Chapter 1

Opening a Can of Worms

Religion used to be everything. The religions of traditional societies encompassed every facet of life—conception, birth, puberty, marriage, hunting, planting and harvesting, commerce, warfare, medicine, "science," art, music, death, burial, and the afterlife. Even surveying was originally a religious function. The markers between properties were considered sacred to the gods and, for this reason, were not to be disturbed (DeCoulanges, 1972).

The function of religion has always been to bring meaning and coherence to life—to explain what life is all about and to prescribe how life is to be lived in the face of its religious purpose. Meanings and values, beliefs and ethics, credo and commitment, vision and virtue, understandings and evaluations, are core hallmarks of religion. So religion touches every aspect of life.

Yet as history progressed, one by one, facets of life branched off and became independent. Socrates was noted—and executed—for teaching youth to question the stories about the gods. Thus, philosophy, the "love of wisdom," emerged alongside of religion. Medieval sacred music was fitted with secular lyrics and played for entertainment. Soon the troubadours were singing their own songs

of romance and love rather than hymns of God and the saints. Modern science once provoked heated controversy about the cosmos as understood in the Bible. Today not even the staunchest Fundamentalists insist on the biblical account, that the earth is a flat disk of land supported by pillars sunk into the deep and covered with a hammered-metal-like dome, from which hang the sun, moon, and stars. The hard sciences and religion now coexist in peace.

But the more science touches human life and its meaning, the more entangled religion remains. Biblical Fundamentalists still protest an evolutionary account of humanity, and medical advances routinely provoke ethical condemnations from religious leaders. Biology comes too close to home. Even worse are the human (or social) sciences—sociology, anthropology, political science, economics, psychology. Religion and the human sciences have been unable to draw their boundaries to anyone's satisfaction.

At the beginnings of American psychology, William James (1902/1961) allowed that religion is an important dimension of human psychology. He addressed the matter in his classic, *The Varieties of Religious Experience.* In contrast, Sigmund Freud (1927/1975) denounced religious beliefs as infantile wishful thinking and named his important treatment of religion *The Future of an Illusion.* For the most part, Freud's influence carried the day, and during much of its first century, modern psychology has been antagonistic to religion. A recent study shows that the majority of psychologists and psychotherapists are much less committed to religion than their clients or the population at large (Bergin & Jensen, 1990).

Nonetheless, psychology is too close to religion to be able to steal away quietly. Early on, religionists were already looking to psychology for pointers on pastoral care, and within religious circles concern about pastoral counseling and psychology of religion continued the discussion about the relationship between psychology and religion (Wulff, 1997). Most recently, even secular sources have begun to reintroduce religious—or at least, spiritual—concerns into psychology. So, for example, *American Psychologist*, the prestigious journal of the American Psychological Association, carried a series of articles arguing for the integration of some religious dimension within contemporary psychology (Jones, 1994; Kukla, 1989; O'Donahue, 1989).

It has now become respectable to attend to spiritual and/or religious concerns in psychology and especially in clinical practice and psychotherapy (Bergin, 1980, 1991; Bergin, Masters, & Richards, 1987; Canda, 1988a, 1988b; Conn, 1989; Chandler, Holden, & Kolander, 1992; Ellis, 1980; Ellison & Smith, 1991; Helminiak, 1987c, 1989a; Hiatt, 1986; Kass, Friedman, Leserman, Zuttermeister, & Benson, 1991; Manaster, 1990; McFadden, 1991; Miller, 1990; Moberg, 1978; Moberg & Brused, 1978; Paloutzian & Ellison, 1982; Schneiders, 1989; Shelly & Fish, 1988). But the "and/or" and the "especially" are significant. They point up the ambiguity surrounding the matter. While there is growing consensus that somehow psychology inevitably implicates religious or spiritual issues, there is no coherent and commonly accepted understanding of how religion and the human sciences relate. This is the problem that this book addresses.

The focus here is on psychology, though the overall topic is the human sciences. This is so not only because I am more familiar with psychology than with the other human sciences but also because religious issues come to the fore more saliently in psychology than in economics, political science, anthropology, or sociology. Of course, conflict with religion is at the roots of modern sociology. Its founders, August Comte and Claude-Henri Saint Simon, proposed that, with the full deployment of social science, the superstitions of religion would fall away and a form of positivist religion, a "new Christianity" of ethics and fraternity, would thrive in its place (Reese, 1967, pp. 99, 505–506). Moreover, sociological studies of American society, for example, have analyzed questions of meaning and value (Bellah, Madsen, Sullivan, Swindler, & Tipton, 1985), the very pair of concerns that are central to religion. And serious theoretical discussion, closely related to the religious concern for truth and goodness, surrounds the very nature of sociology as a discipline (Bernstein, 1976; Doran, 1981, 1990; Habermas, 1991/1970; Taylor, 1989; Weber, 1949; Wolfe, 1989, 1993). The question is, How is it possible for a supposedly objective and value-free science to treat of human realities? For not only are these human realities constituted by the meanings and values that people place on them. But the very scientists studying them also buy into particular world views and implicit agendas; the scientists are operating out of their own chosen sets of meaning and value. These methodological issues are the very same ones that also affect psychology (Browning,

1987; Doherty, 1995; Richardson & Guignon, 1991). Thus, while the focus here is on psychology, the methodological issues at stake are common to all the human sciences.

Three Common Approaches

In general, I discern three approaches to relating religion and psychology. By treating respectively the Evangelical integration project, Don Browning's position, and Ken Wilber's position, this book addresses these three approaches. Most globally, there is a call for dialogue. The suggestion is that both religion and psychology have something valid to offer, and conversation between the two would somehow be mutually enriching. But determining the ground rules for this dialogue is precisely the interdisciplinary challenge.

The second approach introduces more precision and specifies the domains of competence proper to science and religion. This approach accepts Dilthey's now classic distinction between the *Geisteswissenschaften* (human or social sciences) and the *Naturwissenschaften* (natural or physical sciences) (Palmer, 1969). This distinction suggests that, while the *Naturwissenschaften* provide explanation about things, the *Geisteswissenschaften* interpret the meaning of things. (Exactly what this means—and it is problematic—will be discussed in Chapter Three.) Thus, supposedly, there can be no conflict between the natural sciences and religion as long as each remains faithful to its respective role. When the question is about psychology, however, ambiguity reigns again, for both theology and psychology may fall under the *Geisteswissenschaften*. In this case, the first two approaches are combined, and psychology and religion become partners in a dialogue regarding the meaning of things (Browning, 1987). As may already be obvious, however, this combination of approaches provides no real advance, since the topic here from the beginning has been religion and the *human* sciences.

Finally, borrowed from Hinduism, Buddhism, and disparate strands of Western thought is an approach named "the perennial philosophy" (Huxley, 1945; Wilber, 1996). It suggests that the innermost nature of all things is spiritual or even divine, and thus it indicates a common link that unifies psychological and religious concerns. This approach is the theoretical core of much humanistic

and transpersonal psychology, which rightly insists on broadening social science to include the transcendent dimensions of human experience. However, the coherence of this theoretical core remains a problem. As may already be obvious, this unification of disciplines is ultimately bought at the expense of all differentiation of specialized fields of study. Psychology and theology are ultimately collapsed into one.

An Alternative Approach

Detailed exposition and criticism of those approaches fill the latter half of this book. None of them appears to be adequate, but no alternative has been available.

In its first half, this book proposes an alternative; it suggests another approach. It provides a resolution to the conundrum in the relationship of psychology and religion. In its second half, this book also claims to pinpoint flaws in those other approaches and to suggest corrections for them. Accordingly, the alternative approach would appear more incisive and more comprehensive than the rest. Thus, this book is a contribution to the eventual emancipation of the last of the academic disciplines, the human sciences, from the all-embracing mother, religion. But the final result is not orphaned children, for the relationship between religion and the human sciences is also preserved.

In a volume companion to this one, *The Human Core of Spirituality: Mind as Psyche and Spirit* (Helminiak, 1996a), I have already exemplified the results of applying this other approach. As the title of that book suggests, spirituality is at the heart of the present discussion. A coherent understanding of spirituality is the key to clarifying the relationship of psychology and religion.

Spirituality is widely, almost universally, considered a religious concern, and "religious" is taken to mean "theological." This is to say, spirituality is generally thought to concern humanity's relationship with God. Pushing the matter even further—as in Wilber's (1996) perennial philosophy, for example—human spirit and divinity are thought to be one and the same thing; at its core humanity is thought really to be divine. But when human spirit and divinity are thus confounded, I submit, the interdisciplinary problematic becomes unresolvable. Surely, no one can say with

certainty what God is. Then, if divinity is an essential dimension of humanity, all the human sciences face an impossible task. They can never hope to achieve a correct understanding of humankind. Their success depends on explaining what can never be understood: God. So positing spirituality as an intermediary discipline—between psychology on the human side and theology on the divine—is the key to relating the human sciences and religion.

Necessarily, that prior volume gave short shrift to issues of interdisciplinary methodology. This book attends to these issues in detail.

Outline of Chapter One

In the next section, I summarize some key concepts from that other book, for they also bear on methodology. Their mention here allows the present volume to stand as an independent monograph.

With that summary, the foundation will have been laid for a study of other attempts to integrate religion and psychology. This chapter will tentatively begin that study by unpacking the matter. This initial focus will be on two broad discussions about the relationship of psychology and religion: the so-called "integration" project of Evangelical Christianity, and the debate about the nature of religious studies in contrast to theology. These two discussions constitute the subsequent two sections of this chapter. These discussions are notorious for their failure to achieve consensus, so, unlike the positions addressed in later chapters, these two are not elaborated positions on the relationship of religion and the human sciences. Nonetheless, discussing these two will provide a useful introduction. It will exemplify the variety of approaches that have been suggested in this matter. It will raise the myriad and entangled questions at stake in this matter. And thus it will prime the reader for this book's subsequent deeper consideration of the matter.

An Overview of the Alternative Approach

A key suggestion was already made: Spirituality is the link between psychology and theology. Of course, here *spirituality* is taken to refer to an academic discipline or a field a study. It is the study

of the lived experience that people call their "spirituality." Accordingly, this side-by-side listing of psychology, spirituality, and theology is already a sorting out of issues that all constitute what is globally called "religion." This sorting out is the heart of the alternative approach to relating religion and the human sciences presented in this book—an approach via spirituality—and this alternative presumes that "religion" is too diffuse a construct to be used effectively in interdisciplinary studies.

A System of Four Viewpoints

The full-blown presentation of this sorting out comprises a schema of four levels. (See Figure 1.1.) These I call "viewpoints," and they relate in an interlocking system. *Viewpoint* is a technical term and will be defined in Chapter Two. The term refers to a point of view or a horizon of concern or a stance regarding the attempt to understand something. And the something in question here is the human being and the human situation.

One stance approaches the human with concern simply to understand accurately what happens to be the case. This stance constitutes the positivist viewpoint. Another stance wonders, over and above that, whether what happens to be the case is as it ought to be. Here questions of *correct* meanings and *wholesome* values—questions of the true and the good—come into play explicitly. This stance is called the philosophic viewpoint, the stance of the "lover of wisdom." A further stance posits a fullness of truth and goodness as the terminus toward which correct human meanings and values point. This fullness is taken to be God, and this stance is called the theist viewpoint. Finally, a still further stance considers the possibility of human participation in that Fullness, which is God. The concern is to account for human union with God, and this stance is called the theotic viewpoint. *Theotic* comes from the Greek term *theosis*, which means deification or human participation in divinity. The study of deification would be called *theotics*, in contrast to *theology*, which limits its concern to God.

It is possible to study the human from within any or all of these viewpoints. Attending only to the de facto status quo of the matter, one works within the positivist viewpoint. Attending to human authenticity, one works within the philosophic viewpoint.

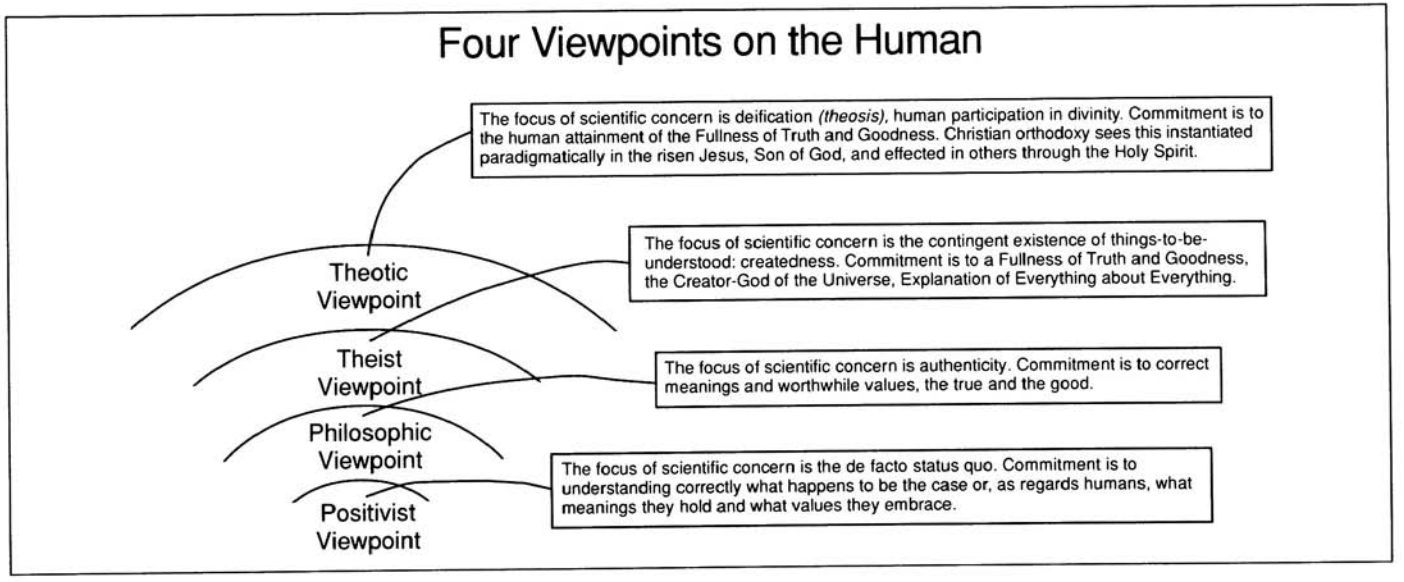

Figure 1.1 This system of higher viewpoints entails a series of interlocking analytic perspectives on one and the same phenomenon. The questions inherent in each viewpoint—not a change in phenomena nor a change in the data available on one phenomenon—determine different academic disciplines or sciences. At the same time, the interrelatedness of the questions interrelates the same independent disciplines. Valid conclusions within the lower viewpoints constrain, and are retained within, the higher viewpoints. The presuppositions of the higher viewpoints confirm the validity of the presuppositions of the lower. The independent disciplines in interrelationship constitute a comprehensive human science. (Reprinted from Daniel A. Helminiak, *The Human Core of Spirituality,* © 1996, with permission of the State University of New York Press)

Attending to God and the created status of the human, one works within the theist viewpoint. And attending to human deification, one works within the theotic viewpoint.

Diverse academic disciplines are proper to each of the viewpoints. The theotic viewpoint is concerned with theotics, the treatment of human participation in divinity. Classical Christian orthodoxy (I do not mean Fundamentalism) provides a ready example of theotic concern. The three core doctrines of Christianity—the Trinity of Persons in God; the incarnation of the Only-Begotten of God as Jesus Christ and his glorification or resurrection from the dead (deification); and grace, the deifying gift of the Holy Spirit given to Jesus' human brothers and sisters—serve to account for human sharing in the divine nature of the Eternal Parent, God.

Again, the theist viewpoint is concerned with theology. Understood here in a restricted sense, theology is the study of God and God's relationship to the created universe. (*Theology* is not taken to mean any study of any issues proper to a specific religion.)

Yet again, the philosophic viewpoint is concerned with spirituality. This is the study of human beings that takes into explicit account the human need to be open, honest, and loving or, in a word, authentic. Further elaboration on this crucial matter is given below. But already it might be clear that such study of the human, differentiated from theist concerns, is a kind of social science whose vistas include the furthest possibilities of human development. So, according to the present analysis, social or human science that takes authenticity into explicit account is already spirituality.

Finally, the positivist viewpoint is concerned to explain the facts of some matter. It pertains in the natural sciences, and it also characterizes the human sciences as currently conceived.

From the positivist through the philosophic, theist, and theotic viewpoints, these four cohere as ever broader expansions of one another. To this extent they represent a coherent and comprehensive system for study of the human. They suggest where different facets of the matter fall and thus how these facets relate to the others. By the same token, the four viewpoints also determine what disciplines properly deal with these facets. The system of four viewpoints is a schema for comprehensive interdisciplinary science.

Chapter Two presents elaborate detail on this system of four viewpoints, so further explanation will not be given here. What has

been said is sufficient to introduce the matter and to present the terminology.

Spirituality as an Inherently Human Phenomenon

Of course, pivotal to the matter is the understanding of spirituality. I discussed it in detail in *The Human Core of Spirituality* (Helminiak, 1996a), and here I present a brief summary.

The beginning point is to recognize the complexity of human "mind" and to differentiate within it two distinct factors: psyche and spirit. This is to say that, in contrast, the standard model of the human is bipartite. In religion the human is said to be body and soul, and in the human sciences, body and mind. (The difference between mind and soul is not significant here.) But if human mind is more than one thing, a tripartite model of the human emerges: the human is a composite of organism, psyche, and spirit. (See Figure 1.2.)

Granted that spirit is an inherent dimension of the human mind, there is already at hand a basis for treatment of spirituality apart from any implication of God. Spirituality is a fully human affair. Spirituality is built into the human experience in the very makeup of the human mind (cf. Vande Kemp, 1996). Though most people may express their inherent spiritual inclination by means of belief in God and through the practice of religion, at its core spirituality is a human, not a theological, matter; it pertains to social or human science and not to theological studies per se. Spirituality is an unavoidable consequence of being human. And all this is said without any prejudgment on questions about the existence and nature of God or about the role of belief in God in most people's lived spirituality.

The pertinent question at this point is whether this purported human "spirit" can account for all the aspects of what is called "spirituality." And the whole matter depends on the explanation of spirit.

An Account of the Human Spirit

The major inspiration of my whole approach is the thought of Bernard Lonergan (1957, 1972). The summary given here is dense, and the matter is extremely subtle. Like Lonergan's thought over-

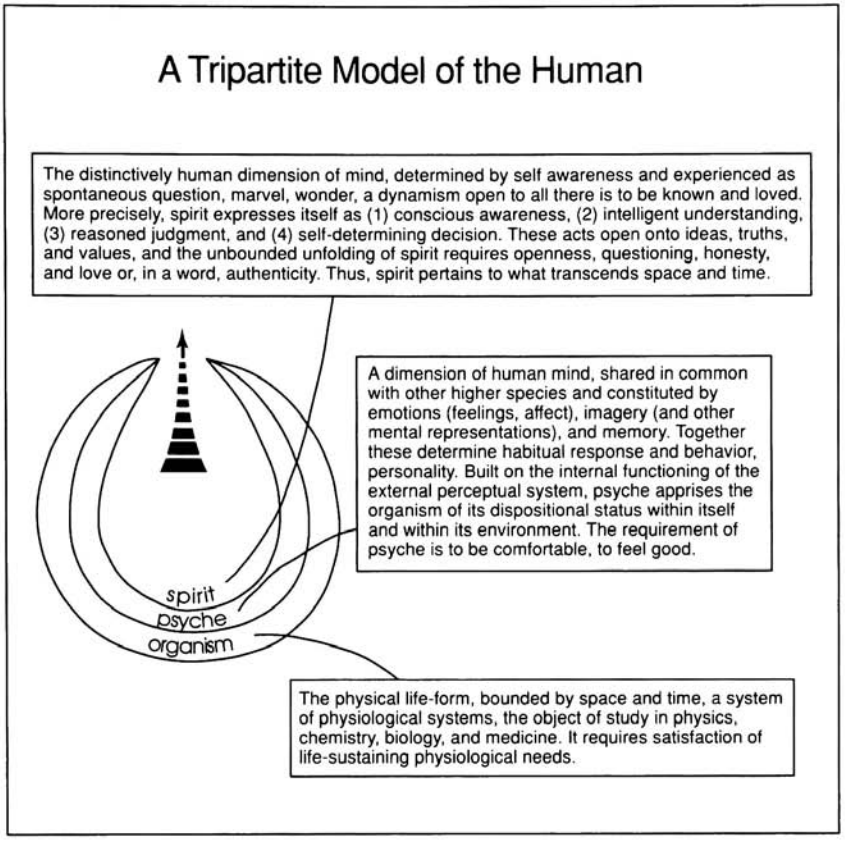

Figure 1.2 Refining the standard model, body and mind (or body and soul), the tripartite model distinguishes psyche and spirit within mind. Three factors name the necessary and sufficient to account for human reality and functioning. The factors are distinct: each entails a different intelligibility, so the one cannot be the other. Their distinction does not imply separation. Neither does their depiction here, in perceptible and imaginable representation, suggest contiguity of parts or priority of order. (Reprinted from Daniel A. Helminiak, *The Human Core of Spirituality,* © 1996, with permission of the State University of New York Press)

all, it is difficult. For this reason Lonergan is not well known, nor is his position often cited. Nonetheless, I find his thought far more incisive than any other I have studied. So I present here an instance of his possible significance, an implementation of his methodological analyses. In this and its companion volume (Helminiak,

1996a), I have tried to present as accessible a presentation as possible. Still, the reader will be challenged to think deeply and carefully. My hope is that, in the end, the reader might share my enthusiasm and believe that Lonergan's thought offers a significantly new approach to interdisciplinary questions. To test whether or not it does—to this task this book is an invitation.

Lonergan's main work was an analysis of human consciousness, the work of intentionality analysis. In places he also refers to consciousness as "spirit" (Lonergan, 1957, p. 519; 1972, pp. 13, 302), and I use these terms interchangeably. Differing from contemporary usage in psychological circles, by "consciousness" Lonergan does not refer to all the self-aware contents and processes of the human mind but restrictedly to that by which the human mind is self-aware. This particular dimension of mind is the spiritual.

Lonergan's analysis outlines the structure of consciousness or spirit: spirit is bimodal, and it operates on four levels. (See Figure 1.3.) That is, simultaneously, concomitantly, and inextricably, it is both conscious and intentional (as parallel terms I also say "nonreflecting" and "reflecting"), and in shifting emphasis its functioning is empirical, intellectual, rational, and responsible (Lonergan, 1972, p. 6–13).

The Four Levels of Consciousness

Consider first the four levels of consciousness. Note from the beginning that *levels* is a metaphor. This image does not mean that consciousness is actually built piece upon piece. If consciousness is but another name for spirit and if spirit is nonspatial and nontemporal, all talk of pieces and building and pictured levels is off base. *Levels* is but a word, and others could have been used: dimensions or aspects or facets of consciousness or factors or emphases within consciousness. The words point to distinguishable aspects of consciousness, facets that are discernibly different, though they constitute and operate within one reality, human consciousness.

Consciousness or spirit is a dynamic reality. It is driven ever forward by wonder, marvel, awe, which is inherent in humanity and constitutive of human beings. This wonder, or primordial question, expresses itself in particular formulated questions. It is at work in the child's unending curiosity and interminable queries; it

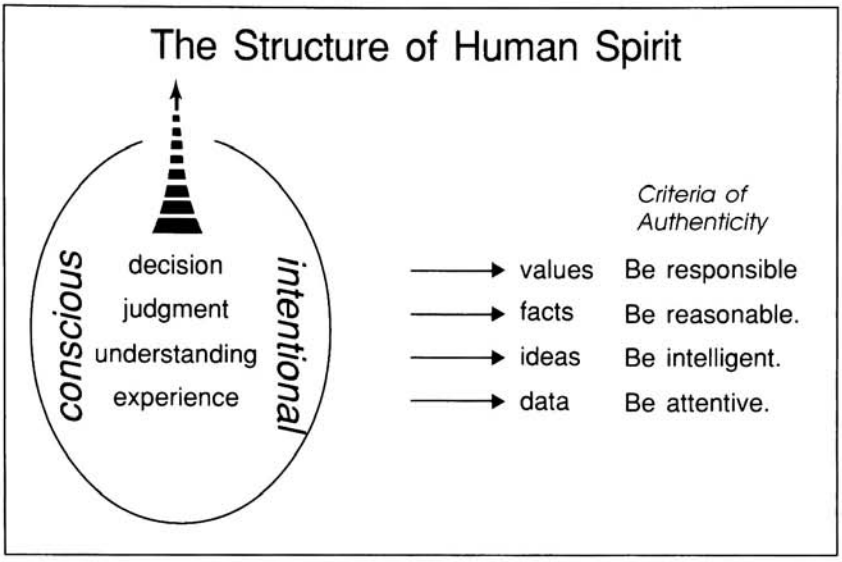

Figure 1.3 According to Lonergan (1957, 1972), human consciousness or spirit is a conscious intentionality, dynamic, open-ended, and self-transcending, that operates on four interrelated levels. Acts of seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting, and imagining on an empirical level constitute experience and provide data, something to be understood. Acts of inquiring, understanding, conceiving, and formulating on an intellectual level concern intelligibility and result in ideas, concepts, hypotheses about the data. Acts of reflecting, marshalling and weighing the evidence, and judging on a rational level concern reality, being, truth, and result in knowledge, facts, i.e., ideas verified in the data. Acts of deliberating, evaluting, deciding, and acting on a responsible level concern the good and express values, lived responses to experience and knowledge. This structure is normative, for its open-ended unfolding requires deliberate respect for its functioning on each level: attention, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsibility. Together these define human authenticity and permit ongoing growth. (Reprinted from Daniel A. Helminiak, *The Human Core of Spirituality,* © 1996, with permission of the State University of New York Press)

undergirds the research scientist's attempts to understand; it emerges in the lover's profession of eternal devotion; it sustains the mystic's contemplation of the stars. The openended dynamism that

makes humans human is part and parcel of every truly human experience. Humans are inherently spiritual.

On a first level, consciousness is mere awareness, and through such awareness one finds oneself confronted with data. There is something to be understood. The spontaneous dynamism of human spirit prompts the question, What is it? With this question consciousness shifts its functioning to a second level. Here, not mere awareness but understanding is at stake. After investigation and questioning, insight may occur. One has a breakthrough of understanding. Then formulation follows, and one has a hypothesis, a theory, an idea, a possible explanation.

But the presence of an idea or hypothesis spontaneously effects another shift in spiritual functioning. Wonder, marvel, and awe now express themselves in another question, Is it? or Is it so? That is to say, Is this idea correct, have I understood correctly? Or is this just another "bright" (but mistaken) idea? Consciousness is now operating on a third level. The task at hand is to check the hypothesis against the data and to determine the inherent "is" or "is not," the "Yes" or "No," regarding the correctness of the idea. This question is answered by another kind of insight, the judgment of fact that discerns whether or not there is sufficient evidence to allow the conclusion, It is so. With this conclusion, one has moved from mere experience and beyond mere idea and into reality. One has attained to fact; one has knowledge. Knowledge is correct understanding. Knowledge is understanding that is verified in the data. So human knowledge is a compound; it depends on the coalescence of data, understanding, and judgment.

The presence of knowledge in consciousness provokes yet another shift, and spirit begins functioning on the responsible or existential level, a fourth level. Here, the determining concern is expressed in the question, What am I going to do about it? Here, concern shifts from knowing to doing, from thinking to living. The same unfolding dynamic of consciousness is at work, but now it requires decision or choice and necessitates engagement with the external world. Decisions and choices result in changes in oneself and in the world, and these changes provide new data for another turn of the wheel of dynamic consciousness.

Thus, consciousness operates on four levels. Aware of data, it is empirical. Questioning to understand, it is intellectual. Marshal-

ling and weighing evidence, it is rational. And pondering, deliberating, and acting, it is responsible.

When talking about the spiritual, I often speak simply of "meanings and values." These are the hallmarks of human spiritual functioning. Parallel and more suggestive formulations are "credo and commitment," "vision and virtue," "beliefs and ethics," "understandings and evaluations." These pairs represent a shorthand way of inferring the concerns of the four levels of consciousness. "Meanings" pertains to the first three levels, so instead of naming data, idea, and fact, I simply say "meanings." It should be noted that here *meaning* does not mean significance, as in the phrase, "the meaning of my life," for this usage already entails values and commitments. Rather, *meanings* is used in a strictly cognitive sense and suggests simply "understandings." Hence, there follow the parallels, "beliefs," "vision," "credo." In contrast, "values" relates to the fourth level of consciousness. I find these shorthand formulas useful in nontechnical presentations—as in the second paragraph of this chapter. These formulas also square well with the jargon of the social sciences and thus provide an easy entry for discussion of the spiritual in human science circles. I trust that the reader will not be confused by my shift in phrasing. A thorough grasp of any matter allows one to express it in various ways as fit the occasion.

The Correlation of Consciousness and Being

A single dynamism or intentionality is at work on all four levels of consciousness, and the ideal goal of this openended movement is to embrace the universe. We would understand everything about everything; we would love all that there is to be loved. The very nature and structure of human consciousness gear us toward all that is; they orient us toward being.

Being is taken to be all that there is to be known. Thus, human consciousness and being co-define one another. All that is can, in principle, be known, and what there is to be known is what is. What cannot be known is not, period. This is to say, "what cannot be known" is not "something" that cannot be known; rather, this supposed "something" simply does not exist; in actuality, it is

nothing. If there is nothing there to be known, there is simply nothing there. And if there is something there, it can be known. The ideal reach of human spirit is coterminous with the totality of reality. Being is all that there is to be known and—granted also the fourth level of consciousness—loved.

The Inherent Normativity of Consciousness: Authenticity

Since human spirit is oriented in openended embrace toward all that there is to be known and loved, the very dynamism and structure of human spirit entail a normativity. The continued unfolding of spirit toward the universe of being imposes certain requirements. If on a first level of consciousness, people are aware, then insofar as they can determine the matter, they should be attentive. If on a second level people seek to understand, then they should be intelligent—which is simply to say, they should use whatever intelligence they have. If on a third level people seek to know, then they should be reasonable—which is to say, they should honestly make judgments on the basis of the evidence. And if on a fourth level people determine themselves and their world, then they should be responsible—which is to say, they should choose and act in accord with what they know and in a way that keeps open the openended unfolding of consciousness. The very structure of consciousness entails normative requirements. In this peculiar case, the "ought" does follow from the "is," for under consideration is the source and root meaning of "ought." Under consideration is that very reality that introduces questions of "ought" into the human situation.

The normative implications of the structured unfolding of consciousness constitute four transcendental precepts: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, and Be responsible. These are precepts because they impinge on us human beings and from within make demands. Violation of them entails diminishment of our own selves and inevitably, in some way or other, distortion and destruction to our world. They are transcendental because they apply across the board to whatever people do, wherever and whenever they do it.

The transcendental precepts represent a peculiar kind of requirement. Though they express absolutes, they are not absolutist.

Though they apply to every human operation, they do not prejudge or predetermine any outcome. Without ever prescribing *what* is to be affirmed or done, they require *how* every human activity should proceed: attentively, intelligently, reasonably, and responsibly. Proceeding in this way, human change moves toward unlimited fulfillment. Proceeding contrariwise, it creates its own dead end.

The transcendental precepts are absolutely openended in their purview. Indeed, in the realm of spirit they spell out the laws of nature to which Francis Bacons's famous aphorism referred: "Nature can only be commanded by being obeyed." Only obedience to the transcendental precepts assures openended human unfolding. In this, the reader should be hearing echoes of standard talk of spirituality. In contrast, only "the devil" would protest that the transcendental precepts bias human functioning.

The transcendental precepts provide the technical definition for a pivotal construct in this study of religion and the human sciences: authenticity. One is authentic to the extent that one follows the transcendental precepts. The matter is as simple and as far-reaching as that.

This understanding of *authenticity* does not completely square with the popular usage, which derives from existential philosophy. Though the word itself does suggest what is at stake in the present discussion, other connotations of the word might suggest something as banal as following one's personal whim or preference, and in some cases being authentic might simply mean being obnoxious. In contrast, Lonergan's notion of authenticity has objective validity build right into it. In Lonergan's (1972, p. 292) trenchant phrase, "Genuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity." The presupposition is that authentic humanity is openendedly directed toward all that is, toward all that is true and all that is good. There is no possible egoism or solipsism in this understanding.

The Source of This Account

That is a popular summary of Lonergan's four-level analysis of human consciousness or spirit. I elaborated it in detail in *The Human Core of Spirituality*. The question remains, Where did Lonergan get this formulation? And there is the further question, What evidence suggests that this formulation is correct?

Historically, Lonergan arrived at his formulation through extensive study of Thomas Aquinas and the Greek philosophers, especially Aristotle, as well as study of modern philosophy and its "turn toward the subject." But the question about the evidence for his account points to another source, and in a profound sense it is the answer to both those questions.

The four-level analysis claims to formulate the structure of human consciousness. Then the only valid source for the formulation as well as the evidence to validate it must lie in consciousness itself. This analysis is correct if it accurately articulates human consciousness, and anyone should be able to test the validity of this articulation by examining his or her own consciousness. By carefully attending to inner experience, anyone should be able to detect a four-faceted functioning. Indeed, there could be no other way to test it. The only available instance of the matter in question lies within each one's own inner experience. Moreover, if the evidence does indeed lie there, this account of consciousness is empirically grounded. This account is a scientific statement. It rests on hard data—not, indeed, the data of sense, which alone narrow empiricism would credit, but real data nonetheless, the data of inner experience, the data of consciousness.

The Invulnerability of This Account

Consciousness is the ground of human subjectivity; consciousness is what make us human subjects. So another way to speak of consciousness or human spirit is to speak of human subjectivity. Now, one will never find an instance of subjectivity lying somewhere outside oneself. What is other than self or beyond self is not the subject but an object. Yet within one's own experience and only here, unless one is comatose or in dreamless sleep, one has available for examination an instance of human subjectivity. Attention to it should result in a four-factor formulation and, by the same token, result in the evidence that validates this formulation.

Are you ever aware of something to understand, so that you ask, What is it? How does it work? Why is it so? Or do you ask questions when, really, there is nothing there to be understood? And when you do ask, What is it? are you aware of trying to understand? Or have you never had the experience of insight? Have

you never understood anything? And when you have an idea, do you ever wonder whether it is correct? Or does concern about correctness never occur to you? And when you determine that you are correct about something, do you begin to deliberate about the implications for your life? Do you wonder what you ought to do in this case? Or are you indifferent about the rightness or wrongness of your actions? Does it never occur to you to seek to do the right thing?

If you answered in the affirmative to the positively phrased questions, your own experience confirms the pattern of operations that Lonergan formulated in terms of four levels of consciousness. You have confirmed in your own experience the validity of this formulation. This formulation does express the very operations of your own mind. Now, you might not like the formulation. You might prefer not to speak of "levels." But regardless of how you eventually do choose to speak of the matter, it is clear that you know the reality about which Lonergan is speaking, and your formulation, despite whatever words you might use, must square significantly with his, for you speak of the same thing. In your own experience, you have evidence in support of his theory of consciousness. Moreover, the evidence in this case is telling indeed. It is the evidence of your very own experience. Fully apart from what might be the case in the experience of other people, in some way your very own self constrains you to accept Lonergan's account of consciousness. And if after consideration, other people must also admit to a similar assessment of the matter, in multiple subjects there is mounting empirical evidence in support of this account.

If, on the other hand, you answered in the negative to the negatively phrased questions, you disqualify yourself from the discussion. You unashamedly profess to be unaware, without understanding, dishonest, and irresponsible.

This is a disconcerting state of affairs. In some way it is personally offensive. It appears that this account of consciousness is telling us what we are, and we are unable to protest that we are other. In this matter we are unable to determine for ourselves what we are and what we want to be. Much to the consternation of our modern cry for autonomy and independence, we cannot but bow to this formulation of consciousness. If we refuse, we only undermine the personal dignity we wish to protect. The peculiarity of this state of affairs suggests that Lonergan is onto something. I, for

one, believe that he has hit the nail on the head. His formulation of consciousness is accurate, and it cannot be subverted. Even argument to subvert it must, in the very arguing, employ the very elements that structure the account in the first place.

Thus, the evidence for Lonergan's four-level formulation of consciousness lies in the data of consciousness. The evidence lies in the very inner experience of the conscious human subject.

The Bimodal Structure of Consciousness

That fact provokes further questioning that leads more deeply into the nature of consciousness or spirit. Our daily mental functioning is filled with concern about this, that, and the other thing. We are usually quite aware of the contents of conscious experience. These contents are the things about which we think. But seldom do we attend to the process of thinking itself.

Stop for a moment and answer this question: what were you just doing?

Without much effort you will probably answer something to this effect: I was just reading the above paragraph. Or else, I had stopped reading for a moment and was thinking about what I just read. Or perhaps, my mind had drifted, and I was daydreaming about such and such. Let us assume that you answered that you were reading the above paragraph. Whatever the case, nobody could prove you wrong. You are the only person who could accurately answer that question. But the remarkable thing is that you could answer it.

Your mind was wholly taken up with what you were reading. Yet when I asked about what you were doing, you were able to answer correctly: "I was reading"—even though that is *not* what you were attending to. You could answer about the fact of your reading even though your mind was filled with whatever it was you were reading. Evidently, you were aware of two different things at one and the same time and aware of them in two different ways. You were aware of what you were reading, and you were aware of the fact of your reading. Of course, the two are inextricable, but the two contents of your awareness are different.

That is the point. Consciousness is double. By one and the same consciousness, you are aware of some object and simultaneously aware of yourself as the aware subject.