From a theistic point of view, the natural conclusion is that sets owe their existence to God's thinking things together. The natural explanation of those three features is just that sets are indeed collections-collections collected by God; they are or result from God's thinking things together. This idea may not be popular at contemporary centers of set theoretical activity; but that is neither here nor there. Christians, theists, ought to understand sets from a Christian and theistic point of view. What they believe as theists affords a resource for understanding sets not available to the non-theist; and why shouldn't they employ it? Perhaps here we could proceed without appealing to what we believe as theists; but why should we, if these beliefs are useful and explanatory? I could probably get home this evening by hopping on one leg; and conceivably I could climb Devil's Tower with my feet tied together. But why should I want to?

The Christian or theistic philosopher, therefore, has his own way of working at his craft. In some cases there are items on his agenda- pressing items-not to be found on the agenda of the non-theistic philosophical community. In others, items that are currently fashionable appear of relatively minor interest from a Christian perspective. In still others, the theist will reject common assumptions and views about how to start, how to proceed, and what constitutes a good or satisfying answer. In still others the Christian will take for granted and will start from assumptions and premises rejected by the philosophical community at large. Of course I don't mean for a moment to suggest that Christian philosophers have nothing to learn from their non-Christian and non-theist colleagues: that would be a piece of foolish arrogance, utterly belied by the facts of the matter. Nor do I mean to suggest that Christian philosophers should retreat into their own isolated enclave, having as little as possible to do with non-theistic philosophers. Of course not! Christians have much to learn and much of enormous importance to learn by way of dialogue and discussion with their non-theistic colleagues. Christian philosophers must be intimately involved in the professional life of the philosophical community at large, both because of what they can learn and because of what they can contribute.

Furthermore, while Christian philosophers need not and ought not to see themselves as involved, for example, in a common effort to determine whether there is such a person as God, we are all, theist and non-theist alike, engaged in the common human project of understanding ourselves and the world in which we find ourselves. If the Christian philosophical community is doing its job properly, it will be engaged in a complicated, many-sided dialectical discussion, making its own contribution to that common human project. It must pay careful attention to other contributions; it must gain a deep understanding of them; it must learn what it can from them and it must take unbelief with profound seriousness.

All of this is true and all of this important; but none of it runs counter to what I have been saying. Philosophy is many things. I said earlier that it is a matter of systematizing, developing and deepening one's pre-philosophical opinions. It is that; but it is also an arena for the articulation and interplay of commitments and allegiances fundamentally religious in nature; it is an expression of deep and fundamental perspectives, ways of viewing ourselves and the world and God. Among its most important and pressing projects are systematizing, deepening, exploring, articulating this perspective, and exploring its bearing on the rest of what we think and do. But then the Christian philosophical community has its own agenda; it need not and should not automatically take its projects from the list of those currently in favor at the leading contemporary centers of philosophy.

Furthermore, Christian philosophers must be wary about assimilating or accepting presently popular philosophical ideas and procedures; for many of these have roots that are deeply anti-Christian. And finally the Christian philosophical community has a right to its perspectives; it is under no obligation first to show that this perspective is plausible with respect to what is taken for granted by all philosophers, or most philosophers, or the leading philosophers of our day.

In sum, we who are Christians and propose to be philosophers must not rest content with being philosophers who happen, incidentally, to be Christians; we must strive to be Christian philosophers. We must therefore pursue our projects with integrity, independence, and Christian boldness.[4]

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