

*He Is
There and
He Is Not
Silent*



FRANCIS A.
SCHAEFFER

“When our world falls apart and we must go back down to the very foundations to rebuild, we do not need slapdash, glib formulas. We need something solid, real, and honest. That is what Francis Schaeffer brilliantly offers us in *He Is There and He Is Not Silent*. The living God has drawn near to us and made himself known to us. If we rebuild our broken lives with his wisdom, we will have something compelling to say to our generation.”

Ray Ortlund, President, Renewal Ministries

“I read *He Is There and He Is Not Silent* in 1976 and professed faith in Christ six months later. This was not a coincidence: Francis Schaeffer’s brilliant book helped to change my life when I was twenty-six. This new edition, I pray, will help to change many more lives. I needed to learn, as Schaeffer says, that God exists and speaks, that we all see with presuppositional glasses, that modern explanations of how everything began ‘are usually semantic mysticisms,’ and that man is abnormal but not hopeless. Young and old people today need to learn that too.”

Marvin Olasky, Editor in Chief, *WORLD* magazine

“In retrospect, we can now see clearly that Francis Schaeffer was one of the most original thinkers and that *He Is There and He Is Not Silent* was one of the most essential works of the late twentieth century. It helped to provide the intellectual tools evangelicals needed to recover a Christian worldview in an increasingly postmodern culture. If you want to understand how the personal God revealed in Jesus Christ helps us make sense of our world, you need to read this book.”

Joe Carter, Editor, The Gospel Coalition; Executive Pastor, McLean Bible Church, Arlington, Virginia; contributor, *NIV Lifehacks Bible*

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Introduction

MY FIRST TWO BOOKS were *The God Who Is There* and *Escape from Reason*. Many people assumed—perhaps because it is shorter—that *Escape from Reason* is the “introduction” and *The God Who Is There* a development of it. In fact, the opposite is the case. *The God Who Is There* was written first; it lays the groundwork, establishes the terminology, and sets out the basic thesis. This is something for which we have struggled at L’Abri—a Christianity which has balance, not only exegetically and intellectually, but also in the area of reality and beauty; an insistence that beginning with the Christian system as God has given it to men in the verbalized propositional revelation of the Bible one can move along and find that every area of life is touched by truth and a song. *Escape from Reason* works out this principle in the philosophical area of nature and grace; it shows how modern culture has grown from polluted roots far back in the late Middle Ages.

This book, with the first two, makes a unified base; and without them the various applications in the later books are really a few feet off the ground. This book deals with one of the most fundamental of all questions: how we know, and how we know we know. Unless our epistemology is right, everything is going to be wrong. That

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is why I say this book goes with *The God Who Is There*—a link emphasized by its title. The infinite-personal God is there, but also he is not silent; that changes the whole world. Wittgenstein, in his *Tractatus*, can find only silence in the area of values and meaning. Bergman made the same point in his film *The Silence* (1963). This book challenges their pessimism. He is there. He is not silent.

These three books constitute a conscious unity—a unity which I believe reflects the unity of Scripture itself.

It will be clear that this book, dealing as it does with a primary area, forms a vital part of our case in speaking historic Christianity into the twentieth century. He is there and is not a silent, nor far-off God.

Francis A. Schaeffer
1972

CHAPTER ONE

The Metaphysical Necessity

THIS BOOK DEALS WITH the philosophic necessity of God's being there and not being silent—in the areas of metaphysics, morals, and epistemology.

We should understand first of all what the three basic areas of philosophic thought are. The first is in the area of metaphysics, of *being*. This is the area of what *is*—the problem of existence. This includes the existence of man, and we must realize that the existence of man is no greater problem as such than is the fact that anything exists at all. No one said it better than Jean-Paul Sartre, who said that the basic philosophic question is that something is there rather than nothing being there. Nothing that is worth calling a philosophy can sidestep the fact that things do exist and that they exist in their present form and complexity. This is what I mean, then, by the problem of metaphysics—the existence of being.

The second area of philosophical thought is that of man and the dilemma of man. Man is personal, and yet he is finite; so he is not a sufficient integration point for himself. We might remember another profound statement from Sartre: that no finite point has

any meaning unless it has an infinite reference point. The Christian would agree that he is right in this statement.

Man is finite; so he is not a sufficient integration point for himself. Yet man *is* different from non-man. Man is personal in contrast to that which is impersonal; or, to use a phrase which I have used in my books, man has his “mannishness.”

Behaviorism, and all forms of determinism, say that man is not personal—that he is not intrinsically different from the impersonal. But the difficulty with this is first that it denies the observation man has made of himself for at least forty thousand years (if we accept the modern dating system); and second, there is no determinist or behaviorist who can really live consistently on the basis of his determinism or his behavioristic psychology—saying, that is, that man is only a machine. This is true of Francis Crick, who reduces man to the mere chemical and physical properties of the DNA template. The interesting thing, however, is that Crick clearly shows that he cannot live with his own determinism. In one of his books, *Of Molecules and Men*, he soon begins to speak of nature as “her,” and in a smaller, more profound book, *The Origin of the Genetic Code*, he begins to spell nature with a capital “N.” B. F. Skinner, author of *Beyond Freedom and Dignity*, shows the same tension.

So there are these two difficulties with the acceptance of modern determinism and behaviorism, which say there is no intrinsic difference between man and non-man: first, one has to deny man’s own observation of himself through all the years, back to the cave paintings and beyond; and second, no chemical determinist or psychological determinist is ever able to live as though he is the same as non-man.

Another question in the dilemma of man is man's nobility. Perhaps you do not like the word *nobility*, but whatever word you choose, there is something great about man. I want to add here that evangelicals have often made a serious mistake by equating the fact that man is lost and under God's judgment with the idea that man is nothing—a zero. This is not what the Bible says. There is something great about man, and we have lost perhaps our greatest opportunity of evangelism in our generation by not insisting that it is the Bible which explains *why* man is great.

However, man is not only noble (or whatever word you want to substitute), but man is also cruel. So we have a dilemma. The first dilemma is that man is finite and yet he is personal; the second dilemma is the contrast between man's nobility and man's cruelty. Or one can express it in a modern way: the alienation of man from himself and from all other men in the area of morals.

So now we have two areas of philosophic thought: first, metaphysics, dealing with being, with existence; second, the area of morals. The third area of this study is that of epistemology—the problem of knowing.

Now let me make two general observations. First, philosophy and religion deal with the same basic questions. Christians, and especially evangelical Christians, have tended to forget this. Philosophy and religion do not deal with different questions, though they give different answers and use different terms. The basic questions of both philosophy and religion (and I mean religion here in the wide sense, including Christianity) are the questions of Being (that is, what exists), of man and his dilemma (that is, morals), and of epistemology (that is, how man knows). Philosophy deals with these points, but so does religion, including evangelical, orthodox Christianity.

The second general observation concerns the two meanings of the word *philosophy*, which must be kept completely separate if we are to avoid confusion. The first meaning is a discipline, an academic subject. That is what we usually think of as philosophy: a highly technical study which few people pursue. In this sense, few people are philosophers. But there is a second meaning that we must not miss if we are going to understand the problem of preaching the gospel in the twentieth-century world. For philosophy also means a person's *worldview*. In this sense, all people are philosophers, for all people have a worldview. This is as true of the man digging a ditch as it is of the philosopher in the university.

Christians have tended to despise the concept of philosophy. This has been one of the weaknesses of evangelical, orthodox Christianity—we have been proud in despising philosophy, and we have been exceedingly proud in despising the intellect. Our theological seminaries hardly ever relate their theology to philosophy, and specifically to the current philosophy. Thus, students go out from the theological seminaries not knowing how to relate Christianity to the surrounding worldview. It is not that they do not know the answers. My observation is that most students graduating from our theological seminaries do not know the questions.

In fact, philosophy is universal in scope. No man can live without a worldview; therefore, there is no man who is not a philosopher.

There are not many possible answers to the three basic areas of philosophic thought, even though there is a great deal of possible detail surrounding the basic answers. It will help us tremendously—whether we are studying philosophy at university and feel buffeted to death, or whether we are trying to be ministers of the gospel, speaking to ordinary people—if we realize that although there are

many details which can be discussed, the possible answers—in their basic concepts—are exceedingly few.

There are two classes of answers given to these questions.

1. The first class of answer is that there is no logical rational answer. This is rather a phenomenon of our own generation—under “the line of despair.” I am not saying that nobody in the past had these views, but they were not the dominant view. Today it is much more dominant than it has ever been previously. This is true not only of philosophers in their discussions, but it is equally true of discussion on the street corner, at the cafe, at the university dining room, or at the filling station. The solution commonly proposed is that there is no logical, rational answer—all is finally chaotic, irrational, and absurd. This view is expressed with great finesse in the existential world of thinking, and in the Theatre of the Absurd. This is the philosophy, or worldview, of many people today. It is part of the warp and woof of the thinking of our day: that there are no answers, that everything is irrational and absurd.

If a man held that everything is meaningless, nothing has answers and there is no cause-and-effect relationship, and if he really held this position with any consistency, it would be very hard to refute. But in fact, no one can hold consistently that everything is chaotic and irrational and that there are no basic answers. It can be held theoretically, but it cannot be held in practice that everything is absolute chaos.

The first reason the irrational position cannot be held consistently in practice is the fact that the external world is there and it has form and order. It is not a chaotic world. If it were true that all is chaotic, unrelated, and absurd, science as well as general life would come to an end. To live at all is not possible except in the

understanding that the universe that is there—the external universe—has a certain form, a certain order, and that man conforms to that order and so can live within it.

Perhaps you remember one of Godard's movies, *Pierrot le Fou* (1965), in which he has people going out through the windows, instead of through the doors. But the interesting thing is that they do not go out through the solid wall. Godard is really saying that although he has no answer, yet at the same time he cannot go out through that solid wall. This is merely his expression of the difficulty of holding that there is a totally chaotic universe while the external world has form and order.

Sometimes people try to bring in a little bit of order; but as soon as you bring in a little bit of order, the first class of answer—that everything is meaningless, everything is irrational—is no longer self-consistent and falls to the ground.

The view that everything is chaotic and there are no ultimate answers is held by many thinking people today, but in my experience they always hold it very selectively. Almost without exception (actually, I have never found an exception), they discuss rationally until they are losing the discussion, and then they try to slip over into the answer of irrationality. But as soon as the one we are discussing with does that, we must point out to him that as soon as he becomes selective in his argument of irrationality, he makes his whole argument suspect. Theoretically the position of irrationalism can be held, but no one lives with it in regard either to the external world or the categories of his own thought world and discussion. As a matter of fact, if this position were argued properly, all discussion would come to an end. Communication would end. We would have only a series of meaningless sounds—*blab, blab, blab*.

The Theatre of the Absurd has said this, but it fails, because if you read and listen carefully to the Theatre of the Absurd, it is always trying to communicate its view that one cannot communicate. There is always a communication about the statement that there is no communication. It is always selective, with pockets of order brought in somewhere along the line. Thus we see that this class of answer—that all things are irrational—is not an answer.

2. The second class of answer is that there is an answer which can be rationally and logically considered, and communicated with others externally. In this chapter we will deal with metaphysics in the area of answers that can be discussed; later we will deal with man in his dilemma, the area of morals, in relation to answers that can be discussed. So now we are to consider such answers in the area of Being, of existence.

I have already said that there are not many basic answers, although there are varieties of details within the answers. Now curiously enough, there are only three possible basic answers to this question which would be open to rational consideration. The basic answers are very, very few indeed.

We are considering existence, the fact that something is there. Remember Jean-Paul Sartre's statement that the basic philosophic question is that something is there rather than nothing being there. The first basic answer is that everything that exists has come out of absolutely nothing. In other words, you begin with nothing. Now, to hold this view, it must be *absolutely* nothing. It must be what I call *nothing* nothing. It cannot be nothing something or something nothing. If one is to accept this answer, it must be nothing nothing, which means there must be no energy, no mass, no motion, and no personality.

My description of nothing nothing runs like this. Suppose we had a very black blackboard which had never been used. On this blackboard we drew a circle, and inside that circle there was everything that was—and there was nothing within the circle. Then we erase the circle. This is nothing nothing. You must not let anybody say he is giving an answer beginning with nothing and then really begin with something: energy, mass, motion, or personality. That would be something, and something is not nothing.

The truth is I have never heard this argument sustained, for it is unthinkable that all that now is has come out of utter nothing. But theoretically, that is the first possible answer.

The second possible answer in the area of existence is that all that now is had an impersonal beginning. This impersonality may be mass, energy, or motion, but they are all impersonal, and all equally impersonal. So it makes no basic philosophic difference which of them you begin with. Many modern men have implied that because they are beginning with energy particles rather than old-fashioned mass, they have a better answer. Salvador Dali did this as he moved from his surrealist period into his new mysticism. But such men do not have a better answer. It is still impersonal. Energy is just as impersonal as mass or motion. As soon as you accept the impersonal beginning of all things, you are faced with some form of reductionism. Reductionism argues that everything which exists, from the stars to man himself, is finally to be understood by reducing it to the original, impersonal factor or factors.

The great problem with beginning with the impersonal is to find any meaning for the particulars. A particular is any individual factor, any individual thing—the separate parts of the whole. A drop of water is a particular, and so is a man. If we begin with the imper-

sonal, then how do any of the particulars that now exist—including man—have any meaning, any significance? Nobody has given us an answer to that. In all the history of philosophical thought, whether from the East or the West, no one has given us an adequate answer.

Beginning with the impersonal, everything, including man, must be explained in terms of the impersonal plus time plus chance. Do not let anyone divert your mind at this point. There are no other factors in the formula, because there are no other factors that exist. If we begin with an impersonal, we cannot then have some form of teleological concept. No one has ever demonstrated how time plus chance, beginning with an impersonal, can produce the needed complexity of the universe, let alone the personality of man. No one has given us a clue to this.

Often this answer—of beginning with the impersonal—is called pantheism. The new mystical thought is almost always some form of pantheism—and almost all the modern liberal theology is pantheistic as well. Often this beginning with the impersonal is *called* pantheism, but really this is a semantic trick, because by using the root *theism* a connotation of the personal is brought in, when by definition the impersonal is meant. In my discussions I never let anybody talk unthinkingly about pantheism. Somewhere along the way I try to make the point that it is not really *pantheism*, with its semantic illusion of personality, but *pan-everythingism*. The ancient religions of Hinduism and Buddhism, as well as the modern mysticism, the new “pantheistic” theology, are not truly *pantheism*. A semantic solution is being offered. *Theism* is being used as a connotation word. In *The God Who Is There* I have emphasized the fact that the modern solutions are usually semantic mysticisms, and this is one of them.

But whatever form pan-everythingism takes, including the modern scientific form which reduces everything to energy particles, it always has the same problem: in all of them the end is the impersonal.

There are two problems which always exist—the need for unity and the need for diversity. Pan-everythingism gives an answer for the need of unity, but none for the needed diversity. Beginning with the impersonal, there is no meaning or significance to diversity. We can think of the old Hindu pantheism, which begins everything with *om*. In reality, everything ought to have ended with *om* on a single note, with no variance, because there is no reason for significance or variance. And even if pan-everythingism gave an answer for form, it gives no meaning for freedom. Cycles are usually introduced as though waves were being tossed up out of the sea, but this gives no final solution to any of these problems. Morals, under every form of pantheism, have no meaning as morals, for everything in pan-everythingism is finally equal. Modern theology must move towards situational ethics because there is no such thing as morals in this setting. The word *morals* is used, but it is really only a word.

This is the dilemma of the second answer, which is the one that most people hold today. Naturalistic science holds it, beginning everything with energy particles. Many university students hold some form of pan-everythingism. Liberal theological books today are almost uniformly pantheistic. But beginning with an impersonal, as the pantheist must do, there are no true answers in regard to existence with its complexity, or the personality—the “mannishness” of man.¹

The third possible answer is to begin with a personal beginning. With this we have exhausted the possible basic answers in

regard to existence. It may sound simplistic, but it is true. That is not to say there are no details that one can discuss, no variations, subheadings, or subschools—but these are the only basic schools of thought which are possible. Somebody once brilliantly said that when you get done with any basic question there are not many people in the room. By this he meant that the farther you go in depth in any basic question, finally the choices to be made are rather simple and clear. There are not many basic answers to any of the great questions of life.

So now let us think what it means to begin with that which is personal. This is the very opposite of beginning with the impersonal. That which is personal began everything else. In this case man, being personal, does have meaning. This is not abstract. Many of the people who come to L'Abri would not become Christians if we did not discuss in this area. Many would have turned away, saying, "You don't know the questions." These things are not abstract, but have to do with communicating the Christian gospel in the midst of the twentieth century.

At times I get tired of being asked why I don't just preach the "simple gospel." You have to preach the simple gospel so that it is simple to the person to whom you are talking, or it is no longer simple. The dilemma of modern man is simple: he does not know why man has any meaning. He is lost. Man remains a zero. This is the damnation of our generation, the heart of modern man's problem. But if we begin with a personal and this is the origin of all else, then the personal *does* have meaning, and man and his aspirations are not meaningless. Man's aspirations to the reality of personality are in line with what was originally there and what has always intrinsically been.

It is the Christian who has the answer at this point—a titanic answer! So why have we as Christians gone on saying the great truths in ways that nobody understands? Why do we keep talking to ourselves, if men are lost and we say we love them? Man's damnation today is that he can find no meaning for man, but if we begin with the personal beginning we have an absolutely opposite situation. We have the reality of the fact that personality does have meaning because it is not alienated from what has always been, and what is, and what always will be. This is our answer, and with this we have a solution not only to the problem of existence of bare being and its complexity but also for man's being different, with a personality which distinguishes him from non-man.

We may use an illustration of two valleys. Often in the Swiss Alps there is a valley filled with water and an adjacent valley without water. Surprisingly enough, sometimes the mountains spring leaks, and suddenly the second valley begins to fill up with water. As long as the level of water in the second valley does not rise higher than the level of the water in the first valley, everyone concludes that there is a real possibility that the second lake came from the first. However, if the water in the second valley goes thirty feet higher than the water in the first valley, nobody gives that answer. If we begin with a personal beginning to all things, then we can understand that man's aspiration for personality has a possible answer.

If we begin with less than personality, we must finally reduce personality to the impersonal. The modern scientific world does this in its reductionism, in which the word *personality* is only the impersonal plus complexity. In the naturalistic scientific world, whether in sociology, psychology, or in the natural sciences, a man is reduced to the impersonal plus complexity.

But once we consider a personal beginning, we have yet another choice to make. This is the next step: Are we going to choose the answer of God or gods? The difficulty with gods instead of God is that limited gods are not big enough. To have an adequate answer of a personal beginning, we need two things. We need a personal-infinite God (or an infinite-personal God), and we need a personal unity and diversity in God.

Let us consider the first choice—a personal-infinite God. Only a personal-infinite God is big enough. Plato understood that you have to have absolutes, or nothing has meaning. But the difficulty facing Plato was the fact that his gods were not big enough to meet the need. So although he knew the need, the need fell to the ground because his gods were not big enough to be the point of reference or place of residence for his absolutes, for his ideals. In Greek literature the Fates sometimes seem to be behind and controlling the gods, and sometimes the gods seem to be controlling the Fates. Why the confusion? Because everything fails in their thinking at this point—because their limited gods are not big enough. That is why we need a personal-infinite God. That is first.

Second, we need a personal unity and diversity in God—not just an abstract concept of unity and diversity, because we have seen we need a personal God. We need a personal unity and diversity. Without this we have no answer. Christianity has this in the Trinity.

What we are talking about is the philosophic necessity, in the area of Being and existence, of the fact that God is there. That is what it is all about: *He is there*.

There is no other sufficient philosophical answer than the one I have outlined. You can search through university philosophy, underground philosophy, filling station philosophy—it does not

matter—there is no other sufficient philosophical answer to existence, to Being, than the one I have outlined. There is only one philosophy, one religion, that fills this need in all the world's thought, whether the East, the West, the ancient, the modern, the new, the old. Only one fills the philosophical need of existence, of Being, and it is the Judeo-Christian God—not just an abstract concept, but rather that this God is really there. He exists. There is no other answer, and orthodox Christians ought to be ashamed of having been defensive for so long. It is not a time to be defensive. There is no other answer.

Let us notice that no word is as meaningless as is the word *god*. Of itself it means nothing. Like any other word, it is only a linguistic symbol—g-o-d—until content is put into it. This is especially so for the word *god*, because no other word has been used to convey such absolutely opposite meanings. The mere use of the word *god* proves nothing. You must put content into it. The word *god* as such is no answer to the philosophic problem of existence, but the Judeo-Christian content to the word *God* as given in the Old and New Testaments does meet the need of what exists—the existence of the universe in its complexity and of man as man. And what is that content? It relates to an infinite-personal God, who is personal unity and diversity on the high order of Trinity.

Every once in a while in my discussions someone asks how I can believe in the Trinity. My answer is always the same. I would still be an agnostic if there was no Trinity, because there would be no answers. Without the high order of personal unity and diversity as given in the Trinity, *there are no answers*.

Let us return again to the personal-infinite. On the side of God's infinity, there is a complete chasm between God on one side and

man, the animal, the flower, and the machine on the other. On the side of God's infinity, He stands alone. He is the absolute other. He is, in His infinity, contrary to all else. He is differentiated from all else because only He is infinite. He is the Creator; all else was created. He is infinite; all else is finite. All else is brought forth by creation; so all else is dependent and only He is independent. This is absolute on the side of His infinity. Therefore, concerning God's infinity, man is as separated from God as is the atom or any other machine-portion of the universe.

But on the side of God being personal, the chasm is between man and the animal, the plant, and the machine. Why? Because man was made in the image of God. This is not just "doctrine." It is not dogma that needs just to be repeated as a proper doctrinal statement. This is really down in the warp and woof of the whole problem. Man is made in the image of God; therefore, on the side of the fact that God is a personal God the chasm stands not between God and man, but between man and all else. But on the side of God's infinity, man is as separated from God as the atom or any other finite of the universe. So we have the answer to man's being finite and yet personal.

It is not that this is the best answer to existence; it is the *only* answer. That is why we may hold our Christianity with intellectual integrity. The only answer for what exists is that He, the infinite-personal God, really is there.

Now we must develop the second part a bit farther—personal unity and diversity on the high order of Trinity. Einstein taught that the whole material world may be reduced to electromagnetism and gravity. At the end of his life he was seeking a unity above these two, something that would unite electromagnetism and gravity, but

he never found it. But what if he had found it? It would only have been unity in diversity in relationship to the material world, and as such it would only be child's play. Nothing would really have been settled because the needed unity and diversity in regard to personality would not have been touched. If he had been able to bring electromagnetism and gravity together, he would not have explained the need of personal unity and diversity.

In contrast, let us think of the Nicene Creed—three Persons, one God. Rejoice that they chose the word *person*. Whether you realize it or not, that catapulted the Nicene Creed right into our century and its discussions: three Persons in existence, loving each other, and in communication with each other, before all else was.

If this were not so, we would have had a God who needed to create in order to love and communicate. In such a case, God would have needed the universe as much as the universe needed God. But God did not need to create; God does not need the universe as the universe needs Him. Why? Because we have a full and true Trinity. The Persons of the Trinity communicated with each other and loved each other before the creation of the world.

This is not only an answer to the acute philosophic need of unity in diversity, but of *personal* unity and diversity. The unity and diversity cannot exist before God or be behind God, because whatever is farthest back *is* God. But with the doctrine of the Trinity, the unity and diversity is God Himself—three Persons, yet one God. That is what the Trinity is, and nothing less than this.

We must appreciate that our Christian forefathers understood this very well in AD 325, when they stressed the three Persons in the Trinity, as the Bible had clearly set this forth. Let us notice that it is not that they invented the Trinity in order to give an answer

to the philosophical questions which the Greeks of that time understood. It is quite the contrary. The unity and diversity problem was there, and the Christians realized that in the Trinity, as it had been taught in the Bible, they had an answer that no one else had. They did not invent the Trinity to meet the need; the Trinity was already there and it *met* the need. They realized that in the Trinity we have what all these people are arguing about and defining but for which they have no answer.

Let us notice again that this is not the *best* answer; it is the *only* answer. Nobody else, no philosophy, has ever given us an answer for unity and diversity. So when people ask whether we are embarrassed intellectually by the Trinity, I always switch it over into their own terminology—unity and diversity. Every philosophy has this problem, and no philosophy has an answer. Christianity does have an answer in the existence of the Trinity. The only answer to what exists is that He, the triune God, is there.

So we have said two things. The only answer to the metaphysical problem of existence is that the infinite-personal God is there; and the only answer to the metaphysical problem of existence is that the Trinity is there.

Now surely by this time we will have become convinced that philosophy and religion are indeed dealing with the same questions. Notice that in the basic concept of existence, of Being, it is the Christian answer or nothing. No matter how evangelical and orthodox you are, it will change your life if you understand this.

Let me add something, in passing. I find that many people who are evangelical and orthodox see truth just as true to the dogmas, or to be true to what the Bible says. Nobody stands more for the full inspiration of Scripture than I, but this is not the end of truth

as Christianity is presented, as the Bible presents itself. The truth of Christianity is that it is true to what is there. You can go to the end of the world and you never need be afraid, like the ancients, that you will fall off the end and the dragons will eat you up. You can carry out your intellectual discussion to the end of the discussion because Christianity is not only true to the dogmas, it is not only true to what God has said in the Bible, but it is also true to what is there, and you will never fall off the end of the world! It is not just an approximate model; it is true to what is there. When the evangelical catches that—when evangelicalism catches that—we may have our revolution. We will begin to have something beautiful and alive, something which will have force in our poor, lost world. This is what truth is from the Christian viewpoint and as God sets it forth in the Scripture. But if we are going to have this answer, notice that we must have the *full biblical* answer. Christianity must not be reduced to the pan-everythingism of the East, or the pan-everythingism of modern, liberal theology (whether Protestant or Roman Catholic), and the Bible must not be weakened. We must not allow a theological pantheism to begin to creep in, and we must not reduce Christianity to the modern existential, upper-story theology. If we are going to have these great, titanic answers, Christianity must be the full biblical answer. We need the full biblical position to have the answer to the basic philosophical problem of the existence of what is. We need the full biblical content concerning God: that He is the infinite-personal God, and the triune God.

Now let me express this in a couple of other ways. One way to say it is that without the infinite-personal God, the God of personal unity and diversity, there is no answer to the existence of what

exists. We can say it in another way, however, and that is that the infinite-personal God, the God who is Trinity, has spoken. He is there, and He is not silent. There is no use having a silent God. We would not know anything about Him. He has spoken and told us what He is and that He existed before all else, and so we have the answer to the existence of what is.

He is not silent. The reason we have the answer is because the infinite-personal God, the full Trinitarian God, has not been silent. He has told us who He is. Couch your concept of inspiration and revelation in these terms, and you will see how it cuts down into the warp and woof of modern thinking. *He is not silent.* That is the reason we know. It is because He has spoken. What has He told us? Has He told us only about other things? No, He has told us truth about Himself—and because He has told us truth about Himself—that He is the infinite-personal, triune God—we have the answer to existence. Or we may put it this way: at the point of metaphysics—of Being, of existence—general and special revelation speak with one voice. All these ways of saying it are really expressing the same thing from slightly different viewpoints.

In conclusion, man, beginning with himself, can define the philosophical problem of existence, but he cannot generate from himself the answer to the problem. The answer to the problem of existence is that the infinite-personal, triune God is there, and that the infinite-personal, triune God is not silent.