

Life, Teaching, and Influence: In Search of a Biography

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It is impossible, even with the best intentions and the many notes kept as crutches to “free” speech, to recapture what is spoken freely. So while what follows has been built on the same notes, it is by necessity a new creation, warts and all.

—RH

Why am I addressing you tonight? My name is surely not the reason for my invitation. You have heard several Huessys set forth their definite opinions over the last few days (in fact the definite opinions in the Huessy family would make a fascinating study of nature vs. nurture). Carrying my grandmother’s maiden name is most important to me as an adopted child in this large and wonderfully complicated family; I may even, as the proverb claims for all converts, be something of a fanatic, but I am not a professional grandson. I had other grandparents; in fact, like most of my siblings, I had six. I knew and loved five of them.

Nor do I appear before you with any kind of academic or philosophical credentials. I am a set designer by trade. I am not a scholar; I find that a great deal of what passes as “great thought” is lodged a flight or two of stairs above my understanding—on occasion I have responded to what seemed like unnecessary abstraction with rage. But it is only one aspect of a larger problem: I once responded to a dreadful pun by calling out for a blunt instrument, only to have the punster suggest that I try my intellect. Maybe that is why ERH’s life-changing influence on people without intellectual pretensions, be it Anna Henke, Mary Henderson, or my own mother, is so important to me. If I seem to be laying claim to Solomonic wisdom, boundless generosity, or faithful hospitality, by putting myself in that company, I am at the same time declaring myself an honorary little old lady. So be it: there is a long-standing joke in my family that my wife was an honorary son and I an honorary daughter.

No, my one true credential for speaking here is that I am convinced that my life was saved as well as changed by my encounter with ERH’s work; in that I can perhaps speak for many here in Monticello. It is out of that conviction, rather than any courage I can muster, that I have paraded my opinion so often before the ERH on-line chat-group, although my electronic rants seem to have persuaded Norman Fiering that I might have something to say here tonight. So if you don’t like what I have to say, please speak to Norman.

It was what Joseph Wittig calls “the witness of the flesh”, the life and “work” of Anna Henke above all, that persuaded me to trust ERH, and not see in his dethroning of system just another intellectual system: truth calls out to be embodied, not transfixed with the pins in a mental display case. The cross of reality, as ERH said of Christian dogma, “does not propose ideas for our minds to master, it tells actual events which can master and transform us.” So it behooves us, in dealing with ERH in public, to be on our guard against the temptations of system: of retreating into an arcana of obscure references, of armoring ourselves with his vocabulary as our own exclusive jargon.

While trying to organize my thoughts in preparation for this evening, I decided to sweep the dead leaves out of the van instead of preparing, and as I swept, I found myself suddenly “transported”: I knew again the truth of what bound me to ERH, who wrote: “For the doctrines of speech and time, there is no system in the traditional sense, there is no one truth which alone brings blessing” [*Ja und Nein*, p. 73]. There is also the fact that ERH could write: “I am by nature the most impatient of all the people I know”. This is the man who raged against my failure to use antique, but correct, verb forms on my return from my first year in Germany, only (on Freya’s gentle intervention) to shift to a rhyming joke on the state of language. This is the man who asked his eldest granddaughter what she was studying, and on hearing her say “American literature”, replied in high dudgeon: “Is there such a field?”

Several of my closest relations are given to initially negative reactions, so it may be that I am a contrarian by nature. Certainly, in my first words on ERH, written for the 1982 conference in Waterloo, Ontario, I spoke of his partnership with Joseph Wittig, unknown in America and at the time nearly forgotten in Germany, but I spoke out of gratitude to these two men, who had opened the possibility of Christian faith to me. In 1985 I wrote on ERH’s German works on industry and work service, then rarely mentioned. Perhaps I was made bold by ERH’s dictum that the role of the church is to protect the spirit of all the ages in the face of the spirits of any given age, to accent the tone missing in any given moment, even at a conference on ERH. So permit me to speak an embarrassing truth.

But for all my debts to ERH, my two favorite theologians are Mary Poppins and Charles Post. Mary Poppins famously remarked that if we take care of the sense, the sounds will take care of themselves, and Charles Post held that every sermon should have one idea: no more, no less. So, in the spirit of Charles Post, let me say that I am nailing my flag to the mast of Christianity and its

pivotal role in ERH's life and work. In 1985 I said that the members of the ERH community were like the blind men who each had hold of a part of the elephant and claimed that the elephant was like the part they grasped, because they could not see the whole. At that time, I inferred that my own understanding was just one more blind man's take on the elephant; now I have the somewhat less modest intent of telling you that I have seen the elephant, that the part I hold is its heart.

I began with my conviction that ERH openly declared the program he had followed and would follow in his own life in a chapter from the work he wrote with Joseph Wittig, *Das Alter der Kirche* [*The Age of the Church*], on Christ's "Life, Teaching, and Influence". [I have submitted a rough translation of the chapter for inclusion in the proceedings, but it appears that no one has read it. Fair enough.] I then panicked: most of my reading in ERH was done over 25 years ago. So I went back to "Life, Teaching, and Influence" to make sure I remembered it correctly, and then went on to re-read *Das Geheimnis der Universität* [*The Secret of the University*] and *Ja und Nein* [*Yes and No*]. *Das Geheimnis* is a book that clearly shows forth the tracks of changed opinions and, as far as I know, the only place where we can find ERH on Islam. *Ja und Nein* is another source of useful information, philosophical and biographical. Considering ERH's belief in the insufficiency of systems to deal with the reality of spoken truth, and his inability to look at any issue without taking a view over the course of centuries, it seems significant that this little substitute for the once-planned autobiography is named after Peter Abelard's *Sic et Non*.

What I found in these post-war German works were far balder statements on Christianity's importance "from the horse's mouth". Now, as someone who speaks more from the other end of the horse, I have to ask: why is this so hard for people to hear, let alone to swallow? When Clint Gardner kindly invited me to speak to his adult-ed class on ERH, I could almost hear the minds snapping shut as soon as I said that Christianity was central to ERH's thinking; I sensed that I had destroyed weeks of work on Clint's part to open those minds to a new way of thinking about God, mankind, and the world, by getting them to concentrate on speech. I have to say that I feared a similar reaction at this conference, and so I prepared myself with great trepidation to state the obvious: that Christianity was central to ERH's life and work. But now I find that the "C" word has already been spoken, and eloquently, by Darryl Bryant. Thank you, Darryl. We may feel free to say so, quite simply because we have ERH himself as witness.

Christianity is central, but how? And what, for ERH, does Christianity mean? It is in fact both

that blinkered superstition that offended Clint's listeners on the one hand [the "scandal to the Jews and stumbling block to the wise"] and the movement of the spirit through time on the other. It is the revelation of God's great breathing of the spirit into things of earth that allows each generation to take part, in turn and in its own way, in the history of salvation. While not considering himself bound by any particular interpretation, ERH accepts the Christian tradition in its entirety; he is perhaps the first German Protestant since Luther to accept the validity of the whole of scripture and the whole of Christian history. For if God is indeed the ground of all reality, as the Fathers teach, then God must of necessity be revealed in history. ERH is not alone in perceiving that insight is the fruit of life, and therefore of suffering, but he seems to be alone in his insistence that insight obligates the thinker to act on that insight, and seeing in that obligation "the driving force of Western civilization". ERH is eloquent on love, and how could he not be, if God is love, and also the ground of all reality?

In declaring Christianity central to ERH's life and work, I am trying to begin to trace the outline of a life, fumbling for the beginning of a biography. If I seek that outline in an essay on the meaning of Christ's life, it is not because I think that ERH is in any way to be confused with Christ, or that he resembles Him any more than the rest of us. [In fact, one of the things that I have always found hardest to take about the "disciples" is the way that some of them would say "Eugen" in exactly the melting tones in which the least of my "little old ladies" might have been accused of saying "Jesus".] What I am saying is that in looking at how he understood what he saw as the central life in human history, we can perhaps see how he sought to make sense of his own, and how he sought to live. In this we walk backwards in the footsteps of ERH's Dartmouth colleague Ambrose Vernon, who founded three departments of biography at American colleges, in the firm conviction that a close and sincere meeting with one person's life would eventually lead to a confrontation with the shape and meaning of Christ's life, and his continuing life in us. This is not hagiography, but a search for meaning in the "liturgical acts" of a life.

"Life, Teaching, and Influence" declares the unity of Jesus' life, Christ's teaching, and the ongoing life of both in other people; in doing so it also declares a "post-critical" era for scripture. (ERH and Rosenzweig, Wittig and Buber, could all meet in the space where revelation was once again taken at face value.) ERH declares the importance of understanding life [or history, or anything else worth studying] not as an assemblage of parts, but as a series of events which create a

whole. He uses the image of drama, where each act is complete in itself, but depends for its ultimate meaning on its relation with the others, and particularly the end. It is in the unfolding of the drama that its meaning is made clear; it is in the explicit naming of the processes of life or history that its meaning is created.

I was reminded willy-nilly of Ibsen's wonderful dictum, that if a gun hangs over the mantelpiece in the first act, you must see to it that it goes off in the last act; and if a gun goes off in the last act, you had damn well better hang it over the fireplace in the first act. That may sound manipulative, but Ibsen was speaking about a constructed image of reality which must turn back on itself to make its message plain, and ERH is speaking about reality as we know and suffer it. St. John declares that Jesus was the word of God, present and true from the beginning. What the gospels deliver to us is Jesus's teaching, the fruit of his unseen "early" life; we are given no more information on the life that culminated in the teaching and acts of Christ than is necessary to understand the meaning of the trail being blazed.

I think even a cursory glance at ERH's life will show that he attempted to live out what he describes in this wonderful chapter from 1927: he explicitly declares that the final step after life has ripened into vision, and vision has been distilled in teaching, is to act upon the insight, and that action is by nature political. What ERH uncovers for us is the possibility of a new birth of the medieval concept of *imitatio Christi*. Except that here the "imitation" is not inward, in humbly accepting poverty, obedience, and suffering, but outward, in following the flow of the spirit from reflection to action. Like the first Christians, ERH took the Gospel as "gospel"; he declares the Gospel to be a guide, a primer of incarnation. Truth not only entered the world once by incarnation: truth *can* only enter the world through incarnation, through the investment of a life in the cause of that truth.

As you can perhaps imagine, I was greatly relieved to find that my rusty memories of "Life, Teaching, and Influence" were borne out in re-reading it. Imagine my surprise then at stumbling across the following right at the beginning of *Ja und Nein*:

My friend Georg Mueller has tried to clarify my interests as speech, history, and time. Thanks to his perceptive understanding all my countless quests of the last six or seven decades can be seen to run along one of these three paths. My own astonishment at this fact leads me to consider their unity. And now I would like to say expressly: I appear to have pursued the daily lives of the peoples and their members as reflections of the trinity. I have

regarded the languages of individuals and nations, the times of lovers and haters, the history of empires, church, and society, all as reflections of the triune God...

[p. 9]

Every human speaks to invest a moment with staying power; we speak to eternalize ourselves or parts of our world... To speak is to marry the moments to one another...

[p. 10]

The trinity was celebrated 2,000 years ago as the child's victory, and God's, over the thinkers. The troika of speech, times, and history is the form which the eternal resistance to God's trinity in creation, revelation, and salvation takes today. So the patient reader will not be surprised that my whole life has been an attempt to express God's form in relation to this trinity... God must be honored as the triune one; otherwise he is not honored at all...

[p. 14]

Franz Rosenzweig propounded the theory to fit my practice:

I believe [he wrote in the decisive dialogue of our lives] that there is in the life of every living thing moments or perhaps only a single moment in which it *speaks* its truth. So it may not be necessary to say anything at all about living things; it may be enough to await the moment in which they express themselves. The dialogue these monologues create (and that they do create a dialogue is the world's great mystery; the obvious, the revealed, the content of revelation itself, which should confirm your definitions), that dialogue is what I consider the only full truth. [*Briefe*, p. 712]

[pp. 45-6]

In *Ja und Nein*, ERH divides his adult life before 1945 into four periods. From 1902-1912, he gratefully received the "inherited approach"; his "first love" was philology. But having recognized in 1906 that the cult of the Renaissance was a learned mythology to dismiss Luther and Calvin, he felt himself a spiritual foreigner at Heidelberg. And in 1912, *Koenigshaus und Staemme* marked the distance that he traveled into a new realm of the spirit, in which he could declare that "the language is wiser than the speaker"; in it he began his encounter with tribes and empires. From then to 1923, he lived out his response to the call he had received, writing and acting in such a way that the University of Leipzig (where as the youngest *Privatdozent* then in Germany, he met the student Franz Rosenzweig), Carl Muth and Rudolf Breitscheid, would make the three offers of continued professorship, co-editorship of the Catholic magazine *Hochland*, and a position in the task force drafting the Weimar constitution, all of which he turned down to go to Daimler-Benz. Now he could

challenge the Hegel scholar Franz Rosenzweig to join him on *terra nova*, and with the rest of the Patmos group, find that their shared experience of the war separated them from Karl Barth.

We accepted his castigation of liberal thinking as an *a priori* assumption. I in particular had no doubts in regard to faith, the catholic doctrine of the fathers was the presupposed starting point of my own thought. He was just rediscovering it; I asked: What next? How can our whole lives become so liturgical that when we express this truth, it becomes inherently believable?

[*Ja und Nein*, p.82]

Now he could write that “metaphor enters us as the primal mode of speech; it is no secondary thing.”

From 1923 to 1933, he lists five efforts to give institutional form to the truths revealed in the war, including the Loewenberg work camps and the Academy of Labor. He cites the Kreisau circle as “the most beautiful fruit of the work camps” and remarks “I had anticipated Hitler as early as 1918, long before he himself woke to his call.” And from 1933 to 1943 he was subject to external events. Thus, in *Ja und Nein* and *Geheimnis der Universitaet*, looking back in his seventies, he explicitly offers his own life as an example of the conjugation of the spirit through the stages of call, response, communal life, and external events, and recapitulates what he had set out in “Life, Teaching, and Influence” a generation earlier.

And what of the post-war years? Interestingly enough, they remain uncovered in *Ja und Nein*. One thing that rose up before me again was the fact that, objectively regarded, ERH was an utter failure. In the second volume of *Soziologie* and in his lectures, he laid out his universal history; he returned to Germany to teach, trying to bring back what he had discovered in America. But he must have felt unwanted here: until Argo Books was founded, he could not find an American publisher for any work after *The Christian Future*, or any German publisher willing to print his work without a subsidy. With the waning of the brief post-war focus on faith, he too “disappeared”. He gloried in being “statistically insignificant”, but I believe that you can see him working out what it means to be ignored in your own time throughout the post-war years, in his writing on Abelard, Paracelsus, St. Simon, Giuseppe Ferrarri, and others who spoke too soon to be heard. He quotes Annette von Droste-Hülshoff as saying that anyone can be read a hundred years later, if they are only willing to give up any hope of acceptance in their own time. ERH noted that the next person after Paracelsus to lecture in the vernacular at a German university came 200 years later, and is generally acclaimed

as the first. He himself expected to be “discovered” 70 years after his death. [So stay tuned.]

ERH famously declared, and Hal Berman has now shown, that all war, and certainly all revolution leads to a re-framing of law; he also declared that great wars work themselves out in the world of ideas. He saw Descartes’ rationalism as a response to the 30-years’ war, Kant’s “critiques” as a response to the Seven Years’ War, Schopenhauer as a response to Napoleon, and Nietzsche as a response to the Franco-Prussian War. He clearly understood himself to stand in that line, as a man who had attempted to work through the changes that the past war had worked, how ever much the rest of the world wanted to ignore them. In 1918-20, he not only prophesied the coming of the “empire of lies” that Hitler so clearly embodied if Germany could not stop ignoring reality, but he foresaw the end of Germany as a nation altogether, and the domination of Europe by the United States and the Soviet Union. (It is worth pointing out, I think, that in one of the “American Social History” lectures, ERH blames the U.S. for Hitler’s rise to power: the European powers had fought to a standstill and would have had to make peace on equal terms, if America’s entry had not allowed France to dictate the humiliating terms of the Versailles Treaty which were the root of Hitler’s success. Statements like this take a long time to digest.) In *The Secret of the University*, he tells of his discovery of Giuseppe Ferrari, who discovered the periodicity of history long before ERH, and was able to lay it bare in the history not only of Italy but of China!

The post-war years brought heartbreak. His friends from the Patmos circle now wrote their stories, and left him and his influence out of them. He reacted with anger and distress, writing a scathing letter cutting off relations. Had he not publicly credited them with helping to make him who he was, so much so that he declared that the age of the individual genius was over (in future all insight would be seen to be the fruit of defining dialogue and “mutuality”)? The experience that had sustained him through the years of separation, through the agony of the war, was declared a non-event. Rudolf Ehrenberg wrote to Wittig that ERH no longer shared the defining experience of the survivors of Patmos, in their passage through the years of Nazi paganism. There is bitter irony in this, as it had been Barth’s failure to understand the meaning of the war for those who had lived through it that led ERH to write him off as someone of a bygone era.

For all his stoic acceptance of having spoken too early to be heard, it must have been a devastating blow to find so little echo in the new world he embraced, and to see his great hope for “succession” and the future, his former students in Germany, die before him: Helmuth von Moltke

fell to the Nazis, Horst von Einsiedel to the Soviets, and the one survivor of the Loewenberg work-camps and the Kreisau circle, Carl Dietrich vonTrotha, died after being run over by a motorboat in the U.S. seven years later—the victim, ERH would say, of America’s worship of speed. Even the word “work-camp” had been soiled by its perversion at the hands of the Nazis.

Because it seems so little known, I would like to say a little bit about *Geheimnis der Universität*. In *Out of Revolution*, ERH had written that in Germany, the university was the conscience of the king, replacing the authority of Rome. In *Geheimnis* he declared the secret of the German university’s role in the life of the spirit was its custom of letting people speak before they were credentialed: the function of the *Privatdozent* was to speak new thought before it had been recognized by professorial office, and through him the university gained a constant “head-start” of 15 years.

Teaching, since St. Paul, means generalizing from a life already lived. Paul rescued us from idealism. Not ideas, but truths lived out, are to become science. Values are not just ideas, but the life embodied by our ancestors, they are embodied life...

[*Geheimnis der Universitaet*, p. 24]

Science is the teachable form of truth... Modern scholarship lives by the fiction that the past is better known than the future and that nature delivers better data than society.

[p. 28]

In another essay, originally a letter he wrote to the journalist Margrit Boveri in response to her book *Treason in the 20th Century*, he takes violent exception to her inclusion of Bonhoeffer and the members of the Kreisau Circle as traitors. He declares that by the end of the war, Moltke and Bonnhoeffter represented the legitimate government of Germany, and demands that their names become international. Bonnhoeffter’s name has long since done so, though it sometimes seems that the meaning of what he stood for has been lost in the process (his is a hallowed name in churches that wouldn’t dream of taking the demands of a “religionless Christianity” seriously). It is astounding to see how in the last 12 years in Poland the name of Moltke has become a name to reckon with—Moltke’s is a name that allows Poles and Germans to make peace. Joseph Wittig’s, too, is seen as a name that can unite the present and former inhabitants of his beloved county Glatz in Silesia.

ERH returns to the subjects of the revolutions, saying that each had necessitated the following

one by claiming to be final. Justice, however, had required that the emperor be forced to listen to the princes, the princes forced to listen to the estates, the estates forced to listen to the voters, and the voters forced to listen to their victims. This is precisely the historical process that he proclaims in “Life, Teaching, and Influence” to be the heritage of the Lamb of God, the sacrifice who had the bad taste to speak at the slaughter. The Christian era is the history of the victims’ right to speak and be heard.

But to encourage you, [I will] show you that this is a world-wide process, which is caused not by the so-called Russian revolution, but by the World Wars... Today you are obliged to ask: where are the disinherited? Where are the oppressed?

[p.82]

...Love means giving up your own point of view; love is the reason for the existence of history.

He calls out the third millennium as the Age of the Good Samaritan; he writes in grateful appreciation of his friends on Patmos and of Joseph Wittig, and speaks of the particular meaning of Jewish anti-semitism. He writes on marriage as law and sacrament, and declares that the contemporary status of women in society is a gift of the Christian church.

So, what makes ERH unique? or worth a hearing? Is it his range? his incredible scholarship and erudition? his ability to discern the spirits, and recognize the times? Three times he looked back at history to proclaim the end of an era: in 1917, near Verdun, he saw the unity of 1000 years of European history. In his work with Joseph Wittig, he looked back over 2000 years of Christian history, and in proclaiming its unity over time, proclaimed the end of the church’s age. After the end of the world wars, which he saw as one conflict with a twenty-year truce, he proclaimed a universal history stretching back to Adam as the price of peace on a planet whose peoples were inescapably being forced to live together in one great society.

His unusual ability to change his mind? Many years ago, we watched the PBS documentary series *Eyes on the Prize*, and were treated to the terrible prospect of former Arkansas governor Orville Faubus saying that, given a chance, he would do exactly the same thing again. After that pronouncement, I have felt that we should hold those who are in fact capable of changing their minds in the face of historical facts in higher esteem: they are rarer than we think, perhaps a sort of secular saint. ERH was, as I wrote some time ago, “a German soldier who became a dedicated

American, a professor who bitterly attacked his academic colleagues for shirking their responsibility to society, and a Christian whose unshakable faith in the power of the word led him beyond the church.” Having labored for years to establish the Russian revolution as one in a series of events that had created Europe, he could in *Geheimnis der Universitaet* decry the Bolshevik revolution as a stage-managed copy of the French event, and declare America the carrier of the economic revolution. In between, interestingly enough, he could say that “America and Russia as carriers of economic revolution are obliged to adopt and integrate the third world.” His change of mind is perhaps most clearly illustrated by a story Freya told me recently: she was walking with ERH in Berlin when a convoy of American occupation troops drove by, in his native city. “Are those your soldiers?” she asked. He was silent a moment and then replied, “Yes, they are.” Events make epoch.

The belief in the history of salvation? He never ceased to insist that faithfulness to the one spirit required different postures and actions in each generation. Paul had to reverse the relation of Christ’s life and teaching because he came after it; in *Andragogy*, ERH goes so far as to say that the Christian understanding of time brings an end to the Greek dichotomy of thought and action, since through it we can see that Aristotle thought, which allowed his student Alexander to act, and both form part of a whole. The action required of each successive generation is finding a new translation of the Gospel to make the spirit take new form.

His declaration that action must follow on insight? He certainly lived out the words of James Russell Lowell, whose famous hymn proclaims not only that “once to every man and nation comes the moment to decide”, but that “time makes ancient good uncouth” and portrays “truth forever on the scaffold, wrong forever on the throne”. I would say that we can accept his own word, that what set him apart was not his acceptance of Catholic teaching and the Christian tradition, but his insistence that from that acceptance, we look for what our hour calls for in the way of action. Though many Christians have taken on the task of incarnating what they saw as crucial truth, he stands apart for saying that that very step is what clearly differentiates Christianity from everything that had gone before. He stands apart in our time for seeing that each religious tradition incorporates and builds on a particular understanding of time. As the current orthodoxies pass in their turn, it is not too much to hope that his faithfulness to the witness, not just of the first Christians, but of all Christians in their time, will find honor someday.

I would say we must honor him as a man who took upon himself the burden of seeing the world

to come in a world that sought its security in a fantasy of a world gone by. I would say that his life is intended as a bridge, to rescue the relevance of the Christian tradition into a new era. He was, therefore, bound to be misunderstood: as Rudolf Hermeier has pointed out, as a “Jew and emigrant” while he was a passionate Christian and American immigrant. Before the “second war” he was attacked as a war-monger; during the war he was suspected as a Nazi spy; and after the war, he was under suspicion as a Communist. The ground-breaking correspondence between ERH and Franz Rosenzweig was viewed, especially by Rosenzweig, as a *German* event. The orthodoxy of today denies this even as a possibility; the “Aryan” wives who demonstrated outside Gestapo headquarters demanding the release of their husbands, are described in a recent book as “German” wives with “Jewish” husbands. This ideological division is all the more questionable given the clear parallel to Jewish Americans’ self-understanding; the stress caused by the denial of identity has been devastatingly described by both Peter Gay and Viktor Klemperer. Posthumously, Hitler is being declared right. And surely half the meaning of Franz Rosenzweig’s path to Judaism is that he found the primacy of revelation through arguing with a Christian. To deny that is to deny the new quality of the event, and to doom Jewish-Christian dialogue to a sterile avoidance of sore spots.

It is in *Geheimnis der Universitaet* that ERH makes the incredible statement that because man is created in God’s image, he is by necessity tri-une. That tri-unity is shown in his approach to time, as embodied in the pagan’s focus on the inspired moment, the Jew’s focus on eternity, and the Christian’s focus on the demands of the present hour. In future, he says, we will all have to live consciously as good Christians, good Jews, and as good pagans. He declares that all three “beliefs” have produced existentialists: the pagan Jean-Paul Sartre, the Christian Soren Kierkegaard, and the Jewish Franz Rosenzweig. The fourth option is that of the beast, as the past century has made unmistakably clear. And he quotes his own letter to Franz in which he says that “I can only hope to believe.”

We too can only hope to believe.
Thank you for your attention.