

adherent of the only worldview, which instead of being antagonistic to human fulfilment, conduces to its fulfilment on the highest levels. Profoundly persuaded of this, the Christian sets himself against the denigration of biblical faith, inevitably appearing as an old-fashioned obscurantist. But he comforts himself with T. S. Eliot's lines:

In a world of fugitives  
The person taking the opposite direction  
Will appear to run away.<sup>26</sup>

He finds comfort, too, in recalling Kierkegaard's exclamation, "The movement is BACK!" And because the situation is fraught with an incalculable urgency, there will be, Kierkegaard forewarns, "something in the accent which recalls a policeman when he faces a riot and says, Back!<sup>27</sup> Back, back, back to biblical faith and, paradoxically, by going backward to move forward. Hopper sets forth the logic of this regression which is actually progressive.

The crisis in which we stand is, therefore, absolute. It cannot be solved by any retreat into history. It can only be solved by passing through the lost domain of Christian truth to the point of the Cross, for only so can it be revised progressively.<sup>28</sup>

A genuine modern, therefore, who at this stage of Western history believes the way forward is back, sympathizes deeply with Ernest Becker's quest for an adequate solution to the predicament of our times.

Is there any answer to the incredible world-picture of the twentieth century? Is there something that can work against the death grip of both commercial and communist ideology, and mechanistic science and maybe even history itself? One thing perhaps one thing alone: a theory of alienation, a broad and compelling theory. which showed what man was, what he was striving for, and what hindered this striving -- in himself, in society, in nature. We need a theory of alienation that was composed of the best knowledge in psychology, sociology, ontology, and theology, and this is what the hardpressed human spirit itself supplied. It was a theory of alienation that was at the same time a thoroughgoing new moral view of the world.

But the Christian is convinced that, granting the need for understanding and applying it, the answer in essence lies ready to hand. In the Bible we have "a broad and compelling theory" which is the profoundest of anthropologies and which, a radical interpretation of human brokenness and healing consonant with "the best knowledge" available, proves dynamically moral. Becker speaks in language the Biblicist gratefully appropriates. Modern man frets and whines under the burden of existence because

he has nothing ultimate to dedicate it to; nothing infinite to assume responsibility for, nothing self-transcending to be truly courageous about. He has only himself, his dazzling and diverting little consumer objects; his few closely huddled loved ones; his life-span; his life-insurance; his place in a merely biological chain of things.

Becker, therefore, ringingly avows: "God alone can make sense of a free horizon of meaning."<sup>29</sup> Becker is right, provided the God he avows is the God biblically self-revealed.