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### Dimensions of Meaning

The development, or upheaval, going on in contemporary theology has its origin, not in some new revelation from on high, but in fundamental changes that have been going forward in Western culture.

There are, I believe, three such changes. The Aristotelian ideal of demonstrative science has been replaced by the quite different ideal and reality of empirical science. A classical apprehension of man has given way to a historical apprehension. A logical approach to philosophy is being replaced by a methodical approach.

Our concern is with the second of these changes, and our remarks fall under two headings: I. Meaning and Reality; II. The Mediation of Meaning.

#### I. Meaning and Reality.

To attempt to define either meaning or reality would involve us at once in enormously complex philosophic issues. We propose to avoid them, for they are not of the essence of the cultural phenomenon that concerns us, for that is a matter of fact which every philosophy has to try to take into account.

- 6) The second dimension of meaning.
- The first dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word itself. The second dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word in the context of the sentence. The third dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word in the context of the paragraph. The fourth dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word in the context of the whole text. The fifth dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word in the context of the whole culture.
- 7) The third dimension of meaning.
- The first dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word itself. The second dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word in the context of the sentence. The third dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word in the context of the paragraph. The fourth dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word in the context of the whole text. The fifth dimension of meaning is the meaning of the word in the context of the whole culture.