

# The Philosophical Research Society, Inc.

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## THE WILL TO BELIEVE

DEAR FRIENDS:



OCASIONALLY, an individual comes along who states with wistful finality that he wishes he could experience the inner consolation of spiritual conviction, but is completely unable to have faith in anything. Such a person does not even believe in himself, finds no purpose in existence, and feels himself to be the unfortunate victim of a biological process. It is reported that Einstein once remarked that he longed to experience the consolation that brought comfort to the majority of human beings, but was unable to do so. It has been noticeable that atheism is more prevalent among the highly educated. They live in the rarified atmosphere of extreme skepticism. I have discussed this problem with those who are chronically incredulous to discover, if possible, the fundamental reasons for their more or less cynical attitudes.

One of the principal difficulties seems to be that both agnostics and atheists have identified religion with theology. They object to the extreme sectarianism that dominates most of the world's religions. One man told me that a sovereign power of some kind might exist but all definitions of this power were objectionable in one way or another. Actually, orthodoxy is the basic cause of mysticism. The individual must search in himself for the insight necessary to a constructive faith. Science has been exploring the physical mysteries of existence for several centuries. As it extended its investigation it upset many theories that had long been regarded as true. Even scientists

are reluctant to discard long cherished hypotheses, and are not above persecuting nonconformists. While astronomers are deeply respectful of the achievements of Galileo, Copernicus, and Kepler, they have not invested them with an aura of infallibility. The seventeenth century was a period of pioneering in every field of knowledge. Atheism is a scientific example of extreme orthodoxy, and those who accept it are placing their personal preferences between themselves and the natural instincts of the human mind. First cause remains as inscrutable to the intellectual as the mystery of the unknown God is to the theist. Each is attempting to defend, not a fact, but an interpretation.

The unbeliever likes to think of himself as a liberated human being. No dogma dominates his conduct, no ancient code determines his morality, and he feels free to fulfill his personal ambitions--even though they may be excessive. He is considerably comforted by the assumption that science is the antonym of superstition.

Another factor which complicates the situation is the glamour which surrounds modern technology. Our young people are addicted to science fiction and have difficulty in deciding which is science and which is fiction. We are living in a generation of robots and computers and a fantastic array of "gadgets." A new mythology is in the making, and Hercules returns to us as the scientific "Superman." We sit and watch the impossible on television until a degree of disorientation is virtually inevitable. Educators are not raising any serious opposition to space mythology, although they are directly responsible for its existence. Some censorship, leadership, or guidance might contribute to ethics and the restoration of commonsense. The miracles of religion are denied or discredited, but miracles of technological progress are treated with considerable respect. In the midst of a highly confused galaxy there is a tendency to overlook the essential purpose of knowledge. The proper end of learning is the improvement of the human state. The enlargement of understanding to the end that we can live together in peace and harmony is overlooked. Interplanetary wars, invasions from outer space, and scientifically controlled monsters who can devastate the earth seem to contribute little to the solution of any of the world's problems. Fantasy of this kind adjusts millions of young people to the idea that there is nothing ahead but death and disaster. After surveying the present program it is quite obvious why God has no place in this modern mythology. Victory is reserved for those with the largest missiles and the fewest scruples.

Yet, somewhere out there, a great structure of laws operates forever. Humanity is not merely a fragile species existing only to await annihilation. Most of our prominent technicians consider existence as a completely physical phenomenon. If there was ever a case of self-delusion, it is this.

Lord Bacon (1561-1626) has been described as a lawyer, courtier, statesman, philosopher, and master of the English language. According to the Encyclopedia Britannica, he claimed all knowledge as his province, and advocated new ways by which men might establish a legitimate command over nature. There is considerable doubt today that science understands the importance of this "legitimate command." Bacon was a devoutly religious man, and his scientific method was grounded in religion. Without spiritual directives, temptations to the abuse of power increase rapidly, and opportunity is not properly guided by responsibility. If there is a will to disbelieve, doubts multiply rapidly, but if there is a resolution toward right belief, this can also be sustained by all necessary evidence. Every aspect of existence that has yet

been explored bears witness to a universal intelligence--a kind of cosmic comprehension without which the cosmos could never have been brought out of chaos. If the operations of this sovereign intellect are ignored or transgressed by intelligent creatures, cosmos will fall back into chaos. The trend in this direction is obvious today, and a new restoration of learning based upon idealism is urgently needed.

When the human will attempts to function without regard for the universal purpose, troubles multiply rapidly. These difficulties increase until situations become intolerable. As emergencies increase, the average person intuitively seeks appropriate remedies. As usual progress without principal inclines the mind to seek spiritual solutions to material problems. In moments of personal tragedy we naturally call upon our spiritual convictions for help. Even skeptics turn hopefully to faith when science fails. There is a great revival of religious interest in the modern world. This does not involve a rejection of science, but a realization of its limitations. There is something beyond technology, and when technical procedures fail, there is no recourse but faith in the substance of things unseen. Science has not explored this area and therefore has no legitimate grounds to condemn those whose immediate needs science cannot serve. If we unite scientific skills with love, faith, and hope, we can bring together for the common good all resources of the cosmos necessary to the protection of our society. It is not that religion should become scientific, but rather that it should emphasize the sovereignty of soul power over physical power. It may take a little exertion of the will to convince us that we must seek first the kingdom of heaven, but this dedication is the greatest necessity of the hour. Lord Bacon, before mentioned, declared that those of small knowledge have a tendency to deny God, but as knowledge deepens and the mind honestly contemplates realities, it must finally come back again to God. In this generation rededication is a kind of penance, long overdue.

There is a new class of literature appearing. Much of it originates among scientifically trained scholars and thinkers. It is concerned with the invisible energy field which surrounds the earth and with the development of superior faculties within the human being by which he can come into closer, conscious contact with the mysteries of life. Materialism is gradually being eroded away by a younger generation of idealists, who find the prevailing standards of living hopelessly inadequate. It is becoming increasingly obvious that materialism is a small, comparatively desolate island in the infinite ocean of universal spirit. The life and light within us will finally show us the way toward the life and light that governs all creation.

Most sincerely yours,

*Mandy P. Hill*

Each year seems to bring with its advent new and evermore complex variations in the Internal Revenue Service's regulations governing estate planning and charitable giving. This can be very confusing, and it was thus a considerable relief when we recently ran across some small booklets which, to our mind, did much to explain how one could fulfill the impulse to support organizations which have been meaningful in one's life--in a way most advantageous in terms of taxes and long term estate plans.

In the next few weeks we will be sending you a complimentary copy, first of a booklet dealing with that often neglected until too late problem of wills and, then, a short while after that a second booklet on what the author calls "Tax-wise Giving." Both will give you what we think is important guidance in a critical area of life in a simple straightforward manner, presented by an attorney of specialized competence in these aspects of law.

Do take the time to read them and, if you like, let us have your thoughts on the information they give.