



***THE WAY
BACK***

TO COMMUNION WITH GOD



A Thoughtful Approach! | Dr. Andrew R. Hardy © Copyright 2009

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Introduction

This dissertation has evolved in the process of doing the research for it. Initially I began foundational research for it before I began the course of study which has led to its final production. In the first place I had planned to write on the book of Acts; based on the past six years of research which I conducted into the Lukan corpus. Indeed my book “St. Luke the Real Man of Mission” to be downloaded at <http://www.cluonline.com/freebooks/>, represents the first 4 chapters of a proposed written dissertation ten chapters in length. However, as I pursued 3 years of the 6 years of research, which I did towards this, it became increasingly clear that the original thesis idea was far too narrow. Hence I decided to broaden it out in scope to do something quite different; which I do not believe has been done before. This was to develop a Post Critical research project considering the way that the Spirit of Jesus’ communicates directly with the human spirit (heart) by joining himself to it; by his Holy Spirit. Some have mistaken this with Theosophy.

Theosophy is that field of study into the ways that God is thought to mystically communicate with people. It is pantheistic in nature, and it has occult overtones. For these reasons Christians distance themselves from this branch of Spiritual research. Hence my use of the term “Theosophy” will immediately ring alarm bells. I share the same acute concern in the light of the Theosophical Societies statement:

“The Theosophical Society

The Theosophical Society is a worldwide association dedicated to practical realization of the **oneness of all life** [*Pantheism*] and to **independent spiritual search** [*Gnosticism*]. It was founded in New York City in 1875 by Helena P. Blavatsky, Henry S. Olcott, William Q. Judge, and others. Blavatsky (1831-1891) is the primary force behind the modern theosophical movement. Her works and those of her teachers express the principal concepts of its philosophy. A Russian by birth, she travelled for twenty years in Europe, the Americas, Asia, and the Near East **studying mysticism and occultism** [*satanic connection*]. Helena P. Blavatsky also wrote books titled **Isis Unveiled** [*pagan goddess*] and **The Secret Doctrine** [*Gnosticism*].”

The Theosophical Society clearly, do not, readily have any connection with Christian thought. Its Gnostic overtones are those embraced beginning in the early second century AD, and broadly condemned as heretical by the early Christians. Indeed John’s gospel, and his first epistle, were written to demonstrate that Gnostic Decetism were not a Christian movement.

This dissertation will be exploring the way that Post Critical people are pursuing a kind of theosophical exploration; and connections will become evident between their exploration of the so called “spirit world” and the charismatic movements experience of the Holy Spirit. Particularly it is argued that post critical people are more open to the world of the Spirit than any other historical period; except the openness that existed in the 1st century AD. It is this

post critical interest which demonstrates that people today are open to communicate with the Spirit of Jesus' once more (Acts 16:6 – 10). Although this dissertation is not theosophical in nature it is charismatic in nature. It explores how to hear God's voice; dialoguing with him in Spirit to spirit union, within the context of a Trinitarian theology. I will not be using the word "Theosophy" throughout the dissertation because I do not in any way adhere the avowed Gnosticism or occult overtones. I do utilize the term "Theophostics" to describe a form of Christian prayer counselling, but in this case my use must not be taken to mean I embrace its' negative connotations in theosophy.

For these reasons this dissertation is setting out to develop a new post critical missional theology, which explores what is at the heart of Trinitarian theology of the Holy Spirit; as he communicates with the Christian in Dialogical terms. The connection to my earlier Acts research is clear, to the extent, that Luke demonstrates from his sources that early Christians dialogued with God; and heard his voice regularly (See on developments in this dissertation for the careful analysis of the evidence for this).

This new theology aims to make a theology of the Spirit explicable in three ways:

Firstly, it seeks to set out the way that the Holy Spirit communicates with God's people. The Holy Spirit is particularly viewed as the Spirit of Jesus' (Acts 16:6 – 10). It is argued that the Christian community can only engage in mission if it primarily has a Spirit to spirit dialogical union with Christ; otherwise it will not know his mission to save lost peoples and lost communities.

Secondly, the current newly metamorphosing Western Society is post critical in nature. It is very much alike the society of the 1st century Roman Empire; in which the first Christians shared their experience of the Spirit of Jesus' gospel to the then world; with significant missional and evangelistic success.

Thirdly, this new theology is not primarily theoretical in intent, but rather praxis based. It aims to make theoretical theology and praxis the two sides of the same coin in the discussion of theology as direct communion with God. It seeks to make this explicable in terms of the concept "Revelation Knowledge." It is the key contention that every Christian, and non-Christian seeker, may dialogue with God Spirit to spirit in their hearts – listening to the God who speaks. Hence I will maintain that theology is no longer to be about theoretical academic debate but rather to be about real personal communion with God; for each individual Christian to experience – dialoguing with God - receiving revelation knowledge from God.

This will be pursued in the light of the need to make sure that safe exploration may be achieved for each post critical Christian who no longer embraces Enlightenment Rationalism; but a new epistemology based on listening to a personal God who speaks. This takes us beyond the God of systematic theology books, toward an experience of the real God who individually communicates as living experienced inner voice with theology itself – for real theology has to do with the very person of God; in the third person of the Godhead.

Moreover, the first five chapters of this dissertation consider the core thesis set out in broad terms above. The other 19 chapters make applications of the core thesis in a number of important fields; Dream analysis, Spiritual warfare, Counselling, Biblical studies,

Hermeneutics, Youth Ministry, Missional leadership, Ministerial education, Literary and historical criticism.

This concludes the brief introductory points I wanted to make about this research. I hope and pray that the reader will be encouraged to explore communion with God through the Spirit of Jesus’.

Chapter 1

The Need for a Post Critical Theology

Introduction

When I first started the research for this Doctoral dissertation I had planned to write it on the missiology of Luke-Acts in the light of a charismatic theology. As I proceeded in the research I had the growing sense that the potential outcome was going to be far too narrow that the larger aims of writing such a doctorate would achieve about 10% of what I had hoped. In the LAMAD¹ style of research it proves to be very important to involve God in the whole process of research looking to him for confirmation in the heart of what he wants to reveal in the process of research and learning. This comes as a check in one's heart or as a sense of openness to pursue a line of enquiry. On reflection I had been sensing a check over the limitations of the Luke-Acts research. What I had been noticing as I continued to read and seek direction was that the need for a new type of theology to be developed. This came to very clear focus one evening as I was reading Leslie Newbigin's book "The Open Secret".

Newbigin quotes Michael Polanyi:

"I (Newbigin) have been encouraged to think that this is a fruitful approach to the subject of this book by reading the parallel that Michael Polanyi has drawn between our time and the time for which Augustine wrote. At the crucial turning point of his great book, *Personal Knowledge*, Polanyi writes:

The critical movement, which seems to be nearing the end of its course today, was perhaps the most fruitful effort ever sustained by the human mind. The past four or five centuries, which have gradually destroyed or overshadowed the whole medieval cosmos, have enriched us mentally and morally to an extent unrivalled by any period of similar duration. But its incandescence had fed on the combustion of the Christian heritage in the oxygen of Greek rationalism, and when this fuel was exhausted the critical framework itself burnt away.

Modern man is unprecedented; yet we must now go back to St. Augustine to restore the balance of our cognitive powers. In the fourth century A.D., St. Augustine brought the history of Greek philosophy to a close by inaugurating for the first time a post-critical philosophy. He taught that all knowledge was

¹ Christian Leadership University, Official Catalogue & Orientation Manual, 2008, sections 1-7

a gift of grace, for which we must strive under the guidance of antecedent belief: nisi credideritis, no intelligitis.

Polanyi's plea is for a "post-critical philosophy" without which he believes science must destroy itself.The fundamental belief is embodied in the affirmation that God has revealed himself as Father, Son, and Spirit."²

It was with these conclusions ringing in my ears that I realised that my research into the so called "post modern", or "post Christian" phenomenon of the Western world took on a new shape. It struck me that Newbigin and Polanyi had hit on a crucial observation about the nature of all knowledge which goes to the very depths of the whole debate of what is the basis for human existence and human knowledge itself.

This chapter will focus on the need for a new type of theology which may be termed as the rediscovery of the "first world basis to human being and human consciousness" itself (more on this later). Polanyi's point, that "*Augustine brought the history of Greek philosophy to a close by inaugurating for the first time a post-critical philosophy. He taught that all knowledge was a gift of grace, for which we must strive under the guidance of antecedent belief: nisi credideritis, no intelligitis.*"; made me realise that there is no real theological work which has developed how knowledge from God is perceived in the human spirit. There are exceptions to the rule, where good practical applied theology has been developed, particularly by Dr Mark Virkler³ and by Dr Jack Deere to a lesser extent⁴; to name a couple of the very best examples. Virkler's work ranks highly in the whole area of theophostics⁵ and it has been through dialogue with Dr Virkler that I have set out to develop a new post critical

²Leslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret*, SPCK, UK 1995pp.28,29; Also see on what Augustine writes, Penguin Classics, *St Augustine city of God*, Penguin Books, UK, 1984, pp. 436,437 or Book 11, 8:7; All consult, Penguin Classics, *Saint Augustine Confessions*, Penguin Books, UK, 1983, p. 163; or Book VIII IV; Augustine here confesses his need of divine spiritual encounter brought about by God in order to know him on an experiential level.

³Mark & Patti Virkler, *How to Hear God's Voice*, Destiny Image, USA, 2005

⁴Jack Deere, *Surprised by the Voice of God*, Kingsway, UK, 1996; It is also recommended to read, Kenneth Boa, *Conformed to his image biblical and practical approaches to spiritual formation*, Zondervan, USA, 2001, chapters 1 – 3 for a discussion of relation spirituality which is the basis for both Virkler's and Deere's theology and praxis.

⁵Theophostic prayer counselling, and the spiritual philosophy that God communicates with the human Spirit on a mystical level healing deep seated hurts is not strictly a Christian derivative. However, in Charismatic practice a kind of Theophostics is practiced by Christian prayer counsellors where the Spirit of Christ is invited into the persons' heart, and Jesus is brought into the relived scene from the past and brings about healing. See on Mark and Patti Virkler, *Counselled by God*, Lamad Publishing, USA, 2002, Chapter 5. Moreover, you may wish to type the word Theophostic into an Internet search engine and you will find some good sites discussing the reasons why this form of philosophy is not strictly Christian. My own view is that Christian prayer counselling does utilise a Theophostic philosophy of how God directly and spontaneously dialogues with our spirits, but I would distance myself from a so called "New Age" connection. However, I think it is useful to define a Christian Theophostic concept which to some extent is what this dissertation has set out to do. For one useful sight which defines Theophostics consider <http://www.theophostics.com/trifolds/trifold.pdf>; For a well developed Christian Theophostic approach to prayer counselling, Rita Bennett, *You can be emotionally free* Chris can set you emotionally free, now and forevermore, Bridge-Logos, USA, 2005.

theology of how God speaks to human beings on a metaphysical Spirit to spirit level. In this chapter there will be discussion on the present situation of theophostics by considering the current “Modern” and “Post Modern” climate of the early 21st century. It will be demonstrated that there is an unparalleled opportunity once more to dialogue with Western people who have given up largely on “Modernism’s” certainties and “Science’s” former authority status, and now are once again seeking the numinous and divine with their “hearts” and “spirits”. The chapter will end by highlighting what is meant by “Heart” and “Spirit” and by demonstrating that the Middle Eastern Jesus, and the historic Biblical period in general, were characterised by obtaining knowledge through their hearts by revelation; rather than the Enlightenments avowed system on Rational analysis and empirical research as the basis for Human knowledge. It will be demonstrated that major scientific figures have obtained the greatest scientific ideas in the history of science by “Revelation Knowledge”.

The Nature of the Debate

It is not without considerable evidence that the growing conclusion that the Zeitgeist of the late Twentieth Century and the early Twenty First Century has witnessed major transformation. The Enlightenment witnessed, as Polanyi noted, an age of “*the most fruitful effort ever sustained by the human mind.*” His point is based on the Enlightenments’ rediscovery of Greek Rationalism and the seeds it planted for empirical research. Thomas Aquinas was the great systematiser of a new Christian Philosophy which found its impetus in Plato and the great names of the former Greek Intellectual atmosphere.⁶ The combination of rationalism and empirical experimentation gave rise to an incredible impetus which led to the age of reason and science firstly through the aegis of scholastic universities.⁷ This new force propelled mankind on a new age of discovery, and a new consciousness of the self in the cosmos.⁸

The nineteenth century saw an incredible acceleration in the power that drove modern man’s pursuit after control over his destiny through industrialisation.⁹ The Age of Reason and the power of industrial revolution in Europe (in the 19th century) set the stage for new human conquest and a new brave age of man at the heart of his own destiny. Humanism was born in the Nineteenth century in a way that previous humanist minorities only dreamt of with a few intellectuals in previous generations, and it became the key philosophy of the

⁶ William Johnston, *Mystical Theology the science of love*, Harper Collins publishers, UK, 1995, pp.47 – 55 & Donald K. McKim (Editor), *Dictionary of Major biblical Interpreters*, IVP, UK, 2007, pp. 16, 18-20, 26, 42, 45, 183, 201-3, 254, 257, 283, 321, 363, 456, 459, 539, 552, 555-56, 572, 575, 634, 644, 682-83, 772-73, 782, 830, 914, 934-36, 980-84, 1008, 1077-78.

⁷ Justo L. Gonzalez, *The Story of Christianity*, Vol. 1, Harper & Row, USA, 1984. pp. 311-19, 362-65

⁸ Leslie Newbigin, *The Open Secret an Introduction to the Theology of Mission*, SPCK, UK, pp.28,29

⁹ For an extensive survey of the opportunities which the industrial revolution brought to the British Empire see on, Phyllis Deane, *The First Industrial Revolution*, Cambridge University Press, UK, 1982.

Western World View as the Twentieth century progressed. Was there nothing which man could not invent or solve for himself given enough time to experiment and learn?¹⁰ The 1960s, 70s and early 80s in Britain and Europe (and North America) witnessed an incredible optimism which was unrivalled in terms of the extent of its influence than any other period of human endeavour with medical breakthroughs, the space age and computer science. Many of the popular films of the period picture man fighting against the odds, and by his ingenuity overcoming huge obstacles; for instance the 1970s film Asteroid pictured the triumph of science overcoming global devastation by destroying an asteroid hurtling towards earth. The Space age gave birth to high hopes man could conquer new frontiers which would liberate him from his earth bound existence. The popular 1970s show Star Trek Idolised Gene Roddenberry's staunch belief that man would keep on reaching new heights of achievement moving toward a society where he would shape his own destiny like a kind of cosmic deity. Technology was to be the key to the end of disease and death, and at the core of a bright peaceful future. All of this was based on an unshakeable conviction that science would keep on breaking through new frontiers which would cure Cancer, prolong life perhaps even give mankind the key to an almost eternal existence; when the secrets of the aging process were discovered!

However, this age of optimism took a fatal blow in the recession of the 80s in Britain, and with the arrival of the 90s there was a new type of attitude developing on what seemed to be a mass scale in the Western Hemisphere; which was far less optimistic and far more pessimistic about what the future held.¹¹ Man and his belief in science, and scientists, was dealt a severe blow which has moved Westerners away from the optimism of the 60s – early 80s to a new sort of relativism; which has done away with the old certainties.¹²

Although this is a very sketchy assessment of the trends which have led to the current relativities of the early 21st century; it is clear that a new set of opportunities and challenges face the coming generations of this century as it unfolds.¹³ This dissertation is not concerned with entering deeply into the debate about what this stage of human pessimism will become, but rather it will be focussing on the more fundamental question of “What is the basis for human certainty about its' future? What will the new energy source be that will replace “*the combustion of the Christian heritage in the oxygen of Greek rationalism*” as Polanyi so clearly states it?” There is certainly a loss of faith in the old certainties of Enlightenment optimism; based on empiricism, rationalism and scientific advance.

Dr Francis Collins, the director of the Human Genome project, whose team successfully mapped the parameters of the human genome, is a devout Christian. In his book “The

¹⁰ Martin Robinson, *The Faith of the Unbeliever*, Monarch, UK, 2001 pp.36 - 43

¹¹ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission, Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, Orbis, USA, 2000, Chapter 10

¹² Ibid

¹³ Op Cit Chapter 11

Language of God, A scientist Presents evidence for Belief”¹⁴ he highlights how his life as a scientist missed the whole point of that life through the processes of the science he initially had faith in. He writes:

“So here is the central question of this book: In this modern era of cosmology, evolution, and the human genome, is there still the possibility of a richly satisfying harmony between the scientific and the spiritual worldviews? I answer with a resounding yes! In my view, there is no conflict in being a rigorous scientist and a person who believes in a God who takes a personal interest in each one of us. Science’s domain is to explore nature. God’s domain is in the spiritual world, a realm not possible to explore with the tools and language of science. It must be examined with the heart, the mind, and the soul – and the mind must find a way to embrace both realms.”¹⁵

I must say I take issue with Collin’s assertion that there is some sort of dichotomy between a “domain” of science and that of the spirit or spiritual; and we must turn to that in just a moment. However, this aside, he agrees whole heartedly with Polanyi and Newbiggin concerning the need for the “heart” to “examine” the spiritual world rather than the mind; although their terminology differs. Of course Polanyi does not use the word “heart” but rather that all knowledge is a gift of “grace”, but his observation is the starting point for my development of the thesis that all knowledge comes from the intuition of the heart rather than by rational means in the first place. Having noted this, here is what Polanyi said again:

In the fourth century A.D., St. Augustine brought the history of Greek philosophy to a close by inaugurating for the first time a post-critical philosophy. He taught that all knowledge was a gift of grace, for which we must strive under the guidance of antecedent belief: nisi credideritis, no intelligitis.

Where Collin’s and Polanyi differ is over knowledge in its’ total scope as being a gift of grace, as opposed to just spiritual knowledge being a gift of grace. Polanyi certainly envisages all types of knowledge as a “gift of grace” whereas Collins limits this to spiritual knowledge. Or does he?

“I will argue that these perspectives not only can coexist within one person, but can do so in a fashion that enriches and enlightens the human experience. Science is the only reliable way to understand the natural world, and its tools when properly utilized can generate profound insights into material existence. But science is powerless to answer questions such as ‘Why did the universe come into being?’

¹⁴ Francis Collins, The Language of God A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief, Pocket Books, UK, 2007

¹⁵ Ibid, p.6

‘What is the meaning of human existence?’ ‘What happens after we die?’ One of the strongest motivations of humankind is to seek answers to profound questions, and we need to bring all the power of both the scientific and spiritual perspectives to bear on understanding what is both seen and unseen. The goal of this book is to explore a pathway toward a sober and intellectually honest integration of these views.”¹⁶

It seems that Collins, like many leading scientists of the early 21st century no longer are willing to give science the high ground in answering the key questions of life, as he clearly outlines them in his questions. What is important to note is that we do not have a back water former PhD writer, who did his research 30 years ago, and then faded into the background; writing with no current academic credibility. Rather the worlds’ leading human geneticist is writing with the full force of his scientific discipline and research to compare his faith and science against. This man makes it very clear that he believes that God can be found by what he calls the “heart”. Indeed Polkinghorne identifies the ontological desires of the human quest for meaning as a key aspect of the human pursuit after God.¹⁷ And by implication, for both Polkinghorne and Collins not by rationalism, not by science, but by this deep core reality which is termed the “heart”. In this dissertation the meaning of this key term “heart” will be demonstrated to be a real part of the self through which all primary revelation takes place. For now it must be noted that the Holy Bible almost always designates the heart as the primary spiritual organ that is involved in receiving knowledge from God.¹⁸ At least 95% of the instances in Scripture points to the “hearts” primary significance as the means by which God reveals him self to human beings.

Neuropsychology has moved forward in its’ consideration of what reality might be envisaged to be which has been aligned with SPECT (Single Photon Emission Computed Tomography) brain imaging of religious people as they are experiencing states such as speaking in tongues (we will consider research on this in detail in chapter 5). What is interesting is that empirical scientific research has led to an embracing of other realities being equally true as much as so called “base-line reality”¹⁹- that reality experienced in the conscious world of everyday life by people generally. D’Aquila and Newberg conclude when discussing the relationship between Reality and Phenomenology:

“Suffice it to say reality seems to consist fundamentally only of the vivid sense of reality, or, as some would say, reality is constituted by compelling presences. If this can be systematically shown to be true, and we believe that we have done so, then

¹⁶ Op Cit, p.6

¹⁷ John Polkinghorne, Science Christian Belief Theological reflections of a bottom-up thinker, SPCK, UK, 1994, pp. 9 - 51

¹⁸ Mark and Patti Virkler, How to Walk by the Spirit, Lamad Publishing, USA, 2007, See on Introduction.

¹⁹ D’Aquila & Newburg, The Neuropsychology of Aesthetic, pp.50 - 54

spiritual or mystical states of reality recalled in the baseline state as more certainly representing an objective condition than what is represented in the sensorium of the baseline state must be considered real. There can be no other conclusion no matter how one comes at it. This may present many problems that must be worked out, but the essential or underlying reality of hyperlucid experiences (visions, dreams and the reality of numinous deity's existence – all this writer's words to clarify what the writers mean) must be said to be real or the word reality has no meaning whatsoever. It is such considerations that put us, even against our will, in the presence of what Rudolph Otto called the *mysterium tremendum et fascinans* – the tremendous and spellbinding mystery.”²⁰

What is crucial to understand is that brain studies are indicating that reality is just as real in states of AUB (Absolute Unitary Being) experienced by Christian mystics as in the datum of “Base-line” reality known particularly to Modernists and subscribers to the Enlightenment paradigm; as what they think is the only reality in the space time world of human sense perception.²¹ A return to the arguably greater reality of intuitive spontaneous heart revelation of the Middle Eastern Jesus is supported by current neuroscience.²²

Having highlighted this, it will be returned to later. The crucial point that needs to be considered next is as Polanyi puts it:

“But its incandescence (of the critical movement) had fed on the combustion of the Christian heritage in the oxygen of Greek rationalism, and when this fuel was exhausted the critical framework itself burnt away.”

This is critical to understand. The proposed change in Western man's world view about the importance of Enlightenment values has burnt out. That there is a new type of person emerging who no longer opts for one, or even two certainties; rather the whole arena is open once again with the mysterious and numinous.²³ The truth seems to be that what many call “Post Modernism” is patchy, some are still married to “Modernism”, but there is a significant trend among Generation “X” and “Y” toward the relativities of what some call “Post Modernism”.²⁴ The experience of AUB states of receiving a sense of the greater reality of God beyond base-line reality in the heart fits well with a new post criticism and

²⁰ Ibid, p. 50

²¹ Op Cit, Bosch, Chapter 9

²² See on Chapter 5 of this Dissertation

²³ Christopher Sinkinson, *The Universe of Faiths a critical study of John Hick's religious pluralism*, Peterborough Press, UK, 2001, Chapter 9

²⁴ George Barna, *Generation Next what you need to know about today's youth*, Regal Books, USA, 1995, chapter 6, & Jo Pimlott & Nigel Pimlott, *Youth Work After Christendom*, Peterborough, UK, 2008, Chapter 3

theological evaluation of just what reality is.²⁵ Dave Tomlinson's comments capture this well:

"The postmodern world is a world which understands itself through biological rather than mechanistic models; a world where people see themselves as belonging to the environment rather than over it or apart from it. A world distrustful of institutions, hierarchies, centralized bureaucracies and male dominated organizations. It is a world which networks and local grassroots activities take precedence over large scale structures and grand designs; a world in which the book age is giving way to the screen age; a world hungry for spirituality yet dismissive of systematized religion. It is a world in which image and reality are so deeply intertwined that it is difficult to draw the line between the two."²⁶

Whatever way the debate goes about the real viability of allowing for a term like "Post-Modernism" it seems that there is a growing trend in which Enlightenment mechanistic certainties have given way to a new search for meaning.²⁷ Rationalism may be best thought of as a disjuncture between the feeling and seeking self which is looking for meaning in life with that rational capacity which works on logic and has no passion for its' own existence.²⁸ If nothing else the plethora of TV series like: "Supernatural", "Most Haunted", "Angel", "Dead like me" and "Ghost Whisperer" is that there is a huge market for a real target audience who are exploring the spiritual world once more! All of this is evidence for an innate human search known to Anthropology well as the human races search for the numinous and the divine.²⁹

What I have been suggesting up to this point is that Polanyi's assertion, made in 1952, bears with particular weight even more so now given the current trends moving away from a steady state view of rationalistic and mechanistic world views; in terms of a perception of so called base-line reality. No longer do the educated middle classes in Europe or North

²⁵ See on Chapter 5 of this Dissertation

²⁶ Dave Tomlinson, *The Post-Evangelical* (London: Triangle, 1995), p. 75.

²⁷ Consider the wide variety of books in local book stores on alternative Spirituality which have been very evident throughout the 90's and on until 2009 while I am writing. I have quoted one book of thousands to be found in book stores in this dissertation, Neale Donald Walsch, *Conversations with God Book one*, Hodder & Stoughton, UK, 1995. Walsch is not a Christian but he demonstrates the Theophostic exploration through his conversations with God – his book is essentially as written dialogue of him talking with God and God answering him. It is also worth reading G.E.R. Lloyd's work on Aristotle's science and rationality for a background comparison you can make for yourself about the points of connection between the Greek precursors of the Age of Reason, G.E.R. Lloyd, *Early Greek Science: Thales to Aristotle*, W. W. Norton & Company, UK, 1970.

²⁸ It is perhaps useful to consider What CS Lewis wrote in a published series of lectures he gave where he talks of "Men without Chests", people either become so focussed on the rational mind they lose their heart and passion, or so focused on their hearts that they lose their rational capacity. Lewis prescribes that man needs to allow the balance to be restored so that head and heart may be allowed to cooperate once more in our educational institutions. Clive Staples Lewis, *The Abolition of Man*, Collins Fount Paper Backs, UK.

²⁹ John Monaghan & Peter Just, *Social & Cultural Anthropology a very short introduction*, Oxford University Press, UK, 2000, pp. 121 - 123

America accept a steady state view of an unchanging perspective of reality.³⁰ Things are open for exploration once more. There are immense frontiers which are just starting to show up on the landscape. No longer is everything neatly to be defined in terms of a unified theory of everything without reference to the numinous.³¹ This has been the holy grail of cosmologists and physicists it is true, but it has become less and less possible to answer the really big questions about the origins and destiny of the universe without resorting to theory and philosophy; despite attempts to dupe the general public into thinking science is pure in its pursuit of just dealing with facts.³²

The eminent Physicist Stephen Hawking concludes his book “A Brief History of Time from the Big Bang to Black Holes” after discussing the search for a unified field theory with the words:

“However, if we do discover a complete theory, it should in time be understandable in broad principle by everyone, not just a few scientists. Then we shall all, philosophers, scientists, and just ordinary people, be able to take part in the discussion of the question of why it is that we and the universe exist. If we find the answer to that, it would be the ultimate triumph of human reason – for then we would know the mind of God.”³³

Whatever, may be said about Hawkings’ optimism concerning the ability of human reason to find the reason for the universes’ existence, it is clear that even he at the time of writing had some willingness to be open to a potential knowledge of the “Mind of God”; whatever that meant to him. However, notice how he takes a high view of “scientists” having some sort of private access in the minority of a “few” to the real knowledge about the nature of the universe; and that by means of “reason”. If this is indeed the estimate of one who categorizes himself as one of these elite few, then no wonder people in general have turned from science as the means of an object of faith and veneration. Having said this when consideration is given to Collins’ avowed faith it is clear that he sees the answer to life’s deep questions as beyond the realm of science. It is rather a thing to be pursued by the human “heart” or “spirit”. Many now are turning back on mass to this approach through the generically entitled “New Age Movement”.³⁴

Among popular writers in this field is Walsch. He clearly comes from a New Age background with the characteristic eclectic resonance to his work. Book one of his “Conversations with

³⁰ Leslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, USA, 1999.

³¹ *Ibid*

³² Malcolm A. Jeeves & R. J. Berry, *Science, Life, and Christian Belief a survey of contemporary issues*, Baker Books, USA, 1998 & David, K. Clark, *Dialogical Apologetics a person-centred approach to Christian defence*, Baker Books, USA, 1993. Chapter 3

³³ Stephen W. Hawking, *A Brief History of Time from the big bang to black holes*, Bantam Press, UK, 1990, p. 175

³⁴ Mark & Patti Virkler, *Am I Being Deceived*, Bridge-Logos publishers, USA, 2001

God” is avowedly based on this heart approach to discovering God. He tells the story of how one day God just started to speak to him, and his book claims to be messages from God for people to read. This is what he says:

“To my surprise, as I scribbled out the last of my bitter, unanswerable questions and prepared to toss my pen aside, my hand remained poised over the paper, as if held there by some invisible force. Abruptly, the pen began moving on its own. I had no idea what I was about to write, but an idea seemed to be coming, so I decided to flow with it. Out came.....’Do you really want an answer to all these questions, or are you just venting?’³⁵

In this fashion Walsch came up with his first book “Conversations with God” and published it. This is an example of what is commonly called automatic writing by New Age buffs; as Walsch wrote “Abruptly, the pen began moving on its own..... .” There was a sense of his hand being under the control of another conscious being. This is common enough for those who hold to the eclectic spirituality of New Age philosophy. What is interesting is the sense of acceptance that Walsch approaches this with as a phenomenon which has derived from another interior and exterior to him self at the same time. There is a sense of heart to heart interest between the I and the Thou which Walsch takes to be the voice of God. Although I do not adhere to a New Age philosophy I do adhere to the belief from experience that God does speak to us on a heart to heart level, and that this God is the Father of Jesus Christ. As Walsch is not a Christian I think it is highly likely that another spiritual being is communicating with Walsch; so I don’t recommend him as a source of spiritual theology. However, his experience, does demonstrate the market for a Spirit to spirit encounter with God which goes beyond the rational and, or, scientific.

It is interesting that Hawkings’ sets himself up as a kind of elite scientific deity, and how Walsch’s book brings God to everyone on a generic level (he claims) – that is at least those who believe God can be known beyond the rational. Indeed the rational is considered to be a positive barrier to hearing from God. Collin’s does not say this in as many words although it has already been noted that there needs to be a use of the human heart in pursuing the Spiritual realm of God in his view. In Hawking’s view, if indeed he believes in any sort of God, he is only really accessible to the reason. Walsch clearly exemplifies a non-Christian universal approach to the availability of a deity to the human spirit without scientific pursuit. What all of this demonstrates is that there are differing epistemologies concerning the possibility of knowing the “Mind of God”. What Hawking’s affirmation makes clear is that the God of science is mostly beyond anyone but a few. What Collin’s makes clear is that he still embraces reason and science to explore the physical world, and the human spirit to

³⁵ Op Cit, Walsch, p. 1

explore the Spiritual world; whereas, Walsch practices speaking with his proposed deity by spirit to spirit contact. I suggest that Western people generally speaking have abandoned science for meaningful answers to life and are now in a state of flux searching for meaning once more without a faith in the god of science. That the science idol is passing in its' influence now and a new set of multiple experiments are being conducted by Western men and women in the whole realm of the human heart.

As a Christian researcher I want to point to the large body of literature, evidence and experience which demonstrates that God does speak today in a way that it can be said people can "hear his Voice".³⁶ The challenge of this dissertation is to take the reader on a journey to learn to listen to the "God who Speaks" by the Spirit of Christ Jesus'.³⁷ This will be part of the task of the next chapter to develop a Biblical concept of the human heart and human spirit in the light of a Trinitarian theology. However, it is important to give more consideration concerning the nature of developing a post critical theology in this chapter before another step is taken.

Reactions to Post Criticism

It is probably far too simple to suggest that a single reality called "Post Modernism" exists. The very term it self is the creation of the human mind, and the sociologists attempt at describing a phenomenon or phenomena. Dan Kimball makes the helpful observation that the Western World is a mixture of Modern and Post Modern trends.³⁸ This probably does not even go far enough for many scholars, but for the purposes of this dissertation it seems like a useful simplification to maintain as the central thesis of this dissertation. 21st century Westerners are somewhere between modernism and post modernism.³⁹ Certainly generation "Y" even more so than Generation "X", have grown up in very relativistic approach to what can be known or proven for certain. Hence pluralism of beliefs is more typical than ever.⁴⁰

Moreover, Kimball gives useful definition to the difference between "Modernism" and "Post Modernism":

"Modernism – A worldview and culture emphasizing science, technology, the belief that all knowledge is good and certain, a single moral standard truth as absolute, the value of individualism, and that thinking, learning, and beliefs should be determined systematically and logically."

³⁶ Geoff and Hope Price, *Miracles true stories of how God acts today*, Macmillan, UK, 1995

³⁷ Klaus Bockmuehl, *Listening to the God who speaks*, Helmers and Howard, UK, 1990

³⁸ Dan Kimball, *Emerging Church vintage Christianity for new generations*, Zondervan, USA, 2003, Chapter 1

³⁹ *Ibid*, chapter 4

⁴⁰ Leslie Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, Eerdmans, USA, 1999, chapter 1

“Postmodernism – An emerging and developing worldview and culture pursuing what is beyond modernity. It holds there is no single universal worldview. Therefore, truth is not absolute and many of the qualities embraced by modernism no longer hold the value or influence they once did. It can still be defined as we like, since it is still forming and developing.”⁴¹

It is probably accurate to recognise that Western people are located somewhere between the now and not yet of Modernism and Postmodernism; with many still resonating more with Modernism, those who have not left one for the other, and those who identify the most with the relativities of a postmodern outlook. What does seem to be true is that a large number of emerging generations from the former “X” category and now of the new “Y” category are best defined as “post critical, or post modern” (I use the terms interchangeably) in the sense that any number of beliefs might be true.⁴² Rationalism is no longer seen as the key way to determine the answers to life’s big questions. This of course has its dangers and opportunities. The danger is that with the fast cycling information highway of the internet will mean that what was yesterday’s interest is tomorrow’s discarded news.⁴³ The opportunity is that people are more open to explore new experiences without buying into a rationalistic agnosticism or atheism.⁴⁴

This dichotomy between the Modern and Post Modern/post criticism (I use these two terms interchangeably, but prefer to develop a post critical approach to theology in later chapters) has led to the resurrection of radical atheism, once more, appealing to a perceived older reliance on reason and a steady state view of scientific opinion about the loss of a theistic explanation for the world. A well known name who epitomizes this reaction to “Post Criticism” is Richard Dawkins’. In his well known book “The God Delusion” he appeals to the

⁴¹ Ibid, Kimball, p.58

⁴² Michael Frost & Alan Hirsch, *The Shape of Things to Come innovation and mission for the 21st-century church*, Hendrickson Publishers, USA, 2003. The whole book is an excellent analysis of the ways that emergent generations are now in need to find God in new and creative ways. The authors develop the importance of the five-fold ministries of Scripture, Apostle, prophet, pastor, teacher and evangelist – making it clear that the Spirit of God and the voice of God are vital to the emergent cultural and sociological Western environments.

⁴³ The case for this is made in my published notes for a series of lectures I gave on Biblical Interpretation, Andrew R. Hardy, *Whole Brain Biblical Meditation*, www.cluonline.com/freebooks.

⁴⁴ Christ Stoddard & Nick Cuthbert, *Church on the Edge principles and real life stories of 21st century mission*, Authentic, UK, 2006, 94 – 100; Martin Down, *Building a New Church Alongside the Old*, Kingsway, UK, 2003, chapter 14; Martin Robinson, the well known Missiologist makes the point of how important it is for church planting to be based on the right grounds – key to this is authentic Spirituality. In terms of new church plants reaching those who are once again exploring the spiritual world outside of Christianity is that the church once more embraces its’ spiritual roots, Dr Martin Robinson, *Planting Mission-Shaped Churches Today*, Monarch Books, UK, 2006, Chapter 7; Richard Foster writes significantly, and practically, about rediscovering the spiritual disciplines, Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline the past to spiritual growth*, Hodder & Stoughton, UK, 1999; it is vital that we relearn the art of contemplation and spending time with God. Many non-Christian people are doing this through connections with Eastern Religions because the Church has lost this art. So the significant numbers of people who are no longer interested in Modernism are looking in other directions than the church for deeper spiritual experiences.

supposed lack of credibility for belief in God in the light of human reason and scientific knowledge. He writes:

“If the argument of this chapter is accepted, the factual premise of religion – the God Hypothesis – is untenable. God almost certainly does not exist. This is the main conclusion of the book so far.”⁴⁵

Dawkin’s reaches this conclusion after rehearsing many arguments based on enlightenment principles; i.e. proposition+ evidence+analysis = conclusion. His arguments are based on setting up unilateral propositions which he then seeks to criticise and demolish. The problem with his line of reasoning is just the way he limits his argumentation to assumed constants which must always be true based on their assumed steady state. What he is really doing is setting up a straw man and then demolishing it with simplistic over generalisations. Moreover, he does not attempt to engage with deeper investigation into his own interior experience. Neither does he engage any of the evidence of real life experiences of God which would demonstrate the possibility or reality of the Deity in theist’s lives. He assumes that spiritual phenomena and direct theophany encounters with God are not even worth exploring. Surely this blatant disregard for evidence of the divine even in current day human experience makes his appeal to a supposed objectivity of perspective highly suspect! Modern neuroscience is not willing to accept the base-line reality defined empirically by Dawkin’s through its’ own brain research, yet Dawkin’s gives no credence to this line of investigation by giving evidence of his own investigation into the numinous. Base-line reality is his reality and none other exists except when it suites his needs to argue against theism. It was said recently by a leading academic at the Oxford University Student Union Lectures celebrating Darwin (2009) that the reason why Dawkin’s is so passionately trying to deny God’s existence is because he really feels threatened by counter evidence for his real existence. In the private view of this un-named academic Dawkin’s would himself become a theist within the next ten years. If consideration is given to psychological phenomena it may well be the case that he will experience such a transformation. Certainly it is a well known psychological observation that people tend to project their negative reactions about someone or something on the thing they hate or fear most in them selves. Could Dawkin’s be doing this very thing?

Another problem with Dawkin’s arguments, which he rehearses in the “God Delusion”, is that they have all been dealt with in equally as competent ways by theists who can demonstrate evidence can be interpreted in more than one way very convincingly.⁴⁶

⁴⁵ Richard Dawkins, *The God Delusion*, Black Swan, UK, 2006, p. 189; Also consider an interesting response to the book, Andrew Wilson, *Deluded by Dawkins a Christian response to the God delusion*, Kingsway, UK, 2007.

⁴⁶ Roger Forster & Paul Marston, *Reason Science and Faith*, Monarch Books, UK, 1999; Malcolm A. Jeeves & R.J. Berry, *Science, life, and Christian Belief*, Baker Books, USA, 1998; David K. Clark, *Dialogical Apologetics a person-centred approach to Christian Defence*, Baker Books, USA, 1993; Of all the big names who seek to

Without entering debate by analysing Dawkin's book perhaps Andrew Wilson's observation about his theology of God makes it clear why Dawkin's so badly misses the point about the God he has proposed, and hence tried to demolish belief in. He writes:

"Like Einstein, then, Dawkins' problem seems to be that the God or gods he has heard described are simply not big enough. To be fair, if the God of the Bible was the small, petulant, Freudian superego that Dawkin's imagines, I would not believe in him either. But Yahweh, the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, is far larger and more glorious than Dawkin's imagines....."⁴⁷

He then adds,

"There was once an opponent of Christianity so aggressive that he made Dawkins look very tame in comparison. He fought believers with all his might, both intellectually and physically, and dedicated his life to ridding the world of the blight of Christianity. Yet as he eventually found out, the size and holiness and love and power and truth of God revealed in Jesus of Nazareth are incomparable. And for this reason, God is more than enough to satisfy the sceptic's soul."⁴⁸

My largest objection to Dawkin's, beyond his obvious atheism, is his failure to demonstrate any clear personal exploration with his heart into the area of the numinous or the divine.

address the argument for God A.E. Wilder Smith is Significant. In the award Winning Video Series called "Origins" produced by Eden Films in the 1980s a convincing case can still be made to take an alternative look at Intelligent design, A.E. Wilder Smith, a critical survey of the principles of evolution and Christianity man's origin, man's destiny, Harold Shaw, USA, 1969 (it is still worth a good read); Stuart Burgess one of the key Engineers who designed the Hubble Space Telescope also makes a strong case for God, Stuart Burgess, Hallmarks of Design Evidence of design in the natural world, Day one, UK, 2000; Stuart Burgess, He made the Stars also what the Bible says about the stars, Day one, UK, 2002; R. Douglas Geivett & Gary R. Habermas, In Defence of Miracles A comprehensive case for God's Action in History, IVP, USA, 1997; One of the great names among English Scholars from Oxford was Clive Staples Lewis, his work is being rediscovered once more by Theistic Scientists and philosophers alike. For instance Francis Collins referred to in this chapter references Lewis's work in his case for God. Following are some of his classic books which make the case for God; C.S> Lewis, Miracles, Collins Fount Paperbacks, UK, 1982; C.S. Lewis, God in the Dock, Collins Fount Paperbacks, UK, 1987; C.S. Lewis, The Great Divorce, Fount, UK, 1991; C.S. Lewis, The Abolition of Man, Collins Fount Paperbacks, UK, 1978; C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity, Fount, UK; C.S. Lewis, Fern-seed and Elephants and other Christian essays, Collins Fount Paperbacks, UK, 1978; C.S. Lewis, Surprised by Joy, Collins Fount Paperbacks; Alan Hayward, Does God Exist? Science says 'Yes', Lakeland Marshall & Morgan & Scott, UK, 1983; Hans Kung, Does God Exist, Collins, UK, 1978; Del Ratzsch, Science & Its Limits The natural sciences in Christian perspective, IVP, USA, 2000; Kelly James Clark, Return to Reason, Eerdmans, USA, 1990; Leon Morris, I believe in Revelation, Eerdmans, USA, 1983; Francis Collins, The Language of God a scientist presents evidence for belief, Pocket books, UK, 2007; David Wilkinson, God, the big bang and Stephen Hawking an exploration into origins, Monarch, UK, 1993; John Polkinghorne, Science Christian Belief theological reflections of a bottom-up thinker, SPCK, UK, 1994; John Ankerberg & John Weldon, Darwin's Leap of Faith exposing the false religion of evolution, Harvest House Publishers, USA, 1998; For a scientific take on Christian Theophostics consult, William Johnston, Mystical Theology the science of love, Harper Collins publishers, UK, 1995.

⁴⁷ Andrew Wilson, Deluded by Dawkins? A Christian Response to the God Delusion, Kingsway Publications, UK, 2007, p.111

⁴⁸ Ibid, p.112

Surely it is not possible to disregard the numinous when neurology is unwilling to do so. Collin's own journey is far more honest and it seems to make far more sense of the problems Dawkin's attempts to set up against the existence of God. Both Collin's and Dawkins' are biologists of renown – yet Collin's mature approach to his belief in God seems to make Dawkin's book pale into insignificance. And what is the difference between the two men? Collins approaches the question of God with his heart and spirit, Dawkins tries to do it on the basis of base-line reason. One approach lacks passion and humanity and evidence of having really tested if God is really there in his heart, whilst the other has honestly done so and answers with an affirmative "Yes he is"; with a clear recognition God has to be sought with the heart to be found. I know of no better way of delineating the difference between the epistemologies of both men as believer and unbeliever. God can only be found, as Scripture testifies,⁴⁹ through the "Spirit" or "heart" of man.

Roger Forster and Paul Marston in their excellent book "Reason Science and Faith" make some interesting observations about Dawkins which should not be taken lightly given the backgrounds of both men. They write:

"We might have come to writers like Dawkins and Dennett, the doyens of late 20th century penguin popular science, expecting that some wonderful new answers to questions of meaning would come from their science. Instead, as noted, one finds only marginally updated references back to the same old tried and failed atheism of earlier philosophers like Hobbes, Hume and Nietzsche. Their works are full of word pictures and parables (which we earlier dubbed 'Penpops fables') some of which are to 'prove' obscure distinctions reminiscent of scholastic philosophy. They seem to contain very little actual science and no research – they are essentially homespun philosophy. But Dawkin's, for example holds an Oxford Professorship (specially endowed by Microsoft) for the 'Public Understanding of Science.' His militant atheism is presented as though a part of science. So we might ask: can science as science really answer questions of meaning and purpose?' Many eminent scientists, who have published real scientific results, seem not to think so.

Albert Einstein, probably the most revered scientist of the twentieth century, wrote:

The scientific method can teach us nothing else beyond how facts are related to, and conditioned by, each other. The aspiration toward such objective knowledge belongs to the highest of which man is capable, and you will certainly not suspect me of wishing to belittle the achievements and heroic efforts of man in this sphere. Yet it is equally clear that knowledge of what is does not open the door directly to what should be. One can have the clearest and most complete knowledge of what is, and yet not be able to deduce from

⁴⁹ See on Hebrews chapters 3 & 4

that what should be the goal of our human aspirations the ultimate goal itself and the longing to reach it must come from another source.”⁵⁰

It is amazing that Dawkin’s an avowed scientist should claim scientific credibility for his conclusion that God is disproved by science in any way. Einstein may be said to agree with Collin’s view that such knowledge of God’s existence is a matter of the human “spirit” or “heart” when he speaks of “another source”; and his has much to add to a new direction in the pursuit of knowledge.

The seeming current trend toward post criticism is reaching a new level of exploration of the heart once more. That which is metaphysical beyond direct scientific observation is becoming a leisure pursuit to be participated with on Television with programmes like “Most Haunted”. The science of the human “spirit” needs its own source of description.⁵¹ The place to look for this for the Christian is in the Biblical literature and also in the vast body of experimental spiritual formation literature of the last 2,000 odd years. At this juncture it is worth noting that science itself has taken on new direction and new attitudes to the whole field of “Intelligent Design”. One great early name in this field was Sir Fred Hoyle who wrote his highly controversial book at the time entitled “The Intelligent Universe”.⁵² Other more modern writers recognise that there is no such thing as a steady unchangeable type of science with iron cast laws which exists without change and modification as well. James Gleik, in his book “Chaos” makes the following remarks (although he is not an avowed theist) concerning the influence of Chaos theory on the way science is starting to change hence giving evidence that science is in flux following its own type of “Post Critical” crisis:

“Then there are revolutions. A new science arises out of one that has reached a dead end. Often a revolution has an interdisciplinary character – its central discoveries often come from people straying outside the normal bounds of their specialities. The problems that obsess these theorists are not recognized as legitimate lines of enquiry. Thesis proposals are turned down or articles are refused publication. The theorists themselves are not sure whether they would recognize an answer if they saw one. They accept risk to their careers. A few freethinkers working alone, unable to explain where they are heading, afraid even to tell their colleagues what they are doing – that romantic image lies at the heart of Kuhn’s scheme, and it has occurred in real life, time and time again, in the exploration of chaos (theory). Every

⁵⁰ Roger Forster & Paul Marston, Reason Science & Faith, Monarch Books, UK, 1999, pp56,57

⁵¹ William Johnston, Mystical Theology the science of love, Harper Collins publishers, UK, 1995.

⁵² Sir Fred. Hoyle, The Intelligent Universe, UK

scientist who turned to chaos early had a story to tell of discouragement and hostility.”⁵³

Gleik’s point in writing on Chaos theory, among other things, is to demonstrate that the world of the Modernistic certainties with its fixed regular predictability was transformed by the challenge of Quantum theory and the flux of many contradictions which general relativity compared to Newtonian certainties created.⁵⁴ In the quotation above he demonstrates how scientific credibility can remain entrenched for generations until a revolution happens. The current revolution of Chaos Theory is to demonstrate that most systems are complex and do not have fixed simple rules. Fractal analysis has discovered new regular patterning in the midst of seemingly chaotic multi-systems in nature. In other words it may be argued that the old certainties of a steady state view of science are now giving way to a complexity theory which by its very nature means the whole question of set critical formulas no longer bear the same authority. Fractal analysis has demonstrated complexity theory does not mean there are many symmetrical patterning phenomena to be observed in complex systems. Hence there is definite evidence of science’s own “Post Critical” mid-life crisis!

In terms of the development of my post critical theology, and Polanyi’s suggestion that *“Augustine brought the history of Greek philosophy to a close by inaugurating for the first time a post-critical philosophy. (Teaching) that all knowledge was a gift of grace, for which we must strive under the guidance of antecedent belief: nisi credideritis, no intelligiti;”* there seems to be the possibility of mapping a whole new landscape of the basis for the human search for God and the meaning of its life. It is no longer possible to face even the world of science with complete certainty as the realization of complexity has opened up the human soul once more to the mysterious and divine; which can only be approached in the first place by the human spirit and heart. This sets the foundation for discussing the nature and source of human knowledge. Indeed Planks uncertainty principal applied to quatum mechanics gives evidence that it will never be possible for science to give a total description of everything as a unified field theory because to do so one would have to account for the position of every particle in existence. The only being who could do this would be the deity and hence the deity must exist in this numinous field of the uncertainty principle whether scientists like Dawkins or Hawking like it or not. Does Schrödinger’s’ cat exist or not in his quatum world cat box? Is the answer Yes and no? For theists like me and Collins the answer is an emphatic yes! But in order to know this God we must seek him in and through our hearts!

⁵³ James Gleik, *Chaos the amazing science of the unpredictable*, Vintage Books, UK, 1998, p.37

⁵⁴ *Op Cit*, David Wilkinson, chapter 5.

Jung and the Collective Unconscious – Revelation Knowledge and Einstein

It is time to consider another step in the discussion of a post critical thesis and theology. It was stated in the introduction thus:

“This chapter will focus on the need for a new type of theology which may be termed as the rediscovery of the “first world basis to human being and human consciousness” itself .”

In the first instance it is important to note that the rebirth of the Ancient Greek obsession with reason and the rational was brought into the conscious level of Western thinking in the Enlightenment and the way this trend has held sway for three or four hundred years since. The belief that the grounds for human knowledge is founded on rationalism – the belief that man’s reasoning capacities are the key to real knowledge – has been the central working thesis of what Enlightenment “Modernism” has derived much of its energy from. The Age of Rationalism and Modernism’s scientific reign is under going a process of being weighed and found wanting when it comes to the human psyche’s need for deeper soul searching answers to life’s big questions.⁵⁵ As has already been noted it can no longer be assumed that scientists’ holding the most prestigious and influential positions in the academic world maintain the belief that science gives humanity the means to gain knowledge of the greatest questions of the human soul, viz-a-viz the need to receive a heart fulfilling knowledge through communion with God. Collin’s has already been brought as a witness concerning this and his voice is among 40% of world scientists who hold to a theistic conviction at this present time.⁵⁶

In other words scientific men and woman believe that God is real and that he makes sense not only to their science but also to the spiritual dimensions of their lives which Collin’s rightly indentified with the human “heart;” or simply defined as the spiritual organ which allows men and woman to communicate with God!

For ease of classification I am suggesting that three major world views be considered to effectively label how people currently process the world around them and their place in it. This could of course be expanded!

⁵⁵ The Seventh-Day Adventist Writer Jon Paulien makes some very important observations, Jon Paulien, Present Truth in the Real World the Adventist struggle to keep and share faith in a secular society, Pacific Publishing Association, USA, 1993.

⁵⁶ Ibid, Francis Collins, p. 4.

The first world view is simply the most common to human history and experience. It is the belief that God communicates via special supernatural means with the spiritual heart of man through an act of revelation which is experienced as intuitive spontaneous thoughts, ideas, pictures and feelings. This world view takes in the perspectives of what might by some be called the experience of primitive man. However, it still remains a key aspect which millions of people on planet earth base their whole lives on. In Christian terms the charismatic and Pentecostal movement represent the key proponents of this view. It is very interesting that Pentecostal churches are the fastest growing mission group in the world to date with half a billion converts, or put another way 25% of the 2 billion Christians in the world today.⁵⁷ Those Christians who believe that “heart” based revelation knowledge is the key to the most important type of knowledge do not believe science or human reason or rationality are useless, it is rather that their epistemology, for any who have really seriously thought about it, would be to say that “God communicates with the heart of man and through this media also with his head – i.e. rational capacity.”⁵⁸ The key issue is that the philosophy of rationalism and its humanistic antecedents are not the way such persons will approach their search for knowledge.⁵⁹ That Revelation knowledge recognized as such or not has been the demonstrable key to major scientific breakthroughs on an intuitive scale.

Next the second world view might be considered which is Rationalism as a belief system, along with its’ humanistic philosophical partner, that man’s analytical and reasoning capacities are the basis to all knowledge and man’s future and destiny.⁶⁰ This destiny is that man has control over his own future without reference to a deity or need for such a deity to be involved in the way he shapes his life.⁶¹ The spiritual world does not exist in a way which gives any more than a crutch for men and women to try to placate their finite frailty.⁶²

Moreover, consideration may be given to a third world view, which probably incorporates scientists like Collins, which may be stated something like this; Science has its specific sphere when it comes to examining naturalistic observable phenomena. The spiritual component of man is outside empirical observation and is based on the human hearts innate ability to commune with a real living and communicating deity. This means that there are two legitimate spheres of human endeavour, one the mind used for rational development and research scientifically and the other the heart which is the key to the very definition of what it means to be human – created in God’s image.⁶³

⁵⁷ Wikipedia on Pentecostalism and charismatic movement numbers

⁵⁸ Mark and Patti Virkler, *How to Hear God’s Voice*, Destiny Image, USA, 2005, chapter 1.

⁵⁹ *Ibid*, chapter 1

⁶⁰ Walter Wink, *The Powers that be theology for a new Millenium*, A Galilee Book, USA, 1998, p. 17

⁶¹ *Ibid*, Wink, p. 17,18.

⁶² Karl Marx wrote this in *Das Capital*, he lived 1818 – 1883; also consult, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*, Phoenix Paperback, UK, 1996.

⁶³ *Ibid*, Collins.

Really what each of these world views demonstrate is found to be the case with the sorts of people any one person might know in his or her life time. Knowing varieties of individuals often raises the challenge of world view.⁶⁴ For a Christian, like my self, it is often about what I or they by comparison do to challenge my world view. Most significant to my Spiritual formation over the years has been concerning my fundamental basis for the whole of my life and self identity – “how does knowing God on an intimate interior level by his Spirit transform me?” This challenge is often brought to light over the basis for any sort of knowledge in the first place about the direction or personal self definition or direction in life.⁶⁵ More fundamentally, for my self, the crucial question is “What is the basis for anything I know on a spiritual or intellectual level?” “Is there a route which seems to resonate with theology and experience which reveals the fundamental avenue God utilizes to communicate with the heart and mind of man? This is where the work of Carl Jung may prove very insightful as a first step in the process of developing an applied theology regarding this.

Jung’s work has been part of the reading that many eclectic practitioners in secular and Christian psychology and counselling have consulted. In terms of my own training as a clinical and pastoral counsellor he was part of that process. An area which has been fascinating for many practitioners over the years is his ground breaking research, and clinical practice, of the use of dreams in psycho-analytical terms.⁶⁶ Jung’s well known research into archetypes is common knowledge to most well trained counsellors or psychologists. Even the basic “A” level psychology course or philosophy course (in the UK) considers Jungian theory, and, or, practice. Where his academic work, based on over 100,000 dreams he analysed, comes to bear most in this chapter, is his work on the archetypes of the “Collective Unconscious”.

Jung’s book entitled “Four Archetypes, Mother, Rebirth, Spirit, Trickster” has an excellent and concise set of propositions which will be the most efficient means of demonstrating the importance of a discussion of the “Collective Unconscious” to the Christian understanding of Heart knowledge, or intuitive theistic revelation in man’s heart. So, firstly, a consideration of Jung’s fundamental hypothesis is to be detailed:

“The hypothesis of a collective unconscious belongs to the class of ideas that people at first find strange but soon come to possess and use as familiar conceptions. This has been the case with the concept of the unconscious in general. After the

⁶⁴ David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission paradigm shifts in theology of mission*, Orbis Books, USA, 2000, p. 195.

⁶⁵ M. Scott Peck, *The Road Less Travelled and Beyond spiritual growth in an age of anxiety*, Rider, UK, 1997, chapters 1 & 2; Also consult John Piper who discusses the role of Fasting and Prayer as a way of tuning into God from a place of uncertainty to receptivity, John Piper, *A hunger for God desiring God through fasting and prayer*, Crossway Books, USA, 1997.

⁶⁶ C.G. Jung, *Modern Man in search of a soul*, Ark Paperbacks, UK, 1989; C. G. Jung, *Four Archetypes, Mother, rebirth, spirit, trickster*, Ark Paperbacks, UK, 1989.

philosophical idea of the unconscious, in the form presented chiefly by Carus and von Hartmann, had gone down under the overwhelming wave of materialism and empiricism, leaving hardly a ripple behind it, it generally reappeared in the scientific domain of medical psychology.”⁶⁷

Jung’s point is well made. Enlightenment ideology for a time was able to undermine the concept that there was a consciousness beyond the personal unconsciousness, but this was and has only been the case for those who have radically embraced rationalism and empiricism as their primary epistemology throughout Enlightenment/modernism times – so even this picture is patchy. Human psychology has always found the need to wrestle with a larger sphere of unconscious life that is not accounted for by the personal unconscious alone despite claims to the contrary based on enlightenment epistemology.⁶⁸ Mankind recognises that images, ideas and states of being have a universal life of correspondence which seems to be hard wired into the human psyche. Neuroscience has said as much in its own inimitable mechanistic terminology.⁶⁹

Jung makes a second point in the line of his propositional argument:

“At first the concept of the unconscious was limited to denoting the state of repressed or forgotten contents. Even with Freud, who makes the unconscious – at least metaphorically – take the stage as the acting subject, it is really nothing but the gathering place of forgotten and repressed contents, and has a functional significance thanks only to these. For Freud, accordingly, the unconscious is of an exclusively personal nature, although he was aware of its archaic and mythological thought-forms.”⁷⁰

Here Jung sets out what the rationalist would say, and indeed Freud did teach, concerning the source of the unconscious mind’s images.⁷¹ But as has been detailed above modern Neuroscience is far more willing to talk about circuits existing in the brain which set patterns in place including potential “Collective Unconscious” memories.⁷²

The next step of his propositional line of thought is the most informative to this chapter, and indeed the thesis of a new kind of post critical theology;

“A more or less superficial layer of the unconscious is undoubtedly personal. I call it the personal unconscious. But this personal unconscious rests upon a deeper layer, which does not derive from personal experience and is not a personal acquisition but

⁶⁷ Ibid, Archetypes, p.3

⁶⁸ Op Cit, Archetypes, pp. 3,4

⁶⁹ See on Chapter 5 in this dissertation

⁷⁰ Op Cit, Archetypes, p.3

⁷¹ Ibid, Archetypes, p.3

⁷² See on chapter 5 in this dissertation

is inborn. This deeper layer I call the collective unconscious. I have chosen the term 'collective' because this part of the unconscious is not individual but universal; in contrast to the personal psyche, it has contents and modes of behaviour that are more or less the same everywhere and in all individuals. It is, in other words, identical in all men and thus constitutes a common psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature which is present in every one of us."⁷³

This is the king pin of Jung's well researched and documented theory. It is still widely accepted and has even got the mechanists on board to some extent with their brain circuits' suggestion. This "common psychic substrate of a suprapersonal nature" is something that every dreaming human being meets every night in his or her dreams.⁷⁴ The key question to make about this "Collective Unconscious" is where did the hard wiring come from? When did it stop getting written? What is the source of its reality? It seems like a classic demonstration of the teleological argument that present human consciousness is designed with this "Collective Unconscious". Indeed this "Collective Unconscious" hard wiring is in fact the basis of human consciousness and the ontology of the numinous perception of the "Super Conscious" communicating deity who speaks to the human heart.⁷⁵ Indeed Neuroscience has discovered that the Amygdale (in the brain) is the sphere which communicates, or facilitates, the numinous dialogue with the Living God who speaks to our Right brain intuition circuits (forgive the mechanistic language).⁷⁶ Indeed evidence for the intuitive flashes which come from nowhere, which have changed the face of modern science, have come from this design feature within the human mind's innate ability to intuit.⁷⁷ The fact of intuitive flashes which have given rise to new leaps forward in human knowledge unknown to human consciousness before is one of the greatest proofs, or demonstrations, of a super consciousness beyond the individual psyches own innate sources to possess.⁷⁸ Put another way the human mind through the avenue of the heart, or spirit, is able to obtain unknown knowledge by revelation from an outside intelligence who communicates with the creative spontaneous intuitive heart of man beyond reason and mechanistic materialism's defined limits.⁷⁹ This type of knowledge may be called "Revelation Knowledge"⁸⁰ and it has given birth to the age of Relativity theory, chaos theory and quantum mechanics. But far more importantly it gave birth to the direct revelation of

⁷³ Op Cit, Archetypes, pp.3,4

⁷⁴ Herman Riffel, Dream Interpretation a biblical understanding, Destiny Image, USA, chapters 1 – 4; also, Rev. Herman Riffel, Christian Dream Interpretation audio/video guide, available through www.cwgministries.com upon request and payment; also consult www.cluonline.com.

⁷⁵ See on chapter 5 of this dissertation

⁷⁶ See on chapter 5 of this dissertation

⁷⁷ See on Chapter 5 of this dissertation

⁷⁸ John Polkinghorne, Science & Christian Belief theological reflections of a bottom-up thinker, SPCK, UK, 1994, chapters 1 & 2.

⁷⁹ Op Cit, Johnston, chapter 3.

⁸⁰ Mark & Patti Virkler, How to hear God's Voice, Destiny Image, USA, 2005, chapter 2.

God to Holy men, Prophets, the God-man Jesus (John 5:19), the Apostles and every believer in New Covenant terms (Acts 2:18; Ephesians 1:17,18).

It is recognised that Jung never argued for a super conscious being but a “supra-conscious” element to human innate brain function, however, the step has to be taken which asks the fundamental teleological question of the origins of this “supra-conscious” element, and the well documented evidence of intuitive flashes which go beyond the range of human knowledge; or experience or “supra-conscious” origins. Moreover, “Supra-conscious” archetypes have to by definition have had an origin by which they were fundamentally written into the very DNA molecule itself. Evidence clearly defines that DNA is not a conscious entity in itself, and neither could it self design this for itself, hence arguably there is an author of the “Supra-conscious archetypes” themselves.⁸¹ Furthermore, DNA is an information storage system which with an antecedent argument of “supra-consciousness” existing within its instructions for brain design a priori leads to the conclusion of a preset input of data into this unintelligent unconscious DNA of man; which gives evidence of a transcendent intelligent designer and programmer.⁸² It is the contention of this research that intelligent design has input data into the DNA sequence which enables the goal of that DNA, a living human being, to intuitively communicate with the God of the Judeo-Christian Faith on a Spirit to spirit level; as the first point of the origin of all meaningful knowledge mankind can possess of lasting value! A modern day example is Albert Einstein. Herman Riffel who was a leading practitioner in Christian Dream Interpretation. and a practitioner of many tenets of Jungian theory, has this to say about the way that general relativity first came to Einstein’s consciousness:

“We are told that when Albert Einstein was asked where his theory of relativity had originated, he attributed it to a dream he experienced in his youth. According to the story, he was riding in a sled which started going faster and faster until it approached the speed of light, at which time the stars broke into fantastic colours. He said that the rest of his life was a meditation on that dream.”⁸³

Riffel also adds some more examples of others who have found the unconscious intuitive world of dreams to be the source of knowledge:

“General George Patton received intuitive military guidance from dreams. Robert Louis Stevenson wrote his book *The strange case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* from a dream. Dimitri Mendeleev developed the periodic table of elements from one of his dreams. Niels Bohr received a Nobel prize for his quantum theory, which he claimed

⁸¹ See on chapter 5 of this dissertation.

⁸² Consult the Video Series by Eden Films, called “Origins”, Dr. Wilder Smith discusses the fact the RNA have no way of knowing which DNA letters to spit out in the copying of the DNA double helix.

⁸³ Herman Riffel, *Dream Interpretation a biblical understanding*, Destiny Image, USA, 1993, p. 1

came from a dream. Friedrich Kekule received insight for the structure of benzene from the image of a snake biting its tail in one of his dreams. Elias Howe had a nightmare that gave him an idea by which he invented the sewing machine.”⁸⁴

The whole point of this brief sketch from Riffel’s research, based on his experience whilst he was part of the Jungian Training Institute, is that the evidence clearly demonstrates that major breakthroughs in the world’s most paradigm shifting scientific terms have come from intuitive dream sources; from the unconscious not through rational or empirical research in the first instance. Rational and Empirical research has done much to demonstrate the conscious reality of such intuitions, but in the first place they came from beyond the world of the conscious observable world. In other words dream pictures on the screen of the non-analytical intuitive mind have changed reality in the physical and intellectual world of so called base-line reality.⁸⁵ In Christian terms God gave Paul a vision of a man of Macedonia calling for help and this dream changed the mission landscape of the spread of the gospel and brought the gospel to gentile Europe.⁸⁶ Another way of viewing this evidence is to argue for revelation which has come via intuition, and not reason; from a source outside of the normal conscious, personal unconscious, or collective unconscious of the human mind. Each level delineated above has not been the potential source of this new knowledge as none of them at the stage of conscious cognition existed in the history of human ideas or the mind of man. Of course it may be argued that the mind in some way made connections and creatively gave the information, but this seems to definitely be outside the scope of the evidence of Jung’s concept or research into the existence of the archetypal “Supra-Conscious” element – rather lending toward the far more plausible conclusion that the knowledge came from outside of any of the three levels Jung demonstrates. This is where the “Super-Consciousness” of the deity comes into play or other potential sources of revelation knowledge.

Having considered the intuitive nature of the foundations of General Relativity theory and Quantum theory it is now time to consider my own personal research of the “Super-conscious” nature of what Charismatic theologians call Revelation, or Revelation knowledge; in the realm of Theophostic discussion.⁸⁷ In terms of my own research into the world of the intuitive and how God speaks to me I have documented examples in my journal and my dream journal over a few years. What is useful about this approach is that it gives documentation in a linear fashion with dates and descriptions of what I have sensed God saying to me, or spontaneously bringing to my mind as ideas, thoughts, pictures, dreams and visions. This personal need for direct personal verification of the individual subjects’ sense perceptions and empirical observations, with training, can be very informative about

⁸⁴ Ibid, p. 2

⁸⁵ See on chapter 5 of this dissertation

⁸⁶ Acts 16:1-10

⁸⁷ See on Footnote number “5”

the process of intuitive revelations from God beyond a “Collective Unconscious level”. I will set out the process and skills which need to make this a useful empirical and objective pursuit for the individual practitioner later. What has been invaluable is learning from others who are using tried and tested approaches to this field as I have tutored them in the realm of hearing from God in formal and informal ways for about 18 years. Most helpfully the ground breaking work and research of Dr Mark Virkler and Dr Patti Virkler have given vital substance to this process for my own practice and journey of receiving revelation from God. It may be said their research is anecdotal, but it is well tested through those who have been tutored in their LAMAD style of revelation based learning.⁸⁸

In terms of my family history there is an important event which defined my self consciousness of some purpose for my life from the very first time in my early life (about age 7); when my mother told me the story of the turning point in her life. When she was a young woman of about 20 years old in the 1950s she worked as a children’s nurse in a hospital for terminally ill children. This hospital was situated in the seaside town of Great Yarmouth on the East Coast of Britain. She worked with a team of nurses and doctors. The work was fulfilling although difficult because of the inevitable death of the patients she nursed. Nurses during this period were housed in a large section of the hospital in their own private rooms. Rooms were next to each other which meant that the nurses could communicate with each other by raising their voices if they so wished.

The Nurse who was in charge of the nursing staff during this period of the British hospital system was called the Matron. She would have one or two senior nursing staff who would work with her to make sure that nursing was being performed to a uniform-ally high standard. My mother had been in her position for about two years doing her training. One evening whilst the Matron was away overnight, seeing a sick relative, my mother had a dreadful stomach ache. She asked one of the senior staff nurses for some medication for this. There was a large medicines cupboard with many bottles in it. Apparently some of the labels had got smudged. Normally the Matron would dispense drugs from it. My mother was given two large table spoonfuls of what was called “Syrup of Figs” so she thought. This was a horrible stomach medication, which I have personal knowledge of as I had some as a child.

My mother had an early night. She went to her room and fell asleep. She was awoken some hours later with somebody violently shacking her calling her name, “Sylvia, Wake up, Wake up Sylvia.” This went on for a short time and then she managed to open her eyes; a very tall dark figure was bending over her in her bed shacking her calling her name. She tried to sit up in bed but could hardly move. The stranger kept on calling her name and shacking’ her which included the bed. She found some strength from somewhere and turned on her light whilst on her back still looking at this stranger; as soon as the light went on he disappeared

⁸⁸ Consult Christian Leaderships Online Information www.cluonline.com

and the shacking stopped; she found strength to call out. Other nurses had already heard the noise and came to her room. What was all the noise about? They immediately saw my mothers' distress – they helped her out of bed – and walked her around the hospital giving her rest stops and water to drink. No doctors were available. Within a few hours she recovered.

The next day, when the Matron returned, she asked the senior staff nurse to show her which medicine she had given to my mother. She showed her. It had been a fatal dose of bromide. She should not even have survived. The story of her miraculous awakening, and the miracle of her living, was the talk of doctors and nurses in the hospital. My mother was a devout Anglican at this time and believed there was a reason for her life being saved. She believed that God, or an angel, had awoken her. There was no doubt to anyone that she had been visited by someone that night for that very purpose.

I was told this story by her. My Father was not a church goer, and was an agnostic/atheist. The Bible was mentioned mostly as an object of ridicule. My mother had stopped going to church once married to my father, but she was still a believer. She was not someone who often told us Bible stories. But this story she wanted my brother Alan, and myself, to hear. She said she believed she had been saved in order that God might fulfil a special purpose in Alan's and my lives.

The years of childhood and adolescence passed. I was not a Christian. By age 17 I gave my life to Christ. My mother was going to church again by then as well. The day I became a Christian I sensed a new presence in my life. It was so real and tangible that I knew in my heart it was God; I now identify this as an experience of God which transcended base-line reality to an AUB perception of cosmic conscious encounter with the Trinity.⁸⁹ I started to have dreams, and senses of God speaking to me. This was hard for me to explain as I had been brought up to rationally discount the God of Christian faith as a myth by my father. For him, and myself, up to that time God if anything was some sort of power in the universe, but probably not a personal power or being. The God who showed up in my life was definitely personal – communicating with me from a definite source outside of me, but at the same time in my deepest being – my heart or spirit. This happened the moment I had invited God into my life and it was like the light switch or power had been switched on in my total being. Indeed at the moment I had this happen to me I also knew I was called to an altruistic life of ministry.

I went to university and studied theology. I graduated and then went on to the post graduate ordination programme for 5 years. You could not be a minister unless you first had graduated. I ministered and did some teaching in seminary, and after a few years I was sent to my first church district. This consisted of two churches at first; one in Great Yarmouth and

⁸⁹ See on Chapter 5 of this dissertation.

the other in Lowestoft. My mother contacted me as soon as she heard where I had been sent to minister. She said to me "Andrew, you know the story that I told you about my life being saved for a purpose?" "Yes" I said. "Well I never told you where it was did!! It was Great Yarmouth." Immediately I sensed God saying to me "This is the purpose I saved your mother for so you could be born for the ministry I have set before you!" She then went on to tell me how she knew that I was the reason why she had been saved. Her whole life had been one of service to Alan and my self. She had developed, after my birth, the dreadful disease Rheumatoid Arthritis. Social workers had been sent to evaluate her as a mother because of the severity of the illness when Alan and I were very small. She hid much of the symptoms and refused to go back to the doctors for treatment; making her condition even worse, in order to keep us both from being fostered out. This was a definite option the social services of that period were considering. I remember throughout my childhood hearing my mother walk down the stairs each morning crying out in pain, not wanting us to hear, as she took each step down the stairs until her joints eased up through movement. I remember her brave and determined efforts to get extra work, with great personal suffering, when my father was forced to be on strike during the turbulent union militant actions of the early sixties and seventies. I remember helping my mother and encouraging her when she was in pain and still pressed on. As a small child, and then an emerging adolescent, I did all I could to encourage her. But the greatest thing is, that she gave far more encouragement to Alan and my self than we ever gave to her. When she knew she had fulfilled much of her role of being our mother a doctor at the church where she and I went, this was when I was 17 and converted, persuaded her to go to a wonderful specialist for help with her disease. He asked her to get into a gown in his examination room next to his consulting office. He came in with his nurse, and the first thing he saw was her feet. They were terribly disfigured by the disease. Both he and the nurse stood for a full two minutes shocked and unable to speak holding back tears from their eyes. This surgeon had heard my mothers' story from her doctor, and he did not know what to do or say.

In the end he performed surgery on her feet. She had a dreadful reaction to the aesthetic and lay in a hospital bed for a full two weeks on a drip and unconscious. The doctors feared the worse. I remember taking the 5 mile walk every day to the hospital and then the 5 mile walk home as I went to her bed side. One day on arriving I found the youth pastor there. He was a man who often heard God's voice just as I did. He was not vocal about this, but I said to him that day "She is going to die isn't she!" He replied with a sense of certainty "No she isn't Andrew!" He was completely sure about it. I could see it in his face and sense it in his being. I said "How do you know that?" He said "Because God just told me". I walked the 5 miles home that night. When I got near home I walked in a wonderful wooded park nearby. I prayed to God "Please Jesus, save her!" Suddenly before my eyes in the sky Jesus appeared to me as if dying on the cross. He was surrounded by bright light. He said to me "Andrew you know how much your mother has suffered to save you from having to live in foster

homes, and to give you the best she could for your childhood!" I said "Yes Lord!" He said "I have suffered with her and so much more than you can understand so that I could save you". I thanked him for this. And as if by a miracle, I had seen another man, a member of my church, walking in the park some distance from me; just as the vision finished he started singing hymns to God as well. Clearly I had not been the only one to meet with God that night. And yes my mother did recover. She lived for another 18 years seeing our children and my brothers' when they were born. It was 11 years after this incident that she contacted me about my first church in Great Yarmouth. My mother and Father are now with the Lord because my Father also became a Christian.

In terms of this dissertation I know it is vital for a proper consideration of the evidence of the God who speaks to the human heart, beyond the "Collective Unconscious", to be based on personal evidence. This is indeed at the heart of a new "Post Critical Theology". It is the evidence based on the ultimate type of empiricism – that which observes what is happening in a person's own interior life with the evidence of how this interior life finds conscious manifestation in the physical/material world as well. A post critical theologian or Christian cannot study theology without knowing the God who communicates Spirit to spirit with him or her.

"Post Critical Theology" needs to start with a new type of training process. For too long the ministry training schools of the Western World have been dominated by Enlightenment study of Theology. Pure theology is approached as only a pure academic discipline in the major universities in Britain and Europe. The result is that there is no real encounter with the object of the science of the human "heart"; God himself. Do graduates from such seminaries come out knowing how to communicate with the God who speaks as they might talk to their best friend or lover? The evidence of my own experience of having studied in the academic world of so called "Pure Theology" is "No!" My experience and the evidence from various surveys suggest that many go into seminary with a strong evangelical faith and come out as agnostics or even atheists; hence denominations like the Baptists in the UK have their own seminaries.⁹⁰ The result of pursuing theology as a literary, historical and critical academic pursuit – utilising only the rational mind to understand God has led to this serious aetiology. The key aetiological factor of this disease is that students are not aided to explore the God who speaks to heart and to head. Just focussing on the God of Rationalism leads to a continuous dead end experience of God which becomes its' own self reinforcing circuit of dead end conclusions about a God who does not reveal himself through the closed circuit system of rational and logistical deduction.⁹¹ There is an empirical and rational system which he does reveal himself through which is through direct communication through the human heart. This is open to Empirical and rational thought processes too.

⁹⁰ Look on the Internet for "Regents Park" and "Spurgeons".

⁹¹ Leon Morris, I Believe in Revelation, Eerdmans, USA, 1983, chapter 1.

There is overwhelming evidence for the rational part of the human mind to deal with in this sphere if only a new type of theological education takes place. Moreover, the God of Rationalism taught in many universities is taught by atheists and agnostics. Blind guides cannot lead others. Theistic theologians and academics are also to be found in the universities as well, and it is the case that academic study of the critical science of theology does not disprove the tenets of evangelical faith. But for the average student who went to study then faced with those who set up arguments against the veracity of such a faith can, and do, influence the focus of their type of rationalism and conclusions upon young impressionable minds. My pursuit of academic theology, in my earlier years, being taught by theists and agnostics did present its' challenges, but careful consideration of the way evidence was used makes me completely certain about my faith because God has kept my heart focussed on the source of all knowledge and real demonstrate-able evidence of his existence through the equally verifiable data of the God who speaks to human hearts and gives evidence of his super conscious reality in the real world where things he says then just happen without the one who received the communication with God doing anything to bring it about (more evidence later). The critical point to make here is that a new type of "Post Critical Theology" must have intentional spiritual formation as part of its very syllabus. It is unrealistic to believe that a student will encounter the God of the heart and mind if there is not teaching and education in the theology program to do this! In order to have empirical evidence to observe of the God who is real and speaks, and does tangibly measureable things in the real world, based on what he has revealed, the student needs to have the means to have access to those experiences. When they have this their rational capacity in unity with their hearts under God's gracious eye will approach theology in a new way! This new way will be founded on a reasonable and meaningful intimate relationship with the real God who loves humanity and wants to spend time with every man and woman in the depths of their spirits'!

Imagine what the churches would look like if the trained ministers who served in them had this sort of "Post Critical" theological training. It is the primary contention of this research project that the Middle Eastern Jesus, of first century Palestine, was such a trainer. The whole meaning of the Greek term for "Disciple" – Greek Μαθητης coming from its' verbal cousin Μανθανω is:

“To learn by practice or experience, acquire a custom or habit, Phi. 4.11; 1 Ti. 5.4,13; to ascertain, be informed, Ac. 23.27, et al. To understand, comprehend, Re.14.3. (α).

Μαθητης, ου, ο, (2. Tab. B. C) a disciple, Mat. 10.24,42, et al.

Μαθητρια, ασ,η, (2. Tab. B. b, and rem. 2) a female disciple; a female Christian, Ac. 9:36.

Μαθητεω, fut. ευσω, aor.1, εμαθητευσα, (13. Tab. M) Intrans. To be a disciple, follow as a disciple, Mat. 27.57; in N.T. trans. To make a disciple of, to train in discipleship, Mat. 28:19; Ac. 14.21; pass. To be trained, disciple, instructed, Mat. 13.52. LG.”⁹²

Moulton’s description of the etymological roots of the noun Μαθητης with its’ verbal sense of what a Μαθητης does “To learn by practice or experience, acquire a custom or habit, Phi. 4.11; 1 Ti. 5.4,13; to ascertain, be informed, Ac. 23.27, et al. To understand, comprehend, Re.14.3. (α),” is informative to the core understanding of a “Post Critical Theology” relating to education and training. It is impossible to understand theological ministry education and training apart from its’ spiritual component.

At the heart of Jesus own experience in his human earthly development toward adulthood, he must have gone through the process of discipleship to the Jewish way of life fulfilling all of its requirements to his family. The following passages demonstrate this from Luke’s gospel, although the word disciple is not used of Jesus here the process of “To learn by practice or experience, acquire a custom or habit,” is clearly to be demonstrated in the emerging consciousness of Jesus the adolescent:

LK 1:29 Mary was greatly troubled at his words and wondered what kind of greeting this might be.³⁰ But the angel said to her, "Do not be afraid, Mary, you have found favor with God.³¹ You will be with child and give birth to a son, and you are to give him the name Jesus.³² He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High. The Lord God will give him the throne of his father David,³³ and he will reign over the house of Jacob forever; his kingdom will never end."

LK 1:34 "How will this be," Mary asked the angel, "since I am a virgin?"

LK 1:35 The angel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you. So the holy one to be born will be called the Son of God.³⁶ Even Elizabeth your relative is going to have a child in her old age, and she who was said to be barren is in her sixth month.³⁷ For nothing is impossible with God."

LK 1:38 "I am the Lord's servant," Mary answered. "May it be to me as you have said." Then the angel left her.⁹³

In the first instance Jesus is to be considered by Mary as the “Son of God”; but this does not mean she is not to have a real human son – the God-Man. Mary seems to only come to really understand that Jesus was the Son of God as she went through the trauma of his death and resurrection. As his Mother she made sure he learnt the lessons of childhood. Luke indicates as much; consider Mary’s words upon finding him as a 12 year old in the temple:

“⁴⁸ When his parents saw him, they were astonished. His mother said to him, "Son, why have you treated us like this? Your father and I have been anxiously searching for you."

⁹² Harold K. Moulton, *The analytical Greek Lexicon Revised*, Zondervan, USA, 1981, P.18; Also, for a more detailed study consult, Gerhard Kittel (Editor), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Gushing-Mulloy Inc., USA, 1969, pp.391 – 472.

⁹³ NIV

LK 2:49 "Why were you searching for me?" he asked. "Didn't you know I had to be in my Father's house?"⁵⁰ But they did not understand what he was saying to them.

LK 2:51 Then he went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.⁵² And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men."⁹⁴

Jesus "went down to Nazareth with them and was obedient to them. But his mother treasured all these things in her heart.⁵² And Jesus grew in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men." He learnt as an obedient and trusting son through the discipleship of the human family and the discipline of the Jewish way of life. The writer to the Hebrews says as much:

"HEB 2:14 Since the children have flesh and blood, he too shared in their humanity so that by his death he might destroy him who holds the power of death--that is, the devil--¹⁵ and free those who all their lives were held in slavery by their fear of death.¹⁶ For surely it is not angels he helps, but Abraham's descendants.¹⁷ For this reason he had to be made like his brothers in every way, in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted."⁹⁵

The whole reason for Jesus life of trust and obedience, in a discipleship sense of the term, is described here for us is clearly stated here for the purpose of "in order that he might become a merciful and faithful high priest in service to God, and that he might make atonement for the sins of the people.¹⁸ Because he himself suffered when he was tempted, he is able to help those who are being tempted." It was so that human salvation and effective means of help might be given to humanity by one who understood the process of discipleship himself.

The Hebrew term for Disciple is LAMAD which means:

"To accustom oneself, with Je. 10.2.-II. To learn, with and an inf.; with ac. Pl. – I. to accustom, Je. 9.4. – II. To teach, with acc. Of the pers; with double acc.; with acc. Of the thing and of the pers.; with Be of the pers.; and with MIN ps.94.12. PU. To be accustomed, trained, taught.

Accustomed, Je. 2:24. – II. Trained, taught; hence, a disciple.masc. learner, disciple, 1 Ch.25.8."⁹⁶

"LAMAD" is a key concept in terms of the whole Hebrew education system. It was the prophet's duty as God's mouth piece that lived by "LAMAD" himself, learnt in the "School of the Prophets"⁹⁷, and after graduating he was to "LAMAD" or "disciple" the people of God.⁹⁸

⁹⁴ NIV

⁹⁵ NIV

⁹⁶ Benjamin Davidson, The Analytical Hebrew and chaldee Lexicon, Regency Reference Library of Zondervan, USA, 1850, page 431.

⁹⁷ Ibid, cluonline – sections 1 - 7

⁹⁸ See on Jeremiah 10:1,2 RSV

Jesus the one perfect and definitive disciple of God expressed his “LAMAD” relationship to God in the Following terms:

“ JN 5:19 Jesus gave them this answer: "I tell you the truth, the Son can do nothing by himself; he can do only what he sees his Father doing, because whatever the Father does the Son also does. ²⁰ For the Father loves the Son and shows him all he does. Yes, to your amazement he will show him even greater things than these. ²¹ For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so the Son gives life to whom he is pleased to give it. ²² Moreover, the Father judges no one, but has entrusted all judgment to the Son, ²³ that all may honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father, who sent him.”⁹⁹

The Son of God is able to disciple because he is directly disciple-ed by the Father by hearing the God who dialogues with him in his heart. This comes from the intimate place of a Father/Son relationship. Just as the Father shows the Son everything he is doing, and all that he wants the son to say and communicate, so it is for the Son’s disciples:

“¹² I tell you the truth, anyone who has faith in me will do what I have been doing. He will do even greater things than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ And I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Son may bring glory to the Father. ¹⁴ You may ask me for anything in my name, and I will do it.

JN 14:15 "If you love me, you will obey what I command. ¹⁶ And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Counselor to be with you forever-- ¹⁷ the Spirit of truth. The world cannot accept him, because it neither sees him nor knows him. But you know him, for he lives with you and will be in you. ¹⁸ I will not leave you as orphans; I will come to you. ¹⁹ Before long, the world will not see me anymore, but you will see me. Because I live, you also will live. ²⁰ On that day you will realize that I am in my Father, and you are in me, and I am in you. ²¹ Whoever has my commands and obeys them, he is the one who loves me. He who loves me will be loved by my Father, and I too will love him and show myself to him."

JN 14:22 Then Judas (not Judas Iscariot) said, "But, Lord, why do you intend to show yourself to us and not to the world?"

JN 14:23 Jesus replied, "If anyone loves me, he will obey my teaching. My Father will love him, and we will come to him and make our home with him. ²⁴ He who does not love me will not obey my teaching. These words you hear are not my own; they belong to the Father who sent me.

JN 14:25 "All this I have spoken while still with you. ²⁶ But the Counselor, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you all things and will remind you of everything I have said to you. ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you. I do not give to you as the world gives. Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.”¹⁰⁰

Notice how Jesus states that the “Counselor” will be the replacement for Jesus who himself is also called “counselor” once Jesus has returned to the Father. The Holy Spirit will be the one who will continue to communicate on a Spirit to spirit level with Jesus’ earthly disciples. He will not draw attention to himself but to Christ.¹⁰¹ In other words he will intimately dialogue with the Christian New Heart and disciple it in it’s’ development.

⁹⁹ NIV

¹⁰⁰ NIV

¹⁰¹ John 16:12 – 14 RSV

The Middle Eastern Jesus was the God-man who modeled what it looks like when there is a heart to heart relationship with God. The Words and Works of Jesus proceeded out of a heart to heart dialogical intimate communion between the unseen Father and his physically present Son. To have seen Jesus is to have seen the Father – they are one and the same.¹⁰² To know the Father and to dialogue with him through the Son of God the Holy Spirit makes the connection and dialogical communion possible heart to heart. This means that the Middle Eastern Jesus resonates most critically with Polanyi’s “Post Critical” age which no longer trusts Rationalism and Enlightenment values as it once did. Like the world of First Century Palestine, there was a major search for the meaning of life beyond the rational or observable world, or man’s mind, to discover the meaning of life in a deity.¹⁰³ This was a great opportunity for the early church, as although the nascent Christian community was a competitor in the first three centuries of its emergence, it in the end became the State Religion under Emperor Constantine.¹⁰⁴ There is clear evidence that charismatic phenomena of the Holy Spirit’s presence were the experience of early Christians, and this led to the forward movement of its credibility with a God who spoke through the heart to include man’s rational capacity as well.¹⁰⁵ The Didache demonstrates how the early Christian movement had clear instructions for churches to follow when visiting “prophets” came to various Christian Communities.¹⁰⁶

The Material and theological perspective of Luke-Acts and also the Johannine corpus find clear resonances with each other. For instance Luke in beginning his second volume of the theological history of the church writes this to his probable patron “Theophilus” (most likely this name is the new Christian name given to a high ranking Roman official – possibly a Christian Senator in Rome):

“AC 1:1 In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach ² until the day he was taken up to heaven, after giving instructions through the Holy Spirit to the apostles he had chosen.”¹⁰⁷

Notice the language Luke uses: ¹ In my former book, Theophilus, I wrote about all that Jesus began to do and to teach.” He refers to his Gospel. He highlights this gospel as recording the things Jesus Did and Taught. As A.M. Hunter writes in his famous book: “The Works and Words of Jesus”:

“ ‘Jesus came into Galilee,’ says Mark, ‘Proclaiming the Gospel of God: “The time has come; the kingdom of God is upon you; repent, and believe the Gospel.”’ (Mark 1.14 NEB). Familiarity with these words has dulled our ears to their wonder. What they mean is something like this: ‘The time of which the prophet Isaiah spoke (Isa.

¹⁰² John 14:6

¹⁰³ See on my book “LAMAD Matthew” at, www.cwgministries.com/freebooks

¹⁰⁴ Martin Robinson, *Changing Hearts changing minds when the western world ignore the gospel – what should Christians do?* Monarch Books, UK, 1996, pp. 9 – 36.

¹⁰⁵ This is essentially what Luke seeks to do in the development of his theology of the Spirit. Leon Morris, *Tyndale New Testament Commentaries Luke*, IVP, USA, 1995, pp. 15 – 51. William Barclay, *The Daily Study Bible The Acts of the Apostles*, The Saint Andrew’s Press, UK, 1986, pp. 1-7; F. Scott Spencer, *Journeying through Acts a literary-cultural reading*, Hendricksen Publishers, USA, 2004, pp. 34 – 50; John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Acts (The Bible Speaks today series)*, IVP, UK, 1991, pp.21 – 37.

¹⁰⁶ Michael W. Holmes (Editor), *The Apostolic Fathers Greek Texts and English Translations*, Baker Books, USA, 1999, pp.246 – 268 (This gives the Greek and English for the Didache’s redacted text).

¹⁰⁷ NIV

52.7) has come. The reign of God is now a dawning reality. God has begun to invade history in his royal power. Therefore, turn back to God and accept the good news I am bringing.”¹⁰⁸

To the early Christians, the Apostles and disciples of Jesus’, the gospel, or Jesus physical presence on the earth among them, was a beginning of what he had shaped them as disciples to become. Jesus had only “began” his Words and Works recorded in the gospel. He was now to continue these until he returned once more at his second coming:

“ AC 1:6 So when they met together, they asked him, "Lord, are you at this time going to restore the kingdom to Israel?"

AC 1:7 He said to them: "It is not for you to know the times or dates the Father has set by his own authority. ⁸ But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit comes on you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

AC 1:9 After he said this, he was taken up before their very eyes, and a cloud hid him from their sight.

AC 1:10 They were looking intently up into the sky as he was going, when suddenly two men dressed in white stood beside them. ¹¹ "Men of Galilee," they said, "why do you stand here looking into the sky? This same Jesus, who has been taken from you into heaven, will come back in the same way you have seen him go into heaven."

AC 1:12 Then they returned to Jerusalem from the hill called the Mount of Olives, a Sabbath day's walk from the city. ¹³ When they arrived, they went upstairs to the room where they were staying. Those present were Peter, John, James and Andrew; Philip and Thomas, Bartholomew and Matthew; James son of Alphaeus and Simon the Zealot, and Judas son of James. ¹⁴ They all joined together constantly in prayer, along with the women and Mary the mother of Jesus, and with his brothers.”¹⁰⁹

The disciples go and await the promise of the Holy Spirit probably in John Mark’s Father’s home in the priestly quarter of Jerusalem,¹¹⁰ for the Holy Spirit’s arrival. When he comes during Pentecost then the early Christians receive a special anointing of the Holy Spirit which is for all Christians alike.¹¹¹ From then on they are to continue to live out of a Spirit to spirit dialogical relationship with Jesus Christ through the agency of his Holy Spirit.¹¹² In the realist sense possible Jesus continues to speak, and work miraculously, by his Spirit through his disciples and apostles. Luke makes this even more apparent to his theology in the record of how Paul’s early Apostolic Team was guided to continue Jesus Words and Works in Europe:

AC 16:6 Paul and his companions traveled throughout the region of Phrygia and Galatia, having been kept by the Holy Spirit from preaching the word in the province of Asia. ⁷ When they came to the border of Mysia, they tried to enter Bithynia, but the Spirit of Jesus would not allow them to. ⁸ So they passed by Mysia and went down to Troas. ⁹ During the night Paul had a vision of a man of Macedonia standing and begging him, "Come over to Macedonia and help us." ¹⁰ After Paul had seen the vision,

¹⁰⁸ A. M. Hunter, *The Work and Words of Jesus*, SGM Press Limited, UK, 1979, p. 53.

¹⁰⁹ NIV

¹¹⁰ John Wenham, *Easter Enigma are the resurrection accounts in conflict?* Wipf and Stock Publishers, USA, 1992, p. 15.

¹¹¹ Acts 2:18

¹¹² Charles Finney, *Revival*, Rickfords Hill PublishingLtd, UK, 2003, chapter 4; Three Books in one, Selwyn Hughs, *Revival times of refreshing*, Leonard Ravenhill, *Why Revival Tarries*, Arthur Wallis, *In the Day of thy power*, Kingsway, UK, 1990; David Wilkerson, *Hungry for more of Jesus the way of intimacy with Christ*, Rickford’s Hill publishing Ltd, UK, 2003.

we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.”

Notice how it is “the Spirit of Jesus” who guides the Pauline team to go to Macedonia. It is not through any old spirit out there, but by the “Spirit of Jesus” that the team conclude that he has sent them to continue his Words and Works; through their creative cooperation with him on a Spirit to spirit level in Macedonia. Also note how Luke Joined Paul’s team in Troas and he scribes “we got ready at once to leave for Macedonia, concluding that God had called us to preach the gospel to them.” The team concluded with the rational faculty of their minds that God wanted them to go to Macedonia. They did not work this out by their own human strategy, but rather they received “Revelation Knowledge” in their hearts which then guided them to think about what God wanted them to consider cooperating with him in Macedonia (I will return to the implications of the Lukan theology of “Post Critical” Spirit to spirit ministry in another chapter). The critical issue to recognize here is that ministry formation, personal formation of ideas, and intimate dialogical Spirit to Spirit intimacy with Father like Son; exemplified in Jesus’ earthly ministry (John 5:19), was based on the “heart” guiding the “head’s” rational capacity rather than the other way round.

This then sets the stage for a “Post Critical Theology” which will be developed further by looking at Scriptures’ development of the role of the “heart” as God’s primary organ later. At this stage it must be noted that knowledge obtained by humanity, exemplified by the example and authority of Jesus’ own life, and the early churches experience, has always been founded on Grace, not human effort in any way lest Christian men and women should boast.¹¹³ Polanyi is accurate when he argues that Augustinian theology of knowledge being a gift of grace is part and parcel of the emergent “Post Critical” generation. Indeed Augustine’s theology here was founded on a far better practice of its greater reality in the Middle Eastern Jesus. The world of “Modernism” and “Enlightenment” is passing into a brighter future where once again people are willing to explore the realm of the heart in concordance with the God who speaks through this primary organ of revelation.

Ministerial formation of ideas and praxis, Personal formation and Spiritual formation must start with the right epistemology in order for the God who speaks to be able to most effectively shape the life, thought, praxis and experience of ministry properly. This is the main issue of this new approach to “Post Critical Theology” as the arena in which God dialogues with the spirit and head of man in an intimate two way relationship. This is meant to bring the Reign of Christ at Father’s Right Hand into the lives of every disciple who lives by LAMAD as Jesus exemplified it.¹¹⁴

This dissertation will seek to thoroughly explore this new Theology if indeed “Theology” is the right word to describe it! I will use the word “theology” in order to express more than the current notion of academic theology implying rather that it is about experiencing the God who speaks in the first place. Among much else the most critical part of the churches mission is to “make disciples”¹¹⁵ which is the imperative of Jesus Mission for his people! This is the mission of the church to all nations.¹¹⁶ Hence the critical issue of mission is to make disciples

¹¹³ Eph.2:8 - 10

¹¹⁴ John 5:19

¹¹⁵ Matthew 28:18 - 20

¹¹⁶ Matthew 24:14

as Lord Jesus modeled it to disciples whom he also treated like brothers, friends and loved servants. The critical thing is that men and women who only do what they hear and see the Jesus Saying and Doing learn to do this by Revelation Knowledge. But it is also critical that the church comes to understand what God's ultimate goal for life lived through him is. This may be described as Trinity as loving sharing community. The reason God made everything was for the sake of relationships and community – is that not the message of the book of Genesis that God communed with the first human parents in the garden.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁷ Genesis 3:8