

William Temple: An Anglican Tradition in Social Ethics

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[0 : 00] All right. Before I start, I am talking about social ethics, and whenever you're talking about Christian social ethics, you're also talking about political theology, trying to relate the kingdom of God to the kingdoms of the world.

And it always brings up the issue of the church in the world. So before I get started, I'd like to read from Jeremiah 29, verses 1 through 7.

These are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the surviving elders of the exiles and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had taken into exile from Jerusalem to Babylon.

It said, And I think this text raises the question.

In our new situation in the Western world where the church is, in a sense, experiencing exile in a new way after the fall of Christendom and with new social and political arrangements, but also with new conditions.

[2 : 07] Pluralism, pluralism, pluralism, pluralism, individualism, rationalism, all kinds of isms. And in the midst of that, we, the church, are planted and experiencing in a new way what it means to be resident aliens.

So I think that this last verse raises the challenge for the church in the city as exiles in the world city. Seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you. Pray to the Lord on its behalf. For in its welfare, you will find your welfare. And I don't know exactly all that that means.

And it's complex answering what that might mean. So as I move towards this talk about William Temple, who was a leader of the church and a statesman during the time of the world wars in Europe, during a time when Europe was experiencing a similar transition from the established church to the somewhat, at least somewhat disestablished church, and also realizing a world at war.

I'd like to pray a prayer that he wrote and a prayer of the church about William Temple after he was archbishop in Canterbury.

[3 : 58] So if you'll pray with me, then we'll get started. Oh, almighty God, the father of all humanity, turn, we pray, the hearts of all peoples and their rulers, that by the power of your Holy Spirit, peace may be established among the nations on the foundation of justice, righteousness, and truth.

Through him who was lifted up on the cross to draw all people to himself, your son, Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen. And this is a prayer of the church.

O God of light and love, you illumined your church through the witness of your servant William Temple. Inspire us, we pray this morning, by his teaching and example, that we may rejoice with courage, confidence, and faith in the word made flesh, and may be led to establish that city, which has justice for its foundation, and love for its law, through Jesus Christ, the light of the world, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

Amen. Amen. So, my topic today is, is William Temple? He'll be the focus of my talk, but I'll also be talking about a couple other people along the way.

This lecture is based on a paper that I wrote around this time last year for Dr. Packer's course in Anglican History and Theology. He gave me a pretty good grade.

[5 : 41] Amen. So, hopefully, he doesn't retract that after this morning.

Anyway, in the course of my research, I read what I wrote in my script, this book, but I forgot to bring the book with me. It's called *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, and in the book, the authors, there's three authors that each, that each, try to express the common spirit of the Anglican communion

through studies of Richard Hooker, Frederick Dennison Morris, and William Temple.

Conveniently, those are the same three Anglicans whom I resourced in order to begin to trace in my paper for what I wanted to call an Anglican tradition and social ethics, or hope to identify as some kind of coherent tradition in social ethics in the Anglican church.

Anyway, in the introduction, the authors of this, in the introduction to *The Spirit of Anglicanism*, the authors explain that beginning in 1970, an Anglican consultative council has met every two years in order to bring more frequent expression to the collective thought of Anglicans worldwide.

and they report how at the third meeting of the Anglican consultative council in 1976, the delegates discussed the role of the church in contemporary society.

[7 : 23] The report from the council names specifically F.D. Morris and William Temple as chief examples of a theological tradition responsible for the strongest component of Anglican social consciousness.

And here's what they wrote specifically in the report. In seeking to determine its attitude to society and social problems, the Anglican communion must be conscious both of strength and of weakness.

Its strength derives from some notable examples of social awareness and action in the 18th and 19th centuries and from an all too short theological tradition exemplified by such persons as F.D. Morris and William Temple, a tradition which still does not receive the attention it deserves.

Its weakness lies in its long history of uncritical acquiescence in the prevailing social order. So just to reiterate that, its strength lies in this tradition which we're talking about today because of how it actively exemplified a serious social awareness and an engagement with social activism.

and the weakness of the Anglican social consciousness has to do with its long history of uncritical acquiescence in the prevailing social order, which is a serious judgment.

[9 : 07] And for me, reading that report was very affirming. First of all, it affirmed the topic and logic of my paper, which draws a pretty direct connection between the theology and social ethics of Morris, who lived and worked in the mid to late 19th century, and Temple, who lived and worked in the first half of the 20th century.

But it also affirmed the importance of asking the question where and how have Anglicans engaged with questions about socio- and political problems in the prevailing order.

And as I mentioned a few moments ago, this has only become more critical in the 20th century as the world has found itself in a state of total war, as we've experienced a process of globalization, as we've experienced shifts in Christian prevalence to the global south, and the crumbling of the old Christendom arrangements in Western society, and you name it.

The list goes on, and I don't have to tell this group that there are internal problems in the church as well, and those raise serious questions, serious social, ethical questions as well, questions having to do with how humans relate to one another and what it means to establish or exemplify a just and peaceable society.

So, what I want to do this morning is to set out and assess the tradition in social ethics developed and exemplified in the 20th century by Archbishop William Temple.

[11 : 21] The first thing I'll do is to briefly introduce the philosophical roots of Anglican moral and political theology. That's where Richard Hooker comes in.

Then I will explain the rise of what's called Christian socialism, exemplified by F.D. Morris. And then I will introduce William Temple and sketch the development of his Christian philosophy, his political theology, and social ethics.

And I apologize in advance if that becomes something of a whirlwind tour. And I hope that it's followable. I think once I've talked about Temple, I'll stop.

I have a further conclusion, kind of a proposal, for how Temple's view of views on politics and social action could be strengthened.

But I think I'll stop and see if we can engage in discussion briefly, and then I can add those thoughts if it's fitting.

[12 : 38] So let me start with philosophical foundations. This may be, for some of you, this may be really familiar and really easy to follow.

For others, I hope that it's easy enough to follow. The philosophical foundations for Anglican moral theology were most clearly established in the 16th century by Richard Hooker in *The Laws of Ecclesiastical Polity*.

The basis for Hooker's moral theology in the book is his confidence in human reason to discern what is good and right.

And that confidence in the human capacity to reason is rooted in a concept of natural law that draws extensively from the philosophy of Thomas Aquinas and others.

The idea of natural law is that the universe has an orderly structure consisting in a hierarchy of laws that are designed to serve ultimate ends.

[13 : 51] That the universe is made up of these laws that move in a certain direction.

out of those laws the first eternal law is the law of God's being and everything else is governed by the second eternal law.

And the subset of the second eternal law is the law of reason that governs rational creatures.

Because humans are created in the image of God is how the logic goes.

we are able by the use of our reason to participate in God's eternal law and therefore to apprehend the structure of the universe.

The structure of the universe reflects a moral law or a natural law which guides humans to natural ends to temporal ends.

[14 : 51] the universe and then there's the divine law which is revealed in scripture which guides people to their supernatural or eternal end. in this sense the natural and supernatural spheres are complementary and Hooker correspondingly understood the church and the state as two aspects of one and the same Christian society because of that relationship between the natural and temporal and the supernatural and eternal.

so on the social level the goal of participation in eternal law is the realization of the kingdom of God and that applies both to the church and the state.

So following from this the English tradition more generally has tended to emphasize the positive possibilities of cooperation between church and state and that is on the basis of the conviction that and I'm quoting here the state arises as the natural result of the social nature of human beings ordering their affairs according to the common good educating citizens in the ways of justice and restoring faults in social systems.

this view gives rise to a marked optimism about social progress and it implies not only the possibility but also the responsibility of the church to intervene in the social order.

One historian explains that Anglicanism's relatively high estimation of nature its corresponding tendency to affirm the persistent goodness and redeemability of the world and its public responsibility as the church of England all combined with the prominence of the social question in the second half of the 19th century to produce an Anglican tradition of socialism.

[17 : 08] So I'll reiterate that on so we've started with this idea this high view of nature because of because of by our because by our reason we can participate in in eternal law that that gives rise to a positive view of the state because the state is is seen as as capable of participating in in seeking the common good and then beyond that to seek to seek natural natural human ends and the and then there was the responsibility of the of the Church of England especially in its established as the state church to that that led the Anglican tradition especially in light of of social so what are called the social question kind of social problems in the late 19th century it led the

Anglican church to kind of develop this tradition that we call socialism and that happened especially in the person of Frederick Dennison Morris who was the preeminent Anglican theologian in the 19th century and is considered the founder of Christian socialism so Frederick Dennison Morris lived between 1805 and 1872 just to put that more definitively on the timeline and in the 20th century he has been remembered in the book Christ and Culture by H.

Richard Niebuhr as a classic example of the theme Christ the transformer of culture in the book Christ and Culture Niebuhr sets up five different types of the way that Christ relates to culture and I won't try to explain that more but it is significant that especially because Niebuhr was a proponent of Christ the transformer of culture model that he named very specifically named F.

Morris as the chief exemplar of that idea so at the time of Morris' career the great economic changes of the late 18th and 19th centuries had ushered in a new urban and industrialized culture in Europe which in turn led to widespread social and economic injustices Morris maintained that these social problems were rooted in a theological breakdown and church divisions so in the kingdom of Christ in which he published in 1938 Morris explored the possibility of a more comprehensive unifying theology with the hope that that if we could attend to a unified theology that would lead to a better response in society he argued that politics and religion are inseparable and

that the church should be involved in answering social questions he rejected both individualism and sectarianism which he saw as part of a huge part of the problem and he asserted that the universal unified church existed only for the sake of the world morris's method and in this is implicit some of the natural law philosophy his method was to dig beneath the various forms of religious and social life to discover certain universal structures of human existence he maintained that all human relationships move toward a universal society which ought to have the same character as the one who is its source and goal so you hear that reaching towards natural and supernatural ends there the supernatural end of humans being the goodness that is

God himself the source and goal of human existence and so and so morris is saying that all human relationships are moving in the direction of this universal society so he still understood the church as a distinct society but he held that view in tension with the conviction that the state is also God's creation so this is how he understands the difference between the church and the world quoting him the world contains elements of which the church is composed in the church these elements are penetrated by a uniting and reconciling power the church is therefore human society in its normal state the world that same society irregular and abnormal the world is the church without

[23 : 06] God and the church is the world restored to its relationship with God taken back by him into the condition for which he created it deprive the church of its center and you make it into a world I think that's a pretty good distinction and quite important Morris' thesis was that the world had to be educated into the realization that true reform was not attainable by refashioning society according to man-made schemes but only by the recognition of the already existing kingdom of Christ that is his main argument now before I move on to temple I need to explain the description of Morris as the founder of Christian socialism can be a little misleading if you've read anything by Karl Marx because Morris' theories bear no resemblance really to post Marxian varieties of socialism Morris was far less interested in specific legislative goals than he was in the theological analysis of political and economic reform as I think have just represented but he did embrace the name Christian socialism because it promised to commit the church to an engagement with what he called unsocial Christians and unchristian socialists and Morris was committed to applying reason to the articulation of faith and morals and to enabling dialogue with others for a more human social order in a sense that's his version of socialism at its core is to articulate faith and morals carefully and to enable dialogue with others for a more human social order and this is basically the Anglican tradition inherited not long after by William

Temple so that's the basic background in two people so now William Temple who I'm putting up as a representation of 20th century Anglican social ethics William Temple characterizes the leading English tradition in social ethics around the crucial time of the world wars Temple was born in 1881 and he grew up in the heyday of the British Empire and widespread optimism about the possibility of social progress he was also totally immersed in the world of Anglicanism especially the liberal tradition dominant in the schools where he was educated his father Frederick Temple was bishop of Exeter when William was born then he was the headmaster of rugby school where William studied before becoming archbishop of Canterbury so as a student at rugby

William was impressed by the idealist view the kingdoms of the world were to be incorporated into the kingdom of Christ and at Balliol College at Oxford he was immersed in the dominant British Hegelian tradition which sought a comprehensive rational understanding of reality so with those two influences you can see the two themes of the philosophical background at least generally and generally the socialist background Temple also joined the Christian Social Union while he was in school which owed its existence to the Christian socialist tradition inspired by Morris in forgetting to bring the spirit of Anglicanism the book with me that meant I also do not have the list of the rest of William's life I actually had typed it in to my document yesterday and I accidentally deleted it last night and so I thought I'll just take the book with me I have it marked up no big deal and then I forgot the book so but the rough sketch of William's life was that he was educated at Oxford he got involved in liberal socialist movements to the extent that he was kind of blacklisted from more conservative groups he he he he he he was a he was a lecturer at Oxford for several years after school he became a pastor he was eventually consecrated as bishop of Manchester and and then and and while he was

[28 : 45] I believe that was in 1929 and while he was there he he served on various he served as the chair of various councils having to do having specifically to do with both the both social action on one on the one hand but also the ecumenical movement on the other hand that's something that

doesn't come into this lecture really at all but he was enormously influential in the ecumenical movement that now is expressed in things like the World Council of Churches he actually he was a drafter for the constitution of the World Council of Churches and so anyway he was extremely busy he wrote he wrote about 20 books and he and then in 1942 he was he was appointed as

Archbishop of Canterbury that seemed to have been following from his his lectures at at the Malvern Conference in 1941 which was specifically addressing how how England could be reestablished as a as a just society and and specifically how it could regain its footing as a Christian society so that was an interesting conference that would be interesting to read the papers from that in and of themselves but in any case his he had a highly controversial voice at that conference but which managed to get the attention of the prime minister who who passed his name along to the king and got him got him into

Canterbury anyway he was enormously influential and and I and I do wish that I could have at least read some of the quotes about how his biographers have reflected on on his influence in the Anglican world in any case when he was going back to when he was at rugby school while he was there he was he was he was under the influence of kind of idealism then then at Oxford Hegelianism rationalism and then he kind of got pulled into a long career of involvement with social movements so it was under some of these early influences that he that Temple launched his life project to develop a Christian philosophy this is where this turns to the more the academic side of things

I'm starting with his Christian philosophy then I'll go to political theology and then and then those together kind of explain his social ethics so his first theological his first philosophical treatise was called *Men's Creatrix* it was published in 1917 and in it Temple declared that the philosophical task was to think clearly and comprehensively about the problems of life I don't find that particularly insightful by itself in keeping with the Anglican high view of natural law he assumed that the world is rational and that by exercising reason the human mind can grasp the world completely he argued that the sciences of knowledge art morality and religion present four converging lines of evidence that do not meet and he showed turning at the end of his treatise to theology he showed that the incarnation supplies the central point at which those four converging lines meet and find their unity this that philosophical study was followed in 1924 by a more theological study called *Christus Veritas* in which he presented a Christocentric metaphysics rooted in the incarnation so that was anticipated in *Men's Creatrix* and developed over the following years the church is only in *Christus Veritas* the church is second only to the incarnation in temples theology in *Christus Veritas* he relates the church's task to the overall human task to quote him he says the fundamental human task is the inner unity of complete personhood and the outer unity of a perfected fellowship as wide as humanity toward this human nature is impelled by the creator's act at the incarnation and the consequent activity of his spirit at work upon humanity from within thus the church's task is defined for it the church is the herald and foretaste of the kingdom of

[34 : 31] God for that it exists and for service to that end it must be organized and equipped and at least at that point I think we can say amen temple's philosophy is finally and most fully encapsulated in his Gifford lectures which were published as *Nature, Man and God* in 1934 in the lectures he presented a sacramental understanding of the universe about participation towards ultimate ends and demonstrated a decisive shift from his earlier idealism to realism and that's an important trajectory that we see in all aspects of his thought as this moved from idealism to realism he emphasized human character and will in the pursuit of human purpose in keeping with idealistic philosophy but he also as increasingly a realist he also acknowledged at that time the radical nature of human evil also during his career

Temple published a series of books exploring political theology he they were some of them were called *Church and Nation* from 1915 *Christ in His Church* from 1925 and then probably his most well-known work *Christianity and the State* which he published in 1928 Temple's political theology called for a differentiation of functions between Church and State taking as his starting point the relation of the Church to the only partial realization of the Kingdom of God in Temple's later writings he became more emphatic that because of human sin the kingdom cannot come fully within human history history he says history is not leading us to any form of perfected civilization which once established will abide it is a process history is a process of preparing the way for something outside history altogether the perfected kingdom of

God the key instrument of preparation for the kingdom of God is the church and Temple's understanding of the relationship was that church and state have the same sphere the life of humans but they have different functions in relation to that one sphere and the Christian citizen has to fulfill his churchmanship and his citizenship in the whole of his life by responding at all points to the appropriate claims of church and state in other words we're dual citizens and we need to be able to differentiate the appropriate functions and therefore the appropriate claims on us of the church and state in order to live well the application of Temple's philosophical and political theologies to a discernible

Christian social ethic first emerged in the 1920s at which time Temple convened and chaired the conference on politics economics and citizenship which came to be known as by the moniker COPAC the aim of that conference was to seek the will and purpose of God in political social and industrial life it was a conference that included delegates from around the western world Temple's approach to social reform remained basically the same throughout his career he began with so this is the big picture of his views of social reform he began with a broad doctrinal understanding of the Christian faith and from that work towards concrete decisions on specific issues and in turn those decisions were formulated into objectives for society so it starts with basic theological ethics out of Christian theology you make ethical judgments and then it becomes a public ethic in the sense that or social ethic in the sense that those decisions were then put up as directives for where broader society should be moving temple temple's contribution to Christian ethics is encapsulated in Christianity and social order which I mentioned before published in 1942 pretty late in his life he died in 1944 in that book he argued for the church's right and responsibility to intervene in the social order so that stayed the same from earlier on under the influence of natural law theory and the argument rests now his argument rests on three social principles which he had kind of originally deployed at

[40 : 07] Copac the primary principles are the expositions of the doctrine of God and creation including the nature and destiny of man so he has a theology proper and an anthropology as kind of his overall primary principles but then there were three derivative principles and they were first of all the freedom and dignity of the individual and on the basis of that temple says the first aim of social progress must be to give the fullest possible scope for the exercise of all powers and qualities which are distinctly personal and of these the most fundamental is deliberate choice the second principle is the social nature of human beings temple said and many of other people said something like this man is naturally and incurably social and this directs temple's theory of the state which he called the administrative community of communities in the sense that humans naturally exist in community and the third principle is that humans were created to serve the needs of one another on the basis of these principles temple offered a critique of british society and then set out a series of directives which society should follow in order to correspond more closely to those principles this is important he called these guidelines middle axioms because those guidelines are meant to translate

Christian principles into directives for public action so it's translating from the theological language within Christianity to intelligible language for practice in society middle axioms were sponsored by leading Christian ethicists at the ecumenical Oxford Conference of 1937 on church community and state in other words it became a pretty popular idea specifically just to mention that it did that was specifically appropriated by temples American contemporary in Christian ethics Reinhold Niebuhr the brother of Richard Richard Niebuhr wrote Christ and culture Reinhold Niebuhr was more known as a theologian and as a theological ethicist and the reason why

I think that's important to mention is that there's actually a profound commonality between temple and Niebuhr and in fact it seemed that temple came under the influence of Niebuhr late in his life and Niebuhr is considered the quintessential realist so coming out of in the same era after during and after the world wars becoming very serious about the condition of human sin and the limitations of the limitations of achievement within history so that was I think that had a significant influence on that on the trajectory in temple's life towards realism anyway back to temple this development of temple's thought especially his increasing realism is apparent in in that his 1942 exposition of social principles was actually preceded by an exposition of original sin he seemed to in the sense that you had to talk about the pervasiveness of human sin before you could before he started to outline any other principles increasingly his view was that there is no use in trying to

Christianize the world which is closer to the Christian socialism view and then again to make the parallel in the states closer to the social gospel view so his view was no longer that there was any

use in trying to Christianize the world but that Christians ought to cooperate with anyone who shared their social aims so basically cooperate with the state in seeking the relative betterment of society but without the ideal that we were going to realize God's kingdom on earth within human history in the last ten years of his life having been challenged by the impact of the Nazi regime and the shifting currents of continental and North American theology Temple was forced to make a wholesale theological appraisal he concluded that his earlier Christian philosophy was too idealistic about the possibility of achieving what he had called a

Christocentric synthesis and in 1938 in his chairman's introduction to the report on the this is a long title his chairman's introduction to the report on the Archbishop's Commission on Christian Doctrine which is published as *Doctrine in the Church of England* Temple reflected the increasingly popular transition from a theology of incarnation to a theology of redemption he wrote the following a theology of redemption tends rather to sound the prophetic note it is more ready to admit that much in this world is evil and strictly unintelligible and it looks to the coming of the kingdom as a necessary preliminary to the full comprehension of much that now is we have been learning how impotent man is to save himself how deep and pervasive is that corruption which theologians call original sin man needs above all to be saved from himself this must be the work of divine grace so this different emphasis allowed temple to insist that the world had to be converted in order for it to become intelligible in fact in in

[47 : 05] Richard Niebuhr's *Christ and culture* he calls the Christ the transformation he calls those who who who who hold that Christ is the transformer of culture calls that the conversionist view and I think there's some interesting uses of that idea of conversion so temple wanted to say that the world had to be converted in order to become intelligible and that is in the sense that it's fragmented socially ethically and rationally in other words he no longer understood the world to exist as a rational whole as in the philosophy we looked at before it only becomes intelligible or coherent as it is redeemed so one notable result of temple's philosophical development was that he put greater stress on the need for moral guidance in an ethic of collective action again this is maybe reflective of the influence of

Niebuhr who wrote a book called *Moral Man and Immoral Society* and it was this suspicion about about humans ability to seek the common good because of this because of the pervasiveness of sin and you could only kind of get together and do the best you can temple's views increasingly reflected also the catholic tradition outlined in *rerum novarum* which was the encyclical in 1891 and in *rerum novarum* it was taught that the role of the state is to promote justice through the protection of rights while the church must speak out on social issues in order to teach correct social principles so it was just a much more moderate view of the church's function especially but it starts to sound limited in kind of what the state can do as well as what the church can do in the last year of his life temple published the essay what

Christians stand for in the secular world and in there he set out what he regarded as a Christian consensus on social problems so he maintains that the problem is to envision the task of the church in a largely alien world the church must therefore maintain its own spiritual life fellowship and beliefs or else it will have no place to stand from which to address the world in temple's words Christians must restore hope to the world through the relation of the kingdom of God to history as a transcendent reality that is continually seeking and partially achieving embodiment in the activities and conflicts of the temporal order and I'm going to end with that that's temple at the end of his life he's come to this more realist position it hasn't stopped seeking peace or justice but it has stopped expecting that the world order is good enough to achieve the kingdom of

God which is in a lot of ways I think you'll agree is a good move I would at the same time want to say that with the rise of temple's realism kind of a Newberian realism there was also a tendency to diminish the significance of the church he's still in one sense he's come to focus more on the distinctiveness between the church and the world in a way that kind of harkens back to what Morris said about the church being what the world can't be without God but at the same time it's difficult to see how his ecclesiology is very strong at that point and what it really means to be

Christians rather than just trying to like through those middle axioms translate Christian social principles into something more general something like universally accessible and acceptable so so I don't quite know what to make of Temple at the end of his life but there's the map and I like to stop there like I said I have a sense of how I think that his theories could be improved but I'd kind of like to stop and see what questions or comments you might have at this point would you describe I

suppose he had to be a high churchman yeah very high churchman

[53 : 13] Anglo Catholic I would I think that he would be described as Anglo Catholic especially the schools I think Balliol College is pretty high high church so his idea of salvation was delivered by the church and church membership really is that what he believed yeah that's a great question how does he understand what it means to be a Christian is that basically what you're asking I haven't read anything that really reflects on that I would I would think yes that he think that he sees salvation as something that doesn't really happen outside of the church especially coming from a time when the church was more established so so salvation is established church hasn't got much else to do is it except to get in this kind of politics because

I'm a late convert and a lot of things sort of passed before me but of interest is really under the heading that I've had is the Puritan idea of salvation the evangelical side of things and any social concerns that those groups have I think would probably have more reality I think than probably someone that may not even be in the faith as we understand it in the church but not in the faith as we understand it right I mean I would say this in defense of Temple I have absolutely no no doubt of his personal faith that's reflected in his sermons and it's reflected in his sense of devotion

I mean in the long run Temple was really an ecumenist I mean he was a huge part of the ecumenical movement and there's actually an interesting relationship between his view of the church in its various manifestations and his view of the kingdom again this is in the book at home but one of the last things he wrote it was from I believe it was from a retreat that he taught at like a month before he passed away he said he encouraged Catholics and Protestants slash evangelicals and Orthodox to join to really join together in seeking the unity of the

Christian faith and the kingdom of God and in that I think that I would and I guess what made me think of that quote is that he talks about appreciating an evangelical immediacy of faith which sounds like something that he's very positive about as an observer of that rather than a participant in it I guess I'm just saying I don't see where he wasn't a participant in it so I think that's the best response I can give is that I don't I mean he I have read where he as when he was young did have some misgivings about what we would determine as orthodox faith but he later came to wholeheartedly affirm those points so how often did or at all did

Kierkegaard move across the horizon of these thinkers because surely he would have been a magnificent corrective to their what seems in retrospect their absurdly naive optimism I don't know I wish I knew I wish I knew thanks for bringing that up I don't know anything about Kierkegaard unfortunately and no I didn't see but I could at least say that I didn't see his name anywhere in reading around this I in preparing for this morning it became painfully evident to me how little I really understand about that particular era and it was and it was an intriguing time for the world and for the church so I don't know do you have anything in particular in mind well just like

[58 : 45] Kierkegaard critiqued the privileged members of Christendom in his environment and these privileged members of Christendom don't seem to have a critic saying to them what are you talking about what kind of world are you living in right like because in Oxford it didn't seem to bring the real world to their minds right right in the sense that they didn't have a critic saying what are you trying to do just recreate because I think there was a sense in which at the time there were people who were kind of scrambling to try to recreate try to rebuild Christendom as it was falling down around them I mean the Church of England is interesting I mean in Temple's time he there was a time when he was bishop and he was and he had to actually I believe it might have been before he was bishop but he was on he was on a committee called the

I think it was called the Life and Liberty Committee or something like that and it was basically dealing with the it was it was born out of a problem where they were trying to seek they were churchmen trying to seek their church leaders trying to seek social improvement and trying to attend to the problems of like social and economic disparities and they and parliament was not cooperating with them and it basically long story short it led to the enabling act 1919 and so so there's this weird thing going on where on the one hand I agree with you I think that a lot of this optimism has to do with kind of like the ecclesial elite not being in touch with reality but on the other hand

I mean he's obviously extremely concerned with social problems so that is reality and then it becomes extremely concerned with violence and political unrest so there's anyway I just think it's interesting that on the one hand he's in the established church and it would almost seem in his best interest to maintain the tight relationship between the church and state because that's Christendom

but on the other hand seemed to be like you know what this the church needs to be able to be the church without the state kind of getting in its way so there was a hope to have integrity with Christian convictions yeah what do you think is the legacy of the temple in terms of when you look at the

Anglican Church today I was just thinking about the present archbishop and you know what do you see sort of an outworking of that thinking from temple sort of coming into mainstream Anglicanism as we know it these days yes I think so in the sense that on the one hand in global Christianity he really was extremely influential on the rise of the modern ecumenical movement but then within Anglicanism he was really a proponent of the idea that Anglicanism is the best situated tradition for ecumenism ecumenism and so that is a legacy is just his involvement with that and I imagine that that remains highly influential on kind of the Anglican identity but the social action stuff in a sense that takes me back to the reason for my questions in the first place why I was asking the question what if any tradition exists within Anglicanism time of social consciousness and action and I I went I think I went back to temple because it was so obvious in his lifetime and his writing and I don't know where that has led the Anglican church because I don't personally and I might just be I might just not know but

[64 : 09] I personally am not aware of major of a major emphasis on on social concern within the Anglican church so I don't know what you guys think about that because you know Anglicanism way better than I do yes ma'am I'd like to go back to the comments you made about the relationship of church and state because Archbishop Temple was a member of a privileged church in the state and we do not have a state religion in Canada but they were also embedded in the politics bishops sat in the house of lords and that's why we can call both a high churchman and a statesman right because it was a given that's a double hat that doesn't work when it comes to social issues you've got people protecting their station in life sometimes their income land whatever or their mitre and hat they are not really going to sit there and legislate their own destruction are they so when he taught ecumenism whatever that word was right yeah

I see it written church union yeah yeah they're talking about we will lead in this movement and we will gather other kinds of christians to our point of view but you know that's not going to happen it isn't the anglican church that is converting people right left and center it's the pentecostals you know it's difficult to see how his ideal plan would translate to even some of the social and religious forces that were happening in his lifetime and this man didn't see the atheistic empire of the cold war he didn't see the destruction of the class system which got impetus after world war ii right so i guess i'm wondering how do we make his ideas relevant because they sound great on paper but how do we get there yeah that's a brilliant observation because you're right it's not the context that we're in in north america i think that was for me for me that's why it's been important this is all of my other reading in um political theology and and social ethics is is from is from north american sources uh for the most part and uh and from context where the where the church is is not um established the way that the way that it is and was in britain i think i think that was part of i think that's part of the reason why in my in my head it was it's been important to parallel uh the to to parallel his thinking with niebuhr because niebuhr basically had the same very similar um influence in in the u.s uh and in north america in general as a protestant um in in a in a in a in a totally post christendom context already uh and and as a and and as a protestant didn't have the kind of like there was no automatic social cloud uh or political or political standing so um um and then if and then in looking at and and i think one thing that's interesting is that there is that there are so many similarities that obviously would have played out differently but in actually in thought there's so many similarities uh so in a sense temp in a sense to read temple i've i've thought what do you what do you do what do you do with this what do you do with this in our context um i i think i mean i think that that would lead to my my conclusions about temple which which was which was to apply um some north american um philosophers and theologians thoughts to as a critique um of him uh on on the ground on the ground of course i don't really know because i don't understand because i don't understand the um how things have played out in britain um but here i think that i think it but i one thing i think that applies uh is in both cases is that we need to assert the distinctiveness of the church and uh its practices in as

as a as a witness before watching world um and i can i can read that more fully in a second um the uh anti-slavery movement was that before during or after temple it would be before yeah yes sir i'm wondering if temple's experience doesn't drive us back to a more new testament view of the church

and society yeah um in the sense that he may well have seen himself as carrying on the tradition of Wilberforce and Shaftesbury who could have waged these great campaigns in parliament for example um taking the stand that England was a Christian country and that really their job was to awaken the conscience the Christian conscience of the nation right and there was such a conscience right and there was such a commitment right and it seems to me what you said is that Temple's experience through life led to him realizing that that was unreal yeah in fact the church is the state is not part of the church right and that we are in fact to put it bluntly we're living in a hostile environment yep we have a different mission rather than the mission to reform the manners of society our mission has to be appealing to the transformation of the society through its individual redemption yes thank you for saying that that's great because that it really is a better articulation of what

I'm trying to get at is that is that whatever you I think something that you can make out of out of out of out of Temple's trajectory of Temple's thinking is that he did realize the world has fallen and hope and I don't know if he realized wait what even if even if there are even if there are still fragments of Christendom in Great Britain there's it's it really is a post-Christian society the significance of I think the significance of of reasserting the the strangeness of the church in in this in the in the current in the world context now is that is that is that we are seeking to not to recover some long lost Christian consciousness in the world but to actually expose the world as one one one theologian has been influential on me suggests that basically what the church does is call the world the world it shows the existence of the church is what makes the world because the world and that's actually and that's why that's why

I really liked I thought it was really interesting Morris's quote about the church in the world I found myself resonating with it even though Morris was probably more you know he was apparently quite naive about about the world as it actually is outside of a Christian context anyway Niebuhr actually wrote about the irony of American history and that was a very interesting study on the irony of the idea that we were establishing like a virtuous society in America and especially the betrayal of that as ironic after the world wars when Americans were still conceiving like the American identity was still one of innocence even though it was the most powerful nation in the world wielding nuclear weapons you know that kind of a thing and it's just those kinds of things that just keep reiterating we really are resident aliens and we need to understand that we kind of need to stake out existence as exiles again could

[74 : 25] I read this brief conclusion and maybe this will be a better articulation than my ad hoc responses I wanted to say that the weakness that two 20th century thinkers have I think have raised have exposed the weakness of the Temple tradition one of them would be in philosophy would be Alasdair MacIntyre and in theological ethics it would be Stanley Howell because MacIntyre accounted for the collapse of the enlightenment project into an unending debate between rival and incommensurate ethical positions so there's that issue of traditions right and Howell has emphasized the church as a community of character which is in itself a social ethic and so both have inspired versions of ethics that stress

Christian distinctiveness so let me read this real quick and after virtue MacIntyre proposes that since the enlightenment we have lost the theoretical framework that rendered the language of morality intelligible so that we are left only with a simulacra fragments of the sense of morality that we might have once had when the world really was Christianized moral disagreements today are therefore interminable or unending because moral and ethical debates suffer this conceptual incommensurability so he argues that there is no way to engage accounts of justice and rationality except from within a particular tradition so that's important because of this because philosophically someone like

Temple or Niebuhr are working on the assumption that we can communicate the same concepts to when in actual reality there's a difference of language because you learn language and concepts in a long tradition like a tradition of rationality anyway I think more importantly and more to the point of what we've just been talking about is Hauerwas' position and he often claims that the first social ethical task of the church is to be the church the servant community and this saying exemplifies Hauerwas' understanding of the church as well as the church's relationship to the world against the assumption that it is the aim of Christian ethics to seek the general improvement of society Hauerwas contends that the church's task is to tell and perform the story that forms it the story given to us in scripture and summed up in

Christ this view forms the convictional basis of Hauerwas' criticism of the Niebuhr tradition and as I've been saying I think that criticism can be leveled against temple as well Hauerwas says that under Niebuhr's influence the task of Christian ethics came to be understood as the attempt to develop theological moral and social insights necessary to explain the ambiguous task of achieving more relatively just societies and I think that I would put the emphasis on that idea of relativism of that task Niebuhr and I think temple continued the liberal assumption that theology must be grounded in anthropology and he continued the social gospel or the Christian socialist assumption that the aim of Christian ethics was to formulate the means to serve society in this very general sense as if society was seeking the same thing we're seeking and

Hauerwas is critical of Niebuhr for his faith in the liberal project of securing the intelligibility of theological discourse by demonstrating how it reflects as well as describes the human condition and the result is that and this I think is kind of the important thing and I totally apply this to temple the result is that Niebuhr and temple undermine the theological worth of Christian ethics by assuming that theological convictions must be translated into non-theological language so in a sense this idea of translating into non-theological language is on the one hand aware that the world is no longer Christian or Christianized or maybe even Christian or even

[80 : 07] Christianizable but it continues this assumption that you can just cooperate with the state or with whoever to seek relatively to seek the common good and the problem is that we don't understand the common good the same way what is the good well to go back to the tradition of Christian philosophical thought the good is God himself and and within and within human history that doesn't that is not the same as it's not the same as the this these like general ideas like the protection of human rights or or or trying to balance powers or or whatever so anyway thank you