

Set #1: GOD so CREATION so HISTORY so GOD'S PEOPLE

Set #2: EVOLUTION so NATURE'S CHILDREN ----- Elliott #1704

"Oh, the music goes round and round and it comes out here," a song sung a half-century ago: what goes in comes out. So it is with cosmologies, our mind-pictures of "how things are in the universe." This thinksheet concerns itself with the existential end-products of the two most powerful of these pictures in American heads today.

1. *Picture #1* is a film whose producer is the biblical God, "Maker of Heaven and Earth." Within this set, the internal logic is the divine sanction: since by creation and preservation it's God's world, we are to live as what we are, viz., God's people (or, in rhetorical perspective, we are to become what we are "called" to be: we are with God's help to effectuate *esse* into *bene esse*, *natura naturans* into *natura naturata*--in starkest diametrical, to become what we are, moving essence into existence). Note that this internal logic with its grand force is a logic, an intellection: it is a philosophical schema for leading every thought captive to God....Behind and within this intellection there lies a moral intuition: the duties thatprehend me from a depth deeper than family and history and even my own heart I choose to take as from Life itself, Reality itself, from the Being out of whom is all becoming that ever was or is or will be, from the One through whose will the scattered many are drawn to become the gathered one. Only this One has the right to call me (through family, history, nature, human nature, my own nature), to teach-command me (Hebrew, *torah*). And my integrity, my integration, my shalom, depends on my resisting the siren calls of other centerings ("idols"). In short, I am under orders....Behind and within this intellectual-moral commitment there lies a vision centrally heated by a Love that illumines all loves, which are (if I will receive it so) its sacraments. As love is better sung than said, as singing correlates with being, whereas saying correlates only with consciousness, hymnic response is at the heart of liturgy: "Jesus, the very thought of Thee/ With sweetness fills my breast." Love is the source and chief support of life, and the quality of our loving--and therefore of our life--depends on its cognitive and sturgic (duty) supports. (Preaching's paradigm)

2. *Picture #2* is in such radical contrast as to be an enemy, in our culture now the chief enemy, of picture #1. Reality is seen as essentially impersonal: we live out our lives not just in a cold, cruel world but also in a colder, uncaring universe; and our survival, before our inevitable doom, depends on our using our wits to warm and defend ourselves. "The Maker of Heaven and Earth" has shriveled down to the self that creates and protects its turf. The great Love is gone, and we wallow in the lesser loves too small for our soul: the loves that were sacraments have become overpromising deceptions (#1696). The ultimate sanction, God's loving will, has been replaced by pseudo-ultimate sanctions--sanctions of consequence pretending to the status of ultimacy. (Instance of the ultimate sanction: "And all for love, and nothing for reward"--Edmund Spenser, *The Fairie Queene*, I.ix.40.) Evolutionism has demoted us from God's people to nature's children, forcing us to define downward what it means to be a human being. (As an old man, Darwin said this was his life's fundamental error: the ex-theological-student overreacted to opposition to his science and committed hubris: he eliminated God and so violated the law of parsimony--a deed his documentation of evolution did not require.)

3. In today's "relevant" preaching, "Be wise" (the sapiential sanction) is the commonest substitute-replacement for "Be holy" (the Bible's ultimate sanction). Politically, it's "Be just"; personally, it's "Be

healthy" (as in Bruce Larson's nevertheless highly useful *There's a lot more to health than not being sick* (Word/81). P.30: People aren't "neurotic," they're "dumb" and foolish.)