THE ROLE OF EMOTION IN COLERIDGE'S
RELIGIOUS THOUGHT

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# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I. INTRODUCTION</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. THE HEAD AND THE HEART</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. WILL AND INTELLECT</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. EMOTION AND INTELLECT</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. WILL AND EMOTION</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VI. REASON AND FAITH</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIBLIOGRAPHY</td>
<td>71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

When the name Samuel Taylor Coleridge enters a conversation, the most immediate reactions are usually connected with the phrases "Romantic poet" and "opium addict." Although there is truth in these general impressions, they hardly give credit to the greatness which is Coleridge's. As scholar, philosopher, literary critic, and theologian, he has received far less attention than he deserves. His contributions to philosophy are both creative and borrowed; especially noteworthy is his service to Great Britain by introducing and popularizing the works of Immanuel Kant. His Biographia Literaria, another monument of his work, has a firm place in the English critical tradition. Coleridge as Christian thinker and theologian is the least-known Coleridge, although his position in the heritage of the Anglican tradition is outstanding. Furthermore, his contributions to the understanding of the Christian Faith by the individual Christian have been neglected. C. R. Sanders, in Coleridge and the Broad Church Movement, establishes Coleridge's historical importance and summarizes his ideas concerning Faith. James D. Boulger's work, Coleridge as Religious Thinker, is an excellent study
which concentrates on the Coleridgean ideas related to the Christian Faith. Using these books as a springboard, and Coleridge's *Aids to Reflection* as the most important primary source, this thesis will explore in depth the most pertinent matters of the Christian Faith as discussed by Coleridge, with particular reference to the role of emotion in his religious thought.

Man seeks God through Reason and Faith. God cannot be totally understood; so Reason and Faith are not exclusively intellectual endeavors. To know God cannot be willed by man; so the question of Reason and Faith is not primarily will. God cannot be known by a mere experience or feeling of reverence or beauty; so the subject of Reason and Faith is not a matter of pure emotionality. God can only be realized, not explained or understood; Reason and Faith consist of all three—intellect, will, and emotion. These three are ultimately self-determined, spiritual faculties; if they are determined, they are mechanical and lifeless.

Coleridge was opposed to the purely emotional approach of the mystics and the "enthusiastic" religious groups. Although his religious Faith was extremely emotional, he avoided extreme emotional subjectivity and tried to emphasize the necessity of an objective approach also. Coleridge opposed those who asserted that intellect was a product of sensation, that the mind was the passive recipient of ideas
impressed upon it. For this faculty taken by itself he uses the Kantian term, Understanding. Coleridge was opposed to determinism in any fashion. He believed that ideas can be realized only through an internal medium, never through an external one. Man is a self-determining creature with a choice. His intellect must seek to know rather than be prodded to know. The emotions must react spontaneously and genuinely in each situation, must never be premeditated by the individual or determined by external propaganda, commercials, advertisements. Coleridge explored the will as the most clearly spiritual part of man, opposing Calvinism and Edwardism, which preached determinism. The will is free to choose, just as the intellect and emotion are free to choose. The whole man, as a unity of intellect, will, emotion, is free to choose to seek to know or not to seek to know God through Reason and Faith.

Reason and Faith are not static states of belief, but active states involving the whole man. Reason and Faith realize God through will, intellect, and emotion. Will cannot know God. Emotion cannot know God. Intellect cannot know God. The whole man, consisting of these three, must know Him. What is the relation of intellect and will in knowing God? Intellect and emotion? Will and emotion? Are the three inversely proportional to one another, or does the cultivation of one enrich the other two, or at least
make the others aware of the need for cultivation? Coleridge answers some of these questions provisionally, but never does he propose final answers. To do so would defeat the spirit of Coleridge, for his thinking is essentially spiritual, self-determined, rather than mechanical, other-determined. He never reaches ultimate solutions; he continues to search and is never satisfied. Although he could engage in most abstruse arguments, rallying classical allusions with vigor, he was not afraid to descend from the heights of intellect to admit his need for a living Faith. Coleridge could never define his terms precisely because he was constantly changing and growing. His system is not a beautifully constructed one; it is the reflection of an "inquiring spirit." He is at all times a live individual with which one can feel sympathy. This is the contemporaneity of Coleridge.

Coleridge felt deeply, and to explore this capacity for feeling, for emotion, is the object of this study. He also disciplined his feelings in order to make them acceptable to other people. Although his literary form does not show as much of this discipline as the reader would like, it does show the irrepressible emotional nature of Coleridge. He is classed as one of the English Romantics. This title commonly signifies men who indulged their feelings in an irresponsible manner. When rebutting this common oversimplification of the nature of Coleridge and the other
English Romantics, one must be careful to note, however, that Coleridge did have a strong emotional bias. Too often studies of Coleridge's theology, and studies of theology in general, have stressed the concepts of will and intellect and have neglected the definite emotional content. A Romantic being discussed without much attention to his emotional aspects? Impossible, one says! But, unfortunately, philosophical and theological discussions frequently tend to become dry and aridly intellectual, sometimes evolving into theoretical discussions which ignore the life, the Faith which is the center of the Christian religion.

If Coleridge is to be classified as a Romantic, why not explore his theological thinking in this light? Coleridge the Christian, the sinner deeply aware of his faults, yet also aware of the love, the Grace of an all-forgiving God, rather than Coleridge the pedantic theologian, will be the object of the present search.
CHAPTER II

THE HEAD AND THE HEART

The role of emotion in Coleridge's religious life can be tracked down in his historical disagreements, in his distinction between enthusiasm and fanaticism, and in his personal commitment. Coleridge showed himself to have a longing for emotional ties with a Higher Being, yet at the same time he was suspicious of extreme emotionalism and feared that his Faith would be unfavorably associated with those groups who relied unduly on an emotional basis for their Faith. One of these groups with whom he refused to be linked was the mystics.

"From no vain, or worse than vain, ambition of seeming to walk on the sea of Mystery in my way to Truth," 1 Coleridge shuns any connection with mystery. In addition to this initial general rejection, he rejects, although somewhat reluctantly, the doctrines of Erskine and Schleiermacher.

But the lengths to which the subjective emotional basis for faith was carried in Erskine exceeded Coleridge's more cautious statements on some significant points. For Erskine, subjective spirit almost seems to create its own doctrines, giving to them autonomous

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validity independent of objective historical Revelation. This gives him kinship with Schleiermacher. . . . Coloridge was wary of this purely emotional basis for religious thinking and wished to avoid the charge of mysticism leveled at Erskine and Schleiermacher.2

Mysticism and mystics as a general class also were treated tolerantly in part by Coleridge. Mystics are defined as those who "refer to inward feelings and experiences, of which mankind at large are not conscious, as evidences of the truth of any opinion."3 Similarly, mysticism is a belief founded on those inward feelings and beliefs. A fanatical mystic who tries to impose his beliefs on all is dangerous; yet the two types of enthusiastic mystic approach more nearly to a spiritual view of life. The first type of enthusiastic mystic, harmless yet largely ineffectual, is represented by Jacob Behmen. The second, a more clear-sighted individual, is a Fenelon.4 Thus mysticism is not an absolute evil for Coleridge; the extreme type is of no use to him, but the less harmful variety leads him toward his spiritual concept.

Coleridge uses the word mystery in at least two prominent places in his Aids to Reflection, and he does not apologize for this usage. "Omnia exunt in mysterium, says a schoolman; that is, There is nothing, the absolute ground of which is

not a Mystery. The contrary were indeed a contradiction in
terms: for how can that, which is to explain all things, be
susceptible of an explanation?" Following this statement
Coleridge discusses the position he will take concerning the
question. Again Coleridge asserts his belief in mystery by
saying: "The life, we seek after, is a mystery; but so both
in itself and in its origin is the life we have." Coleridge
does not deny that there is a mystery concerned with life,
but he does follow these observations later with a more
explicit explanation of his meaning.

Coleridge shies away from the terms mystical and
miraculous and replaces these words with his favorite,
spiritual. In discussing the common ground of experience
of such men as Sir Thomas More, Bernard Gilpin, Cranmer,
and Bishop Bedel, Coleridge states that this basis is either
a common delusion or a real agency, which is not a part of
the natural world, and since it cannot be termed miraculous
must be named spiritual. He here inserts the following
footnote: "In check of fanatical pretensions, it is expedient
to confine the term miraculous, to cases where the senses are
appealed to in proof of something that transcends, or can be
a part of the Experience derived from the senses." By thus
restricting the word miraculous to the physical world, he is

5Ibid., p. 91.  6Ibid., p. 135.
7Ibid., pp. 63-64.  8Ibid., p. 64.
able to develop, unhindered by fanatical pretensions, his concept of the spiritual. He also foresees Evangelical criticism branding his work as "Visionary ravings, obsolete whimsies, transcendental trash,"9 which terms he dismisses as mere abusive substitutes for valid argument. Ridding himself of questionable terms and suggestive phrases, Coleridge carefully defines his own terms and proceeds with his speculations.

In addition to his grappling with misleading phrases which might cause his writings to be branded as merely mystical meandering, Coleridge avoids any connection with enthusiastic or evangelical sects. He broadly classifies three chief groups as "enthusiastic": Familists and their like, sentimentalists, and Aeolists. "Enthusiasts find it an easy thing to heat the fancies of unlearned and unreflecting hearers; but when a sober man would be satisfied of the grounds from whence they speak, he shall not have one syllable or the least tittle of a pertinent answer."10 Coleridge disagrees with the Familists of the sixteenth century and with similar enthusiasts of later date concerning their interpretation of the law of Faith.11 He also disclaims any association with such groups by stating:

If after these declaimers I shall without proof be charged by any with renewing or favoring the errors of the Familists, Vanists, Seekers, Behmenists, or by

9Ibid., p. 258. 10Ibid., p. 96. 11Ibid., pp. 13-14.
whatever other names Church History records the poor bewildered Enthusiasts, who in the swarming time of our Republic turned the facts of the Gospel into allegories, and superseded the written ordinances of Christ by a pretended Teaching and sensible Presence of the Spirit, I appeal against them to their own consciences, as willful slanderers.\textsuperscript{12}

Although it was a basically secular movement, "sensibility" shared common factors with the other "enthusiastic" groups, and it was likewise opposed by Coleridge. "Sensibility is not even a sure pledge of a GOOD HEART. . . . Sensibility . . . is for the greater part a quality of the nerves, and a result of individual bodily temperament.\textsuperscript{13} Sensibility is passive and does not necessarily imply benevolence, but sometimes produces selfishness instead. Sensibility can be easily corrupted because it represents only a part of a man. Sterne did as much damage as did the Materialists by propagating this philosophy which makes a mockery of the true emotional strength of the heart and feelings.\textsuperscript{14} Sensibility was a secular misuse of the emotions just as the undue emotionalism of the enthusiastic sects was.

Another species of enthusiasm which Coleridge denied any relation with was that of the "Aeolists," so called by Swift, Butler, and Warburton. After recognizing the position taken by these three satirists concerning the word Spirit, Coleridge examines "one feature common to the whole group—the pretence, namely, of possessing, or a Belief and Expectation grounded on other

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 94. \textsuperscript{13}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 22. \textsuperscript{14}\textit{Ibid.}, pp. 22-24.
men's assurances of their possessing, an immediate Consciousness, a sensible Experience, of the Spirit in and during its operation on the soul."\(^{15}\) He declares that his presentation of Spirit is not liable to the criticisms made by these satirists because the Spirit he deals with is supersensual, and they are concerned with Spirit as a sensible experience.\(^{16}\) Coleridge has denied all positions which might enable him to be labeled as an enthusiast writer, just as he avoided relationship with the mystics. Both groups try to treat Spirit as an individual possession; Coleridge permits Spirit to transcend both the individual and the group.

Two other groups, the Methodists and the Evangelicals, are also suspect to Coleridge. When he talks about the doctrine of Redemption, Coleridge refers to the "watching for signs and sensible assurances, 'the frames,' and 'the states,' and 'the feelings,' and 'the sudden conversions,' the contagious fever-boils, of the (most unfitly, so called) Evangelicals, and Arminian Methodists of the day..."\(^{17}\) Coleridge's treatment of the Methodists is commented on by Boulger, who states that in a note to A Barrister's Hints Coleridge generally defends the Methodists, "But when the barrister accuses the Methodists of ignoring Scripture in their reliance upon excitement produced by Sermons, Coleridge exclaimed, 'Excellent and Just. In this way are the Methodists

\(^{15}\)Ibid., p. 46.  \(^{16}\)Ibid., p. 47.  \(^{17}\)Ibid., p. 210.
to be attacked: . . . not from their doctrines, but from their practices, and the Spirit of their Sect." The Evangelical group, which was criticized also by Coleridge, was a movement which arose within the Church of England "to combat the success of Methodism by reviving the older interpretations preached by the Methodists but officially ignored by the conservative members of the High Church party." Coleridge foresees the "remarks which the literal interpretation of the Evangelist will call forth," and he elaborates on their literalness by comparing them to the Pharisees:

Thus Coleridge's attitude toward two specific sects, the Methodists and the Evangelicals, like that toward the mystics and those loosely branded as enthusiasts, is clearly one of non-identification. Coleridge did not want to be related to any of these groups and protested vigorously against the possibility.

One definite opinion concerning these tendencies as a whole is clarified by Coleridge's distinction between enthusiasm and fanaticism:

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18 Boulger, p. 48.  
19 Ibid., p. 39.  
20 Coleridge, Aids, p. 258.  
21 Ibid., p. 131.
object contemplated from the vividness or intensity of his conceptions and convictions: fanaticism is heat, or accumulation and direction, of feeling acquired by contagion, and relying on the sympathy of sect or confederacy; intense sensation with confused or dim conceptions.22

There is only one kind of fanatic, and he can only exist as part of a group; the enthusiast, conversely, is usually solitary, and there are varying degrees of enthusiasm.23

Further commenting on the fanatical spirit which he so opposed, Coleridge states: "If any pretend that they have the Spirit, and so turn away from the straight rule of the Holy Scripture, they have a spirit indeed, but it is a fanatical spirit, the spirit of delusion and giddiness. . . ."24

Later in this vein he declares: "Truth needs not the service of passion; yea, nothing so deserves it, as passion when set to serve it."25 Thus the anti-emotional leanings of the sage, directed clearly against religious fanatics, and extending to some forms of enthusiasm, have been clearly demonstrated. There can be no doubt that Coleridge's concept of religious Faith was not akin to that practiced by the so-called mystical and enthusiastic, tending to fanatical, sects. This observation, however, does not remove the possibility of the important role played by emotion in Coleridge's theology; it merely clears away some questionable associations which


23 Ibid., p. 130. 24 Coleridge, Aids, p. 39. 25 Ibid., p. 79.
might arouse false criticism. In reaction to these enthusiastic groups Coleridge did not develop an entirely rationalistic theology; he and Leighton state that "knowledge is not the ultimate End of Religious Pursuits. . . . To desire the word for the increase of knowledge, although this is necessary and commendable, and, being rightly qualified, is a part of spiritual accretion, yet, take it as going no further, it is not the true end of the Word."\textsuperscript{26} There was a total commitment neither to the heart nor to the head in the religious thought of Coleridge.

Although Coleridge rejected the religious enthusiasm consistently, \textit{personally} he was in sympathy with an emotionally-based Faith. Boulger comments that in Coleridge's "personal commitment to the doctrine as a necessity for his own life . . . . his doctrine cannot rightly be distinguished from the enthusiasm of Methodists or mystics, for it is a purely empirical assent without rationale."\textsuperscript{27} Likewise Muirhead notes that Coleridge craved fellowship with God, that the doctrine of Kant was too stoic for the Englishman who did not want merely inferred friends.\textsuperscript{28} The personal commitment to an emotional theology is seen throughout Coleridge's writing beginning with the \textit{Biographia Literaria}.

\textsuperscript{26}Ibid., p. 65. \textsuperscript{27}Boulger, p. 57. \textsuperscript{28}John H. Muirhead, \textit{Coleridge as Philosopher} (London, 1954), p. 219.
He early states that the "mystics kept alive the heart in the head" and that although his head was with Spinoza his heart was with Paul. Coleridge's rejection of Kant's stoic principle is found in a letter of December, 1817, to J. H. Green:

... he [Kant] treats the affections as indifferent (αμέταξια) in ethics, and would persuade us that a man who disliking, and without any feeling of love for virtue, yet acted virtuously, because and only because his duty, is more worthy of our esteem, than the man whose affections were aidant to and congruous with his conscience.

Ample evidence of the importance of the heart in Coleridge's theology is found in *Aids to Reflection*. Continuing his opposition to Stoicism, Coleridge states that even though the Stoic is the representative of ancient philosophy most kin to the Christian, yet they are opposites because the Stoic "acts virtuously in spite of his feelings... while Christianity instructs us to place small reliance on a virtue that does not begin by bringing the Feelings to a conformity with the commands of the Conscience." He later states that "all true remedy must begin at the heart..."," and that

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the heart has no rest anywhere but with God: "It is made for Him, and is therefore still restless till it meet with Him." He reaffirms the primacy of the heart still further: "Too soon did the Doctors of the Church forget that the heart, the moral nature, was the beginning and the end; and that truth, knowledge, and insight were comprehended in its expansion." Furthermore, he declares, "Unless ye believe ye cannot understand; and unless ye be humble as children, ye not only will not, but ye cannot believe." Coleridge becomes aroused against a rational approach to Christianity and powerfully asserts: "Evidences of Christianity! I am weary of the word. Make a man feel the want of it; rouse him, if you can, to the self-knowledge of his need of it; and you may safely trust it to its own evidence." And most stirringly of all, he answers those who seek to understand and have some proof for the Christian life: "Christianity is not a Theory, or a Speculation; but a Life;—not a Philosophy of Life, but a Life and a living Process. . . . TRY IT." With this statement Coleridge clearly approaches the enthusiasm which he has qualified by his distinction from fanaticism, but which strikes him as so abominable in the enthusiastic groups which he condemned repeatedly. In order to avoid swearing

allegiance to a religion supremely of the heart, he recognizes the importance of the head.

Coleridge could not tolerate an excitement motivated by ignorance; thus he recognized the importance of the head in relation to the heart. In Aphorism XIII he discusses the importance of the intellect: "Never yet did there exist a full faith in the Divine Word ... which did not expand the intellect, while it purified the heart;—which did not multiply the aims and objects of the understanding, while it fixed and simplified those of the desires and passions." Faith is concerned not only with the heart but with the head as well. He continues this theme by stating: "The more consciousness in our Thoughts and Words, and the less in our Impulses and general Actions, the better and more healthful the state both of head and heart." That intellect holds an unshakeable position in the theology of Coleridge is further seen in this statement:

In preventing the rank vapours that steam up from the corrupt heart, Christianity restores the intellect likewise to its natural clearness. By relieving the mind from the distractions and importunities of the unruly passions, she improves the quality of the Understanding: while at the same time she presents for its contemplations, objects so great and so bright as cannot but enlarge the organ, by which they are contemplated.

Hence the interworking of the head and the heart can be seen. Coleridge personally affirmed his emotional belief

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39 Ibid., p. 6. 40 Ibid., p. 58. 41 Ibid., p. 125.
when he wrote, "TRY IT," but he was aware of the mischief that a Faith based wholly on emotion could play. Boulger states that "fear of this very enthusiasm led Coleridge to fuller sympathy and understanding for orthodox positions, while his native rationalistic bent urged him to seek a basis for his insights into the value of emotion in religious experience outside emotion itself."\(^{42}\) Therefore head and heart are held in balance by Coleridge, and in order to rise above the paradox he evolves his theory of the "Higher Reason," putting himself outside emotion itself: the moral laws "are the ground-work of Christianity, and essentials in the Christian Faith, but not its characteristic and peculiar Doctrines; except indeed as they are confirmed, enlivened, realized and brought home to the whole being of man, head, heart, and spirit, by the truths and influences of the Gospel."\(^{43}\)

The conflict between head and heart, enthusiasm and rationalism, is solved by Coleridge's recognition of man as a creation who acts as a whole being, with his will, intellect, and emotion, not merely as one who either thinks or feels. A complete, total act by man is more important than a fragmentary thought or feeling. Coleridge's "Higher Reason" explains the whole man in the highest action he can make, that of communion with God.

\(^{42}\)Boulger, p. 47.  \(^{43}\)Coleridge, Aids, p. 130.
The individual who acts as a whole being, with a synthesis of will, intellect, and emotion, is the man who is capable of a fulfilling relationship with God. He is a man partaking of the "Higher Reason," according to Coleridge. The terms will and intellect, as used by Coleridge, are derived from his philosophical reading, especially of Kant; the term emotion, however, of Coleridgean origin and of prime importance in this discussion, goes beyond the thinking of Kant. In order to clarify the relation between emotion and will, and emotion and intellect, it is first necessary to determine the connection of will and intellect as used by Coleridge. Basically, the English thinker employs Kant's distinction between practical and speculative reason, considers practical reason more important than the latter, stresses the necessary co-existence of the will and the intellect, and finally subordinates the intellect to the will.

Coleridge, it was just noted, observes Kant's distinction between the speculative reason and the practical reason. Speculative reason is similar to the term intellect; both deal with abstract truths. Practical reason, or will, is related to moral truths and to the will of man.
Contemplated distinctively in reference to formal (or abstract) truth, it is the Speculative Reason; but in reference to actual (or moral) truth, as the fountain of ideas and the light of the conscience, we name it the Practical Reason. Whenever by self-subjection to this universal light, the will of the individual, the particular will, has become a will of reason, the man is regenerate: and reason is then the spirit of the regenerated man, whereby the person is capable of a quickening inter-communion with the Divine Spirit.

Coleridge began thinking about the distinction between will and intellect in connection with Hartleian and Humean mechanism. Suppressing mechanism, which he links with his term Fancy, he asserts the necessity of Imagination, which implies a self-sustaining will and intellect: "If in ourselves there be no such faculties as those of the will, and the scientific reason, we must either have an innate idea of them, which would overthrow the whole system; or we can have no idea at all." Man is not the passive recipient of sense impressions, as the mechanistic theories propose; but he possesses such faculties as will and intellect which serve to mediate between sense impressions and their reception and use by the mind. Coleridge further delineates the duties of the intellect and the will in Kantean terminology:

\[\textit{\ldots the speculative reason, vis theoretica and scientifica, or the power by which we produce or aim to produce unity, necessity, and universality in all}\]

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1 Charles Richard Sanders, *Coleridge and the Broad Church Movement* (Durham, 1942), p. 47.

our knowledge by means of principles a priori; the will, or practical reason; the faculty of choice (Germanic, Willkür) and (distinct both from the moral will and the choice,) the sensation of volition...3

These two distinct human faculties, "the practical reason operating in the will and the speculative reason operating in the intellect,"4 are two of the three elements in Coleridge's "Higher Reason." Snyder states: "That only which unites the speculative and the practical, subordinating the former to the latter, can be rightfully called a philosophy."5 The two faculties are necessary to Coleridge's idea of a "Higher Reason," and the practical takes precedence over the speculative.

Coleridge's concept of the will is not only superior to that of the intellect; it is also more complex. He first defines will as the spiritual part of man: "If there be sought Spiritual in Man, the Will must be such. If there be a Will, there must be a Spirituality in Man."6 Considering then his definition of spirit as self-consciousness, as an act rather than a fixed object, the spirit must dissolve the identity of object and subject "in order to be conscious of it. But this implies an act, and it follows therefore that intelligence or self-consciousness is impossible, except by

3Ibid., pp. 193-194. 4Boulger, p. 92.
5Alice Snyder, Coleridge on Logic and Learning (New Haven, 1929), p. 128.
6Coleridge, Aids, p. 88.
and in a will. The self-conscious spirit therefore is a will. . . "7 The will is the I, the intelligent self.

Through the will, man can know God: "We begin with the I KNOW MYSELF, in order to lose and find all self in GOD."8 Self-consciousness is a form of knowing for each individual: "... the act of self-consciousness is for us the source and principle of all our possible knowledge."9 The will of man must be a unified faculty; it determines his conduct totally:

For as the Will or Spirit, the source and substance of Moral Good, is one and all in every part; so must it be the totality, the whole articulated series of single acts, taken as unity, that can alone, in the severity of science, be recognized as the proper counterpart and adequate representation of a good Will.10

The will of man is unified; furthermore, it is self-determined: "The Will is ultimately self-determined, or it is no longer a Will under the law of perfect Freedom, but a nature under the mechanism of cause and effect."11 Coleridge further explains his concept of will by his comments on Calvinism: "Now as the difference of a captive and enslaved Will, and no will at all, such is the difference between the Lutheranism of Calvin and the Calvinism of Jonathan Edwards."12 Will, as used by Coleridge, is the spiritual part of a man through which he can know God; it must act as a unified whole, is

7Coleridge, Diographia, 1, 185. 8Ibid., p. 186. 9Ibid.
10Coleridge, Aids, p. 197. 11Ibid., p. 190.
12Ibid., pp. 105-106.
self-determined and grounded in freedom. Boulger asserts that Coleridge's idea of the will is the traditional one, modified by his knowledge of Kant; "... the basic premise of the three (viewpoints) is the same, that the will exists as a fact, choosing good over evil in order to conform to a law of conscience."13 The problem of the relation of the terms will and conscience must now be considered.

Boulger asserts that for Coleridge the conscience is not a separate faculty but is a synonym for will, which Coleridge considers the experience of conscience in the individual:

But the one assumption, the one postulate, in which all the rest may assume a scientific form, and which granted we may coercively deduce even those which we might allowably have assumed is the Existence of the Will, which a momentary reflection will convince us is the same as Moral Responsibility, and that again with the reality and essential difference of moral Good and Evil.14

The term conscience is important because not only is it a synonym for will, but it also is the following:

... a point of synthesis between the reason and the will; it is a way of expressing the priority of the will in the higher reason without destroying the unity of intellect, will, and emotions in the self, or I AM. This is a very important point, for Coleridge considered the identification of the self in conscience as the critical pivot of his religious idea. "Even so to manifest the Reason as Will or Productive Power, and the Will as Reason, and the Construction (these being Acts of Free I Am) necessary in order to such manifestations, is Practical Philosophy. ..."15

13Boulger, p. 103. 14Ibid., pp. 122-123. 15Ibid., p. 12.
Thus will is for Coleridge of supreme importance; it is the spiritual, self-determined, unified faculty through which man exercises moral responsibility.

Although the practical reason, will, is considered by Coleridge to be more important than the speculative reason, intellect, the two faculties are necessary to and depend upon each other. "... a Will conceived separately from Intelligence is a Non-entity and a mere phantasm of abstraction." Will and intellect cannot be separated and remain intelligible. Faith in the existence of a God "... could not be intellectually more evident without becoming morally less effective, without counteracting its own end by sacrificing the life of faith to the cold mechanism of a worthless because compulsory assent." Intellect and morals, or will, are tied together and must be kept in balance. The necessary connection between will and intellect is discussed by Coleridge in several different ways: he uses the terms law and will, letter and spirit, religion and morals, to discuss the existing relationship. "The Letter without the Spirit killeth; but does it follow, that the Spirit is to kill the Letter? To kill that which it is its appropriate office to enliven?" In the terms used in this discussion, when a man relies totally on his intellect, his will is murdered;

But does it follow that a man should exert his will without taking the counsel of his intellect? The will should stimulate the intellect, but it should not destroy or ignore it; the two faculties are necessary to each other. Similarly, Coleridge uses the words law and will to make his point more lucid.

For the brute animals, their nature is their law;—for what other third law can be imagined, in addition to the law of nature, and the law of reason? Therefore: in irrational agents the law constitutes the will. In moral and rational agents the will constitutes, or ought to constitute, the law: I speak of moral agents, unfallen.19

Before the fall of man, his intellect and will were one and acted harmoniously. When man sinned, his intellect and will were separated, and conflict arose within him. Man formerly willed what he ought to do, but now he can no longer do so. This is sin as explained by Paul: "I do not understand my own actions. For I do not do what I want, but I do the very thing I hate."20 Coleridge again shifts his terminology and discusses the connection of religion and morals:
"Religion and morals cannot be disjoined without the destruction of both."21 Religion, a mere cerebral set of beliefs

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19Ibid., pp. 201-202.


joined to an habitual performance of the ritual of church-going, cannot be separated from the everyday actions of a man. Religion, or intellect, without morals, or will, is a static, dying quality. On the other hand, morals or will without the curb of religion or intellect would be equally ineffective. Although will and intellect are necessary to and depend upon each other, Coleridge consistently places more emphasis upon the will than upon the intellect.

Coleridge rejects man's use of his pure intellect to enable him to know God. He emphasizes the role of the practical reason, or the will, as instrumental in this endeavor.

But if not the abstract or speculative reason, and yet a reason there must be in order to a rational belief, then it must be the practical reason of man, comprehending the Will, the Conscience, the Moral Being with its inseparable interests and Affections—

The role of the Practical Reason, of will and of conscience, is further clarified in relation to the intellect in Coleridge's discussion of the evolution of Faith.

Soon, however, experience comes into play. We learn that there are other impulses besides the dictates of conscience; that there are powers within us and without us ready to usurp the throne of conscience, and busy in tempting us to transfer our allegiance. We learn that there are many things contrary to conscience, and therefore to be rejected and utterly excluded, and many that can coexist with its supremacy only by being subjugated, as beasts of burden; and others, again, as, for instance, the social tendermesses and affections, and the faculties and

excitations of the intellect, which must be at least subordinated. 23

Will or conscience will be superior to intellect, but it can never be separated from intellect. The will is the spiritual aspect of man, the self-determined, unified faculty through which man exercises moral responsibility, and it must be related to and superior to the intellect.

Now that the relation of the will and the intellect has been explored, the third factor necessary to complete the total man, according to Coleridge, will be introduced. What is the role of emotion in relation to that of intellect? What is its role, finally, in relation to the will? The role of emotion in Coleridge's religious thought can best be clarified by an exploration of these two questions.

23 Coleridge, Essay on Faith, p. 344.
CHAPTER IV

EMOTION AND INTELLECT

The relation between emotion and intellect, as they function in Coleridge's Higher Reason, has undergone a preliminary exploration in Chapter II, which was concerned with Coleridge's attitude toward the emotionally-oriented groups of his period, also with his distinction between and discussion of "the head and the heart." Journeying from a discussion of the historical and the personal views of Coleridge concerning these two faculties, the position and relationship of emotion and intellect as they function within the Higher Reason must now be determined. Coleridge admits that there is a necessary relationship between these two faculties, and although he stresses the importance of emotion over that of intellect, he does not maintain this position without wavering. The two finally become almost inseparable, according to Boulger, within the framework of the Higher Reason. Just as Coleridge is concerned chiefly with the doctrine of Original Sin in his exploration of the will and its relationship to the intellect, so he deals primarily with the doctrine of Redemption in his treatment of emotion and its relation with intellect.

A necessary relationship exists between emotion and intellect. In a statement which recalls his animosity toward
the enthusiastic groups of his day, Coleridge declares:
"Every attempt, in a sermon, to cause emotion, except as
the consequence made on the reason, or the understanding,
or the will, I hold to be fanatical and sectarian."¹

Emotion cannot alone be appealed to; Coleridge, always afraid
that his religious position would be compared and likened to
these standards which pledged supreme allegiance to the cause
of emotion, always stressed the necessary relation of emotion
to the other faculties active in man. Further illuminating
the connection of emotion and intellect, he states in The
Friend: "The feelings, with their vital warmth, performed
the important function of actualizing the reason; but the
reason made these feelings trustworthy."² Feeling serves to
warm the intellect, to make it aware of the living existence
of the whole being; feeling stirs the intellect, quickens
its cold reflections into warm resolutions, actualizes the
potentialities which are mused upon within the intellect.
Feeling serves an important function, but feeling can become
too warm, too insistent, too eager for hot action rather
than cool reflection. Therefore the intellect must serve to
qualify emotion, to cause it to act in a manner of trust
worthy to be adopted by the whole being which it is activating.

¹Samuel Taylor Coleridge, The Table Talk and Omniana of
Samuel Taylor Coleridge, edited by T. Ashe (London, 1884),
p. 186.

²Coleridge, Friend, p. 57.
Emotion and intellect are mutually dependent. Applying this distinction to the Christian Faith, Coleridge says: "Unless Christianity be viewed and felt in a high and comprehensive way, how large a portion of our intellectual and moral nature does it leave without object and action."\(^3\) The intellect alone is not sufficient to sustain a Christian's Faith. He must feel deeply as well as think keenly, and if he neglects the emotional side of his Faith, a large portion of his moral and intellectual nature has no purpose, no meaning. He feeds the poor not out of a feeling of good will for his fellow men, but because he knows he should feed the poor, or at least this is what he has been told and has always believed. A vast portion of his nature is unfulfilled, unrealized, if he is not a Christian who feels, as well as thinks, deeply. Although Coleridge is always suspicious of extreme reliance upon the emotional faculty, he stresses the importance of emotion as well as intellect.

At times Coleridge seems to think that emotion should be subordinated to the control of intellect. In The Friend he states, "Reason works by thought through feeling, yet begins and ends in thoughts."\(^4\) Although feeling helps the thinking faculty, arouses it, warms it, actualizes the potential contained there, the entire process both begins and ends in thought. Intellect is the starting point; a man

begins to think, the process is aided by the intervention of emotion, and finally he arrives at a conclusion through thought. Intellect is more primary, is more important to Coleridge at another time when he states:

The cerebral system of the nerves has its correspondent antithesis in the abdominal system; but hence arises a synthesis of the two in the pectoral system as the intermediate, and, like a drawbridge, at once conductor and boundary. In the latter, as objectized by the former, arise the emotions, affections, and, in one word, the passions, as distinguished from the cognitions and appetites. . . . For through these emotions, affections, attachments, and the like, are the prepared ladder by which the lower nature is taken up into, and made to partake of, the highest room, . . . .

Coleridge uses this classical physiological example to clarify the relation of man to God; yet he seems, in this example, to subordinate emotion to intellect. Although he does maintain the importance of intellect over emotion in these two instances, there are numerous examples to show that he considers emotion of most importance.

Coleridge affirms the importance of internal knowledge rather than external, gives personal testimony concerning the emotionality of his own nature, and clarifies the role of emotion in the Christian Faith. In all of these instances, emotion is more important than intellect. Still reacting against the mechanistic philosophies of Hartley and Hume, Coleridge maintains that the mind is not passive as these men have suggested, but is active. Knowledge is not impressed

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5Coleridge, Essay on Faith, p. 347.
upon men's minds from without, and true knowledge must come not from a man's surrounding influences but from within the individual. "All living knowledge must proceed from within." Dead knowledge, Coleridge implies, can be impressed upon the individual, but living knowledge must be expressed by him. Religious knowledge, like all vital knowledge, must always come from within. "The Truth of religion . . . always comes from within, never without." A man can never be forced to believe that which he has no inclination to believe. The Truth of religion cannot be handed from person to person and understood on a whim. The Truth of religion, as with knowledge in general, must be internalized before it is either alive or True, before it can be expressed or confessed by the individual. Muirhead is also interested in this aspect of Coleridge's thinking. He states, "The Idea of God cannot be conveyed into the mind—it can only be awakened and brought into distinct consciousness by the appropriate experience." Here the Idea of God, implanted in the mind of the individual not by external sources, but innately, must be stirred by an experience before it can be developed. Coleridge believed that "the chief function of philosophy is to indicate the

6Coleridge, Friend, p. 452.


8Muirhead, p. 226.
particular kind of experience that is fitted to awaken the idea and to remove particular obstacles to its acceptance by the reason."9 The Idea of God is natural to each individual; it has its beginning in instinct and is fed in the child by the loving attention shown by the parents. Therefore the birth of thought is also the birth of religion:

The first introduction to thought takes place in the transfer of person from the senses to the invisible. The reverence for the invisible, substantiated by the feeling of love, this, which is the essence and proper definition of religion, is the commencement of the intellectual life of humanity.10

"The notion of God is essential to the human mind."11

After stressing the importance of internal knowledge rather than external, Coleridge in several instances testifies concerning his own emotional nature. He objectively states that "spiritual truths are addressed, not primarily to intellect, but to wants, cravings, interests of the moral being.

Using himself as an example, he says, "Revelation must have assured it, my Conscience required it—or in some way or other I must have an interest in this belief. It must concern me, as a moral and responsible Being."13 Never could Coleridge believe disinterestedly. God could never have been a cold, Deistic First Cause; God must be a warm, loving personal God with whom Coleridge could commune. He could not believe merely with his intellect and without emotional assent:

9Ibid. 10Ibid., p. 253. 11Coleridge, Lit. Rem., p. 15.
12Ibid., pp. 366-367. 13Coleridge, Aids, p. 120.
"This I believe, not because I understand it, but because I feel it suitable, needful, and clearly revealed." Although a religion which emphasized emotion to the exclusion of intellect was repulsive to Coleridge, no less so was a religion which stressed intellect above emotion.

I am by the law of my nature a reasoner. A person who should suppose I meant by that word, an arguer, would not only not understand me, but would understand the contrary of my meaning. I can take no interest whatever in hearing or saying anything merely as a fact—merely as having happened. It must refer to something within me before I can regard it with any curiosity or care. The religious beliefs of Coleridge are consistent with this self-admission made the year he died. The internalization of truth and the emotional necessity which must precede concern are two important facets of Coleridge's religious beliefs.

The role of emotion in a Christian Faith can be clarified by a distinction between the words belief and Faith. Muirhead also clarifies the relation of Faith and belief as found in an unavailable Coleridgean manuscript. Coleridge states in Table Talk:

The sublime and abstruse doctrines of Christian belief belong to the church; but the faith of the individual, centered in his heart, is or may be collateral to them. Faith is subjective. I throw myself in adoration before God; acknowledge myself his creature,—simple, weak,


15Coleridge, T. Talk, p. 275.
lost; and pray for help and pardon through Jesus Christ; but when I rise from my knees, I discuss the doctrine of the Trinity as I would a problem in geometry; in the same temper of mind, I mean, not by the same process of reasoning, of course.16

Faith primarily concerns emotion, while belief chiefly concerns intellect. Faith is an act, whereas belief is a cerebral function. And when Coleridge states, "To act is nobler than to think," he chooses Faith as the more important of the two. In a note, H. N. Coleridge recalls:

Mr. Coleridge used very frequently to insist upon the distinction between belief and faith. He once told me, with very great earnestness, that if he were that moment convinced—a conviction, the possibility of which, indeed he could not realize to himself—that the New Testament was a forgery from beginning to end—wide as the desolation in his moral feelings would be, he should not abate one jot of his faith in God's power and mercy through some manifestation of his being towards man, either in time past or future, or in the hidden depths where time and space are not. This was, I believe, no more than a vivid expression of what he always maintained, that no man had attained to a full faith who did not recognize in the Scriptures a correspondency to his own nature, or see that his own powers of reason, will, and understanding were preconfigured to the reception of the Christian doctrines and promises.17

Coleridge believed that he conceivably could have Faith without belief, but he more realistically believed that Faith and belief can support and aid each other. Muirhead also thinks that for Coleridge Faith does not necessarily imply belief, that it may exist without belief, but that belief can "... derive its origin and stability wholly from the antecedent

16Coleridge, T. Talk, pp. 174-175.
17Ibid. (contained in a note).
faith. In this discussion of Faith, emotion tends toward becoming will; the relation of the two in Faith must be clarified in the next chapter.

Emotion and intellect have a definite relationship in the Higher Reason of Coleridge; sometimes he stresses intellect over emotion, but most of the time he grants emotion ascendancy over intellect. The two faculties cannot be wrenched apart in man, examined, and left in their state of separation. They must be reunited to be able to function properly in the Higher Reason. Boulger generalizes and then quotes from one of Coleridge's Notebooks: "The intellectual and emotional aspects of the dialectic merge at the highest level in his [Coleridge's] religious thinking."

Immortality! What is it but the impossibility of believing the contrary? The inevitable Rebounce of the I Am, itself the Fearful Rebound of Life. The moment that the Soul affirms, I Am, it asserts, I cannot cease to be. For the I Am owns no antecedent, it is an act of Absolute Spontaneity and of absolute necessity. No cause existing why it is no cause can be imagined why it should cease to be. It is an impossible thought as long as the I Am is affirmed.

The impersonal, the intellectual I AM of religious philosophy is one with the I AM of personal emotion; the two cannot be separated, and because the personal, emotional I AM is joined with the impersonal, intellectual I AM, immortality cannot be denied. Two worlds are joined in God. Coleridge states his position in this manner:

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18Muirhead, p. 231. 19Boulger, p. 165. 20Ibid., p. 166.
Revealed Religion (and I know of no religion not revealed) is in its highest contemplation the unity, that is, the identity or co-inherence, of Subjective and Objective. It is in itself, and irrelatively, at once inward Life and Truth, and outward Fact and Luminary. But as all Power manifests itself in the harmony of correspondent Opposites, each supposing and supporting the other,—so has religion its objective, or historic and ecclesiastical pole, and its subjective, or spiritual and individual pole.21

The union of subjective and objective, of emotion and intellect, which was such a basic part of Coleridge's religious thought, is lucidly summarized by Boulger:

He wanted a dynamic, subjective and emotional approach to an irreducible minimum of beliefs which would hold all Christians together without the seemingly inevitable hardening which necessary belief had brought in the past.22

To combine the individual and the group, the emotional and the intellectual, the spontaneous and the structured was Coleridge's idea. "He intended to maintain the objective as a guide in present thinking, but the true coalescence of subject and object could not mean paralysis of thought and emotion."23 Coleridge would never be satisfied with a dead, rigid set of beliefs; for him the Christian Faith was a living force which, although not to be allowed complete license, must exist in freedom.

That emotion and intellect are separate faculties of the whole man and that they are merged in the action of the

21Coleridge, Confessions, p. 335.
22Boulger, p. 187.
23Ibid., p. 191.
whole man have been established. In this discussion the problems of Faith and belief and of internal and external knowledge have been explored. The relation of intellect and emotion, as well as that of intellect and will, has at this point been established. The problem of the relation of emotion and will still remains, and this can best be approached by realizing that in the majority of his discussions concerning will Coleridge is concerned with Original Sin and that in the majority of the discussions concerning emotion he is concerned with Redemption.
CHAPTER V

WILL AND EMOTION

When Coleridge asked himself the question, "Who is this Christ, the Redeemer?" he did not and could not comfort himself immediately with the answer that Christ gave at the feast of Tabernacles: "If any one thirst, let him come to me and drink. He who believes in me, as the scripture has said, 'Out of his heart shall flow rivers of living water.'" Coleridge tormented himself by questioning the why and the how of this statement, and although he could never establish a system of clear, definite, and final answers, he did engage himself in an important and basic quest. When Coleridge queried, "Who is this Christ, the Redeemer?" he raised the problem of Original Sin, a religious factor concerning chiefly the faculty of will. When he wondered, "How can I believe in this Christ?" he was forced to consider the phenomenon of Redemption, a religious quality involving both will and emotion. He attempted to establish the role of emotion in Redemption by asking whether emotional exaltation precedes Redemption, is included in the act of Redemption, or occurs as a result of Redemption. Finally he faced the consequences of Redemption, as seen in his attitude.

toward the Scriptures and toward the Creed of the Church, particularly the Anglican Church.

When Coleridge asks "Who is this Christ?" and discusses the fact of Original Sin, he is concerned primarily with the concept of will. The starting point of his discussion is his assertion that conscience is the ground of and precedes human consciousness. Coleridge states that this concept, the cornerstone of his system, is the idea of the priority "in dignity and order of generation, of the Conscience to the Consciousness in Man—No I without a Thou, no Thou without a Thou, no Thou without a Law from Him, to whom I and Thou stand in the same relation."  

Man contains innately the idea of God, of conscience or will, even before he is conscious of himself as man. Such a position is the extreme opposite to Freud's idea of man, first aware of his own consciousness, then proceeding to develop a conscience and an idea of God. Man is one with God before he is aware of himself as a man. From this starting position Coleridge states emphatically that Original Sin is not inherited sin. Adam did not reject his oneness with God, thus causing all mankind to be forced to pay the penalty for his sin. The common idea of Original Sin as inherited sin is exactly opposite to the true concept of Original Sin, according to Coleridge. He states that the will becomes corrupt when it assumes that it has a nature.

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2 Boulger, p. 227.
When one believes that sin is inherited, is natural, he believes himself to be an innocent victim of a crime not committed by himself. When the will believes that it has a predetermined nature, that its sinful state is an effect determined by a far-distant cause, then the will is corrupt. A person must realize that his will is free and self-determined, that it is not determined by a previous cause, that it is not the mere victim of inherited sin. After a man has realized that his will is free, that he can choose and is not the helpless victim of an Original Sin, then he can freely acknowledge the Divine Will.

And the ground work of personal Being is a capacity of acknowledging the Moral Law (the Law of the Spirit, the Law of Freedom, the Divine Will) as that which should, of itself, suffice to determine the Will to a free obedience of the law, the law working therein by its own exceeding lawfulness. This, and this alone, is positive Good; good in itself, and independent of all relations.

The will of man must be free, must not be compelled to choose or to reject God. If the will is free to choose good, it is also free to choose evil; Coleridge thus maintains that all evil resides in the will. "But an evil in the Will is an evil Will; and as all moral evil is of the Will, this evil Will must have its source in the Will." Man's will is free, it is not the helpless victim of an inherited Original Sin; man can choose good or evil, and in the will, the faculty of choice, resides the possibility of evil. "A moral Evil is an

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3Coleridge, *Alida*, p. 190. 4Ibid. 5Ibid.
evil that has its origin in a Will. An evil common to all must have a ground common to all. . . . Now this evil ground cannot originate in the Divine Will; it must therefore be referred to the will of man. And this evil ground we call Original Sin. Coleridge has completely and systematically developed his concept of Original Sin as residing in the will of each man. In answer to the question, "Who is this Christ?" Coleridge has shown the ready capacity for sin in each man. Coleridge, by being aware of sin and of man's sinfulness, in effect states that man must believe in Christ, the sinless one, because man, with the choice given between good and evil, so often chooses evil. Only by submitting his will to the Will of God can man consistently choose the Good.

Just as Coleridge confronted the problem of who is Christ, he was concerned with the relation between the individual Christian and the Christian as a member of a community. "What is the proper relationship of will and emotion in the life of the individual Christian?" "Should the will of the group be more powerful than the emotional experience of the individual Christian?" In answering these questions Coleridge seems to take a conservative position on the relation of the individual and the group. His desire to resolve his contradictions and to unify his position is shown by this statement already quoted in Chapter IV:

6Ibid., p. 192.
I comprise and conclude the sum of my conviction in this one sentence. Revealed religion (and I know of no religion not revealed) is in its highest contemplation the unity, that is, the identity or coinherence, of Subjective and Objective. It is in itself, and irrelatively, at once inward Life and Truth, and outward Fact and Luminary.

Christianity is neither totally subjective nor totally objective; the experience of the individual must be unified, and the individual feelings and the community will must be reconciled. Christianity does not excite the emotional faculty of the individual, nor is it merely a product of the person's will to believe.

I become convinced, that religion, as both the cornerstone and the key-stone of morality, must have a moral origin; so far at least, that the evidence of its doctrines could not, like the truths of abstract science, be wholly independent of the will. It were therefore to be expected, that its fundamental truth would be such as MIGHT be denied; though only by the fool, and even by the fool from the madness of the heart alone.

Religion is of moral origin and includes both will and emotion; likewise, the Spirit acts primarily on the heart and the will:

"The belief in the accompanying and consequent gifts, comforts, and privileges of the Spirit, which acting primarily on the heart and will, cannot but manifest themselves in suitable works of love and obedience, that is, in right acts with right affections, from right principles." There is a definite relation between will and emotion as discussed by Coleridge,

7Coleridge, Confessions, p. 79.
8Coleridge, Biographia, I, 135. 9Coleridge, Aids, p. 131.
but what is the specific relationship of the two faculties in the individual? Coleridge offers two related, although somewhat contradictory, answers to this question. The sage, contrasting Stoicism and Christianity, states:

Christianity instructs us to place small reliance on a virtue that does not begin by bringing the Feelings to a conformity with the commands of the Conscience. Its especial aim, its characteristic operation, is to moralize the affections. The Feelings, that oppose a right act, must be wrong feelings. The act, indeed, whatever the agent's feelings might be, Christianity would command; and under certain circumstances would both command and commend it. 10

Emotion and will must be in conformity; emotion is dangerous and should be subjected to an action which is generally considered commendable. Conversely, Coleridge says: "The belief of a God and a future state ... does not always beget a good heart; but a good heart so naturally begets the belief, that the very few exceptions must be regarded as strange anomalies from strange and unfortunate circumstances." 11

Coleridge considers the relation of will and emotion in the individual from two perspectives. At times he considers emotion dangerous and states that Christianity must "moralize the affections." Yet he also places the "good heart" in a primary position, as the cause, not the effect, of belief.

The exact relation of emotion and will in the general religious life of the individual was a difficult and finally an unsolved problem for Coleridge. His strong allegiance to

10Ibid., p. 57. 11Coleridge, Biographia, I, 136.
emotion made it impossible for him to subordinate feeling to
the will completely; however, the realization of the power and
the role of the will in man, and his acquaintance with his own
willful nature, made him stress the importance of this faculty.

Coleridge knew that the religion of the individual was
not the only type of religion. He was a strong link in the
Church of England tradition and was by no means a subverter
of established religion. On many occasions Coleridge mentions
his attachments to the Faith of his fathers, and although he
always stresses the unity of the subjective and the objective,
ever the individual to the exclusion of the group nor the
group to the exclusion of the individual, at times he seems
to be more conservative than the twentieth-century reader
would like. Sanders states:

Mere individual desires and opinions certainly did not
provide adequate tests of truth. Coleridge was very
positive in stating this belief: "For catholicity is
the distinctive mark, the condition sine qua non, of a
spiritual teaching; and if men dare with their
eyes open mistake for this the very contrary, that is,
their own particular fancies, or perhaps sensations,
who can help it?" Any doctrine generally accepted by
many nations in many ages was likely to be founded
"either in the nature of things, or in the necessities
of human nature." Private judgment, therefore, should
be exercised only in so far as it took into considera-
tion the judgment of the church and the teachings of
history and tradition. In attempting to make the
tests of truth universal, Coleridge significantly
sought a reconciliation between the right of private
judgment, which Protestantism had considered indis-
ponsable and had often exercised to the point of
becoming unsocial and sectarian, with Catholic socia-
ility and love and respect for the truth handed down
by the institutions and traditions of the past. 12

12 Sanders, p. 51.
Coleridge himself says: "Rites and ceremonies the Church may ordain *jure proprio* on matters of faith her judgment is to be received with reverence, and not gainsaid but after repeated inquiries, and on weighty grounds."\(^{13}\)

Although this discussion is primarily concerned with the role of emotion in the life of the individual Christian, it is important to note that Coleridge was as concerned with the objective matters of religion, the rites, ceremonies, creeds, and rituals, as he was with the subjective aspects of Faith, the *who* of Faith as related to Original Sin, and the *how* of Faith, as involved with Redemption.

Having discussed the *who* of salvation and the positions of the individual and the Christian community, Coleridge embraces the even more tangled question of *how* a Christian believes. Redemption is the chief experience in the life of a Christian, according to Coleridge, and he asks several questions concerning this all-important change. "Does emotion precede the change in the experience of Redemption, and if it does not, in what state of mind does one arrive at the state?" "Exactly what is the act of Redemption? What does it signify, and who accomplishes it?" "Does an emotional response arise as the result of Redemption? If so, of what particular emotions does it consist and what are the consequences of this response?" The questions concerning Redemption

involve the faculties of will and emotion. Coleridge tried to maintain a balance between these two faculties; he realized the dictatorial hold will would exert over emotion, and he was well aware of the anarchistic reign which would occur if emotion were to gain rule. The interplay between the faculties of will and emotion in Redemption occupied much of Coleridge's thought.

Coleridge was concerned with the question, "Does emotion precede Redemption?" to the extent of ridiculing even the possibility; he consistently asserted the precedence of duty, will, and conscience to the act of Redemption. Coleridge was wary of those religious sects which taught that emotion precedes Redemption, as discussed in Chapter II. Extreme emotionalism could never result in Redemption, but rather in fanaticism, he judged. In his suspicion toward emotion as a cause of Redemption, Coleridge stressed the importance of the conscience in this position. The conscience he defined as "... a spiritual sense or testifying state of the coincidence or discordance of the free will with the reason."14 Applying the concept of conscience, Coleridge states:

No man can have the sensation of an approving conscience, in the nature of things, but as far as he has consciousness in himself that he did it because it was his duty, because it was the will of his Maker, because he could not do otherwise without introducing a complete contradiction to the love of that Being to whom he is worse than a beast if he does not feel love, and gratitude,

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and incapability of deriving his happiness from the senses, and to the best of his power acting and living and feeling with the consonance of our Author.\textsuperscript{15}

Not emotion, but duty merely for its own sake, foreshadows Redemption. A Christian must not be a good or moral person for the sake of his conscience, to make himself feel dutiful or to appear law-abiding and upright to others; a Christian is dutiful because he cannot act in a different manner. Coleridge reacts violently to the suggestion that a Christian should be dutiful for the sake of feeling his own conscience to be good:

So you object, with old Hobbes, that I do good actions for the pleasure of a good conscience; and so, after all, I am only a refined sensualist! Heaven bless you, and mend your logic! Don't you see that if conscience, which is in its nature a consequence, were thus anticipated and made an antecedent—a party instead of a judge—it would dishonour your draft upon it—it would not pay on demand? Don't you see that, in truth, the very fact of acting with this motive properly and logically destroys all claim upon conscience to give you any pleasure at all?\textsuperscript{16}

Duty, will, and conscience are not man-made faculties which can be manipulated into good actions and thus produce good effects. Will must precede emotion before Redemption can occur, but Redemption cannot occur through the will of the individual Christian. The Christian must do his duty because he can do nothing else; likewise the Christian cannot redeem


\textsuperscript{16}Coleridge, \textit{T. Talk}, p. 135.
or change himself, but must be changed by a greater Power than himself and can ultimately do nothing to coerce this mighty Power to change him. He can only be redeemed when he can do nothing else for himself.

The interplay of will and emotion in the individual state prior to Redemption brings the Christian to the act of Redemption itself; at this point the center of interest is shifted from the individual who is changed to the act of Redemption itself. A cardinal feature of Redemption is the fact that it is an act, not by the individual, but by Christ. "Christ alone saves us, working in us by the faith which includes hope and love." 17 A man, however strong his willful aspiration, his emotional up-stirring, or his intellectual convictions cannot change himself as Christ does in the act of Redemption. But, Coleridge queries, this act that is so powerful, so unattainable by men—of what does it consist? He cannot answer his own question and explain the mystery of Redemption except in these words: "There remains, therefore, only the redemptive act itself, and this is transcendent, ineffable, and à fortiori, therefore, inexplicable. Like the act of primal apostasy, it is in its own nature a mystery, known only through faith in the spirit." 18 The knowledge of the act of Redemption cannot be conveyed from one individual to another; it is an individual experience and can be known

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17 Coleridge, Lit. Rem., p. 49.
18 Ibid., p. 57.
only through Faith. Coleridge continues with a personal explanation of the phenomenon by stating:

I receive with full and grateful faith the assurance of revelation, that the Word, which is from all eternity with God, and is God, assumed our human nature in order to redeem me, and all mankind from this our connate corruption. My reason convinces me, that no other mode of redemption is conceivable, and, as did Socrates, would have yearned after the Redeemer, though it would not dare expect so wonderful an act of divine love, except only as an effort of my mind to conceive the utmost of the infinite greatness of that love. 19

Coleridge, however, is not content to explain Redemption as a mystery or to express his Faith in the Redeemer; he engages his ever-active intellect with the problem and formulates and categorizes it:

Oh may these precious words be written on my heart! 1. That we all need to be redeemed, and that therefore we are all in captivity to an evil:—2. That there is a Redeemer:—3. That the redemption relatively to each individual captive is, if not effected under certain conditions, yet manifestable as far as is fitting for the soul by certain signs and consequents:—and 4. That these signs are in myself; that the conditions under which the redemption offered to all men is promised to the individual, are fulfilled in myself—these are the four great points of faith, in which the humble Christian finds and feels a gradation from trembling hope to full assurance. . . . 20

This summary of Redemption systematizes what has already been stated about the act, yet Coleridge went even further in his attempt to explain Redemption. Concerning the role of will in the act of Redemption, he states:

A creaturely will can not be free; but the will in a rational creature may cease to be creaturely. . . . In short, where omnipotence is on one side, what but utter

19Ibid., pp. 16-17. 20Ibid., pp. 47-48.
impotence can remain for the other? To make freedom possible, the antithesis must be removed. The removal of this antithesis of the creature to God is the object of the Redemption, and forms the glorious liberty of the Gospel.21

A final explanation of Redemption is expressed in these terms, which stress the role of emotion: "It [redemption] is the differential of immortality, of which the assimilative power of faith and love is the integrant, and the life in Christ the integration."22 Coleridge's explanation of Redemption contains varied references, ranging from mystery, inevitability, and Faith, to will and emotion. The concept, the act of Redemption with which he was concerned, was at once a practical and a speculative one to him. He gives many explanations, never posing one as the truth, and guides rather than badgers those who would listen to him.

Having attempted an answer to the question of the precedence of emotion in Redemption and having defined the act of Redemption itself, Coleridge wishes to discover if an emotional response arises as the result of Redemption, and if so, what are the consequences of this response and of what particular emotions does it consist. Coleridge first asks:

Had you involved yourself in a heavy DEBT for certain gew-gaws, for high seasoned meats, and intoxicating drinks, and glistening apparel, and in default of payment had made yourself over as a bondsman to a hard creditor, who it was foreknown, would enforce the bond of judgment to the last tittle;—with what emotions would you not receive the glad tidings, that a stranger, or a friend whom in the days of your wantonness you had

21Ibid., p. 168. 22Coleridge, Aids, p. 217.
neglected and reviled, had paid the DEBT for you, had made SATISFACTION to your creditor? 

Indeed, with what emotions, Coleridge asks, does a person respond to Redemption? "Ah! but we trust in God that he did in fact come. The adhesion, the thankfulness, the love which arise and live after the having come, whether from spontaneous liking, or from a beckoning hope, or from a compelling good, are the truest criteria of the man's Christianity." 

Emotion, then, does arise as the result of Redemption, and two of these emotions are those of thankfulness and love. Such feelings cannot be manufactured artificially and applied at will; genuine feelings of love and thankfulness arise only after a person has been changed by Christ. They are the result, not the cause, of Redemption. Coleridge mentions such emotions as joy, confidence, and gratitude. Such emotions arise after Redemption and should be expressed to the Redeemer; also, each individual can only experience Redemption and the consequent emotions for himself. The religious thinker uses the illustration of an ungrateful son's neglected duties being repaid to the mistreated mother by a friend. The friend can never compensate the unhappy mother for the lack of love her son has given her; each person can act only for himself in such affairs. 

23 Ibid., p. 219.  
stated that emotions such as love, joy, thankfulness arise as the result of Redemption and that each person must individually be redeemed. Boulger further explains Coleridge's use of the term emotion as he states: "Coleridge considered religious feelings and emotions as self-evident, existential facts immediately given in consciousness and operating in a manner analogous to that of the conscience in the experience of knowing God."

A religious feeling is not a vague onslaught of memory or sympathy, it is not a result of repressed sexual desires or an overfunctioning of a bodily gland; a religious emotion leaves the realm of the sensual and approaches that of the supersensual. It is a "self-evident, existential fact," existing for the one who experiences it, and existing only in the particular experience. It is, however, not explainable in terms of science or mysticism, but only as the result of the Redemption, the visitation of Christ, to the individual Christian. It is here that Coleridge walks on quicksand, and he rarely expresses his supersensual view of emotion for fear of being branded a fanatic or a mystic. He limits emotion by enclosing it within the entirely supersensual Reason: "He that can permit his emotions to rise to an equality with the universal reason, is in enmity with that reason."

Emotion is of extreme importance, but it is also dangerous and cannot be permitted to overtake the Reason, the supersensual faculty of the whole man.

26Boulger, p. 103.  27Coleridge, Essay on Faith, p. 347.
Coleridge continues his exploration of Redemption by examining two consequences of the change, concerning the Creed and the Scriptures. "Solely in consequence of our Redemption does the Trinity become a doctrine, the belief of which as real is commanded by our conscience." Belief in a Creed before one is redeemed seems to Coleridge to be a sterile, meaningless belief. Only after having experienced Redemption can one affirm the Trinity. Likewise with the Scriptures, Coleridge states that a person cannot read the Bible objectively and expect it to furnish him with a proof of the validity of Christianity. He admits that there are contradictions and unexplainable passages in the Bible; for this reason it cannot be read entirely objectively but must be read in a spirit of Faith, reading the parts in the spirit of the whole. "Without that spirit in each true believer, whereby we know the spirit of truth and the spirit of error in all things appertaining to salvation, the consequence must be—So many men, so many minds!" Religion, the reading of Creed and Scripture, is primarily spiritual according to Coleridge. The term spiritual is a pregnant one, containing the fact of Original Sin and the phenomenon of Redemption. A spiritual religion concerns not the sensual, but the supersensual; it takes into account the living Faith of a whole man in a living God. It includes both Original Sin and

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28Coleridge, Lit. Rem., p. 17.
29Coleridge, Confessions, p. 334.
Redemption, both will and emotion. As Boulger sums it up, "To view the unconditioned as a living God required the activity of the will and the emotions." 30

30 Boulger, p. 102.
CHAPTER VI

REASON AND FAITH

Coleridge's religious quest is centered on his concern with the dynamic Faith of Christianity. He cautiously employs the word spiritual, always afraid of being branded a mystic or a fanatic. Although he considers the emotional faculty extremely important, he realizes that previous religious thinkers who realized the importance of emotion have stressed it too heavily; therefore, he devotes much time to a consideration of the will and the intellect so as to avoid conducting a mystical or fanatical search. He explores the spirituality of the will, and he uses the Kantian distinction between practical and speculative Reason. He then reconciles the will and the intellect, the science of knowledge and the science of living. Coleridge explores and shows the distinctions among the faculties of will, intellect, and emotion; then he shows the necessary co-operation of the three in the act of Faith. In his discussion of the two great events of the Christian Faith, Original Sin and Redemption, Coleridge shows that conscience precedes consciousness and that an emotional response follows, does not precede, Redemption. Throughout his discussion of the three faculties—will, intellect, and emotion—Coleridge keeps special sight
of the role of emotion. Although he is always somewhat frightened of the role of emotion, he can never deny it. Even in his sometimes abstruse discussions of will and intellect, the emotional faculty creeps into a key position. The role of emotion in Coleridge's religious thought makes the Faith which he describes dynamic and meaningful to the modern reader.

Two ideas, Reason and Faith, must be discussed before this exploration of Coleridge's religious thought is complete. The first term, Reason, is primarily of Kantean origin, although Coleridge freely adapts it to his own ends. The second one, Faith, has its origin for Coleridge in the writings of Paul, the Gospels, the Church Fathers, Luther, and several Anglican Divines. Coleridge discusses it from several perspectives, but he never allows it to become static, sterile, or dead. He is concerned with the dynamic Faith of a living person. In order to show Coleridge's perspective of Reason and Faith, the two will be briefly compared and contrasted. The primary concern is with the question, "What is Faith?" Short discussions concerning Reason and the relation between Reason and Faith will help the reader see the importance of Coleridge's idea of Faith.

What is Reason? This question was illuminated for Coleridge in his early manhood as he studied the works of Immanuel Kant. Kant distinguishes Reason from Understanding by stating that the Understanding assimilates knowledge from
given factors, while the Reason is a more creative faculty which can produce some of the factors from which it derives knowledge. Coleridge uses this basic distinction as a touchstone for much of his later writings; he develops the Kantean Reason, however, until it becomes an all-inclusive term.

J. H. Bernard says in his introduction to Kant's *Critique of Judgement*:

But as we reflect on our mental states we find that here no proper account has been given of the phenomena of feeling, which play so large a part in experience. And this Kant saw before he had proceeded very far with the Critique of Practical Reason; and in consequence he adopted a threefold classification of the higher mental faculties based on that given by previous psychologists. Knowledge, feeling, desire, these are the three ultimate modes of consciousness, of which the second has not yet been described. ... Understanding is par excellence the faculty of knowledge, and Reason the faculty of desire (these points are developed in Kant's first two Critiques). And this suggests that the Judgement corresponds to the feeling of pleasure and pain; it occupies a position intermediate between Understanding and Reason, just as, roughly speaking, the feeling of pleasure is intermediate between our perception of an object and our desire to possess it.¹

Coleridge uses the term Reason as an all-inclusive one, including will, intellect, and emotion in it. He then postulates Reason as a supersensual mode of knowledge and opposes it to the sensual Understanding. To use a homely illustration of Understanding, Coleridge states:

My eye at this moment rests on a volume newly read by me, containing a well-written history of the inventions, discoveries, public improvements, docks, railways, canals, and the like, for about the same period, in

England and Scotland. I closed it under the strongest impressions of awe, and admiration akin to wonder. We live, I exclaimed, under the dynasty of the understanding: and this is its golden age.2

Understanding in one sense means for Coleridge the mechanical, thoughtless piling up of skills; opposed to this faculty is that of Reason, the faculty of the whole man of intellect, will, and emotion. Understanding is sensual while Reason is supersensual; through the Reason man can have a satisfying relationship with God.

Must there not be some other faculty above this mechanism by which man is adapted to his present circumstances? Must there not be some power, call it with Lord Bacon the "LUMEN SICCUM"; or "the pure light", with LORD HERBERT; call it "REASON", or call it the "Faith of Reason" (WITH KANT), must there not be some power that stands in human nature but in some participation of the eternal and universal by which man is enabled to question, nay to contradict, the irresistible impressions of his own senses, NAY, the necessary deductions of his own understanding—to CHALLENGE and disqualify them, as partial and INCOMPETENT?3

The Understanding is the sensual faculty through which man mechanically endures his life; the Higher Reason is the faculty through which the whole man lives a full and meaningful life, through which he as a finite creature can have communion with an Infinite Creator.

Although the term Reason is of extreme importance to Coleridge, the term Faith is even more necessary than Reason.

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3Coleridge, Phil. Lect., p. 374.
What is the relation of Faith and Reason? Are they opposing ideas, or are they of the same nature? Exactly how are they related? Faith and Reason are not opposed to each other.

But when a man tells me that it is against his reason to believe such things, that all arguments prove the contrary, and yet pretends to believe it from a principle of faith, I am very glad that one thought remains to me, that he may be a fanatic and not a hypocrite, but one or the other must he be, as none but a hypocrite or a fanatic would pretend to believe by faith not only what is above his reason, but directly against it.4

The bare idea of a possible opposition between Reason and Faith is heinous to Coleridge. He stresses the importance of each faculty and seeks constantly to reconcile the two. Coleridge quotes Jeremy Taylor in order to illustrate this point:

By the eye of reason through the telescope of faith, that is, Revelation, we may see what without this telescope we could never have known to exist. But as one that shuts the eye hard, and with violence curls the eye-lid, forces a fantastic fire from the crystalline humour, and espies a light that never shines, and sees thousands of little fires that never burn; so is he that blinds the eye of reason, and pretends to see by an eye of faith. He makes little images of notions, and some atoms dance before him; but he is not guided by the light nor instructed by the proposition, but sees like a man in his sleep. IN NO CASE CAN TRUE REASON AND A RIGHT FAITH OPPOSE EACH OTHER.5

Having stated positively that there can be no opposition between Reason and Faith, Coleridge examines their precise relationship. In one of his unpublished notebooks Coleridge states: "... the Human Reason began in Faith; ... an

4Ibid., p. 365. 5Coleridge, Aids, p. 229.
insight into the reasonableness of obedience was antecedent to an insight into the reasonableness of the command to be obeyed. . . ."6 Re-enforcing his statement concerning the primacy of Faith, Coleridge expounds:

Now that reason in man must have been first actuated by a direct revelation from God, I have myself proved, and do not therefore deny that faith as the means of salvation was first made known by revelation; but that reason is incapable of seeing into the fitness and superiority of these means, or that it is a mystery in any other sense than as all spiritual truths are mysterious, I do deny and deem it both a false and dangerous doctrine.7

Coleridge supports the idea that Faith precedes Reason, but he never lets the reader forget the importance of Reason. In an earlier writing, Coleridge waxes more poetical on the same subject: "... the Scheme of Christianity ... though not discoverable by human Reason, is yet in accordance with it; ... link follows link by necessary consequence; ... Religion passes out of the ken of Reason only where the eye of Reason has reached its own horizon; and Faith is but its continuation. ..."8 Coleridge has shown that Reason and Faith are not contradictory but instead are complementary, that Faith is more primary than Reason but that one arrives at Faith through Reason. He uses the figure of speech, eye of Reason, suggesting that one sees by means of Reason, and in the next quotation, taken from Jeremy Taylor, he sanctions a companion simile, heart of Faith:

Whatever is against right reason, that no faith can oblige us to believe. For though reason is not the positive and affirmative measure of our faith, and our faith ought to be larger than our speculative reason, and take something into her heart, that reason can never take into her eye; yet in all our creed there can be nothing against reason. 9

It cannot be denied that Coleridge stresses the compatibility of Faith and Reason, and the primacy of Faith. From the one quotation by Jeremy Taylor, it would be hasty to assume that Coleridge thought that Faith was more concerned with the heart, the emotional faculty, than was Reason. A more complete investigation of the nature of Faith for Coleridge must be undertaken before such a judgment can be framed.

What is Faith? Coleridge frequently mentioned the word and even wrote an essay concerning the subject. Relevant to a discussion of this term are several concepts too large to be exhaustively treated, but too necessary to be entirely ignored. Coleridge's concept of God and of man, his idea of Faith as an act of the whole man, his attitude toward the Scriptures concerning the distinction between Faith and belief, and his definitions of Faith as supersensual and as dependence of man in relation to God will be examined in an attempt to illuminate the Coleridgean idea of the Christian Faith. A preliminary definition for this discussion is one given by Coleridge in his Essay on Faith: "In this sense, then, faith is fidelity, fealty, allegiance of the moral

9Coleridge, Aids, p. 228.
nature to God, in opposition to all usurpation, and in resistance to all temptation to the placing any other claim above or equal with our fidelity to God.\textsuperscript{10} This definition is clearly stated, but it cries for further clarification: "Who is God?" "Who is man?" "What does fidelity consist of?"

The Coleridgean idea of God concerns such attributes as love, oneness, infinite power; he mentions Trinity, unity of Will and Reason, God as object of religious emotion, and God as object of spiritual religion. Coleridge forwards a common concept of God as he states: "God is love." He continues, however:

This is to us the high prerogative of the moral, that all its dictates immediately reveal the truths of intelligence, whereas the strictly intellectual only by more distant and cold deductions carries us towards the moral. For what is love? Union with the desire of union. God therefore is the cohesion and the oneness of all things; and dark and dim is that system of ethics, which does not take oneness as the root of all virtue.\textsuperscript{11}

Continuing with his idea of the unity of God, Coleridge makes his confession of Faith in a God "... in whom supreme reason and a most holy will are one with an infinite power...."\textsuperscript{12}

In a later notebook, Coleridge reaffirms this position:

... Supreme Reason, which is One with the Eternal Source the Absolute Will of the Universe.\textsuperscript{13}

God, the unity of Will and Reason, the oneness of all things, is not a Unitarian idea but a Trinitarian one for Coleridge,

\textsuperscript{12}\textit{Ibid.}, p. 15. \textsuperscript{13}Boulger, p. 128.
according to Boulger:

Identity, as the ground of Absolute Will, is truly the idea of God. Ipseity, Alterity, and Community correspond by convenience of analogy to the traditional notion of Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Power, Logos, Love). This particular item of Coleridgean metaphysics and speculative theology is, to say the least, unconventional, in that the emphasis upon identity or manifestation of God as Absolute or Pure Will leads necessarily to a theology of doing and becoming, to a God of action known as events rather than as a subject to be contemplated. 14

Coleridge's most comprehensive statement concerning God is found in one of his unpublished notebooks:

In an Eternal self-comprehending One there is the ineffable Will that created the World as well as the Adorable Might and Intelligence that gave it form and order. The Personality of the Creator, and the Creative Act of the Divine Person were the two fundamental Articles of the primeval Faith. By the first, God was the object of a Religion of Hope, Fear, Love, Communion, Thanksgiving, Prayer; by the latter involving the Unity and Absolute transcendency of the divine essence, he was manifested as the object of a rational, spiritual, i.e., supersensuous Religion. By virtue of the first, the conversion of the Soul to the ground and cause of the Universe became Religion, in contradistinction from Science, and Theory; by virtue of the Second, it was a Religion, as opposed to Superstition and Idolatry. "God is a Spirit, and in Spirit and Truth to be worshipped."15

Coleridge's idea of God, and anyone else's idea of God, cannot be adequately stated in a concise sentence. God as Creator, Redeemer, Three in One, the unity of Will and Reason, a God of action are some of the outstanding attributes of the Coleridgean idea of God.

Closely related to Coleridge's idea of God is his concept of man. He describes his idea clearly and shows the relation

14 Ibid., pp. 133-134. 15 Ibid., pp. 227-228.
of Faith to man.

It is not true that body plus soul makes man. Man is not the synthetons or composition of body and soul, as the two component units. No man is the unit, the prothesis, and body and soul are the two poles, the positive and the negative, the thesis and antithesis of the man; even as attraction and repulsion are the two poles in and by which one and the same magnet manifests itself.16

After pledging allegiance to the idea of the whole, unified man, Coleridge discusses the role of Faith in such a man:

"... the faith, which is to save the whole man, must have its roots and justifying grounds in the very depths of our being."17 The theme of unity, which was begun in his idea of God, continues throughout Coleridge's discussion of the faithful man: "I speak of that sincere, that entire interest, in the undivided faith of Christ which demands the first-fruits of the whole man, his affections no less than his outward acts, his understanding equally with his feelings."18 Coleridge cannot sufficiently emphasize the importance of the totality of the act of Faith: "... it [Faith] must be an energy, and, inasmuch as it relates to the whole moral man, it must be exerted in each and all of his constituents or incidents, faculties and tendencies;—it must be a total, not a partial—a continuous, not a desultory or occasional—energ.y."19

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16Coleridge, Lit. Rem., pp. 95-96. 17Coleridge, Aids., p. 211.


19Coleridge, Essay, p. 349.
"But faith is a total act of the soul: it is the whole state of mind, or it is not at all." 20

Coleridge expresses clearly the wholeness of the Faith that a unified man must enact toward a God who is the Supreme Totality. He is anxious, however, lest men confuse Faith and belief. He illumines his views of the Scriptures and Baptism in discussing this problem. Although Coleridge believed in the literality of the Bible, he was aware of the physical errors which it contains: "... it is the spirit of the Bible, and not the detached words and sentences, that is infallible and absolute." 21 He gives this advice to "an unlearned but earnest and thoughtful neighbor": "Use the Old Testament to express the affections excited, and to confirm the faith and morals taught you, in the New, and leave all the rest to the students and professors of theology and Church history!" 22 Coleridge views the rituals of the Church in the same spirit he views the Scriptures. He stresses that only Faith, not Baptism, is essential to salvation: "You remember and admire the saying of an old divine, that a ceremony duly instituted was a Chain of Gold round the Neck of Faith; but if in the wish to make it co-essential and consubstantial, you draw it closer and closer, it may strangle the Faith it was meant to deck and designate." 23 He states

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20 Coleridge, *Friend*, p. 287.  
that the mechanico-corpuscular theories, which were prevalent in his age, have destroyed the concept of a dynamic, living Faith, and that the most heinous result of these theories is "the habit of attaching all our conceptions and feelings, and of applying all the words and phrases expressing reality, to the objects of the senses." Coleridge is decisively opposed to a mechanical interpretation of an entirely sensibly-conceived world. He stresses that such an interpretation is conducive to belief, but never to the supersensual, dynamic Faith which he called for.

Opposite to the sensual belief is the supersensual Faith of Coleridge. Through the supersensual Faith man can commune with God. Shairp summarizes Coleridge's position by stating that "Faith is fidelity to that part of our being which cannot become an object of the senses." Muirhead defines Coleridge's view by saying: "Faith is the Fidelity of the personal will in each of us to the moral reason, conscience." Coleridge speaks for himself by asserting that "Faith subsists in the synthesis of Reason and the Individual Will." Clearly, Faith is supersensual, but there is still one element of the act which must be explored. Faith involves a definite

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24Ibid., p. 270.
25Ibid., p. 272.
27Muirhead, p. 230.
28Coleridge, Essay, p. 349.
subordination of man to God, a dependence of the creature upon his Creator. Coleridge describes Paley's view of Christianity as "Make-faith," and constantly exclaims that man cannot manufacture his own salvation but must depend on God. He describes that dependence in this manner:

"Again, in opposition to all the pretenders of self-love, with the severity and more than severity of the Stoics, we hear him [Jesus] commanding to be perfect even as our Heavenly Father is perfect, and yet declaring to men that they must perish—utterly perish—if they relied on themselves, or if they sought for a realization of that perfection, which yet remained even the only ground of a safe morality, in aught but a reliance on a superior power: not a mere tame acquiescence in the truth of it, but in a total energy of their being with utter concentration of the soul to that our intense wish, a sense of utter dependence which is entitled Faith. Ask and it shall be given to you. Your reason has informed you what morality is. Your feelings have instructed you to do to others as you would that others should do to you and to love your neighbor as yourself, but God above all is the sole Idea of the moral law. It is truly the law and the prophets. But that this cannot be attained by a mere act of unaided will, that this is not to inflate the mind with any pride but only by a sense of its dependence, by a sense of its utter incapability, can it ever command that faith by which it shall ask and have that given."

Faith which involves total dependence on God causes Coleridge to state, "Seek me, 0 Lord, that I may be found by thee!"

He continues to describe man's subordination to God by saying: "The will of God is the last ground and final aim of all our duties, and to that the whole man is to be harmonized by subordination, subjugation, or suppression alike in commission

and omission." Man must stand steadfast by Faith. He cannot will Faith, emotionalize Faith, nor rationalize Faith. Man as a whole being must confess Faith in a God, who, with His Son and Spirit, is Supreme Totality. Faith, not belief, is involved when man affirms his creaturely dependence on the Creator, when the whole man, with intellect, will, and emotion, asserts his I AM and accepts his acceptance by the supreme I AM.

Coleridge, although he thought emotion to be of supreme importance, was afraid to rely too heavily on the faculty. Even though he rigorously avoided being grouped with the mystics or the enthusiasts, there was a constant conflict between his head and his heart. The contradiction can be found in most of his writings. Fearful that a Faith based chiefly on emotion or the heart would disintegrate into either mysticism or "enthusiasm," yet afraid that an intellect-centered Faith would develop into a mechanistic view of life, Coleridge relied chiefly on the faculty of will to explain the Faithful relationship of man to God. Although he defined will as the most nearly spiritual part of man, he could never have excluded emotion and intellect from his idea of Faith. He used to his own ends Kant's distinction between Understanding and Reason, identifying intellect and Understanding and speaking of Reason, which merges into Faith, as a

32Coleridge, Essay, p. 348.
combination of intellect, will, and emotion. To the whole man who has Faith in God, each faculty is indispensable; yet the role of emotion seems to be, although the most hidden, the precipitating factor in the Coleridgean view of Faith. Coleridge states that a man can be made to believe something through a conversion of the intellect, but he also believes that a man cannot have Faith in something chiefly because his emotional faculty has been deeply stirred by a minister. Man cannot save man; only God through Christ can redeem him. Man, through a perverted will, has rejected God's Grace. When man freely accepts this Grace, thereby signifying his creaturely dependence upon the Creator, he is redeemed through Christ and can then feel genuine emotions of love, joy, thankfulness, and hope. Emotion, the result and not the cause of Faith, is a key faculty in the religious thought of Samuel Taylor Coleridge.
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