

Questions for Symbol & Analogy Seminar, 3/23/76

Whereas Augustine and Anselm, speaking out of relatively undifferentiated awareness, defined theology as fides quaerens intellectum, modern theologians make distinctions and so may have a different formulation of what theology is. David Tracy, for example, in defining his revisionist mode of theology, insists that the theologian qua theologian need not in principle hold the decidedly Christian beliefs and their implicit cognitive claims in order to do fundamental theology. He says that it is necessary and sufficient that the theologian have an adequate pre-understanding of the subject matter of religion and that this pre-understanding is basically present to anyone able to ask the fundamental questions articulated in religion and theological speech. He distinguished faith both from this pre-understanding and from beliefs and defines faith as "a basic orientation or attitude which determines one's cognitive beliefs and one's individual ethical actions (the faith of secularity). More explicitly faith is that fundamental attitude which affirms the ultimate significance and final worth of our lives, our thoughts and actions here and now in nature and history."

1. Is belief in Christian doctrines (which theologians seek to treat thematically or conceptually) necessary to this task? Is faith necessary? In other words--granted, of course, that Tracy's thinking is in process--is his present position acceptable, that the theologian need only a pre-understanding of the subject matter of religion in order to do fundamental theology?
2. Comment on Tracy's position as one "in principle" in view of the de facto situation that one does not seem to find theologians among those who are not believers nor non-believers among theologians.

Fides quaerens intellectum (Aug Ans) presupposes faith; similarly, functional specialty, systematics, presupposes functional specialties, doctrines, foundations, where foundations includes religious conversion.

Fundamental theology may be ^t introductory theology, which I ^w could take as functional specialties, research, interpretation, history, dialectics

It presupposes faith in some practitioners but not in all; hence possibility of dialectic, hermeneutic of suspicion and of recovery to separate sheep from goats, wheat from chaff

In general, one must always begin with people as they are; Tracy teaches in non-denominational divinity school; largest single group of students but not majority is RC

Fundamental Theology

a) A widespread conception up to Vatican II:

Theology analogously a science (strict Post Anal)(analogously: loosely deductive) (a succession of linked topics that gradually narrowed down the issues)

The existence of God (philosophy, naturally known)

The duty of worship (ethics, naturally known)

On the true religion

On the divine legate (Jesus of Nazareth)

On the true church

On the inspiration of scripture

b) Concilium 6 (vol 7 was in 1965)

Henri Bouillard, 'Human experience as the Starting-point of Fundamental Theology,' pp. 79-91. (grace in all human experience) Concilium 40 (1969)

Raymond Panikkar, 'Metaphysics or Diacritical Theology as Fundamental Theology,' 43-55 Fund theol is investigating unconscious presuppositions; it comes after the rest of theology; dialogue of mystics to be beyond cultural limitations

Heinrich Fries, "From Apologetics to Fundamental Theology," 57-68 apol became justification ~~of~~ of one's own and rebuttal of other positions; fund theol 'the tenets of faith must strike man in such a way that he is real in them and finds himself in an authentic encounter"

Jan Walgrave OP "The essence of modern fundamental theology," pp 81-91. Blondel's rejection of extrinsic apologetics and demand for method of immanence, from man's lack, concavity, emptiness

Joseph Cahill, "A fundamental theology for our time" 93-101 Traces older fundamental theology to John Perrone's works published 1835-42. Question is to enucleate when and where and how and with what necessity God is operative in human community today; will presuppose universal salvific will; fund theol must work in concert with other disciplines; fund theol is a by-product of a more general theological understanding; a particular use of a more general habit of theology

Claude Geffré OP, "Recent developments in Fundamental theology: An Interpretation," at least pp. 5-20. Survey, general agreement, comparisons and critiques of particular views, judicious