

human freedom and creativity during the Renaissance -- praiseworthy yet tragic. It was tragic because the logic of the renaissential turning from God to man, from eternity to time, from a reasonable faith to faith in reason, has been working itself out by "a silent sorites." And "a silent sorites" is Kierkegaard's phrase for the sophistry which, undetected, leads step by step from truth to falsehood and absurdity.^22

Theologically, though, we must continue pressing backward. The New Testament does not intimate any difference between a first century mind and a twentieth century mind, or a Hebrew mind of the eighth century B. C. in contradistinction to a Greek mind of the fourth century B. C. It knows only the darkened, carnal, corrupt mind of fallen man who, sinfully ignoring God's loving imperatives, professes himself to be wise in his own conceits and thereby becomes a fool. This mind the New Testament traces back through the Old Testament to the Garden where the Tempter enticed man willfully to heed the pride-inflating promise, "Ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Over against this mind the New Testament sets the Spirit-illuminated mind of the believer *qua* a human being who by grace has the mind of Christ and who struggles constantly to let his renewed mind govern every aspect of thought and behavior. So the modern mind from the perspective of the New Testament is merely an updated version of the carnal mind which, until regenerated, is at enmity with God. The modern mind is only that rebellious mind which, refusing to obey God's Word, rejects scornfully the idea of revealed truth: "Yes, hath God said?"

The Modernity of the Bible

In this context it is impossible to unravel the various strands which make up that ensnarled tangle of beliefs and convictions that constitute the modern mind. Among its interwoven and incompatible elements, however, are such ideologies as anti-supernaturalism, anthropocentrism, rationalism, relativism, secularism, optimism and pessimism (both of them, paradoxically), and nihilism. Each of these cries out for a discussion *in extenso*, but here we must content ourselves by referring to William Barrett's *Time of Need*, a sweeping, magisterial, and enervating critique of "Forms of Imagination in the Twentieth Century." Barrett depicts the normlessness, the meaninglessness, the emptiness of man self-divorced from God as he plunges, fulfilling Nietzsche's prediction, down, down, down into the dark depths of nothingness. Probing the nihilistic consciousness revealed in the novel, in painting, in sculpture, in drama as well as in music, Barrett ends his devastating survey with an analogy that furnishes an incisive commentary on the end-results of the post-renaissential heresy of autonomous anthropocentrism.

Imagine the music of the last three centuries selectively condensed into one long-playing record. It is a wonder nobody has yet made such a record, for it would be a most startling summation of Western history. The gracious concords of polyphony give way to the intricate harmonies of diatonic music, where dissonances