Two Pauline doxologies, laden with the freshness and purity of a divine atmosphere, set the theme of this work. Ephesians 3:21 reads, "Unto him be glory in the Church by Jesus Christ throughout all ages, world without end. Amen." Galatians 1:5, voicing a similar thought, reads, "To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

Their beauty and eloquence in the King James Version are unexcelled. However, the English translation of the original Greek does not disclose the full import of the passages. The literal translation of the phrase in Ephesians 3:21, "throughout all ages, world without end," is, in the original Greek, εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεάς τοῦ αἰώνος τῶν αἰώνων, "unto all generations of the age of the ages." The relevant phrase in Galatians 1:5, "for ever and ever," εἰς τοὺς αἰώνας τῶν αἰώνων, unto the ages of the ages.

Ephesians 3:21 carries the thought that the generations of the redeemed, those who even in this time-bound life become the "children of the resurrection," are preserved in the final Age, the Age that embraces, without loss, all time-bound ages. There is, then, the Age of the ages.

Now Galatians 1:5 plays on the plural, ages, and replicates the plural, so as to emphasize the eternity in which the long stream of historical ages is comprehended and finally saved. The eternity of the New Testament is not a static age, but rather is the dynamic of an endlessness, the constituents of which are the innumerable series of the ages of time.

These passages, then, address the question of time and eternity and their relation to each other. We shall see that this New Testament view differs widely from human speculation and brings time and eternity together in salvational harmony.

In order to pursue this subject, it is necessary to come to some understanding of
the meaning of the crucial terms, *time* and *eternity*. Attention will be given to certain writers, historical and modern, so as to throw light on the subject under consideration.

The question of the nature of time is a very complex and difficult one. St. Augustine (A.D. 354-430) put the matter very well: “What, then, is time? If no one asks of me, I know; if I wish to explain to him who asks, I know not.” There is a very good reason why Augustine knows what time is but finds himself unable to explain its nature. First and foremost, time is *directly exhibited in awareness*. But, secondly, like everything so exhibited, it is therefore indefinable.

Now, the question emerges as to whether or not there is a “real” time in nature. That is, does the moving flow of experienced time have some counterpart in nature? As we shall see, attempts to establish the reality of objective time all too often proceed on the assumption of a logical-mathematical paradigm of a time-series of instant-less points. But, as we shall also indicate, this leads to insuperable difficulties. A few examples of the difficulties may be briefly noted.

The early Greek philosopher Zeno of Elea (circa 490-430 B.C.) argued that, if time is composed of indivisible instants, motion is impossible. The argument is that of the “paradox of the flying arrow.” In a temporal instant, he says, no change of position can occur. Hence, motion, which requires that a body change position, cannot occur, albeit, paradoxically, motion does appear to occur.

If it is incorrect to reify, i.e., apply to reality, a mathematically conceived time-series of temporal instants, it is also incorrect to reify the past and the future. This reification lies at the root of Augustine’s dilemma concerning the reality of the past and the future. Having confessed that, while he knows what time is, although he cannot explain it, he writes:

> Yet I say with confidence, that I know that if nothing passed away, there would not be past time; and if nothing were coming, there would not be future time; and if nothing were, there would not be present time. Those two times, therefore, past and future, how are they, when even the past now is not, and the future is not as yet. [2]

Essentially the same problem occurs with respect to a “real” present. There is a real present only on condition that the present cease to be, that it become non-existent:

> But should the present be always present, and should it not pass into time past, truly it could not be time, but eternity. If, then, time present—if it be time—only comes into existence because it passes into time past, how do we say that even this is, whose cause of being is that it shall not be—namely, so that we cannot truly say that time is, unless because it tends not to be? [3]

It may be, and has been, said that there is in nature an “absolute” time and that, accordingly, the past and the future are accommodated in this order of time. This is the position of Newton (1642-1727):

> Absolute, true, mathematical time, of itself, and from its own nature, flows equably without relation to anything external, and by another name is called duration . . . [4]
The main difficulty with this view is that we have no evidence for the truth of the theory. We are unaware, either directly or indirectly, of absolute time. Newton himself in effect admits this. He argues that as improvements are made in the measurement of relative, common time, a closer approximation to absolute time will be achieved. But there is no evidence that these measurements do indeed tend to approximate absolute time. And they certainly do not yield any direct awareness of absolute time intervals.

A more contemporary argument against an objective time is proposed by J. M. E. McTaggart (1866-1925). He says that there are two time-series. The A-series is time ordered as past, present, and future. This is dynamic time, or time as passage. The B-series is time ordered according to the relation of before and after. In this series, time is static, in that these relations are permanent. The B-series depends on the A-series.5

Now, McTaggart continues, the A-series, which is time as experienced, is not objectively real, and this for the reason that its reality implies a contradiction, as well as an infinite regress. We experience time, he points out, as presentness (present perception), as pastness (memory), and as futurity (anticipation). When these distinctions in the A-series are reified, a contradiction results. Every event now assumes the property of present, past, and future. Since, however, these characteristics are incompatible, there is no way of reconciling them in an objective time series.

Past, present, and future are incompatible determinations. Every event must be one or the other, but no event can be more than one. If I say that any event is past, that implies that it is neither present nor future, and so with the others. And this exclusiveness is essential to change, and therefore to time. For the only change we can get is from future to present, and present to past.

The characteristics, therefore, are incompatible. But every event has them all.

The reality of the A series, then, leads to a contradiction.6

C. D. Broad (1887-1971) rebuts McTaggart's argument, by pointing out that when a complete description of an event is given, which requires the use of tense language, the contradiction disappears.7 However, we shall not here consider Broad’s argument in detail. Instead, we shall explore another feature of McTaggart’s view.

He appears to restrict the experience of time to present perception, memory, and anticipation. However, memory and anticipation are not in themselves the experience, or awareness, of lived time. They therefore are not on the same level with the experience of the present. What is remembered is not an actual event or a quale, the past, in which the event is allegedly located, but rather an experience, the residual traces of which are present in the nervous system. Mutatis mutandis, this consideration holds for anticipation.

Now, if the experienced present is taken as a durationless moment (analogous to the dimensionless point of geometry), past and future are present. They then must be experienced as distinct in memory and anticipation.

However, our awareness of time is that of a specious present. The true present of sharply dividing past from future and
utterly distinct from both. On the contrary, the experienced present is also the awareness of past and future.

As given in awareness, time is disclosed as an experience of a present that shades off into two dimensions: towards an horizon of an immediate "retention" of the past and an immediate "protention" of the future. Thus, in experience, past and future are elements of the immediately experienced present. They must thus be distinguished from the past as recalled in memory and the future as anticipated in expectation.

The experience of time, then, has a certain "thickness," which shades off into the now-experience of pastness and futurity. The "now" of experience is not a "knife-edge" experience. Here there is no instant-less moment of time. Further, an abstract time-series, constructed mathematically as a series of instantaneous points, is in nowise the time-flow of experience. It is purely and simply a conceptual construct and is abstract throughout. Attempts to explain, or define, time in this manner do not reach the time that we actually experience and live through.

Thus past and future need not be placed outside the experience of the present, as something "out there" in reality that may be recalled in memory or anticipated in expectation. Augustine's difficulty concerning the reality of past and future that yet do not exist, or McTaggart's difficulty concerning the reality of past and future as concurrent with the present, do not appear when past and present are held within the experienced present.

To conclude this phase of the discussion, some attention may be given to the English-American philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead (1861-1947). His view of time, as set forth in chapter three of _The Concept of Nature_, is helpful.

Time is not a series of extensionless instants. There are no such instants or series of such instants, in either experience or nature. Temporal instants, and their placement in a series, are constructions of thought. The awareness of time is the awareness of a "duration," not of a durationless moment of time. What is posited in sense awareness as a fact in nature is not a material object located in "a one-dimensional series of extensional instants of time," but an event in process of completing itself. In so far as time is objective, it is the duration required for that completion.\(^5\)

While a moment has no temporal extension, a duration does. Since it is not a conceptual abstraction, a duration is directly given in sense-awareness. In contrast to a moment, it has what Whitehead calls "temporal thickness":

...the ultimate terminus of awareness is a duration with temporal thickness. This immediate duration is not clearly marked out for our apprehension. Its earlier boundary is blurred by a fading into memory and its later boundary is blurred by an emergence from anticipation. There is no sharp distinction between memory and the present immediacy or between the present immediacy and anticipation. The present is a wavering breadth of boundary between the two extremes.\(^6\)

Since the immediate duration is temporally thick, there is no minimum of duration, a duration itself is a temporal thickness. Further, durations themselves overlap one another. This means, then, that even the individual present is a duration. This holds, mutatis mutandis, for a plurality of minds. Finally, since a mathematically con-
ceived time-series of points is an abstraction, no such time-series defines an absolute world-time. There is no absolute time, either in the passage of mind or the passage of nature. On the contrary, there are times. Time, in mind and nature, is relative.\textsuperscript{10}

The approach to the question of the nature of time must be a phenomenological one. A phenomenological consideration of time does two things: (1) it refuses initially to postulate an objective world-time, and (2) it insists that time be viewed as directly evident in awareness. As thus viewed, time is a process in which durations fade off to past and future and overlap each other.

The language in which the experience of time as duration that includes retention of the past and protention of the future is taken from Edmund Husserl (1859-1938). This view of time is developed in his 1928 work, Vorlesungen zur Phänomenologie des inneren Zeitbewusstseins, which has been translated by James S. Churchill as The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness. The only time of which there is certainty is immanent time.

When we speak of the analysis of time-consciousness, of the temporal character of objects of perception, memory, and expectation, it may seem, to be sure, as if we assume the Objective flow of time, and then really study only the subjective conditions of the possibility of an intuition of time and a true knowledge of time. What we accept, however, is not the existence of a world-time, the existence of a concrete duration, and the like, but time and duration appearing as such. These, however, are absolute data, which it would be senseless to call in question. To be sure, we also assume an existing time; this, however, is not the time of the world of experience but the immanent time of the flow of consciousness.\textsuperscript{11}

Time, then, is the flow of consciousness, the sense of inner passage. This passage is articulated as present duration retaining, containing in presentness, past and future as a "shading-off." Husserl describes the retention of the past in present experience:

We now . . . take the sound \textit{la} tonel purely as a hyletic datum. It begins and stops, and the whole unity of its duration, the whole unity of the process in which it begins and ends, "proceeds" to the end in the ever more distant past. In this sinking back, I still "hold" it fast, have it in a "retention," and as long as the sound persists the sound has its own temporality. It is the same and its duration is the same.\textsuperscript{12}

The greater portion of The Phenomenology of Internal Time-Consciousness deals with the relation of present and past, i.e., with presence and retention. Yet Husserl indicates that protention belongs to the experience of the present, as well as does retention. He states:

\textit{It pertains to the essence of the expected that expectational intuition is something primordial and unique exactly as is intuition of the past.}\textsuperscript{13}

Husserl's earlier work, \textit{Ideen zu einer reinen Phänomenologie und phänomenologischen Philosophie}, appeared in 1913. The English translation of the first part of the work...
appeared in 1928, under the title, *Ideas: General Introduction to Pure Phenomenology*. The term *constitution* appears there for the first time in Husserl’s writings. Although he does not define the term, the context indicates that it refers to the way in which a presentation content is built up out of many layers of sense qualia. The synthesis that is produced is, at this stage in Husserl’s thought, a passive one. He became increasingly disturbed by the concept of a passive constitution of the object, because it suggested that the construction was from the side of the object rather than from the side of the apprehending consciousness. Were this the case, the very foundations of phenomenology, which restricts itself to appearances, would be threatened by an unwelcome “realism.” At this juncture, he turned to the problem of the awareness of time. He believed that the constitution of the inner consciousness of time was the key to all other processes of constitution, the constitution of hyletic data and other objectivities. He apparently suggested that the inner stream of time-consciousness, which is operative in other syntheses, is itself produced from a deeper source, from a primal source of active synthesis. Such a source, lying below time-consciousness itself, would be the transcendental ego. It would be the ultimate root of all processes of constitution.

Now, however it is to be explained, there is, in some sense, a “common world” brought to view in human awareness. If there be an ultimate root of active synthesis, it cannot be confined to any individual experience. That would issue in solipsism, which is an outcome very few would tolerate. What this means is that Husserl’s transcendental subjectivity must, finally, be extended beyond the individual to a more comprehensive experience. The possibility here intimated is what Whitehead suggests as but a conjecture, namely, that “this alliance of the passage of mind with the passage of nature arises from their both sharing in some ultimate character of passage which dominates all being.”

To sum up thus far: What we can say about time is that it is a form of awareness. In that awareness, the present embraces past and future. We cannot, by extrapolation or abstraction, construct a mathematical time-series, in which past, present, and future are located, and regard it as definitive of objective time. Yet time, as the form of awareness, must extend beyond any individual awareness. For this consequence, where shall we look?

In philosophical literature, the term *eternity* is used in three main senses: as an unending expanse of time, as absolute timelessness, and as that which includes time, but also transcends time.

The first theory, that eternity is endless time, is the popular view. It is also Kant’s view. Kant says that the supreme human good consists in conformity with the moral law. This moral ideal cannot, he continues, be realized in this life. Thus an endless process is necessary for the attainment of the moral ideal.

Now, the perfect accordance of the will with the moral law is *holiness*, a perfection which is capable at any moment of being required as practically necessary, it can only be found in a process of *infinitum* towards that perfect accordance, and on the principle of *pura intentione*, it is necessary to assume such a practical progress as

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Now, this endless progress is only possible on the supposition of an endless duration of the existence and personality of the same rational being (which is called the immortality of the soul).  

However, that there is such an unending expanse of time cannot be demonstrated by the theoretical reason. And, to make matters worse, the notion is inconceivable. Kant regards the time-series as one in which the antecedent parts cease to exist as the succeeding parts come into existence. Now, he continues, the time-order presupposes either a first member in the series or an unending succession of antecedent members. Neither alternative is conceivable. A first member in the series would have no antecedent member to determine its place in the time-order. Its antecedent would be an empty time, which is nothing at all. If there were no first member in the unending series, then the series is one which never began—which would be a series that never existed at all. Thus, to take Kant's argument, eternity as endless time is an impossibility.

The difficulties in the idea of an unending process have led the majority of philosophical thinkers to regard eternity as a state of existence independent of temporal conditions. The apparent timelessness of the "laws" and other general statements of scientific and philosophic discourse serve to occasion the belief in a corresponding timeless existence. However, our ordinary experience appears, at least on the surface, as time-bound, so as to appear to exclude any consciousness of timeless existence. Thus, if there is an eternity of timeless existence, it seems that it has no connection with our temporal mode of existence. The two modes of existence—time and eternity—stand in complete separation and opposition.

At the dawn of western philosophical thought, the Greek philosopher Parmenides of Elea (6th-5th century B.C.) argued that the only existent is the one, eternal Being. Becoming and change are illusory. If anything comes into existence, it derives from either Being or Not-Being. If it comes out of the former, then it already exists and thus does not come to be. If it comes out of Not-Being, it is non-existent, since from nothing, nothing can come. Hence the apparent world of change is illusory.

... And it [Being] never Was, nor Will Be, because it Is now, a Whole all together, One, continuous; for what creation of it will you look for? How, whence (could it have) sprung? Nor shall I allow you to speak or think of it as springing from Not-Being; for it is neither expressible nor thinkable that What-Is-Not Is.  

The closing portion of Parmenides' poem is entitled "The Way of Opinion." Here he argues that the temporal world of sense appearances is illusory. However, he does not attempt to explain why the senses delude us and give rise to false appearances.

Plato (428-7-348-7 B.C.) recognized the necessity of giving an account of time as well as of eternity. The eternal reality is, as it was for Parmenides, available only to thought. The Eternal is the Idea of the Good (ηδονή τοῦ ἀγαθοῦ). It is the supreme reality, the ultimate cause. "... the good itself is not essence but still transcends essence in dignity and surpassing power." In distinction to Parmenides, Plato holds that the world of time, of change and degree of reality. It is, as he calls it, the
world of becoming. It therefore must be accounted for.

There is some sense, Plato argues, in which the Good is the cause of the world. In *Republic* vii 517b-c he says:

... the idea of the good ... is indeed the cause for all things of all that is right and beautiful, giving birth in the visible world to light...

And in *Phaedo* 99c, he designates the Good as that "... which must embrace and hold together all things."

There is, however, no conceptual, or scientific, way to define the respect in which the Good is the cause of the temporal world. Yet, some account must be given, to indicate in some fashion the incontrovertible truth that the Good is the cause of the world. To provide the account, Plato turns to the myth.

The *Timaeus* tells of the creator-god (δημιουργός, demiurge) who fashions the ordered universe by imposing the eternal forms up on the chaos of matter. He desired to make it as nearly like its eternal model as possible. The likeness is but approximate, since the world is a sensible world and nothing sensible can be eternal. To effect this approximation of the world to the eternal, the demiurge created time, which is the mediating link between the eternal model and the ordered universe of physical reality. And time is able to fulfill this mediating function because it is an *image* of eternity. But, unlike the eternal, which abides the same forever, time is a *moving* image:

Accordingly, seeing that that Model is an eternal Living Creature, He set about making this Universe, so far as He could, of a like kind. But inasmuch as the nature of the Living Creature was eternal, this quality it was impossible to attach in its entirety to what is generated; wherefore He planned to make a movable image of Eternity, and, as He set in order the Heaven, of that Eternity which abides in unity He made an eternal image, moving according to number, even that which we have named Time.  

Time, then, is the moving image of eternity. It is such an image because its movement is circular. A temporal movement that repeats itself in its circular process is "like" the eternity "which abides [forever] in unity."

Yet there is still the unbridgeable disjunction between eternity and time. The distance is absolute. The eternal is alone in self-existent isolation, while the temporal is but a shadowy image severed completely from the eternal. In no sense does eternity *include* time.

It must be observed, parenthetically, that this Platonic view of eternity became the dominant view in subsequent western philosophy: from Aristotle onwards through Spinoza to Kant.

If the life of the world, including human life, is to have a meaning beyond the stretch of time, then eternity must enclose time. The American philosopher Josiah Royce (1855-1916) developed a line of thought of the relation of time to eternity.

Royce's conception of time is similar to that of Husserl. Time is not the time of mathematics, i.e., a series of durationless points. Rather, it is the experience of succession. He
we not only observe that any antecedent member of the series is over and past before the next number comes, but also, and without the least contradiction between these two aspects of our total experience, we observe that this whole succession ... is present at once to our consciousness ... 22

The fact that the serial character of experienced time is also concurrently experienced as a unified whole is the key to Royce's theory of the relation of the temporal to the eternal. More specifically, experienced time is, for us, an experience of Will. On the one hand, the time-span of the experienced present is a limited one. The successions, the "before" and "after," that are held within the unity of the experienced present are relatively few. On the other hand, these short successions of present apprehension portend future experiences in which present intentions of Will may be realized and fulfilled. Time is the experience of yearning for the Other, i.e., that which is beyond any finite realization. But, Royce maintains, this Other is not merely an Other, to be followed by some additional Other in a serial endlessness. This Other is also Totality. And Totality is the Eternal.

For, as a fact, in defining time we have already, and inevitably, defined eternity; and a temporal world must needs be, when viewed in its wholeness, an eternal world.23

Again,

For the goal of every finite life is simply the totality whereof this life, in its finitude, is a fragment. When I seek my own goal, I am looking for the whole of myself. In so far as my aim is the absolute completion of my Selfhood, my goal is identical with the whole life of God.24

Thus, as in finite experience the duration of the "now" is inclusive of past and future, so in the infinite experience every portion of time is simultaneously present.

... I declare that this same temporal world is, when regarded in its wholeness, an Eternal order. And I mean by this assertion nothing whatever but that the whole real content of this temporal order, whether it is viewed from any one temporal instant as past or as present or as future, is at once known, i.e. is consciously experienced as a whole, by the Absolute.

Now the events of the temporal order ... are divided, with reference to the point of view of any finite Self, into what now is, and what no longer is, and what is to be, but is not yet. These same events, however, in so far as they are viewed at once by the Absolute, are for such view, all equally present.25

Thus every portion of time is literally present for God. The temporal world is for God in which events succeed themselves, replaced. The British philosopher Bernard Bosanquet (1848-1923) objects to Royce's theory of the necessary transformation of finite
experiences as included in the divine experience. He gives an example. A man grieves for four hours, because he believes that he has offended his friend. At the end of the four hours, he realizes that he was mistaken, and his grief is dispelled. Now, the question is: is the series of events apprehended by the finite mind apprehended in the exact manner by the Infinite Mind? Now, in finite experience the first term, the feeling of anxiety, is modified by the second term, the feeling of gladness. As the terms are taken up in God's experience, is the first term, the anxiety, modified?

If, in the divine experience, i.e., in eternity, the anxiety is not modified, the Divine Mind would apprehend only a congeries, a lifeless, meaningless, aggregate.

If . . . the latter occurrences do not modify the earlier, . . . then we have no transformation, but only a fixed panorama of exactly the same occurrences which form a diorama for the man who goes through them. This gives a mere aggregate or congeries. Omniscience is then to see in any lapse of successive events nothing more than a finite being would see so far as he followed that identical lapse. Surely this will not do.

But suppose, now, that in the higher consciousness, which views the anxiety and gladness all at once, the anxiety is colored by the gladness. This experience is different from the finite experience of temporal succession, which is marked, first, by anxiety and, second, by gladness. This means, then, that, in the simultaneity of the divine experience, there is an experience that is alien to the absolute consciousness. Hence, on Royce's theory, not all finite experiences would be included in the divine experience. But this consequence, his theory of the Absolute will not permit.

But neither will it permit the transformation of temporal experiences as they are contained in the Divine Mind. Transformation, even in the higher consciousness, is a process, a development, a completion, and this is inconsistent with the static character of the Absolute. In short, neither alternative, i.e., that subsequent events do or do not affect previous events, is allowed for by Royce's theory of eternity.

It would appear, then, that the respect in which time is included in eternity must be one in which process is not excluded from eternity. If time is the experience of process, and if time is brought within eternity, then process must be a factor in eternity.

The third concept of eternity, that it includes time while yet transcending time, may perhaps best be defined by reference to the work of Alfred North Whitehead.

For Whitehead, what he terms "actual entities" are the basic realities of the universe. He writes:

'Actual entities'—also termed 'actual occasions'—are the final real things of which the world is made up. There is no going beyond actual entities to find anything more real. They differ among themselves, of importance, and in capacities of function, and yet in the principles which actually exemplifies all alike, actual entities; and these facts are, all alike, actual entities; and these complex and interdependent.
Actual entities come into existence through a self-creative process. The process involves two factors: an actual entity receives content from an entity, or set of entities, whose life is over, and it also receives structure in terms of general characteristics (eternal objects). Whitehead calls this process by which events create themselves prehension.

A prehension is a process of unifying. Accordingly, nature is a process of expansive development, necessarily transitional from prehension to prehension. What is achieved is thereby passed beyond, but it is also retained as having aspects of itself present to the prehensions which lie beyond it.

Thus nature is a structure of evolving processes. The reality is the process.28

Thus nature is a flux, the passage of events. There is an interminable flow of successive events. Events briefly occur, then pass away into “the dead past.” Only when their lives are over, do they become content for transfer to newly arising events. Yet, even here, there are intimations of immortality and eternity. For, as the above passage indicates, even in their death there are aspects of their individuality present in the future course of events.

The self-constituting process whereby events come into being involves, we have earlier indicated, the taking on of structure and pattern. Events are not only a that; they are also a what. They are defined in terms of some certain general characteristics. Their definition is itself a complex one. On the one hand, the indirect inheritance of pattern by way of the transfer of content from events that have perished predisposes the reception of some characteristics. But, on the other hand, the range of possible characteristics, or eternal objects, is infinite. Since the emerging event is to a large extent self-creative and thus tends toward novelty, there are other characteristics called for. Yet no event can embody all the possible characteristics. There must be some selection of eternal objects, made available consistently with the self-aim of the emerging event, so as to enable the emergence of the novel occasion. The only agency in this process must be itself an actual entity. It must be an actual entity that envisages the eternal objects and serves as the principle of selection, so as to make available to the emerging event its relevant characteristics. This actual entity is God.

Since God envisages the eternal objects, there is, and must be, an eternal aspect of his nature. Whitehead calls this the “primordial nature” of God. This aspect of God is his absoluteness, his eternity.

The ‘primordial nature’ of God is the concrescence of an unity of conceptual feelings, including among their data all eternal objects. The concrescence is directed by the subjective aim, that the subjective forms of the feelings shall be such as to constitute the eternal objects into relevant lures of feeling severally appropriate for all realizable conditions.29

Thus the whole process itself, viewed at any stage as a definite limited fact which has issued from the creativity requires a definite antecedent ground, as an antecedent ground to the definite process of the temporal world. . . . God, who is the ground antecedent to transition, must include all possibilities of physical value conceptually, thereby
holding the ideal forms apart in equal, conceptual realization of knowledge. Thus, as concepts, they are grasped together in the synthesis of omniscience. . . . This ideal world of conceptual harmonization is merely a description of God himself. Thus the nature of God is the complete conceptual realization of the realm of ideal forms. The kingdom of heaven is God. . . . Thus God is the one systematic, complete fact, which is the antecedent ground conditioning every creative act. 30

Thus the eternal God is intricately involved in the world process. He is the eternal antecedent fact who, from out the harmony of his wisdom, provides the lure for the self-realization of the events of world process. But he is more. For he takes within himself, in so far as the harmony of his nature permits, the events for which he is the lure, the antecedent condition. But now the transfer of content is radically different from what occurs in the transfer of content from events to events. There, the duration of the emerging and new event is itself soon to slip into the irretrievable past, to become data for the future. But this does not occur in God; God has no past. He continues to live as he increasingly receives from creature-hood the transfer of content. He is, as it were, protected from perishing, as he undergoes some modification, by reason of his eternal nature, his primordial nature. But, notwithstanding this eternity, his nature is yet changed. There is process in God, process in eternity. This effect, Whitehead calls the “consequent nature” of God.

The ‘consequent nature’ of God is the physical prehension by God of the actualities of the evolving universe. This primordial nature directs such perspectives of objectification that each novel actuality in the temporal world contributes such elements as it can to a realization in God free from inhibitions of intensity by reason of discordance. 31

Now, in the transfer of content from finite actual entities into the consequent nature of God, not all can be saved. While he exercises “a tender care that nothing be lost,” 32 it nevertheless remains that this care is qualified by the import of the phrase, “that can be saved.” Those discordances that destroy the harmony of the Divine Life cannot be received in God’s inner life. In this respect, there is the transformation of content, as the temporal is received in eternity, that Royce’s account of the inclusion of the finite in the infinite cannot provide. But the transformation goes further: the individuality that is saved in the Divine Life is saved in the most comprehensive context of perfection. He is preserved, with undiminished reality, in God. But, consistent with that individuality, he now lives in the harmony of the divine society.

The consequent nature of God is his judgment on the world. He saves the world as it passes into the immediacy of his own life. It is the judgment of a tenderness which loses nothing that can be saved. It is also the judgment of a wisdom which uses what in the temporal world is mere wreckage. 33

. . . there is perfected actuality, in which the many are one everlastingly, without qualification of any sort either of individual everlastingness, immediacy is reconciled with objective immortality. 34

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Finally there is in God what Whitehead calls the "superjective nature" of God. This is the phase in the divine nature whereby the content that is provided him from temporal entities is made available to the new, emerging entities in the process of the ongoing world. If we put this in terms of the lives of personal individuals, their constructive work in the world, as it is received in God's everlasting life, is, by his tender care, given back, with transformation, to the world.

The "superjective" nature of God is the character of the pragmatic value of his specific satisfaction qualifying the transcendent creativity in the various temporal instances.35

In the fourth phase [superject] the creative action completes itself. For the perfected actuality passes back into the temporal world, and qualifies this world so that each temporal actuality includes it as an immediate fact of relevant experience. For the kingdom of heaven is with us today. The action of the fourth phase is the love of God for the world. It is the particular providence for particular occasions. What is done in the world is transformed36 into a reality in heaven, and the reality in heaven passes back into the world. By reason of this reciprocal relation, the love in the world passes into the love in heaven, and floods back again into the world. In this sense, God is the great companion— the fellow-sufferer who understands. . . . Throughout the perishing occasions in the life of each temporal creature, . . . is the transformation of Itself, everlasting in the Being of God.37

Whitehead believes that the period from the Hebrew prophets to the death of Augustine was an especially significant one in the history of religion. In the chapter, "The New Reformation," of his book, Adventures of Ideas, he says that there are three phases of the period. "The first phase is constituted by Plato's publication of his final conviction, towards the end of his life, that the divine element in the world is to be conceived as a persuasive agency and not as a coercive agency."38 The second phase is the embodiment of this idea in the person of Jesus of Nazareth. Whitehead writes of this:

The essence of Christianity is the appeal to the life of Christ as a revelation of the nature of God and of his agency in the world. . . . But there can be no doubt as to what elements in the record have evoked a response from all that is best in human nature. The Mother, the Child, and the bare manger: the lonely man, homeless and self-forgetful, with his message of peace, love, and sympathy: the suffering, the agony, the tender words as life ebbed, the final despair: and the whole with the authority of supreme victory.39

The third phase is the intellectual effort to combine Plato's insight with Jesus' life. The Christian theologians endeavored, perhaps none too successfully, to bring the eternal into the temporal by finding God immanent in Christ and the Holy Spirit. The attempt was aborted, Whitehead believes, because, in the final analysis, the theologians refused to follow their own initial leadings: they refused to apply to God the conditions that hold for temporal process.
The eternal is in time, but, also, time is in the eternal. Time makes a difference in the eternal. The God who is primordial is also the God who is consequent. Charles Hartshorne, who has carried Whitehead’s thought more explicitly into the domain of philosophical theology, argues that what happens in the temporal world does, indeed, make a difference to God, brings added content to the divine experience. There is, Hartshorne says, the absolute nature of God, but there is also his relative nature.

The divine relativity has been largely overlooked in traditional theology. For example, Anselm of Canterbury (1033-1109), following the Greek doctrine of the absolute impassivity of God, writes:

For if thou art passionless, thou dost not feel sympathy; and if thou dost not feel sympathy, thy heart is not wretched from sympathy for the wretched; but this is to be compassionate. But if thou art not compassionate, whence cometh so great consolation to the wretched? . . .

Truly, thou art so in terms of our experience, but thou art not so in terms of thine own. For, when thou beholdest us in our wretchedness, we experience the effect of compassion, but thou dost not experience the feeling. Therefore, thou art both compassionate, because thou dost save the wretched, and spare those who sin against thee; and not compassionate, because thou art affected by no sympathy for wretchedness.40

But it is inconceivable that God should take cognizance of our condition and yet not appreciate it with feeling. Further, Anselm asks us to believe that, if we respond to the divine overture and are saved, this, too, has no affect in the quality of the Divine Life.

However, the Bible speaks with a truer, richer voice. Surely, it must be said of the eternal One that he is affected in the transaction, of which Isaiah speaks, when the great prophet looks forward to the redeeming immanence of God in the Savior:

He is despised and rejected
of men; a man of sorrows, and ac-
quainted with grief: . . .

Surely he hath borne our
griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet
we did esteem him stricken, smitten
of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our
transgressions, he was bruised for
our iniquities: the chastisement of
our peace was upon him; and with
his stripes are we healed. . . .

He was oppressed, and he was
afflicted, yet he opened not his
mouth: he is brought as a lamb to

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the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearsers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth. 41

If our knowledge of God is dependent upon grace, it is also dependent upon what is best in our humanity. And the best in our humanity cannot accept the view that the Father of unbounded love stands in an eternal impassivity, unaffected by, unmoved by, that divine transaction that supremely brings the eternal into time. Nor is the Father unaffected by the salvation that results from the great work of the Savior: "He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied . . . ." The satisfaction is in heaven:

And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them. Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth . . . . 42

Hartshorne writes eloquently of all this:

. . . God has nowhere to hide himself from any sorrow or joy whatever, but must share in all the wealth and burden of the world. The cross is a sublime and matchless symbol of this . . . .

Only a mind completely free of selfish prejudice, ready to enter with instant sympathy into all existent forms of experience, to participate without reserve in every last fragment of feeling and thought anywhere, and able to harmonize all this variety of experience into one tolerable aesthetic whole, can constitute the subject of all change. Precisely this is also the religious idea of God, to whom all hearts are completely open because his sensitive sympathy is absolute in flexibility. 43

Now, as we have indicated in the opening pages of this work, the scriptures speak of an eternity that involves time and a time that involves eternity. The Pauline doxologies lift the refrain that sings of "the generations of the ages of the ages," and of "the age of the ages."

The Hebrew equivalent to the Greek age (οἰκήματα) is עַלְפֵּי. Some have argued this word is derived from the root עֹלַה, concealed, which means to veil from sight, to conceal. The noun suggests a vanishing point, that which is out of mind, that which is in the remote past or future. It thus means a temporal span of indefinite duration. It is used in the earlier Hebrew literature in this restricted sense.

Only in the later Hebrew scriptures is the plural form, עַלְפֵּי, used. The plural is a development of the singular, to raise the idea of eternity in which temporality is encompassed. It is found, for example, in Isaiah:

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But Israel shall be saved in
the Lord with an everlasting
salvation: ye shall not be ashamed
nor confused world without end.\textsuperscript{44}

The expression \textit{everlasting salvation} (שָׁמַרְתָּ הַשָּׁמִיָּה תּוֹלֵלָה) reads, literally, \textit{a salvation of ages}. The phrase translated as \textit{world without end} is in the Hebrew שָׁמוֹר עַד עַד. The plural of עַד, i.e., עַדְדָד, is associated twice with the term רָע. As a noun, the term means \textit{terminus, or duration}, in the sense of \textit{advance} or \textit{perpetuity}. It may also be used as a preposition, and as such it is prefixed to the plural עַדְדָד. The noun form of the term follows the compound term. Thus the phrase translated as \textit{world without end} is in the Hebrew characterized in terms of a doubling of the ideas of terminus and advance in the eternal ages. The expression in the Hebrew may, then, be translated, \textit{to ages of ages}. The idea is that the temporal ages culminate in and advance in the eternal ages, the ages whose advance is forever open. It is thus comparable to the Greek phrase in Ephesians 3:21.\textsuperscript{45}

The very same duality of meaning is found in the Greek term \textit{αἰών}, or \textit{age}. Here, too, the ideas of time and eternity are intertwined. The word is derived from an obsolete primitive noun, \textit{αἰχή}, which apparently means continued \textit{duration}. The word means, properly, an \textit{age}. The age is a temporal one. But by extension the meaning is advanced to connote \textit{perpetuity}. Thus already the primitive term, \textit{αἰχή}, suggests the idea of endlessness. When the present participle ἄίων, \textit{being}, is added, to form the term \textit{αἰών} (age), the implied connotation is made explicit. Temporality is associated with eternity. This association is carried forward in the formation of the word \textit{eternal}, \textit{αἰωνιός}. Thus, by way of its derivation, the term \textit{eternity} is associated with the term \textit{age}, of which itself, as we have just observed, carries an implicit connotation of eternity.

The singular term \textit{αἰών} is found in classical Greek literature. Aristotle speaks of it with reference to its implication in world time:

\begin{quote}
\ldots the sum of existence of the whole heaven, the sum which includes all time \([χρόνος]\) even to infinity, is \textit{aion}, taking the name from \textit{αἰχή ἔστιν} ("to be eternally"), for it is immortal and divine. In dependence on it all other things have their existence and their life \ldots .\textsuperscript{46}
\end{quote}

It may very well be defined as \textit{life} or \textit{vital force}. Homer writes in this regard: "yet shall my life \(\alphaἰών\) long endure" (ἔπι τι ἄηρών \textit{αἰών} δὲ μοι \textit{αἰὼν ἐστετών}). The identification is unequivocally indicated in another passage of Homer's, where he says: "and his sweet life \(\alphaἰών\) was ebbing away."\textsuperscript{47} It appears, therefore, that \textit{αἰών} is connected, not only with \textit{αἰχή}, but also with \textit{αἷμα, to breathe, to blow} force. If this be the case, we are here trenching upon the fully developed view that the singular age, the final and eternal \textit{αἰών}, is the Divine Life. But be that as it may, \textit{αἰών} is now generally regarded as connected with \textit{αἰχή}.

This same word \textit{αἰών} is used in the New Testament to indicate things that appear to be profoundly antithetical: the eternity of God and the duration of the world. Now,
belief in creation brings with it a separation of the ideas of time and eternity. Thus the New Testament employs αἰών in the sense of the time of the world, and, particularly, the end-time of the world. Matthew says that Jesus spoke in parables as a way of disclosing "things which have been kept secret from the foundation of the world." The Master explains to his disciples that the harvest referred to in "the parable of the tares of the field" is "the end of the world" (αἰώνος—age). The margin of the Revised Version translates the phrase as it is literally, the consummation of the age (τῇ συντέλειᾳ αἰώνος). The word συντέλεια, which is in the King James version translated as end, is a compound word. It derives from its verb, συντέλεω, which in its turn is a compound of the preposition σύν (together with, with) and the verb τελέω (to end, i.e., to complete). In composition, which is the case here, the preposition emphasizes the thought of consummation or fulfillment. The end-time, then, is emphatically the time of fulfillment—the fulfillment of the age in its discharge of the divine purpose in the time of the world. There is even here the implicit thought of the supreme age, the eternal age, in which the temporal age is brought to its summons in God. Jesus himself voices this: "Then shall the righteous shine forth as the sun in the kingdom of their Father." Once again time and eternity are intertwined.

There are passages in the New Testament where the singular αἰών, used to refer to the time of the world, is replaced by the plural. Although the plural breaks away from the strict emphasis on world-unity, which is strictly the function of the singular, and approaches the eternity-formula, the reference is still to the unity of world-time. This use of αἰών is found in Hebrews 9:26:

For then must he often have suffered, since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

The phrase the end of the world is in the Greek, συντέλεια τῶν αἰώνων, and means literally, consummation of the ages. Here the plural is used, not to denote eternity, but the dispensations within the unitary age of world-time, through which the divine purpose of redemption is successively realized. The primary age is still the unitary age of world-time, which holds within its embrace the several lesser ages.

The singular form of the term is also used in the New Testament to designate eternity. Jesus declares to his disciples that he is "... the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread he shall live forever ...". The word forever is in the Greek the phrase εἰς τὸ αἰώνα, unto the age. Here the singular form, which primarily denotes world-time, is often strengthened by adding to it the singular genitive of αἰών the Son of God. Hebrews speaks of the Son:

But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is for ever
122 Johnson

and ever: a sceptre of righteousness
is the sceptre of thy kingdom.50

The phrase for ever and for ever is εἰς τὸν οἰόνα τοῦ οἰόνος, which reads unto the age of the age.

There is a further development in the use of the term, οἰόν, to express the idea of eternity. It consists in associating the plural of οἰόν with the singular. This is employed in the passage noted at the beginning of this work. Ephesians 3:21 reads: "throughout all ages, world without end," εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεάς τοῦ οἰόνος τῶν οἰόνων, "unto all generations of the age of the ages."

The phrase is a remarkable one. It contains two formulae. One formula expresses the idea of eternity, or endless continuance, in terms of γενεά, generations. The other formula expresses the same idea in terms of οἰόν and οἰόνες, age and ages. The phrase is peculiar, in that the two formulae are conjoined and the singular, age, is used in the latter formula in connection with the plural of the term. Previously, as in Hebrews 1:8, the singular is used to express eternity, but it is not associated with the plural.

The first formula expressing the idea of eternity, εἰς πάσας τὰς γενεάς (unto all generations), places the generations in the singular οἰόν, the one and single age of eternity. And the second formula places the plural οἰόνες, or ages, within one and single οἰόν, or age, of eternity. The use of the singular has the effect of defining eternity as the one eternal fact of the living God. It has the further effect of declaring that the ages within the one eternal age are not merely abstract times, but the times of countless generations who, through redemption, are enclosed in the eternal divine embrace. The emphasis is on the individuals who are redeemed in God. In the one, eternal fact of the Divine Life, there is, indeed, in the language of Whitehead, "... the phase of perfected actuality, in which the many are one everlastinglly, without qualification of any loss either of individual identity or of completeness of unity. In everlastingness, immediacy is reconciled with objective immortality."

But there is yet a further, and final, development of the eternity formula. This development consists in the formation of the double plural. It is the most complete expression for eternity that the New Testament writers employ. It is used only in the New Testament.

The formula is the one, noted earlier, found in Galatians 1:5: "for ever and ever," εἰς τοὺς οἰόνας τῶν οἰόνων, unto the ages of the ages. Here eternity is defined as "ages upon ages." If, now, we combine the two forms of the eternity formula, i.e., Ephesians 3:21 and Galatians 1:5, we get the result that the one eternal age is, instead of a static one, the age of movement and life. "But the Lord is the true God, he is the living God, and an everlasting king ..."52 Eternity is no abstract thing; it is the actuality of the living God. Eternity is the supreme and comprehensive experience of God. And the Christian promise is that the time that is the form of our present experience shall, without essential loss, be embraced within the life of Him who ever liveth.

How shall companionship with the Divine Life be interpreted? But before we consider this, the final subject upon which this work deals, a brief consideration of an allied question should be made.

We have seen, in connection with our consideration of Whitehead's theory, that God in his primordial eternity is associated with finite events in two respects: he receives into
himself content derived from finite events, and, secondly, he makes available the content to the ongoing world of finite events. There is thus development in the divine nature and an offering from that nature to the future of the world. In this last phase, there is divine enactment in the actual world. This enactment, we may say, brings eternity into time.

The Christian conception of God differs in certain essential aspects from Whitehead’s conception. This is particularly so with respect to the divine enactment that creates the critical juncture of eternity and time. For Christianity that enactment is Jesus Christ in history. We may say that this personal event is within God’s eternal envisagement. For of this man it is written that he is “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world,”53 that he “verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times . . . .”54 He “was manifest in these last times”:

And the Word was made
flesh, and dwelt among us, (and
we beheld his glory, the glory
as of the only begotten of the
Father,) full of grace and truth.55

But to return to the question: how shall companionship with the supreme experience be interpreted? There are two answers to this question. First, it cannot be understood in conceptually clear or precise terms. John writes, “Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be.”56 We know our present state as children of God, but we cannot comprehend the state of our future glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath
not seen, nor ear heard, neither
have entered into the heart of
man, the things which God hath
prepared for them that love him.57

Second, there is even now some indication of the nature of our participation in heaven’s glory. Paul states this where he writes: “For now we see through a glass, darkly . . . : Now I know in part.”58 What this signifies is that our knowledge of the future is, and must be, symbolic and metaphorical. The phrase “For now we see through a glass, darkly” can be translated as either “For we see at present by means of a mirror in a riddle” or “For we see now through a mirror, in (the fashion) of a riddle.” The mirror is a reflecting mirror. It is not of the order of a glass through which one looks. The word translated as “mirror” is ἵπποστροφον, which means “reflector.” The adverb “darkly” is in the Greek a prepositional phrase, ἐν κίνδυνε ὑμεῖς, which means “in a riddle.” And these are not given directly, but only as reflections.

What the future shall be, then, is, as the term suggests, an enigma. But the enigma, given through the medium of human thought and language, indicates, even now, something of the reality to which it refers. What we do know is, as Paul says, that our reflected glimpses of the realities of heaven will one day give way to direct and immediate appre-
hension: "but then face to face: ... but then I shall know even as also I am known." It is remarkable that the word "know" is not the same word where Paul says that he now knows "in part," but that in the future he will "know even as also I am known." His partial knowledge is γνῶσις, which is the approximate knowledge of the learner. The knowledge that he anticipates is illumination. The word is ἐπιγνῶσις (know-well): "But then I shall know-well, as also I was well-known." Paul is saying that, as his Lord knew him well when he was converted, so in such fashion he will know in heaven. Then it shall be, not so much that we know God, but rather that we are known of God.

Paul's discussion of this topic is formulated in conceptual terms, terms that have to do with knowledge. The terms are, to be sure, but human terms. But there are also terms that are symbolic and metaphorical. The New Testament employs these terms in its effort to throw light on the future that awaits the children of God.

Now, we may experience some hesitancy to accept the view that our knowledge is symbolic. This is especially so in our time when exact science reigns so predominantly. We fear that, while science yields knowledge and truth, so it is widely believed, religion does no such thing with respect to the declarations of faith.

However, there is here a great confusion. For science itself is symbolic. The constructions and theories of empirical science are the symbolic forms with which the attempt is made to collate and systematize our perceptual encounter with the world. Were we to ask the question, "are these constructions and theories 'literally' true—true of the world as it 'really' is?" we would ask an irrational and unanswerable question. We would be asking for a knowledge that transcends the very conditions of knowledge. That is but nonsense. The inescapable fact is that we are here, as in all forms of thought and discourse, confined to our "community of subjective form."59

The scientific symbol is an operational symbol, i.e., its reference is always to the perceptual. The religious symbol is an intuitive symbol, i.e., its function is to receive the sensible and intuitible and then mould that content so as to apply it to the non-sensible and non-intuitible. The process is one in which the symbol leads into the reality symbolized and in so doing transcends itself in insight.

Now, it is in the Book of Revelation that this is done par excellence. The writer draws his images from the range of human experience: from heaven and earth, from darkness and light, from sun and moon, from fountains and rivers and seas, from country and city, from jewels and gold, from tears and sorrows, from joy and gladness, from death and life, and from bride-hood and the lamb of the field. Yet all these images give way to insight, if we will but wait and let the imagery lead us on and upward. Linger for a moment. You will see neither darkness nor sunlight, for there is no pause in the activities of daylight time and there is no need of borrowed light. You will see no sea of sorrow and unrest, for now they are buried in the depth of the past. But you will see the eternal fountains of grace, "the throne of God and the Lamb," from which flows the life-giving river. You will see on its banks the waters of life that yield the healing. You will see the city whose streets are the golden ways of peace and happiness. You will see no tears, for these streams of sadness throughout humanity's long history are wiped away in the divine gift of serenity. You will hear no sound of mourning or crying.
And I John saw the holy city,
new Jerusalem, coming down
from God out of heaven, prepared
as a bride adorned for her husband.

"As a bride adorned for her husband." Here the imagery speaks of the intimacy of communion, of the reality of the sharing of lives in the Divine Life. This is the final harmony.

And I beheld, and lo, in the
midst of the throne . . . stood
a lamb as it had been slain . . .
And he came and took the
book out of the right hand of
him that sat upon the throne.

And they sung a new song,
saying, Thou art worthy to take
the book, and to open the seals
thereof: for thou wast slain, and
hast redeemed us to God by
thy blood out of every kindred,
and tongue, and people, and nation.60

And I saw a new heaven and
a new earth: for the first
heaven and the first earth were
passed away; and there was no
more sea.61
And when all things shall
be subdued unto him, then shall
the Son also himself be subject
unto him, that God may be all in all.62

Notes
2. Ibid.
3. Ibid.
6. Ibid., pp. 207.
9. Ibid., p. 69.
10. Ibid., pp. 57-60.
12. Ibid., p. 44.
13. Ibid., pp. 80-81.
15. Whitehead, op. cit., p. 69.
23. Ibid., p. 133.
24. Ibid., p. 135.
25. Ibid., pp. 138-41.
32. Ibid., p. 525.
33. Ibid.
34. Ibid., p. 532.
35. Ibid., p. 135.
36. Italics mine.
37. Ibid., pp. 57-58.
39. Ibid., p. 121.
44. Isa. 45:17.
45. J. P. Green, Sr. translates the phrase *world without end* as *to the forevers of eternity*. See his *The Interlinear Bible*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1976). Thomas Scott says of the expression: "... the *eternal* salvation by Messiah, strongly marked by the repetition and augmentation of the phrase, to the *ages of eternity*." See Thomas Scott, *The Holy Bible*, 6 vols. (Boston: Samuel T. Armstrong, 1832). The Septuagint renders the Hebrew into Greek: ἐτών οὐ αἰώνος ἐτί, and translates it as: *for evermore*. More literally, it may be read as: *yet unto the age*, i.e., eternity.
52. Jer. 10:10.
56. 1 John 3:2.
57. 1 Cor. 2:9.
58. 1 Cor. 13:12.
59. "Science aims at constructing a world that shall be symbolic of commonplace experience."
63. 1 Cor. 15:28.