The Foundations for Ethical Behavior:
A Christian Perspective for a Dialogue with Buddhism

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ABSTRACT

This paper explores the foundations of Christian ethical life. It argues that Christians cannot escape from the need to make decisions in a morally ambiguous world. Neither the Bible, Church tradition, or centralized teaching authorities are able to supply all the rules and regulations to cover every possible situation. Sooner or later every Christian will find him or herself in a situation in which they must make their own free decision. This need to choose arises out of the Christian belief that they are called by God to grow spiritually and ethically. This would not be possible without the freedom of choice. It is through the constant dialectic of spirituality and ethics that Christians can come both to know God and the correct ethical path to take. Nevertheless, Christian ethics is also shaped by a belief in the inevitability of human failure and the need for divine forgiveness. It is belief in this forgiveness that enables Christians to continue their ethical quest even after devastating mistakes. The foundations of Christian ethics is an ongoing interaction between the duty to be moral, the search for God's guidance, and the awareness of forgiveness. The paper ends by indicating how this Christian perspective raises interesting questions for Buddhist-Christian dialogue.

Introduction

For Christians the question of correct human behavior is just as central as it is for Buddhists. To be a Christian means more than confessing belief in Jesus Christ, it includes and demands a way of living that improves, or at least attempts to improve, life on this planet. Christians are expected by God to care for the weak, the sick, the helpless and the oppressed and to challenge injustice wherever it exists. In the prophetical literature of the Old Testament one finds a number of passages that clearly indicate that worship of the God of Israel must be combined with the fulfillment of moral obligations. In the Book of Isaiah God expresses displeasure with his people's religious festivals and convocations because they have failed to "learn to do good; seek justice, rescue the oppressed, defend the orphan, plead for the widow." (Isaiah 1:17) The prophet Jeremiah warns the ancient Jewish people that God will only dwell among them if they "do not oppress the alien, the orphan, and the widow, or shed innocent blood" (Jeremiah 7:6), and Ezekiel describes the righteous man as one who oppresses no one, commits no robbery, gives his bread to the hungry, and executes true justice (Ezekiel 18:7-8). It is not enough to turn away from idols and worship the true God of Israel, this worship must be combined with an ethical way of life that prevents injustice and helps those who suffer. The New Testament expresses the same idea of what it means to be faithful to God:

> "When the Son of Man comes in his glory ... then he will sit on the throne of his glory. All the nations will be gathered before him, and he will separate people one from another.... Then the king will say to those on his right hand, 'Come, you that are blessed by my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was hungry and you gave me

food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me. I was naked and you gave me clothing, I was sick and you took care of me. I was in prison and you visited me.' Then the righteous will answer him, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry and gave you food, or thirsty and gave you something to drink? And when was it that we saw you a stranger and welcomed you, or naked and gave you clothing? And when was it that we saw you sick or in prison and visited you?' And the king will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did it to one of the least of these who are members of my family, you did it to me.' Then he will say to those on his left hand, 'You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels; for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not give me clothing, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' Then they will answer, 'Lord, when was it that we saw you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not take care of you?' Then he will answer them, 'Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.'" (Matthew 25:31-45)[1]

Such powerful biblical ethical admonishments have strongly shaped Christian self-understanding. Throughout their history Christians have considered moral activity to be an indispensable part of their faith and identity. They have founded schools, hospitals, charities, almshouses, orphanages and hospices and have felt obligated to uphold justice in many parts of the world. It is true that many such actions have not always been motivated by the purest of hearts and have often caused greater pain and suffering, but this says more about the hidden complexities of human nature than it does about the moral bankruptcy of the Christian faith. For Christians right belief and right conduct go together, and it is often said that a true Christian is best recognized by his or her deeds, rather than his or her statements of faith. This paper presents an outline of how Christians understand this interaction between the religious and ethical life, and what questions this raises for Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Limited space only allows for a rough sketch, but even a rough sketch can pinpoint the central themes that shape Christian behavior in a morally challenging world.

God Does Not Demand Moral Perfection

The heavy Christian emphasis on ethically correct behavior has not been without its problems. Probably one of the most enduring misconceptions that has arisen from this teaching is the belief among many non-Christians and Christians that God is some kind of judgmental superpower who expects perfect moral conduct and condemns all to everlasting punishment who fail to follow his stringent commands. Throughout history Christians have been warned that if they perform immoral acts they will suffer God's terrible wrath: ministers and priests have preached hell-fire and damnation from their pulpits and have told people what they must and must not do to please God. Biblical passages like Mark 9:43-48 have been used to reinforce this demand for ethical perfection:

If your hand causes you to stumble, cut it off; it is better for you to enter life maimed than to have two hands and to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to stumble, cut if off; it is better for you to enter life lame

> than to have two feet and to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to stumble, tear it out; it is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than to have two eyes and to be thrown into hell, where their worm never dies, and the fire is never quenched.

A too literal or selective reading of this passage can lead to a picture of a religion that prefers self-mutilation to even one moral shortcoming. The negative consequences such a message can have on the lives of fallible human beings are easy to imagine. Society is full of examples of Christians who live in constant dread of God's eternal damnation if they set one foot wrong: children who think God is a wrathful father just waiting to punish them, people who accept terrible abuse because they think it is a sin to complain, spouses who remain in abusive marriages because to get a divorce would go against God, and women who remain subservient to their husbands because they believe that that is what God wants. Homosexuals are still told that their very desires are an affront to God and bar them from salvation. Such people live miserable and anxious lives and often suffer serious and debilitating psychological problems. For them Christianity is not a religion of life, joy and liberation, but an ideology of confinement, dread and spiritual death. What they have forgotten is that ethical responsibility and ethical perfection are not synonymous; God may require the former from people, but he definitely does not demand the latter.

There are two main difficulties with the idea of a judgmental God who requires moral perfection before he will grant salvation. The first, and probably most obvious, is the sheer impossibility of knowing for certain what God wants in all situations. Where are Christians to find all the rules and regulations? Recourse to the Bible does not solve the problem. Most Christians will invariably refer to the Ten Commandments when asked about biblical ethical teachings, but these commandments are very general in nature and offer little help when it comes to complex moral questions. The Bible also has nothing to say about such modern ethical dilemmas as genetic engineering, cloning, nuclear or biological warfare, international politics, pollution or economic globalization. Some Christians attempt to work around this problem by extending and reinterpreting biblical passages to apply to contemporary issues. Thus, for instance, Genesis 2:24, which states that "a man leaves his father and mother and clings to his wife, and they become one flesh," has been used to condemn all homosexual relationships without exception.[2] This approach, however, is fraught with its own insurmountable difficulty: how is one to know whether an extension and reinterpretation accurately expresses the will of God? There are many different ways to interpret and apply biblical passages; who is to say which one is correct? One answer has been to make sense of biblical statements by reading them through the eyes of Church tradition and/or a centralized infallible teaching authority, but this simply begs the question: which Church tradition or teaching authority does one follow? There are many Church traditions, and they have been constantly changing throughout history; at one stage it was considered traditional to burn heretics at the stake. Likewise, there have been and continue to be different forms of teaching authority throughout Christendom, often in vehement opposition and disagreement with each other. Which one is a Christian to believe? Such problems make it clear that it is impossible to construct an unambiguous, universally acceptable and all-embracing list of moral codes from the contents of the Bible. The Bible may guide, shape and challenge Christians, but it does not provide them with ready-made answers. It is

probably best described as the starting point of Christian life and reflection rather than the endpoint.

The second, and most significant, difficulty with the idea that God only accepts the morally perfect is that it contradicts the very heart of the Christian message. In spite of all its ethical admonishments, Christianity is a religion that proclaims God's grace and forgiveness of a sinful humanity. The so-called Good News is not that people can earn God's approval by being morally perfect, but that God already accepts humans with all their character flaws and imperfections. Christianity acknowledges the internal brokenness of the human condition and recognizes that even the best people cannot completely avoid doing wrong. Every human being is a microcosm of competing forces and often does the very wrong he or she wants to avoid. Even the apostle Paul suffered from this disturbing and frightening internal condition: "I can will what is right, but I cannot do it. For I do not the good I want, but the evil I do not want is what I do." (Romans 7:18-19)[3] The central Christian message is that humans need not despair in the face of their moral failings:

> For there is no distinction, since all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God; they are now justified by his grace as a gift, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, whom God put forward as a sacrifice of atonement by his blood, effective through faith. (Romans 3:22-25)

Through the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ humanity has been forgiven its sins and become acceptable before God. This forgiveness is a divine gift and cannot be earned. To say that people must first appease God's wrath by reaching ethical perfection is to deny this central Christian teaching. Christianity offers hope to the weak, broken and imperfect, not to the strong, whole and perfect (Matthew 9:10-13). The proclamation of God's forgiveness does not mean that moral behavior is not important; Christians are still expected to attempt to live morally upright lives.[4] This expectation, however, is tempered with the realization that the often incomprehensible complexity of moral questions and the fallibility of human nature have a way of undermining even the best intentions and plans. When this happens, it is God's forgiveness that guarantees that people's attempts at ethical lives need not deteriorate into a cry of hopeless despair.

Sin

At this point it is necessary to say something about the meaning of the word sin, for it has direct bearing on the foundations of Christian ethics. Few words are more misunderstood or misused in everyday discourse. One particular common distortion is the phrase "living in sin," which is meant to convey the immorality of engaging in sexual activity outside of the holy bonds of matrimony. Indeed, for some people the term sin is practically synonymous with any kind of perceived sexual misconduct, as if all God cares about is what humans do in their bedrooms. On a broader level, the word is thought to refer to the breaking of a religious rule or set of rules; lying, stealing and murder are often classified as sins. Members of Christian Churches often ask their leaders whether this or that is a sin, implying that there exists

a perfect and timeless divine list of regulations which applies to all people in all historical situations. Such common understandings of sin, however, are misleading and distract people from the deeper religious and spiritual significance the term is meant to convey. In the Bible a sin is not so much the violation of a taboo or the transgression of an external ordinance, as it is an action and/or thought which touches upon and distorts a human's personal standing with God. To commit a sin is to alienate oneself from the divine.[5] Part of the biblical message is that people are engaged in a living relationship with God, and, like any relationship, what works one day may not work the next. To sustain a living and healthy relationship with anyone requires constant interaction and intercommunication, otherwise it becomes impossible to know what is appropriate behavior for a given situation. A husband who does not dialogue with his wife but instead consults a list of rules and regulations to sustain his marriage will probably find himself in divorce court in a short amount of time. The same applies to a relationship with God. In order for this relationship to be healthy, people must try to discern and follow the will of God in the changing historical circumstances of their existence. When they concentrate on a set of rules at the expense of this relationship, they are just as guilty of sin as when they run around blindly killing innocent men, women and children. This is the profound negative implication the term sin is meant to convey: a sin damages and distorts a person's loving relationship with God, a relationship without which it becomes difficult to make correct ethical decisions.

Christian Ethics:
A Dialectic Between Spirituality and Moral Behaviour

This more accurate and profound understanding of the word sin helps bring into focus the foundations of Christian morality: correct ethical behavior is connected at its most intimate level with a loving and healthy relationship with God. For Christians a healthy spirituality and good ethical conduct go hand in hand. Without the one the other becomes considerably more difficult. This Christian view is born out by a careful reading of the biblical Ten Commandments. Formulated thousands of years ago, these commandments have played a central role in Christian ethical reflections and are often mentioned when Christians are asked about their faith's moral teachings. But the Ten Commandments contain more than a list of moral guidelines; they reveal that well before the birth of Christianity the ancient Jews believed that spirituality and ethically right behavior are closely interrelated.[6] Indeed, of these commandments only the last six actually address moral activity; the first four are concerned with correct belief and worship:

> Then God spoke all these words:
> I am the Lord your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me.
> You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the Lord your God am a jealous God....
> You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the Lord your God....

> Remember the sabbath day, and keep it holy. Six days you shall labor, and do
> all your work. But the seventh day is a sabbath to the Lord your God; you shall
> not do any work....
> Honor your father and your mother....
> You shall not murder.
> You shall not commit adultery.
> You shall not steal.
> You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.
> You shall not covet your neighbor' house; you shall not covet your neighbor's
> wife,..., or ox, or donkey, or anything that belongs to your neighbor. (Exodus
> 20:1-7)

It is immediately apparent that the first four commandments admonish people to
maintain a healthy relationship with God through proper belief, worship and ritual
practice. They are to acknowledge no god other than the God who liberated the Jews
from Egypt, they are not to worship false gods, they must not use God's name to fulfill
their own selfish ends, and they must put aside their striving toward wealth one day a
week in order to properly honor God. Only by implementing these first four
commandments correctly do believers in God acquire the religious and spiritual
strength to accurately execute the last six.[7] For Christians, however, this does not
mean that a healthy relationship with God, expressed through worship, prayer and
ritual, always precedes right moral conduct. The connection between the two is
actually far more complex and subtle. When Jesus was asked which commandment in
ancient Jewish law was the greatest, he replied

> 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul,
> and with all your mind.' [Deuteronomy 6:5] This is the greatest and first
> commandment. And a second is like [*homoia*] it: 'You shall love your neighbor
> as yourself.' [Leviticus 19:18] On these two commandments hang all the law
> and the prophets. (Matthew 22:37-40)

The fact that Jesus quoted from what is now known among Christians as the Old
Testament illustrates his continuity with the religious-ethical teachings of ancient
Judaism. What is noteworthy, however, is that he described the second commandment
as being "like" the first. The Greek word *homoia* can mean both "like" and "of the
same nature as." What Jesus appears to have been indicating is that both
commandments are practically identical in nature: loving one's neighbor is almost
indistinguishable from loving God, and loving God is almost indistinguishable from
loving one's neighbor. The two are related to each other at the most intimate level.
One could also say that they interact in a never-ending dialectic: one cannot correctly
love or even know God without correctly loving one's neighbor, and one cannot
correctly love one's neighbor without correctly loving and knowing God. Spiritual
and ethical growth feed off each other, and it is often difficult to discern where the one
ends and the other begins. Indeed, from a Christian perspective, a person who is
unable to love God or does not believe in God but loves his or her fellow human
beings may actually be loving and learning to know God. Likewise, a person who
hates people but truly begins to love and understand God may suddenly find within
him or her the power of human compassion.

This dialectic between spirituality and morality has a direct bearing on the question of the foundations of Christian ethical behavior. The last six of the Ten Commandments are good moral guidelines for the upkeep of a healthy and stable social environment. Were people to constantly abandon their parents, commit murder, engage in adultery, lie and give false witness, and covet other people's possessions, society would quickly descend into self-destructive chaos. The ethical rules contained within these commandments are a clear and general expression of the fundamental principles that should govern social life, but they are expressed in such general terms that it is not always possible to apply them to concrete situations.[8] Does one honor parents who have been neglectful and abusive? Is it wrong to commit murder if one's life or the lives of one's family or of other people are threatened? Should one steal to feed the starving? How does one respond to such confusing issues as pollution, economic inequality, gene therapy or foreign policy? Humans must make ethical decisions, but in the face of such dilemmas how are they to discern the morally acceptable path of conduct? A Christian response is to highlight the importance of maintaining a dynamic dialectic between love of God and love of neighbor, between spirituality and good ethical behavior. Through a healthy relationship with God a person may discover the right way to express love for his or her fellow human beings, and through this expression of love a more healthy and intimate spirituality may be achieved. In the ongoing process of this dialectic an individual may find that he or she must break one of the Ten Commandments in order to truly love God and neighbor. The Ten Commandments, while applicable most of the time, are not absolute and may be discarded during moments of severe moral crisis. At such moments the correct ethical decision, the one that most furthers love of God and fellow persons, may be to kill, steal, lie, commit adultery or bear false witness. It is, however, extremely difficult to know when such a moment of moral crisis has been reached. There are no methodologies, philosophical guidelines, systems of analysis or unimpeachable authorities a Christian can consult. Instead, the individual finds him or herself alone, weighed down by the horrible uncertainty and personal responsibility of having to make his or her own decision. It is a terrifying moment most people would prefer to avoid. For Christians the only way through it is to open one's heart and mind to the guidance and inspiration that comes from one's healthy spirituality and one's loving concern for one's fellow human beings. Through prayer, ethical reflection and a never-ending concern to reduce suffering and injustice, a person may find the power to discern a possible course of action when the moral boundaries become blurred and ambiguous.

Freedom, Human Fallibility and Forgiveness

One problem, however, remains unavoidable. In this world of great complexity, ambiguity and human fallibility few ethical decisions, whether in agreement with or in opposition to the Ten Commandments, can ever be completely free from uncertainty and doubt. People are nearly always haunted by the nagging suspicion that they could have acted differently or with greater nuance. This problem affects most human decisions, and often makes the burden of choice unbearable. But humans cannot escape from the responsibility of having to choose; it is fundamental to human interaction and existence. For Christians the need to choose arises directly from their understanding of their relationship with God. God is not a judgmental

taskmaster who demands blind obedience, but a loving father who wants his children to grow spiritually and ethically. The use of the words "father" and "children" is not accidental. The human family is a good analogy for how Christians see God and his attitude toward people. A healthy family almost always includes parents who encourage their children to engage in a quest of self-discovery and self-realization. For this quest to be successful the children must have the freedom to explore and must be required to face the consequences of their actions. The parents will support, comfort and guide their children, but they will not take away the latter's freedom and need to live with responsibility. Parents who shield their children from the world, who control their children's every move, who do not grant them the freedom of choice, and who do not make them accept responsibility for their actions, invariably stifle their children's development and prevent them from growing into full and well-balanced human beings. Psychiatric rooms around the world are full of such examples. In a similar manner, a loving relationship with God is only possible if humans possess the freedom to make their own choices in belief and practice. A forced love of God or neighbor is no love at all. Christians would not be free if God always told them what they should do, and they also would not be free if they could avoid the pain, uncertainty, responsibility and possible mistakes that are part of every decision-making process. Indeed, without struggle or doubt no real learning and growth can take place.[9] Although Christians believe that the human quest finds its ultimate fulfillment in the presence of God, they also believe that humans can only appreciate this fulfillment when they achieve it freely, on their own; otherwise the relationship with God would always be one of slaves and master rather than children and father. Love and freedom are intimately connected, and for fallible human beings freedom invariably includes the terrible pain, uncertainty, anxiety and possible mistakes that come with choice and responsibility.

This inevitability of doubt, uncertainty and mistakes sets the stage for the most central and vital message of the Christian faith: forgiveness. Although Christians are expected by God to work toward the end of suffering and injustice in the world, God also acknowledges and accepts the frailness and internal brokenness of the human condition. People's best intentions often have unforeseeable negative consequences which increase rather than reduce pain. The world is full of humans who tried their best and failed miserably. Greed, lust and unexamined presuppositions and prejudices have a way of insinuating themselves into almost every decision-making process. Even when the motivating force is the very best of altruism, human limitations and fallibility can lead to the ethically wrong choice. Necessary facts are often overlooked or simply remain hidden until it is too late, or, when they are known, people lack the strength and wisdom to understand and apply them correctly. This is one of the great inevitable tragedies of human existence and the source of much dread, anxiety, resignation and despair. But for those who fail Christianity offers the hope and comfort of divine forgiveness. In the Beatitudes Jesus states:

> Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.
> Blessed are those who mourn, for they will be comforted.
> Blessed are the meek, for they will inherit the earth. (Matthew 5:3-5)

These are the people for whom life has become too great a burden, who find their hopes dashed and their ethical quest a failure. They have realized that both spiritual

and ethical perfection lie beyond the reach of human capability. For these people the message of forgiveness offers new life and power. When humans choose wrongly and cause even more suffering, the promise of divine forgiveness reveals that a healthy relationship with God is still possible. And this renewed relationship empowers people to continue the ethical quest even after devastating failure. God will not turn his back on sinful humanity, but instead embraces people with all their flaws and shortcomings. Ultimately, this is a message of inexhaustible hope: human fallibilities and mistakes will not have the final word in the ongoing moral endeavor to make the world a better place.

Conclusion

The foundations of Christian ethics are located in the complex interaction of three central and indispensable themes: the duty to work toward the end of suffering and injustice in the world, the need to live in a healthy and growing relationship with God, and the Good News that God forgives human failings. All three must be taken into account and maintained in Christian life, otherwise there is the danger that one will eclipse the equal importance of the others. Christianity is a fine balancing act between all three, with each acting as a corrective for the other. This ensures that Christianity remains a vibrant and living religion that continues to challenge and inspire people. In a way, this understanding of the Christian foundations for ethics could be said to reflect the Christian Trinitarian idea of God: the one God as the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. It could be argued that it is the Father who commands moral integrity, the Son who forgives human shortcomings and mistakes, and the Holy Spirit who inspires people to discern the correct ethical behavior for a given situation.

This close interaction between belief and practice in Christian moral reflection sets up an interesting starting point for Buddhist-Christian dialogue. Buddhism may not have à God, but it does have a spirituality which, as in Christianity, is cultivated by its followers. How does Buddhist spirituality impact on its ethical teachings, and where do Buddhists look for inspiration and guidance? The dialectical question is also worth exploring. In Buddhism, is it ethical behavior that leads to spiritual enlightenment, or is it spiritual enlightenment that enables correct ethical behavior? Or is it that the two interact and feed of each other in a never-ending dialectic? For Christians, Buddhist answers to these questions would be of great interest.

Notes

[1] All biblical quotations are taken from the New Revised Standard Version.

[2] Stott, John, Same-Sex Partnerships? A Christian Perspective (Grand Rapids: Fleming H. Revell, 1998) 34-35. Schmidt, Thomas E., "Romans 1:26-27 and Biblical Sexuality," in Corvino, John, ed., Same Sex. Debating the Ethics, Science, and Culture of Homosexuality (New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 1997), 95-96.

[3] This Christian belief in the fundamental internal brokenness of all human beings is expressed in the doctrine of original sin. Although its classic formulation by

Augustine (354-430) is no longer acceptable today, the fundamental message it is supposed to convey remains relevant. Augustine formulated his description of original sin in response to Pelagius (late 4th to early 5th century), who taught that every human being could learn to avoid sin. Augustine rejected Pelagius' teaching because he believed it failed to appreciate the tragic element in human life. Augustine argued that when Adam sinned against God he ruined the entire race. Since then Adam's sin has been passed down from generation to generation through the act of procreation. Every child is, from moment of birth, infected with this sin (Kelly, J. N. D., Early Christian Doctrines (London: A&C Black, 1977) 362-366). Although Augustine's negative attitude toward sex and unfair portrait of the newborn child is unacceptable today, the deeper truth he was trying to convey is still relevant. Human behavior is almost always morally and psychologically ambivalent. Human's best intentions go wrong and their hidden motivations remain unclear even to themselves. The doctrine of original sin expresses the deep tragedy that affects all human action. It reveals human flaws and reminds people that their best efforts are often not good enough. From the moment of birth people are divided against themselves and others. Humans are self-destructive, even when they do not want to be (Daly, Gabriel, Creation and Redemption (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988) 126-128).

[4] Kuitert, H. M., I Have My Doubts. How to Become a Christian Without Being a Fundamentalist (London: SCM, 1993) 251-252.

[5] De Vries, S. J., "Sins, Sinners," in The Interpreter's Dictionary of the Bible (vol. 4; Nashville: Abingdon, 1962) 362-363.

[6] Mayes, Andrew D. H., "The Decalogue of Moses: An Enduring Ethical Programme?" in Freyne, Sean, ed., Ethics and the Christian (Dublin: Columba Press, 1991) 33, 39.

[7] The new Catechism of the Roman Catholic Church expresses a very similar sentiment in its observation that the moral life is rooted in a sustained correct belief in God. Katechismus Der Katholischen Kirche (München: Oldenbourg, 1993) 538, paras 2087, 2088. See also Häring, Bernhard, "More than Law and Precept: Commandments 1-3," in Walsh, Michael J., ed., Commentary on the Catechism of the Catholic Church (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1994) 357-360.

[8] Kuitert, I Have My Doubts, 269.

[9] Cf. MacNamara, Vincent, The Truth in Love: Reflections on Christian Morality (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988) 118-122.