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Personality and Soul: A Theory of Selfhood

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What is personality? What is soul? What is the relationship between the two? When Moses asked the Father what his name is, the Father answered, "I AM." The I AM is the highest possible philosophical concept of God. The I AM is the high spiritual concept of personality. The diversity of reality originates in the unity of the personality of the Father. The I AM is the absolute origin and cause of reality. It is hardly surprising, then, that the concept of personality is a little elusive and mysterious. How should we begin to comprehend that level of reality from whence spirit, mind, matter, time, space, eternity, and infinity originate? How can we grasp that reality which creates being and existence?

Of the many attributes of personality, let us focus upon these three:

- Personality possesses the power of free will.
- Personality is characterized by morality.
- Personality is devoid of identity, but it can unify the identity of any living energy system.

The first of these attributes is not beyond our comprehension. The idea of free will is one with which we are well acquainted. Man has always believed that he has some power to choose and act freely. The concept of personal freedom would be meaningless without this belief in free will.

Man has always been sensitive to the existence of moral issues and choices, but the idea that personality is characteristically moral is a significant new wrinkle on a familiar personal experience. It makes sense that I, who possess free will, can use this free will to make moral

evaluations and choices. It is a new thought that "I" am characteristically moral. Still this is not a startling idea; neither is it one that is very difficult to understand and accept.

The distinction between personality and identity, on the other hand, is a completely new concept found only in the fifth epochal revelation. And it is a concept which is very difficult to comprehend. When I consider what I am, my first thought is that I am a personal being, and this personal being is my identity. Identity is being and I am this being. The idea that I am a reality separate and distinct from the reality of my personal identity is most confusing. For western man living under the influence of the Cartesian image of man, this means that the "I" and the "thinker" are two different realities—personality is something other than the intellectual ego. Cartesian man lives in his intellect, he is the intellectual ego. This is an idea extremely difficult for me, or should I say my intellectual ego, to grasp. This revealed concept of personality requires us to, somehow, distinguish the reality of identity from that of personality, which is devoid of identity.

If we consider the reality of identity as it is described to us, we discover that there are multiple personal identities within the domain of the self. We are informed that the intellect is a personal identity. The Thought Adjuster has identity but not personality. The body, the physical identity, is said to be "unqualifiedly personal." The soul is our evolving, immortal identity. It is the task of personality to harmonize the functioning of these multiple personal identities. We are also told that personality possesses the power of transferring the seat of identity from the material mind system to the

morontia soul system. What does all of this mean in the context of personal experience? How can the concept of one personality and multiple personal identities be reconciled? What is the real difference between personality and identity?

One possible approach to this question is to try to discover the pure reality of our own personality; that is, to attempt to differentiate the reality of personality from all the other things in our experience. To do this we need a hypothesis of what we think personality is.

Let us assume, on the basis of revealed authority and personal insight, that personality is the unity of "I." I know intuitively that "I am" and that I am One, even if I do not understand how I know this. I also know that I have free will, the power to initiate a chain of events. Let us make this, then, our hypothesis of personality: I am a unity of personal will. We can now examine experience to see what falls within this hypothetical domain of personality and what lies without.

The body, although personal, obviously falls outside this domain. It is apparent that the perceptions and sensations, the urges and hungers, the instincts and impulses of the body frequently proceed in directions contrary to my personal will.

What, then, of the intellect?

Western man lives under the continuing dominance of the Cartesian image of Man: "I think, therefore I am." Nothing seems so responsive to my personal will as thought. To Descartes the act of thinking seems to be absolute proof that he exists. However, if we reflect upon the relationship between personal will and thinking, we quickly realize that thinking and personal will are frequently in conflict. How often do I find myself dwelling upon some idea and tell myself to stop thinking of it, only to find that I cannot? Strong emotions such as anger, excitement, fear, or anticipation often seize control of my thinking and take it in directions which are against my will. How common it is for me to struggle with thoughts induced by my emotions! My temper causes me to think things which I know I will later regret even as I think them. My anxieties cause me to think things which needlessly dissipate my courage and energies. The more I reflect upon this, the more I see that I am frequently struggling for control of my intellect. Since I am a unity of personal will, this conflict between "I" and the

"thinker" means that personality is not the intellectual identity.

What is true of the body and the intellect is equally true of the heart, the emotional identity. It is all too common an experience to have emotions and desires which I definitely choose not to have. The recurring conflicts between my personal will and the emotions and desires of my heart shows that personality is not the emotional identity, the heart.

There is a fourth personal identity which is not as commonly recognized as the body, the intellect, and the heart. It is the moral identity. It is within wisdom that personality finds a fuller expression for its free will. The influence of the Cartesian image of man leads us to confuse the intellect with wisdom because both function in thought. However, the thinking of the intellect is fundamentally different from the thinking of wisdom. The intellect only considers the best means to use to obtain a given end. Wisdom evaluates the value of alternative ends and chooses between them. The intellect does not comprehend "why," only "how." It is wisdom which asks "Why?" Is wisdom, the moral identity, the personality? We are told that personality is characterized by morality and wisdom is the functioning of moral evaluation.

But wisdom is not personality. I know this is so, because sometimes I intentionally evade asking why. Moral issues can be very taxing, so I sometimes simply pretend they aren't there. The evasion of moral conflict is the most subtle form of self-deception. In addition, there is the fact that I have rejected my own moral evaluations at times in favor of satisfying personal desires. The fact that I can put my will behind a desire which is contrary to what I evaluate to be right clearly reveals that my will is in conflict with my moral evaluations. If the reality of personality were identical with the moral identity, it would not be possible for me to be amoral. The activity of moral evaluation would be an inherent part of my being and one from which I could not escape. Neither would it be possible for me to experience inner conflict between my desires and my morals.

It appears that there is nothing I can point to as the reality of my personality. I behold four separate personal identities-body, intellect, heart, wisdom-but none of them can be the personality. How do I know, then, that these identities are "me"? How do I know that I have a self?

This question leads us to the realization of a pure objective manifestation of the reality of personality. It is not because I have absolute control over these identities that I know they constitute my self. We have seen that the power of free will has only a partial control over these identities. The one reality which perfectly illuminates these identities as being part of my self is the quality of personality.

Personality possesses the power of reality identification; personality can choose its own being. Personality makes something its own by placing its quality upon it. The self is that portion of reality upon which the personality has placed its quality. And this quality of personality, this value of personal-ness, has its source and center in the reality of personality. Personality creates personal identity by personalizing being.

Without the quality of personality I could never separate the self from the rest of reality. I could not be self-conscious. I could not declare, "I am." It is because I behold the quality of my personality among the phenomena of experience that I am able to identify the existence of my self. Without this quality the self could not be personal. If the self were not personal, I would not know that I personally exist; I would not be self-conscious. And the bestowal of this quality is subject to the free will of personality. I possess the power to personalize and de-personalize things. Personality is not being; it is the origin of being. The Father bestows personality upon man, and man can then project the quality of his personality upon being, creating personal identity.

Consider the implications of this. We are well acquainted with the idea of growth as it applies to things physical, mindal, and spiritual. Now we are presented with the concept of the growth of being the idea that being can be transformed from one order of reality into another. The fairy tale of the philosopher's stone says that this red crystal is able to transform base metals into gold. Revelation presents us with the truth that personality possesses the power of transforming its being from matter into spirit. Personality is able to choose its own being. It is able to transfer the center of personal identity from the intellectual identity to the morontia identity of the soul through its power of personalization; that is, personality can make the soul more personal than the intellect.

The soul is constituted of morontia reality, a level of being which intervenes between the material mind and the divine spirit. The material mind is only partially conscious of this morontia reality. This partial consciousness of the soul is experienced, initially, as the awareness of ideals. Ideals exist in the soul. The ideal of God is a morontia reality in the soul which can be apprehended by the adjutant mind-spirits of wisdom and worship.

Ideals are a living synthesis of idea and value. The adjutant of wisdom, the moral identity, creates ideals by unifying ideas and values, meaning and spirit. The Thought Adjuster may or may not be the inspiration behind a particular value. If the value is divine, the Thought Adjuster inspires it. If the value is not divine, the Adjuster does not participate in the creation of the ideal. We are definitely informed that the Adjuster inspires the creation of the ideal of altruism. However, reflection makes it clear that we have ideals which cannot be considered to be divinely inspired. The soul contains both types of ideals-the divine and the not-so-divine.

This creation of morontia ideals is initially perceived as the conscience. This is wisdom's first awareness of the reality of the soul. The conscience is not the voice of God speaking to the mind of man. We are cautioned to be critical of the conscience-to use wisdom to discriminate between those ideals which have a divine origin and those which do not. As the soul grows, there is increasing awareness of the ideals of truth, beauty, goodness, and love. The transferal of the seat of identity from the intellectual identity to the soul is accomplished by the free will of personality acting through the adjutant of wisdom to personalize the spiritual ideals of the soul. "Salvation is the spiritualization of the self-realization of the moral consciousness...." (~1478)

In this attempt to discover what personality is, what soul is, and what the relationship between the two is, we have sketched a simple theory of the constitution of selfhood.

Personality is a unity of personal will. It exists in a dimension which transcends the reality of being. Personality is a reality without substance, without being. Yet it is the origin and creator of the substantial realities of spirit, mind, and matter. Personality possesses the power of choosing its own being through its freewill personalization of identity. The essence of this personalization is the

creation and bestowal of the quality of personality upon being, bringing personal identity into existence. Personality is not a quality; it is the origin and creator of the quality of personality.

Selfhood consists of four actual identities-body, intellect, heart, and wisdom-and one potential identity-the soul. Personality is able to associate directly with each of these personal identities by virtue of its transcendence of being and its power of personalization. The adjutant of wisdom, the moral identity, creates the ideals of the soul through its ability to bring ideas and values together to form a derivative order of reality-morontia. When the value is divine, the Thought Adjuster participates in its creation. The adjutant of worship is responsive to

the living needs of the soul, to its hungers and yearnings.

Below is a tentative diagram of selfhood detailing the component parts of the self. Diagrams are always limiting, but occasionally they are a useful means of summarizing concepts and information.

The question I would ask now is this: How does personality personalize identity? The challenge we face is to transfer the seat of identity from the material mind to the morontia soul, and this would seem to require that we personalize the soul. What does it mean to personalize the soul and how should we approach this task?

COMPONENTS OF SELFHOOD

Cosmic Circuits	Personal Identity	Experiential Nature	Objectives
Thought Adjuster			
Spirit of Truth	Soul	Inspiring	Ideals and Values
Holy Spirit			
Adjutant of Wisdom	Wisdom	Judging	Moral evaluation and choosing
Adjutant of Worship	Heart	Feeling	Emotions and Imagination
Adjutant of Counsel			
Adjutant of Knowledge	Intellect	Thinking	Ideas & Decisions
Adjutant of Courage			
Adjutant of Understanding	Body	Doing	Perceptions, Urges & Sensations
Adjutant of Intuition			

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