

Lecture 13

ANTICHRIST

Lecture XII, The New Religion, continued Part D. from outline

And this brings us to the spiritual state of our modern people, not necessarily under the direct influence of occultism or modern art, but still that very state which occultism and modern art expressed.

This we can see by a few pages from a book by another German, who is actually a Jew, became converted to Catholicism, became totally disillusioned with modern Europe and left the cities and went, found himself a place on a lake in Switzerland where last I heard he was still living. His name is Max Picard. He wrote a book called *The Flight from God* which describes how the life of modern man, especially life in the cities, is one of a complete running away from reality, running away from God. After the Second World War he wrote a second book called *Hitler in Ourselves*. Here he very nicely expresses what is the background for all these movements.

"During a trip to Germany in 1932, the head of an influential political party called upon me to ask how it was possible that Hitler had become so much of a figure and had gained so many followers. I pointed to a magazine which was lying on the table and told him to look at it. Page one was filled by a half-naked dancer; on page two, soldiers were drilling with a machine gun, and farther down a scientist was shown in his laboratory; page three featured the evolution of the bicycle from the middle of the nineteenth century to the present day, and a Chinese poem was printed next to that; the following page was divided between the calisthenics of factory workers during a rest period and the writing technique of a South American Indian tribe by means of knotted strings; on the opposite page, Senator So-and-so was depicted in his summer retreat.

"This,' I said, 'is how modern man grasps the things of the world outside himself. Modern man drags all things toward himself chaotically and without cohesion; this proves that his own inner life is a chaos lacking cohesion. Modern man no longer confronts the things of the world as solidly existing, nor do things register in his mind individually; neither does he approach a particular thing by a particular act: modern man with his chaotic inner life has a correspondingly chaotic outer world whirling toward him. What is coming is no longer scrutinized; it suffices that anything at all should be coming along. To this disjointed tumult anything or anybody could admix -- Adolf Hitler, too: he gets inside a man without his noticing how he got there; from that point on, it no longer depends upon the victim but upon the skill of Adolf Hitler, whether he will merely pass through that man's mind or take hold of it.'

"The disjointedness of a magazine, however, seems old-fashioned, almost handmade, compared to the radio. In the radio the business of disjointedness has become mechanized: 6 A.M. calisthenics; 6:10 A.M. recorded music; 7 A.M. news; 8 A.M. Morse-alphabet course; 9 A.M. morning sermon; 9:30 A.M. 'In the Lake Dwellers' Village'; 10 A.M. Beethoven sonata for flute and piano; 10:30 A.M. farming lecture; 10:45 A.M. world news; 11 A.M. Overture to [Wagner's] 'Rienzi'—and so on till the Spanish course at 10:10 P.M. and the Jazz hour at 10:30 P.M.

"This world of the radio not only is disjointed;" That's classical radio; that's good radio. "it produces disjointedness: it presents all things in such a way that they will not hang together from the very start and thus are forgotten one by one even before they have disappeared; from the start they are shrouded in a haze of oblivion. This outer world presupposes that man's mind is no longer capable of perceiving the things of this world in any context -- as they are, that is, as they endure, and as they are correlated to one another in their nature --" rather "it operates

primarily toward the inner discontinuity, toward the disjointedness of man, and with that it works.

"There no longer is an outer world which can be perceived, because it is a jumble -- likewise, there is no longer in man a mind able to perceive with clarity, because his inner world, too, is a jumble. Therefore, man no longer approaches objects by an act of will; he no longer selects the objects of the external world and no longer examines them: the world is fluid; disjointed objects move past disjointed man. It no longer matters what passes by; what counts is only that something should pass by. Into this line-up anything could sneak, including Adolf Hitler; and one prefers that at least he, Adolf Hitler, should turn up than to have nothing turn up at all. 'Heil' to him; for not only does he march along as part of the jumble, but he also sees to it that the march of the jumble does not stop -- he mechanizes the flow of events and things assembly-line fashion and does it better than anyone else.

"The Big City is the expression of the disjointed as such. In it the disjointed has become stone, nay, concrete. Constantly the lines of the houses are interrupted by the movings of automobiles, of streetcars and trains which cut through everything like machines. Human figures appear as dissolved into indistinct blots, hurtling back and forth between the walls of houses and of streets like pawns of evil powers. The sky itself seems removed farther from earth than elsewhere, and even the sky has lost continuity with itself, for it is constantly cut through by sharp-silhouetted planes.

"From this outer jumble, then, Adolf Hitler could easily sneak into the inner jumble; in this disjointedness he could show himself beside anything because he fitted anything: such as he was, he fitted into anything disjointed.

"And as again and again he showed himself in this jumble, he became more distinct than the other parts of the chaos; one got used to him and accepted him as one accepts a toothpaste which turns up again and again in the chaos of advertising pages. Soon he appeared as the only reality in a world wherein everything else manifested itself only to vanish again immediately.

"Sorel believes that in a modern democracy it is possible for a handful of men to usurp the tools of power and to establish a dictatorship. That is true. But it is possible only because today everybody is slithering toward anything -- and thus one might slide toward the means of power without noticing it, while others notice it even less. One need not make any special effort; one need not fight for the instruments of power -- one just grabs them as one grabs at anything else in the chaos wherein one slips. It is merely an accident that this should happen in the realm of politics; in this world of the momentary and the disjointed anything else might be grabbed as well, in [lieu]" place "of politics and dictatorship. Here, there exists no history of power-assumption; no history, no theory, no doctrine counts except the theory and the doctrine of chaos.

"Hitler had no need to conquer; everything was pre-conquered for him through the structure of discontinuity, through the general disjointedness. As a result, such a dictator tries to make up for that sham of *Mein Kampf*," which he wrote, "which really was not necessary for the assumption of power: now that he possesses power, he strives with all the gestures, with all the big noise of power, and by violence and murder to prove that he is the dictator by his own act and not by an accident of chaos.

"Only in a world of total discontinuity could a nullity such as Hitler become Fuehrer, because only where everything is disjointed has comparison fallen into disuse. There was only Hitler, the nullity, before everybody's eyes, and in this instable world wherein everything was changing at every moment one was glad that at least the one nullity, Hitler, remained stable before one's eyes. An orderly world, a hierarchy, would automatically

have placed the nullity, Hitler, into nothingness; he could not have been noticed. Hitler was the excrement of a demoniacal world; a world of truth in its order would have pushed him aside.”^{cccxxvii}

Again we see the same thing that it is the world, it is we the ordinary people who are living this very kind of life of disjointedness and used to the very phenomena which we see around us -- the newspapers, the radio, the television, the movies -- everything which is oriented toward pieces which do not fit together. There's no God; there's no overwhelming, underlying pattern to things, no God, no order. And the order which we see in our life is only left over from the previous time when people still believed in God. And that's why Solzhenitsyn can look at America and say, "It's coming here."^{cccxxviii} You are sort of cutoff off; you don't see it. But it's coming here because that's the way, that's what's happening in the world. And of course, Americans are blinded because we're used to having our food...

Fr. H: We're protected.

Fr. S: ...and very much cut off from the reality. And the reality that's happening in the world is this here^{cccxxix}, these crazy people, who are not crazy people, they're expressing what the devil is planning for us next.

In modern art, as we've seen, we see this chaos, this disjointedness on one hand; on another hand, we see, as this man also pointed out, this Sedlmyer, the artificial calmness of the architecture. We look at the modern city and you see these tremendous big skyscrapers, pure -- there's one in San Francisco -- pure black glass. And I have known people who look at that and say, "Oh, it's beautiful! It expresses the soul; that's what we are striving after." And of course, he's in tune with the times. What it expresses is: no God, everything is cutoff. All that's left is some kind great memorial to what, to blindness. And inside they hang these crazy paintings of someone who goes crazy and puts, or they get paintings by apes, children, primitive peoples and so forth.

Out of this, by the way, in the last few years -- well since 1945 especially -- there's been a new kind of art movement, which is, this wild Expressionism out of which there begin to come people, that is, shapes. Unfortunately we haven't got any real examples of it. You can point to a couple there.

Fr. H: This would be close.

Fr. S: There's one artist called Francis Bacon. This is very close. It looks like(?) one of Bacon's paintings (?) by Goya. Already he was foreseeing that. There's another one called Giacometti, the Italian sculptor, who has tremendous tall figures, all sort of, they're very much like this one here(?), some kind of absolute chaos and out of it there begins to come kind of a human form, only it's like this -- inhuman, like a mask or misshapen, some kind of a thing like this, all sort of humped over and maybe one arm is missing, or its legs are missing. His face is staring ahead like sort of nothing. There no, no expression, no hope, no despair, just "Uhh." There're many painters like that now.

But this is, apart from Surrealism, it's the one other constant school of painting which has come out, painting and a little bit of sculpture. And they're simply frightful figures. And he just makes you frightened to look at them, as though they're just disfigured by the war or -- just frightful.

Fr. H: Feeling of raw meat...blood and guts...toilet seat...

Fr. S: And this also is a part of, it's very sort of battered down now, but also there is behind it again this feeling of something coming up, some kind of chialistic expectation. Maybe now we're going to come at last to a new age. In fact, there's one Catholic artist, about twenty years ago this painter, I forgot his name^{cccxl}, but at that time Jacques Maurtain and Gilson and all those

Catholic humanists were saying, "This looks like the new iconography for Catholicism." And you look at it, and it's frightful. It's like combin, well, it's more expressionistic, it's some kind of transfiguration. You see these distorted figures. You can't recognize them as human beings hardly, but all his paintings are religious. So now there's going to be a new religious art.

And by the way, they often take religious themes now, and these forms come back, but some kind of demon figures. Like there's one, where I went to college at Claremont, there was one sculptor. I forgot his name, but he had a sculpture of Christ rising. And what it was was the figure of a dead man who was being lifted up. You could see there all distorted still dead but he's now being lifted up by something. In other words probably a demon's going to take over the body. And some people say, "Oh, that's beautiful. It's going back to religion now, that [shows] already he believes in the resurrection." And he believes in what the demons are resurrecting. And the body is distorted and it, you can see it's dead, just beginning to come to some kind of distorted life. Or he has another one, a crucifixion which is absolutely a crucifixion by demons, frightfully distorted figure on the cross.

This is perhaps not so strong as a sort of chiliasm, but still it is some kind of indication that out of the nihilism of the wars and revolutions mankind still hopes for some kind of humanism. But now it's what you can call "sub-human."

But there is also very much a current of *hope* among the few prophets. We've already seen how Teilhard de Chardin is filled with optimism that all this, in fact, he says this Communism and fascism and all (who were victims?) is only passing by. Evolution does not regard the individual, only the species. As long as man survives, who cares about the hundred million in the concentration camps? Man will survive and the species will evolve into something higher.

So we have many prophets. We'll mention only two or three. And this Teilhard de Chardin is one. Another one is a strange figure in the nineteenth century in Russia, his name is Fyodorov, whose writings were almost unknown at that time and were published only after his death in the early decades of the twentieth century, but with whom people like Dostoyevsky and Tolstoy were fascinated and Solovyov also. He had a very strange idea. His writings were not published in English until Schmemmann got a hold of them, and had them translated for his anthology of crazy Russian writings. He has a whole seventy pages of this man, the first time ever in English. He must think it's very significant.

He [Fyodorov] is one you can say is disillusioned with revolutionary ideals, that everything is for the future. Because that means we of today in the present, and people who have struggled in the past, are only the "manure" for the future paradise. And he could not stand that. And therefore he came up the idea that the task of mankind is to resurrect his ancestors by means of science. Of course, how this is going to come about we don't know. He says you sort of have the faith and develop science and get ready for the great event when the ancestors will be resurrected and everybody will enter into this paradise.

And we see today we have the new science of cryogenics, that is, people are letting themselves be frozen in the hope that they will be resurrected in some future day when their disease will be cured. But that very idea is a chiliastic idea -- I'm going to be resurrected in the future. I'm going to come back to life -- very filled with this secular chiliasm. And this man Fyodorov puts this into the form of some kind of prophecy that in the future -- this book is called *The Common Task* -- the great task of mankind is to resurrect the ancestors. Of course, it's a wild dream but it's very much, you know, this is what the antichrist will resurrect: people, and be able to look like resurrection, will be able to put demons into them and make them walk around again, with walking corpses.

And you notice, by the way, in science fiction literature the same theme occurs. [In] science fiction movies there's some kind of aliens from outer space and they come and take over somebody's body and walk around like zombies. You see these in advertisements for them, these children from outer space, and the children who have been inhabited by some being from outer space with their eyes wide open, staring ahead -- same spirit. In fact, the whole of science fiction is entirely chialistic: superior race, Superman is coming from outerspace.

So that's one, Fyodorov, one crazy prophet, but very much in tune with the spirit of the new kingdom in this world, outside of the limits of Christianity, of course, because we believe in the true resurrection not by science but by God Himself.

[Insert from 1980 Nietzsche Lecture; Fr. Seraphim also took extensive notes on D.H. Lawrence for his Anarchism book in the 1960's.]

[D.H. Lawrence] ...thirty or so. And he was filled with this idea of sort of back to the earth paganism. And he gave us kind of almost a philosophical basis for sex, although his novels aren't dirty -- well, all except *Lady Chatterly's Lover's* not too good. But what they have in them is this constant emphasis upon *earthiness*, upon the open expression of sex. And he has these heroes; in one story I read, there was a heroine. He talks about unhappy, in fact -- he's married, doesn't have to be too outrageous(?). He always talks about unhappy marriages because one of them was is very earthy and the other one is very, [does] too much thinking; and this is the disease of modern times, this thinking too much. And therefore he has this one story about a man and woman who got divorced; the woman ran away or something to the south seas. So everything's sunny and bright. South is of the earth. So he goes looking for her, and there's a contrast. She's there someplace on a rock in the south seas, naked, sunning herself and she's all brown and like a goddess. He's all pale -- most northern Europeans are absolutely pale and emaciated and effeminate. And she has power because she's of the earth, she's earthy. She believes in fully expressing sexuality. And he has all kinds of inhibitions, you know, "You can't do that, no, no, no." And he presented a very stark contrast between real earthy. He read Nietzsche; he knew that the new Superman's going to be of the earth; that's what Nietzsche said: the new Superman will come from the earth. And therefore in all these stories, everything that has to do with Christianity is considered effeminate, weak, like Nietzsche says. Everything to do with paganism is strong. Therefore he has all kinds of images, especially of black Africa; he loved African gods. And his heroes have these statues, these crude African statues that symbolize their fact that they're awakened from all these prejudices. All the inhibitions of Christianity are thrown off, man becomes free. And then you're able to see there's no particular laws. If you're married or unmarried, it makes no difference. He didn't go into homosexuality. He just thought that the normal sex should be expressed freely.

He even has one horribly blasphemous story, which even before I was a Orthodox I couldn't finish. It's about how Jesus Christ resurrected. Or whether He resurrected or just came down from the Cross and discovered He was a failure. And then he has a love affair with Mary Magdalen and discovers the meaning of life. And it's just expressed so crudely and blasphemously, that it's too much even for a non-Christian. That's the level he's on, but he's a very powerful writer. And he's considered among the great writers. In fact I think I had a course with either six or eight writers and he was one of them. I think Hemingway was even left out, so they went for him. [He's] very important because he's very symptomatic of modern times. But he was an example of this neo-paganism.

And he had a follower, another writer who's called Henry Miller, who is very down to earth. Henry Miller is an American who died a few years ago -- he was more than 70 years old ten years ago. He lived in Big Sur and was a typical modern

bohemian type, free of all kinds of prejudices and so forth. And in the 1920's, I think, he went to Paris like a lot of young intellectuals in the West did. And Hemingway went there also. Paris was like the art capital of the world. There you learn about what's really going on in art. He was rather old then, thirty-five or so, when he first woke up to become an artist and went to Paris and began living there as an expatriate and writing these novels. Basically he was influenced by D.H. Lawrence. [He] woke up to the idea of reality of this world, of earth, of paganism, of sex and all that, and began writing these novels which were banned in America until very recently. They were published in France. In fact I knew somebody who had a bookstore in San Diego who was arrested for selling it under the counter maybe fifteen years ago. 'Course since the seventies that's all changed. They can now print it, considered old hat now to.

Well, D.H. Lawrence died about 1930. Henry Miller was still alive in the '60's when I was in down there. I never saw him. My mother lived in Carmel, so I was in that area. But he was still a tourist attraction in those days in Big Sur. He retired down there, sort of had followers around him who believed in the same things.

Well, this Henry Miller was writing, actually they're just pornographic sex novels, all four letter words and sex experiences and everything else is described. These books now are just ordinary; everybody writes like that now. In this way he's [a] typical, enlightened modern man, one step beyond Hemingway, and filled with this anarchic spirit, the very spirit which Fourier talks about: let the passions be unleashed and there'll be paradise.

But this is very interesting because at the same time in Paris, Nicholas Berdyaev met him or he read his books. And Berdyaev lived in Paris as an exile [and] was very interested in all modern manifestations of culture. And therefore he read Henry Miller, I don't know how, if he read English or not. But Berdyaev himself is an absolute anarchist, you know. He believes in overthrowing the Church and letting the free spiritual man come forth. And so he read this American anarchist, Henry Miller, who believes in expressing whatever you have inside of you, any garbage, or whatever you have inside you, you just express it. And he read Henry Miller. I think he only read one book, and he said, "At the end of this book, I feel like my world is dissolving." He says, "Absolute anarchy! The man should be burned!" He couldn't stand it because he said all these passions come out, and it was too much for him because the man is just absolute expression of whatever comes out from your nature. If you once enter into his philosophy, everything begins to dissolve. There is nothing left, you just dissolve yourself, can't stand it. Berdyaev had some quite accurate observations sometimes. For instance, he went to to a lecture of Rudolph Steiner in Berlin. And he said he felt like that man is frightful, he is trying to conquer God from beneath. What he saw was accurate, but he himself was also a false prophet.

And he [Henry Miller] lived the kind of life [in which] his passions were unleashed. He could do whatever he want; there's no more restraints. And he was someone like D. H. Lawrence [in his idea that] the sexual passion especially should be liberated and man will be somehow new, renewed, which is all, of course, a rather of a myth which can actually destroy people.

But he also wrote some essays, non-fiction writings, which show that the man is quite aware of things. And he thought rather deeply on what it means to be a modern man, where it's all going, the fact that now [that] all this sexuality is coming out, we are able to be free. The prejudices of the past are being overcome. He believed in astrology, and in all kinds of magic arts, and believed the new age is coming, some kind of aquarian age when prime ministers will be astrologers and the Renaissance alchemy and so forth will flourish again. He [Henry Miller] got this out of the air, just like Hitler said, "I am the first of the first magicians," I think he said, "in the new age of magic."cccxli And he has one

article and he talks about the necessity for mankind to be under one world government, and he says, "Who will rule this one world government?" And he said, "The time will come when a man will arise by himself, and he will have such charismatic ability that people by themselves will flock to him and see in him all their hopes for a new religion, the new age of mankind, and just like Napoleon he will become their symbol." And he said, "I feel that every age has a person who represents that age," sort of the age produces a person that represents this age, therefore our age is going to produce a tremendous man, a great new magical political figure, who will come and rule the world, and represent for us all these feelings of the earth, and all these forbidden things that were not allowed to come out before^{cccxliv}, which seems to be very accurate -- another prophecy of Antichrist and some kind of millenium in which the impulses of mankind will be let loose, people will be free of all restraints, of past beliefs of God, of morality and will enjoy the millenium.

And of course, this is a perfect example of this self-worship that Kant let loose on the literary and popular level. And once this was allowed to come out, then, of course, the whole, everything is allowed. And now there is hardly a single movie you can see apparently that's not full of some kind of sex scene.

And it's very interesting how this subject is handled in classical writers. For example, we saw a movie called "Nicholas Nickleby" recently, which has a lot of sex in it, sort of under the scenes, but you have to read it between the lines to get it. It's quite clear what's meant -- this decadent nobleman and the girl, and you see the way they look at each other. The whole picture's revealed to you, but it's revealed in a very elegant way, even in the movie. And there's no stirring of passion, you just see that's life. Therefore sex as a part of life is presented in a very realistic way. And nowadays how do they present it? You know, they go into all the gory details. So you have to sit there and watch apparently. Even Anna was taken to the movies by her father(?), and she had to sit and watch and see this squirming under covers, and imagine what they're doing. Of course, in many places they just take everything off and show you. What does that do? That's called realistic attitude towards life, isn't it? Is it?

Student: Well, it depends how you look at it, your point of view. Even with the classical literature it's not, they were working with more realistic point of view than today.

Fr. S: They just were, they had taboos. They couldn't talk about some things.

Student: It reminds me same thing of the services, Fr. Herman was telling us about the compline...all the time these, it just talks about...that it does it in such a way...

Fr. S: Well, this element has always been part of life, and it's always been expressed. In fact, in the, the Orthodox lives of saints are full of this. In fact they're quite shocking if you're used to Victorian standards of literature. It's quite open about this subject, but it's presented in such a way that it doesn't arouse passion, it just gives you the reality.

And what's happening now, the fashion in the last ten or fifteen years is to produce all this that hasn't been allowed before in such a way that it arouses your passion. And therefore it does not put across any *meaning*, that is, it does not tell you how to handle this whole thing because you're so interested in it. Of course you're going to be watching the clothes come off and so forth. You're going to get all excited and all interested. And what is it going to do for the plot, for the whole meaning of life? It doesn't do anything. It just titillates you, tickles you. And that's what Kant produced.

And the reason why it tickles is why? Because we're *self-centered*. Everybody looks there and he sees himself. Because in itself, usually sex is a very unsatisfying experience. You don't get these tremendous experiences you see in the movies or in books.

And therefore you go to the movies and you see: maybe your own body isn't particularly beautiful, but you go there and you see beautiful bodies, ah! And as you're looking at those beautiful images, *you're worshipping yourself*. It's like looking at yourself in the mirror. And all those inadequacies you have whether in beauty or in sex experience or whatever, it all becomes perfect, if only have someone who's handsome enough and does it so expertly and so forth. You. It's actually like looking at yourself in a mirror and worshipping yourself, the tremendous thrill of it. Because there's no more literature at all, no more higher values whatsoever. And this is definitely a form of self-worship.

Student: Well, it's the same thing as that when you tell us about that desert guy in Arizona, I don't know, Fr. Herman or someone was telling us, you see him looking at the mirror, OK, I look like myself... It's all self-worship.

Fr. S: Yeah. That's a basic category of mistake in spiritual life, to be always looking at yourself. And in modern times that's very characteristic. It's very narcissistic, all our spirituality. And this sort of people who talk about being spiritual, it's usually very self-centered; they're looking at themselves in a mirror. That's right.

And on the lower level, this is where it's affecting contemporary art. I haven't seen these films, although the last one I saw about twelve years ago was bad enough. I think I saw two of them already pretty bad. That means now it is even [more] open. And there's no more, the higher values get drowned in this lower element. And you simply apparently cannot make a film nowadays -- unless it's just an outright child's film -- unless it has some kind of a sex scene in it. So you get an "R" and if you get an "R" that means, ahah! this is spicy. Let's go watch that. That's all part of this same cult of self-worship.

And it filtered down from the time of Kant. He wrote about 1790. And now in 1980, two hundred years, this filtered down to this lowest level. And that's the result. That's one aspect which is very prevalent in our society, in fact, every place: advertisements, the whole suggestive element in television. The whole idea is to arouse you, arouse your emotions, arouse your passions and present some kind of a beautiful figure, just like you're looking in the mirror at yourself: I have to have that perfume, I have to have that deodorant....

Dostoyevsky also wrote several interesting pieces. One, I forget where it was, and what book it was, he wrote about a dream of

Fr. H: *The Raw Youth*.(?)

Fr. S: That's a different, I think it's a different book, there is two of them. One is [the] idea that it's very attractive to our human nature to, if everyone sort of takes their clothes off and does what he likes.

Fr. H: Baboque.

Fr. S: Baboque? Because this is the very same thing that Henry Miller feels and Fourier liked, that idea of unleashing the passions. In fact, we'll even see from ten years ago in San Francisco and New York, I don't know, I read in a newspaper, some critics said of the San Francisco, some kind of ballet from San Francisco went to New York, and in one of their dances all the people took their clothes off, and just bounced around the stage for a couple minutes then put their clothes back on. And he said that in that moment I felt such a feeling of liberation, I couldn't explain it, the mysterious feeling of absolute liberation came over me.

Of course, then it was very avant-garde, today now this happens all the time. But this shows again this chiliastic desire now when all restraints are gone then you feel some kind of new liberation coming over you which lasts for a moment but that's all you need. You need only a few years to be in the reign of

Antichrist.

And in *The Raw Youth* Dostoyevsky had a very good prophecy about the future, unfortunately we don't have the quote, but it concerns the day when the sun went down, that is, God went out of the life of man. And he said in that day men will all of sudden realize that they are alone, that the sun has gone out of their life, and now they are alone on this planet, and what will happen then? He said men will then be filled with such love for each other and such love for every little piece of grass because they know it's going away. It will always, if it's going, going forever. Only this moment it survives. There's no God, nothing else beyond life. We must grasp this moment and live to the full. And they will huddle together and embrace each other out of loneliness.

"Dostoyevsky's comment on this: Men, 'having rejected God, worship "Humanity," and love everything Humanity loves; thus even the Bible, which has illumined men like the sun; though its sense is now lost, one cannot be ungrateful for the favors it has bestowed upon mankind."^{cccxl} Why, then, do they kiss the Bible, reverently listening to the reading from it and shedding tears over it? -- This is because, having rejected God, they began to worship "Humanity." Now they believe in Humanity; they deify it and adore it. And what, over long centuries, has been more sacred to mankind than this Holy Book? -- Now they worship it because of its love of mankind and for the love of it on the part of mankind; it has benefited mankind during so many centuries -- just like the sun, it has illumined it; it has poured out on mankind its force, its life. And even though its sense is not lost, yet loving and adoring mankind, they deem it impossible to be ungrateful and to forget the favors bestowed by it upon humanity....

In this there is much that is touching and also much enthusiasm. Here there is actual deification of humankind and a passionate urge to reveal their love. Still, what a thirst for prayer, for worship; what a craving for God, and faith among these atheists, and how much despair and sorrow; what a funeral procession in lieu of a live, serene life, with its gushing spring of youth, force and hope! But whether it is a funeral or a new and coming force -- to many people this is a question.

I picture to myself...that the battle is over and that the strife has calmed down. After maledictions, lumps of mud and whistles, lull has descended and men have found themselves alone, as they wished it; the former great idea has abandoned them; the great wellspring of energy, that has thus far nourished them, has begun to recede as a lofty, inviting Sun, but this, as it were, was mankind's last day. [Fr. Seraphim's note: (He speaks of the disappearance of the idea of God.)] And suddenly men grasped that they had been left all alone, and forthwith they were seized with a feeling of great orphanhood.... Never was I able to picture people as having grown ungrateful and stupid. Orphaned men would at once begin to draw themselves together closer and with more affection; they would grasp each other's hands, realizing that now they alone constituted everything to one another. The grand idea of immortality would also vanish, and it would become necessary to replace it, and all the immense overabundance of love for Him who, indeed, has been Immortality, would in every man be focussed on nature, on the universe, on men, on every particle of matter. They would start loving the earth and life irresistibly, in the measure of the gradual realization of their transcendence and finality, and theirs would now be a different love -- not like the one in days gone by. They would discern and discover in nature such phenomena and mysteries as had never heretofore been suspected, since they would behold nature with new eyes, with the look of a lover gazing upon his inamorata [beloved]. They would be waking up and hastening to embrace one another, hastening to love, comprehending that days are short and that this is all that is left to them. They would be laboring one for another, and every man would be surrendering to all men all he possessed, and this alone would make him happy. Every child would know and feel that everyone

on earth is his father and his mother. Let tomorrow be my last day -- everyone would think, looking at the setting sun -- but all the same, I shall die, yet they all will remain, and after them, their children -- and this thought that they will remain, always as ever loving and [palpitating], as anxious over each other would replace the thought of the reunion beyond the grave. Oh, they would be losing no time to love, so as to quench the great sorrow in their hearts. They would be proud and bold on their own behalf, but they would be timid on each other's behalf; everyone would be trembling for the life and happiness of every man. They would grow tender toward one another, and would not be ashamed of this as at present, and they would fondle each other, even as children. Meeting one another, they would be beholding each other with a deep and meaningful look, and in that look would be love and sorrow....

Isn't there here, in this fantasy, something akin to that actually existent "Atheists Church"?

Of course, this is very much part of our contemporary mentality. And even all this sexual revolution and so forth, some of it's just, you know, looseness but quite a bit of it is people looking for love. They do not find love in God, in the family, in church, in the society. And so they grasp at this ideal of sexual love, which gives a temporary warmth and then fades away to nothing. That also is needed to make a millennium: people who are enlightened, away from any standard. And it will give the appearance, therefore, of a kingdom of love, and the Antichrist will be, he, the one they worship, while worshipping themselves, because their god is themselves.

And Berdyaev, we've already had quite a bit of, I want to repeat one more quote from him; it is in the article on charismatic movement,

"The world is moving towards a new spirituality and a new mysticism; in it there will be no more of the ascetic worldview. The success of the movement towards Christian unity presupposes a new era in Christianity itself, a new and deep spirituality, which means a new outpouring of the Holy Spirit."

In a way it sums up the whole of the past chiliastic hopes since Joachim of Floris, who was his idol, and inspires people in the present to look for some kind of new age. And if it looks impossible, if the future looks dark and difficult, and tyranny and, and gulag, still somehow when you think of his ideas you can all of a sudden be filled like Rousseau with a great mystic feeling that, yes, there must be something more to reality than some kind of concentration camps. We believe in the future harmony.

And so Berdyaev says, "The world is moving through darkness toward a new spirituality and a new mysticism.... The new mysticism will not consider this objectivized world as final reality." See, there'll be a new science. The spirit reality will come in. "In it will be revealed the true gnosis.... And all the tormenting contradictions and divisions" of modern life which divides man into actual fragments "will be resolved in the new mysticism, which will be deeper than all religions and ought to unite them." It "will be the victory over false forms of social mysticism, the victory of the realm of the spirit over the realm of Caesar." "The final triumph of the realm of spirit presupposes a change in the structure of human consciousness.... This can be envisaged only eschatologically."

Of course, evolution comes to the aid of this by saying indeed mankind is evolving to some higher consciousness wherein spiritual reality will be opened.

Solovyov

Now we come finally to one man who is very much part of all these movements. His name is Vladimir Solovyov. In fact it's probably owing to him more than anyone else that the Russian

intelligentsia went off the track, because Kireyevsky tried to call the intelligentsia back to Orthodoxy, and Soloviev was inspired by pantheism, by foreign influences, had a vision of Sophia. In fact, he met Sophia in the desert of Egypt. It's probably that same woman messiah that the Saint-Simonians went to look for in the 1830's. She was staying in the desert there, and he went to the desert and had a vision of Sophia. He was there in 18--, the Saint-Simonians went in 1830's, and Soloviev went in 1880, I guess.

He didn't live long. He died in 1900. He lived about forty-five years or so, probably contemporary with Nietzsche. He was another one of these wild thinkers. He came up with all kinds of fantastic things. The world would be governed by the Pope and the Tsar -- the whole world, the world empire of the Tsar and the Pope. And he was full of these new ideas, Sophia as the fourth person of the Holy Trinity, and all these fantastic things that threw off Bulgakov, inspired Berdyaev, Florensky, and all these wild thinkers.

Fr. H: All the Paris School came straight from this Sophia.

Fr. S: Vladika John, in his article on Soloviev and Bulgakov, says that this sophiology is the worship of *man*, the rejection of the worship of God, and placing in its place the worship of man. But at the end of his life some kind of new spirit came over Soloviev. And he came into complete discouragement over the hope for a world empire -- Orthodoxy and Catholicism uniting.

Fr. H: He didn't become Catholic, though; he didn't become Catholic.

Fr. S: Yeah. He received communion in Catholic church for a time.

Student: He did become Catholic?

Fr. S: Yeah. But he didn't consider he had become Catholic. He considered that he was uniting both religions. And in the last year of his life he was troubled by forebodings of the future. And all of a sudden he began reading prophecies about Antichrist. And it got so much for him that he told some people that he has very difficult time going to church because he has such a strong feeling that in a very short time all the churches will be closed and the catacombs will be opened up.

Fr. H: He had some kind of insight, no question.

Fr. S: And he saw as the end of history, the end of modern life, the end of modern history, the coming of Antichrist. And so he sat down and wrote a story which was the dialogue of three people. One is some kind of monk who tells us the story of antichrist...

...*Three Conversations on War and Future of Mankind*. In this he makes fun of the Tolstoyan who thinks that we should be peaceful and not resist no matter what happens. At the end of this *Three Conversations* is a story of Antichrist. Most of the details he gets from Scripture and the Holy Fathers, and a few things he adds a little to himself which are not too good, but the basic story is quite accurate. And he adds into this the things which he himself learned by his own occult experiences and his own awareness of the spirit of his times. So we'll see how this comes out in his....

In a way you can say this is the very close parallel to the legend of the Grand Inquisitor of Dostoyevsky.

"There lived at that time a remarkable man -- many called him a superman -- who was as far from being a child in intellect as in heart. He was young, but his genius made him widely famous as a great thinker, writer and social worker by the time he was thirty-three. Conscious of his own great spiritual power, he had always been a convinced idealist, and his clear intelligence always made clear to him the truth of that which

ought to be believed in: the good, God, the Messiah. He believed in all this, but he loved only himself. He believed in God, but at the bottom of his heart he unconsciously and instinctively preferred himself to God.

"...The inordinate pride of the great idealist seemed justified both by his exceptional genius, beauty and nobility, and his lofty asceticism, disinterestedness and active philanthropy. He was so abundantly blessed with gifts from above that he was scarcely to blame for regarding them as special signs of exceptional divine favor; he considered himself as next to God, as the son of God in a unique kind of way." All of this is not too different from these socialist prophets, by the way. "In short he recognized himself for what Christ really was. But this consciousness of his own higher dignity expressed itself not as a sense of a moral obligation to God and the world, but as a conviction that he had rights and privileges over others, especially over Christ. At the beginning he had no hostility against Jesus. He admitted His messianic dignity and significance, but he sincerely saw in Him merely the greatest of his own predecessors;" (That is how the Saint-Simonians says "the Saint-Simonian transformation of Christianity," in which he's actually greater than Christ.) "his mind, clouded by pride, could not understand Christ's moral achievement and his absolute uniqueness. He reasoned thus: 'Christ came before me; I come second; but that which in the order of time comes later is essentially prior. I come last, at the end of history, just because I am the perfect and final saviour. The first Christ was my forerunner. His mission was to anticipate and prepare my coming.' With this idea in his mind the great man of the twenty-first century applied to himself all that is said in the Gospel about the second coming, understanding by it, not the return of the same Christ, but the replacement of the preliminary Christ by the final one, that is, by himself.

"...This man also justified his proud preference of himself to Christ with the following argument: 'Christ, in preaching the moral good and manifesting it in his life, was the *reformer* of mankind, but I am destined to be the *benefactor* of this partly reformed, and partly incorrigible mankind. I shall give all men what they need. Christ as a moralist divided men into the good and the bad, but I will unite them by blessings which are needed by the good and the bad alike. I shall be the true representative of the God who makes His sun to rise on the evil and on the good and sends rain on the just and the unjust. Christ brought a sword, I shall bring peace. He threatened the earth with the fearful last judgment. But I shall be the last judge, and my judgment will be one of mercy as well as of justice. There will be justice too in my judgment, not retributive, but distributive justice. I will make distinctions between people and give everyone his due.'

"In this beautiful frame of mind he waited for some clear call from God, for some manifest and striking testimony to his being the eldest son, God's beloved first-born. He waited, and meanwhile nurtured his selfhood on the contemplation of his superhuman gifts and virtues -- as already said, he was a man of irreproachable morality and extraordinary genius. "The righteous and proud man waited and waited for a sanction from above to begin his work of saving humanity -- and still the sanction did not come." How many people there are like this, by the way, some people who think they're great geniuses. They're waiting for some demon to appear to them to tell them to go out and teach the world. He waited until he was thirty-three years old. "Abother three years passed. And suddenly there flashed through his mind a thought that sent a hot tremor into the very marrow of his bones, 'And what if....? What if not I, but that other...the Galiilean... What if He is not my forerunner, but the real one, the first and the last? But then He must be *living*.... Where is he?... What if He comes to me...here, now.... What shall I say to him? Why, I shall have to bow down before Him like the most stupid of Christians, shall have to mutter senselessly like a Russian peasant, "Lord Jesus Christ, have mercy on me, a sinner," or grovel like a Polish country woman! I, the bright genius, the superman! No, never!' And instead of the former cold, rational

respect for God and Christ there was born and grew in his heart, first, a kind of terror and then a burning, choking and corroding envy and furious, breath-taking hatred. 'I, I and not He! He is not living, He is not and shall not be. He is not risen, He is not risen from the dead! He rotteth in the tomb, rotteth like the lowest....'

"Foaming at the mouth, he rushed out of the house and garden and, leaping and bounding, ran in the black depth of the night along the rocky path.... The fury died down, and despair, hard and heavy as the rocks and dark as the night, took its place. He stopped at the sheer drop of the cliff and heard the vague noise of the stream rushing along the stones far below. Unendurable anguish weighed on his heart. Suddenly something stirred within him. 'Shall I call Him -- ask Him what I am to do?' And the sad and gentle image seemed to rise before him in the darkness. 'He pities me.... No, never! He did not, He did not rise from the dead!'

"And he threw himself down from the cliff. But something resilient like a water-spout supported him in the air, he felt a kind of electric shock, and some power flung him back. He lost consciousness for a moment and when he came to himself he was kneeling a few steps away from the edge of the cliff. He saw the outline of a figure glowing with a misty, phosphorescent light and its eyes penetrated his soul with their intolerable sharp brilliance.

"He saw those piercing eyes and heard -- he did not know whether from within himself or from outside -- a strange voice, toneless and, as it were, stifled, and yet clear, metallic, and absolutely soulless as though coming from a phonograph. And the voice was saying to him: 'You are my beloved son in whom I am well pleased. Why have you not sought me? Why did you revere that other, the bad one, and His Father? I am your god and your father. And that other one, the beggar, the crucified, is a stranger both to me and to you. I have no other son but you. You are my only one, only begotten, co-equal with me. I love you and ask nothing of you. You are beautiful, powerful and great. Do your work in your own name, not in mine. I have no envy, I love you. I want nothing from you. He whom you regarded as God asked of His son boundless obedience, obedience unto death, even the death of the cross, and He did not help Him on the cross. I ask nothing of you, and I will help you. I will help you for your own sake, for the sake of your own dignity and excellence and of my pure disinterested love for you. Receive my spirit. Once upon a time my spirit gave birth to you in beauty, now it gives birth to you in power.'

"At these words of the unknown being the superman's lips opened of themselves, two piercing eyes came quite close to his face and he felt the sharp, frozen stream enter into him, fill his whole being. And at the same time he was conscious of wonderful strength, energy, lightness and rapture. At that instant the luminous outline in the eyes suddenly disappeared, something lifted him into the air and at once deposited him in the garden by the house door."

And this is very similar to many occult experiences.

"Next day not only the great man's visitors but even his servants were struck by his peculiar, as it were, inspired expression. They would have been still more impressed could they have seen with what supernatural ease and speed he wrote, locking himself in his study, his famous work entitled *The Open Way to Universal Peace and Welfare*.

"...That book, written after the adventure on the cliff, showed in him an unprecedented power of genius. It was all-embracing and all-reconciling. It combined noble reverence for ancient traditions and symbols with broad and bold radicalism in social and political demands and precepts, boundless freedom of thought with the deepest understanding of all things mystical, absolute individualism with ardent devotion to the common good, the most lofty idealism of the guiding principles with thoroughly

definite and concrete, practical conclusions. And it was all put together with such consummate art that every one-sided thinker or reformer could easily see and accept the whole entirely from his own particular point of view, without sacrificing anything for *the truth itself*, or rising above his own self for the sake of it, or giving up his one-sidedness, or in any way correcting his mistaken views and aspirations, or trying to make up for their insufficiency.

No one raised objections against this book, for it seemed to everyone a revelation of the all embracing truth. It did such complete justice to the past, it passed such dispassionate judgment on every aspect of the present, it brought the better future so concretely and tangibly within reach, that everyone said: 'This is the very thing we want; here is an ideal that is not utopian, a plan that is not a chimaera.' The wonderful writer carried all with him and was *acceptable* to everyone, so that Christ's words were fulfilled:

"I am come in my Father's name, and ye receive me not: if another shall come in his own name, him ye will receive." Which, by the way, refers to Antichrist. "For in order to be received, one must be acceptable.

"True, some pious people, while warmly praising the book, wondered why Christ was not once mentioned in it; but other Christians replied: 'And a good thing too! In the past, everything holy was so bedraggled by all kinds of self-appointed zealots, that nowadays a deeply religious writer has to be very careful. And since the whole book is permeated by a truly Christian spirit of active love and all-embracing benevolence, what more do you want?' And all agreed with this.

"Soon after the publication of the *Open Way*, which made its author the most popular man in the world, there was held in Berlin the international constituent assembly of the European States Union.

"The 'initiated' decided to concentrate executive power in the hands of one person, investing him with sufficient authority. The *man of the future* was elected almost unanimously life-long president of the United States of Europe. When he appeared on the rostrum in all the brilliance of his superhuman young strength and beauty and, with inspired eloquence, expounded his universal programme, the assembly, charmed and completely carried away, in a burst of enthusiasm decided without putting it to the vote to pay him the highest tribute by electing him Roman emperor. The assembly closed amidst general rejoicing, and the great elect published a manifesto beginning with the words, 'Peoples of the earth! My peace I give unto you,' and ending as follows: 'Peoples of the earth! The promises have been fulfilled! Eternal universal peace is secured. Every attempt to disturb it shall be immediately met with overwhelming opposition. Henceforth there is in the world one central power which is stronger than all other powers, both separately and taken together. This invincible and all-conquering power belongs to me, the plenipotentiary chosen Emperor of Europe and ruler of all its forces. International law is supported at last by sanctions that have hitherto been lacking to it. Henceforth no country will dare to say "war" when I say "peace." Nations of the world, peace be unto you!' The manifesto had the desired effect.

"...Within a year a world-wide monarchy in the exact and proper sense of the term was founded. The seedlings of war were pulled out by the roots. The League of Universal Peace met for the last time and, having addressed an enthusiastic eulogy to the great peace-maker, dissolved itself as no longer necessary. In the second year of his reign the Roman and universal emperor issued another manifesto: 'Peoples of the earth! I promised you peace and I have given it to you. But peace is only made sweet by prosperity. It is no joy to those who are threatened with destitution. Come unto me, all you that are cold and hungry and I will give you food and warmth.' Then he announced a simple and all-inclusive social reform that was already indicated in his book and had captivated at the time all noble and clear minds. Now

that the world's finances and enormous landed properties were concentrated in his hands, he could carry out this reform and satisfy the desires of the poor without appreciable injustice to the rich. Everyone was paid according to his capacity, and every capacity was rewarded according to its merits and results.

"...There was firmly established in all mankind the most important form of equality -- *the equality of general satiety*. That was done in the second year of his reign. The social and economic problem was solved once for all. But though food is of first importance to the hungry, those who have sufficient food want something else.

"Even animals when they have had enough to eat want not merely to sleep but to play as well. This is even more true of men who *post panem* [after bread] have always demanded *circuses*.

"The superman-emperor understood what the crowd needed. At that time a great magician surrounded with a halo of strange facts and wild fairy tales came to him in Rome from the distant East.

"This magician, Apollonius by name, unquestionably a man of genius, semi-Asiatic and semi-European, was a Catholic bishop *in partibus infidelium* [of the infidel lands]. He combined in a marvellous way a mastery of the latest discoveries and technical application of Western science with a knowledge both theoretical and practical of all that is real and significant in the traditional mysticism of the East. The results of this combination were astounding. Apollonius mastered, for instance, the half-scientific and half-magical art of attracting and directing at his will atmospheric electricity, so the people said he *commanded fire to come down from heaven*. But while striking the imagination of the multitude by all kinds of unheard-of novelties he refrained for a time from abusing his power for any special purposes. And so this man came to the great emperor, worshipped him as the true son of God, and, declaring that in the secret books of the East he had found direct prophecies about him as the last saviour and judge of the earth, offered himself and his art in service to him. The emperor was charmed, accepted him as a gift from above, and bestowing splendid titles upon him, kept the magician permanently at his side. The peoples of the earth, having received from their master the blessings of universal peace and abundant food for all, were also given the chance of permanently enjoying the most diverse and unexpected signs and miracles. The third year of the superman's reign was coming to an end.

"The political and social problems were happily solved; now there was the religious problem to deal with." Which both Napoleon and Hitler saw as the crowning of their own career if they had gotten that far. "The emperor himself raised it, at first of all with reference to Christianity. The position of Christianity at that time was as follows. It had considerably decreased in numbers -- there were not more than forty-five million Christians on the whole of the globe -- but it had pulled itself together morally and reached a higher level, so that it gained in quality what it had lost in quantity. Men who had no spiritual interests in common with Christianity were no longer numbered among Christians. The different denominations had lost about the same proportion of their members," and "...the hostility between them had lessened considerably, and the differences had lost their former sharpness...."

"During the first two years of the new reign the Christians' attitude towards the emperor and his peaceful reforms was one of definite sympathy and even enthusiasm. But in the third year, when the great magician appeared, many...began to feel uneasy and to disapprove. The passages in the Gospels and the Epistles about the prince of this world and antichrist were read more attentively than before and excited lively comments. From certain signs the emperor guessed that a storm was gathering, and decided to make haste and clear up matters. Early

in the fourth year of his reign, he addressed a manifesto to all his faithful Christians of whatsoever denomination, inviting them to elect or appoint plenipotentiary representatives to an ecumenical council under his presidency. By that time he had transferred his residence from Rome to Jerusalem. Palestine was then an autonomous state, populated and ruled chiefly by Jews.

Jerusalem had been a free city and was now made an imperial one. Christian holy places remained intact, but the whole of the broad terrace, Haram-ash-Sharif, from Birket-Israin and the barracks on one side, and down to the El-Aksa mosque and 'Solomon's stables' on the other, was occupied by a huge new building. It included, in addition to two small old mosques, a large 'Imperial' temple for the union of all cults, and two luxurious imperial palaces with libraries, museums and special accommodation for magical experiments and exercises. The ecumenical council was to open in this semi-temple and semi-palace on the fourteenth of September. Since the Evangelical denomination had no priesthood in the proper sense, the Orthodox and Catholic hierarchs in accordance with the emperor's wish decided, for the sake of uniformity among the delegates, to admit to the council some of their laymen known for their piety and devotion to the interests of the Church. Thus the general number of the council members exceeded three thousand, and about half a million Christian pilgrims flooded Jerusalem and Palestine....

"The opening ceremony was most impressive. Two-thirds of the huge temple dedicated to the 'unity of all cults' were occupied with benches and other seats for members of the council, and one-third was taken up with a tall platform; there were two thrones on it, one for the emperor, and a lower one for the great magician (cardinal and imperial chancellor), and behind them long rows of armchairs for the ministers, courtiers and secretaries of state, as well as longer rows at the sides for a purpose unknown. The members had already celebrated their religious services in the different churches, and the opening of the council was to be entirely secular. When the emperor came in with his suite and the great magician, and the orchestra played 'the march of united humanity,' which was used as the imperial international hymn, all those present rose to their feet and waving their hats called out loudly three times, '*Vivat! Hurrah! Hoch!*' The emperor, standing by his throne with majestic benignity stretching out his hand, said in a pleasant and sonorous voice:

"Christians of all denominations! My beloved subjects and brothers! From the beginning of my reign which the Almighty has blessed with such wonderful and glorious deeds, I have not once had occasion to be displeased with you; you have always done your duty in all faith and conscience. But this is not enough for me. My sincere love for you, my beloved brothers, longs for reciprocity. I want you, not out of a sense of duty but from heartfelt love, to recognize me as your true leader in every work undertaken for the good of humanity. And so, in addition to what I do for all, I should like to bestow special favors upon you. Christians, what can I do to make you happy? What can I give you, not as to my subjects but as to my brethren and co-believers? Christians, tell me what is most precious to you in Christianity, that I might direct my efforts to it.'..."

After hearing the view of the Catholics, he said, "Dear brother-Catholics! oh, how well I understand your view and how I should like to find support for my power in the authority of your spiritual head! That you may not regard this as mere empty talk and flattery, I solemnly declare: in accordance with my autocratic will the chief bishop of all Catholics, the Pope of Rome, is henceforth restored to his Roman see with all the rights and privileges that had ever been given it by my predecessors, beginning with the emperor Constantine the Great. And all I want of you, brother-Catholics, is an inner, heart-felt recognition of me as your only defender and patron. Let those who regard me as such in their heart and conscience come to me here." And most of the Catholics get up and go to the benches.

Then he speaks once again, "Dear brothers! I know that

there are among you some who value most in Christianity its *sacred tradition*, ancient symbols, ancient hymns and prayers, ikons, and holy rites. And what indeed can be more precious to a religious mind? Know then, beloved, that today I have signed the statute and settled large sums of money on the world-museum of Christian archaeology in our glorious imperial city of Constantinople for the object of collecting, studying and preserving all relics of Church antiquity, especially the Eastern. I ask you to elect tomorrow from among yourselves a committee to discuss with me the measures that must be taken in order to make the present manners, customs and ways of living as conformable as possible to the tradition and ordinances of the holy Orthodox Church. Brother-Orthodox! Let those of you who appreciate my action and who can wholeheartedly call me their true lord and leader, come up to me here! ...”

“Then, straight and slender like a white church candle, the Elder John among the Orthodox, stood up and answered gently: ‘Great emperor! Most precious to us in Christianity is Christ himself -- He himself, and everything rests on Him, for we know that in Him all the fullness of Godhead dwells bodily. But from you too, sire, we are ready to receive every blessing if only we recognize in your bountiful hand the holy hand of Christ. And here is our straight answer to your question what you can do for us: confess now here before us Jesus Christ the Son of God, who came in the flesh, rose from the dead and is coming again -- confess Him, and we will receive you with love as a true forerunner of his glorious second coming.’

But “something evil was” now “happening to the great man.” emperor. “The same hellish storm raged within him as on that fateful night. He completely lost his inner balance, and all his thoughts were concentrated on not losing external self-control and not giving himself away too soon. He was making superhuman efforts not to throw himself with a wild yell at the speaker and tear at him with his teeth. Suddenly he heard the familiar unearthly voice: ‘Be still and fear nothing.’ He remained silent....

“While the Elder John was speaking, the great magician, who sat wrapped up in a voluminous three-colored cloak that completely hid his red robe of a cardinal, seemed to be doing some manipulations under it; there was a look of concentration in his glittering eyes, and his lips moved. Through the open windows of the temple a huge black cloud could be seen gathering, and soon everything turned dark. The Elder John was still gazing with fear and amazement at the silent emperor; suddenly he drew back in horror and, turning round, cried in a stifled voice: ‘Children, it’s antichrist!’ At that moment there was a deafening crash of thunder, a huge ball of lightning flared up in the temple and enveloped the Elder.... When the Christians recovered from the shock, the Elder John lay dead.

“The emperor, pale but calm, addressed the assembly: ‘You have seen God’s judgment. I did not wish for anyone’s death, but my heavenly Father avenges his beloved son. The case is settled. Who would dare to oppose the Almighty? Secretaries! write: “The ecumenical council of all Christians, when the fire from heaven had struck the insane opponent of the divine majesty, unanimously recognized the mighty emperor of Rome and the world as their supreme leader and lord.”’”

And then the Pope also is struck down and the election is held for a new Pope. “While the election was being held the emperor was gently, wisely and eloquently persuading the Orthodox and Evangelical delegates to end their old dissensions in view of the new great era in Christian history; he pledged his word that Apollonius would know how to do away forever with all the historical abuses of papacy.” The magician is elected Pope. “The Orthodox and Protestant delegates, convinced by his speech, drew up an act of union between the churches, and when, amidst joyful acclamations, Apollonius appeared on the platform with the cardinals, the Greek archbishop and an Evangelical minister presented their paper to him.

‘*Accipio et approbo et laetificatur cor meum* [I accept and approve and my heart rejoices],’ said Apollonius, signing the document. ‘I am a true Orthodox and a true Protestant as much as I am true Catholic,’ he added and exchanged friendly kisses with the Greek and the German. Then he walked up to the emperor, who put his arms round him and held him in his embrace for some minutes.

“Meanwhile curious points of light flitted in all directions about the palace and temple; they grew and transformed themselves into luminous forms of strange beings; flowers never seen on earth before fell in showers from above, filling the air with a mysterious fragrance. Delightful heart-melting sounds of strange musical instruments floated from on high, and angelic voices of invisible singers glorified the new lords of heaven and earth. In the meantime a terrible subterranean roar was heard in the northwestern corner of the central palace under..., the cupola of souls, where according to the Moslem tradition lies the entrance into Hades. When, at the emperor’s invitation, the assembly moved in that direction, all clearly heard innumerable high-pitched and piercing voices -- children’s or devils’ -- calling out: ‘The time has come, release us, saviours, saviours!’ But when Apollonius, pressing himself close to the wall, thrice shouted something to those under the earth in an unknown tongue, the voices were still and the subterranean roar subsided.

“...The emperor, together with the Pope, came out on to the eastern balcony,” of the temple “raising ‘a storm of enthusiasm.’ He graciously bowed in all directions, while Apollonius continually took from large baskets brought to him by cardinals-deacons, and threw into the air magnificent Roman candles, rockets and fiery sprays, pearly-phosphorescent or bright rainbow-colored, that caught fire at the touch of his hand. On reaching the ground they all turned into innumerable different-colored sheets of paper with complete and unconditional indulgences for all sins, past, present and future. Popular rejoicing surpassed all bounds. True, some people said that they had seen with their own eyes the indulgences turn into hideous toads and snakes; but an overwhelming majority were enthusiastic. Public festivities went on for a few more days and the new miracle-working Pope performed things so wonderful and incredible that it would be quite useless to describe them.”cccxlviii

We have here a very realistic picture which needs only a few details corrected perhaps to be in fact a realistic view of a millenium which is possible just about in our time.

So let us sum up the main points of the new religion which is preparing for the reign of Antichrist. The first is the “death of God,” which entails the abolition of Christianity, that is, Orthodoxy, but this began in the eleventh century, what we call the apostasy. The “death of God” is a poetical way of saying apostasy. If God is dead, everything is permitted, which means an entirely new order of the universe and the demons come into man’s world. If there is no God, then....

G. Summary: doctrines of the new theology

- 1. Death of God = apostasy**
- 2. All is permitted = irruption of demons.**
- 3. Superman = sub-man: worship of oneself.**
- 4. Man and world become divine: final deception of devil.**
- 5. World monarchy, new revelation, millennialism — for a brief time.**

H. The answer: to save oneself. God is with us. Ours is the truth.