

The test of truth: fact or feeling?

Experience is so often the hallmark of our human happiness, and yet so few of us have a grasp of the place experience has in our lives.

the various experiences which give significance to our lives, be they sexual love, moral impulse, or religious observance. Psychology, biology, and anthropology have all enabled us to understand our own natures in more intricate ways. But we must be careful, lest in attempting to formulate our life we reject that which gives life meaning.

C.S. Lewis has something to say about external explanations of internal phenomena. He describes seeing a sunbeam shining in a dark toolshed, then stepping inside the beam itself. "This is only a very simple example," he says, "of the difference between looking at and looking along."

He goes on: "You get one experience of a thing when you look along it and another when you look at it. Which is the 'true' or 'valid' experience? . . . it has been assumed without discussion that if you want the true account of religion you must go, not to religious people, but to anthropologists. . . it has even come to be taken for granted that the external account of a thing somehow refutes or 'debunks' the account given from the inside."

Lewis concludes that neither the inside or outside account is infallible—and so therefore each case must be examined on its own merits. "It is perfectly easy," he warns, "to go on all your life giving explanations of religion, love, morality, honour, and the like, without having been inside any of them."

This is the balanced path toward understanding our experience. We must not follow blindly any road offered which promises comfort or happiness, but nei-

ther can we afford to rule out all avenues to a deeper existence. Neither the logician nor the mystic sees the entire picture. We must engage both sides of our psyche, the analytical and the poetic, to weigh all options, to "test the spirits," as Paul said, to see "if they be of God."

The experience of the wild love of God is a wonderful thing. The nourishment of the soul from the spring of the divine cannot be neglected. But all things are not good. There is that which kills the soul as well as that which heals it. We must learn to choose, to sift the false from the true. *I show you a more excellent way.*

THE ALTAR OF AN UNKNOWN GOD

JOEL P. SHEMPERT
Copy Editor



In last week's column, I diverged from my usual *modus operandi*; rather than presenting a series of arguments, I related an experience. I hoped to share the power of that experience with others, and perhaps even to impact the lives of those who are immune to my debate and argumentation.

But while there is no denying the validity of my experience, it is difficult to pin down its significance or meaning. After all, as I experienced the Crucified Christ in that small Lutheran church on Good Friday, others had experiences as well. One choir mate, for instance, commented that the crucifixion was "a metaphor for salvation through the forgiveness of self." His experience, equally deep and powerful, differed greatly from mine.

There are some who would say it makes no difference—that each mystic path is equally valid, or equally invalid. And if the experience is the end and not the means, they are right. Whatever drug, obtained through chemistry or theology, will offer solace in an otherwise bleak life is perfectly acceptable.

But I believe it does make a difference. The path we choose can lead to eternal bliss or disaster, and can have a profound effect on the way we live our mortal lives as well.

G.K. Chesterton wrote that "there is only one thing more impractical than burning a man for his religion. And that is the habit of saying that his religion does not matter." The metaphysical question is the most important dilemma a human being will face in life, and thus must be weighed carefully in our hearts and minds. We must, in the words of Paul of Tarsus, "work out our faith with fear and trembling."

It is easy to offer explanations for

“The nourishment of the soul from the spring of the divine cannot be neglected.”

Correction

In my opinion article on April 14, 1999, I referred to Instructor Dean Darris as "infamous." I wish to with-

draw this statement, and apologize to Dr. Darris.

-Karl Katzke
Associate Editor



Dr. Spew and Adam Corona Present... LOVE WHINE

My girlfriend is going out with some friends to a dance club for a "girls' night out." It frustrates me to think of her going and dancing with other guys and getting hit on, but I don't know how to tell her my concern without sounding controlling. What do I do?
—Mitch, 20

Adam: Get over it, brother. Find some guy friends and hit a strip bar. If she is cool with that, cool. If not, move on.

Spew: Hmm. Ask yourself: What motivates me to be worried or frustrated? Do you have a past of possessive behavior? You're not married to her, and you cannot place the demands of marriage on her.

I can sympathize, though. In our society men have no outlet for expressing frustration in a relationship without coming off as a jerk male chauvinist from the 50s. Be gingerly with expressions of concern—don't be possessive.

Adam: Yeah—I go with Spew on that. But don't be blind; if she

cheats, she gets the boot. Right to the curb.

I'm concerned about some friends of mine who were recently engaged. I fear they aren't really in love, and are headed for trouble. How can I tell them?
—Jenny, 22

Spew: No matter how well-intentioned you are, if you say anything you will lose the friendship, at least during the relationship, which could last 60 years!

You've got to respect their right to their own lives. Now if one of them was abusive, that would be something. But you're talking about being in love, which is not your place to decide.

Adam: Yeah, mind your own damn business. It's people like you that try to ruin something you don't have. You gossip to all your friends—and if they do eventually break up, you'll do the "I told you so" chant.

Spew: My, we seem to be uncommonly in agreement today.

Just remember, Jenny: defining love is hard enough for two people, without friends getting involved.

I'm a gay man, and my bisexual partner is moving in with his straight ex-girlfriend, whom he claims is just platonic now. Is this a bad sign?
—Brian, 19

Adam: You go first, Dr. Spew. I'm afraid of what I'll say.

Spew: Well, that doesn't sound healthy, regardless of sexual orientation. Those two obviously have some history, and you're fooling yourself if you don't think there's going to be some attraction. And even if they never engage in anything sexual, they're living together like a married couple. They're having an emotional affair.

Adam: I really don't care if the two dudes stick together—it's just more women for me. There's something in me though, that says if that girl can win him back, more power to her.

THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

The Clackamas Print aims to report the news in an honest, unbiased, professional manner. The opinions expressed in The Clackamas Print do not necessarily reflect those of the student body, college administration, its faculty, or The Clackamas Print advertisers. Products and services advertised in The Clackamas Print are not necessarily endorsed by anyone associated with The Clackamas Print. The advertising rate is \$4.75 per column inch. All signed letters to the editor should be 300 words or less and will be considered for publication if submitted by 1 pm the Friday prior to publication. The Clackamas Print is a weekly publication and is distributed every Wednesday except during Finals week. The Clackamas Print Copyright 1999.

- News Editor:** Robert Schoenberg (x2576)
- Feature Editor:** Jeremy Stallwood
- A & E Editor:** Angie Daschel
- Sports Editor:** John Thorburn
- Advertising Manager:** Kristina Brooks (x2578)
- Copy Editor:** Joel P. Shempert
- Photo Editor:** Timothy A. Bell
- Design Editor:** Megan Oldenstadt
- Secretary:** JoAnne Gale
- Advisor:** Linda Vogt (x2310)

- Associate Editors:** Angie Daschel, Karl Katzke, Shelbi Wescott, Mandi Linstrom
- Cartoonists:** Israel Gunderson, DJ Cole
- Staff Photographers:** Sarah Welch, Toni McMichael, Melissa Leone
- Staff:** Salena De La Cruz, James Khosravi, Chamaine Larson, Maria Raymond, Leah Chapin, Susan Abe, Stef Smith, Randy Parsons, Sandra Lupo

19600 S. Molalla Ave. Oregon City, Oregon 97045
(503) 657-6958 EXT 2309 • CCCPRINT@CLACKAMAS.CO.OR.US

Dr. Spew and Adam Corona Present... LOVE WHINE

Send Letters to: spewandcorona@yahoo.com