

"POPULAR RELIGION"

March, 1966

"Men are reluctant to pass over the notion of an abstract and negative deity to the living God... An 'impersonal God' -- well and good. A subjective God of beauty, truth and goodness, inside our own heads -- better still. A formless life-force surging through us, a vast power which we can tap--best of all. But God Himself, alive, pulling at the other end of the cord, perhaps approaching at an infinite speed, the hunter, king, husband -- that is quite another matter. There comes a moment when the children who have been playing burglars hush suddenly; was that a real footstep in the hall? There comes a moment when people who have been dabbling in religion (Man's search for God!) suddenly draw back. Supposing we really found Him? We never meant it to come to that! Worse still, supposing He had found us?"

C. S. Lewis, Miracles

There is a kind of easy popularity that goes with vague, general religion. It seems on the surface at least more intellectually credible to hold to a general, conceptual kind of religious conviction stripped of any concreteness and therefore of any real relevance to my daily, earthly existence. I can do with it and make of it just about whatever I desire with little fear of interference or argument; after all, who cares! It is all so intangible that it ceases to be either particularly dangerous or for that matter interesting.

But, everything changes when the realization hits me that what has happened on Christmas, Good Friday and Easter is something radically different. Here I am not encountering more or less interesting ideas and concepts but God speaking for himself concretely and pulling at the other end of the cord, showing that he really cares about me, that he really knows who I am, that he is the one able to forgive me of my sins and give me wholeness and fulfillment.

May this incredible breakthrough be our experience in this Holy Week of 1966.

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