words were unconnected in any rational intelligible way, it is not unlikely that melodic associations replaced grammatical ones.

But the prompting of the Spirit was not limited to the tongues. Sober odes for the edification of others were also held to be spirit-inspired (Col. 3:16). Probably such songs were sung to the accompaniment of the *kithara* (Rev. 5:8; 15:2), for the *kithara* was the guitar of antiquity and was used with quiet, rather than ecstatic, songs.

At any rate, the New Testament is full of songs which found their way into its pages, because they had enjoyed prior use in the assemblies of the early Christians. The rousing hymns and acclamations in Revelation give a vivid portrait of the important role of music. And the Christians in Bithynia, whom Pliny examined, gave as the only, and apparently most important, feature of their worship the fact that they sang a hymn to Christ antiphonally (Epist. I, 96, to Trajan).[50]

As *kabod* and *tehillah* belonged together in the Old Testament, so *doxa* and *hymnos* (or *psalmos*) were closely linked in the New. For as the epistles frequently assert, what the believers had been called for was the praise of God (2 Cor. 4:15; Eph. 1:6, 12, 14; Phil. 1:11; Col. 1:12). In this sense, music was indeed the most basic expression of their faith.

50. Cf. J. Quasten 'Carmen,' *RAC*, II, 906f.

4 BRUCE CAMPBELL

Can Prayer Be Humanizing?
Person and Prayer in the Thought of Gabriel Marcel

Can prayer be humanizing?

The question springs from two observations and a hope. The two observations are: (1) that it is becoming increasingly difficult to retain (or recover) our authentic human qualities in this increasingly over-administrated, depersonalized, technological, concrete and prefabricated, homogenized, one-dimensional, manipulated super-society; and (2) that belief in, and the practice of, prayer are declining: the Christian come of age is putting away 'the things of childhood,' including prayer. My hope is that I may be able to show that there is a mutual relation between person and prayer. How and whether a man prays depends on how he conceives of himself as a person and, reciprocally, praying (or not praying) partially determines who he is, as every act (or omission) is part of making the person.

I propose to examine the relations betwen person and prayer by reference to the work of Gabriel Marcel, a contemporary philosopher who analyzes the effects on persons of forces operating in our culture, and who writes occa-

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sionally of prayer. The problem is to determine, using Marcel's approach, whether and/or how prayer can foster human development. To do this, we must first understand how Marcel views person and prayer. We proceed to this inquiry after giving a brief introduction to Marcel's way of thinking.

I MARCEL'S THINKING

The essence of Gabriel Marcel's thinking is that it demands, in order to be understood, that the reader reflect on his own experience. Early in his life, Marcel eschewed the goal of constructing a unified system of philosophy, feeling this could only be accomplished through abstraction which denied the ambiguities of concrete experience. In reflecting on the aim of philosophy, he concluded that its goal is to make experience aware of itself, and thus to bring the philosopher into greater intimacy with himself and with the world. He tries to achieve this through using his one tool: reflection. In order to understand Marcel, then, we must join with him and use his reflections as a way to clarify our own lives. Marcel himself says that his type of philosophy is 'essentially of the nature of a kind of appeal to the listener or the reader, of a kind of call upon his inner resources.'[1]

These observations not only give us the orientation we must have in order to understand Marcel; they also open us to the central distinction of Marcel's thinking. It is phrased in various ways and we will gain our initial entrée to it through following Marcel's thoughts on the nature of philosophical reflection. Marcel distinguishes between two types of thinking: primary and secondary reflection. Primary reflection is examination through detachment, examination of objects which are placed before the inquirer but do not affect him. This process of abstraction, though necessary to the technical advancement of man, proceeds by dissolving the unity of experience which is placed before it. Secondary reflection, which is proper to philosophy, is thinking grounded in participation; it reconquers the unity of immediate experience which was lost in the act of abstracting. This type of reflection, for example, reflects on 'my body felt as *my* body'[2] and not as one among many other similar bodies, all subject to the same laws – in other words, not as seen through primary reflection.

In reflecting on 'my body' and on the nature of sensation, Marcel discovers that the self, taken in its immediacy, does not have an objective, instrumental relation to 'my body' or to the world, but rather the bond uniting it to body and world is more accurately evoked by words such as presence and participation. Depending on how we look at the world, then, as an observer or as an incarnate participant, we can see it as a realm of objects or as a realm of presences. This is the central distinction of Marcel's works.

1. G. Marcel, *The Mystery of Being*, vol. I (Chicago: H. Regnery, 1951), p. 262. The two volumes of this work are referred to below as MB I and MB II.

2. MB I, p. 114. Marcel's treatment of 'my body' in his essay on 'Having' in *Being and*

His favorite way of expressing this distinction is through the contrast of problem and mystery. A problem exists apart from me; it is there for anyone. Who I am does not influence my approach or affect the solution. The self remains beyond the elements with which it has to deal in order to solve the problem. A mystery, in contrast, is something in which I am involved, in which I find myself committed as a whole man. In the realm of mystery, there is no frontier between what lies in the self and what lies before the self. In a mystery, the data cannot be set over against me, because I am involved in them.

For example, when I ask the question 'Who am I?' I enter the realm of mystery. I do not even clearly know the meaning of the question, Marcel states, though I am obsessed by it. '*So we see the problem of Being here encroaching upon its own data,* and being studied actually inside the subject who states it. In the process, it is denied (or transcended) as a problem, and becomes metamorphosed to mystery.'[3] Mystery is the world seen as presence, seen through secondary reflection. Problem is the world seen as object, seen through primary reflection.

We can see this central distinction worked out in Marcel's reflections on my relations with others and on hope. I can consider another person as 'he' or 'thou,' as an object or as a presence. When I consider another person as 'him,' I treat him as if he were absent, even if he is physically near to me. I meet someone and we talk about the weather, our respective work, but 'even though I am addressing him, he continues to be "someone," "that man there" ... It is as though he were filling out a questionnaire, as if he were providing me with fragments of an account with which he identified himself.'[4] The more my questioner is external to me, the more I am external to myself; we are both in solitude, cut off from one another.

There is another way of relating, however: the way of communion. If, in talking with this 'someone,' I discover we have shared an experience, a bond of feeling is created between us. 'A unity is established in which the other person and myself become *we*, and this means that he ceases to be *him* and becomes *thou*.'[5] At the moment when communication is established between me and the other, 'we pass from one world into another,'[6] from the world of solitude, objects, 'him,' to the world of communion, presences, 'thou.'

Having (Westminster: Dacre Press, 1949), hereafter referred to as BH, seems to contradict his treatment elsewhere, the other interpretation being the one employed in this article. Actually, the two treatments are compatible. Marcel looks at 'my body' as my possession only to contrast this approach to it, which he characterizes as seeing it through primary reflection, with seeing it on a more fundamental level. 'My body' is the prime datum we must reflect on in order to understand our relation to the world. In so reflecting, Marcel concludes that Reality 'cannot be compared with an object placed before us' (BH, p. 184), i.e., the more fundamental relation is participation and not possession.

3. BH, p. 127.
4. G. Marcel, *Creative Fidelity* (New York: Noonday Press, 1964), p. 33.
5. *Ibid.*
6. *Ibid.*, p. 72.

Hope can only be understood if it is seen as a reality of the realm of communion. Hope is contrasted to that other possible response to man's situation of captivity and frustration: despair. To despair is to deny the existence of any resources with which the situation of captivity and alienation may be transcended. It is the recognition of the ultimate inefficacy of all techniques, joined to 'the inability or the refusal to change over to a new ground – a ground where all techniques are seen to be incompatible with the fundamental nature of being, which itself escapes our grasp.'[7] Despair is aligned with solitude. To despair is to affirm that I am alone and can draw only on my own resources.

Hope, on the other hand, is grounded on communion. Even though man's trials are infinite and each tempts me to shut within myself, I can transcend the situation in an ascending spiral of communion. Hope affirms that through communion resources are available to the self with which it can transcend its situation of captivity. All hope is thus a veiled hope of the full communion: salvation.

In sum, through examining reflection, Marcel has opened us to two disparate ways of viewing the world, as presence or as object. He believes that the world of presence and comunion is more fundamental. Person and prayer are examined by him as realities of this realm.

II MARCEL'S UNDERSTANDING OF PERSON

Just as we discovered the central distinction of Marcel's thought by examining his thinking on philosophical reflection, so we can begin our discussion of his understanding of the person in the same manner. Reflection, Marcel shows, is my personal response to a break in the flow of my life. An obstacle of some kind has been set in my path, I find myself confused about something I thought I understood. Employing reflection, I rise from one level of living to another. Through deepening my self-awareness, I am able to communicate more intimately with myself and with others. Reflection thus points to the central characteristic of the person – the urgent need for transcendence, which Marcel describes as an aspiration for a purer and purer mode of experience.

The meaning of 'purer mode of experience' is understood through an important term of Marcel's thinking: participation. The mode of insertion of the person into the world is described as 'participation.' The incarnate self is *in* a situation, which means he is not an autonomous whole, not self-contained, but rather open, exposed, permeable. There are several levels to participation. The nonobjective participation of sensory receptivity is merely the first level of the world of presence, the depths of which are participation described as communion with others, greater intimacy with myself, and communion with God.

The way to deepen communion with others is through disposability. This disposition is contrasted with unavailability. The unavailable man is not only

7. G. Marcel, 'On the Ontological Mystery,' in *The Philosophy of Existentialism* (New York: Citadel Press, 1956), p. 30.

occupied but encumbered with himself. He is shut up in the circle of his private experiences, and judges others by the way they fit into his preconceived desires and plans. He is incapable of being 'present' to another. The available person, not being encumbered with himself, has the capacity to listen and respond to the appeal made by others to him. He is at my disposal, 'capable of being with me with the whole of himself when I am in need.'[8]

A person is able to deepen his participation also through becoming more and more intimate with himself, which means coming into contact with ever deeper levels of himself. I can gain this intimacy through my relations with other persons. Just as my disposition toward another as 'him' alienates me from myself, seeing the other as 'thou' makes me one with myself. The act of inward relaxation, by which I establish communion with the other, unifies me and thus enables me to communicate with the deeper levels of myself. A second mode of communion – contact with my being – also enables me to unify myself and move to a deeper level of self-intimacy. Through opening myself in appeal, I come to see that the deepest within me is not of me. This form of communion will be discussed at greater length in the section on prayer.

Communion with God in prayer is the experience of deepest communion. It will be examined in detail in the next section. Here we will review Marcel's reflections on God. When we speak about God, Marcel says, it is not God that we are speaking about. The only contact man can have with God is through invocation. Our manner of addressing God provides us with the clue to understand something of who he is; invocation is made to 'thee.' I address in the second person only what or whom I regard as being able to answer me. The empirical thou can always relapse into the region of objectivity, becoming a 'him.' God is the Absolute Thou who can never become a 'him.' Since God is not subject to objective interpretation, but is accessible and present only to invocation, the only way to 'think' about God is to pray.

In sum, a person is an incarnate being, situated in the world in a nonobjective manner described as participation. He feels an urge to deepen his participation by increasing his presence to himself and to others and, above all, through communion with the Absolute Thou.

III PRAYER ACCORDING TO MARCEL

Prayer, for Marcel, refers to two different activities, one of which may be considered a preliminary step to the communion with God which is prayer *per se*. This is recollection. The distractions of daily life tend to estrange me from my true self. In recollecting, I impose a silence upon myself and withdraw from my life, in order to draw nearer to the deeper levels of myself and renew contact with the realm of presence and mystery. Reversing the process of objectification, I immerse myself in an '[original] source or illumination.' This act

8. *Ibid.*, p. 40.

of renewing contact with my being is 'the act by which I recover my being as a unified whole.'[9] This renewal leads me to recognize that the deepest within me is not my own, but rather a gift. Further, recollection emits an illumination of plenitude which enables me to evaluate my life. That is, it triggers the urge for transcendence.

Thus recollection is the act in which, withdrawing in silence to shield myself from the distractions of daily life, I unify myself by regaining contact with my being, seen as a gift. This contact generates humility and the urge for union with God, both of which are integral elements in prayer.

How and whether a person prays depends on his understanding of God and his disposition toward other personal beings. We will examine what Marcel says about these topics, before articulating his description of how prayer works.

God is known only through invocation, through prayer, Marcel says. In this experience, I know God as 'thou,' present and able to respond to my appeals. In his discussion of 'Prayer and Humility' in *The Mystery of Being*, vol. II, Marcel makes it clear that, of the two dispositions possible towards other persons, availability is the attitude necessary in the believer to make prayer possible. The spirit of prayer may be defined negatively as the rejection of the temptation to shut in on oneself in pride or despair. Positively, it is 'primarily a receptive disposition towards everything which can detach me from myself and from my tendency to blind myself to my own failings.'[10]

The key to understanding Marcel's reflections on prayer is implied in the previous paragraph. As he himself states it: 'Prayer is possible only when intersubjectivity is recognized, where it is operative.'[11] 'Intersubjectivity' is Marcel's term for the realm of presence and communion. The freely acknowledged realm of intersubjectivity is the ambit within which prayer operates; prayer can only be understood if it is seen as a reality of this world of communion.

Realizing this, we can comprehend how the believer prays and how prayer is answered. In speaking of prayers, we are speaking of 'purity' and not 'validity,' Marcel asserts. Thus we are forced immediately to come to terms with the question whether a prayer for myself can be 'pure.' Legitimate prayer for myself, Marcel concludes, bears on 'what is susceptible of being regarded as a divine gift'; I can pray 'to *be* more, but not to *have* more.'[12] We are not in any way dealing with what can be possessed, he says, but only the use that can be made of the possession.

Prayer for others is seen in the same way. The purity of such prayer depends on the 'active recognition in and through God of the bond which constitutes all real love.'[13] Legitimate prayer for others is founded on a true advance of

9. G. Marcel, *The Existential Background of Human Dignity* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1963), p. 86.

10. MB II, pp. 117f. 11. MB II, p. 119.

12. G. Marcel, *Metaphysical Journal* (Chicago: H. Regueny, 1952), p. 224.

13. MB II, p. 109.

love – movement into the 'more and more indivisible community, in the bosom of which I and the other tend to be continually more perfectly absorbed.'[14] Thus the purity of prayer for another is measured by my and the other's absorption into the communion which is the Absolute Thou.

We can understand how prayer is answered by referring to love-relations and to hope. When I make an appeal to someone who loves me, I am certain that my appeal will be heard and responded to in some way promoting my being, even though I cannot predict the manner the response will take. On the transcendent level, if I hope for something specific and it is not fulfilled, the hope has by no means been an illusion. Believing that the last word is with communion and fulfilment, hope is able to transcend any tragedy or disappointment. In a similar manner, the believer who feels he has a living relation to God cannot predict the manner in which his prayer will be answered, but he is certain that the response will aid his advance, and that of the one for whom he prays, in the realm of being toward full communion.

IV CAN PRAYER BE HUMANIZING?

Having reviewed Marcel's understanding of person and having seen what he says about recollection and prayer, we are now ready to answer the question posed at the outset: can praying aid our recovery of authentic qualities of the person?[15] We will first state Marcel's own description of today's 'broken world' and the difficulties of existing as a full person in it, and then examine how he feels recollection and prayer can be humanizing.

The metaphor Marcel uses to describe the current state of affairs is the 'broken world.' In the words of a heroine of one of his plays (*Le Monde cassé*): 'Don't you feel sometimes that we are living ... if you can call it living ... in a broken world?' The heroine continues:

> Yes, broken like a watch. The mainspring has stopped working. Just to look at it, nothing has changed. Everything is in place. But put the watch to your ear, and you don't hear any ticking. You know what I'm talking about, the world, what we call the world, the world of human creatures ... it seems to me it must have had a heart at one time, but today you would say that heart had stopped beating.[16]

Marcel attributes this cessation to the spirit of abstraction and to the refusal to reflect.[17] Both must be surmounted for a human being to become a person.

14. *Ibid.*

15. We could ask the question the other way around, and thus use Marcel's thinking as a critique of those who still pray, asking: how can a deeper understanding of 'person' serve as a check against the unhealthy elements in our prayer? Because of space limitations, only the first question will be treated in this article.

16. MB I, pp. 26f.

17. This discussion is based on Marcel's chapter on 'The Broken World' in MB I, pp. 22–47. The reader is referred also to other analyses of the present times by Marcel:

The spirit of abstraction is the refusal to treat a human being as a human being and the substitution for him of an idea, an abstraction. It rests on the denial of the realm of presence. Increasingly, Marcel says, man is being registered, enrolled, punch-carded. He is seen as an agglomeration of functions, an agent, a unit of production whose worth is measured in terms of his output. The reduction of a personality to an official identity or to certain functions 'must have an inevitable repercussion on the way I am forced to grasp myself.'[18] Life centring on functions and denying the realm of presence is empty and headed toward despair. In such a world, collectivization becomes common, and the more it takes place, the less conceivable becomes the idea of any real community. There cannot be persons without community.

The degradation of person, resulting from denying the realm of presence and treating the person as a thing, is compounded by a second aspect of the spirit of abstraction: denial of God. In a thoroughly bureaucratized world, Marcel says, a certain social equality would prevail. This equality, obtained by levelling down, is incompatible with any sort of fraternity. Equality is the claiming of something; it is ego-centric: 'I am your equal.' Fraternity, in contrast, is essentially hetero-centric: 'you are my brother, I recognize you as such, I greet you as my brother.'[19] If human dignity can be fully recognized, Marcel says, it is on condition that we place ourselves in the context of fraternity and not equality. And fraternity is impossible without a father; fraternity is '[in]separable, indeed, from the idea of a transcendent Being who has created me but has also created you.'[20]

The spirit of abstraction, then, which reduces man to an agglomeration of functions, which increasingly puts each man in danger of confusing his real self with the state's official record of his activities, which judges his worth in terms of productivity, is grounded on the denial of the realm of presence and thus the denial of God.

The other foundation for the broken world is, according to Marcel, the refusal to reflect. The world he pictures as broken 'rests wholly on an immense refusal ... which seems to be above all the refusal to reflect ...' Without reflection, we are in a state of unknowing about ourselves, and thus we have no way to evaluate ourselves and to change consciously.

Marcel's plays, which he calls the 'drama of the soul in exile,' are concrete examinations of this situation of self-estrangement through unknowing. Through his drama, Marcel hopes to evoke an awareness which most of the time remains in us as though benumbed and inarticulate. This is the recognition of ambiguity; particularly in *A Man of God*, the discrepancy between

Existential Background of Human Dignity, pp. 107–135; *Three Plays* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1958); *Problematic Man* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967); and *The Decline of Wisdom* (London: Harvill Press, 1954).

18. MB I, p. 36.

19. Marcel, *Existential Background of Human Dignity*, p. 132.

20. MB I, p. 39.

what the characters really are and the ideas which they have of themselves is constantly felt.

Claude Lemoine, the main character of the play, is a Protestant minister. As the play unfolds and events of the past are recalled, it is apparent that Claude has been living for many years in illusion about himself. It is only through the crisis caused by confronting again his decision to become a minister and the early years of his marriage that he recognizes his true situation. Claude loses his bearings in his own life; his friends are incapable of putting an end to his inner uncertainty. His only recourse is to turn himself toward 'the One who knows him as he is, whereas he himself perhaps is condemned to know himself only as he is not.' Total abandonment is the state in which authentic existence originates; nothing in the broken world can tell a man who he is, and thus give him a foundation on which to build an authentic life.

Thus, in the broken world, the refusal to reflect results in a state of unknowing and illusion about the self. The spirit of abstraction, which rests on a denial of presence, reduces man to an agglomeration of functions and thus makes him into an object.

Recollection and prayer can aid the restoration of whole persons, Marcel feels. We saw earlier that recollection is my access to the realm of mystery and presence, and that it provides me with resources with which I may evaluate my life. We saw also that prayer is grounded on belief in an absolute personal being. We will now show Marcel's response to the problem of being human, by examining recollection as the way to know the realm of presence and as the means to evaluate my life, and by examining prayer as the ground of my personhood and that of others.

Recollection leads to personal development, first and foremost, because it gives access to the world of presence, the realm denied by the spirit of abstraction. The person exists in the realm of presence, and yet strong tendencies in daily life lead him away from this realm and deep into the world of problems, abstractions, and objects. He is continually in danger of objectifying life by viewing experience as needing to be converted into problems. The forces active around him move in the direction of making him see himself merely as a collection of functions. The sole way of regaining contact with the realm of mystery and presence is through 'a kind of inner grip that is nothing other than recollection.'[21] Marcel affirms that it is only through recollection that the powers of love and humility can be born and can be grouped in strength. These alone, in the long run, 'can form an adequate counterpoise to the blind, and blinding, pride of the technician, closed in by his techniques.'[22]

Secondly, recollection, as the means of overcoming man's refusal to reflect on himself, helps him to overcome his state of unknowing about himself. The circumstances in which our lives unfold make us strangers to our own depths. The broken world offers us the temptation to lose ourselves in our functions, and thus never to face our estrangement. But sometimes this false security suf-

21. G. Marcel, *Man against Mass Society* (Chicago: H. Regueny, 1962), p. 91.
22. *Ibid.*, pp. 100f.

fers a break, and we experience a feeling of unrest (*inquiétude*), which opens the way to self-knowledge.[23]

Unrest means a dissatisfaction with self and with things as they are. The opposite of self-complacency, it is a necessary condition of all spiritual progress. In his plays, Marcel shows concrete human beings forced to face themselves, but trying to avoid the pain of doing so. The self they face invariably needs some drastic change. The play revolves around their struggle to decide whether they are willing to undergo the transformation.

Recollection is our response to the feeling of unrest. We have seen that it is in recollection that, re-establishing contact with my being, I am able to evaluate my life and thus to respond to unrest. In living in the realm of function and objects, I find no vision, no principle of judgment with which I may evaluate my life and set it on a new course. This is because the self exists in a realm beyond objective judgment. By contacting my being in recollection, I experience an illumination of plenitude, which enables me to evaluate my life and which serves as the guiding light of my self-transformation.

Recollection turns me toward God in prayer. Not only does contacting my being as a gift generate humility and trigger the urge for transcendence; it also leads me to prayer by forcing me to ask the question: with what resources will the transformation of my life indicated through recollection be wrought?

Staying within the world of the problematic does not provide me with an answer. The world of the problematic is the world of fear and desire, the world of function and techniques. The inevitable end of limiting reality to what can be measured, to cause and effect, to technique, is despair. Despair, as we have seen, consists in the recognition of the ultimate inefficacy of all techniques, 'joined to the inability or the refusal to change over to a new ground – a ground where all techniques are seen to be incompatible with the fundamental nature of being.'[24]

Despair is contrasted with that other response to the situation of captivity: hope. Hope, which exists in the realm of mystery, asserts that at the heart of being there is a principle offering resources with which the trials of life may be fought and, eventually, overcome. Hope is correlative with communion and is opposed to solitude. To affirm that I am alone and can draw only on my own resources is to condemn myself to despair. But Marcel affirms that communion, not solitude, is the last word. All hope is a veiled hope of salvation, and thus the most conditional hope points beyond itself to the Absolute Thou. Thus the resources with which the transformation can take place come from outside me, from God.

We saw earlier that the spirit of the man of prayer is openness and humility. Prayer rests on an acknowledgement that I do not have the power to make myself but receive my being as a gift from God. Through prayer, the resources with which the transformation can be wrought are made available to me.

In addition, prayer is the ground of my personhood. I am affected by the

23. For Marcel's treatment of this idea, cf. *Problematic Man*, pp. 67–71.

24. Marcel, *Philosophy of Existentialism*, p. 30.

way I address others. To address the other as a source of information, as we have seen, makes me external to myself. It makes me into an object, a 'him.' To invoke the other as 'thou' is to pass from one world into another and to enter the realm of presence where both of us are 'thous.' In opening myself to invoke God as 'thou,' I realize that I am always a 'thou' in face of the Absolute Thou. In sum, I ground myself as a person through communion with others, and pre-eminently with God, who is always 'thou.'

For Marcel, acknowledgment of God is not only the way for one to affirm his own selfhood; it is the root of others' personhood as well, and thus the foundation of human relations. Theism, he says, 'appears as a metaphysical condition of survival or even as a safety ground of personal relationships.'[25] In a world which freed itself from theism completely, these relationships would inevitably deteriorate. Human dignity, Marcel has written, depends on the sacredness of the person, of his being a brother. Both these assertions, however, rest on an acknowledgement of God. If God is dead, Marcel laments in *Man against Mass Society*, the notion of the creature conceived in the image of God necessarily lapses at the same time. The notion of the human person is still capable of inspiring respect only to the degree to which it profits from the aura which surrounds the notion of a creature formed in the image of his creator.

Marcel says, in the introduction to *The Inward Morning*, by Henry Bugbee, that we cannot gain control of the ground of our actions; our part consists in being at the disposal of the source of unconditional demand. He notes with approval Bugbee's suggestion that the term 'theonomy' is more accurate than either 'autonomy' or 'heteronomy' to describe the centre or focus of one's life. He quotes a passage from Bugbee which may serve to summarize how prayer is humanizing:

> I think of reality as ever questioning, calling upon us, as if in syllables shaped from a mouth, which issue almost soundlessly. In a noisy soul this call is utterly ignored. But as true stillness comes upon us, we hear, we hear; and we learn that our whole lives may have the character of finding that anthem which would be native to our tongue, and which alone can be the true answer for each of us to the questioning, the calling, the demand for ultimate reckoning which devolves upon us.[26]

We are, in Marcel's words, largely in a state of unknowing about ourselves. Our own proclivities and the forces active around us tend to reinforce the illusion. In order to change our direction and initiate transformation of the self, we need to still ourselves and hearken to the call.

CONCLUSION

We live today, Marcel says, in a 'broken world,' in which being a full person is difficult. This world is based on the spirit of abstraction, which denies the

25. G. Marcel, 'Theism and Personal Relationships,' *Cross Currents*, 1 (1950–1), 41.

26. G. Marcel, in Henry Bugbee, *The Inward Morning: A Philosophical Exploration in Journal Form* (New York: Collier Books, 1961), p. 33.

realm of presence, and the refusal to reflect, which results in a state of unknowing and illusion about the self.

Recollection and prayer can aid the restoration of whole persons. Recollection leads to personal development, because it is the only access to the realm of presence, where persons cease to be things and the humanizing powers of love are uncovered, and because it is the means of overcoming man's refusal to reflect on himself. Prayer can play an important part in restoring whole persons, because through intersubjective communion with God resources are made available with which I may transform my life, because in it I ground myself as a person, and because in recognizing God as Father I acknowledge all men as brothers.