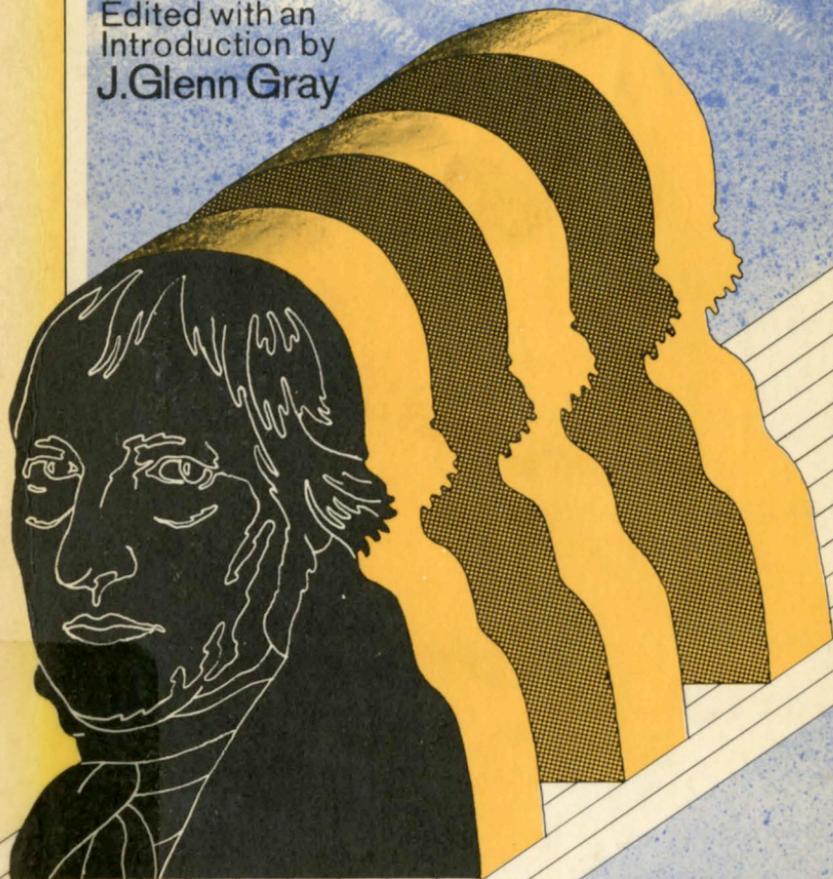


# G.W.F. Hegel

## On Art, Religion, Philosophy

Introductory  
Lectures to  
the Realm of  
Absolute Spirit

Edited with an  
Introduction by  
J. Glenn Gray



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G.W.F. Hegel

# On Art, Religion, Philosophy

*Introductory Lectures  
to the Realm of  
Absolute Spirit*

Edited and with an Introduction by

J. GLENN GRAY

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HARPER TORCHBOOKS  
Harper & Row, Publishers  
New York and Evanston

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likely to mirror what is given *as* it is given than to throw the shapes of the outer world into chance medley, or distort them into grotesqueness. For this external element no longer has its notion and significance, as in classical art, in its own sphere, and in its own medium. It has come to find them in the feelings, the display of which is *in themselves* instead of being in the external and *its* form of reality, and which have the power to preserve or to regain their state of reconciliation with themselves, in every accident, in every unessential circumstance that takes independent shape, in all misfortune and grief, and even in crime.

Owing to this, the characteristics of symbolic art, in difference, discrepancy, and severance of Idea and plastic shape, are here reproduced, but with an essential difference. In the sphere of the romantic, the Idea, whose defectiveness in the case of the symbol produced the defect of external shape, has to reveal itself in the medium of spirit and feelings as perfected in itself. And it is because of this higher perfection that it withdraws itself from any adequate union with the external element, inasmuch as it can seek and achieve its true reality and revelation nowhere but in itself.

This we may take as in the abstract the character of the symbolic, classical, and romantic forms of art, which represent the three relations of the Idea to its embodiment in the sphere of art. They consist in the aspiration after, and the attainment and transcendence of, the Ideal as the true Idea of beauty.

4. The third part of our subject, in contradistinction to the two just described, presupposes the conception of the Ideal, and the general types of art, inasmuch as it simply consists of their realization in particular sensuous media. Hence we have no longer to do with the inner development of artistic beauty in conformity with its general fundamental principles. What we have to study is how these principles pass into actual existence, how they distinguish themselves in their external aspect, and how they give actuality to every element contained in the idea of beauty, separately and by

as the beautiful unfolds itself in this region in the character of *objective* reality, and in so doing distinguishes within itself its individual aspects and elements, permitting them independent particularity, it follows that this centre erects its extremes, realized in their peculiar actuality, into its own antitheses. Thus one of these extremes comes to consist in an objectivity as yet devoid of mind, in the merely natural vesture of God. At this point the external element takes plastic shape as something that has its spiritual aim and content, not in itself, but in another.

The other extreme is the *divine* as inward, as something known, as the variously particularized *subjective* existence of the Deity. It is the truth as operative and vital in sense, heart, and mind of individual subjects, not persisting in the mould of its external shapes, but as having returned into subjective, individual inwardness. In such a mode, the Divine is at the same time distinguished from its first manifestation as Deity, and passes thereby into the diversity of particulars which belongs to all subjective knowledge—emotion, perception, and feeling. In the analogous province of religion, with which art at its highest stage is immediately connected, we conceive this same difference as follows: *First*, we think of the earthly natural life in its finiteness as standing on one side; but, then, *secondly*, consciousness makes God its object, in which the distinction of objectivity and subjectivity is done away. And at last, *thirdly*, we advance from God as such to the devotion of the *community*, that is, to God as living and present in the subjective consciousness. Just so these three chief modifications present themselves in the world of art in independent development.

The *first* of the particular arts with which, according to their fundamental principle, we have to begin, is architecture considered as a fine art. Its task lies in so manipulating external inorganic nature that it becomes cognate to mind, as an artistic outer world. The material of architecture is matter itself in its immediate externality as a heavy mass subject to mechanical laws, and its forms do not depart from the forms

Now, after architecture has erected the temple, and the hand of sculpture has supplied it with the statue of the God, then, in the third place, this god present to sense is confronted in the spacious halls of his house by the *community*. The community is the spiritual reflection into itself of such sensuous existence and is the animating subjectivity and inner life which brings about the result that the determining principle for the content of art, as well as for the medium which represents it in outward form, comes to be particularization (dispersion into various shapes, attributes, incidents, etc.), individualization, and the subjectivity which they require. The solid unity which the God has in sculpture breaks up into the multitudinous inner lives of individuals, whose unity is not sensuous, but purely ideal.

It is only in this stage that God himself comes to be really and truly spirit—the spirit in his community; for he here begins to be a to-and-fro, an alternation between his unity within himself and his realization in the individual's knowledge and in its separate being, as also in the common nature and union of the multitude. In the community, God is released from the abstractness of unexpanded self-identity, as well as from the simple absorption in a bodily medium, by which sculpture represents him. And he is thus exalted into spiritual existence and into knowledge, into the reflected appearance which essentially displays itself as inward and as subjectivity. Therefore the higher content is now the spiritual nature, and that in its absolute shape. But the dispersion of which we have spoken reveals this at the same time as particular spiritual being and as individual character.

Now, what manifests itself in this phase as the main thing is not the serene quiescence of the God in himself, but appearance as such, being which is *for* another, self-manifestation. And hence, in the phase we have reached, all the most manifold subjectivity in its living movement and operation—as human passion, action, and incident, and, in general, the wide realm of human feeling, will, and its negation—is for its own sake the object of artistic representation. In conformity

consciousness. In poetry the mind determines this content for its own sake, and apart from all else, into the shape of ideas, and though it employs sound to express them, yet treats it solely as a symbol without value or import. Thus considered, sound may just as well be reproduced by a mere letter, for the audible, like the visible, is thus reduced to a mere indication of mind. For this reason the proper medium of poetical representation is the poetical imagination and intellectual portrayal itself. And as this element is common to all types of art, it follows that poetry runs through them all and develops itself independently in each. Poetry is the universal art of the mind which has become free in its own nature, and which is not dependent for its realisation on external sensuous matter, but issues forth in the inner space and inner time of ideas and feelings. Yet just in this, its highest phase, art ends by transcending itself, inasmuch as it abandons the medium of a harmonious embodiment of mind in sensuous form and passes from the poetry of imagination into the prose of thought.

5. Such we may take to be the articulated totality of the particular arts, viz. the external art of architecture, the objective art of sculpture, and the subjective art of painting, music, and poetry. Many other classifications have been attempted, for a work of art presents so many aspects, that, as has often been the case, first one and then another is made the basis of classification. For instance, one might take the sensuous medium. Thus architecture is treated as crystallization; sculpture, as the organic modelling of the material in its sensuous and spatial totality; painting, as the coloured surface and line; while in music, space, as such, passes into the point of time possessed of content within itself, until finally the external medium is in poetry reduced to complete insignificance. Or, again, these differences have been considered with reference to their purely abstract attributes of space and time. Such abstract peculiarities of works of art may, like their material medium, be consistently explored in their characteristic traits; but they cannot be worked out as the ultimate and

Articulation of a totality always in an "un-  
folding" i.e. historical development.

fundamental law, because any such aspect itself derives its origin from a higher principle, and must therefore be subordinate thereto.

This higher principle we have found in the types of art—symbolic, classical, and romantic—which are the universal stages or elements of the Idea of beauty itself.

For *symbolic art* attains its most adequate reality and most complete application in *architecture*, in which it holds sway in the full import of its notion and is not yet degraded to be, as it were, the inorganic nature dealt with by another art. The *classical* type of art, on the other hand, finds adequate realisation in sculpture, while it treats architecture only as furnishing an enclosure in which it is to operate, and has not acquired the power of developing painting and music as absolute forms for its content. The *romantic* type of art, finally, takes possession of painting and music, and in like manner of poetic representation, as substantive and unconditionally adequate modes of utterance. Poetry, however, is conformable to all types of the beautiful, and extends over them all, because the artistic imagination is its proper medium, and imagination is essential to every product that belongs to the beautiful, whatever its type may be.

And, therefore, what the particular arts realise in individual works of art are, according to their abstract conception, simply the universal types which constitute the self-unfolding Idea of beauty. It is as the external realisation of this Idea that the wide pantheon of art is being erected, whose architect and builder is the spirit of beauty as it awakens to self-knowledge, and to complete which the history of the world will need its evolution of ages.

brings the religious man into a condition of perplexity, because however much he may point to what serves a purpose, and is useful in this immediate world of natural things, he sees, in contrast to all this, just as much that does not serve a purpose and is injurious. What is profitable to one person is detrimental to another, and therefore does not serve a purpose. The preservation of life and of the interests bound up with existence, which in the one case is promoted, is in the other case just as much endangered and put a stop to. Thus an implicit dualism or division is involved here, for in contradiction to God's eternal manner of operation, finite things are elevated to the rank of essential ends. The idea of God and of his manner of operation as universal and necessary is contradicted by this inconsistency, which is even destructive of that universal character.

Now, if the religious man considers external ends and the externality of the whole matter in accordance with which these things are profitable for an Other, the natural determinateness, which is the point of departure, appears indeed to be only *for an Other*. But this, more closely considered, is its own relation, its own nature, the immanent nature of what is related, its necessity, in short. Thus it is that the actual transition to the other side, which was formerly designated as the moment of selfness, comes about for ordinary religious thought.

Religious feeling, accordingly, is forced to abandon its argumentative process; and now that a beginning has once been made with thought, and with the relations of thought, it becomes necessary, above all things to thought, to demand and to look for that which belongs to itself; namely, first of all consistency and necessity, and to place itself in opposition to that standpoint of contingency. And with this, the principle of selfness at once develops itself completely. "I," as simple, universal, as thought, am really relation; since I am for myself, am self-consciousness, the relations too are to be for me. To the thoughts, ideas which I make my own, I give the character which I myself am. I am this simple point, and

that which is for me I seek to apprehend in this unity.

Knowledge so far aims at that which *is*, and the *necessity* of it, and apprehends this in the relation of cause and effect, reason and result, power and manifestation; in the relation of the universal, of the species and of the individual existing things which are included in the sphere of contingency. Knowledge, science, in this manner places the manifold material in mutual relation, takes away from it the contingency which it has through its immediacy, and while contemplating the relations which belong to the wealth of finite phenomena, encloses the world of finiteness in itself so as to form a system of the universe, of such a kind that knowledge requires nothing for this system outside of the system itself. For what a thing *is*, what it is in its essential determinate character, is disclosed when it is perceived and made the subject of observation. From the constitution of things, we proceed to their connections in which they stand in relation to an Other; not, however, in an accidental relation but in a determinate relation, and in which they point back to the original source from which they are a deduction. Thus we inquire after the reasons and causes of things; and the meaning of inquiry here is that what is desired is to know the *special* causes.

Thus it is no longer sufficient to speak of God as the cause of the lightning, or of the downfall of the Republican system of government in Rome, or of the French Revolution; here it is perceived that this cause is only an entirely general one, and does not yield the desired explanation. What we wish to know regarding a natural phenomenon, or regarding this or that law as effect or result, is the reason as the reason of this particular phenomenon, that is to say, not the reason which applies to all things, but only and exclusively to this definite thing. And thus the reason must be that of such special phenomena, and such reason or ground must be the most immediate, must be sought and laid hold of in the *finite*, and must itself be a finite one. Therefore this knowledge does not go above or beyond the sphere of the finite, nor does it desire

them. Such is only the relation, however, as it at first appears, when knowledge is still severed from the religious side, and is finite knowledge. On the contrary, when we look more closely, it becomes apparent that as a matter of fact the content, the need, and the interest of philosophy represent something which it has in common with religion.

The object of religion as well as of philosophy is eternal truth in its objectivity, God and nothing but God, and the explication of God. Philosophy is not a wisdom of the world, but is knowledge of what is not of the world; it is not knowledge which concerns external mass, or empirical existence and life, but is knowledge of that which is eternal, of what God is, and what flows out of his nature. For this his nature must reveal and develop itself. Philosophy, therefore, only unfolds itself when it unfolds religion, and in unfolding itself it unfolds religion. As thus occupied with eternal truth which exists on its own account, or is in and for itself, and, as in fact, a dealing on the part of the thinking spirit, and not of individual caprice and particular interest, with this object, it is the same kind of activity as religion is. The mind insofar as it thinks philosophically immerses itself with like living interest in this object and renounces its particularity in that it permeates its object, in the same way, as religious consciousness does, for the latter also does not seek to have anything of its own, but desires only to immerse itself in this content.

Thus religion and philosophy come to be one. Philosophy is itself, in fact, worship; it is religion, for in the same way it renounces subjective notions and opinions in order to occupy itself with God. Philosophy is thus identical with religion, but the distinction is that it is so in a peculiar manner, distinct from the manner of looking at things which is commonly called religion as such. What they have in common is that they are religion; what distinguishes them from each other is merely the kind and manner of religion we find in each. It is in the peculiar way in which they both occupy themselves with God that the distinction comes out. It is just here, however, that the difficulties lie which appear so great, that it

ing the opposition in the element of universality fluid, and bringing it to reconciliation, religion remains always akin to thought, even in its form and movement; and philosophy, as simply active thought, and thought which unites opposed elements, has approached closely to religion.

The contemplation of religion in thought has thus raised the determinate moments of religion to the rank of thoughts, and the question is how this contemplation of religion in thought is related generally to philosophy as forming an organic part in its system.

### *The Relation of the Philosophy of Religion to the System of Philosophy*

1. In philosophy, the highest is called the absolute, the Idea; it is superfluous to go further back here, and to mention that this highest was in the Wolfian philosophy called *ens, thing*; for that at once proclaims itself an abstraction, which corresponds very inadequately to our idea of God. In the more recent philosophy, the absolute is not so complete an abstraction, but yet it has not on that account the same signification as is implied in the term "God." In order even to make the difference apparent, we must in the first place consider what the word "signify" itself signifies. When we ask, "What does this or that signify?" we are asking about two kinds of things, and, in fact, about things which are opposed. In the first place, we call what we are thinking of, the meaning, the end or intention, the general thought of this or that expression, work of art, etc.; if we ask about its intrinsic character, it is essentially the *thought* that is in it of which we wish to have an idea. When we thus ask, "What is God?" "What does the expression God signify?" it is the thought involved in it that we desire to know; the idea we possess already. Accordingly, what is signified here is that we have got to specify the notion, and thus it follows that the *notion is the signification*; it is the absolute, the nature of God as grasped by thought, the logical knowledge of this, to which we desire to attain. This, then, is the one signification

of signification, and so far, that which we call the absolute has a meaning identical with the expression "God."

2. But we put the question again, in a second sense, according to which it is the opposite of this which is sought after. When we begin to occupy ourselves with pure thought determinations, and not with outward ideas, it may be that the mind does not feel satisfied, is not at home, in these, and asks what this pure thought determination signifies. For example, everyone can understand for himself what is meant by the terms unity, objective, subjective, etc., and yet it may very well happen that the specific form of thought we call the unity of subjective and objective, the unity of real and ideal, is not understood. What is asked for in such a case is the meaning in the very opposite sense from that which was required before. Here it is an idea or a pictorial conception of the thought determination which is demanded, an example of the content, which has as yet only been given in thought. If we find a thought content difficult to understand, the difficulty lies in this: that we possess no pictorial idea of it; it is by means of an example that it becomes clear to us and that the mind first feels at home with itself in this content.

When, accordingly, we start with the ordinary conception of God, the philosophy of religion has to consider its signification—this, namely, that God is the Idea, the absolute, the essential reality, which is grasped in thought and in the concept, and this it has in common with logical philosophy; the logical Idea is God as he is in himself. But it is just the nature of God that he should not be implicit or in himself only. He is as essentially for himself, the absolute spirit, not only the being who keeps himself within thought, but who also manifests himself, and gives himself objectivity.

3. Thus, in contemplating the Idea of God, in the philosophy of religion, we have at the same time to do with the manner of his manifestation or presentation to us; he simply makes himself apparent, represents himself to himself. This is the aspect of the determinate being or existence of the absolute. In the philosophy of religion we have thus the

absolute as object; not, however, merely in the form of thought, but also in the form of its manifestation. The universal Idea is thus to be conceived of with the purely concrete meaning of essentiality in general, and is also to be regarded from the point of view of its activity in displaying itself, in appearing, in revealing itself. Popularly speaking, we say God is the Lord of the natural world and of the realm of spirit. He is the absolute harmony of the two, and it is he who produces and carries on this harmony. Here neither thought and concept nor their manifestation—determinate being or existence—are wanting. This aspect, thus represented by determinate being, is itself, however, to be grasped again in thought, since we are here in the region of philosophy.

Philosophy to begin with contemplates the absolute as logical Idea, the Idea as it is in thought, under the aspect in which its content is constituted by the specific forms of thought. Further, philosophy exhibits the absolute in its activity, in its creations. This is the manner in which the absolute becomes actual or "for itself," becomes spirit, and God is thus the result of philosophy. It becomes apparent, however, that this is not merely a result, but is something which eternally creates itself and which precedes all else. The one-sidedness of the result is abrogated and absorbed in the very result itself.

Nature, finite spirit, the world of consciousness, of intelligence, and of will, are embodiments of the divine Idea, but they are definite shapes, special modes of the appearance of the Idea, forms, in which the Idea has not yet penetrated to itself, so as to be absolute spirit.

In the philosophy of religion, however, we do not contemplate the implicitly existing logical Idea merely, in its determinate character as pure thought, nor in those finite determinations where its mode of appearance is a finite one, but as it is in itself or implicitly in thought, and at the same time as it appears, manifests itself, and thus in infinite manifestation as spirit, which reflects itself in itself; for spirit which does not appear is not. In this characteristic of appearance finite

established its opinions and its thoughts for itself, and then attention was directed towards observing how the words of Scripture could be explained in accordance with these. The words of the Bible are a statement of truth which is not systematic; they are Christianity as it appeared in the beginning; it is spirit which grasps the content, which unfolds its meaning. This exegesis having thus taken counsel with reason, the result has been that a so-called theology of reason<sup>1</sup> has now come into existence, which is put in opposition to that doctrinal system of the Church, partly by this theology itself and partly by that doctrinal system to which it is opposed. At the same time, exegesis takes possession of the written word, interprets it, and pretends only to lay stress on the understanding of the word, and to desire to remain faithful to it.

But whether it be chiefly to save appearances, or whether it is really and in downright earnest that the Bible is made the foundation, it is inherent in the very nature of any explanation which interprets that thought should have its part in it. Thought explicitly contains categories, principles, and premises which must make their influence felt in the work of interpretation. If interpretation be not mere explanation of words but explanation of the sense, the thoughts of the interpreter must necessarily be put into the words which constitute the foundation. Mere word interpretation can only amount to this, that for one word another coextensive in meaning is substituted; but in the course of explanation further categories of thought are combined with it. For a development is advance to further thoughts. In appearance the sense is adhered to, but in reality further thoughts are developed. Commentaries on the Bible do not so much make us acquainted with the content of the Scriptures as with the manner in which things were conceived in the age in which they were written. It is, indeed, the sense contained in the words which is supposed to be given. The giving of the sense

1. *Vernunft Theologie*.

means, however, the bringing forward of the sense into consciousness, into the region of ideas; and these ideas, which get determinate character elsewhere, then assert their influence in the exposition of the sense supposed to be contained in the words. It is the case even in the presentation of a philosophical system which is already fully developed, as, for example, that of Plato or of Aristotle, that the presentation takes a different form, according to the definite kind of idea which those who undertake thus to expound it have already formed themselves. Accordingly, the most contradictory meanings have been exegetically demonstrated by means of theology out of the Scriptures, and thus the so-called Holy Scriptures have been made into a nose of wax. All heresies have, in common with the church, appealed to the Scriptures.

2. The theology of reason, which thus came into existence, did not, however, limit itself to being merely an exegesis which kept to the Bible as its foundation, but in its character as free, rational knowledge assumed a certain relation to religion and its content generally. In this more general relation the dealing with the subject and the result can amount to nothing more than the taking possession by such knowledge of all that, in religion, has a determinate character. For the doctrine concerning God goes on to that of the characteristics, the attributes, and the actions of God. Such knowledge takes possession of this determinate content, and would make it appear that it belongs to it. It, on the one hand, conceives of the Infinite in its own finite fashion, as something which has a determinate character, as an *abstract* infinite, and then on the other hand finds that all special attributes are inadequate to this Infinite. By such a mode of proceeding the religious content is annihilated, and the absolute object reduced to complete poverty. The finite and determinate which this knowledge has drawn into its territory, points indeed to a Beyond as existing for it, but even this Beyond is conceived of by it in a *finite* manner, as an abstract, supreme being, possessing no character at all. "Enlightenment"—which is that consummation of finite knowl-

edge just described—intends to place God very high when it speaks of him as the Infinite, with regard to which all predicates are inadequate and are unwarranted anthropomorphisms. In reality, however, it has, in conceiving God as the supreme being, made him hollow, empty, and poor.

3. If it should now seem as if the philosophy of religion rested on the same basis as this theology of reason, or theology of enlightenment, and was consequently in the same condition of opposition to the content of religion, further reflection shows that this is merely an appearance of resemblance which vanishes directly it is examined into.

For God was conceived by that rationalistic way of looking at religion, which was only the abstract metaphysic of the understanding, as an abstraction which is empty ideality, and as against which the finite stands in an external fashion, and thus too from this point of view morals constituted, as a special science, the knowledge of that which was held to belong to the actual subject as regards general actions and conduct. The fact of the relation of man to God, which represents the one side, occupied a separate and independent position. Thinking reason, on the contrary, which is no longer abstract, but which sets out from the faith of man in the dignity of his spirit, and is actuated by the courage of truth and freedom, grasps the truth as something *concrete*, as fulness of content, as Ideality, in which determinateness—the finite—is contained as a moment. Therefore, to thinking reason, God is not emptiness, but spirit; and this characteristic of spirit does not remain for it a word only, or a superficial characteristic; on the contrary, the nature of spirit unfolds itself for rational thought, inasmuch as it apprehends God as essentially the Triune God. Thus God is conceived of as making himself an object to himself, and further, the object remains in this distinction in identity with God; in it God loves himself. Without this characteristic of trinity, God would not be spirit, and spirit would be an empty word. But if God be conceived as spirit, then this conception includes the *subjective* side in itself or even develops itself so as to

reach to that side, and the philosophy of religion, as the contemplation of religion by thought, binds together again the determinate content of religion in its entirety.

With regard, however, to that form of contemplation in thought which adheres to the words of Holy Scripture, and asserts that it explains them by the aid of reason, it is only in appearance that the philosophy of religion stands on the same basis with it. For that kind of contemplation by its own sovereign power lays down *its* argumentations as the foundation of Christian doctrine; and although it still leaves the biblical words standing, yet the particular meaning remains as the principal determination, and to this the assumed biblical truth must subordinate itself. This argumentation accordingly *retains* its assumptions, and moves within the relations of the understanding, which belong to reflection, without subjecting these to criticism. But the philosophy of religion, as being rational knowledge, is opposed to the arbitrariness of this argumentative process, and is the reason of the universal, which presses forward to unity.

Philosophy is therefore very far removed from being on the common highway on which this theology of reason and this exegetical argumentative process move, the truth rather being that it is these tendencies chiefly which combat it, and seek to bring it under suspicion. They protest against philosophy, but only in order to reserve to themselves the arbitrariness of their argumentative process. Philosophy is called something special and particular, although it is nothing else than rational, truly universal thought. Philosophy is regarded as a something ghostly, of which we know nothing, and about which there is something uncanny; but this idea only shows that these rationalistic theologians find it more convenient to keep to their unregulated arbitrary reflections, to which philosophy attaches no validity. If, then, those theologians, who busy themselves with their argumentations in exegesis, and appeal to the Bible in connection with all their notions, when they deny as against philosophy the possibility of knowledge, have brought matters to such a pass, and have

so greatly depreciated the reputation of the Bible, that if the truth were as they say, and if according to the true explanation of the Bible, no knowledge of the nature of God were possible, the spirit would be compelled to look for another source in order to acquire such truth as should be substantial or full of content.

The philosophy of religion cannot, therefore, in the fashion of that metaphysic of the understanding, and exegesis of inferences, put itself in opposition to positive religion, and to such doctrine of the Church as has still preserved its content. On the contrary, it will become apparent that it stands infinitely nearer to positive doctrine than it seems at first sight to do. Indeed, the re-establishment of the doctrines of the Church, reduced to a minimum by the understanding, is so truly the work of philosophy, that it is decried by that so-called theology of reason, which is merely a theology of the understanding, as a darkening of the mind, and this just because of the true content possessed by it. The fears of the understanding, and its hatred of philosophy, arise from a feeling of apprehension, based on the fact that it perceives how philosophy carries back its reflecting process to its foundation, that is, to the affirmative in which it perishes, and yet that philosophy arrives at a content, and at a knowledge of the nature of God, after all content seemed to be already done away with. Every content appears to this negative tendency to be a darkening of the mind, its only desire being to continue in that nocturnal darkness which it calls enlightenment, and hence the rays of the light of knowledge must be necessarily regarded by it as hostile.

It is sufficient here merely to observe, regarding the supposed opposition of the philosophy of religion and positive religion, that there cannot be two kinds of reason and two kinds of spirit; there cannot be a divine reason and a human, there cannot be a Divine Spirit and a human, which are absolutely different. Human reason—the consciousness of one's being—is indeed reason; it is the divine in man, and spirit, insofar as it is the spirit of God, is not a spirit beyond

absolute opposition between philosophy and religion made one of the shibboleths of the time. All those principles of the religious consciousness which have been developed at the present time, however widely distinguished their forms may be from one another, yet agree in this, that they are at enmity with philosophy, and endeavour at all hazards to prevent it from occupying itself with religion; and the work that now lies before us is to consider philosophy in its relation to these *principles of the time*. From this consideration of the subject we may confidently promise ourselves success, all the more that it will become apparent how, in presence of all that enmity which is shown to philosophy, from however many sides it may come—indeed, it comes from almost every side of consciousness in its present form—the time has nevertheless arrived when philosophy can, partly in an unprejudiced and partly in a favourable and successful manner, occupy itself with religion. For the opposition takes one or another of those forms of the divided consciousness which we considered above. They occupy partly the standpoint of the metaphysic of the understanding, for which God is emptiness, and content has vanished, partly the standpoint of feeling, which after the loss of absolute content has withdrawn itself into its empty subjectivity, but is in accord with that metaphysic in coming to the result that every characterisation is inadequate to the eternal content—for this indeed is only an abstraction. Or we may even see that the assertions of the opponents of philosophy contain nothing else than what philosophy itself contains as its principle, and as the foundation of its principle. This contradiction, namely, that the opponents of philosophy are the opponents of religion who have been overcome by it, and that they yet implicitly possess the principle of philosophical knowledge in their reflections, has its foundation in this: that they represent the historical element out of which philosophical thought in its complete shape has been formed.

revelation in an immediate way in man; that religion consists just in this, that man has immediate knowledge of God. This immediate knowing is called reason, and also faith, but in a sense other than that in which the Church takes faith. All knowledge, all conviction, all piety, regarded from the point of view which we are considering, is based on the principle that in the spirit, as such, the consciousness of God exists immediately with the consciousness of itself.

1. This statement taken in a direct sense, and as not implying that any polemical attitude has been taken up to philosophy, passes for one which needs no proof, no confirmation. This universal idea, which is now matter of assumption, contains this essential principle—namely, that the highest, the religious content shows itself in the spirit itself, that spirit manifests itself in spirit, and in fact *in this my spirit*, that this faith has its source, its root in my deepest personal being, and that it is what is most peculiarly my own, and as such is inseparable from the consciousness of pure spirit.

Inasmuch as this knowledge exists immediately in myself, all external authority, all foreign attestation is cast aside; what is to be of value to me must be verified in my own spirit, and in order that I may believe I must have the witness of my spirit. It may indeed come to me from without, but any such external origin is a matter of indifference; if it is to be valid, this validity can only build itself up upon the foundation of all truth, in the *witness of the spirit*.

This principle is the simple principle of philosophical knowledge itself, and philosophy is so far from rejecting it that it constitutes a fundamental characteristic in philosophy itself. Thus it is to be regarded as a gain, a kind of happy circumstance, that fundamental principles of philosophy live even in general popular conceptions, and have become general assumptions, for in this way the philosophical principle may expect the more easily to obtain the general consent of the educated. As a result of this general disposition of the spirit of our time, philosophy has not only won a

position which is externally favourable—with what is external it is never concerned, and least of all where it, and active interest in it, takes the form of an institution of the state—but is favoured inwardly, since its principle already lives in the minds and in the hearts of men as an assumption. For philosophy has this in common with the form of culture referred to: that reason is regarded as that part of the spirit in which God reveals himself to man.

2. But the principle of immediate knowledge does not rest satisfied with this simple determinateness, this natural and ingenuous content; it does not only express itself affirmatively, but takes up a directly polemical attitude to philosophical knowledge, and directs its attacks especially against the philosophical knowledge and comprehension of God. Not only does it teach that we are to believe and to know in an immediate manner, not only is it maintained that the consciousness of God is bound up with the consciousness of self, but that the relation to God is *only* an immediate one. The immediateness of the connection is taken as excluding the other characteristic of mediateness, and philosophy, because it is mediated knowledge, is said to be only a finite knowledge of that which is finite.

Thus this knowledge in its immediacy is to get no further than this, that we know that God is, but not what he is; the content, the filling up of the idea of God, is negated. By philosophical knowledge or cognition we mean that we know not only that an object is, but also what it is; and that to know what it is, is not only to know it to the extent of possessing a certain knowledge, certainty, of what it is; but more than this, this knowledge must relate to its characteristics, to its content, and it must be complete and full and proved knowledge, in which the necessary connection of these characteristics is a matter of knowledge.

If we consider more closely what is involved in the assertion of immediate knowledge, it is seen to mean that the consciousness so relates itself to its content that it itself and this content—God—are inseparable. It is this relation, in fact

relation of religion which is the real point, and not the notions which one may have concerning God.

What is really contained in this position, and really constitutes its true kernel, is the philosophical Idea itself, only that this Idea is confined by immediate knowledge within limitations which are abolished by philosophy, and which are by it exhibited in their one-sidedness and untruth. According to the philosophical conception, God is spirit, is concrete; and if we inquire more closely what spirit is, we find that the whole of religious doctrine consists in the development of the fundamental conception of spirit. For the present, however, it may suffice to say that spirit is essentially self-manifestation—its nature is *to be for spirit*. Spirit is for spirit, and not, be it observed, only in an external, accidental manner. On the contrary, spirit is only spirit insofar as it is for spirit; this constitutes the conception or notion of spirit itself. Or, to express it more theologically, God is essentially spirit, so far as he is in his church. It has been said that the world, the material universe, must have spectators, and must be for spirit, or mind; how much more, then, must God be for spirit.

We cannot, consequently, view the matter in a one-sided way, and consider the subject merely according to its finiteness, to its contingent life, but inasmuch too as it has the infinite absolute object as its content. For if the subject be considered by itself, it is considered within the limits of finite knowledge, of knowledge which concerns the finite. It is also maintained, on the other hand, that God, in like manner, must not be considered for himself, for man only knows of God in relation to consciousness; and thus the unity and inseparability of the two determinations—of the knowledge of God and self-consciousness—even presupposes what is expressed in identity, and that dreaded identity itself is contained in it.

As a matter of fact, we thus find the fundamental conception which belongs to philosophy already existing as an universal element in the cultured thought of the present day.

And here it becomes apparent, too, that philosophy does not stand above its age as if it were something absolutely different from the general character of the time, but that it is one spirit which pervades both the actual world and philosophical thought, and that this last is only the true self-comprehension of what is actual. Or, in other words, it is one movement upon which both the age and its philosophy are borné, the distinction being only that the character of the time still appears to present itself as accidental, and is not rationally justified, and may thus even stand in an unreconciled, hostile attitude towards the truly essential content; while philosophy, as the justification of principles, is at the same time the universal peace bringer and universal reconciliation. As the Lutheran Reformation carried faith back to the first centuries, so the principle of immediate knowledge has carried Christian knowledge back to the primary elements. If, however, this process at first causes the essential content to evaporate, yet it is philosophy which recognises this very principle of immediate knowledge as representing content, and as being such carries it forward to its true expansion within itself.

The want of sound sense which marks the arguments advanced against philosophy knows no bounds. The very opinions which are supposed by those who hold them to militate against philosophy, and to be in the sharpest antagonism to it, upon examination of their content exhibit essential agreement with that which they combat. Thus the result of the study of philosophy is that these walls of separation, which are supposed to divide absolutely, become transparent; and that when we go to the root of things we find that there is absolute accordance where it was believed that there was the greatest opposition.

#### PRELIMINARY QUESTIONS

Before we can proceed to the treatment of our subject itself, it appears to be indispensable to solve several preliminary questions, or rather to institute an investigation into