

DEATH OF GOD THEOLOGY

I. Backgrounds

A. Historical

1. Hegel. 1st used the phrase tho meant only as a Symbolic expression of inner meaning of crucifixion.
2. Nietzsche. Placed the phrase in mouth of his Madman in The Gay Science. Meant as a cultural event of 19th c.
3. Wm. Hamilton in 1960 spoke of a theology of death of God. Can mean several things. For some means cultural death of God. Others mean once was a God who is now dead. =atheism except God was once living.

B. Theological.

1. Neoorthodoxy. Some of d of G theologians were formerly Barthian. But found it impossible to hold together the philosophical skepticism and Xto-centric revelationism of neoorthodoxy. Learned from Barth of radical separation of secular and sacred, of Xnty and rel, so pushed that separation farther.
2. Bultmann. Myth is any representation of divine activity as an objective occurrence in the world. Myths not discarded but need to be interpreted existentially. God is falsely objectified when spoken of in terms of time and space. Transcendence is identical withman, so really none. Everything reduced to anthro and leading to Xn atheism.
3. Tillich. Altizer says Tillich had greatest inf on him. Night of his death said, "You fathered us, here we are." Life, Oct, 22, 1965. Tillich attempted to interpret Xnty to modern man in terms of existential phil. God is not transcendent. He is the inexhaustible depth within the structure of being in which man and nature participate. God not a person tho personal. All rel lang is symbolic. God is of the human consciousness. Really a work of man's imagination. Julian Huxley: Tillich's use of term God is "semantic cheating and so vague as to be effectively meaningless." Tillich was Moses who led people out of Egypt of supernat'lism to Jordan of death-of God and d of God theologians are Joshuas who lead on to promised land of Radical Theol. Hamilton said.
4. Bonhoeffer. Difficult to know bec didn't live long enuf. Said that world has come of age and can get along without God bec no longer needs a problem-solver. Need for this world a religionless Xnty. Not trying to do away with God but trying to clear decks for God of Bible who conquers power and space in world by His weakness. But has been taken to mean God useless.

C. Contemporary. Others who parallel now God-is-Dead theologians.

1. Leslie Dewart. RC. Need to dehellenize Xn doct to get a theism which includes atheism.
2. Pierre Teilhard de Chardin. RC. Universal evolution reaches onward to eschatological God of the ultimate consummation, *Cosmic X.*
3. John A.T. Robinson. =mashed up Tillich, fried in Bultmann and garnished with Bonhoeffer. Recuss Xnty to humanism.
4. Ernest Harrison. Canadian. "There is no God." Anglican. Can be Xn and atheist.

D. God-is-dead theologians

1. Gabriel Vahanian. "Soft". Syracuse. Barthian. God is culturally irrelevant.
2. Harvey Cox. Baptist, Harvard Div. Secular City. Sociologist. Bel in God but need to quit using word until better word emerges. Transcendence comes thru secular things like social change, teamwork, etc. "Soft"
3. Paul Van Buren. Episcopal, Temple. Sec Meaning of Gospel. Philosopher. Value of God-language only when translated into man-language.
4. Wm. Hamilton. Baptist. Colgate-Rochester. New Essence of Xnty. God literally dead. Jesus hidden in neighbor, social movt.
5. Thomas J.J. Altizer. Episcopal. Emory. Gospel of Xn Atheism. Mystical, excessive generalizations. Death real.

THEOLOGY OF PAUL VAN BUREN

I. Background. Th.D. under Barth on Calvin's doct of atonement. Left Barthianism at Epis. Sem in Austin. Now is neo-lib, anti-supernatl, theol of cultural meaningfulness. Since Sec. Meaning of Gospel he has bec more radical esp since move to Temple. Style is ordered, not mystical like Altizer. Uses linguistic analysis to deny meaningfulness of God-talk. God statements are meaningless yet have a meaning derived from Xn's blik. This is secular mean of gospel expressed without God yet =to apostles.

II. Deletion of God

- A. Reason. Bec dissolution of God in modern culture and meaningless of God-talk.
- B. Basis. Use of verification principle. =meaning of a statement is found in the function of statement. Theol statements meaningful if can be submitted to verification. Can't have cognitive (tells us something about reality) statements about God.
- C. Blik. =way of looking at reality. =faith. Lang of faith has a meaning when mixed with man's blik. But when propositional it has no meaning.

III. Gospel.

Embraces story of Jesus. Freedom of Jesus grasps us and gives the blik to one and others and creates community of faith. Gospel can be expressed without God. Says this is the apostolic faith

IV. Blik. ^(see for sig) Blik is what provides revelation. e.g. creation story is Xn's blik about origins. Deity of X is lang of love within Xn's blik. Forgiveness is new self-understanding provided thru Xn's blik.

V. Ethics.

Actually his theol is reduced to ethics bec anthropological. Lovingly serve neighbor.

THEOLOGY OF WILLIAM HAMILTON

I. Background.

1. Barthian. 2. Bet Barth and God is dead (The New Essence of Xnty). Got Barthianism from Dpnald Baillie and R. Niebuhr. 3. Moderate God-is-d in which allowed for possibility of God's reappearance. 4. radical God is dead-God irretrievably lost. 1965- Style is straightforward. Phil is subjective empiricism inside a pluralistic, relativistic framework of many existential possibilities. Elements of social gospel too.

II. Loss of God. Moved from absence of God to loss of God. He means God of traditional theol. Death=metaphor describing the thing happening to a groups of western Xns. but = to real loss of God.

III. Jesus. Still loyal to Jesus. Pattern of Jesus for worldly existence.

J is concealed in world in neighbor, struggle for justice, etc. Then we become Jesus in world as get involved. Actually saying Jesus is an attitude or place to be. Xn is without faith and hope, but has love.

IV. Ethics. Xtological as others. Jesus as suffering lord is pattern. Protestant is one who puts self at disposal of neighbor.

THEOLOGY OF THOMAS J.J. ALTIZER

I. Background

1. Tillich at U of Chicago. 2. neoortho (Niebuhr) 3. Romanism flirt. 4. Failed psychological tests for Epis ministry. 4. PH.D. at Chicago in Hist of Rel. 5. Emory. Came to death of God position 1 yr after Ph.D. in which affirmed orthodoxy. Style is mystical, poetry, unintelligible. Flamboyant.

II. Sources of his theol.

1. Phil of Hegel. Idealistic. Spirit had to negate self and climax was in incarnation when spirit emptied self and bec flesh and God died and was reborn in his epiphany in X.
2. Profane visionaries of 19th c like Blake and Nietzsche.
3. Phenomenology of Oriental mysticism.
4. Some areas of Prot theol. Jesus ala Schweitzer and Bultmann's demyth.
5. Antying else that conveniently fits his system.

III. Death of God.

1. Nature--divine self-negation or self-annihilation.
2. Characteristics. Historical, cosmic, irrevocable, liberating, eschatological.
3. Cause. Move of Godhead itself, bringing gradual metamorphosis of spirit into flesh.
4. Occasion. Incarnation of X
5. Identity. Traditional God. Transcendent, majestic God we know.

IV. Kenosis of the incarnation of X. Incar is another way of speaking about death of God. Climax in death. No possibility of resurr and ascension of X. These would betray the essential movement of incar. This gives a consistently kenotic Xtology. Really implies God committed suicide in incar. Involves disappearance of historical Jesus and emergence of universal Jesus.

V. Atonement.

On-going process of kenotic Jesus and discovery of universal Jesus in present time. Transcendence now gone over to complete immanence. Knowledge of God is no longer a matter of intercourse but o f masturbation.

VI. EThics. Silent on practical ethics. Criticized for this.

ON THE DEATH OF GOD

There is no quality and there is no power of man that was created to no purpose...But to what end can the denial of God have been created? This too can be uplifted through deeds of charity. For if someone comes to you and asks your help, you shall not turn him off with pious words, saying: "Have faith and take your troubles to God!" You shall act as if there were no God, as if there were only one person in all the world who could help this man--only yourself.

Rabbi Moshe Leib of Sasov

I. Some distinctions

- A. Psycho-therapy is like a major overhaul to treat defects.
- B. Counselling is like tune up to bring out best in person who is running all right.
- C. Pastoral care is much more than counselling tho today we have made them almost the same.

II. Presuppositions

- A. Unsaved counsellors have their presuppositions; otherwise they wouldn't try to keep on with a patient until he agrees with them.
- B. Xns have too tho must not make counselling session a preaching session. However, advice is part of counselling.

III. Relation to Theology.

- A. Priesthood of all believers. Counsellor should strive to make person realize that and practice it. People often seek it bec they don't want to face up to their personal responsibilities twd God. Problems must be solved on basis of individual's personal priestly responsibility to God. Counsellor must not stand in between for long.
- B. Guilt and forgiveness. Many matters must be called sin, not maladjustments. Then need to seek and find God's forgiveness.
- C. Self-realization. For Xn this means accepting the acceptance that God has offered thru grace in sal.

IV. Comments on Freud

Man develops an illusion (not nec an error) based on childhood exp. Rel is such, is unintelligent, and puts morality on shaky grounds. Man must educate self to face reality using his own powers. Criticism--Freud using scientific net which won't catch rel. facts. Yet admits human needs exist bec the reality exists. Need for food bec food is real. Need for God bec God real (he should admit.)

V. Comments on Carl Ransom Rogers.

- A. Basics--Client-centered therapy. Also non-directive. Man is basically good. Dr. is to institute a "helping relationship" with client. Experience is highest authority. Reared in evang. home but abandoned it for experience.

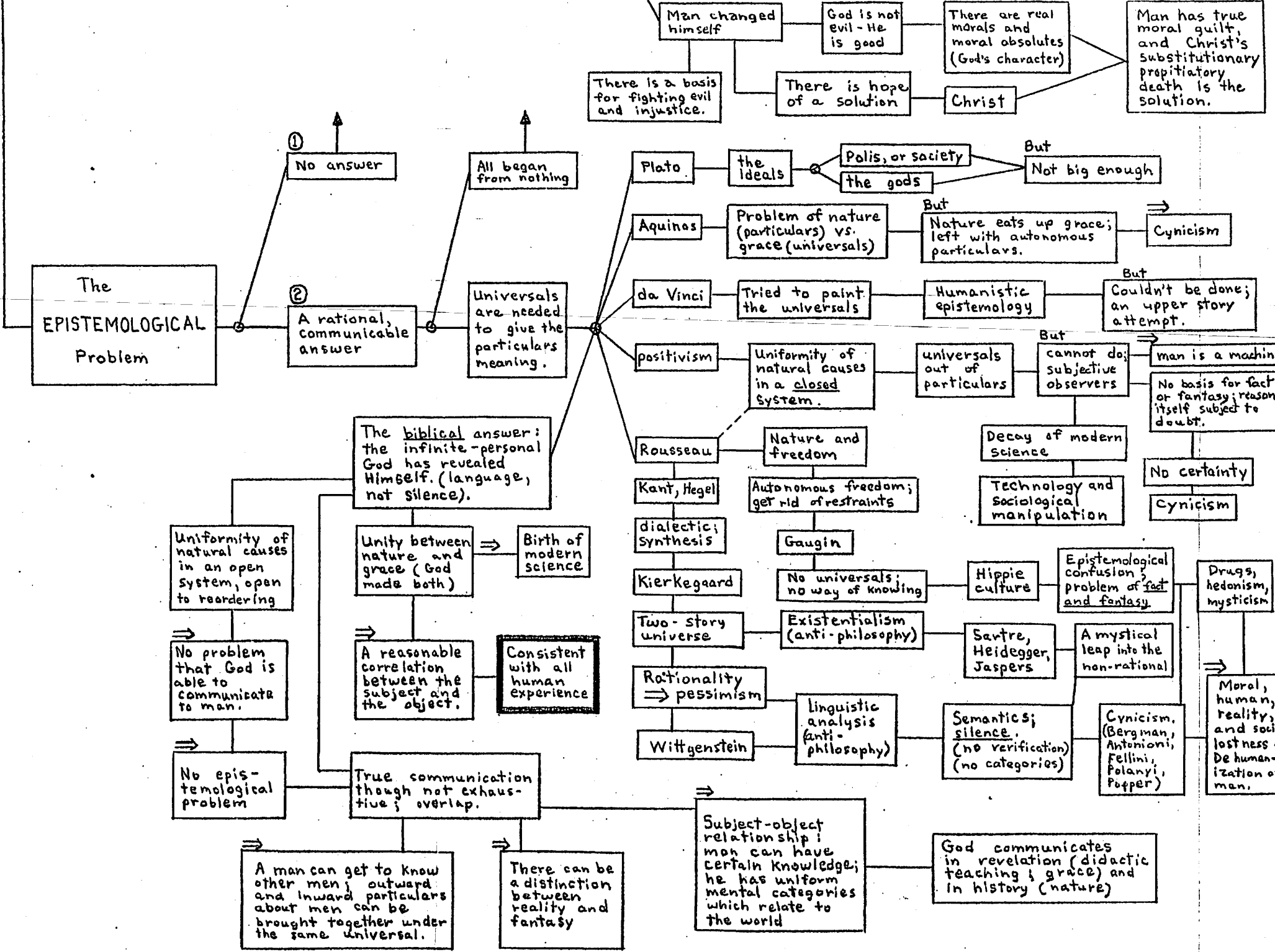
B. Means.

1. Understand client from his point of view. Empathy ≠ sympathy.
2. Develop optimum in client. For Xn can do bec of presence of HS.
3. Create "caring" relatnship.
4. Have unqualified respect for client.
5. Be ready to communicate your ideas to client.
6. Be genuine and honest.

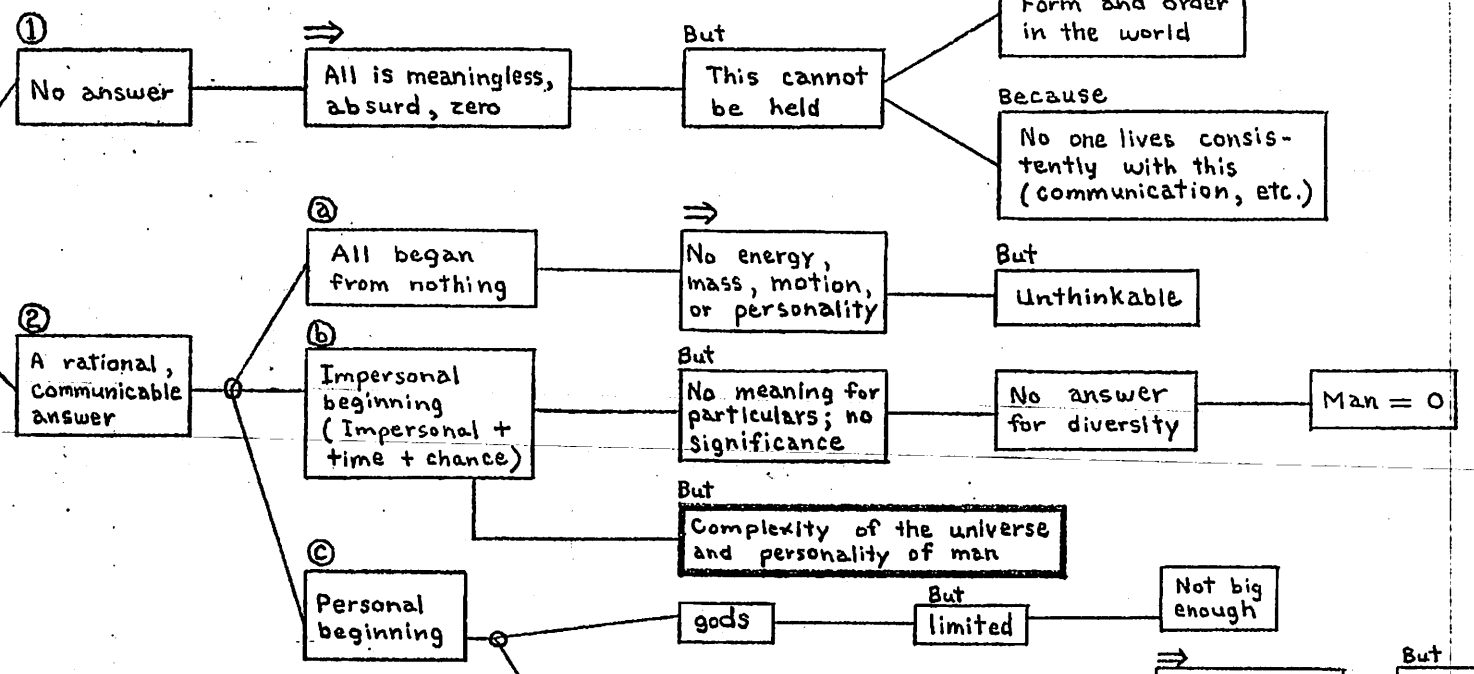
Some feel could construct Xn approach on these principles, tho Rogers himself bases too much on experience.

VI. Relation to Preaching

- A. Preaching should involve minds of people, then will act. Don't play homiletical jazz on nerve endings.
- B. Preaching should be person centered, not just problem centered. Like a dart, not colorful confetti. Prob 1/3 of addience are having adjustmt prob.
- C. Preaching should be healing, spir and emotionally. OK to upset people a la Glasser;s Reality Therapy. Don't use illus that have unrealistic goals. But use illus. Av. person has serious lapse of attention every 3 min. Intelligent person, every 7 min. Some preaching gives psy. more business. From counselling you get insights, not illus.



The METAPHYSICAL Problem



The MORAL Problem

