

The Sceptical Approach to Religion (his spelling)

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PREFACE

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These were originally lectures! I am impressed with the audience that could follow them.

CHAPTER ONE:

RATIONALISM AND FAITH

PAGE 1

He is reaching out to those who find intellectual difficulties in the way of accepting the traditional dogmas of faith.

2 – They will rely on experienced knowledge, such as red and hard, as well as pleasures and pain. Science justifies this. He may also adopt ethics. But, the why? Is a blank, unknowable.

4 – The author knows, simply by affection that some acts are right and some are wrong. His moral sense is part of the constitution of his being. And, it is teleological in that it includes some vision of the future.

5 – You can make people who deny right and wrong admit it is true via extreme cases.

He thinks, thus, teleology of conscience is universal. But a sceptic will find no ground for it.

6 – There are no visible signs of voluntary choice.

7 – So is the world, based on direct observation, non-teleological; or based on awareness of mental states, teleological?

8 – This is a contrast between observation and intuition.

9 – Inference is important in science; we don't see evolution, but signs of it.

10 – As an acorn grows to its potential, the scientist sees no implications of consciousness.

He may view himself as a combo of inheritance and environmental forces: but he is then viewing himself; and he intuits himself as a free moral agent.

11 – But, I can intuit it away as an illusion. Rationalism can do so. The opposite of doing so we call faith. And the life led by faith we call religious.

12 – Faith is then, “The faculty that urges us on to carry over the immediate sense of personal freedom and responsibility and purpose into our interpretation of the world at large, in defiance, if need be, of that more self-assertive display of reason which we call rationalism.”

Let’s not forget that faith is not knowledge, but inference.

The inference of rationalism is all – embracing and fanatically dogmatic; it simply sweeps away the possibility of freedom and responsibility anywhere and everywhere.

13 – Faith is more moderate and consistent.

Technically, inference from observation leads to materialism and monism. From intuition we is dualism of matter and spirit.

14 – Faith is intrinsically theistic. The belief in God must react upon the immediate intuition of ourselves. The morality of self-satisfaction then gives way to that of morality and duty.

15 – Faith comes from our intuition of freedom and responsibility. This leads to hope, and perhaps exaltation.

16 – We see this pattern in primitive religions, if you sacrifice, something good will happen. It happens in magical formulas and rites.

17 – It may lead to indignation or gratitude when things don’t work out, to the object of faith.

There is a progress towards clearer personality involved, towards anthropomorphism. This is necessary to a sense of purpose.

19 – John Dewey said faith is just wishful belief and a defensive attitude.

20 – We are terrified by death awaiting us. No. Religion began with faith, not desire. Faith is a deliberate act of confidence in our hopes.

21 – No logical argument for God is logically coercive.

22 – So, if they ask if we’re ditching the truth, must also ask them if they are ditching the concomitant responsibility belief requires. You belittle my religion as fear. What are you running from?

23 – Faith puts one in judgment and skepticism puts one in arbitrary isolation; in dark bitter despair.

24 – So are freedom and responsibility real?

25 – Must I, to be real, see the world as a cosmic jest, all the more cruel by its lack of intention, as malignant mockery?

Faith to become more than lip-service to probability, requires religion; the determination to live in accordance with said faith’s limits. Otherwise it is just a wager. But, lack of belief just means a facile surrender to the streaming impressions that crowd us.

CHAPTER TWO:

THE SOCRATIC REVOLUTION

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Dr. Johnson said, “All theory is against the freedom of the will; all experience for it.”

29 – Philosophy, when divorced from the faith of religion, has an almost fatal tendency to become non-teleological.

Socrates and Plato’s teleological bent, seems to come out of nowhere from the materialistic bent of surrounding philosophers and then it disappears again.

30 – Telos means ‘end’

31 – It implies that the end was hidden in the beginning, like the acorn. The Darwinian paradigm is materialistic. But only causal relation of which we have any comprehension is that between the proposal in my mind to do something and the doing of it.”

Whereas, as Hume noted, we see no causality in the world.

32 – We could have a definition of evolution in which there was a conscious plan, an architect, that would also be teleological.

33 – So teleological could include; all coming to an end; developing some immanent law to its potential; and guided by some agent (only #3 has purpose, it is the only one reached by intuition, (as opposed to pure observation), and the one he means in this book.

34 – Thales said all just unfolds from simplicity to complexity. Huxley's 'chemistry of the brain' also has no purpose.

36 – Anaxagoras – from which we have little – seemingly turned Socrates.

37 – But he found Anaxagoras was on about the reason of the world, not the cause. They were looking for that which binds things together (the Good) blindly.

38 – Thus Socrates' early enlightenment came via turning away from observation, towards intuition.

39 – Plato put the root of teleological philosophy in the Good and God. Early Socrates – and we should believe Plato's account – in the Good. We will see Plato's development, in 4 books, towards God.

Gorgias; the Republic; Timaeus; and the Laws.

40 – The Laws recaps the theory of Forms and rejects it for divine Agent.

In Gorgias, we wonder if a rhetorician must understand 'justice' or just be able to make any opinion prevail? Is it just flattery?

41 – Might he not be convinced to work against his own interests?

42 – Is justice just, as Polus charges Socrates with arguing, just a corollary of happiness? Strong people get what they want; weak people have morality and justice.

43 – Philosophy is good when you're young; but if you're still doing it in later life, you should be beaten, because it can make you effeminate, via belief in conventional justice and the loss of desire or taking care of yourself.

44 – Strong and clever men can better fulfill their desires. Socrates then drives him to lower and lower desire; to where he gets to one that is repugnant in itself.

45 – Socrates' interlocutor is monadic;

47 - There is no separation between man and his desires. Socrates sees dualism within man himself. And the ethical law demands that a man is master of himself; stronger than himself.

48 – Hobbes tries to show a clash of motives will coincide, ultimately, with Socrates' position.

49 – Both Hobbes and Rousseau dismiss dualism of this sort. And, today's sociology takes the same position.

CHAPTER THREE:
PLATONIC IDEALISM
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Herein, early on, in Gorgias, Socrates wins by showing other's positions to be false. Then he feigns humility.

51 – The cravings of the body are nothing and ephemeral compared to the cravings of the soul. The desire to dominate others is a shadow of the failure to dominate your own soul.

53 – But perhaps these ideas are just based upon the emptiness of the soul. In the Phaedrus, Symposium and Phaedo, he tries to clothe the Ideas in splendor, so we might feel their reality.

In the Meno, we see them coming from a former life; in the Phaedrus, we get the three winged horse.

54 – And in the Symposium, we get to beauty via bodies. In Phaedo, the hope of beauty after death would make a man happy to die. Thus in these middle dialogues, justifying the Idea was in the forefront of Plato's mind.

55 – But, More is unconvinced, we know that these things are, but not how that these things are. In the Republic, Plato tackles how we know.

56 – The challenge is where is justice when a reputed just man must undergo tortures and the unjust (but reputed just) man gets rewarded with pleasures and blessings?

57 – In response, Plato analyzes the soul into 3 parts, in their 'just' relation.

58 – He is really still on being the 'master of oneself.'

60 – The philosopher should lord over others and themselves. This has the objective standard and the subjective appreciation of the ideal.

61 – It also harkens back to the sense of right and wrong that is instinctive in all men.

62 – Thus the Ideal is a rational corollary of consciousness. They are derived straight from observation as well as the esthetic and ethical ideas we know by intuition.

63 – We have two fields of experience, observation of particular things and intuition of particular qualities.

One set of Ideas have opposites, the other does not. Man and horse, don't have opposites. But ethical ideals, good, moral and aesthetic, beautiful, have opposites.

64 – Since things in the visible world – horse – have no opposites, they leave our faculties untouched.

Ideals bring your emotion and will into play. You will act no differently if you don't believe in horses. You will act very differently if you deny justice.

66 – The loss of belief in everlasting truths, or Plato's imagined ideals, has been the chief cause of the present debacle in morals and art.

In book 6 of the Republic, we get lists of Ideals in heaven. But, while we can say what the good is not, (pleasure for instance), we cannot define it positively. Also, it is not passing, (that which seems good to a man for the moment).

67 - And, without a clear sense of ultimate motive, there can be no order in our lives.

And, in book 8 we contrast the good poised philosopher man with he who wants dominion and lust.

69 – The Timaeus continues The Republic but introduces a strange myth of creation. We also learn that nothing can change its status, and so come into being without a cause. The fashioned thing depends on the mind of the fashioner. So God fashioned all and before him was immutably perfect world of ideals.

So now we have the demiurge, Ideas and material.

71 – In the Republic Gods are of no consequence, Ideals reign. But, in the 10th book of the Laws, he repudiates atheism as immoral. If Timaeus was a correction, the Laws is a retraction.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE PLATONIC TELEOLOGY

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Aristotle's' attacks on the Platonic Ideas were repeated and virulent, but only attack the Republic form.

73 – He accepts forms as a good towards which things move, but rejects the idea that they can effect anything in this world.

74 – Plato had the same reservations. But without it, the world falls into disorder and no rational discourse is possible.

He says the ideals are passive and God active . God bound himself in this world due to being good. Hence action.

75 – He made all good as far as this was attainable with the materials at his disposal.

76 – The hindering factor is not matter, it is an inherent and utterly irrational principle of disordered motion, displaying itself in the senseless inertia of matter and life.

And, if pressed further, Plato will say the lack of perfection is due to ‘necessity.’

77 – And so pre-Socratic determinism and darkness closes in again upon Western thought.

78 – 79 Herein he shares a story where he, More, looked at nature as beautiful until he thought of what lay beneath the surface, ie armies of countless individuals, driven on by instinctive lust, engaged in internecine warfare, each blade of grass fighting for its place in the sun.

How did good come of this then, stalemates in warfare?

80 – This, he infers, is why Plato added a lower cause to the upper cause. And, it is not evil, it is mechanical forces with no volition of their own, no purpose of evil.

81 – This is the disordered cosmos and motion out of which God’s reason made the world. But where in here is man? Aristotle is right that it is nonsense that a good man in hard times is happy.

82 – Well Plato says that a bad man can never be happy. He lacks self-mastery and is a beast tormented by his enslaving passions. But, he doesn’t prove that the good man must be happy.

83 – Plato says happiness is a state of mind belonging to the man who has gained possession of the final Good, that towards which all desires aim. Happiness is a matter of conscience and often requires struggle and pain.

Happiness is a feeling of self-approbation and the result of a good conscience.

84 – Many martyrs died refreshed with the joy of martyrdom. Many simple folk. But, this is with Christianity. Mere philosophy could not bring a person to such a state.

85 – Hope can render you senseless to present pains, due to hope. People like to feel in harmony with the Ideal of justice. But, we need more, hope that says the law will be operative.

86 – So for happiness, we see justice, the hope of faith, and possibility 3 – the cold reality that makes the man of faith a fool.

Should we aim at happiness or deserving to be happy, Kant asks.

87 – But, if you get rid of happiness, duty becomes a cruel despot, Christ fills our efforts with hope and joy.

88 – Socrates talks of reincarnation. But, we wouldn't need this if possession of justice in the soul was enough.

89 – We are born into the world ignorant. But, ignorance is no excuse of duty; we are intellectually impotent, but morally responsible.

But, wasn't it rude of God to put us in this situation? Sophocles faces this in Oedipus, who is ignorant of what he does and yet still responsible for it.

90 – But the intuition of right and wrong is a knowing.

91 – In the Euthyphro, we have the idea of a judging God, who is an object of faith, inferred from a wish to believe. Here philosophy and religion intertwine. The Gorgias brings in religion, like this, with almost no connection to the rest of the argument.

92 – The religion pretty much disappears from the Republic. Phaedrus sort of brings it back with the idea of reincarnation.

93 – Herein the universe was created as a school of discipline and enlightenment for the spirit. Until we get there humility in our walk with God is suggested.

94 – This is a philosophy with teleology.

CHAPTER FIVE:

ILLUSIONS OF REASON

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95 – We saw Socrates, in the Phaedo, give teleological reality, which reflected his own consciousness, as the reason he did not run away from jail. Remember that Plato got to his truth via theism and philosophy. The theism didn't follow from logic, it was a faith in something antecedent to philosophy, a primitive religious instinct of the race.

96 – Plato may now have been very aware that these paths converged and his philosophy was foremost. But, his teleology was an insight and we see how quickly it disappeared when he passed.

97 – The Epicureans and Stoics were materialists. Neoplatonism is spiritual, but it is vacuous and removed from this earth. The One has no consciousness in time.

98 – Why was this eclipse so total? He thinks because materialism made such a nifty package of reality, sans loose ends.

99 – The odd result is that we have a self-styled rational philosophy at odds with the existence of consciousness. And, science and religion could live side by side, but science has totally taken over.

100 – And this vapidness carries on into Kant and Spinoza.

101 – Spinoza is profoundly irreligious, in that he must know all and God is tucked comfortably into a pure theorem of reason, frayed at the edges with conjecture and inference.

102- The Taint of anthropomorphism is gone and good and evil become mere prejudices. God becomes a syllogism.

104 – We get absolute infinite attributes that attribute nothing. By this atheistic logicism, religion is the death of imagination and the life of pure reason.

105 – Why should we love such a God? Empty of attributes?

106 – Why this bad road? More thinks because he forgot about or being intellectually impotent and morally responsible.

107 – Hume goes further and tries to reason consciousness out of existence.

Kant tries to rescue reality from Hume, via intuitive moral sense.

109 – But Kant gets back to where Plato was and has to stick in an immortality of the soul. (Group happiness is not considered).

The story of Lampe: “The old Lampe must have a God, or the poor fellow cannot be happy; but man should be happy in the world as the Practical Reason tells. So shall the Practical Reason guarantee the existence of God.”

112 – Kant retracts happiness as he is just that abstract. If the result is happiness it counters morality.

113 – Kant says we postulate a God to keep our abstractions from getting out of hand. God and immortality are just stand ins for reason and experience. We do not know that such a God exists, Kant says, though his whole project is to replace uncertainty with knowledge.

114 – We do not know that we are free and responsible, but we must act as if we believed. We do not know our immortality or the existence of God, but we must live as if we believed. This is a ghastly mockery of faith.

Kant actually wanted to cut off the tap root of teleology.

115 – Thankfully, Kant completed Hume’s demolition of quasi-religious rationalism built upon the observation of nature. It is safe from judgement as it has become pure vauity.

116 – There is a gulf between religion and metaphysics. One of Kant’s most famous quotes is really a paraphrase of Psalm (117) that celebrated faith, which consummated in the world made flesh.

CHAPTER SIX:

THE EVOLUTION OF HEBRAISM

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Higher criticism discovered the evolutionary nature of the Bible and the idea of Messiahship.

119 – Here evolution and teleology come together at last.

We used to believe the Bible was the one perfect word immaculately revealed once.

121 – The Bible shows the evolving religious sensibilities of a people. And, it grounds a teleological relation between the Old and New Testament.

We see development in the areas of the Idea of God; Morality; Redemption; Cult; and the idea of the Messiah. The first two categories evolved the most.

122 – In the Bible we see hangovers of early primitive superstitions that weren’t edited out.

Mana and taboo are at the heart of this. Mana refers to the otherworldliness to which we appeal; and taboo to the ethical.

Mana is associated with the vague sentiment of wonder, fluctuating between hope and fear.

123 – More admits even he does little superstitious things.

124 – Mana becomes more and more localized in nature. And mana within oneself becomes extended to the family or clan, partitioned out tribally, and then personally conceived Gods and demons. We see this in early Judaism.

125 – For years Jehovah was just one among many Gods. He went from being local to having his sway over all the earth, even though still especially associated with Jerusalem.

126 – We see this when Elijah’s God (because championed by evil queen Jezebel) challenges the other Gods.

128 – We nearly hear: “No, our Lord Jehovah is not a vague personification of nature’s power; rather He is a breath a spirit speaking to the heart of man, asking him to obey and serve.”

It doesn’t reject the primitive sense of the supernatural, it incorporates the sense of mystery and awe that started eons ago in the human mind.

129 – Mana was upon us when we first became men, and it continues, only our interpretations differ.

Taboo runs parallel. Taboo includes attraction and fear.

130 – These taboos impose order upon the conflicting impulses of life, and with the growth of civilization, pass into more and more ethically directed laws. Mana and taboo, though, don’t always advance at the same rate. So, sometimes, morality lags behind the spiritual vision of God.

The root of the word Holy means ‘separate.’

131 – We don’t mean to oversimplify. Man’s dream of the dead and social sympathy contributed to belief in otherworldliness and morality, but their influence soon merges into the general sense of the great mana.

132- This is in all religions but most clearly seen in Jews’ chronicle.

Matthew Arnold’s view of all boiling down to righteous conduct is a bit oversimplified, but a needed correction to make religion a vague otherworldliness.

But, the idea of redemption is particular to the Jews.

133 – It goes back to when the pursuing Egyptian army was somehow destroyed by water. This brought together religion and history. Jews never lost sight of this event.

135 – Israel was not chosen for its own merits, but that via its loyalty to Jehovah and purity of life, all people might come to know God. This idea includes God working in history. Plato reached for this, but the idea belongs pre-eminently to the Hebrew people.

136 – Israel is to be the witness and suffering servant of God. Their redemption gets transformed into the Messiah and the kingdom of heaven – doncha know.

137 – In the blood sacrifice of Passover they are saved. Blood turning away evil powers is an old tale.

139 – They are led out of Egypt by a single prophet. And, later, this whole story received its end, its climax in Jesus.

141 – But, how could this not happen via a triumphant God? Wherefrom is the suffering servant? It is a stupendous coalescence.

142 – Higher criticism is vulnerable in both scholarship and piety. Scholarship, because no criticism can eliminate the supernatural claims uttered by Jesus about himself (He undoubtedly claimed to be the redemptive son of God), while retaining all else of his record as authentic.

143 – Piety because no religion can continue on such an impoverished basis.

Newman was right: the hardest basis of all the demands of religion is just the initial belief in a personal God.

144 – This is not a matter of proof, it is a matter of faith. We must ask, is the Hebraic telos true or are we doomed to live in a world devoid of purpose and meaning?

CHAPTER SEVEN:

THE TELOS OF CHRISTIANITY

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Platonism was the only philosophy which independently developed a high form of teleology, so Christianity the only completely teleological religion of the world.

146 – Teleology means more than end, it means more than evolution, it means purposive evolution.

Was God just an idea that evolved, or does it correspond to the work of a transcendent agent?

147 – Religion generally leads towards monotheism, but in Judaism alone does this come to a proper telos. Zeus gets more and more central, but he does not develop telos around him.

149 – He shows this via comparison with a Babylonian creation myth.

150 – In Israel alone did such a straight telos develop, leading to the destruction of the temple and exile, which meant, after Jesus, Judaism had lost the telos and became only, with the Talmud, law sans telos.

151 – It is a fact of history that, from the purely evolutionary point of view, the genuine telos of Judaism must be found in Christianity. Jesus thought this. Moses to a world greater than Moses.

152 – We either have telos derived from an intuition of consciousness or a dead mechanical world.

To those who practice religion, faith becomes less and less conjecture and more and more hear a voice and guidance from the universe. Skeptics can only say, you may be right, but I know nothing about it.

153 – We have no coercive proof, but there is something in the universality of this claim that should give the skeptic pause. This idea of a purpose or power working for good or ill is universal.

154 – To believe that this is a self-deception and a cosmic jest is sneering and tests credulity, given world experience.

155 – Perhaps the prophets happened by accident, and their sublime genius was picked up on by an imbecile Jesus. But, this claim is based on bad scholarship of anthropology.

156 – The fetishism of the bushman and the genius of the Bible are not on the same level, not both just silly superstition. Why did the universal mana and taboo system only work itself out historically in the Bible?

Everywhere we see that faith can be explained as a transference of the moral sense known to us by intuition to belief in something similar at work in the world at large, yet only in one place to we find a purposive element, which is the very beginning and end of conscience, so clearly grasped as to dominate the whole course of religion.

Herein the inner and outer forms of the teleology correspond. This is huge and calls for a cause commensurate with its magnitude.

157 – The Jews were conscious of faith as a wish belief, and persisted in the will to believe tenaciously like no other people.

158 – No where else is religion “the substance of things hoped for.” Job said, “Though he slay me, yet will I trust him.”

They cling so hard that the desire runs right up and through the messiah ideal and manifests itself.

In Platonic teleology we have 3 elements: An agent conscious of the intent to achieve an end; a moral law to which we are responsible; and a hinderance. This is what we see in the Bible.

The word made flesh “according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus.” Paul.

160 – We see the potential of animate in the inanimate that manifests itself.

And while we have the potential for life in the inanimate world, it seems to have an implied purpose, but there is no one to bring it forward or benefit from it. So we have a break in continuity.

But the animate object has an end for itself. This indicates a plan or purpose better than inanimate objects do or can. But there is a break from inanimate to animate.

161 – And we have a continuity from the amoeba to the lord of the jungle. Then up to man, there is a break. As animals have no sense of purpose. Thus, there is a continuity break prior to man.

In man there is not only consciousness, but a conscience. This is dualism and supernatural in the Aristotle sense. And language helps us communicate this purpose.

162 – Still we do not see purpose. But we do in an implied transcendent way. Logos speaks to us through the world. As, perhaps, Shakespeare is real to us via his works.

Our consciousness is capable of comprehending divine logs and faith as the rest of the world is not.

163 – But this is faith via analogy (us to him) not identity. But if this world is just a machine of pure suffering, I cannot believe that as my inference of a purposive Creator is colored by my sense of order and beauty and righteousness. And, I must believe some other entity thwarts pervasive goodness, (what Plato called 'necessity.').

164 – This is how a theist might see the world, and it is all based on human inference. But, revelation via God from outside and inference from us are not mutually exclusive.

But we do also see in the Old Testament, more immediate operations by the Spirit of God upon the Spirit of Man. This in prophets and the bringing forth of a new form of revelation.

Jesus' incarnation has always been seen this way by Christians. Not just coming indirectly from dirt to man, but from man to God via Jesus.

165 - Thus the revelation of God in Christ is analogous to the revelation through nature and man, but unique in kind as well as in degree. Christians read a record of love behind the purpose of creation via Jesus' sacrifice. Love can only effect its ultimate purpose via self-sacrifice. We can see many things in other philosophies, like Plato, except this. Something that might have been guessed from prophesy has broken into reality.

166 - When we look at the ascension subjectively, it is not discontinuous. From our being to cosmic purpose.

167 – One act of faith.

And we must ask, is this leap across discontinuous boundaries, to God a new period of evolution? Is the dogma of the Incarnate Word a finality or does it point to a higher truth, as prophecy pointed to it?

It seems hard to conceive of anything past the word made flesh, the sacrifice of the son and immortality, Jesus' purity and the triumph over evil in ourselves.

168 - The Second Coming may be such a rendering away of veils. But that would change nothing in terms of the significance of the Incarnation as the telos of prophecy.

But, when we look at the subjective side of faith, it is different, we may grow from strength to strength.

169 – So nothing precludes an ever clearer perception of the meaning of incarnation, of an ever wider and truer application of the moral law of man to man and man to God.

CHAPTER EIGHT:
THE GIFT OF HOPE
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So what happened to skepticism? The skeptic will find that all his efforts at truth will end with disillusionment. We can know nothing.

171 – Rather than idealism, he will say he lives in a world of things. He will not doubt science.

172 – Until we get to the ultimate causation.

173 – Still he will shun metaphysics.

174 – And especially because it assumes things are not mechanical, but conscious and swayed by prayer and sacrifice.

175 – But he will ascent that the creation of monotheism, Israel's view of it in history and the resultant Christ are amazing and a real phenomenon.

176 – And he'll notice that the most famous rational philosophers, Plato and Socrates, came up with a scheme that is compatible with Christian teleology. And, they'll admit, Plato's dualistic allegory of creation laid the basis of a teleology which might be taken as a secular confirmation of divine purpose revealing itself in the Word made flesh.

But how will he respond to similar truths?

177 – He will dodge the empty claims to necessity put forward by Kant and Spinoza.

178 – So we are left with the options of a meaningless mechanical world or the Christian / Platonic world of teleos.

179 – Some will just say, why choose at all? They are 'deficient'. And this refusal to decide is a decision. It puts you dogmatically against religion.

180 – It may allow any number of sorts of ethics. But, it does not hold you accountable to a tribunal outside of your life as religion does.

Religion makes demands on your conduct and character. He must ask himself if he will live according to a teleological mode of existence.

181 He will still deny the theological impulse and view of a teleological universe that most of humanity has mostly adopted.

182 – But we must ask if his antagonism is another sort of wish – belief or embarrassment at his failure to get faith or annoyed by its demands on his being. What if the persistence of our wish belief demonstrates it? That will bother him.

Perhaps he is turned off by just how sickly sentimental some visions of Christianity are.

183 – But love is a command, not a gift. The gift of humanity is hope. And other religions may have hope, but in Christianity it has become a unified philosophy of life as a whole. This can be seen several ways.

184 – The effectiveness of Israel's view of their nation having a divine purpose.

185 – And this goes from hope for a state to hope for individuals. And, the act of living shows us the import of hope to survival – individually and as tribes. (And this would substantiate itself in evolutionary psychology ways).

186 – And we have long wanted purpose and been troubled by its invisibility and wanted to see and touch the object of our faith, to break through the wall that hides it from us and ask why that wall exists.

187 – And in Christianity, that source makes itself seen in man. It is almost as if God had the burden of making himself visible to us.

Skepticism tells us that hope is not knowledge.

188 – But Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

189 – This cannot ultimately, be decided by pure reasoning. The present inclination towards irreligion is not caused by more information. It springs from an enfeebling of the emotions and a paralysis of what might be called the spiritual imagination. We have been made callous by the machinery and business of the world.

190 – Thus we are not swayed by pure reason, but the pressure of the present. But if his emotions are stirring and his imagination active, he will be vexed by an ever recurrent doubt – what if it is true and the word became flesh, not as a deception, but as a reaching towards what really happened?

191 – He will be encouraged by others who will testify that the hope of religion, if followed bravely, brings a strange assurance of satisfaction, it does what seem to be inner miracles. And, he will see others backslide. And, wonder if subjective experiences are an objective phenomenon.

192 – Yet the appeal to his emotions will not be totally squashed.

He will see that it shines with others he has gotten to meet as a great and flashing beauty, like a light set upon a high place. These people have hope. And he will wonder if it could give him hope and harbor.

193 –“ Without adventure civilization is in full decay . . . The great achievements of the past were the adventures of the past . . . Only the adventurous can understand the greatness of the past.”

And, he will ask if the troubles of our civilization come down to a loss of hope and craven timidity before the great spiritual adventure we call religion.

He will suspect that his proud skeptical suspension of judgement is not so much a clear perception of the limitations of reason as much as a cowardly shrinking.

And he will ask if in himself he may find a knowledge beyond present reckoning. Faith is the great adventure. That is a definition that ought to stir a man out of his placid compliance with the dull routine of life.

194 – The author cannot say how the follower will have his sense of right and wrong confirmed by the recognition of the eternal canons of righteousness, how responsibility might get converted into the law of obedience, how conscience might be caught into a cosmic teleology, what voices might be heard in the silent watches of the soul, what invisible companionship comforts him, how hope grows into a great peace.

IN THE APPENDIX we get a great Chart representing Plato’s thought

	The physical realm	The intermediary Realm	The Noetic Realm of intuition
Objective	Natural artifacts	Math	Ideas
Subjective	Opinion	Understanding	The higher reason

Again the Noetic is purely intellectual and has no opposites; it is inferred from observation.

