

Note on psychiatry and religion

The only cure for the neurotic is the cure which Christ the Physician works. In the cure of the neurotic there are three aspects: the emotional, the rational, and the mystical. Neurosis, which is a disordering of the emotions, is cured through the mystical relation to Christ, a relation of dependence which is nurtured by the psychiatrist or director who himself has this dependence upon Christ, and who nurtures this spiritual life in his patient by representing Christ to the neurotic, who insofar as he is neurotic, is infantile, and as an emotional infant, takes the father for God. Out of the relationship of trust that arises, the patient is enabled by the father to face more and more of the truth about himself, and he is encouraged to do this because the father, in leading him to face the truth, allows the son to see that his—the father's—relation to God also demands the facing of the same truth. The father provides the spiritual womb for the birth of the neurotic in Christ. It is through the mystical relationship that the rational ordering of the emotions is brought about. The neurotic, to become a child again, must become a child of God, and out of this he grows up with the rational ordering of a healthy person. Psychiatrists who seek to bring about the healing of emotional disturbances by working at the rational level cannot bring about that healing.

—HTS