
The Task of the Church and the Role of its Members

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A INTRODUCTION

In this time of uncertainty about the church and its clergy, there is no shortage of prescriptions about what the church and its leaders should do. The difficulty is to decide which advice to follow. For, as Steven Mackie said in writing about the evaluation of churches:

"...in order to evaluate the 'success' of the Church in a particular place and at a particular time, it is necessary to define in fairly simple terms the primary function of the organisation we call 'the Church'. But any such definition simply betrays the pre-suppositions of the person making it" (1).

My approach to the task of the church and the role of the clergy is not primarily theological but is based on studies of the life and work of the churches which have been carried out by myself and my colleagues in the Grubb Institute since 1957. During this period we have been engaged in a variety of activities for the churches, among which are included:

- the organising and running of Parish Life Conferences;
- working with clergy on the study of group and organisational behaviour in different conference settings;
- the carrying out of advisory assignments for churches of all denominations, religious orders, and christian organisations;
- a variety of research projects on the role of the churches in the local community;
- the study of the roles of clergy and ministers of different denominations and of varying hierarchical status.

For this work we have drawn on theories of human behaviour, particularly those which concern the human personality, behaviour within groups, and the behavioural patterns of organisations (2). Some of these theories make use of concepts developed within the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations. In particular we have drawn on and developed the work of A K Rice (3), whose major contribution, in my opinion, was a theory of social systems which uses

the same frame of reference to encompass both the behaviour of the individual and the behaviour of an institution.

In the Grubb Institute we have been concerned particularly to understand what we describe as the 'emotional patternings' of the social systems we have studied. The work of W R Bion (4) led to the recognition that there is a limited number of patterns of linked emotions, each of which is expressed by a characteristic pattern of behaviour within groups and organisations. For example, one such emotional patterning is that of dependence. It links the emotions of love, trust, fear, guilt, anxiety in such a manner that it leads to the behaviour in which an individual looks to another person or thing, to provide security and support. One such example of dependence is seen in the following:

"Then suddenly the Mole felt a great Awe fall upon him, an awe that turned his muscles to water, bowed his head, and rooted his feet to the ground. It was no panic terror - indeed he felt wonderfully at peace and happy - but it was an awe that smote and held him and, without seeing, he knew it could only mean that some august Presence was very, very near. With difficulty he turned to look for his friend, and saw him at his side cowed, stricken, and trembling violently. And still there was utter silence in the populous bird-haunted branches around them; and still the light grew and grew...

"'Rat!' he found breath to whisper, shaking. 'Are you afraid?' 'Afraid?' murmured the Rat, his eyes shining with unutterable love. 'Afraid! Of Him? O, never, never! And yet - and yet - O, Mole, I am afraid!' Then the two animals, crouching to the earth, bowed their heads and did worship." (5)

In studying churches, we have explored the emotional patternings underlying the behaviour we have observed, with special attention to dependence.

On the basis of this practical work, we have developed ideas about the place of the Church in society. These hypotheses have been tested in field-work and have led to the formulation of a theory about religion, based on what we have called the process of oscillation.

B THE PROCESS OF OSCILLATION - A Theory about Religious Behaviour

The religious theory is itself an application of a theory about human behaviour in general. We have concluded that in order to survive, human beings are inevitably and continuously engaged in the process of fluctuating or oscillating between two frames of mind or modes of experience. One mode is characterised by man feeling weak in the face of difficulties and anxieties from within and without, in which condition he seeks to disengage himself from his normal social and working environment. This condition may or may not be accompanied by the determination and desire to overcome his weakness and renew his strength. In the second mode of experience man has a sense of wholeness and power which enables him to engage with some confidence in relations with the world and other people around him. Let me describe this behaviour in more detail, while recognising that I am using broad, general categories for the sake of simplicity.

A person going about his normal human affairs sooner or later becomes conscious of a threat to his sense of wellbeing. His inner world becomes disorganised and he experiences a feeling of confusion which affects his sense of identity. This condition may come about gradually as the troubles and uncertainties of life around him seep into his inner world; or it may come suddenly as in a crisis, accident, or the receipt of bad news. It may be due to exhaustion after a period of growth and creativity, or the aftermath of some conflict. The need is to regain his bearings and to find a way of reordering his inner world. The person does this by seeking for something or someone outside himself on which he can concentrate or focus. That is, he allows himself to become dependent, and he is prepared to become more and more dependent until he can locate an idea, a person or an object which satisfies his requirements, and thereby can support him in his need. In religious terms, he is seeking something which can be god to him.

When adult men and women engage in this they appear to 'become as little children', as if they are retracing their steps to find solace with their father or mother, just as older children display behaviour such as clinging

to their mothers which they have otherwise outgrown. The psychological term we use for this process is regression to dependence. Some psychologists (6), (7), (8), (9) view this as natural human behaviour and I mean no disparagement in using the term regression. We have tried to find other terms which appear to be less threatening or confusing, but without success; we hope that our usage of the term may help to rid it of its pejorative connotations.

We describe this phase of the process as regression to extra-dependence, because the person is moving from a mode where he feels he is self-sufficient to a mode where he is dependent on something or someone who is external to himself: where extra stands for outside.

As we have stated above, the person regresses to extra-dependence until he finds a relationship with an outside person which enables him to pause sufficiently to begin to regain his sense of wellbeing and re-order his inner world. This process of re-ordering may be described as the incorporation into himself of the god whom he has hitherto seen as external to himself. That is, he uses the value system which is associated with the person, object or idea as the instrument of re-ordering himself. The dependence on something external - extra-dependence, is now replaced by dependence on something which has become internal - intra-dependence, where intra means within. For example, the psycho-analyst Marion Milner describes this when she interprets William Blake's sequence of paintings illustrating the Book of Job. Speaking of the later pictures, she says:

"It seems that Job no longer needs the omnipotent Father God commanding from above-within and identified with the 'wrought image' of himself, for he has found a kind of control that is inherent, part of what is controlled, not separated and split off. He has found a power that transcends the duality of controller and controlled. 'And that day ye shall know that I am in my Father and you in me and I in you', says the text. Thus the psyche is surely no longer split into a part which orders and a part which obeys - or rebels. The resulting control of instinct is based on love rather than fear." (10)

In this mode the individual is autonomous - not 'independent' although it may at first appear so either to others or himself.

The person thus oscillates from this position where he changes from extra-dependence to intra-dependence. The second phase of the oscillation process we describe as development in intra-dependence towards the position previously described where he reverts from intra-dependence to extra-dependence, where the person acknowledges, either experientially or ritually, the diffusion or threat of chaos into his inner world, disorganising it. It is this which causes him to seek relief by reverting from intra-dependence to extra-dependence. The process of oscillation continues as we have described before.

A person may engage in this process without being aware of the sequential nature of the process, or aware of what he is doing. What we would describe as religious behaviour takes place when a person acknowledges that he is caught up in this process and engages in activities which enable him to ritualise the oscillation. The oscillation is ritualised in different ways. Some religions allocate fixed intervals to symbolise the oscillation, such as the waxing and waning of the moon, the rising and setting of the sun; or by dividing life up into weeks, months or years. Other religions see the oscillation occurring at certain points in the life of the individual, birth, marriage and death. Religious rituals are devised, such as prayer, which formalise the process of regression to extra-dependence; other rituals such as Holy Communion formalise the point of reversion from extra- to intra-dependence. Another such reversion ritual is the cult dance where the god enters the worshipper.

Our conclusion is that religion is the social institution which provides a setting in ritual for the process of oscillation in a society. This is identified by Erikson:

"Religion it seems, is the oldest and has been the most lasting institution to serve the ritual restoration of a sense of trust in the form of faith, while offering a tangible formula for the

sense of evil against which it promises to arm and defend man. Childlike strength as well as a potential infantilization are suggested in the fact that all religious practices include periodic childlike surrender to the Power that creates and re-creates, dispensing earthly fortune as well as spiritual well-being; the demonstration of smallness and dependence by reduced posture and humble gesture; the confession in prayer and song of misdeeds, misthoughts, and evil intentions and the fervent appeal for inner reunification by divine guidance."(11)

Through the creation of myths of gods and goddesses, religion invites regression to extra-dependence upon these gods who are regarded as the extra-dependent leader. However, the change or reversion to the intra-dependent condition is only likely to be possible if man can find a way to regress so that it enables him to relate his experience in religious ritual to the realities of life. As I shall show in a moment, this indicates one way of evaluating religions.

In the intra-dependent mode man uses his powers to master his environment and secure the conditions necessary for his survival. This involves individuals accepting different functions and roles. It also necessitates his being able to come to terms with the things he cannot master, before which he is helpless, so that he retains hope, and a realistic sense of what he can and cannot do. The function of religion is to enable him to come to terms with his helplessness in the face of events and processes which cannot be resisted by any form of practical activity as such. Religion thus assists him to acknowledge his condition of vulnerability and dependence, and to give expression to the fear, shame and other emotions to which this gives rise. It also gives him some assurance that, in spite perhaps of appearances, his life, work, suffering and death are part of some larger meaningful whole: in other words he can entrust himself to some dependable person, process or substratum of some kind.

Before going on to consider how this general theory of religion relates to the christian church, there is a further comment I would like to add. The theory endeavours to see life as a whole, but also to view it under two aspects

or modes in which all human beings are always involved, whether they are conscious of it or not. When we view the regression to extra-dependent mode, we can say that man passes from the profane world to the sacred world. In the mode where man develops towards intra-dependence, we can say that man passes from the religious world to the profane world. Those who wish to assert that all life is sacred, are inevitably led to reject the theory of oscillation. Our theory of religion indicates that religion is indeed concerned with the sacred, but that the way the sacred is handled affects what happens in the profane world.

C CHRISTIANITY AS RELIGION

In relating the general theory to Christianity, there are a number of points to be made.

In what I have said hitherto I have indicated the importance of a belief in gods, but this is not to suggest that it is necessary for gods to exist in reality. But the oscillation theory suggests that a value which can be attached to my belief can be measured by the extent to which the relationship I establish with God in worship enables me to distinguish between the realities and fantasies of everyday life and experience. Some religions are only possible if people engage in assumptions about God and life which are immediately obvious to the outsider as being unrealistic. The test of the christian religion is whether the worship of God enables the worshipper to come to terms with the facts of life, and to seek to establish relationships with people so that the society which results enhances human dignity and does not devalue it. To express this in another way, the value of the christian religion, in human terms at least, is not seen by its success in attracting worshippers, or in the number of converts, but by assessing whether the presence of a christian institution within a society enables the members of that society, (many of whom will not be churchgoers) to control and govern their lives according to love, peace, justice, righteousness and freedom.

Speaking psychologically, God remains a fantasy, ie there is no objective way to test His existence, that is His reality. The christian faith rests on the premise that it is possible to treat this fantasy of God as reality. Thus Hebrews , Chapter 11, verses 1,3 says:-

"Only faith can guarantee the blessings we hope for, or prove the existence of the realities that at present remain unseen... it is by faith that we understand that the world was created by one word from God, so that no apparent cause can account for the things that we see."

The Christian's aim is to direct his behaviour by this hypothesis of faith. Its validity is tested by evidence which will indicate whether I am habitually able to work at a realistic level, with three things with which I am involved in my daily life - myself, people around me and the environment.

The process of oscillation can be related to christian theology in many different ways. Let me give you a few examples relating theological concepts to the phases of the process. Take repentance: regression to extra-dependence involves some form of repentance. It is a process whereby I become aware of some difficulty inside myself, some sin, some bad feeling, arising from behaviour for which I consider I am accountable and which causes me to seek the face of God. My posture in repentance is one of subjecting myself to God as my Lord, who is beyond me, external to myself.

Secondly, the concept of regeneration. I believe that regeneration is probably the single most important concept for the Church in facing up to contemporary issues. Regeneration enables man to have a renewed vision of life and the world. Put theologically it means that when a person acknowledges his faith in God and confesses his sin, then God in Christ acts to forgive him and restore him to life eternal. Put psychologically, it means that when a person is prepared to treat the fantasy about god as the reality of God and at the same time is in touch with the reality of his own feelings and objects in his inner world, then to the extent that the values he perceives in God relate to his own current experience of reality, he accepts these values as part of himself. That is, I turn (convert) to God, and God regenerates, enables me to change from extra-dependence to intra-dependence. At the heart of the worship of the Church is the symbolic act which affirms regeneration in this way:

"The transition to intra-dependence is dramatised in the communion service, in the eating of the sacramental bread and wine. In the 1662 rite, the bread is given to the

worshipper by the priest, with words which conclude: 'Feed on Him in thy heart by faith with thanksgiving'. The symbolic eating and drinking of the body and blood of Christ represents the internalisation of Christ, not as an alien object invading and controlling the recipient, but as a presence which is assimilated and incorporated into his personality." (12)

Jesus also conveys some of the mystery of this process of change to Nicodemus. In response to Jesus' words 'You must be born again', Nicodemus questions, 'Can man enter a second time into his mother's womb to be born?' (13)

Thirdly, the teaching of sanctification. Here is the notion of the Holy Spirit in the Body of Christ, uniting within the believer who is a member of the Body, gradually forming within him the image of the fullness of Christ. This corresponds to what I described as development towards intra-dependence, Christ in me, the hope of glory, a phase more fully realised in the fourth example.

Fourthly, consider the doctrine of incarnation. The incarnation of Jesus Christ means that God entered the world, but that He entered it not in the extra-dependent mode to start a religion, but in the intra-dependent mode to display what man is. This was well said by a student some years ago who said that God made such a good job of becoming man, that man could not believe that Jesus was God. In other words the incarnation is to stress the nature of humanity and that is why people at the time of Jesus found it easier to see Him as a political rather than a religious leader.

These illustrations may help to give us a clue to how the christian religion takes up and describes the same process which I have identified and expressed in psychological terms.

D THE TASK OF THE LOCAL CHURCH

Christian theology is about the whole of life and therefore takes in both the extra-dependent and the intra-dependent mode, ie the sacred and the profane respectively. The oscillation theory implies that the Christian Church as an institution is concerned mainly with the sacred. This is in line with the Thirty-Nine Articles. Article 19 of the Church says:

"The visible Church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure Word of God is preached, and the Sacraments be duly ministered according to Christ's ordinance in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same." (14)

The purpose of the churches can be defined as facilitating and managing regression to dependence on God through Christ in such a way that the worshippers in reverting to the intra-dependent mode, are involved in a change which provides the basis for development, growth and creativity, both individually and corporately.

A corollary of this definition is that the primary unit of church life is the local congregation. It is where the action is, where the people are. In our thinking, the 'Church of England', for example, or 'Methodist Church' are not realities in the same way as the local congregation. The Church of England is an idea held in the mind; one never meets the Church of England but only its parts. For example, because different people hold different ideas in their mind about the Church of England, they sometimes conflict when they meet together to order the affairs of their particular church, and this presents difficulties in determining the criteria for decision-making. To extend this point, the Ecumenical Movement is faced with the difficulty of deciding how to formulate an all-embracing fantasy of the Church as the Body of Christ, from a variety of other fantasies, none of which

accurately describe the sum total of the realities of the local congregations which constitute their different formal organisational structure.

How does the local congregation, the parish church, fit in with the general process of oscillation in society? As a result of studies on the relationship of people in the community to their local church, we have divided the members of the community into three different types.

There are those who engage in what we describe as personal oscillation. These participate regularly in acts of worship; corporately, with other similar people, they experience the process of oscillation for themselves and are often aware of the moment of reversion from extra-dependence to intra-dependence as they engage in the various rituals of the church.

The second type are those who engage in representative oscillation. These seldom or never attend worship but it is important for them that a member of their family, an acquaintance (or some representative person such as a leader of the community eg their doctor), goes to church as it were on their behalf. They become anxious if that person does not go, and even if they apparently criticise them for being too religious, it is done in such a way that the churchgoer is reinforced in his behaviour.

One example of this type is seen in the following report of one of my colleagues in the course of his study into the task of the local church:

"In my discussions with one elderly couple, the husband gave terse answers to all my questions and expressed a general lack of interest in the Church, and the trite conventional nature of his answers indicated a reluctance to express any feelings about the church. His wife told me she attended a small church down the road every Sunday evening. When I asked him what services he attended, he said he had not

been to church for a long time and he had never been to the church his wife attended, but she cut in to say that he went to weddings and christenings and belonged to the Stewardship, and added: "He says, 'You go and say a prayer for me'." A little later when her husband had left the room for a moment she said, 'He likes me to go'." (15)

The third type are those who engage in vicarious oscillation. This group does not identify themselves with any individual churchgoer but it is important for them that church buildings should remain standing, that they hear the church bells ringing, and that they see people going to church. There is no apparent connection between this group and church-going, but our studies have indicated that they constitute a considerable group in society which may not be made manifest until the church building is threatened with closure. For many of them, the church is a place to stay away from, but upon which they covertly depend, like the adolescent who apparently abandons his parents when he runs away from his home, but likes to think it still exists if he should ever want to come back to it.

The existence of this third type of relationship provides the clue to a further understanding of the place of religion in the local community. It is now becoming fairly well established that every community or society evolves its own religion. That is, the boundaries of the society are identified as the point of discontinuity between patterns of ritual activities characteristic of adjacent societies. The religious behaviour which copes with the community needs of the society we call 'folk religion' (16). Left to itself a community or tribe finds symbols to express its folk religion, from the heavenly bodies, trees, wind, water, animals etc. Where a historic religion, with its dogma and symbols, is introduced into a community, it may suppress and replace folk religion, but if the influence of the apostolic religion wanes, then it is likely that the folk religion of the locality will reassert itself and find expression through these apostolic symbols, adapting them in so doing. For example, David Martin describes how this is characteristic of Protestant countries in northern Europe:

"Firstly, the Protestant state churches taken on their own, have a strikingly similar degree of pull so far as attendance is concerned. Between 3 and 5 in every 100 people are attending the state churches of Protestant Europe on any given Sunday... Secondly, the majority of people claim to believe in God but are in varying degrees rather apathetic towards the specifically Christian doctrines of the church..... The label 'Christian' is acceptable but in practice it covers a conformity to the reciprocities of neighbourliness and to a modicum of personal dignity, together with a respect for Jesus Christ and for the Cosmic Overseer of an inexplicable world. This very vague religiosity affects the majority, ... but firm belief in such specifically christian doctrines as the resurrection of Christ or personal immortality affects only a minority. Yet the majority who adhere to this vague religiosity engage in the following activities: they accept a religious rite at birth, marriage and death ... they pray to whatever gods there be. They accept the existence of a religious establishment and the aura it shares with the symbols of the nation. They participate, with varying degrees of passivity, in televised religion or religion on the radio. And, finally, they engage in 'occasional conformity', which may be going to a carol service or harvest festival, assisting in some social activity of the church, or just paying the church an occasional call from time to time ... I should perhaps add that there is also a fair amount of non-christian belief comprising a melange of spiritism, interest in para-normal phenomena, determinist and fatalistic notions derived from concepts of destiny or from astrology, and a margin of faith in re-incarnation. Much of this belongs to the long archaic undertow of pre- and para-christian superstition and historically it has been locked together with christianity itself through the magicking of the christian rites." (17)

A community of believers may therefore erect a church building which has one meaning for them, ie a place where they can worship God in spirit and in truth; but for the members of the surrounding community, the church building becomes a sacred shrine which satisfies their need for a form of dependent leader in quite a different way from the intentions of those who built it and use it. When the characteristics of this folk religion are examined in relationship to the type of society in which it flourishes, we can distinguish a difference between the extra-dependence fostered by the Christian Church, and the extra-dependence which is characteristic of folk

religion. It is important to understand these differences. We distinguish between two different patterns of regression to dependence.

The first we call controlled regression to dependence. Others (18), (19), have spoken of 'regression in the service of the ego', and emphasised that this is regression leading to a new beginning. This form of regression requires a facilitating environment, that is, a secure setting provided by a person, group or institution, which is able to respond actively to the regressing individual. The regressed state is one of rest but it is not passive; it is one in which change takes place in the individual's internal organisation - that is, in the system of beliefs, values and fantasies which determine his approach to life. Consequently he emerges from the regression with new ways of responding to the situations which confront him. This is the form of regression which the Christian Church claims to facilitate, what we call 'apostolic religion'.

The second pattern we have called uncontrolled or contained regression to dependence. Winnicott (20) uses the term 'withdrawal'. This form of regression provides a respite from the demands of life. The individual looks for a setting in which he can opt out, at least temporarily; he wants a haven. He takes for granted that the person, group or institution which provides the setting is able to look after him, and will not make any demands upon him. Contained regression differs from controlled regression in that it does not lead to change. After a respite, the individual faces his situation with the same equipment. This pattern is associated with folk religion, and perhaps also with ecstatic forms of religious behaviour.

We would suggest that some religious factors contribute to the current devaluation of the idea of dependence in society. Because the church is unsure of its task and clergy uncertain about their roles, the parish church in many instances is no longer able to provide the facilitating

environment which it sets out to provide. As a result, the experience of going to church is that of seeking a haven; and the worshipper participates in contained regression not controlled regression. In this contained state, the worshipper discovers that all that happens to him is that he feels weak and he increasingly becomes convinced that dependence de-skills him and debilitates him, and as a result seeks to avoid dependent relationships. Thus the parish church becomes itself a purveyor of folk religion.

The local church is the vehicle of apostolic religion on behalf of the believing community; and those members who participate in the leading of the worship are bound to be subject to the conflicting emotional patterns which arise from the simultaneous manifestation of these two forms of religious activity, ie controlled regression and contained regression.

In those parts of England, where folk religion is still expressed through christian symbols, the leaders of the local christian community have two roles. They are in the role of representatives of the apostolic religion, and are also in the role of the local cult priest of the folk religion of the community. Where the parish priest has no doubts about his authority in his apostolic religion role, in proclaiming the gospel and ministering the sacraments, he is able to tolerate the stress brought about through these two roles functioning at the same time. He will thereby be able to identify with the needs of those people caught up in the folk religion and be prepared to be involved in helping them to interpret those needs more realistically in terms of apostolic religion, without expecting them to turn their backs on folk-religion before they have understood how apostolic faith can satisfy their needs.

But if the parish priest is unsure of his authority, he will experience the dependence of those involved in folk religion as an intolerable strain. He will then either condemn them and construct a belief system

to act as a barrier around the church to keep them out; or he may try to hide behind excessive rituals, and just let them get on with it without feeling a sense of responsibility; or he may plunge into a series of social and community activities, or take up a secular occupation. This issue is particularly focussed in the question of those to whom one administers the sacraments, eg infant baptism. It also accounts for the fact that some clergy find it more comfortable to engage in secular and community social work, where the authority is carried by other people and his dependent relationships can be restricted to specific clients.

The manner in which the parish priest responds to these tensions has important implications for the regular congregation. If he is able to work with their dependent needs, that is provide a controlled regression to dependence, he will find that, in turn, such a congregation will provide him with support in meeting the needs of the rest of the community who may be indulging in folk religion. But if his own congregation lapses into contained regression, then the combined burden becomes excessive and he is increasingly isolated from his congregation and worship becomes unreal, and hence alternative activities in the congregation are frequently set up to compensate. Our observation is that frequently those churches which have a great many activities carried on during the week, are using them both to make up for and also to cover up the failure to provide opportunities for controlled regression to extra-dependence.

It may be important to recognise that folk religion is finding different symbols as means of expression. The christian symbols are being replaced by those taken from far eastern religions, youth culture, and the occult, to name but a few. The consequence of this is that the local church diminishes in significance within the community and it no longer provides a 'shrine' upon which people regress to dependence. Consequently members of the surrounding community become so separated from the church that the

communication of the gospel becomes increasingly difficult. Add to this the wish of many clergy to condemn folk religion because of its threat to apostolic religion, and we can understand why the Christian Church is taking on a minority institutional status in our society, even becoming ghetto-like. A characteristic of this new expression of folk religion is that it is no longer corporate as it was when it was assimilating christian symbolism. It now appears to be fragmented into what we may call religiosity and superstition, and significantly enough it can no longer give stability to communities; so they too fragment, until we have a breakdown of society, where people are seeking smaller and smaller units as a means of establishing their identity.

E THE CHURCH AND THE KINGDOM OF GOD

The foregoing sections firmly locate the work of the Church in the extra-dependent mode. If we allow the proposition that the Church is the instrument of God's action in the sacred world, we are faced with the question of God's relationship to the profane world, man in the intra-dependent mode. The New Testament answer, in our opinion is summed up in the concept of the 'Kingdom of God'.

Whereas the Church concerns itself with the relationships of men with God, the Kingdom of God indicates His concern for the relationships men and women have with one another and with the world around them. Jesus proclaimed that the Kingdom or realm of God was close in time and place to His hearers. He called it the 'rule' of God because it focussed on the divine characteristics of love, justice, righteousness and peace which are embodied in the members of the Kingdom. Jesus defined what it would be like under that rule, and encouraged men to seek to 'enter' it (21). In His dialogue with Nicodemus, Jesus indicated that a condition of entering the Kingdom is to be 'born anew' (22). From this we see the link between the Church and the Kingdom.

They are not two descriptions of the same entity, nor are they two parallel but different experiences of God. Instead they describe in theological terms the two modes of the oscillation process - the process of new birth in extra-dependence, leads to entrance into the Kingdom - intra-dependence. It is the task of the Church therefore to enable its worshippers to become members of the Kingdom of God. We can go further and state that the purpose of the Church is to prepare these members so that the profane world can take on the qualities of the Kingdom.

This is brought about as those who are its members are given the capacity to 'see' the Kingdom; that is, to accept that the qualities of the

Kingdom - justice, peace, righteousness, and freedom - are the normative relationship between man and man. This new perception does not automatically bring about the Kingdom of God on earth, nor provide a blue-print for it, but it means that the members of the Kingdom are able to understand to what end they can direct their lives. If the Church has met their needs through its activities in the extra-dependent state, they will have been able to develop the capacity to endure uncertainties and anxieties, and to endure suffering, and to take the risks which will be involved in struggling towards a society which embodies the qualities of the Kingdom.

Bearing in mind that the oscillation process not only involves what we have called personal oscillation, but also representative and vicarious oscillation, we would suggest that one can measure the effectiveness of the Church as a religious institution in any society according to the extent that the people are able to carry on their ordinary lives in an environment where peace and justice prevail. This would mean that the values of the Kingdom would be endorsed by many who would not see themselves as members of the Church.

F ROLES OF MEMBERS OF THE WORSHIPPING COMMUNITY

Finally let us examine the roles of laity and clergy within the local congregation. It is possible here only to sketch in the outline of a complicated question. We would see the word 'laity' as referring to the people of God in the extra-dependent mode, and as in contradistinction but not opposition to words like 'citizen' which refer to the roles of the same individuals in the intra-dependent mode. Laity is therefore a religious term, associated with the Church and the sacred world; the test of the effectiveness of the worship of the laity is that they become more fully human in their lives in the profane world.

In his role as a member of the Kingdom the individual is free to take up other roles which are appropriate to what he sees ahead of him: to earn a living, the role of worker; to raise a family, the role of parent; to help someone, the role of neighbour. Within each of these roles there are many others. The worker may be a welder, miner, nurse, policeman, accountant, housewife, artist, teacher, shop-keeper, social worker, chef or Member of Parliament. If he takes note of the qualities of the rule of God as given by Jesus, he recognises they include political, social and legal relationships, and will accept his responsibilities as a citizen of the state where he lives and works. The role of citizen, in addition to overlapping with other roles, may lead him in many directions in seeking to love his neighbour- party member, voter, councillor, statesman, agitator and revolutionary.

In his role in society he is on a par with those around him engaged in the same task. His christian resources are interior, personal to himself, to be offered to achieve the common goal. To the extent he remains dependent upon a religious, Christian or God label he has not taken up the intra-dependent role and only imagines his freedom. What

he requires is to be able to distance himself from his church. Any local church which draws him into christian activities outside those sustaining the oscillation process will shackle him.

Within the religious world, the clergy are to be seen as a special kind of laity. Their role is to facilitate the other laity in their regression to dependence. In other words they become specialists on behalf of their brethren. We will refer to this clergy/laity distinction again in a moment.

We have identified a number of factors about the role of the clergy. The first is that it is concerned primarily with the sacred, and with enabling men and women to experience regression to extra-dependence. This is the clergy in the role of the priest. In pastoral work clergy meet the people behind the many different roles they take up as citizens, as well as laity. The clergy here operate in the role of pastor, where their task is to work with the people's needs, either to manage their regression to extra-dependence, or to prepare them for the profane world. Therefore while the priest role is restricted to the sacred, the pastoral role involves an engagement with the secular world, but only in order to bring people in touch with the sacred as a way of preparing them through extra-dependence for their life in the secular world. These two aspects of the clergy role we would consider to be primary, and we might describe it as the priest/pastor role. Clergy have a number of other roles, as a citizen, as members of families, and also as a manager of an ecclesiastical institution, they may have a prophetic role.

We would define the institutional role as that of those who are essentially concerned with the church as a human organisation, which would bring it into line with a school, a factory, a bank or a trade union. In this role, clergy operate in the intra-dependent mode dealing with realities of church buildings, finance, training etc. This role requires a different set of skills from that of the priest/pastor role. We would

consider any reorganisation programme of the Church, which concentrates on administration, to have the unfortunate effect of displacing many clergy from their priest/pastor role to that of institutional manager. Certainly while administration is necessary, it is a waste of time to set up a model of church administration in which clergy are unable, as a result, to provide sufficient pastoral resources to enable people to engage in a controlled regression to dependence. Unfortunately, many clergy see the institutional role as an escape from the rigours of the priest/pastor role. Whereas traditionally the Church of England would consider bishops as having a priest/pastor role, sharing the cure of souls with the local incumbents in his diocese, I suspect that many bishops are now under increasing pressure to take up the institutional role to the injury of the priest/pastor role in themselves.

Reverting to the role of the laity, I would point out that the growth of the laity's influence in recent years has largely been in their form of an institutional role, ie Synodical Government. When the church was propped up by the surrounding folk religion, it was easier for church people to use their authority and to cope with the projections of the dependent emotions of others. In other words, the laity could take their place alongside the clergy in a priest/pastor role. However the fragmentation of folk religion has now made it extremely difficult to take up a role whereby they can be secure enough to cope with the dependent emotional patterning. I consider that the capacity to deal with this problem requires not only a vocation to the ministry, to ensure the commitment to the role, but also highly specialised training for the clergy.

In his professional role the priest/pastor needs to take care that he is not caught up in the fantasies of being the omnipotent leader when he is dealing with these dependent emotional patterns. Many clergy are threatened by the idea of emotion, failure to perceive that the essence of the

christian faith is to do with emotional life, eg love, faith, hope, guilt, forgiveness, as the basis for christian relationships and behaviour.

I have left this point until the end because, what has been called 'the technology of the emotions' (23), has at first sight an unattractive appearance to clergy, who would say they are concerned for truth and the practical needs of people, such as hunger, loneliness, old age, etc, and not interested in the problem of emotional patterns. The fundamental point behind our theory of oscillation, for professing believers, is that the Church is the means of enabling members of society in their role as citizens to engage with the real human needs of their community, by helping them in their role as worshippers to realise their full humanity through participating in these ceremonies of the Church, which enable them to regress to extra-dependence and experience renewal through the regenerative work of the Holy Spirit.

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