

CHAPTER I

THE UNREDEEMED CONSCIENCE

*The processive character of knowing
reminds us that we are always on the way
to a fuller account of all that makes up
the moral reality of action.
-Richard Gula¹*

OVERVIEW

I have yet to find any contemporary writings on conscience that refer to it as other than ‘conscience.’ But the etymology of the word changes significantly when translated from Hebrew to Greek to Latin. In English all of these differences are reduced to one word making it a concept very much in need of clarification. This is especially true in view of the conundrum introduced by Freud this past century, which asserts that conscience is the punishing voice of parental dictates. At the very least, a distinction needs to be made between the traditional description of conscience as a ‘Voice for God’ and parental manifestations that are merely god-like in authority. To that end, I will define and build on three definitions of conscience: Heart conscience, Ego conscience, and the Christ conscience process.

In the Hebrew Old Testament, the heart – not the head – was considered the center of a person and the conduit of God’s voice, i.e. the Holy Spirit. Likewise, in this work, Heart conscience will always refer to the Holy Spirit speaking directly to the Mind through the Heart.² But Heart conscience is nearly impossible to discern while parents speak with god-like authority because their voices can significantly block the heartfelt flow of that ‘still quiet voice’ by their use of shaming judgments. Later, when the Ego learns to emulate parents, it too will block the Holy Spirit by exercising the power to self-shame. Since both impediments are nearly universal occurrences, what is commonly referred to as ‘conscience’ seems better described as Ego conscience, which I also call the *unredeemed* conscience or Voice-of-conscience. Stated another way, Ego conscience

¹ Gula, R. (1991), ‘First Response,’ in R .E. Smith, Ed., *Catholic Conscience Foundation and Formation*, The Knights of Columbus: New Haven, p.101.

² Spirit, Soul, Mind, and Body (brain-body) are all capitalized in this work as they name four distinct worlds of being as described by Kabbalah. Heart is capitalized when it describes conscience as the Voice for God and when it refers to the combined effect of the heart chakras of the seven major auric bodies. These distinctions and the reasons for them are discussed at length in Chapters II and V.

is a *complex* created by archetypal authority that constellates Moral authority in parents. In turn, this obliges the Ego to create ego-aspects³ that strive to cope with that authority by exercising the power to self-shame. That definition is based on Carl Jung's conception of archetype and complex, which I draw upon in my own conceptualizations of conscience.

It will be argued here that the process of *redeeming* conscience, so it can speak as a Voice for God, will always require the intervention of a higher power that can reliably channel the Holy Spirit within the human Mind while that 'Voice for God' is otherwise blocked by Ego and archetype. I will advocate for Jesus Christ as the most reliable channel of the Holy Spirit in Western culture. For that reason, I generally refer to the redemption of conscience as a *Christ conscience process* since it is Christ that redeems it by acting as an unimpeded channel of the Holy Spirit wherever the Ego becomes willing. The Christ conscience process is not a state of being. It is best thought of as ongoing series of interventions by which the Heart's conscience is gradually restored. I do accept that other higher powers can also channel the Holy Spirit, and in the clinical chapters of this book I examine that potential as well.

The thought of Jesus Christ 'channeling' the Holy Spirit may put off some readers who associate the concept with 'psychics' channeling spirits of the dead or individuals channeling spirits who purport to be enlightened. But I use it for that very reason: the Holy Spirit is the uncaused cause of the world of Spirit, *the unblemished source of all that is Spirit over the face of the waters.*⁴ In this work, the *image* of Christ – and his ability to be an unimpeded conduit of the Holy Spirit, is crucial to most of the interventions described herein. To my way of thinking, Christ does more than 'evoke' the Holy Spirit. His *image* literally embodies the Holy Spirit, and he willingly extends its power to all who ask in his name.⁵ His *image* is a channel – an unerring conduit, of the living Spirit, which he offers freely to any who ask.

The Spirit of God has 'hovered over the waters' from time immemorial; so while the Holy Spirit flows unhesitatingly through Christ, it is not restricted to his image. It can flow through myriad sources, just as it touched and inspired all the prophets and writers of the Old and New Testament. Today, it can flow through human beings who evoke it in the name of Jesus Christ. Finally, I accept that the higher powers of other religions and other cultures can also channel the Holy Spirit; that the Spirit of God, which hovers over the waters, can incarnate in any vessel that seeks to bring us closer to God ineffable. My personal preference, and that of most of my clients, is that Christ be that higher power; but it is only that: a personal preference. No *image* has a monopoly on the Holy Spirit.

³ In this work, Ego is treated as an archetype. Its capitalization is always a reference to its archetypal origin. Within the Mind, Ego manifests as self-images called ego-aspects. Each of us acquires numerous ego-aspects in the course of development. The most common types are identified and addressed throughout the body of this work.

⁴ In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth. ²Now the earth was formless and empty, darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. ³And God said, "Let there be light," and there was light. ⁴God saw that the light was good, and He separated the light from the darkness. ⁵God called the light "day," and the darkness he called "night." And there was evening, and there was morning—the first day. (Genesis 1: 1-5)

⁵ According to the Gospels, Jesus Christ was conceived by the Virgin Mary of the Holy Spirit, baptized of the Holy Spirit at the River Jordon, and resurrected by the Holy Spirit.

And that is notably true in clinical settings, which have provided most of the data supporting my theses.

Wherever possible, I will use Ego conscience, Heart conscience, and the Christ conscience process to describe the sense of conscience under discussion; but where I use the word alone it will almost always refer to Ego conscience as this is the unspoken frame of reference of most other writers on the subject. In this work, that egoistic sense of conscience will always refer to manifestations of archetype and Ego that constrict or block the *conscious* experience of the Holy Spirit in the Mind. In contrast, Heart conscience will always refer to the unimpeded flow of the Holy Spirit through the Heart directly into the Mind. It represents an ideal state modeled for us by Jesus Christ.

The Christ conscience process will always refer to *the power of the Holy Spirit channeled through the imaginal presence of Jesus Christ as he strives to restore Heart conscience*. The redemption of conscience is best thought of as a work in progress rather than a one step transformation. It is the ideal realized by Christ and offered to each of us through his discernment and the forgiving power of the Holy Spirit. So long as any aspect of the Ego insists on being self-reliant, it has the power to block the flow of Christ's discernment and the Holy Spirit from the portion of consciousness it organizes. But wherever an ego-aspect becomes willing, Christ can remove that sense of separation.

It has taken me many years to understand what is meant by commonly held conceptions of conscience and its perpetuation by parents, culture, and Ego. What I have finally deduced is that *Ego conscience is the unintended creation of an Empowering archetype, whose primary function is the constellation of Temporal authority in parental images*. But intended or not, this archetype imparts god-like authority to the actions of parents. More to the point, Temporal authority will evolve into Moral authority when the child is old enough to grasp absolute opposites governing the Mind. The growing awareness of absolute opposites must precede the emergence of conscience. That emergence occurs around age seven when the child is said to reach the 'age of reason.' At this age the child is said to acquire a conscience. Once the child becomes an adult, an internalized image of Jesus Christ, imbued with the power of the Holy Spirit, can terminate the Temporal and Moral authority constellated in the parental images. (I have observed this repeatedly in my clinical practice.) The internalized Christ has the power to nullify the constellational effects of the Empowering archetype without having to assume that authority. The Holy Spirit empowers Christ to further redeem Ego conscience by baptizing, convicting, converting, and consecrating the Ego's aspects until there is an unimpeded flow of the Spirit through the Heart to all aspects of the Ego willing to receive its grace. In Christ's own words it is the Holy Spirit who is the source of this power and forgiveness.⁶

Christ's inherent power, coupled with his power to channel the Holy Spirit, can manifest in five different ways: 1) it empowers him to staunch the flow of the

⁶ "But whoever blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; he is guilty of an eternal sin (Mark 3:29)." "And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but anyone who blasphemes against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven (Luke 12:10)." The reason why Christ can be blasphemed against, but not the Holy Spirit, is that the Holy Spirit is the source of forgiveness. When we blaspheme against the Holy Spirit we are cutting ourselves off from the source of forgiveness. In dying on the cross Christ completely subjected himself to will of God and became the perfect channel of the Holy Spirit for all who ask in his name.

Empowering archetype in any parental image, which effectively terminates the image's authority both temporally and as a Voice-of-conscience; 2) it empowers him to release any ego-aspect held in shameful bondage by baptizing it; 3) it empowers him to offer the power of his discernment to any ego-aspect who willingly asks for it; 4) it empowers him to purify the Heart for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; and 5) it empowers him to convict *any image* with the power of the Holy Spirit and thereby transform it. The transformation of Ego conscience is a long and arduous process even with Christ's empowerment by the Holy Spirit; but it is doable if the therapist and client are willing.

Traditionally, Christian theology insisted on the primacy of Ego conscience on the assumption that *it* spoke as the Voice for God. In the 20th century that assertion was challenged by Freudian psychoanalysis, which amply demonstrated that parental images are imbued with a god-like authority that generally contradicts the Voice for God by being unforgivably punishing. Psychoanalysis does not use the concept of archetype to explain how parents become this Voice-of-conscience, but Freud leaves no doubt in the reader's mind that the father's voice is that voice and that it is both superordinate and mercilessly punishing in his clinical experience.⁷ The conflicting assertions of theology and Freudian psychology have brought the two disciplines to an impasse this past century, to a point where one hears little of conscience from either side. In this work, I seek to resolve their conflict by conceptualizing conscience within a theory of levels wherein conscience can only function as a Voice for God when *it manifests through a freely chosen higher power such as Jesus Christ channeling the Holy Spirit*. Where the Holy Spirit is blocked by constellations of the Empowering archetype, and there is no higher power to redress this blockage, the individual is seen to remain in the thrall of a Voice-of-conscience expressed thru parental images and the individual's own Ego creations. Stated another way, for the vast majority of people conscience merely expresses the dictates of parents and ego-aspects created to cope with their archetypally generated Temporal and Moral authority. The goal of treatment, as regards Ego conscience, is the termination of this authority by a higher power who can then act as a freely chosen conduit of the Voice for God.

It will be argued here that the power undergirding the Voice-of-conscience (i.e. Ego conscience) exists *a priori*; that it is a genetically determined archetypal function. It is most like a Jungian archetype with parents forming the initial complex defining it. As formed by parents, the character of Ego conscience seems best described as *unredeemed*, and remains so while it only speaks with a parental voice, or the voice of other mortals claiming a parent's Moral authority.⁸ By contrast, a *redeemed* conscience would be a

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Freud, S. (1923), 'The Ego and the Id,' in Rickman, J. Editor (1957), *A General Selection from the Works of Sigmund Freud*, Doubleday: New York.

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Significantly, the parental voice most often used by conscience is the father's. This fact may help to explain not only the perpetuation of patriarchy, but also the reason why patriarchal institutions – including institutional churches, have insisted on the primacy of conscience even in its unredeemed state. By generalization, the authority is passed to other males throughout the individual's life, unless a person can find a way to redeem conscience. Freud was unsuccessful in his own attempts to treat it.

freely chosen incarnation of God that provides discernment and forgiveness. *From a Christian perspective, that incarnation is Jesus Christ channeling the Holy Spirit.*⁹

Historically, Ego conscience has shown itself exceedingly resistant to change once constellated by parents – in no small measure because its god-like authority *has been mistaken* for the Voice for God. Yet this need not be so. In my work, I have found it is possible to dramatically alter a person's felt experience of Ego conscience provided the client is willing to interiorize an image of Jesus Christ that can channel the Holy Spirit.¹⁰

The Mind's Voice-of-conscience has been a source of study and revelation for several thousand years. The foundation and fall of civilizations may well flow from the moral convictions shaped by a culture's collective Voices-of-conscience.¹¹ Ancient Greeks personified it as "furies" older than the Greek pantheon.¹² In Catholic moral theology since Thomas Aquinas, it has been treated as the final moral arbitrator of thought and behavior. Since its formulation by Thomas Aquinas, Roman Catholic tradition:

“...affirm[s] the inherent freedom of the human person to make choices for good or bad. The instrument of this choice in the area of morality is conscience which one is bound to follow even when mistaken. Experience, scripture, and Church teaching agree that judgments of conscience can be in error...Still, conscience holds primacy and must be followed; if one acts against one's conscience, one is certainly in the wrong.”¹³

Given this sense of primacy, which I believe is a discernible felt experience in many people, the particular formation of an individual's Voice-of-conscience will have significant consequences for the individual as well as those in their relational field.

My own interest in conscience grew out of a desire to understand the archetypal, god-like, authority that my adult clients attribute to parental images, even when the client's past and present experience of those parents is clearly abusive. For the longest time, it did not even occur to me to consider Ego conscience as a critical variable since it is rarely, if ever, addressed in the current psychological literature.¹⁴ But, finally, I recalled Freud's assertion that what we call conscience was essentially the introjection of parental values.¹⁵ He assigned it considerable, if pejorative, power in shaping the individual's personality and resistance to treatment. His assertions effectively and

⁹ This definition is derived from McBrien's definition of a *Christian* conscience. See McBrien, R.P. (1980), *Catholicism*, Vol. II, Winston Press: Oak Grove, pp.999.

¹⁰ In theory, other archetypal images such as Quan Yin or Shiva might have the same effect if they are congruent with the individual's beliefs and can demonstrate the power to channel the Holy Spirit.

¹¹ Breasted, J.H. (1933), *The Dawn Of Conscience*, Charles Scribner's Sons: New York.

¹² Graves, R. (1960), *The Greek Myths*, Penguin Books: New York, p.424.

¹³ Wyerl, D.W. (1991), 'The Bishop, Conscience and Moral Teaching,' in R. E. Smith, Editor, *Catholic Conscience Foundation and Formation*, The Knights of Columbus: New Haven, p.127.

¹⁴ A notable exception may be the Psychoanalytic literature, which few - outside a small circle of analysts, venture to examine.

¹⁵ Freud, S. (1923), 'The Ego and the Id,' in Rickman, J., Editor (1957), op. cit.

justifiably weakened its traditional role as *vox Dei*, i.e. Voice for God.¹⁶ As a consequence, today we speak of situational ethics as distinct from the moral absolutes imposed by a Voice-of-conscience. We rightly minimize its power as a Voice for God. We seek other ways to explain the effects of Ego conscience, and its 'cure' by other means (e.g. drugs, prescribed and illicit).

The Analytical Psychology developed by Carl Jung offers an alternate view of conscience. Jung believed conscience could be better understood as an archetypally determined psychic function that had the potential of judging parents and culture, as well as merely reflecting them.¹⁷ When Ego conscience is treated as an archetype, then the Voice-of-conscience can be seen as using parents to express itself, rather than vice versa (as Freud asserted). While archetypal imprinting can persist indefinitely, it can also be dramatically altered by radical experiences with other archetypally defined images such as the incarnation of Jesus Christ in the Mind. The parentification of conscience can be nullified because the Empowering archetype exists apart from the parental images it constellates. Parents are not the Empowering archetype; rather the Empowering archetype imparts Temporal and Moral authority to their voices and actions, and under the right conditions that authority can be stripped from the images.

Before proceeding to my clinical observations for redeeming Ego conscience, I think it important for the reader to have a greater appreciation of the psychological and theological perspectives, historical and current, that have sought to define conscience. I make no effort to be exhaustive, as thousands of chapters have been written on this subject; but, hopefully, I can provide a frame of reference for evaluating my own observations and conclusions. As regards the psychological perspective, I will restrict my findings to Freud and Jung. By identifying it as a subset of his super-ego construct, Freud legitimized the study of conscience as a psychological phenomenon. His own observations have decisively shaped the perspective of several generations of psychologists, philosophers, and theologians. Jung's conception of the Voice-of-conscience – particularly as to its origin, is in marked contrast to Freud. He allowed it

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I am clear in my own mind that *Vox Dei* always refers to the Holy Spirit channeled by Jesus Christ. But theologians variously, and often obtusely, define it. Harakas, a Greek Orthodox theologian (Harakas, S. (1983), *Toward Transfigured Life*, Light and Life Publishers), asserts that: "...the unique experience of conscience is the profound sense of serious moral obligation and personal responsibility with which the conscience is identified. This imperative character of the conscience is its distinguishing characteristic. And it is in this sense that it is properly referred to as the 'voice of God'...this phrase cannot properly be applied to the conscience if we are primarily referring to the content of the conscience. It is as we focus on the demanding pressure of the conscience upon our being, the profound sense of obligation, that the understanding of the conscience as the voice of God makes sense (p. 110)." According to Harakas, and I would venture, any other theologian, conscience as the *Voice for God* cannot be taken literally: God does not speak to each person telling him or her what is right or wrong. "If that were the case, then there could never be differing ethical perceptions of the same moral situation (p.111)." Pope John Paul describes it similarly: "...in the depths of their conscience 'individuals discover a law which they do not make for themselves but which they are bound to obey, whose voice, ever summoning them to love and to do what is good and to avoid what is evil, rings in their hearts when necessary with the command: Do this, keep away from that. For inscribed in their hearts by God, human beings have a law whose observance is their dignity and in accordance with which they are to be judged.'" (R. E. Smith, Editor (1991), *Catholic Conscience Foundation and Formation*, The Knights of Columbus: New Haven, p.2.). To summarize, the *Vox Dei* or *Voice for God* is always a reference to the felt experience of *authority* of the highest order, very likely Heart conscience.

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I am very much indebted to Anthony Stevens' explorations of the biological basis of Jung's theory of Archetypes for this perspective and for helping me to appreciate its value in determining behavior. Stevens, A. (1983), *Archetypes: A Natural History of the Self*, Quill: New York.

could be treated as an archetype of the collective unconscious, but also felt it was ‘psychoid’ in nature, i.e. open to spiritual influence. Both men have strongly influenced my own thinking. My theological understanding of conscience is grounded primarily in the Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic traditions, though I also draw on theological sources outside those traditions. Throughout the entire Christian era, the Greek and Roman traditions have consistently sought to define and inform conscience. While other sects and denominations may legitimately disagree with their perspectives, it seemed best to reference them as primary sources given their prominence over so many centuries.

Assertions concerning the inherent nature of conscience are bound to disagree. The minimalist view – which only gained prominence in the 20th century, draws heavily on psychoanalytic conceptualizations that treat conscience as dependent upon parents and culture for its creation and maintenance; in effect, it strips the concept of any Godly connection and reassigns that power to parents and culture. By contrast, Jung argued that, “We...give priority to the assertion which conscience itself makes – that it is a voice of God. This view is not a contrivance of the intellect, it is a primary assertion of the phenomenon itself: a numinous imperative which from ancient times has been accorded a far higher authority than the human intellect.”¹⁸ Traditional moral theology also treats conscience as the repository of God’s will for us when not otherwise blunted by culture or willfulness. These distinctions are subtle but significant: conscience cannot claim primacy while it is treated solely as the creation of parents since it must be able to judge parental and cultural values not simply conform to them. The reader must grapple with these divergent views as s/he reads this chapter. The question I seek to answer is whether Heart conscience retains its innate potential to express the Voice for God, even when initially blocked by constellations of the Empowering archetype and the ego-aspects created to cope with those constellations. Or stated another way, can Ego conscience – though originally in the thrall of parents and culture, be transformed, through relationship with Christ, into a reliable conduit of the Voice for God?

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

Freud’s Superego

Freud’s definition of conscience challenged its historical position as a Voice for God. Simultaneously, its inclusion in his tripartite system of dynamics (i.e. id, ego, super-ego) made it an integral part of his study of personality.¹⁹ Other theorists, notably Jung,

¹⁸ Jung, C.G. (1958), ‘A Psychological View of Conscience,’ Hall, R.F.C., Trans., (1970) *The Collected Works of C. G. Jung*, Vol.10, Bollingen Series XX, Princeton University Press: New Jersey, p. 453.

¹⁹ In this section of the discussion I generally treat the ego as singular because this is how Freud defined it. But clinically, the ego is invariably fragmented when encountered in active imagination, and then it is more appropriate to speak of *ego-aspects*. Beyond this current discussion, and throughout the remainder of this work, that will be the term

disagree with Freud as to whether it was parents or parents-constellated-by-archetype that shaped conscience. But few would question the observation that parents are crucial to the initial expression of Ego conscience as most people experience it; and Freud must be credited with obliging us to take this more critical view of it.

It was Freud's contention that, "Although it is amenable to every later influence, it [Super-ego/conscience] preserves throughout life the character given it by its derivation from the father-complex, namely, the capacity to stand apart from the ego and to rule it.... the mature ego remains subject to its domination. As the child was once compelled to obey its parents, so the ego submits to the categorical imperative pronounced by its super-ego".²⁰ C. S. Hall was an expositor of Freud. His primer on Freudian psychology was widely read in the mid 20th century. Hall reiterates Freud's thesis: "It [super-ego] represents the ideal rather than the real, and it strives for perfection rather than for reality or pleasure. The super-ego is the person's moral code. It develops out of the ego as a consequence of the child's assimilation of his parents' standards regarding what is good and virtuous [ego-ideal] and what is bad and sinful [conscience]. By assimilating the moral authority of his parent, the child replaces their authority with his own inner authority. The internalization of parental authority enables the child to control his behavior in line with their wishes, and by doing so to secure their approval and avoid their displeasure [brackets added]".²¹

Freud conceptualized the super-ego as comprised of two parts: the ego ideal and the conscience. In his conceptualization, the ego ideal reinforced the good with pride while conscience punished the bad with guilt and shame. Thus, the role of conscience is always negative in Freud's paradigm. Whereas the ego ideal rewards with a sense of pride, conscience is seen as the internal source of punishment for bad thoughts and actions. To paraphrase C. S. Hall, the super-ego has the same control over the child's ego as the parents had over the child. It holds the ego responsible for moral and immoral acts. Moreover, the ego could be punished for merely thinking of doing something. A thought was the same as a deed in the eyes of the super-ego. Punishment could be experienced as guilt or shame, or other negative feelings, or even injury, illness or loss.²²

Freud's view of conscience was pessimistic as well as negative. He felt that its unrealistic, unforgiving morality was atavistic and unhealthy, particularly, in light of the ego's ability to "realistically" defer gratification of id impulses. "The super-ego forces the ego to see things as they should be and not as they are. The id forces the ego to see the world as the id wishes it would be. In either case, the secondary process, reality testing, and the reality principle are perverted by irrational forces."²³ In the mid 20th century, Ayn Rand championed Freud's appreciation of the ego, *in extremis*, in such novels as

of choice when referring to the self-images encountered in active imagination. Whenever 'Ego' is capitalized, it refers to the archetype that generates new ego-aspects demanded by development and circumstances.

²⁰ Freud, S. (1923), 'The Ego and the Id,' in Rickman, J. (1957) Ed., *A General Selection from the Works of Sigmund Freud*, Doubleday: New York, p. 227 -228.

²¹ Hall, C.S. (1954), *A Primer of Freudian Psychology*, The World Publishing Co.: New York, p. 25.

²² Hall, C.S. (1954), op. cit. p. 25 -30.

²³ Hall, C.S. (1954), op. cit. p. 45.

*Fountainhead*²⁴ and *Atlas Shrugged*²⁵; and her philosophy, in turn, was used by Brandon²⁶ to develop his psychology of self-esteem. Ayn Rand touched a cord in the agnostic, upwardly mobile, post-war generation by her espousal of rational self-interest as the basis for action, and productive achievement as the noblest endeavor. That notwithstanding, and even as Freud denigrated and secularized conscience, and sought at every turn to undermine its authority, a close reading of his papers will show that he also imbued it with an "almost daemonic power" to decisively cripple the very ego he championed.²⁷ In the end, Freud was forced to conclude that conscience was truly overbearing, exceedingly resistant to therapeutic intervention, and often the *primary cause* of neurotic characterological development such as found in depressive, hysterical, and obsessive compulsive disorders.²⁸

"There is no doubt that there is something in these people that sets itself against their recovery and dreads its approach as though it were a danger...In the end we come to see that we are dealing with what may be called a "moral" factor, a sense of guilt, which is finding atonement in the illness and is refusing to give up the penalty of suffering. We are justified in regarding this rather disheartening explanation as conclusive. But as far as the patient is concerned this sense of guilt is dumb; it does not tell him he is guilty; he does not feel guilty he simply feels ill. This sense of guilt expresses itself only as a resistance to recovery which is extremely difficult to overcome...This description we have given applies to the most extreme instances of this state of affairs, but in a lesser measure this factor has to be reckoned with in very many cases, perhaps in all severe cases of neurosis."²⁹

One reason for Freud's inability to alter conscience appears to be his unwillingness to address shame. In his early writings he acknowledged the role of shame in the repression of 'incompatible ideas,'³⁰ but failed to focus on shame as the primary

²⁴ Rand, Ayn (1943), *The Fountainhead*, Signet: New York.

²⁵ Rand, Ayn (1957), *Atlas Shrugged*, Signet: New York.

²⁶ Branden, N. (1994), *The Six Pillars of Self-Esteem*, Bantam: New York.

²⁷ Jung, C.G. (1958), op. cit. p. 446.

²⁸ Freud considered the role of the superego to be central in three personality disorders that to this day remain pervasive and difficult to treat: obsessive-compulsive, hysteria, and depression. see Freud, S. (1923), op. cit. p.229 - 230 and p.233.

²⁹ Freud, S. (1923), op. cit. p. 228 -229.

³⁰ "By means of my psychical work I had to overcome a psychical force in the patients which was opposed to the pathogenic ideas becoming conscious (being remembered). A new understanding seemed to open before my eyes when it occurred to me that this must no doubt be the same psychical force that had played a part in the generating of the hysterical symptom and had at that time prevented the pathogenic idea from becoming conscious. . . . I recognized a universal characteristic of such ideas: they were all of a distressing nature, calculated to arouse the affects of shame, of self-reproach, and of psychical pain, and the feeling of being harmed; they were all of a kind that one would prefer not to have experienced, that one would rather forget. From all this there arose, as it were automatically, the thought of defense. . . . The patient's ego had been approached by an idea which proved to be incompatible, which provoked on the part of the ego a repelling force of which the purpose was defense against this incompatible idea. This defense was in fact successful. The idea in question was forced out of consciousness and out of memory [Breuer and Freud 1895,

reason for repression. Melvin Lansky, a senior training analyst, writing in the *Journal of the American Psychoanalytic Association*, reviews all of Freud's major writings plus those of major contributors to psychoanalytic thought over the past eleven decades, and concludes that *the discipline has utterly failed to address the central role shame plays in the function of conscience.*³¹ His concluding speculation as to why is very telling. To quote him:

Perhaps this turning away from shame is due to the fact that the shame of others makes us feel about ourselves what we do not like to feel: vulnerable, weak, powerless, dependent, contingent, disconnected, and valueless. By contrast, the guilt of others, for all of its severity and pain, gives both the person experiencing that guilt and us as onlookers a sense of power. Despite the pain from the judgments of the guilty person's conscience, we as psychoanalysts feel about ourselves something of the sense of completeness, autonomy, and power that we would like to feel. One might speculate that the emerging shame of the other stirs up our own difficulty bearing shame, our helplessness, and our anxiety that we may prove defective and fail in our professional roles *because we, in facing the patient's incipient experience of shame, will be found to have nothing effective to offer.* Perhaps the prospect of experiencing the shame of another—especially someone who has turned to us for help—so stirs up in us feelings of helplessness, ineffectiveness, powerlessness, and worthlessness as analysts, thereby signaling the danger of our experiencing shame in our professional roles, that we turn away, unable to bear it. In the analyst's counter transference the idea of the actual or incipient shame of the other, then, becomes our incompatible idea—which must be pushed away from our clinical or theoretical awareness because the emotional dangers to us seem too overwhelming and, in our status as professionals, unbearable [italics added].³²

In a later section I highlight a number of parallels between Freud's definition of Ego conscience and theology. Here, I consider it worthy of note that neither discipline has definitively addressed the role of shame as it manifests in Ego conscience. In fact, theologians tend to argue that we need to accept the verdicts of a shaming Ego conscience, not attempt to alter it. That argument assumes it is the Voice for God that shames us. Freud asserts – and in this I heartily agree with him, that it is the parent's shaming that condemns us, not God. But without question, in the absence of Christ's redeeming power, Ego conscience will convict with shame. Only Christ – or a comparable higher power capable of channeling the Holy Spirit, appears able to mitigate that emotion with love and forgiveness. So any therapist *unwilling* to call upon a higher power will be an insufficient resource as regards the redemption of conscience.

pp. 268–269].” Quoted from Lansky, M.R., (2005), ‘Hidden Shame,’ *Journal of American Psychoanalytic Association*, Issue 53/3, pp. 865-890.

³¹ Lansky, M.R., (2005), ‘Hidden Shame,’ *Journal of American Psychoanalytic Association*, Issue 53/3, pp. 865-890.

³² *Ibid.*, p. 887

*The Archetypal Conscience**Described by Jung*

I need to begin this section by emphasizing that Jung did not refer to conscience as a constellation of the Empowering archetype, nor did he refer to the normative manifestation of conscience in most people as Ego conscience. For Jung, conscience is only hypothetically archetypal. If he had named it, he would probably have called it the Conscience archetype, but in his sole paper on the subject he refers to it only as conscience. Likewise, neither Freud nor Jung referred to conscience as both archetypal and Ego derived. Ego conscience is my term for a synthesis incorporating Jung's archetypal hypothesis and my clinical observations of the Ego's dominant role in amplifying the Voice-of-conscience by the creation of Dominant selves with the power to self-shame. I will argue later that both constructs are necessary for an operational definition of Ego conscience as it manifests in most people. Jung acknowledges that for most people 'conscience' is like Ego conscience as I describe it, but he also argues for a definition that would allow for a spiritual dimension, what I have identified as the Christ conscience process.

Jung wrote one essay on conscience late in his life.³³ Thus, on the one hand he wrote very little on the subject (18 pages in 20 volumes), but on the other hand what he said was based on a fully developed theory of psychology and the wisdom of years of reflection and experience. In this essay he is tentative about reducing conscience to an archetype: "...I would suggest reducing the notion of the *vox Dei* to the hypothesis of the archetype, for this at least is understandable and accessible to investigation. The archetype is a pattern of behavior that has always existed, that is morally indifferent as a biological phenomenon, but possesses a powerful dynamism by means of which it can profoundly influence human behavior."³⁴ However, he then goes on to say: "... by the concept of the archetype nothing final is meant, and that it would be wrong to suppose that the essence of conscience could be reduced to nothing but the archetype. The *psychoid nature* of the archetype contains very much more than can be included in a psychological explanation [italics added]."^{35, 36} Thus, he concludes:

For this reason I have not been able to confine myself exclusively to the psychological [archetypal] nature of conscience, but have had to consider its theological aspect. From this point of view it cannot be presupposed that the act of conscience is something that, of its own nature, can be treated exhaustively by

³³ Jung, C.G. (1958), op. cit. p. 437-455.

³⁴ Jung, C.G. (1958), op. cit. p.449.

³⁵ Jung, C.G. (1958), op. cit. p.452.

³⁶ The 'psychoid' nature of an archetype is left largely undefined by Jung. Basically, it refers to the idea that the archetype's boundary is open to the world of spirit; that the archetype is permeable or open to the influence of spiritual forces. The best discussion of psychoid that I have come across is by Jeffery Raff. See Raff, J. (2002), *Healing the Wounded God: Finding Your Personal Guide on Your Way to Individuation and Beyond*, Nicolas-Hayes.

means of rational psychology. *We have, rather, to give priority to the assertion which conscience itself makes – that it is a voice of God.* This view is not a contrivance of the intellect, it is a primary assertion of the phenomenon itself: a numinous imperative which from ancient times has been accorded a far higher authority than the human intellect [brackets and italics added].³⁷

Jung's definition of conscience treats it as both archetypal and *psychoidal* (i.e. bounded by the world of Spirit and susceptible to spiritual influence).³⁸ Thus, while conscience is hypothetically archetypal, 'conscience' could also be far more. But Jung's formally stated theoretical position did not really allow for the psychoidal, so that concept is really left undefined except for one example in his paper (described below).

The concept of archetype has gained credence over the past fifty years, but there are still many misconceptions as to what it means. Stevens'³⁹ discussion of archetypes, coupled with his review of all the research in support of the concept, is one of the best I have come across, and I lean heavily on it in this summary. He begins by offering a contrast with Freud.

"Whereas Freud had assumed that most of our mental equipment was acquired individually in the course of growing up, Jung asserted that all the essential psychic characteristics that distinguish us as human beings are determined by genetics and are with us from birth. These typically human attributes Jung called archetypes. He regarded archetypes as basic to all the usual phenomena of human life. While he shared Freud's view that personal experience was of critical significance for the development of each individual, he denied that this development was a process of accretion or absorption occurring in an unstructured personality. On the contrary, for Jung, the essential role of personal experience was *to develop what is already there* – to actualize the archetypal potential already present in the psychophysical organism..."⁴⁰

Conscience, as an archetype, can be likened to other processes that appear universally in human beings - mothering, the heart-felt, shadow qualities, free will, contra-sexual qualities, intuition, etc. None of these words have precise meanings but all have feeling tones and values that make it hard to imagine a total life experience without them. The Heart, for example, cannot be defined by any particular definition or image of heart (certainly no one would restrict its meaning to physical anatomy); rather, it bespeaks a psychic reality few would deny, and only then if they are willing to define themselves as 'heartless.' Archetypal energy patterns exist a priori – they organize experience by *constellating* images, i.e. authorizing them with a particular power, and directing the individual via the images they constellate. Once constellated, the image

³⁷ Jung, C.G. (1958), op. cit. p.453.

³⁸ In his formal statements, Jung treated his theory of Self as a closed system. In effect, the theory did not allow for spiritual influences. The theory, if not its author, was limited to archetypal influences. However, in his memoirs, letters, and post-humus writings, he did allow for those influences. See especially, his memoir: Jung, C.G. & Jaffe, A. (1963), *Dreams, Memories, Reflections*, Vintage Books: NY.

³⁹ Stevens, A. (1983), *Archetypes: A Natural History of the Self*, Quill: New York.

⁴⁰ Ibid. p.16.

acquires the quality of a categorical imperative. The source of archetypal energies resides in and defines the collective unconscious (which I will elsewhere define as the *conscious* domain of Soul). They are quickened to activity by an individual's life experiences. When there is a discernible 'absence' of conscience, the individual is labeled psychopathic and considered dangerously untrustworthy.⁴¹

The relevance of archetypes is well illustrated by the Mothering archetype whose constellation appears to be absolutely essential to a child's survival. Imagine within your Mind a number of magnets each different in what each attracts and how each affects the individual once something is attracted to it. Actuating a magnet completes a circuit connecting Soul with Mind. This analogy is particularly apt because, while the magnet is always active, it is only actuated (made conscious) when some content in the Mind is drawn to it. By way of illustration, let us call one of these magnets the *Mothering* archetype. This archetype constellates and organizes images, actions, feeling tones, and motifs that will define *mothering* for the child. In effect, this particular magnet has the power to constellate anything related to *mothering*, and authorize whatever it attracts with the power to govern *a child's responses to mothering*. The magnetic force has no shape of its own; rather it expresses itself by constellating experiential images that resonate with its particular energies, thereby shaping the child's consequent behavior. It distinguishes the images it constellates from all others, and assigns unique values and emotions to what it identifies.

Archetypes play a superordinate role in human behavior. For example, the role of the mothering archetype is so vital to an infant's well being that if there is no experience constellated by this archetypal energy the infant is likely to languish and die. Think of an archetype as a kind of psychic organ whose activity is absolutely critical to our very being, not unlike the heart, lungs or stomach. If these physical organs are absent or irreparably dysfunctional we die. Likewise, if the mothering archetype is not constellated in an infant's psyche, i.e. becomes a conscious experience in the infant, the lack will irreparably damage or kill it - an observation conclusively and tragically documented by Spitz more than sixty years ago.⁴²

As a rule, individuals do not choose whether an archetype constellates images.⁴³ Fate (i.e. 'nurture') determines its initial activation and how it affects the individual once it is activated. Archetypal constellations are never considered pathological, but they can be cloaked in a personally conditioned conflict.⁴⁴ If images, symbols, and feeling tones

⁴¹ Hare, R.D. (1999), *Without Conscience: The Disturbing World of the Psychopaths Among Us*, Guilford Press.

⁴² "Spitz's (1945,1946) studies of children raised in orphanages and deprived of maternal involvement chronicles the deleterious consequences for children reared in socio-emotional deprivation. Illustrating the extreme in potential outcomes, Spitz documented an infant mortality rate of over 33 percent in a sample of ninety one infants 'in spite of good food and meticulous medical care.'" Source: Garbarino, J., Guttman, E. and Seeley, J.W. (1986), *The Psychologically Battered Child*, Jossey-Bass Publishers: San Francisco, p. 14.

⁴³ There may be significant exceptions to this rule. It is true that for infants and children the constellation of archetypal energies is most likely developmental and cultural. However, it is conceivable that constellation of some archetypal energies does require a conscious choice on the part of the individual and only occurs when that choice is made. Shamanistic or ecstatic experiences may well fall into this category.

⁴⁴ See Jacobi, J. (1959), *Complex, Archetype, and Symbol in the Psychology of C. G. Jung*, Bollingen Series: Princeton, p.25.

expressing the archetype are threatening to a conscious sense of self, then the Ego can repress or defy them - always a regrettable action. The most common experience of this is the Western male's fear of feminine qualities constellated by his anima, which he summarily projects rather than owns; or a woman's comparable fear of masculine qualities. Once activated, an archetype will make itself felt one way or another. If it is denied conscious awareness, it will simply make itself felt in a negative way as in nightmares, psychosomatic illnesses, obsessions, compulsions, addictions, enthrallment, projections, etc. We can never repress archetypal images with impunity once they are constellated in the Mind. Even if conflictual, the archetype will pose a conflict "that it has been incumbent on man to suffer and solve from time immemorial."⁴⁵

An archetypal constellation need not conform to *expected* parameters, since it is the archetype that gives shape and meaning to experience not visa versa. For example, we would generally expect female, maternal images to quicken and define the *mothering* archetype in a child, but if a father were obliged to enact that role from birth then *his image and actions* could well be identified by the infant's responses as 'good enough' to actuate and define the archetype.⁴⁶ It is the archetype that defines the experience as good enough. If the father's activity fits the parameters needed to constellate a sense of adequate mothering, the infant will live, and likely even thrive.

Hopefully, the forgoing provides an adequate description of conscience as the manifestation of an archetype. But it does not help us to understand how conscience can go against prevailing moral beliefs. We have examples of this in some of our most revered historical figures, e.g. St. Paul, Joan of Arc, Martin Luther, and Gandhi. Martin Luther's challenge to the Catholic Church is good example.⁴⁷ Luther seems quite justified from the perspective of history, but he did not have a Protestant reformation backing him the day he hammered his edicts to the church doors - only his conscience impelling him to act *against* the superiors he had vowed to obey. Sometimes the impelling primacy of conscience is even more dramatic as in the case of Satan's testing of Job. In Job's heart, his conscience remained clear, even though his afflictions, family, and neighbors judged him guilty.⁴⁸ His conscience upheld him despite the condemnation of all around him. If conscience as a psychic function is not superordinate to the morality it appears to support it could not stand against the prevailing morality in transcendent events. Jung highlights this characteristic of the conscience to stand against established mores by distinguishing what he calls the moral (Ego) and ethical (Heart) character of conscience:

Conscience, in ordinary usage, means the consciousness of a factor, which in the case of a 'good conscience' affirms that a decision or an act accords with morality

⁴⁵ Ibid. p. 26.

⁴⁶ The concept of "good enough" is derived from John Bowlby's theory of attachment. Bowlby, J. (1969), *Attachment and Loss. Volume 1: Attachment*, Hogarth Press and the Institute of Psycho-Analysis: London.

⁴⁷ Zachman, R. C. (1993), *The Assurance of Faith: Conscience in the Theology of Martin Luther and John Calvin*, Fortress Press: Minneapolis.

⁴⁸ Job 27:6 - "I hold fast my righteousness, and I will not let it go; my heart does not reproach me for any of my days." In Metzger, B.M. and Murphy, R.E., Eds. (1991), *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/Deuterocanonical Books*, NRSV, Oxford University Press, New York. Unless otherwise noted all biblical verses are taken from this text.

and, if it does not, condemns it as 'immoral' [Ego conscience]. This view, deriving as it does from the *mores*, from what is customary, can properly be called 'moral.' Distinct from this is the ethical form of conscience, which appears when two decisions or ways of acting, both affirmed to be moral and therefore regarded as 'duties,' collide with one another. In these cases, not foreseen by the moral code because they are mostly very individual, a judgment is required which cannot properly be called 'moral' or in accord with custom.⁴⁹ Here the decision has no custom at its disposal on which it could rely. The deciding factor appears to be something else: it proceeds not from the traditional moral code but from the unconscious foundation of the personality. The decision is drawn from dark and deep waters. It is true that these conflicts of duty are solved very often and very conveniently by a decision in accordance with custom, that is, by suppressing one of the opposites. But this is not always so. If one is sufficiently conscientious the conflict is endured to the end, and a creative solution emerges which is produced by the constellated archetype and possesses that compelling authority not unjustly characterized as the voice of God. The nature of the solution is in accord with the deepest foundation of the personality as well as with its wholeness; it embraces conscious and unconscious and therefore transcends the ego [brackets added].⁵⁰

Jung's view of the 'creative solution' comes closest to my definition of conscience as a Voice for God or Heart conscience. It is, as he notes, relatively rare. More often, when faced with two equally moral but opposing choices, we simply suppress one and act on the other. That is characteristic of an Ego conscience.

Where I differ with Jung is his attribution of the moral and ethical solutions to the same archetype. I would argue that Jung's 'ethical' solutions must derive from a force other than the Empowering archetype (or whatever name he would give it). Jung's 'moral' conscience is a complex of parental and cultural mores that cannot be repressed with impunity. Only under special circumstance, which Jung can point at but not define operationally, can conscience function as something more than an archetypal constellation. I am calling that 'something more' a Christ conscience or – in the case of Job, a Heart conscience. For most people, Jung's archetypal conscience is an Ego conscience; and only on rare occasions does it seem to manifest as something more than the Voice-of-conscience. Finally, I would note that Jung's understanding of conscience reflects the perspective of conscience since its translation into Latin, i.e. *conscientia*. That translation represented a significant shift theologically and is discussed at length in the next section. Basically, the 'conscientia' understanding of conscience asserts that it can *guide behavior* as well as punish wrongful behavior. Although *conscientia* is consonant with Freud's superego, which functions as both conscience and ego ideal, *conscientia* is quite different from the original Greek understanding of conscience, which is restricted to shaming condemnation.

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A contemporary example is offered by Hugh K. Barber in his book, *A Crisis of Conscience: A Catholic Doctor Speaks Out For Reform*, 1993, Carol Publishing Group: New York.

⁵⁰ Jung, C.G. (1958), 'A Psychological View of Conscience,' Hall, R.F.C., Trans., (1970) *The Collected Works of C. J. Jung*, Vol.10, Bollingen Series XX, Princeton University Press, p. 454-455.

Taken together, Freud and Jung have accurately discerned the dynamics of conscience as it has evolved theologically. Freud accurately described the dynamics of an Ego conscience. His understanding of conscience as the voice of the parental dictates helps us to understand why conscience has so often *failed* as a Voice for God these past two thousand years. Jung's treatment of conscience as archetypal allows for the *constellation* of Moral authority in parents, which places the source of their authority in an archetype rather than the parent. He also asserts the possibility that conscience can function as more than an archetype; that it has a psychoid nature that could allow it to speak as a Voice for God, i.e. the Holy Spirit. While Jung's writings do not point to a method whereby conscience might be transformed into a Voice for God, he did allow that a higher power could effect powerful changes in an individual. For example, he unknowingly inspired the Twelve Steps of Alcoholics Anonymous when he told a patient that only a spiritual conversion was likely to get him sober.⁵¹ But he never said that a higher power per se was necessary for the alteration of conscience from moral to ethical; he only concluded that it was possible for it to speak as a Voice for God based on its historical manifestations across cultures and millennium.

THE THEOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE

In the following review, most of the discussion implicitly addresses Ego conscience as constellated by the Empowering archetype. I have yet to find a definitive treatment of conscience as an expression of the Holy Spirit channeled by Jesus Christ, i.e. the Christ conscience process. Theology allows for the existence of a Heart conscience but only as an ideal. Theological discussions most often focus on the failure of Ego conscience to realize this ideal and the reasons for that failure.

Christian theology is always derived, in whole or part, from Scripture; and particularly, as regards the concept of conscience, that is where we need to begin. Old Testament writers defined the Judaic sense of conscience as an attribute of the Heart. "God is spoken of frequently as probing the heart (Jeremiah 11:20; 17:10; Proverbs 21:2; Psalm 26:2)."⁵² "Job insists: '...my heart does not reproach me for any of my days' (Job 27:6). Fidelity to heart (conscience) is a central theme in the whole book of Job, as it is in the call of the prophets to fidelity to the Covenant and to the Law (Ezekiel 11:14-21;

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Jung treated a patient who finally got sober after Jung told him he had to experience a conversion – not unlike St. Paul, if he ever hoped to get sober. The patient found a group in England that facilitated the necessary conversion and got him sober. In turn, he was instrumental in getting Bill Wilson sober. Wilson enshrined that series of events in his writing of Alcoholics Anonymous. See Anonymous (1976), *Alcoholics Anonymous: The Story of How Many Thousands of Men and Women Have Recovered From Alcoholism*, Alcoholics Anonymous World Services, 3rd Rev. Edition, pp. 26-27.

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McBrien, R.P., (1980), *Catholicism*, Vol. II, Winston Press: Oak Grove, p.1000.

Jeremiah 31:31-34)."⁵³ In sum, the Old Testament identified the heart as the center of a person, and it was through the heart that God spoke to the individual.⁵⁴

The Greek word for conscience is quite different from Old Testament words describing conscience as a function of the heart though the effect could be the same. The Greek word – *syneidesis*,⁵⁵ appears in the epistles of St. Paul, *and only there*. In the Hebrew Old Testament, the heart encompasses a great deal more than the Greek sense of conscience: the Heart is quite literally the center of Self, whereas *syneidesis* refers only to the Greek experience of conscience. Except for one reference in the Wisdom literature (Wisdom 17:11),⁵⁶ *syneidesis* is not found in Greek translations of the Old Testament or New Testament Gospels, which effectively retain the equivalency of the Voice of God speaking through the Heart. In those books, reference is always to the Heart. It is only in St. Paul's epistles that conscience is described as *syneidesis* and distinct from the heartfelt sense of conscience. But it is St. Paul's definition that partially defines conscience as theology has come to understand it in the 21st century.

Syneidesis

Syneidesis first appears in scripture in the writings attributed to St. Paul. "The word occurs twenty-five times in the Pauline writings, including Hebrews, three times in 1 Peter, and twice in the Acts of the Apostles, both times uttered by Paul."⁵⁷ C.A.Pierce argues that "...conscience was introduced into Christianity under pressure from Corinth, as bound up with a controversial issue."⁵⁸ Specifically, St. Paul was obliged to address the concept of Ego conscience in order to resolve a controversy over the eating of meat

⁵³ Ibid. p. 1000.

⁵⁴ I think it significant that the Old Testament always speaks of conscience in a heart context. It is almost as if the Ego does not exist. Back in the 1970's, Julian Jaynes - a psychologist at Princeton University, put forth the intriguing idea that consciousness and Ego only evolved with the breakdown of tribal nations that forced large groups to move away from their city god centers and the Kings that told them what to do. Until then - as he documents from a variety of sources, individuals were guided by the gods, and the gods' earthly representatives, largely without the mediation of an ego. If his thesis is correct, the ancient histories tapped by the Old Testament may be reflecting a people whose sense of self apart from their tribe was very undeveloped, or non-existent, allowing for the unimpeded constellation of gods and kings as Ego conscience. In any case, it is clear from the above biblical quotes that conscience was located in the Heart, not the Mind. In later chapters I will examine the role of Heart more closely. Jaynes' book has remained in print since the 1970's and has even stimulated commentary. I reference the version I read, but there are more recent printings. See Jaynes, J., (1976), *The Origin of Consciousness in the Breakdown of the Bicameral Mind*, Houghton Mifflin Company: NY.

⁵⁵ The English translation can also be spelled as "suneidesis". See Freedman, D.N., Editor (1992), *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Doubleday: New York.

⁵⁶ C. A. Pierce offers a highly technical, exhaustive analysis and exegesis of Syneidesis in the New Testament and Greek culture. He identifies three variants of syneidesis in the Wisdom literature; but notes that the Wisdom literature "...whether written originally in Hebrew or in Greek, represents the meeting place of the Hebrew outlook with the Greek". In effect, the concept as used there is borrowed from the Greek. See Pierce, C. A. (1955), *Conscience in the New Testament*, SCM Press LTD: London, p.58-59.

⁵⁷ McBrian, R.P. (1980), op. cit. p. 1000.

⁵⁸ Pierce, C.A. (1955), op. cit. p. 66.

sacrificed to idols. The concept of syneidesis was strongly rooted in Greek culture. Their mythology and philosophers often assigned it the final moral authority as a governor of behavior.⁵⁹ Consequently, a number of influential members of the Greek Christian community at Corinth would argue that if an action did not bother their conscience, it was not wrong. St. Paul argued that while conscience should be obeyed where it judges an act to be wrong, its *silence* could not be relied upon as assent for an action. Thus St. Paul says: "I have nothing on my conscience, yet am I not hereby justified (I Cor. 4:4)." As Pierce⁶⁰ shows, exhaustively, almost all uses of conscience, as used in the Greek translations, fall in the category of moral absolute negatives and are, thereby, insufficient as a justification for action:

The defect of [Ego] conscience as an ethical norm is common to every man: even if in all other respects it is 'functioning perfectly' it still remains negative only. Conscience comes into operation when the moral limits of a man's own nature are transgressed: but the simplest way to avoid walking over an edge is to stand still. The demands of God are positive, according to St. Paul – standing still is rebuked as sternly by Jesus in the parable of the talents as a gross sin....The onset of the pain of conscience must always, certainly, be taken as proof that the sufferer has done something wrong. The absence of such pain does not mean he has done right or good. It may mean that he has done nothing at all; or it may mean that he has in some way deadened his capacity to feel this pain to a greater or lesser extent – that in fact, his conscience is defective [bracket added].⁶¹

It was believed that conscience could be weakened, defiled, even subjugated to evil – though never without eventually destroying the individual's humanity. This 'scarring' of conscience is addressed in the Letters of Titus and Timothy, and also Romans. To quote Pierce:

A single (supposedly) wrong act, according to his master [St. Paul], *wounds* or *defiles* the conscience – smites it and leaves a scar (Tit.1:15). If this sin be not repented and repudiated, and if other sins be committed, the *conscience* becomes in time all scar and no *conscience*. It is when it is thus completely *defiled* that it ceases to be effective in its proper office: it is callous or cauterized. If the Romans (Rom. 13: 5) image be employed, each assault on the created limits of man's nature weakens them; if they be not repaired after each assault at the last they become so elastic, or are beaten down so low, that they can be overstepped with impunity [brackets and italics added].⁶²

⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 112

⁶⁰ I have relied predominantly on Pierce in examining the scriptural use of syneidesis. At least two other major authorities also reference him and appear to agree with his exegesis in general though differing a little in the details. See Freedman, D.N. Ed. (1992), *Anchor Bible Dictionary*, Doubleday: New York, and Friedrich, G., Editor (1971), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Trans. and Ed. G.W. Bromiley, W.M.B. Eerdmans Publ. Co.: Grand Rapids, Mich.

⁶¹ Pierce, C.A. (1955), op. cit. p.89.

⁶² Ibid. p.93.

Despite its fallibility and negativity, conscience was still seen in Greek culture, and by St. Paul, as a final arbitrator of morality when aroused. The reason for this is that the other moral faculty – the thinking Mind, could also be corrupted or persuaded to act wrongly and then conscience was all that remained to correct the wrongful action by making the individual shamefully aware. In effect, the reasoning Mind and Ego conscience were seen as the two bulwarks of morality without which human nature would collapse upon its self, lose form and become void. "*Mind* can be so often beclouded otherwise than by sin – by inadequate knowledge of the facts, by honest error, by defective logic. It is, in fallen man, the earlier to be breached. *Conscience* is the last line of defense, itself a negative thing, a *pis aller*, but better than nothing."⁶³ This idea of final arbiter is also linked to the concept of choice or free will. "*Choice* is prior, and *Conscience*, if it arise at all, subsequent, to action."⁶⁴ Thus conscience, while itself fallible, has the power to refute or challenge bad choices or willfulness, though not the power to override them.

The moral limitation of conscience is its inability to prejudge an action. The effects of an aroused conscience, i.e. shame if caught, guilt if kept hidden, *always follow action*, never precede it. However, both Greek philosophers and Christian theologians did contend that an act committed in the *Heart* could also arouse conscience, e.g. an individual could feel the *wrongness* of *coveting* his neighbor's wife. But for St. Paul, *syneidesis* could not inform the individual as to whether an action was good before the fact. Thus, it could not be used as a preeminent guide for morality; at best, it could only inform us when we actually left the path.

Fallible or not, the Greek philosophers and all writers of the Bible agreed that conscience should not be knowingly defied. When aroused it could be merciless and incapacitating on to death. Robert Graves interprets St. Paul's initial response, after his vision of Christ on the road to Damascus, as a Greek experience of conscience that threatened to kill him. According to Graves, Paul shows all the signs of suffering the merciless pangs of conscience for persecuting Christ's followers. In Greek mythology, the Erinnyes or Furies "were personified pangs of conscience, such as are still capable, in pagan Melanesia, of killing a man who has rashly or inadvertently broken a taboo. He will either go mad and leap from a coconut palm, or wrap his head in a cloak, like Orestes, and refuse to eat or drink until he dies of starvation; even if nobody else is informed of his guilt. Paul would have suffered a similar fate at Damascus but for the timely arrival of Ananias (Acts 9:9 ff)."⁶⁵ After arriving blind at Damascus, Paul refused food and water for three days. Ananias, at the bidding of God in a vision, lays hands on Paul, "that you may regain your sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and his sight was restored. Then he got up and was baptized, and *after taking some food*, regained his strength (Acts 9: 17-19, italics added)."

⁶³ Ibid. p.94

⁶⁴ Ibid. p.126

⁶⁵ Graves, R. (1960), *The Greek Myths*, Penguin Books: New York, p.431.

In the Damascus story, and others, Christ has the power to quicken conscience so acutely that individuals *stop* their shameful actions. This seems clearly the case for St. Paul. According to Pierce, the early Christians also saw this as occurring during Christ's ministry.⁶⁶ In the story of the adulterous woman in which the scribes and Pharisees want Christ to authorize her stoning, Christ is shown quickening their consciences such that their own shame forces them to withdraw at which point he forgives her sins. In this case, their shame is in wrongfully using Mosaic Law to entrap Christ. In effect, Christ has the power to stir conscience, but even more important, he has the power to redeem it, to forgive the unforgivable. According to Old Testament law the sin of the adulterous woman was unforgivable and therefore she had to be stoned not forgiven. Following his resurrection, Christ continues to forgive through the Holy Spirit as in the case of St. Paul.

The significance of Christ's incarnation is his power to immediately forgive the otherwise unforgivable. The trials of Orestes mentioned above were well known in the Greek speaking world. There are numerous variations on this story but essentially all find Orestes condemned for killing his mother for her part in killing his father. He is ordered to kill her by no less than Apollo or suffer leprosy. But, historically, matricide was the most unforgivable sin; and for it the Furies hound Orestes without mercy. The Furies were "...older than Zeus or any of the other Olympians. Their task is to hear complaints brought by mortals against the insolence of the young to the aged, of children to parents, of host to guests, and of householders or city councils to – and to punish such crimes by hounding the culprits relentlessly, without rest or pause, from city to city and from country to country....In their hands they carry brass-studded scourges, and their victims die in torment."⁶⁷ Not Apollo, nor even Athene, can completely reverse Orestes' torment. Only after years of trial, and finally wresting away the image of Artemis, is he finally said to be free of their fury. Contrast this legend with the power of the Holy Spirit through Jesus Christ to forgive Paul's sin after three days, or Christ's immediate release of the adulterous woman from her sin.

The Greeks were not alone in having little or no relief from an aroused conscience. Under Biblical Law – the original covenant made between God and his people Israel, Levitical sacrifices could not cleanse the *inner guilt* that resulted from sin.⁶⁸ "There was no provision in the Old Testament for atoning sacrifice for deliberate and defiant sins, only for 'unwitting' offenses committed by the ignorant and wayward."⁶⁹ "But whoever acts high handedly, whether a native or an alien, affronts the Lord, and shall be cut off from among the people. Because of having despised the word of the Lord and broken his commandment, such a person shall be utterly cut off and bear the guilt (Numbers 15:30-31)." But finally, after untold generations, this was prophesied to change under a new covenant announced by Jeremiah (as quoted in Hebrews): "...after those days, says the Lord: I will put my laws in their minds, and write them on their hearts, and

⁶⁶ Pierce, C.A. (1955) op. cit. p.104.

⁶⁷ Graves, R. (1960), op. cit. p.122.

⁶⁸ See glosses in Metzger, B.M. and Murphy, R.E., Editors (1991), *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with the Apocryphal/ Deuterocanonical Books*, NRSV, Oxford University Press: New York, p. 324, OT.

⁶⁹ Metzger, B.M. and Murphy, R. E., Editors (1991), Op. cit., glosses, p.320, OT.

I will be their God...For I will be merciful toward their inequities, and I will remember their sins no more (Hebrews 8: 10-12).” For Christians, the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ inaugurated this new covenant. For the first time a power was manifest in the world that could forgive, i.e. release an individual from the merciless pangs of conscience. The Letter to the Hebrews addresses conscience in this new way and is significantly different from anything written before it. For the first time we hear that Christ is the perfect sacrifice for our sins: "...the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God! (Hebrews 9:14)." Christ's willing submission to the will of God (Thy will not mine be done) is the perfect sacrifice for our sins, and has the power to release us from the torment and ostracism otherwise suffered at the hands of an unremitting conscience.

Imagine a worldview in which hardly anything had the power to release an individual from an aroused Ego conscience. In all our written history, only Jesus Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit willingly cleanses our conscience, purifies it and sets it to rest. There is not one of us who has not experienced the shame and guilt of conscience; and while the Ego has developed a number of strategies for dealing with these affects - such as prideful disdain or defensive anger, all appear to worsen the individual's condition over the long run.⁷⁰ That was Freud's conclusion and final observation concerning the super-ego. We suffer conscience today no less than throughout recorded history. But for the past two thousand years we have also had a redress if we are able to receive the forgiving power of the Holy Spirit embodied in the person of Jesus Christ.

From Syneidesis to Conscientia

Conscientia is the Latin translation of *syneidesis*. Pierce makes the following observation regarding this translation from Greek to Latin:

In Greek, as was seen, MA [moral absolute] was always MBA [moral bad absolute]; but this is far from the case in Latin, in which *conscientia* could be used absolutely to mean either *a good conscience* (in the modern sense) or *a bad conscience* quite indifferently. Further the word is far from being appropriated to a moral context to anything approaching the extent to which it [syneidesis] was in Greek in general, and in the N.T. in particular. In brief it may be fairly said that *conscientia* includes the meaning of [syneidesis] in its Greek and N.T. connotation, but includes so much more besides, as to fail completely to exclude the modern notion of conscience. Its use in translation, therefore, could not fail to reduce what was for the N.T. writers a precise, indeed somewhat narrow, idea, into a conception so broad, vague and formless as to confuse rather than clarify all

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Freud believed that the superego was directly responsible for much neurosis and especially depression, hysteria and obsessive compulsive behavior; the same can be said for compulsive behaviors used to "medicate" feelings, i.e. chronic use of drugs, alcoholism, pornography, etc. as well as illnesses which the person believes are a kind of punishment for past wrong doing.

ethical discussion from that moment forward [brackets added].⁷¹

Whether Pierce's observation is totally correct, it is certainly true from this point forward that any theological discussion of conscience becomes complex and more than a little confusing.⁷² Of note, in recent years Roman Catholic theologians have acknowledged the correctness of Pierce's assertions and attribute at least some of the confusion to errors in translation made by St. Jerome.⁷³

Traditional moral theology habitually distinguished three different meanings to the word "conscience," and these it delineated by the use of three different terms: synderesis, moral science, and syneidesis. Moreover, the tradition contended that the first and last of these terms, and the ideas that they represented, were to be found in the twin founts of Scripture and tradition....By *synderesis* they understood the habit of conscience, the basic sense of responsibility that characterizes the human person. And by *syneidesis* they understood the act of conscience, the judgment by which we evaluate a particular action....The term *syneidesis* is clearly present in Scripture. But what of *synderesis*? The simple and embarrassing fact is that this term does not appear in Scripture. Indeed, there is no such word in the Greek language. Rather, it appears that this entire theological tradition is the result of a massive error.⁷⁴

The above critique notwithstanding, Roman Catholic theologians still insist on defining conscience as both guiding and shaming, though they now acknowledge that the distinction is based on *moral theology*, not the Bible.⁷⁵ Freud also recognized the problem of guidance and punishment. He solved it by retaining the original meaning of syneidesis in defining the conscience of the superego and assigning the 'guiding' aspect to the ego ideal. The Christian theology of *conscientia* fails to make this distinction with the end result that we have an undifferentiated conscience *priding the good and punishing the bad*.

Aside from the clinical evidence presented later in the book, there is one scriptural condition that could justify the attribution of proactive guidance to *conscientia*. In the Letter to the Hebrews we hear for the first time that Jesus Christ has the power to transform our conscience (syneidesis):

How much more will the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without blemish to God, purify our conscience from dead works to worship the living God! For this reason he is the mediator of a new covenant, so

⁷¹ Pierce, C.A. (1955), op. cit. p.118.

⁷² Friedrich offers a more detailed etymology of 'conscientia' as used in Latin philosophy and related apocrypha. See Friedrich, G., Editor (1971), *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, Trans. and Ed. G. W. Bromiley, W.M.B. Eerdmans Publ. Co.: Grand Rapids, Mich. pp.898-919.

⁷³ The original translation of the Bible from Greek to Latin is attributed to St. Jerome.

⁷⁴ O'Connell, T.E., "An Understanding of Conscience", In Curran, C.E., Editor (2004), *Conscience: Readings in Moral Theology No. 14*, Paulist Press: New York, p. 25.

⁷⁵ Ibid. Page 26. "There are not two words in the Greek for conscience, but only one. The distinction between the two concepts may very well be useful, and indeed we shall find it so. But in making that distinction, we must be clear that it is ours, not the Bible's."

that those who are called may receive the promised eternal inheritance, because a death has occurred that redeems them from the transgressions under the first covenant (Hebrews 9:14-15).

In this scripture, we are given to understand that it is possible for Jesus Christ to transform conscience so it can serve as a Voice for God rather than a voice of ‘dead works’ as defined by syneidesis. Unfortunately, to the best of my knowledge, there is no currently recognized ritual within mainstream Christianity capable of effecting that transformation.⁷⁶ In the remainder of this work, I will argue that Christ, indeed, has the power to release us from a conscience of dead works that we might worship the living God. Effecting that transformation is a major thrust of the interventions described later in the book. But lacking the transformational power of early rituals, which may well have been Gnostic,⁷⁷ most Christians and their theologians are left to struggle with an unredeemed conscience very like Freud’s super-ego.

Contemporary theologians implicitly recognize the failure of conscience to speak as a Voice for God by treating it as morally dominant but susceptible to grave error; and in the final analysis, only to be trusted if mediated by the church. Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic theologians argue that there resides in us an innate capacity to move toward the good and away from the bad – and they attribute this capacity to conscientia. But they also assert that without Christ’s church, conscience will err. Before our Fall, as described in Genesis, the inner guidance provided by conscience was considered unerring. Afterward, a residual of this capacity remained but was greatly compromised by our fallen human nature. Harakas puts it thus: "Alone, man's freedom is incapable of fully realizing human purpose. Man's freedom is in need of divine grace to realize the image and likeness of God and to achieve Theosis [i.e. "like God"]. Though we are able to choose rightly sometimes, by ourselves, we cannot fully choose the good and reject what is evil without the energies of God, especially as the good has been revealed and made available to us in the person and work of Jesus Christ."⁷⁸ In effect, theology asserts that conscience provides a point of contact between God and us, but the contact is tenuous at best *and only through Christ does it have the potential of fuller restoration.*

From the Classical period of Church history onward, theological discussion has sought to attribute the workings of conscience to a loving God: “...Communion with God is the destiny of human life. Apart from that principle of finality and apart from an experience of God's tenderness met in forgiveness and compassion, conscience cannot

⁷⁶ Two Roman Catholic theologians have argued that such a ritual existed in the early church. In the early church Bishops baptized in the Spirit. But so far as I can determine, that power gradually diminished as Bishoprics became politicized by the Roman Empire. See McDonnell, K. & Montague, G. (1991), *Christian Initiation and Baptism in the Holy Spirit: Evidence from the First Eight Centuries*, Liturgical Press: New York.

⁷⁷ This aside will probably stimulate no end of debate. It is prompted by the observation that St. Paul spoke of psychic and pneumatic Christians – what contemporary readers refer to as baby vs. mature Christians. Apparently, these distinctions denoted transformations within the person such that the pneumatic Christian lived in grace rather than under the law. The interested reader is referred to Pagels, E.H. (1992) *The Gnostic Paul: Gnostic Exegesis of the Pauline Letters*, Trinity Press International: NY.

⁷⁸ Harakas, S. (1983), *Toward Transfigured Life*, Light and Life Publishers, p.101.

have an authentic orientation.”⁷⁹ While I personally approve such sentiment, it does not express the normal manifestation of conscience as most experience it – priest and laypersons alike. What is more to the point, even theologians who advocate for conscience as the affirming Voice for God are quick to insist that it needs great help; that it is much in need of shaping, education, and formation to attain that level of interaction. Thus conscience must be “...guided both by the intuitive moral sense of primordial conscience and also by the learned aptitudes for responding to the good established by the discipline of virtue.”⁸⁰ Even where conscience is seen as a “radical dialogue with God's Own Spirit,”⁸¹ as seems to be the case for Vatican II, no less than the Catholic Church's *magisterium* is needed to inform it.⁸² There is a definite gulf between the ideal that theology seeks to accomplish through conscience and how little conscience can do without assistance. Undoubtedly conscience speaks with *god-like power*, but it may only be by the grace of God that it speaks for God.

Contemporary theologians have also felt obliged to admit a psychological perspective since the turn of the last century. To quote Ashley, a Roman Catholic theologian:

Modern psychology has helped us understand the difference between the conscience of childhood, the 'super-ego' constituted of emotionally charged images of right and wrong absorbed largely in the family, and the adult conscience which is a realistic judgment of reason. The childhood conscience lays the necessary groundwork for the mature conscience, but if too punitive and perfectionistic or too permissive and chaotic it breeds neuroses that undermine mature judgment. We must recognize that today many Catholics suffer neurotic guilt, or rebel against all moral restrictions, because their childhood training was unsound.⁸³

Unfortunately, while Freud's “modern psychology” has definitely highlighted the fallible humanity of conscience, it offers little in the way of correction: certainly it has not offered a means by which one obtains a more “realistic judgment of reason.” Freud railed against conscience for undermining his beloved reality principle! So the problem remains: how do you reconcile the desire for conscience to express the Voice for God with the punishing guidance of fallible human parents? How do you supplant parental authority with something more akin to Christ's understanding of the world?

⁷⁹ Philibert, P.(1991), 'The Search For an Adequate Theological Method in the Formation of Conscience,' in R.E. Smith, Editor (1991), *Catholic Conscience Foundation and Formation*, The Knights of Columbus: New Haven, p.88.

⁸⁰ Ibid., p.88.

⁸¹ Ibid., p.87.

⁸² Wuerl, D.W.(1991), 'The Bishop, Conscience and Moral Teaching,' in R.E. Smith, Ed. (1991), *Catholic Conscience Foundation and Formation* , The Knights of Columbus: New Haven, p.131.

⁸³ Ashley, B. (1991), 'Elements of a Catholic Conscience,' in *Catholic Conscience Foundation and Formation*, The Knights of Columbus: New Haven, p. 49-50.

CONSCIENCE AND THE WRATH-OF-GOD

Before moving to an integration of psychological and theological perspectives, I need to examine one other facet of conscience mentioned by St. Paul. In Romans, Paul says that we are subject to the Law not only because of conscience but also because of wrath (Rom.13:5). ‘Wrath,’ also known as the Wrath-of-God, is referred to often in the Old and New Testaments (261 times). The modern mind has difficulty accepting the idea of a Wrathful God coming into play when individuals or nations appear to exceed the limits ordained by God, but it is really not so difficult to understand. Consider, for example, the defeat of Germany and Japan in World War II. Both aggressively exceeded their territorial boundaries and grievously trespassed on other nations. This weakened their moral integrity both individually and collectively. America suffered likewise by denying the integrity of an ethnic people in the Vietnam War. Countries, like individuals, are weakened when they transgress against others. The same observation is made for territorial animals. They are strongest in defending their territory and progressively weaker as they seek to range into another’s territory.⁸⁴ Very likely, our planet will express this Wrath-of-God as we continue to exceed its limits. And there is no dearth of examples for persons. Individuals all too frequently provoke the *Wrath of God* in their daily lives. Obesity is one of the most commonly observed examples in today’s culture. *The Body has lawful limits*. When these are exceeded or abused, the effects place us at risk. Overeating leads to numerous health problems (sic) Wrath. This is true of most addictions, e.g. habitual smoking can lead to cancer, excess drinking to sclerosis of the liver, excessive spending to bankruptcy, etc. Whenever we *persistently exceed* the Body’s lawful limits - whatever the reason, there are consequences, if not immediately, then most definitely over the long term.

The Wrath-of-God is a natural consequence of the created limits of flesh. When those limits are exceeded, whether by the Soul, Mind, or Body, the flesh is destroyed. Conscience is expected to warn us when those limits are exceeded. This is what St. Paul means when he says: “Therefore one must be subject, not only because of wrath but also because of conscience (Romans 13:5).” Pierce arrives at a similar conclusion: “We have discovered conscience in the N.T. to be the internal counterpart and complement of *the wrath*. It is the painful consciousness that man has of his own sins, past or, if present, begun in the past. It [Wrath] is *of God* in that it is the reaction of man’s nature, as created, and so delimited, by God, against moral transgressions of its bounds [brackets added].”⁸⁵ In effect, conscience serves “...to turn man back from every attempt to break from the bounds imposed upon him by his Creator – ‘Hitherto shalt thou come - but no further’ (Job 38:11).”⁸⁶

⁸⁴ See Ardrey for summation of early ethological studies on territoriality among animals. Ardrey, R. (1966), *The Territorial Imperative*, (reprinted 1997), Kodansha America.

⁸⁵ Pierce, C.A. (1955), op. cit. p.111.

⁸⁶ Pierce, C.A. (1955), p.111, footnotes.

Where conscience functions properly, as in the above definition, it functions as a messenger warning us of Wrath. But a basic premise of this book is that conscience needs to be treated as unredeemed, and only potentially redeemable. If our thesis is correct, then its unredeemed state must actually *produce Wrath if it actively blocks the Voice for God*. If conscience truly speaks as a Voice for God, *then God must have a way of telling us when conscience fails to speak as a Voice for God*. The Wrath-of-God serves that function. Wrath will warn us when conscience fails to speak as a Voice for God. An unredeemed conscience will provoke Wrath when the Voice for God is blocked. Freud was the first clinician to observe this wrathful consequence when he noted that the mental anguish caused by an unredeemed Ego conscience was largely responsible for the most severe neuroses. Depression, for example, is by any definition wrathful. It can anguish the Mind until even suicide is preferable. If we accept Freud's conclusion that a guilty conscience causes depression and a host of other maladies, then we are obliged to conclude that Wrath warns us when conscience is dysfunctional – *when it persists in speaking as a voice of parents and Ego rather than a Voice for God as expressed by Christ*.

Confession, penance, and absolution can offer the Ego temporary reprise from a shaming conscience. But, ultimately, these are little better than bulimic purging if the shame is unremitting. Likewise, the Ego can temporarily silence the Voice-of-Conscience with any number of 'medications' such as excessive use of food, alcohol, and illicit drugs, as well as prescribed medications such as anti-depressants. These 'medications' can mask the mental anguish of frequent shaming and the fear of being shamed, but their excessive use will also produce Wrath (sic) the iatrogenic effects of excessive use. Just about any psychotropic medication has adverse side effects. Mental health providers actually foster Wrath when they prescribe medications to treat symptoms and fail to address their causes. Too often, medications are simply used to mask mental anguish rather than addressing it, as if a 'chemical imbalance' caused the illness rather than mirroring it. (For years, people in AA have joked about how frequently their doctors treated alcoholism as a 'valium deficiency.') But however depression is defined, it is clearly a manifestation of Wrath. Left untreated, depression is the number one cause of suicidal behavior, of failure to care for self, and of myriad other self-destructive, coping behaviors such as alcoholism and eating disorders. If treated merely as a chemical imbalance, then Wrath will produce iatrogenic effects.⁸⁷ In short, unmitigated attack on the self – whether by an unredeemed Ego conscience shaming the individual or by the side effects of masking that pain with any kind of 'medication,' will exceed the brain's created limits. That is what depression is telling us. However the individual responds to a shaming conscience – short of redeeming it, the unintended side effects of merely coping will exceed our physical and psychological limits.

The 'mental Wrath' defined as personality disorders tells us that an unredeemed Ego conscience is exceeding God's law of created limits. Unredeemed conscience is, as Jung named it, a personally conditioned conflict "that it has been incumbent on man to

⁸⁷ Anti-depressants may be one of the leading causes of weight gain, as any one who has ever been on an anti-depressant will tell you, which is ironic because it was originally tested as a diet pill. Its other most consistent 'side effect' is a marked reduction in sexual libido.

suffer and solve from time immemorial.”⁸⁸ Whatever the particular form of medication (e.g. absolution, alcohol or valium), we will suffer Wrath for its long-term use. In sum, an unredeemed conscience can generate Wrath as well as being its harbinger. The further Ego conscience is from redemption, the more Wrath it generates.

As Spirit, conscience can truly speak as a Voice for God and warrant the name of Vox Dei. That voice can proactively guide us and warn us when we exceed our limits as God created them. Wrath occurs when that guidance is blocked, distorted, or goes unheeded. Stated another way, to the extent that a particular manifestation of conscience distorts or blocks the Voice for God, it will bring Wrath upon the Mind and flesh. By its very nature, an unredeemed conscience is bound to precipitate such Wrath. So long as the Voice for God is distorted by parental, institutional, and personal shaming, it cannot be otherwise. In the following sections, I will identify two primary reasons for the generation of Wrath while conscience remains unredeemed. First, an unredeemed conscience precipitates the creation of Ideal-selves whose standards frequently exceed the Ego’s level of ability, thereby setting off repetitive rounds of shaming. That fact notwithstanding, these Ideal-selves are exceedingly resistant to change because they function as idols or graven images. Second - and here I introduce a totally new consequence, the *unredeemed* conscience holds Rejected selves in bondage by shaming them to such an extent they believe themselves unworthy of redemption. The Ego’s attempts to cope with these Rejected selves and the toxic shame that surrounds them invariably leads to Wrath of one form or another. But the Rejected selves per se are not the primary cause of accumulated, undischarged, toxic shame in the Body. Rather the primary progenitors are Dominant selves and Egos-in-conflict. Both can generate shame on a daily basis that remains undischarged in the Body’s emotional field. It is that accumulation which is hypothesized to be primary cause of all major chronic and recurrent dis-eases of Wrath.

WHEN IDEAL SELVES ARE CONSIDERED

To best appreciate the following discussion, a distinction must to be made at the outset between dissociation and repression. Dissociation is most often identified with Multiple Personality Disorder, now called Dissociative Identity Disorder. But several clinical models – including my own, amply demonstrate the pervasive presence of multiple selves in everyone, which is easily observable once the client is taught to access the Mind via active imagination. Dissociation is the Ego’s earliest defense mechanism. Basically, the child’s Ego fragments when severely stressed and this precipitates the creation of opposite selves in a reflexive effort to evade further stress. The emotion most likely to fragment the Ego is intense or repetitive shame. The earliest manifestations of Ego conscience – prior to age seven, are created by dissociation. That dissociative complex will include the parentified Voice-of-conscience, Rejected-self, and several Coping aspects. With the maturation of moral development during the juvenile period

⁸⁸ See Jacobi, J. (1959), *Complex, Archetype, and Symbol in the Psychology of C. G. Jung*, Bollingen Series: Princeton, p.26

(ages 7-12), most individuals will develop a new ego-aspect aptly called the Dominant self. A distinguishing characteristic of that self is its use of self-shame to usurp the role of the archetypal Voice-of-conscience. The Dominant self uses shame to *repress* shameful events. Essentially, the Dominant self learns the power of self-shame, which effectively hides shameful experiences within the Heart. So far as I can determine the import of this Dominant self has gone largely unrecognized by clinicians, though it is clearly dominant in the psyche of most individuals. Basically, this Dominant self *internalizes* all of the dynamics present in the dissociative complex within itself to evade further dissociation. The Dominant self enacts the Repressive dynamic.

A Dominant self uses the power of self-shame to preempt the Voice-of-conscience. It strives to emulate the activity of the Voice-of-conscience so it can effectively become its own conscience. To cope with the tension created by its 'solution,' the Dominant self must then learn to use one or more socially acceptable behaviors in excess in order to temporarily assuage the angst it creates by shaming itself. This excessive use of socially acceptable behaviors invariably results in Wrath. The discussion that follows will focus on the precursors of the Dominant selves, i.e. the dissociative complex, as well as the Dominant self. The Dominant self incorporates each function of these precursors. When the Dominant self is addressed in therapy each of the precursor elements will have to be addressed in the process of healing. The 'redemption' of a Dominant self is crucial to the redemption of Ego conscience, but these selves are rarely redeemable before the client and therapist have worked with the precursors defined by the dissociative complex. (In stating the forgoing, I am getting well ahead of the reader; but I have to start 'planting the seeds' someplace. The Dominant selves are described in great detail in Chapters VII and VIII, as well as the interventions for working with them. But they will 'show' themselves throughout the work so I need to begin sensitizing the reader to their existence.)

The Ideal Selves

Very little has been said till now about Ideal-selves, what Freud defined as the ego ideal. Recall that the ego ideal is the *prideful* aspect of the super-ego, which Freud paired with conscience. As used here, 'Ideal-self' and 'ego ideal' are interchangeable. In clinical practice, I prefer the term 'Ideal-self' since clients seem to identify it more easily. Ego-aspects identified as Ideal-selves strive to emulate the ideal attributes garnered from the parents' positive feedback and/or the *absence* of negative feedback expressed by the Voice-of-conscience. An Ideal-self is very much the product of the Greek understanding of conscience: the *absence* of shaming becomes tantamount to approval by a Voice-of-conscience. Ideal-selves strive to become a source of pride, but the mere absence of shaming will often suffice, since their initial 'ideal' is most often the diametric opposite of a Rejected-self held in bondage to shame.⁸⁹

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In other writings, Jung recognizes comparable functions in what he calls the persona and shadow, but to the best of my knowledge he does not relate either of those concepts to his definition of conscience.

Clinically, the Voice-of-conscience and Ideal-selves function co-dependently just as Freud defined them. In active imagination, however, their manifestations are distinctly different. First, whereas the Voice-of-conscience will be constellated as a parental image or voice, *Ideal-selves are always identified as self-images decisively shaped by the Voice-of-conscience*. To complicate matters, Ideal-selves can manifest in three distinctly different ways. In the early dissociative phase of development they will manifest as the diametric opposite of a Rejected-self. I call these opposites Coping aspects and examine them at length in later chapters. During a brief transitional period, the Ideal-self will manifest as a Persona core. This is essentially an archetypal constellation of parental gender values. This will be quickly incorporated into the creation of a Dominant self when the Ego discovers the power to self-shame. The Persona core is generally not evident until the Dominant self has been redeemed.

The Dominant self completes the transition to the repressive phase of development. Henceforth, it will assume the role of Ego conscience by incorporating all of the dissociative elements of conscience including its rejected precursors, which it hides in the Heart. Clients, and most theologians, are rarely aware of the connections between the Voice-of-conscience, Rejected selves, ideal variants, and the Dominant self that models that triumvirate. From an individual's perspective, the verdicts of conscience seem to emanate from a Dominant self that effectively drowns out the Voice-of-conscience. But when clients become willing to enter Mind through the psycho-imaginative process, *conscientia* is identifiable as *an idealized self that self-prides for adherence to standards garnered from a parent's behavior, and self-shames failures in order to preempt the Voice-of-conscience*.

Most theological discussions of conscience implicitly recognize the existence of Dominant selves as the major impediment to the proper functioning of conscience. Those discussions generally highlight the Dominant self's experience of *pride* as a primary motivator of its behavior. Most theologians, and scripture, assert that pride is the "mother of evils."⁹⁰ At first glance, this theological disparagement of pride seems odd since pride is actively sought after in most cultures. It feels good. When forthcoming, ego-aspects seem to bask in it, though often covertly so as not to seem arrogant. When the individual experiences a deficit of pride, we speak of low self-esteem, which our culture treats as an anathema. This conflicting view of pride is a conundrum for many people. Even though the ways of the world and Ego conscience definitely encourage pride, the very act of seeking this approbation is said to be sinful and – I would argue, wrathful.

Theologically, what makes pride sinful is self-love (*philautia*). Theologians assert that it is self-love that makes us susceptible to evil; and to the extent *that a Dominant self makes us susceptible to self-love we are in danger of sinning*.⁹¹ To quote Harakas, a Greek Orthodox theologian, "If we are to avoid evil, then there is need above all to recognize that self-love needs to be controlled and watched over with great care. It is powerfully deceptive and there is need for constant vigilance to overcome its ever present

⁹⁰ Harakas, S.(1983), op. cit. p.247.

⁹¹ The concept of self-love is diametrically opposed to Christ's commandment that we 'love our neighbors as ourselves'. Self-love is actually a misnomer; it is more to be equated with prideful self-absorption than love. Self-love refers to narcissism as a defense against shame, which actively blocks our capacity to love others.

influence." ⁹² The source of this "ever-present influence" appears to be the Dominant self which essentially functions as its own conscience.

When the Dominant self is closely examined, several characteristics generally emerge. First, it will image as a self imbued with qualities the individual values above others. For one person, it might be a quality of 'fierce independence,' or 'self-reliance' or 'tough invulnerability,' or 'perfectionism,' or 'high achievement' or 'being rational,' or 'being in control,' and for yet another 'Christ-like detachment,' or 'sensitivity and caring.' A Dominant self can even have the character of a 'turning the other cheek' martyr. In practice, these qualities *can be as varied as the parents who shaped them*, but whatever the particular qualities, the aspiration will be a driving force in the life of the client. Second, the ego-aspects imbued with these qualities appear to function under a rigid, unbending mandate. Even as adults, when we might feel constrained by such qualities, they still enforce themselves with unrelenting authority. Third, and most important, these *Dominant selves always manifest as their own highest Moral authority*; and as such will fail to recognize any other authority other than the parental image that created them. Whether we call this self-love or hubris the effect is the same. A Dominant self will treat itself as 'perfect' and the preemptive silencing of its Voice-of-conscience is seen as confirming this self-assessment. Other parts of the self may need to be saved but not these selves. Whatever the particular qualities of a Dominant self, it will see itself as establishing a standard that is above repute as defined *by the silence* of its Voice-of-conscience. This standard, coupled with the ego-aspect's power to self-shame, establishes it as a power onto itself. *It becomes god-like in its derived authority and henceforth has no need for a higher authority other than the parent who created it. An unredeemed Dominant self becomes quite literally an idol, a graven image.* The power to become your own highest Moral authority is hubristic by any measure. But the Ego can disavow this hubris by acceding to the Voice-of-conscience that created the standard, if only by its silence. Nonetheless, to the extent that a Dominant self acknowledges no authority beyond its own standard and the silence of a Voice-of-conscience, it becomes a graven image of God, and a violation of the first commandment. ⁹³

In Greek mythology, hubris refers to the act of assuming god-like powers, always to our detriment. The most enduring myth concerning hubris is that of Daedalus and his son, Icarus. Daedalus made wings with beeswax and bird feathers that allowed him and his son to escape the island of Crete. But despite his father's insistence on moderation, Icarus became caught up in his god-like power of flight, flew too close to the sun and melted his wings, whereupon he fell into the sea and drowned. Whenever we directly assume god-like powers we risk Icarus' fate. But a Dominant self seemingly protects itself from hubris (which is clinically described as ego inflation). Given that the Voice-of-

⁹² Harakas, S. (1983) op. cit. p.247.

⁹³ Exod. 20:1-7: Then God spoke all these words: I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery; you shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an idol, whether in the form of anything that is in heaven above, or that is on the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth. You shall not bow down to them or worship them; for I the LORD your God am a jealous God, punishing children for the iniquity of parents, to the third and the fourth generation of those who reject me, but showing steadfast love to the thousandth generation of those who love me and keep my commandments. You shall not make wrongful use of the name of the LORD your God, for the LORD will not acquit anyone who misuses his name.

conscience is not cognitively or willfully amenable to persuasion, the Dominant self can disclaim responsibility for Ego conscience *and the ideals it generates*. And having created it, we would not expect a Voice-of-conscience to challenge its own creation. Once in place, it is easy to understand how a Dominant self could promote hubristic self-love and be resistant to most attempts aimed at changing it.

Hubris notwithstanding, a Dominant self created by the Voice-of-conscience has definite liabilities. First and foremost, the Voice-of-conscience is never forgiving. Consequently, the Dominant self tends to be perfectionistic since mistakes are treated as unforgivable. It seeks to be perfect as God is perfect whatever its particular values. This compulsive adherence is particularly strong for clients whose parents used excessive shame, guilt, or ostracism to shape the standards internalized by a Dominant self. And when parents are downright abusive – emotionally, physically and/or sexually, the internalized pain can be intensified sevenfold. The conflicted standards generated by those parents are likely to be impossible, leaving the individual to cope with more or less constant states of anxiety, fear, low self-esteem, or worse. But however a Dominant self manifests, the most tragic consequence is an active blocking of movement toward God’s power to redeem its condition because it is unable to acknowledge any authority greater than itself or the parent that shaped it. Lacking discernment, and imbued with the Moral authority of self-shaming, a Dominant self becomes the felt understanding of what ‘God’ expects of us, however harsh the standard. By early adolescence, most Dominant selves will acquire a number of defenses to assuage their unmitigating perfectionism. Most of those defenses will fall in the category of ‘self-medicating,’ which will invariably generate Wrath if the underlying dynamic is not addressed.

The creation of a Dominant self by the Ego is unavoidable; and it has become the modus operandi by which children are inculcated into adult society throughout the civilized world. Ego conscience cannot be prevented, only transformed. Moreover, the process of transformation cannot be rational or willful. Those have little effect on the Voice-of-conscience or Dominant self. Transformation requires psycho-imaginative processes and the grace of God. Once the Empowering archetype has constellated images within the Mind, only a higher power can change the dynamics it constellates, and even then, not by a direct assault on either the Voice-of-conscience or Dominant self. Their embodiment of Moral authority assures that other ego-aspects will experience them as superordinate and complete, if unremittingly harsh and punishing. But there is a way to challenge this sovereignty if clients are willing to look into the darker recesses of their Mind and Heart.

THE REJECTED-SELF

A Rejected-self is created by a parent’s use of shame and/or angry physical force directed at an infant or young child. Children are defenseless in the face of such attacks and always experience them as unbearably painful constrictions of their free will. Such attacks will force the archetypal Ego to dissociate the ‘offending sense of self’ and create a reactive self. This reactive self generally becomes the prototype for an Ideal-self. While I often speak of the Rejected-self in the singular, in fact the Voice-of-conscience can

generate numerous Rejected selves. What they all share in common is a dissociative trauma that abandons them to a state of shameful bondage. The Rejected-self can be logically deduced if one accepts the premise that all extremes require an opposite for definition, as light requires dark and good requires bad. An Ideal-self, i.e. Coping and Dominant selves, seemingly without flaw, are invariably *a reactive creation necessitated by the prior dissociation of a Rejected-self*. The Ego would have no need to create a reactive self if no ego-aspect was stripped of its free will by shameful assault and dissociation.

The Rejected-self is akin to Freud's Id or Jung's Shadow, and equally condemned by the combined forces of an Ideal-self and Voice-of-conscience. The Rejected-self is perpetually shamed by the Voice-of-conscience and perceived as an object of unremitting disgust, guilt, and fear by its ideal counterpart. Essentially, it is that part of our selves that *has most strongly experienced the parent's shaming behavior expressed emotionally and/or physically*. It could, for example, be the image of a child being angry, if anger was severely shamed by the parents; or the image of a sexually active child, if the parents were sexually repressive, or the image of a silenced child if parents shamed interruptions, or a self perceived as weak, if the parents put a high value on being strong and unemotional. But it can also account for suppressed development of the feeling function, if the child is ridiculed for expressions of feeling; or even the suppression of basic trust if parents frequently violated boundaries. In many cases, the Rejected-self can also embody our contrasexual aspect, i.e. the feminine in a man or masculine in a woman. But whatever the specific nature of a Rejected-self, it will be clothed in shame. Essentially, it epitomizes the shamefully unforgivable. In practice, there is rarely just one and, in almost all cases, these selves will be recreated over several developmental epochs, repeatedly providing the negative anchor defining what is unforgiveable.

Whitfield⁹⁴ popularized a comparable image in his concept of the 'wounded child' but did not connect it with conscience, and failed to appreciate its shameful origins. Likewise, in Eric Bern's Theory of Transactional Analysis, parent-child scripts ascribed the inner critic quality of conscience to parents, but his cognitive approach failed to dethrone the parent.⁹⁵ Jung's concept of the shadow comes closest to my definition of the Rejected-self.⁹⁶ The two are comparable though by no means identical. In Jung's theory, the shadow seems far broader in scope.⁹⁷ They are comparable in that it is possible in both cases to transform their negative energy into something very positive. As I demonstrate further on, the redemption of conscience requires that the Rejected-self become 'the corner stone rejected by the builders.'

The Rejected-self is always disowned by other ego-aspects in its role as *the opposite of whatever Ideal-self emerges to supplant it*. Even so, some individuals are

⁹⁴ Whitfield, Charles (1987), *Healing the Child Within: Discovery and Recovery for Adult Children of Dysfunctional Families*, Health Communications: Pompano Beach, Fla.

⁹⁵ Berne, E. (1977), *Intuition and Ego States: the Origin of Transactional Analysis*, TA Press: San Francisco.

⁹⁶ Two other theorists – R.C. Schwartz and Hal Stone, employ concepts similar to the Rejected-persona, and note the parallels between their concept Jung's shadow. Their work is discussed in some detail in the Chapter IV.

⁹⁷ Singer, J. (1973), *Boundaries of the Soul: The Practice of Jung's Psychology*, Anchor Books: New York.

quite sensitive to a Rejected-self and if discerned early in the process can use it to further clarify the Ideal-self and parentified Voice-of-conscience. For example, a Rejected-self identified as homosexual will point to an Ideal-self that actively disowns that identity and a parent who is equally shaming of homosexuals. Paradoxically, individuals often identify it as ‘closer’ to the core of who they are than the values demanded by an Ideal-self. It is the part of themselves they seek to hide from others, and in the hiding, paradoxically push it deep within the Heart toward the center of Self.

What makes the Rejected-self so significant - quite apart from its seemingly noxious and painful existence, is its ‘odd-man-out’ role in the triad comprising itself, the Voice-of-conscience, and Ideal-self. Of these three, the Rejected-self is the only one that will *readily acknowledge the need for Christ’s healing*. It will always accept Christ as a higher power if given the opportunity. In turn, it is that part of the Ego most sought after by Christ. Unlike the Voice-of-conscience and Ideal-self, which are self-perceived as god-like and therefore un-needful of redemption, this Rejected-self knows it is unworthy. It accepts the verdict of the god-like powers that shame it. It personifies the cornerstone spoken of by Christ.⁹⁸ Once the triadic relationship between the Voice-of-conscience, Ideal-self and Rejected-self is identified and understood, most individuals will readily accede that the Rejected-self best fits the description of the lost sheep or prodigal son. In sum, this part of ourselves most condemned by the Voice-of-conscience and Ideal-self (i.e. the good son), is the part of us most receptive to Christ's redemptive presence and protection. Moreover, once the Rejected-self and Christ *can be brought into relationship*, the transformation of conscience has begun. The Rejected-self, by itself, has no power to sway the self-absorption of a Voice-of-conscience or Ideal-self, and regrettably the same is true of the Christ figure alone; but when Christ can join with the Rejected-self, he can effect a change the other two cannot evade. Where the Aware-ego⁹⁹ can bring Christ and the Rejected-self together in active imagination, Christ can take the first step toward the redemption of conscience by *baptizing* the Rejected-self and liberating it from all shame. That observation is one of the most significant discoveries I have made in my initial explorations of conscience. And once Christ has liberated the Rejected-self, he can then begin offering the individual a loving source of guidance and forgiveness.

The Dissociative Triad

What forms the dissociative triad of an Ego conscience comprised of a Voice-of-conscience, Ideal-selves and Rejected selves? Clearly, the authorization of parents by the Empowering archetype is requisite; it is that power which authorizes a parent’s shaming

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Jesus said to them, "Have you never read in the scriptures: 'The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone, this was the Lord's doing, and it is amazing in our eyes'?" Therefore I tell you, the kingdom of God will be taken away from you and given to a people that produces the fruits of the kingdom. The one who falls on this stone will be broken to pieces; and it will crush anyone on whom it falls." When the chief priests and the Pharisees heard his parables, they realized that he was speaking about them (Matt 21:42-45).

⁹⁹ The Aware-ego is described in Chapter II and at greater length in succeeding chapters. Essentially, it is the ego-aspect created to accept and use the *Light*, and thereby, to exercise willingness. *Light* methodology is described in Chapter III.

behavior. Following the initial creation of a Rejected-self, those shaming judgments will precipitate the development of *avoidance* strategies, i.e. fearful selves that merely seek to avoid a repetition of the shaming experiences. Later, when Ego has a developmental grasp of absolute opposites, and access to gender attributes shaped by the parents (i.e. the Persona core), the Ego can trigger the creation a prideful self who will seek to usurp the parental Voice-of-conscience by exercising its own power to self-shame. But providentially, this polarization of opposites also insures our ongoing receptiveness to God's redemptive work in the world. An Ideal-self, by itself, is all but indifferent to the redeeming message of Jesus Christ. An Ideal-self is perfect in its own eyes and this perception is silently reinforced by the Voice-of-conscience that shaped it. Without a Rejected-self there would be no self-perceived need for a higher power that could remove the shame holding a Rejected-self in its thrall, or the exponentially greater shame that Ideal-selves will generate. Once the Rejected-self is identified and felt, the Aware-ego (though powerless to change it of its own accord) can call on Christ. This 'stone' is most receptive to Christ. When the Aware-ego can finally orchestrate Christ's contact with the Rejected-self, the new relationship forged by Christ's baptismal redemption of the Rejected-self can begin to counter the condemnation, self-absorption, and idolatry. It cannot be overstressed that the Rejected-self is totally incapable of challenging the parental Voice-of-conscience by itself. From the point of view of the Ideal-self and Voice-of-conscience, the Rejected self's mere existence is unforgivable, absolutely condemnable and unremittingly punishable, and that is how it experiences itself in the triadic relationship. Only within the arms of Christ – often quite literally, can the Rejected-self know a different experience and regain the free will to return to full consciousness and participate in the emergence of a Voice for God. If the therapist and the client's Aware-ego can facilitate it, Christ has the power to redeem the Rejected-self, nullify the incessant condemnation of a Voice-of-conscience, and reconcile the opposites by opening them to the power of his discernment.

Ideal -self, Rejected-self, and Free Will

Often, I use the phrase 'in bondage to shame' to describe the unredeemed state of the Rejected-self. By this I mean an ego-aspect in the constant thrall of shame. This effectively reduces its access to free will to the point of nullity. Shame paralyzes, freezes, and isolates; and a shamed self can be indefinitely held in that bondage, though not without causing pain to the rest of the psyche. In contrast, the Ideal-self has unencumbered access to free will; it is above reproach. It is completely willful in the sense that it perceives no reason to be the subject to anything other than its own judgment. Ideal-selves such as the Dominant self can be made to feel *ashamed*, but this can be ameliorated by feeling guilty remorse, making amends, and trying harder. But a Rejected-self is held in perpetual bondage until liberated by Christ. However, once liberated, a Rejected-self can be shown – clinically, to regain complete access to free will. Free will gives it the power to choose; specifically, to choose for the first time who will function as its higher power.

THE REDEMPTION OF CONSCIENCE

Chapters VII and VIII focus on clinical interventions designed to identify and liberate Rejected selves, terminate the power of the Voice-of-conscience, and address the hubristic inflation of the Dominant self that so threatens the Body's wellbeing. The rest of this chapter focuses on the role of Christ in redeeming Ego conscience in concert with the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is absolutely indispensable for the redemption of conscience. It is possible to alter conscience without specifically evoking an image of Jesus Christ, but without question the forgiving, convicting, power of the Holy Spirit is indispensable. Whatever image is offered as a channel of redemption within the Mind, it must be able to channel the 'Voice for God.' *Christ is Christ because he willingly extends the Holy Spirit to any and all who ask it of him.* The Holy Spirit is rarely given such an active role in mainline churches. Their focus is primarily on God the Father and Jesus Christ. But Christ is only Christ because he is conceived by and a perfect conduit for the Holy Spirit. Without the *forgiving power* of the Holy Spirit, Christ would only be a wise teacher or prophet. Only the Holy Spirit flowing *through* Christ's image has the power to forgive our sins. Christ was *conceived* by the Virgin Mary of the Holy Spirit and baptized by the Spirit of God at the River Jordon at the beginning of his Ministry. Thereafter he became a perfect conduit for the will of God. And before his ascension, he called down the Spirit upon his disciples at Pentecost – empowering them, as the first of many, to exercise all the gifts of the Spirit in his name, and his image retains that power to this day.

Remember too, the Empowering archetype is the source of Temporal and Moral authority in parental images. The Empowering archetype cannot be forced to constellate a particular image, but once an image is constellated, *only a power greater than the archetype can alter the constellated flow of archetypal energy.* The collective unconscious - what I am calling the domain of Soul, is the archetypal origin of Moral authority. Ego-aspects are creatures of the Mind, created to organize the Body's activity with free will intentionality. Ego-aspects cannot alter archetypal constellations except by their *willingness* to call on a higher power such as Christ. (Railing against this thesis is sound and fury signifying nothing.) Only a higher spiritual power is capable of intervening on behalf of mortal images held in the thrall of archetypal energies. If such intercessions could be accomplished by merely mortal images (sic) ego-aspects, there would be no need of Christ or any of the thousands of gods and goddesses in our mythological pantheons.¹⁰⁰ That said, the role of the Aware-ego is also crucial by virtue of its willingness for a higher power to intervene. *Once the process of conscience formation is understood, acts of willingness by the client's Aware-ego are absolutely necessary to initiate interventions by Christ. The Aware-ego's willingness is always a prerequisite of Christ's entering the psycho-imaginative space and forming a relationship with the Rejected-self, who cannot act on its own behalf while held in the thrall of shame.*

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The index of Larousses's Mythology is very instructive. Essentially, it lists page after page of gods and goddess, easily numbering in the thousands. There is no culture surviving or extinct which has been without its manifestations of God. See Grimal, P. (1965), *Larousse World Mythology*, Paul Hamlyn: NY.

The transformation of Ego conscience that allows Christ to become a Voice for God requires a large number of interventions. I only focus on the first three in this chapter. The first intervention requires that the client's Aware-ego arrange for Christ to engage the Rejected-self. That interaction allows Christ to bring about a decisive transformation of the Rejected-self by *Interior baptism*, i.e. filling the Rejected-self with the Holy Spirit. In the second set of interventions, the Aware-ego and the now baptized Rejected-self ask Christ to terminate the parents' Moral authority. Finally, the Rejected-self voluntarily opens itself to Christ's power of discernment, which is expected to guide it thereafter. These initial interventions set the stage for the voluntary conversion of ego-aspects that function as Ideal-selves, most particularly, the Dominant self. Their acceptance of Christ as a higher power is crucial to conscience becoming a Christ centered process. Those further steps are all discussed in Chapters VII and VIII. The transformation of the Rejected-self and Christ's termination of the parents' Moral authority is comparatively easy; the conversion of Dominant ego-aspects can require numerous sessions over a period of months. At each step in the process, the individual's *willingness* to seek out and engage these images remains a crucial factor. Free will cannot force a parental image or Ideal-self to change; only the willingness to call on a higher power can bring this about. The therapist's role is to assist the client in discovering the relevant images and bringing them into relationship with Christ. The discovery process can be arduous and inevitably humbling particularly as regards Ideal-selves. Dominant selves are well-entrenched and self-imbued with Moral authority, i.e. the power to reward with pride and self-shame unmercifully. The idea of opening to a higher power is always unpalatable at the outset.

A Number of Obstacles

When initially offered the opportunity, most people are ambivalent – if not outright fearful, at the prospect of actualizing a Christ conscience process. The first difficulty seems to rest with the pervasive experience of Ego conscience as unforgiving. The initial reaction of individuals is to equate Christ with the Ego conscience's power of condemnation. Scripture, especially in the story of the adulterous woman, elegantly demonstrates that quite the opposite is true. We need only imagine the Pharisees and scribes in that story as the 'the conscience of the father' to fully appreciate the contrast between an unredeemed conscience and the forgiving power offered by Christ:

Early in the morning he came again to the temple. All the people came to him and he sat down and began to teach them. The scribes and the Pharisees brought a woman who had been caught in adultery; and making her stand before all of them, they said to him, "Teacher, this woman was caught in the very act of committing adultery. Now in the law Moses commanded us to stone such women. Now what do you say?" They said this to test him, so that they might have some charge to bring against him. Jesus bent down and wrote with his finger on the ground. When they kept on questioning him, he straightened up and said to them, "Let anyone among you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her." And once again he bent down and wrote on the ground. When they heard it, they went

away, one by one, beginning with the elders; and Jesus was left alone with the woman standing before him. Jesus straightened up and said to her, “Woman, where are they? Has no one condemned you?” She said, “No one, sir.” And Jesus said, “Neither do I condemn you. Go your way, and from now on do not sin again.” (John 8:1-11)

Clearly, Christ can discern our misuse of authority, and expose our shameful motivations to ourselves (as in the case of the Pharisees), but he will not condemn us for what we have already done. He is quick to forgive completely whatever we are willing for him to see. Contrast this with the old Covenant, which insists on stoning – or the unrelenting torment of the Furies, when faced with our shame. If there is anything that distinguishes a Christ conscience process from Ego conscience, it is this quality of *complete forgiveness, rather than punishment, for our trespasses.*

A second reason for client ambivalence is the issue of pride. The Ideal-selves are the primary recipients of *prideful self-love*. A Christ conscience process never reinforces our actions with pride. Feelings of peace or serenity, a sense of conviction or loving approbation, compassion, and forgiveness are all possible responses of a Christ conscience process, but never pride. In effect, every Ideal-self must forgo prideful self-love as a source of motivation and be reconciled with its rejected core. In effect, they must forgo all prideful attachments, most especially, the power to self-shame. That will call for a great deal of patience on the part of therapist as well as tenacity and discernment. Basically, the therapist must also learn to use the client’s image of Christ at every turn.

Another difficulty in transforming conscience is definitely cultural. While mainstream churches and theology seemingly advocate for conscience as a new creation in Christ, to the best of my knowledge, none offer *a ritual in which Jesus Christ is specifically asked to transform conscience by making it a new creation enlivened by the Holy Spirit*. If the thesis of this book is correct, parents will always constellate Ego conscience in the first six years of a child's life and – almost without exception – it will be unforgiving.¹⁰¹ Yet there is no ritual that takes this enduring distortion into account and seeks to reform it. Why is that? It could be that denominations, which are entrenchedly patriarchal – as a number of feminine theologians have argued –^{102 103} lack the motivation to transform Ego conscience. Basically, it underpins the religious and secular authority of patriarchy. Freud was quite clear that the conscience of his understanding spoke with a father’s voice. My own clinical experience supports his conclusion. Even where the Voice-of-conscience is matriarchal, all too often her authority is derived from a father, grandfather or male religious leader. In the preponderance of cases, an unredeemed conscience assigns Moral authority to a *patris image*, and by generalization, to other patriarchal figures (e.g. kings, Popes, Bishops,

¹⁰¹ The Roman Catholic Church, among others, offers penance and absolution for all sins identified by a guilty conscience, but has no ritual for the transformation of Ego conscience.

¹⁰² Johnson, E.,(1992) *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, The Crossroad Publishing Co.: New York.

¹⁰³ Schneiders, S.M., (1986), *Women and the Word: The Gender of God in the New Testament and the Spirituality of Women*, Paulist Press: New York.

male priests, lawyers, professors, senators, judges, etc.). It is hard to imagine patriarchal churches advocating for a transformation of conscience that undermined the patriarchal, hierarchal, underpinning of their organization.

It may be that no organized ritual can adequately facilitate the transformation of Ego conscience. I can identify the conditions needed to redeem it, but I cannot describe a group ritual that might achieve it. It may be that such rituals did exist in the early church, as I discuss further on, but they all disappeared once Christianity became the *State* religion of the very patriarchal Roman Empire. For the foreseeable future, I think the process will continue to require a one-on-one relationship such as that offered by therapists, ministers, and spiritual directors. They, at least, should be familiar with the machinations of an Ideal-self long recognized by mystics, such as Saint John of the Cross,¹⁰⁴ and the Greek monastics recorded in the *Philokalia*.¹⁰⁵

Another difficulty in the transformation of conscience is the crucial role played by the Holy Spirit. *The therapist must actively support the image of Christ as a channel of the Holy Spirit.* I have intimated this throughout the chapter. In the next section I address it in detail. Essentially, the client's image of Christ must be empowered to channel the Holy Spirit. The Gospels are clear that the Holy Spirit is the source of forgiveness. But many clergy in mainstream Christianity are decidedly uncomfortable with evoking the Holy Spirit in a way that is emotionally transformative.

A Final Hurdle: Entering the Heart

While only touched on briefly in this chapter, work with the Repressive dynamic – as manifest in a Dominant self, is crucial to the transformation of conscience. The Dominant self repressively hides its shame rather than dissociating it. Essentially, it strives to become its own conscience by exercising the power of self-shaming. This repressive act creates a core of accumulated shame hidden within the Heart. To redeem that shameful core Christ must enter the Heart of the Dominant self to purify and consecrate it for the conscious indwelling of the Holy Spirit. In doing so he penetrates the Heart shared by the Aware-ego and all primary selves fused with the Aware-ego at the moment of penetration. This process of penetrating the Heart and redeeming it allows Christ to prepare a heartfelt dwelling place for the Holy Spirit. That indwelling within the Heart has proven pivotal to the creation of a Christ conscience process. All of this may be difficult for the reader to appreciate at this juncture. Hopefully, the following chapters will increase an appreciation of the Heart's pivotal centrality in the redemption of conscience. What I can share at this juncture is the observation that when clients allow Christ to finally penetrate their 'Heart' the experience is profound and transformational.

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Peer, E.A., trans. and editor (1959), *Dark Night of the Soul by St. John of the Cross*, Image Books, Doubleday: New York.

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Palmer, G.E.H., Sherrard, P., and Kallistos, W., trans. and editors (1981), *The Philokalia: The Complete Text Compiled by St. Nikodimos of the Holy Mountain and St. Makarios of Corinth*, Vol. I and II, Faber and Faber: Boston.

The Christ Conscience Process Defined

Experientially, the Christ conscience process is the felt presence of Jesus Christ abiding serenely within us as a constant, heartfelt, source of forgiveness and guidance in all things spiritual, moral, and ethical. The transformation process allows Christ to become a power for discernment and an ongoing conduit of the Holy Spirit. He does not oppose our thoughts or actions, *but by his presence he continually defines the right thing and lovingly forgives the errors*. No temporal or religious authority - neither church, nor society, nor parents - will exceed the authority of this internal image/voice once conscience is transformed. As discussed earlier, conscience cannot override the free will choices of the Ego. But where Christ becomes a Voice for God, then Christ can become the Ego's constant companion, never far from the Ego's perception and often the focus of its attention.

A Christ conscience process does not drown out other voices or images. It does not suppress the existence of shadow aspects or other archetypal energies, though Christ will have a significant effect on them wherever he is allowed to interact with them imaginatively. Nor is a Christ conscience process the only way Christ's power can heal the Soul, Mind, and Body. Conscience is but one function shaping and energizing our thoughts, feelings, voices, and images. The Soul also empowers images with Temporal and Relational authority (discussed in the next chapter). The Soul can also compromise the Ego's integrity when it allows spiritual infestations or shapes our beliefs with karmic issues. These too are within Christ's power to rectify, but different in kind from issues of conscience.

While conscience does not control the psyche, Freud saw it as pivotal in the client's seeming resistance to getting better; and that remains as true today. When pressed to explain why they are ill, many people with severe or terminal illness are inclined to see the illness as a punishment for their sins. This belief in punishment is also implicit in many books on spiritual healing where unforgiveness is an issue.¹⁰⁶ Belief in the 'Wrath of God' is very old, found throughout the Old Testament and even voiced in the New Testament by Paul. Such beliefs are found throughout the world,¹⁰⁷ not just in the Judeo-Christian traditions, and they all attribute retributive power to an unredeemed conscience or comparable concept. In response to the belief that we are 'punished for our sins,' most therapists and religious point to the value of confession and absolution for easing a guilty conscience. But absolution rituals seem unable to permanently alter, in any significant way, the conscience Freud saw as central to the perpetuation of the most severe personality disorders. In my clinical experience, Freud's observations are valid; only his reluctance to enter active imagination, use the *Light* of willingness, and call upon a higher

¹⁰⁶ Often, healing is seen as obstructed by the individual's unwillingness to seek forgiveness. When they extend forgiveness to self or other, dramatic healings often follow. Forgiveness, in Christianity, is the means by which we are released from the burden of a guilty conscience.

¹⁰⁷ Karmic law, the underpinning of all reincarnation theologies such as those found in Hinduism and Tibetan Buddhism, presume that all things happen for a purpose and that suffering is recompense for past errors.

power able to channel the Holy Spirit, limited his therapeutic outcomes. Where these can be introduced into the therapeutic process, it is possible to transform conscience in a way that ameliorates the symptoms described by him and others.

THE HOLY SPIRIT'S ROLE IN REDEEMING CONSCIENCE

All Christian theology accepts that forgiveness flows from the Holy Spirit and it is asserted here that this power to remit sin is absolutely essential for the redemption of conscience.¹⁰⁸ If the Christ within us lacks the power to channel the Holy Spirit, then he cannot speak as a Voice for God with the power to remit shame. Without exception, the client's Christ image must be able to *baptize* (remit the shame of our falls) with the power of the Holy Spirit. Christ must be able to fill an ego-aspect with the Holy Spirit, thereby remitting the shame that the Voice-of-conscience treats as unforgivable. This is a subjective experience of baptism best described as *Interior* baptism. In our contemporary culture, it is generally preceded by the *ritual* baptism of infants or young children – commonly referred to as baptism of water and the Holy Spirit. Ritual baptism is a rite that can be pointed at by an observer. Contrastingly, Interior baptism is the individual's *subjective experience* of the Holy Spirit. Interior baptism is a conscious interior event that *releases* any ego-aspect from the thrall of shame. It is a felt experience of release that the client can immediately observe in the posture and demeanor of a Rejected-self. It is argued here that Interior baptism is the necessary requisite for the redemption of conscience however it is received. Though psychotherapy can prepare clients for the transformation of conscience by guiding them through a series of steps, its actual redemption is always treated as a transcendent action of the Holy Spirit consciously and willingly received through the image of Jesus Christ.

(Nearly a decade has past since I wrote the above paragraph. Since then I have clinically proven the thesis. The problem now is that what I say in the remainder of this chapter does not go far enough. In Chapter VIII, I will revisit this whole issue when I introduce the concept of being 'convicted by power of the Holy Spirit.' The effects of that experience are a magnitude greater than Interior baptism. Both are manifestations of the Holy Spirit, but conviction is far more transformative. It has the power to heal any image totally and completely – be it an image of self or other. It does not merely release an image from shame but alters its very being. In what follows, I do not discuss this power of the Holy Spirit to convict, but it follows directly from everything I say below.)

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The Holy Spirit's centrality to the process of forgiveness is reflected in the fact that blasphemy against the Holy Spirit is the only unforgivable sin. Such blasphemy cuts us off from the source of forgiveness. This is recorded in all three synoptic gospels: Therefore I tell you, people will be forgiven for every sin and blasphemy, but blasphemy against the Spirit will not be forgiven. Whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this age or in the age to come [Matt. 12:31-32]. But whoever blasphemates against the Holy Spirit can never have forgiveness, but is guilty of an eternal sin [Mark 3:29]. And everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven; but whoever blasphemates against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven [Luke 12:10].

Lacking Interior baptism as an integral part of the liturgy, orthodox theologies have been obliged to treat an unredeemed conscience as the status quo for the better part of seventeen hundred years, even though the ritual equivalents of Interior baptism, i.e. being ‘slain in the Spirit’ or specific prayers for the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, were offered to every adult entering a Christian community in the early church.¹⁰⁹ In the church’s first 200 years, there were three expectations regarding baptism: 1) the individual – always an adult, consciously and wholeheartedly consented to the baptism; 2) the person praying for the initiate asked for a *manifest* indwelling of the Holy Spirit of God through Jesus Christ; and 3) the person, so blessed, received confirmation of the Spirit’s indwelling by a *felt* remission of sin often accompanied by an upsurge of positive emotion and consequent gifts of the Spirit.

Being “slain in Spirit” – strongly associated with Pentecostal and Charismatic movements – is seen to have an effect comparable to that experienced by adults in the early church. Interior baptism differs from it in two respects. First, it is the client who makes the request of Christ. In contrast, being slain in Spirit is ‘received’ when one person prays for it on behalf of the recipient, though the recipient is generally willing or s/he would not be present. Second, Interior baptism is offered to specific aspects of the Ego that have been judged *unforgivable* by a Voice-of-conscience. In contrast, being slain in the Spirit is offered to whatever ego-aspect consciously seeks it out; and it is unclear if that self consciously extends it to the Rejected-self, which cannot ask on its own behalf. I suspect that – too often, being slain in the Spirit may actually be sought as a means of “drowning out” the Rejected-self, rather than redeeming it. It really depends on the intent of the person asking. If they are truly asking on behalf of their most sinful sense of self, then they could very well experience Interior baptism at an altar.

All initiations into Christian churches require a ritual baptism of water and the Holy Spirit, be it sacramental or symbolic, which follows a general form involving the use of water and a formula prayer: “I baptize you in the Name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost.” (All three persons of the trinity must be named, though they can be designated by different names. Thus, an individual could be baptized in the Name of the Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer.) Persons are not typically baptized a second time by water and the Holy Spirit, unless the second rite is conditional,¹¹⁰ or the individual makes a significant shift in denominations and the new denomination considers the first baptism invalid. For example, some churches such as the International Church of Christ consider the baptisms of all other Christian churches invalid and insist that new members be re-baptized; the same is true of Roman Catholic church vis-à-vis protestant denominations. But most protestant denominations are more accepting. In those churches, if a person has been baptized as an infant or adult with water and the Holy Spirit, by a proper form of the ritual, then all further ‘baptisms’ are treated as a renewal, actualization, or quickening of the Holy Spirit already indwelling within the individual through Jesus Christ. So far as I can determine, there is nothing in those rituals that specifically addresses the conscious redemption of a Rejected-self. In most churches, baptism of water and the Holy Spirit is

¹⁰⁹ See McDonnell, K. & Montague, G.T. (1994), op. cit.

¹¹⁰ If the first baptism is questionable as to form or intent, then the individual is conditionally baptized by the priest or minister saying: “If you have not been baptized, I baptize you....”

expected to represent *formal* entry into a Christian community without attendant charisms or remission of particular sins. Even St. Paul had to receive a separate baptism for admission to the Christian community of Damascus after being redeemed with the power of the Holy Spirit.

I consider it noteworthy that being slain in the Spirit has played a pivotal role in the development of Classical Pentecostal churches, which have grown to become the largest Protestant denomination since their inception in 1901.¹¹¹ But the *felt experience* of the Holy Spirit is down played in most mainline denominations except in their peripheral Renewal or Charismatic movements.¹¹² In the early life of the church (first 200 years), Christianity appeared to model itself in significant ways after other mystery religions of that era such as the Elysian mystery sects of the Greeks.¹¹³ Adults seeking to join a Christian community were expected to undergo at least three years of instruction before partaking of the Eucharistic mysteries.¹¹⁴ But this instruction commenced with their baptism with water and the Holy Spirit, *and it was expected that the indwelling of the Holy Spirit would be manifest by one or more charisms as described by St. Paul and others.*¹¹⁵ This initiation was seen as modeling Christ's own baptism at the beginning of his ministry.¹¹⁶ It was after his baptism by John the Baptist, and testing in the desert, that Christ declared: "The spirit of the Lord is on me, for he has anointed me to bring the good news to the afflicted. He has sent me to proclaim liberty to captives, sight to the blind, to let the oppressed go free, to proclaim a year of favor from the Lord (Luke 4:18)."

In the early church, before Christianity became the State religion of the Roman Empire, the Church Fathers¹¹⁷ most often quoted for that period asserted that adult baptism was expected to both remit sin and impart charisms – manifest gifts of the Holy

¹¹¹ See Sienna, V. (1987), *The Twentieth-Century Pentecostal Explosion*, Creation House: Altamonte Springs, Florida.

¹¹² This neglect is recognized even among Catholic theologians. McDonnell and Montague note that: "The element which the Pentecostals have touched on is the one largely neglected in the mainline sacramental churches - that the Spirit received is manifested charismatically and will indeed do so, if one has such an expectation and has not *a priori* excluded it. God, of course, is not limited by our subjective dispositions. But ordinarily God takes us where we are." McDonnell, K. & Montague, G. (1991), *Op. cit.* p. 89.

¹¹³ See Jung, C.G. & Kerenyi, C. (1978), *Essays on a Science of Mythology: the Myth of the Divine Child and the Mysteries of Eleusis*, Bollingen Series XXII, Princeton University Press: Princeton, N.J.

¹¹⁴ See McDonnell, K. & Montague, G. (1991) *op. cit.*

¹¹⁵ The Library of Congress lists more than a 1000 titles addressing manifestations of the Holy Spirit. One author I have valued for his many references to scripture is: Pytches, D. (1985), *Spiritual Gifts in the Local Church*, Bethany House Publishers: Minneapolis, Minn.

¹¹⁶ All four gospels describe Christ's baptism by John the Baptist. The exegesis on these passages is complex, but essentially, all of them emphasize that it occurred at the beginning of his ministry and was the source of his power - as had always been the case for prophets in the Old Testament; that the baptism was of the Holy Spirit received directly from God; and that John's baptism by water was only the outward sign. I might also note here, that this baptism released him from the authority of his parents. (According to Luke [2:51] he continued to live under his parent's authority until his baptism by John). See McDonnell, K. & Montague, G. (1991), *op. cit.*

¹¹⁷ McDonnell, K. & Montague, G. (1991), *op. cit.*

Spirit, as described by St. Paul.¹¹⁸ McDonnell and Montague¹¹⁹ give numerous reasons for the gradual decline of these charisms including heresies surrounding the gift of prophesy¹²⁰ and the emerging belief that *infant baptism was necessary and sufficient*. What they only touch on indirectly was the politicizing of the clerical hierarchy – particularly the Bishops, after Christianity became the State religion of the Roman Empire (313 AD). Historically, the Bishops had been the primary administrators of baptism to adult initiates, but that role diminished with the need to baptize great numbers of people. Infant baptism fell to the many priests demanded of a State religion, though Bishops did continue to function as the sacramental administrators of Confirmation. More to the point, in succeeding centuries as the Bishoprics – and most especially the Papacy – became centers of temporal power, the positions were too often filled by persons with less than spiritual aspirations. The consequent waning of spiritual gifts in bishops and initiates led theologians to argue that the gifts were no longer expected of everyone in the church. Interestingly, many of the ‘heresies’ declared by the church after 313 AD would flow from ‘manifestations of the Spirit’ that challenged the suppressive temporal authority of Roman clerics who sought to impose dogma, doctrine, and community tithes by force of arms.

The politicization of the Christian church,¹²¹ the emergent belief in infant baptism, and heresies attributed to the gift of prophecy, have all contributed to the suppression of the Holy Spirit as a felt experience in mainline churches. Rather than seeking to be ‘slain in the Spirit’ – by which I mean a subjective, transformative, experience, such rituals have been actively discouraged, and that is still the case today in most mainline churches. It is argued here that this suppression has inadvertently blocked one of the most significant promises of Christian faith, namely, a new conscience made in the image of Christ, and has forced theologians to accept an unredeemed Ego conscience as the status quo for the better part of two millennia. Insistence on *infant baptism* has institutionalized the unredeemed conscience since infant baptism generally precedes the creation of the dissociative dynamic that sustains an Ego conscience. Unless a Rejected-self can *experience* the felt release offered by the Holy Spirit, there is no way to begin undoing the cumulative adverse effects of an Ego conscience.

Dogmatically, the Holy Spirit already abides within individuals baptized as infants, but not necessarily in any experiential sense, and rarely within their image of Christ as a willing conduit. There is rarely a conscious juxta-positioning of Christ as a conduit of Holy Spirit unless the individual has willingly accepted Christ in an adult

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McDonnell, K. & Montague, G. (1991), op. cit.

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McDonnell, K. & Montague, G. (1991), op. cit.

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Such “heresies” also appeared to be a concern of St. Paul’s and addressed so in his letters. See Goulder, M., (1995), *St. Paul Versus St. Peter: A Tale of Two Missions*, Westminster John Knox Press: New York

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Walter Wink offers a masterful description of the Christian church compromised by what he calls the Dominator System when it became the official Church of Rome. The Myth of Redemptive Violence governs the Dominator System: the belief that violence can be defeated by violence. Wink sees this myth as upholding a patriarchal, hierarchical, social order that was directly challenged by the teachings of Christ. See Wink, W. (1998), *The Powers That Be: Theology For A New Millennium*, Galilee Doubleday: New York. See Also: Dungan, D.L. (2006), *Constantine's Bible: Politics and the Making of the New Testament*, Augsburg Fortress Publishers.

ritual sought out for that purpose: a ritual in which Christ becomes the channel of their felt experience of the Holy Spirit's forgiving grace. This opening to the Spirit through Christ can take place in several ways: in Protestant congregations through conversion experiences of being 'saved,' or by any ritual commonly referred to as being slain in the Spirit.¹²² Some of the clients I have worked with who were most receptive to the idea of a Christ conscience process had sought out such a baptism of the Spirit in a well-remembered ceremony that each considered life changing. It must be stressed, however, that such rituals are not a prerequisite for Interior baptism. *So long as the client is open to the idea of the Holy Spirit flowing through their image of Christ, that appears to be sufficient for the baptism of a Rejected-self.* Moreover, in my clinical experience, being slain in the Spirit does not by itself insure that aspects of the Rejected-self are baptized. In most cases, the Interior baptism of the Rejected-self and consequent transformation of conscience must still be accomplished through therapy or spiritual direction. I do not know of any rituals that specifically addresses the ego dynamics addressed in this book, except the subjective experience of Interior baptism and conviction by the Holy Spirit discussed in Chapter VIII.¹²³

The reader should not impart a mystical or hysterical aura to this need for Interior baptism. While *external ritualizations* of baptism in the Spirit can be dramatic for participants and observers, it is nonetheless a common and oft repeated experience in Pentecostal and Charismatic renewal movements in the 20th and 21st century. But that said, I will grant that most mainstream churches remain decidedly skeptical at the thought of encouraging baptism in the Spirit. Thankfully, external ritualization is not necessary for the baptism described here. Rather, if anything, the process is often punctuated by long silences which the client later reports as very peaceful. Ego-aspects can be interiorly baptized without recourse to external rituals. But, whether interiorly imagined or externally ritualized, the image of Christ must be able to claim the power needed to forgive the Rejected-self for its very existence, not to mention its actual sins (be they real or imagined). That power has always flowed from the Holy Spirit. As Jung observed, we are dealing here with psychic truths.¹²⁴ Whatever the physical facts of Christ's birth, we

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Bennett, D.J. (1970), *Nine O'Clock In The Morning*, Bridge-Logos Publishers.

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I have recently read an account that might be a notable exception to that conclusion. In his book by the same name, the author describes the experience of Deeksha, which is grounded in the Hindu religion. As he describes it, the experience is more powerful than anything I have described here. A Deeksha is received in much the same way as someone who is 'slain in the Spirit.' It appears to replicate or facilitate many of the transformations described in my work. Of note, the anecdotal reports indicate that all of the people who have experienced it had previously done a great deal of inner work. The experience is expected to be repeated a number of times. In that respect it is very much like being repeatedly convicted of the Holy Spirit; that is to say the effects are said to be cumulative. See Windrider, K. with Sears, G. (2006), *Deeksha: The Fire from Heaven*, New World Library: Novato, CA.

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Jung makes the following observation regarding the distinction between physical and psychic facts: "The conflict [between religion and science] is due to the strange supposition that a thing is true only if it presents itself as a *physical* fact. Thus some people believe it to be physically true that Christ was born as the son of a virgin, while others deny this as a physical impossibility. Everyone can see that there is no logical solution to this conflict and that one would do better not to get involved in such sterile disputes. Both are right and both are wrong. Yet they could easily reach agreement if only they dropped the word 'physical.' 'Physical' is not the only criterion of truth: there are also *psychic* truths which can neither be explained nor proved nor contested in any physical way....Religious statements are of this type. They refer without exception to things that cannot be established as physical facts....the fact that religious statements frequently conflict with the observed physical phenomena proves that in contrast to physical perception the spirit is autonomous, and that psychic experience is to a certain extent independent of physical state. Jung, C.G.

must accept that he was mythically and metaphysically conceived in Mary's womb by the Holy Spirit, that he was anointed by the Holy Spirit at the river Jordan, and resurrected by God to channel the forgiving, healing power of that same Spirit to all who ask it in his name. That power must flow now, as then, or his image has not the power to speak for God. My ego can speak of God; only a higher power such as Christ can speak for God.

Experientially, it is possible for any clergy, spiritual director, or therapist to facilitate Interior baptism of the Rejected-self by guiding the client through three internalizations. First, the client must allow Christ to enter his or her imagination. Second, the client must acknowledge that this image of Christ has the power to channel the Holy Spirit if willingly asked to do so. Even if the client was baptized as an infant, s/he must be queried whether the Holy Spirit can manifest through an image of Christ. Surprisingly, many Christians who have only known infant baptism will hesitate to make such a declaration. Their Christ image may be very human, and not perceived as divine in a manner bespeaking the power to channel the Holy Spirit, though the Gospels unequivocally treat Christ as empowered by the Holy Spirit even while he walked the earth. For others, there is a remembered event when they 'accepted Christ,' or were 'saved,' or 'born again,' or 'slain in the Spirit.' For these clients the idea of the Holy Spirit channeled by Christ is quite easy to acknowledge. But however they come to this conclusion, they must come to accept Christ as a willing conduit for the Holy Spirit.¹²⁵

The third condition: the individual's Aware-ego must facilitate the discovery of Rejected-selves and be willing to ask for baptism on their behalf. The felt experience of Interior baptism is always liberating for a Rejected-self. On occasion, clients have reported their image of a Rejected-self being 'consumed by Pentecostal fire.' But however it manifests, there is a distinct sense that the ego-aspect is immediately and permanently released from the bondage of shame. The resulting relationship between the Rejected-self and Christ becomes unconditional, mutually accepting, and loving. I cannot stress enough that change is never a *precondition* of this baptism. The Rejected-self is baptized as s/he is: all 'warts and perversions' fully present and expected to remain. However, where before the Rejected-self would have felt itself living in a state of shame and condemnation, it now experiences itself as forgiven and able to exercise its free will without fear of shameful bondage. Initially, only Christ is seen as extending this forgiveness. At this point, the Voice-of-Conscience will persist in its shaming. Ideal-selves will also continue to treat the Rejected-self as shameful, though their perceptions will no longer affect the Rejected-self. Following Interior baptism, primary selves may acknowledge these changes in the Rejected-self while remaining untouched by them. *Only when Ideal-selves open to Christ as a channel of the Holy Spirit and relinquish their power to function as their own conscience will these selves likewise be freed to reconcile with the Rejected-self and participate in the Christ conscience process.* What can occur after Interior baptism of the Rejected-self is a diminishment of the Voice-of-conscience's

(1956), "An Answer to Job" in *Psychology and Religion: West and East*, Collected Works, Vol. 11, Bollingen Series XX, Princeton University Press, New Jersey, p. 522-523.

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Images other than Christ can function as conduits of the Holy Spirit. Channeling the Holy Spirit is not the sole prerogative of Jesus Christ. I accept in principle that other spiritual beings could also function as channels of the Holy Spirit. Clearly, the Holy Spirit inspired the prophets of the Old Testament just as it did the New Testament writers. The necessary prerequisite here seems to be that the Holy Spirit is acknowledged as the source of forgiveness and experienced as such when channeled by the image of a spiritual being.

power. Following Interior baptism, the Rejected-self can immediately ask Christ to terminate the parental image's Moral authority; and immediately after, the Rejected-self can voluntarily open to Christ as his or her Voice for God. Those acts make it immune to the prideful, shaming, judgments of any self, as it is now guided solely by Christ's discernment and the grace of the Holy Spirit. However, this redemption of the Rejected-self does not immunize the Body from the self-shaming of a Dominant self, or the defiant shaming of an Ego-in-conflict, which is both cumulative and toxic. To rectify that state of affairs Christ must now work directly with those aspects. Interventions that facilitate their redemption are described in the clinical chapters.

The process of transforming conscience can begin in earnest once a Rejected-self is freed of shame.¹²⁶ At the request of the liberated Rejected-self, Christ can now terminate the parental image's connection to the Empowering archetype. Following this 'dethronement' Christ can now become the Voice for God if the Rejected-self voluntarily opens its Mind to Christ's discernment. The reason why the role of the Rejected-self is so pivotal flows from its willingness to let Christ terminate the power of parental images as the Voice-of-conscience, and to voluntarily accept Christ as a Voice for God, before any other ego-aspect is willing to consider such steps. Without any exception I can think of, the client's Rejected-self has always, unhesitatingly, accepted Christ as its higher power, since this is the same Christ who has freed it from the bondage of shame. But for Christ to abide in the Heart as a Voice for God, other ego-aspects must also come to accept him as their higher power, most especially the Dominant selves that allow him entry to the Heart. Their redemption is by far the most difficult part of the process. It is nearly impossible for ego-aspects that have functioned pridefully, or self-sufficiently, or responsibly, to immediately relinquish their positions of autonomy, if only from fear of being once again vulnerable to dissociation.

The structure of an unredeemed conscience, as I have described it, can be unearthed without the methodologies described in this book. Clients can be asked to self-

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In Chapter VII, I will make a sharp distinction between *being held in bondage to shame and feeling ashamed*. There are two conditions when adults can feel *ashamed*: 1) if the individual is caught in an act considered shameful by self and others; or 2) if the individual identifies with someone who has acted shamefully, for example, a parent who the community identifies as having acted shamefully. In both instances the shame is self-imposed; that is, the individual self-shames in order to evade shaming by the Voice-of-conscience who might otherwise force the dissociation of that sense of self. Any self that exercises the power of self-shame is called a Dominant self. If the shameful act is private - only observed by itself, then the individual is more likely to experience guilt than feel ashamed. Guilt is considered less painful than shame, but painful nonetheless. It does have the advantage of closure. Someone can be made to re-experience shame for a visible action committed ten years ago. In contrast, once 'Mia Cupas' are made, a guilty action is thought to be forgiven. Guilt is felt when an individual has satisfied what s/he considers a shameful desire without getting shamed by another. Thus, remorse and feeling ashamed, though often treated as synonyms, are different in degree. Remorse is more akin to the effects of guilt, while feeling ashamed is always the result of being caught in or associated with a shameful act. While I do not want to split hairs here, the differences become pertinent when addressing the activity of an Ideal-self. These ego-aspects can experience feeling ashamed if caught in shameful acts, or even feel remorse for their part in treating the Rejected-self as unforgivable. Since they tend to use pride as a primary defense they can also feel ashamed whenever their pride fails them, or they are confronted with their hubristic stance vis-à-vis God and Christ. Even so, *an Ideal-self must willingly ask Christ for the Interior baptism of their shameful core*. The Aware-ego cannot ask on its behalf. Shameful behavior or shame by association - as distinct from a shameful identity, does not paralyze an ego-aspect's will to act. In contrast, the Rejected-self does not merely act shamefully: its very *being* is defined as shameful; and that shame paralyzes its will to act or ask on its own behalf. It is one thing to satisfy a shameful desire and feel guilty afterward; quite another to be the Rejected-self that embodies that shameful desire.

report their observations of inner-dialogues and proclivities. That is how Freud discerned the effects of conscience in the first place. As Freud observed, the Superego is comprised of a conscience that can be shown to speak with the attributes of a parent, and an Ideal-self, which is essentially a power unto itself (an idol). In turn, conscience and the Ideal-self can be shown, logically and phenomenally, to stand in opposition to a Rejected-self, which functions as the carrier of seemingly unforgivable attributes, actions, and beliefs (what Freud called the id). Even the Rejected-self is discernible without the methodologies described in the following chapters, as books addressing the Jungian Shadow amply demonstrate.¹²⁷ But neither of these theories provide for the actual redemption of conscience.¹²⁸ So far as I can determine, that can only be accomplished by a higher power channeling the Holy Spirit, and in a Christian context that requires the Holy Spirit incarnate in Jesus Christ. Only by the Holy Spirit's baptism of the Rejected-self is the stage set for Christ to become a Voice for God and begin the process of depotentiating the Ideal-selves. The stone rejected by the builders must first become the cornerstone.

SUMMARY

Conscience has been variously defined depending on the epoch in history, the dominant culture, and the discipline addressing it, e.g. psychological vs. theological. Psychology has tended to overlap with modern Theology but it has not been a perfect fit. In this work, I add to the dialogue by introducing two major re-conceptualizations. The first is the positing of an Empowering archetype that originates in the collective unconscious, and constellates images within the Mind. The images constellated by this archetype are imbued with *a god-like power* relative to the Ego. Parents are the first and most enduring images constellated by this archetype. Early in the child's development the archetype imbues parents with Temporal Authority (described in Chapter VI), which shapes a number of different ego-aspects found to be problematical in psychotherapy. Around the age of seven, a child's cognitive development allows it to internalize the concept of absolute moral opposites. This fosters the development of Ideal-selves as the prideful opposite of a Rejected-self. Working separately but collusively, the Voice-of-conscience and Ideal-selves define perfection and readily shame what cannot achieve that standard, i.e. the Rejected-self and a Dominant self's own shameful core. Dominant selves can seek to preempt the Voice-of-conscience by assuming the power to self-shame and hide the shameful effects within their Heart. Egos-in-conflict can also develop in later childhood and adolescence with the power to defy the Voice-of-conscience. But all of those selves will incur Wrath, as they are inevitably obliged to use socially acceptable

¹²⁷ Johnson, R.A. (1993), *Owning Your Own Shadow: Understanding the Dark Side of the Psyche*, Harper: San Francisco.

¹²⁸ It is conceivable that Jung's theory, especially as it sought to recapitulate Alchemical studies, was capable of transforming conscience. I suspect the necessary elements were present. But nothing like what I am outlining here was ever offered by Jung.

or unacceptable behaviors in excess (e.g. alcohol, smoking, overeating, etc.) in order to medicate the tension of their polarized opposites.

The second major re-conceptualization I have introduced is the redemption of conscience by a higher power capable of channeling the Holy Spirit. In support of this thesis I offer a step-by-step process for the redemption of Ego conscience. The primary obstacle to the redemption of conscience is the entrenchment of the reigning Voice-of-conscience and ego-aspects created to accommodate it. These ego-aspects dominate consciousness; and were it not for the fact that the pain of the Rejected-self remains a perpetual thorn, nothing would change. The Voice-of-conscience and Ideal selves repeatedly and painfully condemn the Rejected-self but never heal it. This situation is aptly described by St. Paul in his observation that, those who live under the Law are perpetually condemned by the Law.¹²⁹ The parentified Voice-of-conscience and Ideal-selves emulating the Voice-of-conscience are the internalized equivalent of the Law.

A redeemed conscience is defined as the discerning, forgiving power of the Holy Spirit flowing through the image of Christ. Jesus Christ's incarnation in the Mind has the power to "liberate the slaves" and terminate the 'lawful' authority of the parents and Dominant selves by supplanting their law with grace, discernment, and forgiveness. The redemption of conscience by Christ is a process rather than a single act. I have already described the necessary steps in general terms. Chapters VII and VIII describe the clinical process in detail.

The redemption of conscience is by no means a new idea since it is spoken of in scriptures and has remained an 'ideal' of Christian theology since St. Paul. But there does not appear to be any recognized ritual or theology for achieving it in mainstream religions, though it could be argued that it was integral to baptism in the early church.¹³⁰ Likewise, the Rejected-self is not new. It can be subsumed by Jung's shadow, Freud's id or St. Paul's 'other.'¹³¹ What is new is the idea of linking the Ideal-self with the Rejected-self and showing how their reconciliation is integral to Christ becoming a Voice for God.

For several reasons, I have located the clinical chapter on conscience later in the book. First, understanding will be easier when the reader has a fuller grasp of the uses of the *Light* and image of Christ in therapy. Those are provided in chapters III and IV. Chapter V introduces a variety of explorations using both the *Light* and image of Christ that will help the reader better appreciate the connections between Soul, Mind and Body. Chapter VI introduces the reader to the Empowering archetype as a clinical phenomenon and interventions for treating its effects as it manifests in the Temporal Authority of parents. Chapters VII and VIII address the clinical redemption of conscience and the transformation of images governed by Relational authority. Chapter VIII also introduces the clinical application of 'conviction by the Holy Spirit.' Basically, conviction by the

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See Barclay for an orthodox interpretation of St. Paul's Letter to the Ephesians, which addresses the issue of Law vs. grace. Barclay, W. (2002), *The Letters to the Galatians and Ephesians*, Westminster John Knox Press: Louisville, KY.

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See McDonnell, K. & Montague, G. (1991), op. cit.

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St. Paul noted that he did what he would not do, and failed to do what he would do. Implicitly, he acknowledged the existence of more than one self and the 'other' self appears to have its own will and divergent attitudes.

Holy Spirit can positively and irreversibly transform any image within the Mind. Anyone who has ever attempted to willfully alter a significant image within the Mind can appreciate the near impossibility of such a feat using the unaided will. But where Christ is allowed to repeatedly convict an image with the power of the Holy Spirit, the transformation is a felt experience that can be judged as total, complete, and enduring without any action of the Ego beyond its willingness.