society conditions man's response to the fulfillment of his basic psychic needs. "To understand the individual we must see him in the context of the culture which molds him."⁵⁷ Fromm applies this concept to hope: "Hope and hopelessness are not primarily individual psychological factors; they are mainly created by the social situation of a country."⁵⁸

⁵⁵ Karl Rahner, Vivre et croire aujourd'hui, Paris, Desclée, 1967, p. 52-53.

⁵⁶ Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 292.

⁵⁷ Ibid., p. viii.

⁵⁸ -----, May Man Prevail?, p. 237-238.

This section considers hope in its social situation in an attempt to understand some of the dynamisms which make hope a difficult virtue in Western society, and therefore increase the difficulty of the living out of the first principle.

Fromm claims that "hope is fast disappearing in the Western world";⁵⁹ and describes its psychic effects.

In fact, the responses and reactions to the shattering of hope vary a great deal, depending on many circumstances: historical, personal, psychological, and constitutional. Many people, probably the majority, react to the disappointment of their hopes by adjustment to the average optimism which hopes for the best without bothering to recognize that not even the good but perhaps, indeed, the worst may occur. As long as everybody else whistles, such people whistle too, and instead of feeling their hopelessness, they seem to participate in a kind of pop concert. They reduce their demands to what they can get and do not even dream of that which seems to be out of reach. They are well-adjusted members of the herd and they never feel hopeless because nobody else seems to feel hopeless. They present the picture of a peculiar kind of resigned optimism which we see in so many members of contemporary Western society--the optimism usually being conscious and the resignation unconscious.⁶⁰

For Fromm, a restoral of hope requires a renewal of society. An individual cannot create, independently, a mood of hope. Fromm points out that although a person's sense of hope may have been shattered in childhood, a

⁵⁹ Fromm, Revolution of Hope, p. 23.

⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 21.

society in which there is a strong current of hope can rekindle his hope even as an adult. Conversely, if a person lives in a society that has little hope, he will tend to be depressed and hopeless, because his society has lost the spirit of hope.⁶¹ Fromm describes the social importance of hope for a renewal of man.

Progress [...] depends on our capacity to come to grips with our hopelessness. First of all, we have to see it. And second, we have to examine whether there is a real possibility of changing our social, economic, and cultural life in a new direction which will make it possible to hope again.⁶²

Fromm has indicated that the material basis for a dignified life is indispensable for keeping hope centered on the present. "The bleaker the hope for real improvement [...] the more the hope [has] to find expression in fantasies."⁶³ The existence of a material basis for a human world (at least in Western society) may shed some light on Vatican II's emphasis on the renewal of this world.

But the suffering of hopelessness is linked to a deeper malaise in man. The Vatican Council has taken note of this general "heartsickness".

61 Ibid., p. 23.

62 Ibid., p. 24-25.

63 Fromm, The Dogma of Christ, p. 30.

In the face of the modern development of the world, an ever-increasing number of people are raising the most basic questions [...] with new sharpness: What is man? What is this sense of sorrow, of evil, of death, which continues to exist despite so much progress?⁶⁴

The hope which should be the Christian's has not alleviated this sense of sorrow in society-at-large. Perhaps this is because, being members of a broader, pluralistic society (or of a society which, whatever its ideology, is not Christian in its ideals) Christians are influenced strongly by the pervading air of hopelessness. This hopelessness may not be conscious--it may be an adjustment to an average optimism which is, however, not at all the same as hope. In this regard, Fromm has pointed out the pressure of group conformity in levelling opinion and ideals to a least common denominator. The pressure to conformity is so persuasive and powerful that only a person of inner strength and integrity can resist finding an identity in conformity.⁶⁵ Social pressure and social sanction lead to a levelling out of taste and judgment. If the Christian's hope is born of inner strength and integrity, and of his personal experience of salvation in Jesus Christ, he may be able to resist the mood of hopelessness. But certainly it must be asked whether the average Christian will be more influenced by

⁶⁴ The Church Today, 10, 208.

⁶⁵ Cf. Chapter II, 5. "Sense of Identity--Individuality vs. Herd Conformity".

his social milieu (with its air of hopelessness) than by his vision.

This raises a further question: is the Church in itself a strong enough society that the Christian can find in the Church's communal hope a sufficiently strong support to sustain him in genuine hope? In countries which can no longer be described as Christian, or in pluralistic societies where the Church has moved beyond the ghetto stage, it seems doubtful that this would be so. The average Christian's contact with his Church is limited to a very brief time-segment of his total life.⁶⁶ Nor does it seem self-evidently desirable that the Church become a society within the total society. Were this the case, the danger would be present that Church membership would be perceived as a withdrawal from the world, and thus would emphasize the otherworldly character of hope. As was indicated in the first chapter, this is not the intention of Vatican II. The thrust of the Council is rather to join with all men who are willing to build a human world.

So it is that this Messianic people [...] is nonetheless a lasting and sure sign of unity, hope, and salvation for the whole human race. Established by Christ as a fellowship of life, charity, and truth, it is also used by him as an instrument for the redemption of all, and is sent forth into the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth.⁶⁷

66 The problem raised by identification with the Church is discussed later in this chapter.

67 The Church, 9, 26.

Christians should collaborate willingly and wholeheartedly in establishing an international order involving genuine respect for all freedoms and amicable brotherhood between all men. The objective is still all the more pressing since the greater part of the world is still suffering from so much poverty that it is as if Christ Himself were crying out in these poor to beg the charity of the disciples.⁶⁸

Finally, this council desires that by way of fulfilling their role properly in the international community, Catholics should seek to cooperate actively and in a positive manner with their separated brothers, who together with them profess the gospel of love, and with all men thirsting for true peace.⁶⁹

The Church should have a positively creative function by infusing society-at-large with a living witness to true hope. But to the extent that the mood of Western society is one of despair, it will be more difficult for the individual to maintain his mood of true Christian hope.

This section has yielded two main conclusions: firstly, the Christian concept of hope, which is fundamental to the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, is conducive to a progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs. In spite of a Christian belief in an after-life, the Christian concept of hope does not induce a passivity toward the task of making the world more human, but rather lends strength to the building of a more human world. This is true under the following conditions:

⁶⁸ The Church Today, 88, 302-303.

⁶⁹ The Church Today, 90, 304.

firstly, that hope is not merely a rationalization; secondly, that it does not suppress a sense of tragedy; thirdly, that it is centered in the 'now' as well as in the 'not yet'; and fourthly, that it is not transferred to the institution.

The second conclusion is this: the Church's communal hope may not provide enough support to sustain hope in an individual if the mood of his society is one of despair. To the extent that the mood of Western society is one of despair, it will be more difficult for the individual to maintain the true Christian hope on which the Christian valuation and significance of suffering depend. However, it may be concluded that, within the context of what has been discussed in this section, the Christian valuation and significance of suffering are conducive to the progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs.

B. Suffering Caused by Sin

Vatican II has contributed to the recognition of suffering by showing that personal sin is the cause of man's suffering. This point was treated in the first principle of chapter one of this study. This section asks whether the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering presented in the first principle concerning sin as a cause of suffering is conducive to a

progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs, and under what conditions. It does so in three points: firstly a resumé of the Council's teaching; secondly, a presentation of the relationship between the Council's thought and the thought of Erich Fromm; and thirdly, a presentation of certain difficulties arising from the society in which man lives.

(a) A Resumé.- According to Vatican II, the primary cause of suffering in the world is the sin of man. As image of God, man is God's lieutenant. Sin degrades man's ability to humanize and dominate nature, and his ability to relate himself to others. The Council states:

Pulled by manifold attractions, he is constantly forced to choose among them and to renounce some. Indeed, as a weak and sinful being, he often does what he would not, and fails to do what he would do. Hence he suffers from many internal divisions, and from these flow so many and such great discords in society.⁷⁰

Thus the Council links the suffering of man to his sins. Sin, in this sense, is not to be understood simply as an external stain contracted by disobedience to commands arbitrarily imposed from without. It is, rather, the failure of man to achieve his own fulfillment because he has set himself against God and sought to find his fulfillment apart from God.⁷¹ By ascribing suffering to the sin of man the Vatican Council has both placed the blame for

⁷⁰ The Church Today, 10, 208.

⁷¹ The Church Today, 13, 211.

suffering on man himself (and not on God) and has challenged man to face his suffering and that of others.

The Council notes that there are types of suffering which are not recognized as such. "No doubt very many whose lives are infected with a practical materialism are blinded against any sharp insight into this kind of dramatic situation."⁷² It further links the suffering which is involved in an anxiety about the meaning of life to a failure of man to respond to God, who alone "provides a fully adequate answer to these questions."⁷³

(b) Relationship between Fromm and Vatican II.-

Although Fromm would not define sin in terms of an attempt to find fulfillment apart from God, Fromm does see sin, or evil, as the choice of a course of action which is destructive of man's true self. One course of action is better than another because one leads to life, the other to death.

Those who do not believe in a moral law and its realistic long-range consequences will, of course, never agree that the kind of alternative as announced by the Bible is a realistic alternative and not just a threat. Those, on the other hand, including myself, who are convinced that there are moral laws which have their inescapable consequences for man will examine the biblical alternatives as to their validity.⁷⁴

⁷² The Church Today, 10, 208.

⁷³ The Church Today, 41, 240; cf. The Church Today, 10, 207-208.

⁷⁴ Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 178.

Also, Fromm describes in his own vocabulary a point which is very similar to that of Vatican II: that a practical materialism may blind man to the damage which he is doing to himself. Fromm points out that some people do not wish to face their suffering. They try to escape it or to run away from it because they have compensated for and cloaked over their suffering (dissatisfaction, boredom, anxiety, or guilt over a wasted life) or because they do not wish to endure the suffering that is necessary for achieving a certain goal.

Man has the power to love, and if he cannot make use of his power, if he is incapable of loving, he suffers from this misfortune even though he may try to ignore his sufferings by all kinds of rationalizations or by using the culturally patterned avenues of escape from the pain caused by his failure.⁷⁵

It would seem unrealistic to maintain that Fromm's statement that many people do not wish to face their own suffering, the suffering of a wasted and unproductive life,⁷⁶ is applicable only to those who do not call themselves Christian, especially in light of the statement quoted above from Vatican II.⁷⁷

(c) Societal Influence.- A potential source of the failure of man to heed the words of Vatican II about the

⁷⁵ Fromm, Man For Himself, p. 221.

⁷⁶ -----, The Sane Society, p. 182.

⁷⁷ The Church Today, 10, 208.

cause of his sufferings and those of others may be the society in which the individual lives. Fromm considers that a society can be so sick that the failure of an individual to attain the ideal of a productive life will go unnoticed. To a certain extent man will not even feel threatened by this, because he will, in judging himself by the standards of his society, find himself to be quite normal. Yet conformity to a society which is not conducive to productive, creative love cannot be construed as a sign of mental health.⁷⁸ Mental health is not conformity to a socially patterned defect. If it is conceded that some of the societies to which the words of Vatican II are addressed exhibit signs of pathology, then certain members of that society will find it difficult to accept the challenge of Vatican II to examine their lives as potential causes of their own suffering and that of others. Society is capable of so dulling man's sensitivity to his own pain that he is no longer capable of recognizing how much or from what he suffers. Man may "try to ignore his suffering by all kinds of rationalizations or by using the culturally patterned avenues of escape from the pain caused by his failure."⁷⁹

78 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 180; cf. The Revolution of Hope, p. 21.

79 -----, Man For Himself, p. 221.

Before human suffering can be alleviated it must be recognized as such: as suffering, and as suffering which can be alleviated. It is here that Fromm sees the value or the role of suffering, for unless man can suffer and recognize that he suffers there is no possibility of his liberation from this suffering.⁸⁰ The recognition of suffering by Vatican II, and the challenge placed before man to recognize that this suffering is caused by his own sin, would seem to contribute to the progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs. But the negative influence of his society may be so strong that he is unable or unwilling to even recognize that he suffers, and thus to undertake a humanizing fulfillment of these needs.

Vatican II's emphasis that the reason for suffering is personal sin should help man recognize that he is capable of combating suffering in a positive fashion. It should also help negate the reification of suffering which de-sensitizes Western man to the reality of human suffering.⁸¹ In these ways the emphasis of Vatican II that personal sin is the cause of suffering should lead man to a progressive fulfillment of his five basic psychic

⁸⁰ Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 15; cf. p. 87-115, esp. 106-107.

⁸¹ Cf., Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 107.

needs by making him aware of suffering and of his responsibility for suffering. However, in order for his facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering to contribute effectively to man's welfare, man must be willing to see that which he is shown. There are both personal and social reasons why man might refuse to see the fact and causes of his suffering, and thus why this facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering might be without affective weight.

It may thus be concluded that Vatican II's emphasis that the reason for suffering is personal sin is conducive to the progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs as analysed by Erich Fromm because it makes man aware of his suffering and of his responsibility for suffering, it helps negate the reification of suffering which desensitizes Western man to the reality of human suffering, and it helps man recognize that he is capable of combating suffering in a positive fashion. This is so under the following conditions: that the individual is personally willing to accept the reality and responsibility of his suffering, and that the society in which man lives does not so dull man's sensitivity to his own pain that he is no longer capable of recognizing how much or from what he suffers.

3. The Second Principle.

The second principle is: the Church recognizes "in the poor and suffering the likeness of her poor and suffering Founder. She does all she can to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ."⁸² The examination of this principle is in two parts: firstly, a resumé of the Christian basis for the principle, and an examination of the principle from the perspectives of rationalization, relatedness, and frame of orientation; secondly, a more extended analysis of rootedness in the Church with special attention to an unhealthy rootedness which limits a person's capacity for the universal love demanded by the second principle.

A. Love of the Poor and Suffering

This section considers four points: firstly, a brief examination of two foundations for the Christian's love for all men: the identification of Christ with those who are poor and suffering, and the universal salvific will of God; secondly, the possible use of the second principle as a rationalization or ideology; thirdly, union achieved by true relatedness; and fourthly, the implications of a lack of true love for a Christian frame of orientation.

⁸² The Church, 8, 23.

(a) The Christian Basis for Productive Love.- The principle foundations for the Christian's love for all men are the identification of Christ with those who are poor and suffering, and God's will for the salvation of all creation and each individual as part of that creation. The first of these foundations was presented directly in the second principle;⁸³ the second of these foundations was implied in the third and fourth principles.⁸⁴

The second principle of chapter one described and analysed at some length the statement of Vatican II that the Church recognizes "in the poor and suffering the likeness of her poor and suffering Founder. She does all she can to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ."⁸⁵ This principle lays a foundation for a love of all men even, or especially, the poor and suffering. The Christian belief that the Lord identifies himself with the one who suffers should provide a solid basis for a view of the poor man which is not one of personal superiority, but one of respect born of a common humanity and an awareness that it is in the poor man that the Lord presents himself

⁸³ Cf. The Church, 8, 23.

⁸⁴ Cf. The Church, 9, 25; Vatican II, "Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy", article 6, p. 140, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Liturgy.)

⁸⁵ The Church, 8, 23.

to the Christian. To the extent that the Christian sees the poor man as a sacrament of Christ he should be motivated to treat him with genuine respect, and love him. Likewise, his response to the poor man should help him to unfold his power for true love, by challenging him to a love based on something more universal than blood, race, or personal preference.

Further, the fact that the Christian believes that all men are loved by God, and that in an historical as well as a trans-historical sense the salvation of all men is intended by God should be a strong incentive to treat all men with a love worthy of those loved by God.

"It has pleased God, however, to make men holy and save them not merely as individuals without any mutual bonds, but by making them into a single people."⁸⁶ Although Christ's call is always to the individual, it is not solely for the sake of the individual. The primordial object of Christ's mission is mankind and its history.⁸⁷

And now, after the resurrection of Christ, this grace is spread forth on the Church, on humanity and on the cosmos, for the fulness in Christ is nothing else than the love of God for the whole of creation, incarnate in a human nature, tending to unite in Christ not only souls but men, in their own framework, the cosmos.⁸⁸

⁸⁶ The Church, 9, 25.

⁸⁷ Cf. Witte, Unam Sanctam 51b, p. 467-468.

⁸⁸ Ibid., p. 476.

An awareness of the communitarian and cosmic dimensions of salvation should give the Christian a sound basis for a brotherly love which is the foundation of all true love; for the Christian sees himself united in Christ with all men and with the whole of creation. This concept is reinforced by participation in the Eucharist. In it, the Church celebrates the victory and triumph of Christ's death which unites man in communion with God and his fellow man.⁸⁹

Christianity provides a sound basis for, and challenge to, true brotherly love. The facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering presented in the second principle, and reinforced by the concept of God's universal salvific will, is conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs, for it demands a true and productive relationship to others.

However, especially in contemporary Western society, Fromm is pessimistic in his estimation of the number of people who actually achieve this type of love. "People capable of love, under the present system, are necessarily the exceptions; love is by necessity a marginal phenomenon in present-day Western society."⁹⁰ In the

89 Cf. Liturgy, 6, 140.

90 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 111.

light of this pessimistic judgment, and in order to understand the characteristics of true brotherly love as criteria for evaluating Christian love for the poor and suffering, a more detailed examination of this facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering may be of value.

(b) Rationalization.- The real demands for personal maturity in productive love implied in the second principle may be partially or totally avoided by accepting the verbalization of the second principle simply as a rationalization. Such a rationalization is not, as has already been indicated, easy to identify. However, if true love is as rare as Fromm believes, and if the second principle demands true love, this is already a caution not to accept a protestation of true brotherly love as fact without some further investigation.

While the people for whom the conciliar documents were written may appear to accept them, there may be no real acceptance at a life level. Fromm has shown, in his discussions of ideologies and rationalization (an ideology being a socially patterned rationalization), that a formula is no guarantee that the real source of motivation is the ideal which is proclaimed. When one considers the demands for mature love made by the Vatican Council, for instance the demands summed up in the second principle of chapter one of this thesis, it may be seriously asked whether the

man who calls himself Christian, but is not fully committed to Christian principles, would let an ideal such as the following become a real force in his life.

Indeed it is the duty of the whole people of God, following the word and example of the bishops, to do their utmost to alleviate the sufferings of the modern age.

As was the ancient custom in the Church, they should meet this obligation out of the substance of their goods, and not only out of what is superfluous.⁹¹

Such a demand involves a radical commitment beyond mere lip-service or simple social adherence to the principles of Christianity as spelled out by the above statement of Vatican II. Yet Fromm's insight is that even when the ideal is not lived, the average person will not throw off the formulation, but will rather cling to it in order to rationalize his actions. In the preceding example, it is difficult to see how the demand made by the bishops could be sidestepped without a person being aware that he is not living his Christian ideals. Yet the need for rationalization of actions is so strong that a person will normally seek out some 'justification' for doing what he does. A person may be selectively inattentive to such a statement, and yet hold to the general Christian ideology.

At the very least, the ideals are proclaimed in an empty sense, i.e., without affective weight. They may be

⁹¹ The Church Today, 88, 303.

an empty ideology, but they provide whatever comfort there is in social adherence to the best principles, even though in his private dealings with his fellow man modern man is "governed by the principle of egotism, 'each for himself, God for us all,' in flagrant contradiction to Christian teaching."⁹²

A specific example of a possible rationalization may clarify one form which a rationalization of the second principle could take. Vatican II recommends that the bishops instruct the faithful in love of those who are suffering persecution for justice' sake.⁹³ Such a recommendation is laudable, but it leaves room for rationalization. One easy way of avoiding the recognition of another's suffering is to start with the prejudiced supposition that his cause is wrong, immoral, etc., and therefore his suffering, which is not for justice' sake, is not a call from the Lord to respond.

Whatever the applicability of this example to an individual Christian, the general point is still true: the same words (here the second principle) may be for one person an accurate statement of a life ideal, for another, a rationalization or lifeless ideology.

92 Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 124.

93 The Church, 23, 45.

(c) True Relatedness.- Fromm's discussion of union through true relatedness sets some criteria for judging the quality of love, and clarifies the value of loving the poor and suffering.

For Fromm, union is the answer to the problem of human existence, i.e., aloneness or alienation. However, as has been indicated in the second chapter, not any sort of union provides true relatedness: neither symbiotic union, nor moral masochism, nor fusion without integrity and independence. For Fromm

mature love is union under the condition of preserving one's integrity, one's individuality. Love is an active power in man; a power which breaks through the walls which separate man from his fellow men, which unites him with others; love makes him overcome the sense of isolation and separateness, yet it permits him to be himself, to maintain his integrity. In love the paradox occurs that two beings become one and yet remain two.⁹⁴

As was noted,⁹⁵ true love has certain definite characteristics: love is an activity; love is giving rather than receiving, and such giving is an expression of potency; love demands maturity; love is an art requiring discipline, concentration and a supreme concern with its mastery; love is characterized by care, responsibility, respect, and knowledge; love is an active concern for the life and

⁹⁴ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 17.

⁹⁵ In Chapter II, Section 2, "Relatedness vs. Narcissism", B and C.

growth of that which is loved; love is necessarily non-exclusive.

The most fundamental kind of love, which underlies all types of love, is brotherly love. [...] This is the kind of love the Bible speaks of when it says: love thy neighbor as thyself. Brotherly love is love for all human beings; it is characterized by its very lack of exclusiveness. [...] In brotherly love there is the experience of union with all men, of human solidarity, of human at-onement. Brotherly love is based on the experience that we are all one.⁹⁶

Fromm emphasizes that the experience of the other as poor, suffering, and helpless is an incentive to the unfolding of true love. "Only in love of those who do not serve a purpose, love begins to unfold."⁹⁷ "By having compassion for the helpless one, man begins to develop love for his brother."⁹⁸ In Fromm's view, brotherly love is love between equals; and in the help afforded to those who are in need a certain caution is necessary. The basis of love is not personal superiority, but a recognition of genuine oneness; and it is on this condition that the help given is an expression of love.

Brotherly love is love between equals; but, indeed, even as equals we are not always "equal"; inasmuch as we are human, we are all in need of help. Today I, tomorrow you. But this need of help does not mean that the one is helpless, the other powerful.

96 Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 39.

97 Ibid., p. 40.

98 Ibid., p. 41.

Helplessness is a transitory condition; the ability to stand and walk on one's own feet is the permanent and common one.⁹⁹

In the light of these considerations, two conclusions may be drawn: firstly, the demand that the Christian love the poor and suffering is a positive challenge to grow in true productive love, for only in love of those who do not serve a purpose does love begin to unfold.¹⁰⁰ In this, the Christian valuation and significance of suffering are conducive to a progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs. Secondly, the maturity demanded by true productive love and Fromm's pessimism about the number of those who achieve this type of love in contemporary Western society indicate a certain caution in attributing such productive love to all who claim it.

A final observation may be added: it requires strong faith to see the poor man as Christ, as well as a certain maturity not to be overwhelmed by the constant experience of suffering to which a sensitive person is exposed. Such faith and maturity cannot be presumed to exist in every person who calls himself Christian.

(d) Frame of Orientation.- Erich Fromm speaks of the human need for a frame of orientation which, optimally,

⁹⁹ Ibid., p. 40.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

should provide a framework which gives meaning to the anomalies of life, relate man productively to his world, and allow man to order his values in a hierarchic form.¹⁰¹ If Christianity is considered as a frame of orientation, the demand for an ordering of values in a hierarchic form in such a way as to fulfill the ideal proclaimed in the second principle relates directly to the ability of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering to give meaning to the anomalies of life. Christianity is an integral system, and the Christian valuation and significance of suffering contain both meaning elements (first principle) and moral demands (second principle).

The demands of a maturely lived Christian frame of orientation are considerable. The second principle indicated that the Council expects the Christian to order his values in a hierarchic way, and that this ordering demands, for instance, real love of the poor and suffering. Perhaps one reason for the failure of the Christian frame of orientation to give meaning to sin, death, and anxiety about the meaning of life is that this frame of orientation demands a concomitant love of the neighbor.

It is the duty of all bishops [...] to instruct the faithful in love for the whole Mystical Body of Christ, especially for its poor and sorrowing members and for those who are suffering persecution for justice' sake.¹⁰²

101 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 64.

102 The Church, 23, 45.

As was the ancient custom in the Church [Christians] should meet this obligation out of the substance of their goods, and not only out of what is superfluous.¹⁰³

An unwillingness to allow one's values to be ordered in such a radical way would be, perhaps, an obex to the power of the Christian frame or orientation to illumine the anomalies of life, or, to use the vocabulary of the first principle, to illumine the problems of suffering, death, and anxiety about the meaning of life.

This relationship is not proposed as exclusive or exhaustive. For instance, a narcissistic distortion (by fear or desire) of one's perception of the world, and so a failure to relate to the world in a productive way, could equally be an obex to the power of the Christian frame of orientation to 'answer' the problems of suffering, death, and anxiety about the meaning of life. Nonetheless, there does appear to be a positive relationship between the second and first principles. To the extent that the Christian attempts to order his values in the hierarchic way proposed by Vatican II, and so to live the ideal set forth in the second principle, the power of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering to illumine the mysteries of suffering, death, and anxiety about the meaning of life may be operative. To the extent that the

103 The Church Today, 88, 303.

demands of the second principle for productive love are not met, the answers provided by the first principle (or by the whole Christian frame of orientation) may be without real effect.

B. Love of All Men and Rootedness in the Church

The second principle of chapter two speaks of the Church's recognition of her suffering Founder in the poor and suffering as a motivation for love of the poor. In order for this principle to become an operative ideal, there must be some identification with the Church, because it is the Church which is proposing the principle, and because it is Christ as Founder of the Church who is recognized in the poor and suffering, and who becomes a source of motivation for the Christian. However, identification with or rootedness in any body has, according to Fromm, certain psychological dynamisms which bring out a potential problem in the second principle. To the extent that rootedness in or identification with the Church is unhealthy, it acts as a force driving man toward exclusivity rather than universal love.

In the discussion of "Rootedness--Brotherliness vs. Incest" (Chapter II, Section 4) it was indicated that the relationship of child to mother may appear in adulthood

as matriarchal relatedness to a group or society.¹⁰⁴ The positive and negative aspects of this relationship were discussed. This section resumé's these concepts, and applies them to the relationship of the individual to the Church. The problem which is broached in this section is this: the more strongly an individual's sense of identity with the Church tends towards an 'incestuous fixation' on the Church as 'mother', the less will be his experience of universal brotherhood. The less his sense of universal brotherhood, the less will be his concern for the sufferings of those who do not belong to the Church.

The Documents of Vatican II maintain a healthy balance between the maternal and paternal dimensions of the Church, both offering love and demanding a responsible relationship to the world. Nonetheless, as, according to Fromm, the tendency towards 'incestuous fixation' is strongly rooted in man, the consideration of this question indicates some of the psychological difficulties involved in fully accepting the universal brotherhood of all men proclaimed by Vatican II, which is the basis for a full and active concern to alleviate the suffering of others.

¹⁰⁴ It is not of particular importance that this society be matriarchal in structure "for we can find many examples of the matriarchal kind of relatedness to mother, blood and soil, even where the social forms are not matriarchal any more." The Sane Society, p. 48.

(a) *Resumé.*- The achievement of the ideal of a world based on human solidarity, or a rootedness based on the experience of universal brotherliness, and the transformation of this world into a truly human home demand considerable maturity of personality and conscience in a difficult area, for the longing for the same rootedness which was had in mother perdures into normal adulthood.

Only when man succeeds in developing this reason and love further than he has done so far, only when he can feel rooted in the experience of universal brotherliness, will he have found a new, human form of rootedness, will he have transformed his world into a truly human form.¹⁰⁵

The genesis of this problem is the search to find in adult life the same security which was had in mother love (an unconditional love which gives a sense of aliveness, rootedness and at-home-ness in the world). The deep sense of rootedness which most children find in mother-love makes it difficult for the child to leave the protective orbit of mother. According to Fromm, "even in the mature adult, the longing for this situation as it once existed never ceases completely."¹⁰⁶ Because the adult sees the complexity of his life, the fragmentary nature of his knowledge, and the accidentalness of his existence, he perceives that in many respects his situation is no different than that which existed when he was a child. If the adult does

¹⁰⁵ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 61.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid., p. 43.

not satisfy his need for rootedness in a humanizing way, by the rootedness which he has in his solidarity with all men, he will attempt to satisfy his need in other ways. One of these is the creation of a relationship to a mother figure, that is the insertion of himself into a group which can provide (more or less) the same psychological fulfillment of the need for rootedness as can the primary relationship to mother.

The family and the clan, and later on the state, nation or church, assume the same function which the individual mother had for the child. The individual leans on them, feels rooted in them, has the sense of identity as a part of them, and not as an individual apart from them. The person who does not belong to the same clan is considered as alien and dangerous--and not sharing the same human qualities which only his own clan possesses.¹⁰⁷

Positively, these societies provide a sense of affirmation of life, freedom and equality. What is of value is not talent, gifts, or particular endowments, but simply the fact that all are children of their mother. Negatively, a matriarchal kind of relatedness makes those who do not belong to a particular 'mother' to be seen as strangers, foreign, alien; it blocks man from developing his individuality; it jeopardizes independence and integrity; and it implies a certain fear of mother which makes

¹⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 45.

the step from dependence to independence all the more difficult.¹⁰⁸

Only those who share the same blood or soil are felt to be human; the "stranger" is a barbarian. As a consequence I remain also a "stranger" to myself, since I cannot experience humanity beyond that crippled form in which it is shared by the group united by common blood. Incestuous fixation impairs or destroys--in accordance with the degree of regression--the capacity to love.¹⁰⁹

(b) Vatican II's Ideal of Universal Brotherhood.-

Vatican II proclaims an ideal of universal brotherhood.

"In our times a special obligation binds us to make ourselves the neighbors of absolutely every person [...]."¹¹⁰

The second principle of chapter one presented in some detail the background, meaning and implications of the statement just quoted. No one is excluded from the redemption of Christ. "The Son of Man came not that He might be served, but that He might be a servant, and give His life as a ransom for many--that is, for all (cf. Mk. 10:45)."¹¹¹ The implications of this for the Christian

¹⁰⁸ These negative qualities, as also the positive, may exist in any number of degrees, stretched along a continuum.

¹⁰⁹ Erich Fromm, The Heart of Man: Its Genius for Good and Evil, New York, Harper and Row, 1964, p. 107.

¹¹⁰ The Church Today, 27, 226.

¹¹¹ Vatican II, "Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity", article 3, p. 587, in The Documents of Vatican II New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Missions.)

are clear: all men are to be regarded and treated as brothers in Christ, and therefore "Christians should collaborate willingly and wholeheartedly in establishing an international order involving genuine respect for all freedoms and amicable brotherhood between all men."¹¹²

It must be noted, however, that such a concept of universal brotherliness places a heavy demand on the individual. According to Fromm, the need which man has for rootedness is commonly found in an 'incestuous fixation' to clan, blood, soil or state; and man must succeed "in developing his reason and love further than he has done so far"¹¹³ before he will be able to find his experience of rootedness in universal brotherliness. This need for rootedness cannot be foresworn, as (according to Fromm) it is one of man's basic psychic needs. Fromm's discussion about the difficulty of achieving such rootedness provides an insight into the dimensions of the task proposed as a Christian ideal by Vatican II.

The suffering of one who is regarded as a brother is more easily responded to than the suffering of one who is seen as a stranger. Although the Christian should see no man as a stranger, his affiliation with Church as

112 The Church Today, 88, 302-303.

113 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 61.

'mother' may lead him to regard the other as alien and dangerous, and not as a brother to be helped.

(c) The Church as Potential "Mother".- It may be asked whether the Church itself shares some of the characteristics of a 'mother-figure', and so unwillingly fosters a certain form of sectarianism. The Vatican Council is not unaware of the possibility: "Let [Christians] altogether avoid racial prejudice and bitter nationalism, fostering instead a universal love for man."¹¹⁴ It is not the intention of the Council to make the Church an exclusive group (a 'mother' in Fromm's sense) to which there is an 'incestuous fixation', but rather to make it a sign and seed of unity for all mankind. Nonetheless, certain statements of Vatican II could lend themselves to an unhealthy interpretation, and certain people whose need for 'mother' is great may latch onto these statements.

The Church, "that Jerusalem which is above," is also called "our Mother" (Gal 4:26; cf. Apoc. 12:17). She is described as the spotless spouse of the spotless Lamb [...].¹¹⁵

In the human nature which He united to Himself, the Son of God redeemed man and transformed him into a new creation [...]. By communicating His Spirit to His brothers, called together from all peoples, Christ made them mystically into His own body.¹¹⁶

¹¹⁴ Missions, 15, 603.

¹¹⁵ The Church, 7, 19.

¹¹⁶ The Church, 7, 20.

This Church, constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter [...].¹¹⁷

There are certain other respects in which the Church could be understood to fulfill the positive functions of 'mother'. It is through her that Christ the one Mediator offers truth and grace to all.¹¹⁸ She is a source of life and light, into which new children are born through baptism, and brought together in unity by the common reception of the Eucharist.¹¹⁹ Like a mother, the Church embraces sinners in her bosom,¹²⁰ and through the sacrament of penance offers "pardon from the mercy of God for offenses committed against Him."¹²¹ The Church as 'mother' provides a sense of affirmation of life, freedom and equality. Although there are various offices and functions within the Church, the basis of brotherhood is a common salvation in Jesus Christ; and the special gifts which are received are the various manifestations of the Spirit given to all,¹²² "in whom all are made citizens of a kingdom which is of a heavenly and not an earthly nature."¹²³

117 The Church, 8, 23.

118 The Church, 8, 22.

119 The Church, 7, 20.

120 The Church, 8, 24.

121 The Church, 11, 28.

122 Cf. The Church, 12, 30.

123 The Church, 13, 31.

If it is conceded that the positive 'mother' characteristics described above would have a certain attractiveness for someone temperamentally inclined towards narcissistic group appartenance or 'incestuous fixation' to 'mother', then it may be reasonably assumed that there would be a concomitant fear of 'mother' which would block this person from developing his independence, and even jeopardize his integrity. If the following quotes were taken in isolation, they would support this fear-dependence syndrome.

In the formation of their consciences, the Christian faithful ought to attend to the sacred and certain doctrine of the Church. This Church is, by the will of Christ, the teacher of the truth.¹²⁴

All this it does under the lead of a sacred teaching authority to which it loyally defers.¹²⁵

Whosoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by God through Jesus Christ, would refuse to enter her or to remain in her could not be saved.¹²⁶

It should be emphasized that the selection of these quotations is not intended to be representative. The mission of the Church is to recapitulate all things in Christ, but the Church has this power only through Christ, and as a sacrament of Christ's mission to bring all things

¹²⁴ Vatican II, "Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life", article 14, p. 694-695, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Religious Life.)

¹²⁵ The Church, 12, 30.

¹²⁶ The Church, 14, 32-33.

to unity in himself. In its fundamental orientation Vatican II sees the Church as reaching out to encompass all men.

Christ and the Church, which bears witness to Him by preaching the gospel, transcend every particularity of race or nation, and therefore cannot be considered foreign anywhere or to anybody.¹²⁷

But the idea that the gospel is the sole way to salvation is not foreign to the Documents,¹²⁸ and the narcissistically or 'incestuously orientated' individual might transfer this idea to this Church, which is for him the mediator of the gospel. Such a person would have a fear of cutting himself free from 'mother'; and his dependency might weaken his independence, responsibility, and freedom. Even if the Church has had no responsibility in creating this attitude, the individual's own irrational needs and desires might keep him bound to the Church in an unhealthy way. The words of Fromm about the Communist Manifesto are perhaps applicable to certain individuals within the Church:

The famous statement at the end of the Communist Manifesto that the workers "have nothing to lose but their chains" contains a profound psychological error. With their chains they have also to lose all those irrational needs and satisfactions which were originated while they were wearing the chains.¹²⁹

127 Missions, 8, 594.

128 Cf. Missions, 8, 595.

129 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 231.

Even if the idea is accepted by such a person that all men are redeemed in Christ and called to the gospel it may be asked how strong is the emotional matrix of this idea. Would such a person hear as a call to effective social and political action the words "Every Catholic must therefore aim at Christian perfection [...] so that the Church [...] may daily be more purified and renewed."¹³⁰ What would be the emotional matrix of the idea that the Christian's 'being in Christ' (by being in his Church) links him to every fellow human being?

(d) Resolution: Maternal-Paternal Polarity.- There is actually a dual polarity in the image of the Church: the maternal--offering salvation, love, mercy, forgiveness and life; and the paternal--demanding active participation in building a human world, even at the cost of personal sacrifice.¹³¹ Although the father does not represent the natural world (the natural rootedness which the infant has in its mother), he does represent another and necessary pole of human existence--the world of thought, of order, of discipline. The relationship of the child to the father, unlike that which is based on a sheer 'act of grace', can

¹³⁰ Ecumenism, 4, 348-349.

¹³¹ Cf. Antoine Vergote, Psychologie Religieuse, Deuxieme edition, Dessart, Bruxelles, 1966, Chapter III, "Les deux axes de la religion: le desir religieux et la religion du pere", p. 155-212.

be controlled by the son. The father "wants the son to grow up, to build; or/and to be obedient, to serve father, to be like him."¹³²

The person who is fully committed to his Christian calling admits the tension of this polarity, and finds in his rootedness in Christ (through the Church) a call to strive for the unity of all things in Christ. But the desire for rootedness is stronger than the call to obedience,¹³³ and so is of more importance in asking what potential effect the Church has as 'mother'.

This section has indicated that the Christian valuation and significance of suffering demand a healthy balance between the maternal and paternal dimensions of the Church. To the extent that the individual seeks a 'mother' (in a regressive sense) in the Church, he will tend to assume certain negative characteristics: he will have a fear of 'mother' which will compromise his independence; those who do not belong to 'mother' will be regarded as strangers. This will, in turn, weaken his sense of responsibility toward his fellow man, and thus vitiate one facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. To the extent that the individual accepts the maternal-paternal polarity of the Church-image, he will

¹³² Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 50.

¹³³ Ibid., p. 49.

find a source of rootedness which is at the same time an incentive to serve his fellow man, and is, thus, a progressive dimension of his Christian valuation and significance of suffering. But Fromm's judgment about the strong tendency toward 'incestuous fixation' induces a caution that the brotherhood of all men demanded by the Christian valuation and significance of suffering is a difficult ideal to attain.

The conclusions of this examination of the second principle may be summed up as follows: the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering proposed in the second principle is conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs because it demands and fosters a union with all men based on a universal productive love, and because the special attention given to the poor and suffering is itself a help to the unfolding of true love.

This is so under certain conditions: firstly, that the second principle is not a rationalization or ideology; secondly, that a healthy balance exists between the maternal and paternal polarity of the Church, and that the individual does not seek a 'mother' (in a regressive sense) in the Church.

4. The Third Principle.

The third principle stated: made one in the sacraments with Christ who suffered and is exalted, the Christian offers his sufferings as an acceptable sacrifice before God. In this analysis of the third principle three main points are treated. All three refer in a special way to the sacramental incorporation into Christ which is the basis of the third principle. The three points are: firstly, sacramental and psychological identification with Christ; secondly, sacramental incorporation into Christ as acceptance of a frame of orientation; and thirdly, sacramental incorporation and liturgical ritual as a frame of devotion.

A. Identification with Christ

The foundation of the third principle (and indeed of the whole Christian valuation and significance of suffering) is the Christian's identification with Christ. This section examines some implications of what it means for a Christian to live with the life of Christ. Two main points are treated: firstly, an examination of the criteria by which the individual's relationship to Christ may be judged; secondly, an investigation of the potentially healthy and potentially unhealthy aspects of this relationship.

(a) Criteria of Judgment.- It is difficult to isolate from Fromm's analysis of man's basic psychic needs any single criterion by which the relationship of the individual to Christ can be judged. Nonetheless an examination of the total situation of the individual does indicate certain criteria by which the rootedness of the individual in Christ may be examined.

Rootedness, or relationship, is either negative-- a union which destroys man's freedom and the integrity of his individual self; or positive--a genuine union which enhances the power of the individual for love and productive work. A common form of negative union is one which Fromm calls moral masochism or symbiotic union: "the union of one individual with another self (or any power outside of the own self) in such a way as to make each lose the integrity of its own self and to make them completely dependent on each other."¹³⁴ The term moral masochism denotes a common way of trying to escape into symbiotic dependency, but may also indicate an even milder form of dependency which is so general in contemporary culture "that only in exceptional cases does it seem to be lacking."¹³⁵ The principle quality of the "thing" on whom the person is dependent is its

¹³⁴ Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 180.

¹³⁵ Ibid., p. 196.

function: namely to "protect, help, and develop the individual, to be with him and never leave him alone."¹³⁶ Fromm refers to that which exercises this function as the magic helper. He points out that the magic helper may often be personified: it may be thought of as God, or as some real person such as a parent, husband, wife, or superior.

To understand the concept of the magic helper, two allied concepts must be mentioned. The first is that of alienation; the second, the existence in contemporary society of the "oral-receptive character". By alienation, Fromm means that man does not experience himself as the active bearer of his own powers and richness, but rather experiences himself as an impoverished thing, dependent on powers outside himself--powers on to whom he has projected his living substance.¹³⁷ The power outside the person is not real (although the person to whom the powers are attributed may be a real person) but is created by the projection of the person himself. Such alienation appears in both religious and non-religious forms. In the religious form, the authoritarian God becomes "the sole possessor of what was originally man's: of his reason and his love."¹³⁸ The second concept is that of the oral-receptive character.

136 Ibid., p. 197.

137 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 114.

138 -----, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 48.

A person of this type of orientation feels that the source of all good is outside himself, and "he believes that the only way to get what he wants [...] is to receive it from the outside source."¹³⁹ In a religious sphere, this type of person has a concept of God in which he expects everything from God and nothing from his own activity. In a non-religious sphere, this type of person forms a relationship to persons or institutions which has the same characteristics; these people are always in search of a magic helper, of someone to provide for them what they will not try to achieve by their own activity.

From these observations of Fromm, certain tentative criteria may be drawn. Firstly, it may be asked whether the individual is seeking in his relationship to Christ a symbiotic union which exhibits the characteristics of moral masochism: i.e., is he trying to overcome his powerlessness by submerging and losing his own self in something greater than himself? Secondly, it may be asked if the individual is seeking Christ as a magic helper. Is the Christ he seeks the Christ who reveals himself, or a god who is the individual's own creation? Thirdly, it may be asked if the individual is of an oral-receptive character: does he look outside himself for things which he should be achieving by his own powers?

¹³⁹ Fromm, Beyond the Chains of Illusion, p. 75.

None of these criteria may be sufficient in itself, however. The religious language which a person uses may not be an adequate expression of his true relationship to God: a person's religious vocabulary (e.g. his communal prayer forms) may indicate an unhealthy relationship which is not present. Secondly, a person's religious vocabulary may not indicate an unhealthy relationship, and yet may only cloak a deep-seated unhealthy rootedness. While these criteria are important, then, it will perhaps be more fruitful to examine the total person in his relationships to non-religious objects and persons. If, for instance, an individual exhibits strongly authoritarian characteristics, this may indicate that he is given to moral masochism, because the morally masochistic person is especially marked by his unhealthy relationship to irrational authority.¹⁴⁰ Finally, the desire for rootedness is a search to overcome aloneness. If this rootedness is healthy, it will not take a person away from his fellow man, but will open him to find his rootedness in human solidarity. Therefore, the regard which the individual has for his fellow man will be a good indication of whether his rootedness in Christ is healthy or not.

¹⁴⁰ Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 163-164.

(b) Relationship of the Individual to Christ.- This section presumes the criteria discussed in the previous section, and examines some potentially negative and potentially positive aspects of the relationship of the individual to Christ.

(i) Negative aspects.- First, it must be admitted that there is a real possibility that what Fromm says about moral masochism and symbiotic union may exist in the relationship of an individual to Christ (or to his idea of Christ). For example, an individual could take in isolation the following words of Vatican II and use them as a rationalization for an unhealthy rootedness in Christ.

By himself and by his own power, no one is freed from sin or raised above himself, or completely rid of his sickness or his solitude or his servitude. On the contrary, all stand in need of Christ.¹⁴¹

Nor has any other name under heaven been given to man by which it is fitting to be saved.¹⁴²

Such a person would indulge in his feelings of limitedness, in an attempt to rid himself of his unbearable feeling of powerlessness. His symbiotic union with Christ would represent an inability to bear his own aloneness and a willingness to rid himself of this feeling in an unhealthy way.¹⁴³ Such an individual would give up his individuality

¹⁴¹ Missions, 8, 595.

¹⁴² The Church Today, 10, 208.

¹⁴³ Cf. Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 180.

in order to become part of something greater (Christ), and thus try to overcome his feelings of powerlessness.

The annihilation of the individual self and the attempt to overcome thereby the unbearable feeling of powerlessness are only one side of the masochistic strivings. The other side is the attempt to become a part of a bigger and more powerful whole outside of oneself, to submerge and participate in it. [...] One surrenders one's own self and renounces all strength and pride connected with it [...] but one gains a new security and a new pride in the participation in the power in which one submerges.¹⁴⁴

The key characteristic of such a person is his indulgence in feelings of limitedness and dependence. There are, of course, genuine feelings of limitedness and dependence. This is a realistic and sober understanding of the limitation of human powers. However, "to worship [this limitation] is masochistic and self-destructive."¹⁴⁵

If Fromm's analysis is accurate, it would be rare to find a person in which at least a mild form of dependency is lacking.¹⁴⁶ For the Christian, the magic helper is not necessarily Christ; and yet one may suspect that the Christian's unhealthy form of dependency, however mild, would attach itself to Christ in some cases. However, another precision may be useful here. Fromm distinguishes between rational and irrational authority, and gives as

¹⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 177.

¹⁴⁵ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 52.

¹⁴⁶ -----, Escape From Freedom, p. 196.

example the difference between the teacher-pupil relationship and the master-slave relationship. While "the interests of the teacher and pupil lie in the same direction"¹⁴⁷ the slave-owner "wants to exploit the slave as much as possible; the more he gets out of him the more he is satisfied."¹⁴⁸ The interests of the slave and the interests of his owner are definitely antagonistic; and, unlike the relationship of teacher to pupil, this relationship is not self-dissolving. To the extent that there is a certain dependency of the Christian on Christ, the question may be asked if it is better described as of the slave-owner type, or of the teacher-pupil type. To the extent that it is the latter it may be healthy, for it may represent a direction of growth.

All members ought to be molded into Christ's image until he is formed in them (Gal. 4:19).¹⁴⁹

Now Christ has communicated this power of subjection to His disciples that they might be established in royal freedom and that by self-denial and a holy life they might conquer the reign of sin in themselves.¹⁵⁰

If at least a mild form of unhealthy dependence is common, it may hopefully be for the Christian a stage along the road toward the goal of freedom. But the possibility

¹⁴⁷ Ibid., p. 186-187.

¹⁴⁸ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 91.

¹⁴⁹ The Church, 7, 21.

¹⁵⁰ The Church, 36, 62.

must always be conceded that even a milder form of dependency or rootedness exists which is not healthy, and which puts in question the Christian's relationship with Christ.

'Being in Christ' might represent an unhealthy form of submission. This brings up the possibility that a person who is born into the household of the faith, but who does not find in his community a witness to a mature relationship to Christ, may abandon Christ precisely because he believes that to be Christian one must not only recognize his dependence and limitations, but actually indulge and foster these feelings. This individual may perceive his call to personal integrity and maturity as incompatible with a rootedness in or identification with Christ. Because of the type of Christians with which he finds himself surrounded, or because of his own misunderstanding of 'being in Christ', he might feel a need to withdraw from the Christian community in order to strive for a healthy concept of self.

In conclusion, the mystery of Christ may be perceived as extrinsic, and submitted to in an unhealthy sense. Or it may be perceived by the individual as belonging to the core of his unique self, and as a creative element of his personhood. The key question is, therefore: does the individual perceive his 'being in Christ' as extrinsic or intrinsic to his own selfhood? Or to phrase

it more accurately, does the individual exhibit a maturity of personality in all phases of his life that would lead the observer to judge that his 'being in Christ' is not an unhealthy form of dependency or rootedness.

(ii) Positive aspects.- There is a form of union with another which is in no way the same as that which has just been described. It is the positive form of union found in the act of loving.

Love is the experience of human solidarity with our fellow creatures, it is in the erotic love of man and woman, in the love of the mother for the child, and also in the love for oneself, as a human being; it is in the mystical experience of union. In the act of loving, I am one with All, and yet I am myself, a unique, separate, limited, mortal human being.¹⁵¹

The language which Fromm uses here is important, because it indicates his belief that a union which could even be called an identification ("I am one with the All") is a healthy human possibility. It also affirms Fromm's belief that such an experience is possible in the mystical act of union. Besides the prerequisite of a general maturity, the main condition for its validity is an ability to remain a "unique, separate, limited, mortal human being."¹⁵² Such a union is not an attempt to escape the sense of powerlessness or aloneness by submerging the self in the

¹⁵¹ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 37.

¹⁵² Ibid.

other (to the loss of the self). It is not love based on subordination and loss of integrity of one partner, which is masochistic dependence, regardless of how the relationship is rationalized.¹⁵³

The Council affirms the unique individuality of the person who is in Christ. This person does have his unique individuality 'in Christ', but this does not appear in any sense to imply a loss of the self in this life or in the next.¹⁵⁴ The Council says that what man is in his own uniqueness will never die; this is the promised redemption of the whole man, body and soul. Once the possibility of a healthy union with Christ is conceded, there may be noted certain potentially positive aspects of the individual's identification with Christ.

Three points are mentioned, two of which touch the moral and personal regeneration of the individual through his own activity; and the third of which considers the call to self-transcendence.

Firstly, if a morally masochistic person is marked by his relationship to irrational authority, the individual who finds rootedness in true union is marked by an ability to respond to rational authority.

153 Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 182-183.

154 Cf. The Church Today, - 22, 221-222.

The person whose conscience is essentially autonomous does the right things not by forcing himself to obey the voice of the internalized authority, but because he enjoys doing what is right, even though often he will need some practice in following his principles before he can fully enjoy his actions.¹⁵⁵

Rational authority represents "the aims of growth and expansion of the individual. It is, therefore, in principle never in conflict with the individual and his real, and not his pathological, aims."¹⁵⁶ The desire to enjoy true union with Christ may, therefore, lead the individual to respond to the rational authority of Christ, and so establish himself in royal freedom by self-discipline and a holy life.¹⁵⁷ Although the Christian receives the strength to achieve a holy life as a gift of God's Spirit, the Spirit need not be understood as an extrinsic force (or, in Fromm's language, as a projection of man's powers onto a being outside himself).

Thus, by baptism, men are plunged into the paschal mystery of Christ: they die with Him, are buried with Him, and rise with Him [...]; they receive the spirit of adoption as sons "by virtue of which we cry: "Abba, Father" (Rom. 8:15).¹⁵⁸

The call to moral regeneration is reinforced by Eucharistic worship. In the Eucharist there is a

¹⁵⁵ Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 55-56.

¹⁵⁶ -----, Escape From Freedom, p. 296.

¹⁵⁷ Cf. The Church, 36, 62.

¹⁵⁸ Liturgy, 6, 140.

"submission of oneself to the judgment of God which on the Cross condemned sin in the flesh of his Son (Rom. 8:3)."¹⁵⁹

If sin is understood as that which is destructive of the individual, then a submission to the judgment of God in the Eucharist would represent for the individual a reaffirmation of his real, and not pathological (i.e. self-destructive), aims. Thus the liturgical worship of the individual would strengthen his uniqueness as well as his desire for union. This renewal is not something forced from the outside: "Through [the] Spirit [...] the whole man is renewed from within."¹⁶⁰ It is therefore an affirmation of the uniqueness of the individual.

Fromm speaks of the need for transcendence as one of man's basic psychic needs. While he does not use the word in a theistic sense, he does indicate two characteristics which may be an important part of 'being in Christ': transcendence implies a letting go of one's ego as if it were an indestructible, separate entity; and secondly, transcendence implies, in its highest degree, a complete absence of narcissism.¹⁶¹ The call to live with the life of Christ should represent for the Christian a call to live

¹⁵⁹ Karl Rahner, Theological Investigations, Vol. II Man in the Church, trans. by Karl-H. Kruger, Baltimore, Helicon Press, 1963, p. 174.

¹⁶⁰ The Church Today, 13, 211; and 22, 221.

¹⁶¹ Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 56-60.

in a way that is most fully human. This implies a call to transcend the ego as separate and indestructible, as also a call to a complete absence of narcissism. Even though the Christian lives with the same life of Christ, he is-- if he is mature--conscious of his unique individuality, and therefore does not see the glory of the life of Christ in him in a narcissistic sense.

(c) The Individual and the Body of Christ.- One of the difficulties in discussing the relationship of the individual to Christ is that much of the vocabulary used is taken from the Scriptures. Fromm has noted that the concept of individual self-identity has grown over the centuries. In the history of human development, there was an age when individual self-identity was not possible: the member of the primitive clan expressed his identity in the formula "I am we"; he found his identity in his identification with the other members of his clan. The man of medieval society was identified with and found his identity in his social role in the feudal hierarchy. Later in the course of its development, "western culture went in the direction of creating the basis for the full experience of individuality."¹⁶² It did so by freeing the individual politically and economically, so that he could sense that he was the center and active subject of his powers, and experience himself as such. To the extent that the

¹⁶² Fromm, *The Sane Society*, p. 63.

Scriptures were written in a period more marked by an idea of corporate personality than is contemporary society, the language of the Scriptures may tend to suggest that being a member of the Body of Christ is another form of the "I am we" mentality which Fromm attributes to the primitive clan.¹⁶³ However, true belonging to the Body of Christ is identical with a rootedness in the whole of humanity. "I am we" is unhealthy only if it represents a loss of the self and a sectarianism. Provided the individual maintains his own self-identity, "I am we" may also be an expression of a desirable rootedness in human solidarity.

The conclusions of this section may be summarized as follows: one facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering concerns the Christian's identification with Christ. It is conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs; it opens man to find his rootedness in human solidarity; it leads him to respond to the rational authority of Christ and so establish himself in freedom by self-discipline and a holy life; it leads him to let go of his ego as if it were a separate, indestructible entity; and it fosters a complete absence of narcissism.

163 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 62.

This is so under the following conditions: firstly, that desire for rootedness in Christ is not a desire for symbiotic union; secondly, that the individual is not of an oral-receptive character who believes that all good comes from outside himself; thirdly, that it is not an attempt to submerge and lose his own self in something greater than himself; fourthly, that Christ is not a magic helper; fifthly, that identification with Christ is not an indulgence in feelings of limitedness and dependence; and sixthly, that the individual maintains his own self-identity.

B. Frame of Orientation

This section uses the criteria of a frame of orientation to investigate the third principle. Although Vatican II does not refer to sacramental incorporation into Christ as an insertion into a frame of orientation, Fromm's description of the nature and characteristics of a frame of orientation offers a useful basis for examining the psychological strengths and difficulties of "being made one in the sacraments with Christ who suffered and is exalted."¹⁶⁴ In what follows, the expression 'Christian frame of orientation' refers to sacramental incorporation into Christ considered as a frame of orientation in Fromm's

¹⁶⁴ Principle III.

sense. This section is divided into six parts: firstly, an introduction; secondly, the Christian vision as a personal frame of orientation; thirdly, growth into 'being in Christ'; fourthly, sin and the Christian frame of orientation; fifthly, daily dying and the mystery of Christ; and sixthly, the value of a partially integrated Christian frame of orientation.

(a) Introduction.- Erich Fromm speaks of the human need for a frame of orientation which, optimally, should provide a framework which gives meaning to the anomalies of life, should relate man productively to his world, and should allow man to order his values in a hierarchic form.¹⁶⁵ This section investigates the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, using the criteria given by Fromm in his discussion of the frame of orientation as one of man's basic psychic needs.

A frame of orientation is a "system of thought which try[s] to give an answer to the human quest for meaning and to man's attempt to make sense of his own existence."¹⁶⁶ No man can exist sanely without some frame of orientation, but the quality of the frame of orientation may vary.

165 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 64.

166 -----, Man For Himself, p. 56.

[If a person] has no picture of the world and his position in it which approximates the truth, he will create a picture which is illusory and cling to it with [...] tenacity.¹⁶⁷

Man cannot live without a frame of orientation, but the frame of orientation may either help or hinder his development.¹⁶⁸ Fromm measures the quality of the frame of orientation by its aptitude to put man in a productive orientation to nature, society, and himself; and by the degree of objectivity which it allows man in his perception of his world. In his judgment of any frame of orientation, Fromm allows no criterion other than man himself. "There is no meaning to life except the meaning man gives his life by unfolding of his powers, by living productively."¹⁶⁹ Thus, Fromm judges religion as a frame of orientation solely from a human point of view.

Only the analysis of the various forms of religion can show which answers are better and which are worse solutions to man's quest for meaning and devotion, "better" or "worse" always considered from the standpoint of man's nature and his development.¹⁷⁰

The criterion of this "human standpoint" is this: an immature frame of orientation is a reversion to primitive and irrational systems which in turn prolong and increase

167 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 28.

168 -----, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 76.

169 -----, Man For Himself, p. 53; emphasis deleted.

170 -----, The Sane Society, p. 66.

man's dependence; a good frame of orientation is mature, productive, rational, and conducive to man's growth.¹⁷¹

Baptism and faith may be considered as the incorporation of the individual into the "life-circle of Christ", that is, into a frame of orientation in which Christ is at the center. The adult who comes to believe in Christ and who seeks admittance into the Church through baptism believes that he is thus made one with Christ who suffered and is exalted. The texts of Vatican II cited in chapter one, section 3.A indicate to what extent Christ should become for the Christian the focal point of a frame of orientation. For example:

The life of Christ is poured into the believers, who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ Who suffered and was glorified. Through Baptism we are formed into the likeness of Christ.¹⁷²

According to Vatican II, the final sense and the ultimate meaning of what man is as spirit and as person is provided only by Jesus Christ.

Only God, who created man to his image and ransomed him from sin, provides a fully adequate answer to these questions. This he does through what he has revealed in Christ His Son, who became man.¹⁷³

171 Fromm, Man For Himself, p. 57-58.

172 The Church, 7, 20.

173 The Church Today, 41, 240.

Vatican II proclaims that the ultimate answers to the questions of sin, death and anxiety about the meaning of life are to be found in Jesus Christ. This may be understood as the individual's incorporation into a system or framework of meaning provided by Christ.¹⁷⁴ Thus, it is possible to investigate the Christian frame of orientation using the criterion given by Fromm: the ability of a frame of orientation to relate man productively to himself, his neighbour, and to the world.

(b) Christian vision as Personal Frame of Orientation.- The fact that a person claims to be Christian does not necessarily mean that he will have a genuinely Christian frame of orientation. As was indicated in speaking about rationalization, such a claim may, in reality, cloak a non-Christian frame of orientation. On the other hand, the fact that the Christian frame of orientation is not original with an individual does not mean that it cannot be his own. Fromm notes that it is difficult to test any given statement to determine whether it springs from the subject, because the decisive point is not what is thought but how it is thought. In this sense, genuine thinking and feeling are always original and new. Although others

¹⁷⁴ There is no reference intended here to the Western cultural framework within which Christianity has largely been transmitted. "Frame of orientation" is a meaning or value-system reference, rather than a cultural allusion.

may have thought and felt the same things before, the person who thinks originally (in Fromm's sense) uses thinking "to discover something new in the world outside or inside of himself."¹⁷⁵ Christianity may be an operative frame of orientation for the individual, provided it is "rooted in an independent conviction based on one's own productive observing and thinking",¹⁷⁶ and not merely accepted unreflectingly because it is the opinion of the majority, or what one has been told by another.

Without analysing the content of the Christian frame of orientation, it may be noted that Fromm holds objectivity to be a prime criterion in determining whether a frame of orientation is merely illusory, or whether it allows a person to see the world, nature, other persons and himself "as they are and not distorted by desires and fears."¹⁷⁷

What, then, can be said of the aspect of the Christian frame or orientation which gives meaning to suffering? To the extent that suffering and death are mysteries, there would appear to be a possibility that the Christian answer be accepted out of fear: something has to make death and suffering make sense, and a Christian frame of orientation does offer some meaning. Once again, the answer does not

175 Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 218-219.

176 -----, The Art of Loving, p. 103.

177 -----, The Sane Society, p. 65.

lie simply in an analysis of the content, but also in an analysis of the degree to which the individual has made this frame of orientation his own, and the extent to which he uses it not to deny the mystery of suffering and death in an unrealistic and illusory sense, but as a means of freeing himself to relate productively and creatively to the world. A resolution of the anomalies of life should not be a denial of the reality of these anomalies. If baptism is understood by an individual as a bringing to bear of the Gospel of Salvation on his life, it need not be a denial of these anomalies; but there must be a reasonably high degree of personal integration by the individual for it to be operative as a frame of orientation in a healthy sense. If the individual has a sufficiently high degree of maturity in his integration of his frame of orientation, he should be able to learn to "recognize which of his ideas have an emotional matrix and which are only conventional cliches without root in his character structure and therefore without substance and weight."¹⁷⁸

(c) Growth into 'Being in Christ'. - The task of integrating the Christian frame of orientation in a mature way is not inconsiderable. For some Christians the decision

¹⁷⁸ Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, "Psychoanalyst-Physician of the Soul", p. 75.

to accept Christ in faith and baptism is an adult decision. Many, however, are born into a household or society which is Christian (in name and/or in fact) and are baptized as infants. How does such a person come to accept in a personal and mature way this Christian frame of orientation? What has been said so far should apply to the person who is baptized as an infant, for although he is not faced with the decision which the baptismal experience requires for an adult, he has the same mystery of the Passing-over of Christ brought into his life in the Eucharist and in his religious formation. But certain additional dynamisms may be operative. When the child becomes old enough to begin to search for a personal frame of orientation, it will be the existence of puzzling phenomena (e.g. suffering, death, anxiety about the meaning of life) which will force the child to try to find some context within which he can understand them, and which permits him to deal with them in his thoughts.¹⁷⁹ A personal frame of orientation is not possible without a certain life-experience; and the life-experience itself obliges one to search for a frame of orientation.

It does not seem likely that a child will be able to grow into a personal acceptance of Christ without the

179 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 64.

example of real Christian witness. Dogmatic and moral training will not be effective if they are only taught in a propositional form.

While we teach knowledge, we are losing that teaching which is the most important one for human development: the teaching which can only be given by the simple presence of a mature, loving person.¹⁸⁰

If the Christians with whom a child has contact profess Christianity without accepting it personally, the child will not be given the example he needs to understand what a Christian frame of orientation is; rather, he might need to reflect that which is proposed in order to achieve an integral human vision. In a pluralistic society there are meaning-system options open to an individual which would not be present in another age or society; yet a sensitivity to one's own mental processes and those of the social group into which one is born is difficult unless a person discovers a loving, integral or courageous person outside his own family, and so is brought to reflect on the spiritual poverty of the un-lived ideals by which he is surrounded (if this be so).¹⁸¹ Even if this happens, there may be pressures on the individual to consider his allegiance to the group (here the Catholic Church or the Christian

¹⁸⁰ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 98.

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

community) above his own wishes and insights.¹⁰² To the extent that an individual bows to this narcissistic group pressure he will lose his ability for objectivity,¹⁰³ and so lessen his chances of making his own a truly Christian frame of orientation--and thus of allowing the mystery of Christ to illumine the mysteries of suffering and death, etc.

(d) Con.- In the discussion of the second principle, it was noted what demands are put on the Christian as regards his ordering of values, and it was asked whether the challenge to love the neighbour in such a radical way may not control the effectiveness of the Christian frame of orientation to illumine the mysteries of suffering and death. This question may be broadened to ask about the effect of the religious language used to describe the human condition, and the redemptive impact of Christ on this human condition. Consider the dilemma posed by these two passages:

Man is split within himself [...]. Indeed, man finds that by himself he is incapable of battling the assaults of evil successfully, so that everyone feels as though he is bound by chains. [...] For sin has diminished man, blocking his path to fulfillment.¹⁰⁴

102 A group may be charged with a more-than-normal amount of group narcissism; and this narcissism exerts considerable pressure toward conformity on the individuals in the group.

103 Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 78-80.

104 The Church Today, 13, 211.

Through [the] Spirit [...] the whole man is renewed from within, even to the achievement of the "redemption of the body" (Rom. 8:23).¹⁸⁵

The dilemma is this: if a person honestly strives to live in the life-circle of Christ, he should be able to apply the promises of redemption from sin to himself. However, if he knows himself experientially, as a sinner, does he experience himself as a redeemed person, one for whom the promises of Christ are valid (i.e., that as Christ has been raised from the dead so he too will achieve even redemption of the body)? To put it another way, what of the Christian who does not fully live the life of the Spirit, and who feels (at the level of awareness) that his ongoing sins are a constant threat to his relationship with Christ? He knows that sin is not the work of the Spirit, and he knows equally that it is only in the Spirit that redemption of the body is to be had. Certain avenues of resolution are suggested by Vatican II:

All the members ought to be molded into Christ's image until he is formed in them (Gal. 4:19).¹⁸⁶

Now Christ has communicated this power of subjection to His disciples that they might be established in royal freedom and that by self-denial and a holy life they might conquer the reign of sin in themselves.¹⁸⁷

185 The Church Today, 22, 221.

186 The Church, 7, 21.

187 The Church, 36, 62.

The vocabulary of these quotations indicates that the conquering of sin is a process begun in faith and baptism rather than a fait accompli. The personal initiative of self-denial is required. Conquering the reign of sin is a task to be accomplished by the power of subjection which the Christian has by the Spirit of Christ.¹⁸⁸

However, to state that the conquering of sin is a task and a process is not to completely resolve the dilemma--sin and Christ are, in fact, incompatible. In some cases, at least, it would appear that awareness of what baptism and the Eucharist are supposed to effect in the Christian, as well as an awareness of what these sacraments demand of the person who accepts them, may reduce the effectiveness of the Christian frame of orientation in resolving the anomalies of life, because of a feeling of unworthiness of the promises of Christ. If a Christian experiences this dilemma deeply (for example, in a crisis of faith at the end of adolescence) he will perhaps be helped to a mature resolution (or acceptance of the tension) by contact with other Christians who, in spite of their experience of sin, hold fast to a Christian frame of

¹⁸⁸ Fromm would perhaps feel that this is an unhealthy projection of human powers onto God, and that man is giving God all that he has through a mechanism of projection similar to that which can be observed in interpersonal relationships of a masochistic, submissive character. Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 49.

orientation and find in Christ their answer to the experience of the anomalies of life--sin included.¹⁸⁹

(e) Daily Dying and the Mystery of Christ.- In order for baptismal incorporation into Christ to function as a genuine frame of orientation, a person must be able in some way to see a relationship between his daily dying and the Passing-over of Christ, for it is the mystery of Christ being lived in the Christian which makes his suffering end in resurrection. As was pointed out in chapter one, principle two, the Christian is called to see the poor man as a sacrament of Christ. This is integral to the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. But by baptism and faith the Christian is also called to see in his own sufferings a presence of the Passing-over of Christ.

The life of Christ is poured into the believers, who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ Who suffered and was glorified. Through Baptism we are formed into the likeness of Christ [...]. In this sacred rite, a union with Christ's death and resurrection is both symbolized and brought about: "For we were buried with him by means of Baptism into death." And if "we have been united with him in the likeness of His death, we shall be so in the likeness of His resurrection also (Rom. 6:4-5).¹⁹⁰

¹⁸⁹ It should be noted that Christianity is neither simply a faith system nor simply an ethical system. To sin is not to deny one's faith in God and his saving power, but it may weaken man's ability to accept that this saving power is personally applicable.

¹⁹⁰ The Church, 7, 20.

This implies a need to see baptismal incorporation into Christ as effecting some reality in the present. The Christian Gospel "consists in the fact that what in the O.T. was future expectation has now, because of what Christ was and did, become--at least in part--present realization."¹⁹¹ It is in the sacrament of baptism that the pledge (the 'seal' or 'Spirit') is given to the Christian that he has already entered into the age of Messianic blessings.

The stark realism of the idea that the Christian has already been admitted to heavenly glory through baptismal union with the glorified Christ stresses Paul's realization of the Christian's present possession of the Messianic blessings and his definitive triumph over the forces of evil.¹⁹²

Within the context of this discussion of a Christian frame of orientation, the two points just raised (the life of Christ in the believer and the Christian's possession of Messianic blessings) allow considerable latitude for interpretation by the individual. Depending on the person's whole psychological make-up, they could be symptomatic of a healthy or unhealthy attitude towards life. Negatively, they could indicate a desire for the annihilation of the self, a willingness to sacrifice the individual for a

¹⁹¹ The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible: An Illustrated Encyclopedia, New York, Abingdon Press, 1962, Vol. I, p. 350.

¹⁹² David M. Stanley, The Apostolic Church in the New Testament, Westminster, Md., Newman, 1965, p. 183.

greater "cause", or a despair of life. Positively, they could indicate (or lead to) a love of life, a healthy hope and an ability to face present difficulties with equanimity and fortitude.

(i) Negative possibilities.- In his discussion of moral masochism, Fromm states that the person who wishes to submit to another imagines that he has something to gain from it, namely a sense of security and strength from the power in which the person submerges himself. It does not seem unfair to question whether a Christian could interpret his "living with the life of Christ" in the negative sense of the following quotation:

The annihilation of the individual self and the attempt to overcome thereby the unbearable feeling of powerlessness are only one side of the masochistic strivings. The other side is the attempt to become a part of a bigger and more powerful whole outside of oneself, to submerge and participate in it. This power can be a person, an institution, God, the nation, conscience, or a psychic compulsion. [...] One surrenders one's own self and renounces all strength and pride connected with it [...] but one gains a new security and a new pride in the participation in the power in which one submerges.¹⁹³

¹⁹³ Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 177. Fromm's personal belief is that "neither life nor history has an ultimate meaning which in turn imparts meaning to the life of the individual or justifies his suffering." Beyond the Chains of Illusion, p. 175. Yet he notes that the contradictions and weaknesses of man's existence push him to seek for an 'absolute' which "gives him the illusion of certainty and relieves him from conflict, doubt and responsibility." Ibid., p. 175-176. Without judging Fromm's premises, it is accepted here that there is a negative way of resolving contradictions and weaknesses, and it is asked whether the concept of union with Christ's death and resurrection may for an individual be symptomatic of this type of unhealthy resolution.

Further, it may be asked whether the concept of the life of Christ in the Christian is too remote an ideal to be operative. "Frequently authoritarian religion postulates an ideal so abstract and so distant that it has hardly any connection with the real life of real people."¹⁹⁴ To say that the mystery of Christ is re-lived in each Christian does not mean necessarily that the mystery of Christ is not psychically very distant from the real person. Whether or not the presence of the Christ-mystery will be an operative part of an individual's frame of orientation will depend on the individual's perception and integration of this ideal in his life. One negative factor which might retard a healthy integration of these Christian concepts is the pressure to conformity in contemporary society, a pressure so persuasive and powerful that only a person of inner strength and integrity can resist it.¹⁹⁵ To the extent that the unhealthy attitudes described above (moral masochism, lack of love of life) are characteristics of his society there will be considerable pressure on the individual to interpret the Christian concept of the mystery of Christ in the Christian in an unhealthy sense.

194 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 36.

195 Cf. ibid., p. 75.

(ii) Positive possibilities.- However, it may also be that these same concepts provide the individual with the inner strength and integrity to resist negative social pressures. Equanimity in the face of contradictions and weaknesses of man's existence need not be bred of an unhealthy submission to an absolute which gives a mere illusion of certainty. If the presence of the mystery of Christ is seen by the individual as an intrinsic part of his own existence, inextricably bound up with his own unique personhood, there could result a productive and healthy faith in his own worth (even if he himself recognizes that he does not understand every dimension of being in person in Christ).

The mystery of Christ may be perceived as extrinsic, and submitted to in an unhealthy sense. It may be perceived by the individual as belonging to the core of his unique self, and may provide (in mystery and faith) a genuine equanimity in the face of disintegrative forces with which he could not otherwise cope. Once again it depends on the way in which the individual understands his own faith, and the motive for which he has accepted it. No a priori judgment should be made.

To some people return to religion is the answer, not as an act of faith but in order to escape an intolerable doubt; they make this decision not out of devotion but in search of security.¹⁹⁶

196 Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 4.

Fromm distinguishes rational from irrational faith by asking to what extent this faith results from a personal experience.

By irrational faith I understand the belief in a person, idea, or symbol which does not result from one's own experience of thought or feeling, but which is based on one's emotional submission to irrational authority.¹⁹⁷

To the extent that the Christian's "being in Christ" results from his own experience and belongs to the core of his unique self, his faith is rational (in Fromm's vocabulary) and constructive of his personhood. A recognition of dependence on God is not the same as an unhealthy worship of this dependence. Vatican II states:

Only God, who created man to his own image and ransomed him from sin, provides a fully adequate answer to [man's] questions. This he does through what he has revealed in Christ His Son, who became man.¹⁹⁸

While this may appear to imply that man's answer to his own existence is in the hands of an extrinsic authority (and therefore inherently irrational and debilitating) such is not necessarily the case. To concede such a line of argumentation would be simply to avoid the critical question: does the individual perceive his "being in Christ" as extrinsic to his selfhood, or has he so

¹⁹⁷ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 204.

¹⁹⁸ The Church, 41, 240.

integrated his life in Christ that he perceives the mystery of Christ as giving final sense to his own meaning as a person?¹⁹⁴

To concede in theory that the Christian faith may be "rational" for an individual neither denies the potential difficulty of achieving such faith, nor posits that it is a frequent occurrence. But it does affirm such faith as a real possibility within the boundaries of healthy human development. In practice, such faith should aid man's productive relationship to himself and his world by freeing him from the paralysis of his own limitations and challenging him to growth in love.

Perhaps the fundamental test of the validity of the Christian faith for an individual will be his productive relationship to himself and the world. "Is it not a question of choosing between better or worse absolutes, between absolutes which help his development and those that hinder it?"¹⁹⁵

(f) A Partially Integrated Frame of Orientation.-
It may be asked whether or not a partially integrated

¹⁹⁴ Cf: Yves Congar, "Le rôle de l'Église dans le monde de ce temps", Vatican II: L'Église dans le monde de ce temps, Tome II, commentaires, no. 65b in the collection Unam Sanctam, Paris, Cerf, 1967, p. 322. (Henceforth referred to as Unam Sanctam 65b.)

¹⁹⁵ Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 76.

Christian frame of orientation allows an individual room for growth by freeing him from the paralysis of his own limitations. Consider the person whose relationship to God is still mixed with elements of irrationality. His belief that God is giving meaning to his life may free him from a sense of alienation which eclipses even his limited ability to relate productively to himself and his world. Evidently this is not an optimal form of religion. It may simply prolong and reinforce dependence and irrationality. But if it is conceded that some people are not, at, or after, a given point, capable of real maturity, then a vision of life which supports the individual while at the same time demanding a certain positive response to the neighbour may be more productive than another less demanding frame of orientation. At the same time it should be noted that man's ability to create a human world in which he is at home demands that he be in touch with reality: that is that his vision of the world be not distorted by desires and fears. Man cannot live in illusion about one area of his life (for example, his relationship to God) without thereby damaging his objectivity in other areas, and so ultimately weakening his ability to relate productively to the world.¹⁹⁶ Therefore any affirmative judgment

196 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 65.

about the value of a partially integrated Christian frame of orientation must be given with considerable hesitation.

However, Vatican II indicates the progressive nature of the realization of the Christian ideal for the individual: "All members ought to be molded into Christ's image until he is formed in them (Gal. 4:19)."¹⁹⁷ Integration of the Christian vision admits of degrees and of growth. Total integration is the goal; continuing progress towards integration is already a sign of a growing maturity. A totally integrated Christian frame of orientation will give more strength to face suffering and death than a partially integrated one; but the latter may at least provide the beginnings of an adequate answer-meaning system for the individual.

This section has considered sacramental incorporation into Christ as an insertion into a frame of orientation. The conclusions may be summed up as follows: the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering which concerns sacramental incorporation into Christ is conducive to the progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs because it provides a frame of orientation which allows the mystery of Christ to illumine the problems of suffering, death, and the meaning of life,

¹⁹⁷ The Church, 7, 21; cf.: Missions, 5, 590; The Church, 9, 26; also Fromm, The Heart of Man, p. 118-221, 94.

because it allows the individual to face contradictions and weaknesses with equanimity, and because it provides an inner strength and integrity to resist negative social pressures. In the case of a partially integrated frame of orientation it may encourage growth and provide the beginnings of an adequate answer-meaning system.

This is so under the following conditions: that the Christian frame of orientation is not simply a rationalization; that it is personally integrated and does not result from conformity or narcissistic group pressure; that the individual is able to live with the tension of being redeemed and being a sinner; that incorporation into Christ is not symptomatic of an unhealthy attitude toward life (desire for annihilation of the self, despair of life, etc.); that it is not a form of masochistic submission; that the mystery of Christ is perceived by the individual as belonging to the core of his unique self; and finally, in the case of a partially integrated frame of orientation, that it does not fixate a person at a level beyond which he is capable of growing.

C. Frame of Devotion

This section considers as frame of devotion the part of the third principle which speaks of sacramental incorporation into Christ. The problem it broaches is

this: in what way does the average Christian come in contact with, and keep before his mind, the frame of orientation discussed in the preceding section? It seems evident that the theology of suffering (for example, that presented by Vatican II) is not studied formally by most Christians. Yet, if it is to be effective in their lives, they must in some way be exposed to this frame of orientation. Erich Fromm's discussion of the frame of devotion, and its relationship to the frame of orientation, offers an avenue of resolution for this problem.

Whether we think of the Greek drama, the medieval passion play, or an Indian dance, whether we think of Jewish or Christian rituals, we are dealing with various forms of dramatization of the fundamental problems of human existence, with an acting out of the very same problems which are thought out in philosophy and theology.¹⁹⁸

What is said in this section may be applied to the whole Christian valuation and significance of suffering. The question is treated here because it was in the third principle that sacramental incorporation into Christ (and therefore the ritual acting out of the foundation of a Christian valuation and significance of suffering) was considered.

Two main points are considered in this section. Firstly, Christian ritual is a fundamental form of

¹⁹⁸ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 132.

transmission of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, as well as the locus and means of the integration of this suffering into a significant pattern which 'resolves' this suffering. Secondly, while this may be true in theory there is no guarantee that what should be actually is. The validity of the sacraments as saving actions of God is not in question. But these sacraments are saving action of God for men, and in forms created by men. The questions asked in this section relate to the receptive capacity of man, and to the suitability of the forms in which God's activity is manifested.

While this section on the frame of devotion indirectly answers the question posed by this thesis (i.e. Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the five basic psychic needs of man, and under what conditions?), the main point under consideration is more fundamental. For if it cannot be demonstrated that the average Christian has a readily available means for coming in contact with the Christian valuation and significance of suffering the question posed by the thesis has little significance for the average Christian.

(a) Transmission of the Christian Valuation and Significance of Suffering.- Ritual is one expression of the frame of devotion. It refers to the level of experience,

in which elements of feeling and sense are realized in action. The same fundamental problems which are treated intellectually in a frame of orientation (e.g. philosophy and theology) are acted out in the frame of devotion.

Or perhaps more accurately within a Christian context, the same problems which are acted out in a ritual are thought out in theology. For, according to Fromm, ritual is not a "second-best" way of presenting these solutions to man. Words are insufficient to describe experience--in fact, they often obscure it, dissect it, kill it. Ritual or art is a more effective way of describing human experience because of its precision, and because it avoids the "worn-out coins which are taken for adequate representations of human experience."¹⁹⁹ This point is of extreme importance for any defense of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, for it would appear relatively easy to demonstrate that the bulk of the material presented in the first chapter of this thesis is not readily grasped intellectually by the majority of Christians. However, just as one should not equate the ability to verbalize an ideology with its operative effect as ideal in the life of the person who verbalizes it, so too it does not seem wise to infer that the inability to verbalize an ideal excludes the possibility that this ideal

199 Fromm, Revolution of Hope, p. 11.

may be genuinely operative in a person's life. This ideal may be transmitted by, expressed in, and reinforced by ritual expression; and this may be, according to Fromm, a more effective way of presenting an ideal than intellectual representation.

Ritual is closely linked to intellectual representation: any integral system has both elements. "Any satisfying system of orientation implies not only intellectual elements but elements of feeling and sense to be realized in action in all fields of human endeavor."²⁰⁰ Man must react to the dichotomy of his existence in his feelings and actions as well as in his frame of orientation. And his expression of his ideals in ritual reinforces his intellectual grasp of his meaning system. But ritual is, in certain respects, more effective than intellectual representation. Because ritual operates at a level beyond words (although words may be part of ritual) it has a power to evoke, express and 'resolve' problems that would otherwise remain untouched. Although an individual may not have thought out systematically his frame of orientation, good ritual allows him to act out and enter into the same mystery that would be approached in systematic theology. Further, good ritual involves the whole man in such a way that he experiences unity and oneness in all spheres of

200 Fromm, Man for Himself, p. 55.

of his being. He is active in a more total way than he would be if he used his mind alone.

The basic relationship between Christian orientation and Christian devotion is of importance. As regards the material presented in chapter one, it should be noted that much of the theologizing about the Christian way of giving meaning to suffering is derived from ritual expression.²⁰¹ The mystery of the life and Passing-over of Christ was re-enacted and made new in ritual (the sacraments); and it is out of reflection on these life experiences that a systematized theology has grown. The fundamental reality of the Christian frame of orientation and devotion is Jesus Christ, and his Passing-over to his Father. The Cross of Christ (as symbol of his Passing-over) is at the core of both baptism and Christian Eucharist. Baptism is a sacred rite in which a "union with Christ's death and resurrection is symbolized and brought about";²⁰² Eucharist is a cultic recital and re-enactment of the sacrifice of the Cross in such a way that Christ is, in the here-and-now, a sacrificial offering with whom the Christian is joined.²⁰³ In their origins, both sacraments were attempts of the Apostles

201 Cf. Principles III and IV.

202 The Church, 7, 20.

203 Cf. Chapter I, Principle III, Section C(a), "The Cross, Baptism, and the Eucharist".

to affirm and transmit their faith in the presence of their risen Lord among them through the Holy Spirit. "In fact, we may say that the apostles looked upon the reception of [Baptism] as reproducing, so far as that was possible, their own pentecostal experience."²⁰⁴ And the Eucharist is, of its nature, a memoria of the mystery of the Passing-over of Christ. In summation, the experience of Christ as re-enacted in sacramental ritual is primary to the Christian experience. From a Christian point of view, ritual is more primary than theological explanation--although the two are closely intertwined. Thus, ritual is of key importance in transmitting and making real the Christian valuation and significance of suffering; and a person may enter into the mystery without being able to give a theologically adequate explanation of his actions. "We are dealing with various forms of dramatization of the fundamental problems of human existence, with an acting out of the very same problems which are thought out in [...] theology."²⁰⁵ Man, faced by the complexity of being human, is moved to express in a shared way his answers to the problems which beset him. Any good ritual helps man to break through the surface of routine and get "in touch with the ultimate realities of

²⁰⁴ Stanley, op. cit., p. 185.

²⁰⁵ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 132.

life."²⁰⁶ This is so theologically as well as experientially of Christian ritual.²⁰⁷

It will be useful, as an illustration of ritual, to draw out some of the implications of the Eucharist for the believer who enters into it fully. Firstly, Mass is ordinarily at least a weekly event for the faithful Roman Catholic. Each Sunday he is a part of a cultic recital and ritual re-enactment of the events which give meaning to his suffering. There is, in this, both stability and variety. The basic Mass pattern remains constant; the Scripture readings and the liturgical cycle highlight various aspects of his 'being in Christ'. He celebrates the mysteries of the life of the Lord (birth, death, resurrection, glorification), and is, ideally, conscious that the life of Jesus of Nazareth is his life. "The life of Christ is poured into the believers, who, through the sacraments, are united in a hidden and real way to Christ Who suffered and was glorified."²⁰⁸ In the Scriptures and in the homily the Christian is made conscious of the meaning of his own suffering, and at least periodically of the existence of

206 Ibid., p. 131.

207 Stanley, op. cit., p. 141: "Accordingly it is to the pentecostal experience of the first disciples that the explication of their specifically Christian beliefs must be ascribed."

208 The Church, 7, 20.

the sufferings of others. Man's suffering is made explicit, and linked to its real cause: sin, or the pain of a wasted life. The Christian accepts the Eucharist as his pledge to enter into the Passing-over of Christ. "The partaking of the Body and Blood of Christ does nothing other than transform us into that which we consume."²⁰⁹ The bread which he shares is a sign of union with his fellow worshippers. His worship is a communal act of hope: he proclaims that his hope in the face of suffering and death will bring him and those with whom he shares the sacred bread into the fulness of the glorified Christ. In the Eucharist, the Christian is involved in a community called together by God in order to be sent to communicate the unity-producing power of Christ.²¹⁰

(b) Entering into Ritual.- Christian ritual may be of special worth and importance in contemporary society, for "modern ritual is impoverished and does not fulfill man's need for collective art and ritual, even in the remotest sense, either as to quality or its quantitative significance in life."²¹¹ It may also be that Roman Catholic ritual (especially the

209 The Church, 26, 50.

210 Cf. The Church, 9, 26; 41, 70.

211 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 303.

Eucharist in which the passing-over of Christ is represented and the Christian is made one with Christ who suffered and yet was raised) may be a strongly integrative force in resolving the mysteries of suffering and death. What has been said to this point indicates that it has the potentiality to be this. But potentiality is not actuality, and certain questions must be raised. Ritual may become more important than the inner reality expressed.²¹² The work of Vatican II (especially The Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy) as well as the liturgical renewal which continues to take place indicate that there was a felt need to renew the outer shell in such a way as to let the inner reality shine through. Has liturgical development reached a point where the inner reality of sacramental rituals shines through sufficiently to sweep modern man up into an experience which is truly integrative at a totally human level? Is, for instance, Sunday Mass experienced by the average Christian as a genuine celebration in faith of the presence of the Risen Lord? Is Sunday Mass, or attendance at a baptism, experienced as a being assumed into that sacrifice of Christ which ended in resurrection--and which gives meaning to the Christian's daily dying? The statement of Vatican II: thus, the Church comes "together to

212 Fromm, You Shall Be As Gods, p. 48.

celebrate the pascal mystery [...], celebrating the Eucharist in which 'the victory and triumph of His death are again made present'"²¹³ may be accepted as an ideal and a possibility; but the statement of what should be is no guarantee of what is.

Nor is it necessarily or exclusively the fault of the ritual if the ideal is not realized. Much of what has been said in the previous sections on rationalization, and the need to accept the Christian message integrally in order for it to be truly effective, indicates that man may not enter fully into the saving rites for many personal reasons: he may not be able to be grasped by the emotional content and contact of the liturgy because his ritual vocabulary and emotional set are formed by a different system of values and perception. Or the lack of real ritual in contemporary society may have atrophied his ability to be renewed by ritual and to allow it to be for him an integrative experience: he may come to worship with a fundamentally spectator attitude.²¹⁴ Contemporary man's 'marketing orientation' may induce him to see ritual worship in terms of a bargaining with God in which he expends a certain amount of time and energy in return for which God guarantees him a certain measure of success and protection.²¹⁵

²¹³ Liturgy, 6, 140.

²¹⁴ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 132.

²¹⁵ Cf. ibid., p. 132-137.

Such a marketing orientation would weaken man's ability to enter into sacramental ritual fully. Or, a man may have lost his objectivity to such a degree that he interprets the Christian ritual in such a personal way that it may no longer be called Christian. Although a religious ritual may appear to be a shared frame of devotion, it may be so distorted by the fears, desires and needs of an individual that it becomes in effect a 'private religion'.²¹⁵

In spite of the questions just raised, the theory is still valid: sacramental ritual is the Christian's basic contact with the Christian valuation and significance of suffering.

In [baptism] a union with Christ's death and resurrection is both symbolized and brought about: "For we were buried with Him by means of Baptism into death." And if "we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, we shall be so in the likeness of His resurrection also" (Rom. 6:4-5).²¹⁶

Christian tradition, reflecting on the Last Supper and the subsequent events of Christ's Passing-over sees the Eucharist as a cultic recital and re-enactment of the saving event. In it each participant "experiences the event and is personally integrated into the death and resurrection of Jesus."²¹⁷

215 Cf. Fromm, Psychoanalysis and Religion, p. 29-30.

216 The Church, 7, 20.

217 John L. McKenzie, Dictionary of the Bible, Milwaukee, Bruce, 1965, p. 251. What has been said here of the Eucharist and baptism may be applied with the appropriate changes to the other sacraments.

In conclusion, two main points have been considered in this section: firstly, Christian ritual is a fundamental and healthy form of transmission of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering under the following conditions: that there is no 'ritual rationalization', that ritual is not an empty shell either because of the ritual itself or because of the unwillingness of the individual to accept the consequences of entering into the ritual, and that contemporary man's marketing orientation does not lead him to misinterpret ritual. Secondly, the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering which concerns acting out in ritual what is thought out in theology is conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the basic psychic needs of man, for it allows man to break through the surface of routine and get "in touch with the ultimate realities of life",²¹⁸ and because it involves the whole man in such a way that he experiences unity and oneness in all spheres of his being. This is so under the conditions noted above: i.e. that there is no 'ritual rationalization', that ritual is not an empty shell either because of the ritual itself or because of the unwillingness of the individual to accept the consequences of entering into the ritual, and that contemporary man's marketing orientation does not lead him to misinterpret ritual.

218 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 131.

5. The Fourth Principle.

The fourth principle stated: Christ continues to carry on his redemptive work in the Church, especially through the Eucharist in which the work of redemption is carried on. Christians, by filling up what is wanting in the suffering of Christ, build up the Church, the sacrament of salvation, for the unity of the world. This section considers some of the psychological dynamisms involved in accepting or even seeking suffering. The criteria of examination are those provided by Fromm in his analysis of man's basic psychic needs.

Every person encounters a certain measure of suffering in his life. Yet some suffering is healthy because it is necessary for the integrity and development of the person; other suffering is unhealthy because it weakens or destroys the person as person. This section examines both types of suffering and attempts to clarify the potentially healthy and potentially unhealthy aspects of the Christian concept of redemption through suffering proposed in the fourth principle, and also in the third principle.²¹⁹

This section is divided into two main points: firstly, constructive forms of suffering; secondly,

²¹⁹ Made one in the sacraments with Christ who suffered and is exalted, the Christian offers his sufferings as an acceptable sacrifice before God.

destructive forms of suffering. In this way another facet of the question posed by this thesis is answered: Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering proposed by Vatican II conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the five basic psychic needs of man, and under what conditions.

It is not asked whether the amount of suffering which an individual undergoes vitiates his life, but rather whether the person integrates suffering into his life in a constructive way. "Life is a unique gift and challenge, not to be measured in terms of anything else, and no sensible answer can be given to the question whether it is 'worthwhile' living, because the question does not make any sense."²²⁰

A. Constructive Suffering

Although suffering is an evil in itself, there are times when a person is called to sacrifice, even to sacrifice his own life. Fromm stresses that the attempt to avoid all suffering is a symptom of serious illness in man. In fact, he defines evil as "man's loss of himself in the tragic attempt to escape the burden of his humanity."²²¹

220 Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 136.

221 -----, The Heart of Man, p. 148.

Fromm notes that there is a common error about love (the one valid way of overcoming alienation and aloneness);

One frequent error must be mentioned here. The illusion, namely, that love means necessarily the absence of conflict. Just as it is customary to believe that pain and sadness should be avoided under all circumstances, they believe that love means the absence of any conflict.²²²

Love is not the absence of any conflict. Nor is happiness the absence of any suffering. There are certain goals and ideals which can be achieved only if one is willing to risk whatever inevitable suffering comes along. No truly productive life excludes suffering.

For example, there is a certain healthy form of 'suffering' (or, better, of effort which may be painful) involved in becoming fully human. The Vatican Council witnesses to this:

For although the Catholic Church has been endowed with all divinely revealed truth and with all means of grace, her members fail to live by them with all the fervor they should. [...] Every Catholic must therefore aim at Christian perfection [...].²²³

Within a Christian context, such suffering is equivalent to a self-emptying, a getting rid of whatever is not of God. In the light of what was said about the ability of the mature person to submit to rational authority, this call to full human growth (Christian perfection), in

²²² Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 86.

²²³ Ecumenism, 4, 348.

imitation of Jesus Christ, is a form of effort or suffering which is constructive of personhood. It is redemptive because it builds the person into a fuller human being.

Sacrifice, even the sacrifice of one's life, is not necessarily a manifestation of an unhealthy mental attitude. Sacrifice may be the ultimate assertion of the integrity of the spiritual self.

It is one of the tragic facts of life that the demands of our physical self and the aims of our mental self can conflict; that actually we may have to sacrifice our physical self in order to assert the integrity of our spiritual self. [...]
True sacrifice presupposes an uncompromising wish for spiritual integrity.²²⁴

Even within a secular vocabulary such suffering could be called redemptive, because its refusal would be a negation of spiritual integrity.

Within the context of the Christian faith as presented by Vatican II, redemptive suffering has a particular meaning.²²⁵ Christ continues to carry on his redemptive work in the Church through Christians who, by filling up what is wanting in the sufferings of Christ, build up the Church for the unity of all mankind. "Just as Christ carried out the work of redemption in poverty and under oppression, so the Church is called to follow the same path in communicating to man the fruits of salvation."²²⁶

²²⁴ Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 294-295.

²²⁵ Cf. Chapter I,

²²⁶ The Church, 8, 23.

In the course of history it unfolds the mission of Christ Himself, Who was sent to preach the gospel to the poor. Hence, prompted by the Holy Spirit, the Church must walk the same road which Christ walked: a road of poverty and obedience, of service and self-sacrifice to the death, from which death He came forth victor by His resurrection. For thus did all the apostles walk in hope. On behalf of Christ's body, which is the Church, they supplied what was wanting of the sufferings of Christ by their own many trials and sufferings (Cf. Col. 1:24).²²⁷

As was explained in chapter one, principle four, there are certain premises underlying these statements: (1) all creation is redeemed by Christ; (2) this redemption is the unification of all men, in Christ, with one another; (3) yet, this redemption, or unification, is not yet complete, for all mankind is not yet one; (4) the Christian has the responsibility of working in the same manner as did the Lord for the unification of all; (5) this unification takes place not through power or force, but through love and service.

To the extent that such unification of all things in Christ requires self-sacrifice and service, it may be considered both healthy and productive. Vatican II describes what is expected of the Christian:

The heritage of this people are the dignity and freedom of the sons of God, in whose hearts the Holy Spirit dwells as in His temple. Its law is the new commandment to love as Christ loved us [...].

²²⁷ Missions, 5, 590.

So it is that this messianic people, although it does not actually include all men [...] is nonetheless a lasting and sure seed of unity, hope, and salvation for the whole human race. Established by Christ as a fellowship of life, charity, and truth, it is also used by Him as an instrument for the redemption of all, and is sent forth into the whole world as the light of the world and the salt of the earth [...].²²⁸

The challenge of such statements is in sharp contrast to Fromm's negative judgment: "Modern man exhibits an amazing lack of realism for all that matters. For the meaning of life and death, for happiness and suffering, for feeling and serious thought."²²⁹ A Christian witness to things that really matter (whatever suffering it entails) and the sacrifice involved in a productive and unifying love for all mankind are worthwhile and healthy. It is productive of individual growth and witnesses to spiritual integrity. Whatever suffering is involved in this may be described as redemptive and as conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the basic psychic needs of man.

The ideal which is presented by Vatican II is an appeal to a high form of productive love. However, the achievement of this ideal requires personal maturity and a mature faith and hope founded on a free and conscious choice.²³⁰ Within a Christian context, the conviction that sacrifice for an ideal is worthwhile is based on a faith

²²⁸ The Church, 9, 25-26.

²²⁹ Fromm, May Man Prevail?, p. 18.

²³⁰ Cf. The Church, 11, 27-29.

that, like Christ, the faithful Christian's sacrifice will end in resurrection. For his living and dying are already a bearing within himself of the living and dying of Christ.

Even St. Paul already equates baptism and faith with the idea of dying and sees every experience of suffering as a 'daily dying', a 'stigma Christi', a bearing within oneself of the 'nekrosis Christi'.²³¹

Such faith demands, as was indicated in the section on the Christian frame of orientation, a personal and deep acceptance of the Christian message.

Equally demanding of faith and maturity are the statements of Vatican II:

Those who are oppressed by poverty, infirmity, sickness, or various other hardships, as well as those who suffer persecution for justice' sake-- may they all know that they are united with the suffering Christ for the salvation of the world.²³²

For all their works, prayers, and apostolic endeavors, their ordinary married and family life, their mental and physical relaxation, if carried out in the Spirit, even the hardships of life, if patiently borne--all these become spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ (Cf. 1 Pet. 2:15).²³³

Precisely why the concept of sacrifice or suffering as redemptive requires such maturity is discussed in the following section.

231 Rahner, Theological Investigations. Vol. III, p. 165.

232 The Church, 41, 70.

233 The Church, 34, 60.

First, however, it may be noted that liturgical worship is the normal cultic expression of the free choice of the Christian to imitate the love, sacrifice, and service of Christ.²³⁴ Baptism leads to the Eucharist, and empowers the baptized to take part in Christ's offering of himself to the Father. But this Christ who offers himself to the Father is the whole Christ--head and members. The disposition to offer sacrifice is at the same time a commitment to become part of this sacrifice, for the Christian is, in Christ, a part of the sacrifice of praise offered to the Father.

We learn from the same Apostle that we must carry about in our body the dying of Jesus, so that the life of Jesus too may be made manifest in our bodily frame [...]. This is why we ask the Lord in the sacrifice of the Mass that "receiving the offering of the spiritual victim" He may fashion us for Himself "as an eternal gift."²³⁵

For a mature and personally convinced Christian, there should be strength in the faith that his daily hardships, whatever they might be, are a sacrifice of praise which he offers to the Father. Whatever the inevitability of his suffering, he should have confidence that what he undergoes for the sake of justice and truth is not a wasted effort. Even if he does not see the results of his efforts in his

²³⁴ Cf. Principle III.

²³⁵ The Church, 26, 50.

own lifetime, he is encouraged to continue on without ceasing, because God accepts his sufferings in such a way as to let them be, like Christ's, a source of the sending of the Spirit of love for the salvation of the world. Even if he cannot understand his sufferings, or the sufferings of others, he can at least be silent before the mystery of suffering, encouraged in his faith that God will bring resurrection out of death; and confident that his efforts towards the unification of all men in Christ (by spiritual integrity and productive love) are not wasted. He will thus be better able to bear the inevitable, and continue to work constructively. Such a Christian concept of suffering may be said to be conducive to the progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs.

B. Negative Suffering

Not all suffering is constructive of personhood. Nor is all suffering born of or conducive to spiritual integrity. This section considers certain unhealthy forms of suffering, and applies these reflections to the concept of suffering as redemptive presented by Vatican II, especially in the fourth principle.

(a) The masochistic person has already been described. Fromm says that the masochistic perversion "proves beyond doubt that suffering can be something

sought for."²³⁶ Even if such a person were to describe his suffering as redemptive, such a rationalization would be suspect. For him, suffering may not only be something desired, but may be praised as an act of great love.

Masochistic phenomena, especially, are looked on as expressions of love. An attitude of complete self-denial for the sake of another person and the surrender of one's own rights and claims to another person have been praised as examples of "great love." It seems that there is no better proof for "love" than sacrifice and the readiness to give oneself up for the sake of the other person. Actually, in these cases, "love" is essentially a masochistic yearning and rooted in the symbiotic need of the person involved.²³⁷

Giving, or sacrificing oneself, requires a considerable degree of maturity if it is not to be simply an attempt to lose oneself, to enter into a symbiotic union with another. Sacrifice may mean "the utmost subordination of the individual self to something higher, not assertion of one's mental and moral self."²³⁸ Connected to this concept is the idea of giving which, if it is to be healthy, requires personal maturity.

The most widespread misunderstanding is that which assumes that giving is "giving up" something, being deprived of, sacrificing. The person whose character orientation has not developed beyond the state of the receptive, exploitative or

236 Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 176.

237 Ibid., p. 182-183.

238 Ibid., p. 306.

hoarding orientation, experiences the act of giving in this way [...]. Some make a virtue out of giving in the sense of a sacrifice. They feel that just because it is painful to give, one should give; the virtue of giving to them lies in the very act of the acceptance of the sacrifice. For them, the norm that it is better to give than to receive means that it is better to suffer deprivation than to experience joy.²³⁹

Although Fromm's perspective in the passage just cited is slightly different than the perspective of the passage previously quoted, his analysis of the widespread misunderstanding surrounding the nature of giving or sacrificing has a certain parallel in what he has said about masochism parading as love. True giving, and therefore true sacrificing, "is the highest expression of potency. In the very act of giving, I experience my strength, my wealth, my power."²⁴⁰ This description contrasts sharply with the negative concept of the annihilation of the individual self implied in moral masochism or psychic symbiotic union.

Whatever is said by the Vatican Council about the redemptive nature of suffering depends on and is applicable to the person who has achieved a predominantly productive character orientation. Otherwise suffering may only represent a masochistic dependency, or a negation of Christianity as a religion of joy and freedom.

²³⁹ Fromm, The Art of Loving, p. 18-19.

²⁴⁰ Ibid., p. 19.

(b) Suffering as Regression.- Sacrifice may be an unhealthy form of rootedness in mother. It may represent a psychic regression to the status of a sick child in order to demand mother love. An individual who has not overcome his fixation to mother may try to procure motherly love in a "neurotic, magical way by making himself [helpless], sick or regressing emotionally to the stage of an infant. The magic idea is: if I make myself into a helpless child, mother is bound to appear and take care of me."²⁴¹

In the light of what was said about the Church as potential 'mother', it may be asked if this mechanism may be transferred to the Church. According to Fromm, this did happen at a certain historical period.

The Catholic Church herself--the all-embracing mother--and the Virgin Mother, symbolize the maternal spirit of forgiveness and love, while God, the father, represented in the hierarchal principle the authority to which man had to submit without complaining or rebelling. No doubt this blending of fatherly and motherly elements was one of the main factors to which the church owed its tremendous attraction and influence over the minds of the people. The masses, oppressed by patriarchal authorities, could turn to the loving mother who would comfort them and intercede for them.²⁴²

It seems possible that this mechanism may still be operative in certain individuals who have an 'incestuous fixation' on Church as 'mother'.

²⁴¹ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 50.

²⁴² Ibid., p. 57.

Allied to this is the concept that suffering may also be a way of controlling the magic helper. "People differ in the means that they use; for some obedience, for some 'goodness,' for others suffering is the main source of manipulation."²⁴³ There is, therefore a potential link between the magic helper and an unhealthy concept of sacrifice.

A willing acceptance of suffering may also describe a character trait of an authoritarian person (i.e. one whose relationship to authority is unhealthy). This type of person loves those conditions which limit freedom. "For the authoritarian character it is always a higher power outside the individual, toward which the individual can do nothing but submit."²⁴⁴ Whether this is rationalized ethically as duty, or religiously as the will of the Lord, the mechanism is the same; and it is unhealthy because it represents an attempt to limit (or avoid) personal freedom.

Such a person would have little difficulty finding a "Christian rationalization" for his attitude. For example:

Through the profession of obedience, religious offer to God a total dedication of their own wills as a sacrifice of themselves; they thereby unite themselves with greater steadiness and security to the saving will of God. In this way they follow

²⁴³ Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 199.

²⁴⁴ Ibid., p. 193.

the pattern of Jesus Christ, who came to do the Father's will [...].²⁴⁵

In the total context of the Documents of Vatican II such a rationalization would be a poor commentary on what a mature Christian would understand by the redemptive nature of suffering. But the possibility remains that an immature person might use such a statement as a rationalization for his fear of freedom.

(c) Suffering as Transcendence.- Except where it is necessary for the preservation of spiritual integrity, suffering is a negative and unhealthy form of transcendence. "Creation and destruction, love and hate, are not two instincts which exist independently. They are both answers to the same need for transcendence, and the will to destroy must rise when the will to create cannot be satisfied."²⁴⁶ Suffering is never a goal, although it may be a necessary evil. An attempt to transcend through suffering could indicate a form of self hate which would only be a negative transcendence--i.e. destructiveness. The affirmations of Vatican II about the redemptive nature of suffering²⁴⁷ could be misinterpreted to mean that suffering is in itself

²⁴⁵ Vatican II, "Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life", article 14, p. 476, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966. (Henceforth referred to as Religious.)

²⁴⁶ Fromm, The Sane Society, p. 42.

²⁴⁷ Cf. Chapter I, Principle IV.

creative of life, and a means of transcending the self in order to achieve union with God. Although God may bring life out of suffering endured for spiritual integrity and productive love, true transcendence is characterized by love, not as a dissolution of the self, but as a spontaneous affirmation of others in which the individual self remains.²⁴⁸

(d) Hatred and Guilt. What Fromm has said about the identification of the poor and suffering with Jesus in the history of Christianity²⁴⁹ poses certain questions about the redemptive nature of suffering. The basis of this redemptive nature of suffering is a certain identification with Christ, into whose death the Christian is baptized, and who is called to carry out the work of redemption even in poverty and oppression in imitation of Jesus Christ.²⁵⁰

In the early days of Christianity, the basis of identification with Jesus had been twofold: firstly, because Jesus was seen by his followers as a suffering man who was exalted to the position of God, who would come soon to execute judgment on those who were oppressing the poor and downtrodden.²⁵¹ Secondly, they identified with the

²⁴⁸ Fromm, Escape from Freedom, p. 287.

²⁴⁹ Cf. Chapter II, 4.C "Societal Influence on the Dogma of Christ".

²⁵⁰ Cf. The Church, 8, 23.

²⁵¹ Fromm, The Dogma of Christ, p. 46.

suffering Jesus in order to expiate the guilt they felt in rejecting the father-god. As hatred, aggression and death wishes were very strong and active in the early Christians, they found relief in their identification with the crucified. "They themselves suffered death on the cross and atoned in this way for their death wishes against the father."²⁵²

When the social, economic and political situation changed, "The masses no longer identified with the crucified in order to dethrone the father in fantasy, but, rather, in order to enjoy his love and grace."²⁵³ "If it was hopeless to overthrow the father, then the better psychic escape was to submit to him, to love him, and to receive love from him."²⁵⁴ The psychic situation had changed from one of hostility and aggression which were directed outwards, to one of turned-in aggression, guilt feelings, atonement and expiation.

For the Catholic masses later on the situation had changed. For them no longer were the rulers to blame for wretchedness and suffering; rather, the sufferers themselves were guilty. They must reproach themselves if they were unhappy. Only through constant expiation, only through personal suffering could they atone for their guilt and

252 Ibid., p. 50.

253 Ibid., p. 66.

254 Ibid., p. 214.

win the love and pardon of God [...]. By suffering and castrating oneself, one finds an escape from the oppressive guilt feeling and has a chance to receive pardon and love.²⁵⁵

Conceding Fromm's analysis, certain questions may be asked: Does there still exist an identification with Jesus which is based on hatred of those who are seen as the oppressors? Does this, in turn, induce guilt feelings which are atoned for by identification with the crucified? Has an outward-directed hostility been turned in on the self so that suffering is seen as an escape from oppressive guilt feelings? Do some people resent God because they feel that he could, if he wished, put an end to suffering? And does this attitude, in turn, induce feelings of guilt which must be expiated by suffering.

To the extent that any of these questions is answered affirmatively, the basis for a truly Christian understanding of the redemptive nature of suffering is weakened. Suffering is redemptive only when it is freely accepted as an essential ingredient of spiritual integrity and productive love; or when, in faith, truly inevitable suffering is made bearable by a belief that, in some mysterious way, God will lead the Christian through death to resurrection.

²⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 68.

(e) Rationalizing the Suffering of Others.- Another point is raised by Vatican II's assertion that all suffering freely accepted is redemptive "for the salvation of the whole world."

Those who are oppressed by poverty, infirmity, sickness, or various other hardships, as well as those who suffer persecution for justice' sake-- may they all know that in a special way they are united with the suffering Christ for the salvation of the world.²⁵⁶

Within the faith-framework indicated in Chapter I, Principle IV, C. "Redemptive Suffering in the Church", the salvation referred to is not merely an other-worldly salvation of souls, but a bringing together in unity of all mankind. Such vocabulary describes well one aspect of a productive relationship to the world. The difficulty is this: if an individual accepted as fact that God will make his (or others') sufferings productive, would this weaken his resolve to fight wholeheartedly to overcome these sufferings with human means and in a human way? Such a faith-view may provide peace and a measure of tranquility in face of truly unavoidable sufferings; and this would be healthy. But the same faith-view could provide a cloak for inaction, or even induce a certain passivity. In the light of what has been said about rationalization, this same faith-view may also provide an easy cover for a non-

²⁵⁶ The Church, 41, 70.

productive relationship to the world. The "test" of productivity must, then, be answered personally for each individual; there is no a priori answer.

A final point to be considered under the heading of destructive forms of suffering is of particular importance because, in the judgment of the author, it is the one point in Vatican II's treatment of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering which can be faulted, in the written form in which it appears, as not being conducive to a progressive fulfillment of the basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm.

In speaking of the relationship between bishops and priests, and the religious superior and subject, the Council appeals to the example of Christ who was obedient unto death as a motive for religious obedience.²⁵⁷ It appears to the author that such an appeal could be understood as an attempt on the part of the bishops to use the example of Christ as a force to maintain their own position unchallenged. Fromm gives a few examples of common cover-ups for the rationalization of a sadistic element in irrational authority: "I rule over you because I know what is best for you"; or, "I am so wonderful and unique that I have a right to expect that other people become dependent on

²⁵⁷ Religious, 14, 476; Vatican II, "Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests", article 15, p. 564-565, in The Documents of Vatican II, New York, Guild Press, 1966.

me."²⁵⁸ There is at least a verbal similarity between these rationalizations and the statements of the bishops. It may be asked, therefore, whether they represent a rationalization of irrational authority on the part of the bishops; or whether they would be appealed to by a religious superior exercising irrational authority; or, at least, whether they would reinforce an attitude of symbiotic dependence on the part of a subject who did not wish to accept the responsibility of his own freedom.

C. Conclusion

This section has considered certain ways in which suffering can be understood, in faith and reason, as redemptive: suffering for the preservation of spiritual integrity, suffering for the sake of an ideal, suffering for the sake of the unification of all men in Christ, suffering as an exercise of productive love. All these indicate that the Christian valuation and significance of suffering are conducive to a progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs.

This section has also considered certain unhealthy conceptions of suffering which would weaken or vitiate

²⁵⁸ Fromm, Escape From Freedom, p. 166.

what Vatican II has said about the redemptive nature of suffering: suffering as a form of moral masochism, suffering as regression, suffering as destructive transcendence, and suffering as an expression of hatred and guilt-expiation. That Vatican II be poorly understood or used as a form of rationalization of a destructive form of suffering is a possibility. Also, the ideal which is presented demands a high degree of personal integration of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, without which a misunderstanding of what is being presented could act as a force arresting a person at a level of incomplete growth, or reinforcing certain unhealthy concepts of suffering.

Nonetheless, with the exception of the one point raised about the use of Christ's obedience as a motive for religious obedience, the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering presented in the fourth principle is conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the basic psychic needs of man under the following conditions: that suffering is not a form of moral masochism, that it is not a regression, that it is not destructive transcendence, that it is not an expression of hatred or guilt-expiation, and that the person who suffers has achieved a predominately productive character orientation.

6. Conclusion.

This chapter has examined some significant dimensions of the four principles derived from Vatican Council II concerning the Christian valuation and significance of suffering in the light of the five basic psychic needs of man posited by Erich Fromm. It has done so in order to arrive at a better understanding of some of the psychological dynamics involved in the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, and to answer the question posed by this thesis: Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's five basic psychic needs posited by Erich Fromm, and under what conditions? The approach of this chapter has been this: some significant dimension (or dimensions) of each of the four principles derived from Vatican II was examined in the light of some dimension (or dimensions) of Erich Fromm's analysis of man's five basic psychic needs.

The results of this investigation may now be summarized.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study has been to investigate some of the psychological dimensions of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. Of all the approaches possible, this thesis chose to study the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II in the light of the five basic psychic needs of man posited by Erich Fromm.

The first chapter presented the Christian valuation and significance of suffering by gathering together into four principles and explaining within the theological context of Vatican II the pertinent statements about the Christian valuation and significance of suffering found in The Documents of Vatican II. The second chapter presented the five basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm, following the basic organization of these needs found in The Sane Society. The third chapter answered the question: are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs posited by Erich Fromm, and under what conditions?

The conclusions of this study may now be summarized.

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1. The introduction to the third chapter considered formulative change in Vatican II as a background for a study of the four principles. It was concluded that the formulative changes of Vatican II indicate that the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II are conducive to the progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs as analysed by Erich Fromm because formulative change helps create an atmosphere of freedom and truth in which reality may be more accurately perceived. This is so under the following conditions: firstly, that there is a basis in society for the acceptance, at a life level, of the ideal; secondly, that renewal becomes a reality, and not just a guilt-inducing rationalization; and thirdly, that the formulative changes of Vatican II are not accepted without a concomitant change of attitude.

2. The first principle stated: In spite of the problems posed by suffering, sin, and death, the Christian presses forward to resurrection in the strength which comes from hope in Christ, who by his death has conquered death. Although this hope is related to the end of time, it does not diminish the importance of intervening duties, but rather undergirds the acquittal of them with fresh incentives. Two foundations of this principle were considered:

the nature and characteristics of Christian hope, and sin as the cause of suffering.

The first section considered hope. This section yielded two main conclusions: firstly, the Christian concept of hope, which is fundamental to the Christian valuation and significance of suffering, is conducive to a progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs as analysed by Erich Fromm. This is so because, in spite of a Christian belief in an after-life, the Christian concept of hope does not induce a passivity toward the task of making the world more human, but rather lends strength to the building of a more human world. This is true under the following conditions: firstly, that hope is not a mere rationalization; secondly, that it does not suppress a sense of tragedy; thirdly, that it is centered in the 'now' as well as in the 'not yet'; and fourthly, that it is not transferred to the institution.

The second conclusion was this: the Church's communal hope may not provide enough support to sustain hope in an individual if the mood of his society is one of despair. To the extent that the mood of Western society is one of despair, it will be difficult for the individual to maintain the true Christian hope on which the Christian valuation and significance of suffering depend.

The second section asked whether the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering presented in the first principle concerning sin as a cause of suffering is conducive to a progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs as analysed by Erich Fromm, and under what conditions. It was concluded that Vatican II's emphasis that the reason for suffering is personal sin is conducive to the progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs as analysed by Erich Fromm because it makes man aware of his suffering and of his responsibility for suffering, it helps negate the reification of suffering which de-sensitizes Western man to the reality of human suffering, and it helps man recognize that he is capable of combating suffering in a positive fashion. This is so under the following conditions: that the individual is personally willing to accept the reality and responsibility of his suffering, and that the society in which man lives does not so dull man's sensitivity to his own pain that he is no longer capable of recognizing how much or from what he suffers.

3. The second principle stated: The Church recognizes "in the poor and suffering the likeness of her poor and suffering Founder. She does all she can to relieve their need and in them she strives to serve Christ."

This principle was examined in two sections: firstly, a resumé of the Christian basis for the principle, and an examination of the principle from the perspectives of rationalization, relatedness, and frame of orientation; and secondly, a more extended analysis of rootedness in the Church with special attention to an unhealthy rootedness which limits a person's capacity for the universal love demanded by the second principle.

It was concluded that the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering proposed in the second principle is conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs as analysed by Erich Fromm because it demands and fosters a union with all men based on a universal productive love, and because the special attention given to the poor and suffering is itself a help to the unfolding of true love. This is so under certain conditions: firstly, that the second principle is not a rationalization or ideology; and secondly, that a healthy balance exists between the maternal and paternal polarity of the Church, and that the individual does not seek a 'mother' (in a regressive sense) in the Church.

4. The third principle stated: made one in the sacraments with Christ who suffered and is exalted, the Christian offers his sufferings as an acceptable sacrifice

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before God. Three main points were treated in the analysis of the third principle. All three referred in a special way to the sacramental incorporation into Christ which is the basis of the third principle. The three points were: firstly, sacramental and psychological identification with Christ; secondly, sacramental incorporation into Christ as acceptance of a frame of orientation; and thirdly, sacramental incorporation and liturgical ritual as frame of devotion.

The conclusions of the first of these points were: the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering which concerns the Christian's identification with Christ is conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs as analysed by Erich Fromm: it opens man to find his rootedness in human solidarity; it leads him to respond to the rational authority of Christ and so establish himself in freedom by self-discipline and a holy life; it leads him to let go of his ego as if it were a separate, indestructible entity; and it fosters a complete absence of narcissism. This is so under the following conditions: firstly, that a desire for rootedness in Christ is not a desire for symbiotic union; secondly, that the individual is not of an oral-receptive character who believes that all good comes from outside himself; thirdly, that it is not an

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attempt to submerge and lose his own self in something greater than himself; fourthly, that Christ is not a magic helper; fifthly, that identification with Christ is not an indulgence in feelings of limitedness and dependence; and sixthly, that the individual maintains his own self-identity.

The second point considered sacramental incorporation into Christ as an insertion into a frame of orientation. The conclusions were: the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering which concerns sacramental incorporation into Christ is conducive to the progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs as posited by Erich Fromm because it provides a frame of orientation which allows the mystery of Christ to illumine the problems of suffering death, and the meaning of life, because it illumines the anomalies of life, because it allows the individual to face contradictions and weaknesses with equanimity, and because it provides an inner strength and integrity to resist negative social pressures. In the case of a partially integrated frame of orientation it may encourage growth and provide the beginnings of an adequate answer-meaning system. This is so under the following conditions: that the Christian frame of orientation is not simply a rationalization; that it is personally integrated and does not result from conformity or

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narcissistic group pressure; that the individual is able to live with the tension of being redeemed and being a sinner; that incorporation into Christ is not symptomatic of an unhealthy attitude toward life (desire for annihilation of the self, despair of life, etc.); that it is not a form of masochistic submission; that the mystery of Christ is perceived by the individual as belonging to the core of his unique self; and finally, in the case of a partially integrated frame of orientation, that it does not fixate a person at a level beyond which he is capable of growing.

The third section yielded two main conclusions: firstly, Christian ritual is a fundamental and healthy form of transmission of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering under the following conditions: that there is no 'ritual rationalization', that ritual is not an empty shell either because of the ritual itself or because of the unwillingness of the individual to accept the consequences of entering into the ritual, and that contemporary man's marketing orientation does not lead him to misinterpret ritual. Secondly, the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering which concerns acting out in ritual what is thought out in theology is conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm

for it allows man to break through the surface of routine and get in touch with the ultimate realities of life, and because it involves the whole man in such a way that he experiences unity and oneness in all spheres of his being. This is so under the conditions noted above; i.e., that there is no 'ritual rationalization', that ritual is not an empty shell either because of the ritual itself or because of the unwillingness of the individual to accept the consequences of entering into the ritual, and that contemporary man's marketing orientation does not lead him to misinterpret ritual.

5. The fourth principle stated: Christ continues to carry on his redemptive work in the Church, especially through the Eucharist in which the work of redemption is carried on. Christians, by filling up what is wanting in the suffering of Christ, build up the Church, the sacrament of salvation, for the unity of the world. The analysis of this principle considered some of the psychological dynamics involved in accepting or even seeking suffering. The conclusions of this section were: with the possible exception of the use of Christ's obedience as a motive for religious obedience, the facet of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering presented in the fourth principle is conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm

because it assists the Christian to bear suffering which is truly inevitable, and continue to work constructively.

This is so under the following conditions: that suffering is not a form of moral masochism, that it is not a regression, that it is not destructive transcendence, that it is not an expression of hatred or guilt-expiation, and that the person who suffers has achieved a predominately productive character orientation.

A final brief summation may be given. With the possible exception of the use of Christ's obedience as a motive for religious obedience, all the facets of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II which were studied in this thesis were found to be conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the five basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm. This is so under the general condition that the individual has integrated the Christian valuation and significance of suffering to a sufficient degree that they are not a cloak for a regressive or unhealthy attempt to fulfill these same psychic needs.

This study may be concluded with several suggestions for further research.

1. As the only possible exception to the general conclusion that the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II are conducive to the

progressive fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs as analysed by Erich Fromm was the use of Christ's obedience as a motive for religious obedience, a more thorough study of authority and obedience in The Documents of Vatican II may be useful. The criterion of examination could be Fromm's concept of authority.

2. It may be of interest to examine the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II in the light of another psychological theorist. Such a study could integrate and compare its results with the results of this present study.

3. It may also be of interest to use the five basic psychic needs of man as posited by Erich Fromm as a tool for examining the valuation and significance of suffering in Judaism or another religious tradition.

4. The methodology of this thesis and the five basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm could be used to examine another Christian doctrine. Another or several studies in this area may crystallize and clarify the way in which the theologian can profit from the psychologist's study of man.

5. Clinical research may indicate whether or not the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II is actually held either as ideal or

ideology by the general Roman Catholic population. Such data would be of particular use to the religious educator or pastor but should also influence theological thought.

6. Both Erich Fromm and Vatican II (or the Christian Church) presume a certain philosophy of man. A comparative study of the different philosophies of man may provide useful guidelines to the theologian, religious educator, or pastor who attempts to profit from the insights of the psychological theorist.

7. As there are Roman Catholic communities in many cultures, a clinical examination of the religious attitudes of Roman Catholics in various cultures may provide a useful test for Fromm's contention that the society in which he lives shapes man's perception of reality. Such an examination would have important implications for theological method, and may even put into question the usefulness of religious documents addressed to Roman Catholics of the whole world.

8. Finally, a logical extension of this present study would be an investigation into both adequate methods of presenting the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II in such a way as to assist them to be conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the five basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm, and an investigation into adequate methods of

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assisting an individual who is using the Christian valuation and significance of suffering as a cloak for regressive or unhealthy attempts to fulfill his basic psychic needs to come to a progressive fulfillment of these same basic psychic needs through the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II.

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APPENDIX 1

ABSTRACT OF

The Christian Valuation and Significance of Suffering
According to Vatican Council II, and the Five Basic
Psychic Needs of Man Posited by Erich Fromm:
An Interdisciplinary Study

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ABSTRACT OF

The Christian Valuation and Significance of Suffering
According to Vatican Council II, and the Five Basic
Psychic Needs of Man Posited by Erich Fromm:
An Interdisciplinary Study¹

This was a study of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican Council II from a psychological point of view. The purpose of this study was to determine whether the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II are conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's five basic psychic needs as posited by Erich Fromm.

The first chapter presented the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II. Four principles were abstracted from Vatican II which summarized what the Council understood as the Christian valuation and significance of suffering. These principles were explained within the theological context of Vatican Council II.

¹ Henry Carl Simmons, doctoral thesis presented to the Faculty of Arts, Department of Religious Studies, University of Ottawa, Ontario, May 1970, xvi-383 p.

The second chapter presented Erich Fromm's analysis of man's five basic psychic needs. These are the needs for relatedness, transcendence, rootedness, sense of identity, and frame of orientation and devotion. Each of these needs may be fulfilled in humanizing or dehumanizing ways.

Chapter three answered the question: Are the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II conducive to the progressive or humanizing fulfillment of man's basic psychic needs posited by Erich Fromm, and under what conditions? One or more significant and fundamental areas was selected from each of the four principles and examined in the light of some dimension or dimensions of Erich Fromm's analysis of man's five basic psychic needs. It was concluded that, with the possible exception of the use of Christ's obedience as a motive for religious obedience, all the facets of the Christian valuation and significance of suffering according to Vatican II which were studied in this thesis are conducive to the progressive fulfillment of the five basic psychic needs of man as analysed by Erich Fromm. This was found to be so under the general condition that the individual has integrated the Christian valuation and significance of suffering to a sufficient degree that they are not a cloak for a regressive or unhealthy attempt to fulfill these same

psychic needs. Specific conditions for the progressive fulfillment of these needs were indicated in each section of the third chapter.