

What I have learnt since writing Insight

Insight, apart from minor revisions, was finished when I went to Rome in the fall of 1953.

Since then I worked on my courses of the Trinity and on the Incarnate Word. I have in print a two volume work in Latin on the Trinity, a short treatise on the consciousness of Christ, and in mimeograph a 600 page work on the Incarnation and Redemption.

My main interest has been, however, what I was concerned with in writing Insight. That work was a preliminary study of methods generally prior to tackling the problems of method in theology. ~~I taught graduate courses~~ on that subject in Rome from about 1958 on to 1964. In the last three years my main effort has been on writing a book on Method in Theology, and things have advanced sufficiently for me to be able to anticipate publication in a few years. both

What I have been working at, then, has been theology itself and ~~the method~~ the method of theology. Both have been extremely interesting, for all during this century and ever more overtly theology has been undergoing great changes. I think that some account of these changes, of the influence exercised on theology by other departments of learning and, in turn, the significance theology can have in a university setting, will provide as good an account as I can give during this hour of the matters that have been my main concern during the past sixteen years.

In speaking of change I must begin by noting that change is the order of the day. The university has ceased to be a storehouse in which traditional wisdom is preserved. It has become the fountain whence flows ever expanding knowledge, and this ever expanding knowledge is a prime source of ever further social and cultural change. It is in this context that one has to think of theology at the present time, first, of the influences theology is undergoing from other disciplines and, secondly, of the influence theology can or might exert on other disciplines.

X In Insight there are recognised four levels of conscious and intentional operations. There is a level of experiencing and of bodily operations; there is a second level of inquiry, insight, formulation; there is a third level of reflection, weighing the evidence, judging; there is a fourth level of deliberating, making value-judgements, and deciding. Each of these levels introduces something quite new; each takes precedence over the previous levels; each preserves and perfects the previous levels. It follows that the fourth level is the most fundamental, the most decisive, the highest.

Now the fundamental difference between my book Insight and my next book on Method in Theology is that, in the main, Insight concentrates on the first three levels, while Method in Theology uses the first three but principally is concerned with the fourth, with the level on which the grace of God and Faith Hope and Charity are exercised. Since the fourth level is the most fundamental, the most decisive, the highest level, it follows that Method in Theology will put the whole of Insight into a fuller context and a more basic context.

On Method I taught graduate courses in Rome from