

What I Believe

Ernest Holmes



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Spiritual wisdom for living in today's world.

This topic naturally divides itself into three parts, what I believe about God, what I believe about man and what I believe about the relationship between God and man.

First, I believe that God is Universal Spirit and by Spirit I mean the Life-Essence of all that is, that subtle Intelligence which permeates all things and which, in man, is self-conscious mind. I believe that God is present in every place, conscious in every part, the Intelligence or Mind of all that is.

I believe that man is the direct representative of this Divine Presence on this plane of existence. Man is the most highly evolved intelligence of which we have any knowledge. Man, being the highest representation of God here, is more nearly like God than any other manifestation on earth.

I believe that the relationship between God and man, between the Infinite and the finite, is a direct one and that the avenue through which the Mind of God expresses to the mind of man is through the mind of man himself. We have the ability to think, to know, to perceive, to receive and to act. What are these attributes other than a direct channel through which the Universal Spirit flows to us?

I do not feel that we approach God through any formula, sacred prayer, or intermediary but rather that the Spirit of God, the eternal Mind is the Power by which we think and know. It is self-evident that the only God whom we can know is the only God whom we do know and that this knowing is an interior process of our own belief and perception. We can know no God other than the God whom our consciousness perceives.

But, some will say while it is true that we cannot think outside of ourselves, we can know that which is outside of ourselves because we do know things that are not within us. This is true, as it is true that we have a city hall but to me that city hall would have no existence unless I were first aware of the fact. It has no existence to those who never heard of it. This is true of everything and while the possibility of knowledge may and must expand, we cannot know that which we do not perceive.

Therefore, I feel that God is to each one what each is to God. The Divine nature must be and is Infinite but we can know only as much of this nature as we permit to flow through us. In no other way can God be known to us. I believe the relationship between God and man is hidden within and that when we discover a new truth or find out something further about an old truth, it is really more of this infinite Mind revealing Itself through us.

I believe, then, in a direct communication between the Spirit of God and man, God personifying Himself through each and all. This is a beautiful as well as a logical concept and an unavoidable conclusion. This makes of the human being a Divine being, a personification of the Infinite.

But if we are Divine beings, why is it that we appear to be so limited, so forlorn, so poor, so miserable, sick and unhappy? The answer is that we are ignorant of our own nature and also ignorant of the Law of God which governs all things.

I believe that all things are governed by immutable and exact laws; these laws cannot be changed or violated. Our ignorance of any law will offer no excuse for its infringement and we are made to suffer; not because God wills it but because we are ignorant of the truth. We are individuals and have free will and self-choice. We shall learn by experience about things mental and spiritual just as we do about things physical and material. There is no other way to learn and God Himself could not provide any other way without contradicting His own nature.

But if everything is governed by Law, is there any spontaneous Mind in the universe? Yes, but this spontaneous Mind, which is God, never contradicts Its own nature, It never violates Its own Law. We shall cease to misuse the Law as we learn more about ourselves and our relationship to the Whole. Experience alone will do this for us. We are made free and because we are made free we shall have to abide by our nature and gradually wake up to the truth of our being.

Since I believe that everything is governed by exact laws, I believe all that the scientific world teaches, provided it is true in theory and principle. But should anyone in the scientific world realizing that all is governed by law, thereby exclude the necessity of a spontaneous Spirit pervading all things, I would ask him this question. By what power of intelligence do you recognize that all things are governed by exact laws? And he would be compelled to answer that he knew by the power of a spontaneous intelligence welling up within him.

We are living in a universe governed by mechanical laws which have no conscious intelligence or personal volition. Of this we are sure. But the very fact that we can make this declaration proves that we are not governed by mechanical law alone; for mechanical law cannot by reason of its very nature, recognize itself. When we come to self-recognition we have already arrived at spontaneous self-knowingness.

We are subject to the Law of our being but this Law is not a Law of bondage but one of liberty, liberty under Law.

I can conceive of a spontaneous Spirit and an immutable Law, the Spirit and the way It works. This position has been accepted by deep thinkers of every age. It is self-evident. Spirit can never contradict Itself. Neither can It violate Its creative action through Its own Law.

God works through what we call the principle of evolution or unfoldment and we are subject to the laws involved. It is not a limitation but is the only way through

which our freedom and individuality can be guaranteed to us. There is an unfolding principle within us which is ever carrying us forward to greater and greater expressions of life, in freedom, love and joy.

Each one of us is, I feel, at a certain level of evolution and on the pathway of an endless expression of Life, Truth and Beauty. Behind us is the All, before us is the All and within or expressing through us, is as much of this All as we are ready to receive. I believe absolutely in the immortality and the continuity of the individual stream of consciousness which is what we mean by the individual life-stream. Humanity is an ascending principle of life, individuality and expression through experience and unfoldment.

I do not believe in hell, the devil, damnation or in any future state of punishment or any other of the fantastic ideas which have been conceived in the minds of those who are either morbid or who have felt the need of a future state of damnation to which to consign the immortal souls of those who have not agreed with their absurd doctrines. God does not punish people. There is, however a Law of Cause and Effect which governs all and which will automatically punish, impartially and impersonally, if we conflict with the fundamental Harmony. This is bad enough but it seems to me to be necessary, else we could not learn. It is one thing to believe in hell and damnation and quite another proposition to believe in a Law of just retribution.

The Law of retribution is the Law of balance, compensation and equilibrium which is necessary to the universe. As we sow we shall, no doubt, reap. But I am sure that full and complete salvation will come alike to all. Heaven and hell are states of consciousness in which we now live according to our own state of understanding. We need not worry about either reward or punishment for both are certain. In the long run, all will be saved from themselves through their own discovery of their Divine nature and this is the only salvation necessary and the only one that could really be.

I believe in every man's religion for it is the avenue through which he worships God. I believe in my own religion more than in that of anyone else because this is the avenue through which I worship God.

I do not believe that there is anything in the Universe which is against us but ourselves. Everything is and must be for us. The only God who exists, the "Ancient of Days," wishes us well, knows us only as being perfect and complete. When we shall learn to know as God knows, we shall be saved from all mistakes and all troubles. This is heaven.

The apparent imperfection is but a temporary experience of the soul on the pathway of unfoldment. Man is a creature of time and of the night but the day will break and the dawn of an everlasting morning of pure joy is in store for all. Meantime, God is with us and we need have no fear for He doeth all things well. I feel that we have reason to rejoice in what truth we now have and that we may look toward the future in confident expectancy, with gratitude and certainty that as we gain greater understanding we shall receive greater illumination.

I believe that we are surrounded by a mental or spiritual law, the Law of Mind which receives the impress of our thought and acts upon it. This is the Law of all life and we may consciously use It for definite purposes. I am not superstitious about this Law anymore than I would be about the law of electricity or any other natural law, for nature is always natural.

I believe in a religion of happiness and joy. There is too much depression and sorrow in the world. These things were never meant to be and have no real place in God's world of Love. Religion should be like the morning sun, sending forth its glorious rays of light. It should be like the gently falling dew covering all, like the cool of the evening and the repose of the night. It should be a spontaneous song of joy and not a funeral dirge. From the fullness of the heart the mouth should speak.

I believe in the brotherhood of man, the Fatherhood of God and the bond of Unity that binds all together in One Perfect Whole. I believe that God speaks to us in the wind and the wave and proclaims His Presence to us through all nature but most completely through our own minds and in our hearts which proclaim His Life and Love.